

Social Media and it's Ups and Downs

Social media is both a blessing and a curse. On one side, it can be used in a positive way like staying informed with friends and family. But on the other side, it can be used in a negative way, like to spread harmful rumors. No matter how we use it, even if we don't, it has an effect on all our lives in some way.

I do not use social media as much as other people my age. The only social media accounts that I own are a YouTube, Twitter, and Xbox account. I use my Xbox account the most, followed by YouTube then Twitter. I do not tweet at all on Twitter and my account is private. I only use it to keep up with shows I watch and the news. I consider my phone just a thing to text my parents with. If you look at other teens in my school, they cannot be without their phone for a second. They have it with them ALL the time, even when their not supposed to. They're constantly on Snapchat, TikTok, or some other app. Even adults are on their phones too much. Everybody is just scrolling endlessly. People spend an average of 2 hours and 22 minutes on social media a DAY. This addiction can lead to mental health problems, abuse, and depression. Misuse of social media, like using it to cyber bully, harass, spread false facts or rumors, or to scam others is a problem that we face even here in Roseville. People use it like a weapon to invade others' privacy and to ruin their social lives. I don't have much experience with these, not being an avid user of social platforms, but people around me in my school and other places do.

For example, just last year in sixth grade, a few students from my school created a hate page about another student. They were discriminating against her (Article 2 of the Declaration of Human Rights), and violated her right to privacy (Article 12). When the school found out about it, they investigated and our teachers told us that whoever did should come forward. I don't exactly know what happened after that because I wasn't involved, but I'm sure it was resolved.

Social media can be used to promote a certain political party, belief, or problem that people face. Doing this is fine, but some take it too far and start spreading hate or lies. America right now is going through a time where it's assumed that you're far left or far right. Social media is used to attack people on their standpoint, or to spread negativity about opposition, whether it is true or not. This can divide our community and the online community in many ways. For instance, when someone in a high political position tweets about something controversial, you can look through the comments and see people agreeing, disagreeing, and yelling at each other. It would be very different if it was real life. People wouldn't say half of the things they say online in real life, to someone's face. That's another bad thing about social media. Anonymous is easy.

Social media does, however, have a positive side. If used correctly, people can create a good footprint about themselves. This is important for high schoolers since colleges look at that kind of thing when considering them. They can show how they've helped in their community, country, and the world. Social media can also be used to spread awareness about problems in our community. It can be used to promote volunteer opportunities, parties, and here in Roseville, the yearly BOOYA and Rosefest, all the sports programs and parks. People can connect with relatives or friends using social media. If everyone would just use it the right way, the online community wouldn't be so toxic.

Social media was originally created as a place to keep up with friends, and make new ones. But then people started to use as a way to be mean to others, because it's so much easier behind a screen. This has become a growing problem that lots of people today have been trying to tackle. It just goes to show that it's getting easier and easier to take from others. Let's keep social media a blessing, and stop it from becoming a curse.