

Today's Great Disaster: Is Social Media Ruining the Future for Teens?

Did you know that 94 percent of teens who have a smartphone use it daily? This is one of the reasons that led to the debate about whether social media brings us together or not. Some people think that social media brings people together. Others argue that it actually separates us more. My claim is that we are replacing friends with screens. This is because we don't spend enough time in person, we are on our phones while hanging out and that makes our friendships weaker, and teens can mistake online friends for real friends.

One reason is we don't spend enough time in person. According to Lauren Tarshis, "A typical teen spends more than 44 hours a week in front of a screen. Much of this is spent on social media platforms like Instagram and Facebook" (18). This means that teens spend almost 2 whole days on social media which is hindering their time with people in person. Before there were phones teens would have spent this time with family and friends. Now teens spend all their free time on social media and not with people in person.

Another reason why teens are replacing friends with screens is that are on their phones too much while hanging out and that makes their friendships weaker. Lauren Tarshis states "1 in 4 teens are online almost constantly" (18). This means that if you are hanging out with friends one of you will most likely be online and if someone is online they can't hang out with you. Before the internet people wouldn't have been online now almost a fourth of teens are constantly online. Another reason why this matters is because when you are online you can't connect with the people around you.

Lastly, teens can mistake online "friends" for true friends. According to Lauren Tarshis, "The average teenager has 150 followers on Instagram" (18). This means that the average teenager has 150 "friends" on social media, but how many are real friends? This is a big reason why social media disconnects us from people. This is because when people figure out that not all their "friends" are really their friends they get discouraged and don't try to make new friends ruining their trust in other friends.

Other people though, argue that tech brings us closer together. They say that you can communicate with people from different places. This is wrong because you could also write a letter and send it in the mail. Although they think that, it is still true that we are replacing friends with screens. Three reasons why this is true are we don't spend enough time in person, we are on our phones while hanging out and that makes our friendships weaker, and teens can mistake online friends for real friends.