

The Risks and Rewards of Being a Teenager in the Cyber World

By Deborah McCoy

Being a teen has always been challenging, but being a teenager today has difficulties and stressors unique to the generations coming of age in the cyber world. Those stressors are impacting our youth's physical and mental health in significant ways, from weakening their immune systems to increasing levels of anxiety and depression. Getting likes, creating brands, dealing with hate and trying to stay relevant during a 24/7 social media cycle impacts happiness, self-esteem, self-worth. Many of our kids are lonelier, less satisfied and less happy with their lives than ever before. How to make the way forward in our deeply connected world is key to their health and welfare. This workshop will

- Look at the battle ground that social media is sometimes, as well as the path to making and maintaining relationships;
- Review the latest research addressing the rise in mental health issues among youth, including anxiety and depressive disorders;
- Examine the frequency and effect of cyberbullying;
- Discuss the impact of relentless google searches and endless information access;
- Assess strategies and resources to develop and enhance sustaining connections for youth, both in-person and online.