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Understanding short and long term effects of social media on wellbeing of elderly

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Abstract

Social networks provide a mix of positive and negative experiences. Network members can provide help in times of need and day-to-day companionship, but they can also behave in ways that are inconsiderate, hurtful, or intrusive. Researchers must grapple with these dualities in order to develop a comprehensive understanding of how social network ties affect health and well-being. This article provides an overview of research that has examined the health-related effects of positive and negative aspects of social network involvement. It focuses on later life, a time when risks for declining health and for the loss or disruption of social relationships increase.

Keywords: social networks, social exchanges, health, older adults

Introduction

Social media are interactive computer-mediated technologies that facilitate the creation and sharing of information, ideas, career interests and other forms of expression via virtual communities and networks. Think of social media platforms as web sites where you engage and connect with other people, communities, organizations and businesses. On the web sites you can share, create, learn, discuss and promote content, ideas, opportunities and more. All of the social media platforms are

Web-based and are accessed via the web or through apps that you install on your iPhones and iPads. And the most common names that come to mind with referencing social media are Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and more. Let's identify what seniors are more likely to use.

Social Media use by seniors

The simple answer is Facebook, YouTube, Pinterest, Instagram, LinkedIn and Twitter. Although the rankings are not equal. According to the Pew Institute in a study published in 2018, Facebook and Youtube are the top platforms used by older adults by a wide margin. The other four platforms of note are nearly equal in popularity. Here are the Pew data. Older adults by a wide margin. The other four platforms of note are nearly equal in popularity. Here are the Pew

How do you access social media?

For all of the primary platforms we discuss, there are two approaches that are used to access the social media platforms. Media

1. Web sites accessed from your web browser. Launch Safari or any other web browser and enter the URL for the site. For example:
 - www.facebook.com
 - www.twitter.com
 - www.pinterest.com
2. Apps installed on your devices. There are iPhone & iPad apps for all of the major social media platform. They are

installed from the App Store. All of the apps are free to install and use.

Is social Media Free?

All of the platforms that we discuss in this recipe can be accessed without fees. But we think it is important to recognize that there is an exchange that occurs when you use most of the social media platforms. There are two components to the value exchange.

1. When you register with the social media platforms, they learn who you are and also learn about you. They may know your email address, your age and perhaps your general location. As you use the platform they may learn more about you. They may learn what you like or the opinions that you have. Your information and your access to the platform is an asset with significant value.
2. The Social Media companies will sell advertising or data to companies that want to target you. And because the targeting is enhanced with your data, it is valued by advertisers.

Having an awareness of how the Social Media companies make money is important so that you can be on the lookout for paid or promoted posts and activity. It is a Social Media fact of life.

Benefits of Social Media – Stay Engaged with Life

When you think about the benefits of social media, one can immediately picture the positive element of staying engaged with life and maintaining relationships with other people. Successful aging is clearly associated with high levels of physical and cognitive health and social engagement. Social networks provide multiple sources of social support. It seems like common sense but it is clearly identified in a number of research articles.

Challenges of Social Media

The use of social media can have positive results. But make no mistake, there are also pitfalls. The most prominent of which is privacy and safety. The use of social media in the 2016 election is a good example of how the platform can be used to spread false information and potentially share private information. The Senior Tech Club recommends that you understand the privacy implications of social media use and take the necessary step to prevent against misuse. We will make recommendations about security and data privacy in our overview of the social media platforms.

Privacy tips for Social Media

Here are six general tips that will help you manage the data and privacy concerns with Social Media.

1. Choose your Level of Engagement. When you sign up for a social media platform, you can choose your level of engagement. Please know that you do not have to share anything on the platform and you can simply consume the posts and updates made by your friends and family. This is up to you.
2. Guard your Personal Information. Never share information like your address, full birth date phone number, driver's license number or social security number.
3. Keep your Circle of Friends Close. Do not accept friend requests from people that you do not know. Know when you share or post if you are sharing with friends or with the public.
4. Don't Overshare – That post about your vacation plans may be an invitation for a burglar to visit your house. Comment carefully.
5. Don't Share your Location. For example, Twitter can automatically attach location information to public tweets. Turn off location information.
6. Be aware of Scams and Frauds. Be aware that scams and frauds exist, and remember that if something sounds too good to be true, it is.
7. Talk to your children if you intend to post pictures of your grandchildren to ensure that their privacy concerns are understood.

Getting Started with Social Media

At SeniorTechClub.com, we look to help you with information, tips and learning for each of the top social media platforms. In our getting started guides for each of the platforms you will learn about:

- What is the core purpose of the platform? What do you share and to whom do you share it?
- Key Terms for use. Every platform has its own language.
- Engagement Options – How do you engage and what are the options.
- Privacy & Sharing Tips – What information is shared and what are the risks.
- Practical applications for seniors – How can you use the platforms in a practical and age appropriate way.
- Recipe for Getting Started – What are the steps to getting started.
- Access to lessons specifically curated for Senior Tech

Club members.

Conclusion

- Social media is no longer a thing for the youth, as more and more senior citizens keep getting on board.
- Perhaps the advantages of using social media are what draws the majority of the seniors to this wave. They can enjoy the benefits of research, more efficient communication, and even bridge the gap between them and the younger generations. However, being exposed to fraud, as well as cyberbullying remain as some of the challenges that seniors might face when participating in the online community.
- To enjoy the full benefits that social media provides for the elderly, one must remain wary of the associated downsides. This way, the seniors can have enriched daily routines as well

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