

King's Christian Collegiate Model United Nations

American Psychological Association



Prena Kaur Handa
February 22, 2025

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Welcome Letter

Dear King'sMUN 2025 delegates,

We are truly honoured, as this year's Co-Secretary Generals of King'sMUN, to welcome you to our 11th annual conference. The Secretariat has been working hard throughout this school year to deliver you an incredible, in-person conference with a variety of unique committees, experienced chairs, and an overall successful day of debate.

Model United Nations, a reenactment of the function of the United Nations, is designed for students to come together to debate, discuss, and develop creative resolutions to a variety of pressing issues that plague our current world. In most committees, students take on the positions of various countries, characters, or political figures to create solutions for both real and fictional issues and crises. We provide distinctive committees that delve into historical events, future scenarios, and fictional topics.

In our personal experience with MUN, we have developed many valuable skills that we will take with us throughout our lives, such as confidence in public speaking, leadership, and creative problem-solving. Furthermore, MUN promotes lifelong connections, as we are constantly meeting delegates who share similar passions to us in committee sessions. We truly believe that your participation in MUN will guide you throughout your high school journey and beyond.

At King'sMUN, we provide a variety of committees to ensure that we have something of interest for everyone. From very current pressing issues (ie. UNSC and the ICJ) and issues in sports (ie. English Premier League and International Olympic Committee) to fictional, yet applicable issues (ie. Pokémon) and issues set in our very own communities (ie. Government of Ontario). We strive to ensure that there is appeal for a variety of delegates. Whether you have no experience or have been to a multitude of conferences, there is a place at King'sMUN for you!

Once again, we are thrilled to welcome all delegates, new or returning, back to King'sMUN. We hope that you engage in fruitful debate and have an amazing time at King'sMUN 2024.

Sincerely,

Aryan Suri and Luciana Ilic

Co-Secretary Generals

King'sMUN 2025

Background Information:

The American Psychological Association is the leading scientific and professional organization representing psychology in the United States. Its members include more than 157,000 researchers, educators, clinicians, consultants, and students. The association aims to promote advancing, communicating, and applying psychological science and knowledge to benefit society and improve lives.

The American Psychological Association (APA) was created to advance psychology's study and practice and establish the field as a recognized scientific discipline. Its founders, led by G. Stanley Hall, sought to unite psychologists across diverse specialties to promote research, share knowledge, and elevate the profession's standards. Founded in 1892 at Clark University in Worcester, Massachusetts, the APA began with just 31 members, increased after World War II, and has grown to over 130,000 people. Today, APA is the largest scientific and professional organization representing psychology in the United States. APA's founding was part of many changes occurring in the United States, which fueled its purpose. Its purpose of origin included the emergence of academic disciplines such as psychology, economics, political science, biochemistry and physiology. These new social sciences quickly developed advanced degrees and provided credentials to validate discipline members as experts. Realizing the growth of applied psychology, APA members recognized its existence. They merged with other psychological organizations to broaden the scope and help promote human welfare and the practice of the science of psychology. Towards the end of World War II, APA allowed returning service members to see the greater need for better psychological services firsthand during the war. There was a special interest in the domains of clinical and applied psychology. Today, APA has several goals and purposes.

- 1.) Advance Psychological Science: APA fosters research and a deeper understanding of human behaviour and mental processes.
- 2.) Promote Education and Training: They develop and maintain high standards for education, training, and psychology levels.
- 3.) Establish Ethical Standards: APA enforces guidelines to uphold ethical practice and professionalism in psychology.
- 4.) Advocate for Public Policy: Influences legislation and public policy to support mental health, science funding and easy access to psychological services.
- 5.) Support Professional Practice: The APA provides resources for psychologists in clinical, organizational, and research roles and encourages professional growth.

6.) Public Understanding: Hope to promote mental health awareness through outreach and communication.

By uniting the psychological community, APA aims to use science and practice to address real-world problems, improve mental health care, and contribute to society and its people's well-being.

Topic 1: Discussing the Influence of Social Media on Teen Emotions

2010 was the year Snapchat and Instagram were introduced. In 2016, Tiktok came out. These apps, among others, have been the target of significant psychological concerns. President Biden threatened to ban the Chinese-owned social media app TikTok. In April, a bipartisan senators group introduced legislation to ban kids under 13 from accessing social media. The U.S. Surgeon General issued an advisory urging action to protect children online. The APA issued its first mental health advisory, recommending protecting youth from the risks of social media.

Youth mental health continues to suffer, alarming parents, teachers, and legislators about the negative impacts. APA warns that fear and misinformation often go hand in hand and recommends adding science-backed balance to the discussion. An assistant professor at Brown University named Jacqueline Nessi stated, “There’s such a negative conversation happening around social media, and there is good reason for that. However, realizing there can be benefits for many teens is important.” APA clearly understands that teens and adults get something out of social media, and a more balanced approach needs to be projected to help teens use platforms in healthier ways. Members at APA take surveys with teens, asking them how much they use social media and then their mental health symptoms. In those studies, a correlation between more social media use results in poorer mental health. However, whether it's social media or a third factor is not confirmed. It's still a great idea to reduce addiction to social media.

Case Study:

According to APA, 42% of teachers surveyed daily instances of classroom incivility compared to 6% before the pandemic. Teachers such as Natalie Spadafora told CBC News that the repercussions of social media usage have increased significantly during COVID-19, and some kids have not been taught that school is not their home and has its own rules.

41% of teenagers with high social media use rate their overall mental health as poor or very poor, compared with 23% of those with lower usage. 10% of the high usage group showed suicidal or self-harm desire in the past 12 months. The average US teenager spends 4.8 hours using the seven popular social media apps, including YouTube, TikTok and Instagram, which are credited for 87% of their social media time. 37% of teens say they spend five or more hours a day. (APA, By the Numbers)

Platform	Almost constantly	Several times a day	Once a day	Less frequently*
YouTube	16%	38%	17%	29%
TikTok	17%	32%	9%	42%
Snapchat	14%	29%	8%	49%
Instagram	8%	27%	12%	53%
Facebook	3%	8%	8%	81%

More than half of teens suggest it would be difficult for them to give up social media. 36% admit they spend too much time, 55% say they pay the right amount, while only 8% say they spend too little time. Girls spend 41% more time on social media than boys spend 31% of their time on social media. (Paw Research Center)

Potential Risks of Teen Social Media Usage:

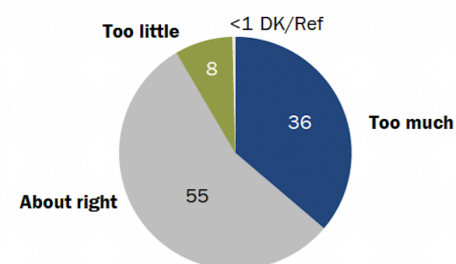
In 2023, the APA issued its health advisory on adolescent social media use, stating potential risks. APA emphasized that platforms built for adults are not inherently suitable for children. Youth require special protection due to vulnerability and competence as they progress through childhood, teenage and late adolescence.

Brain development starts at ages 10-13 and is linked with hypersensitivity to social media feedback until the mid-twenties. Youth get invested in behaviours that will help them get personalized feedback, praise, or attention from peers. Likes and follower counts activate neural regions, which trigger repetitive behaviour and exert a more significant influence on teens' attitudes and self-love. The idea of filters and the number of likes tend to portray unrealistic beauty and regular expectations, which initiates the concept of low self-esteem, which is more commonly found in young teenage girls. Youth are susceptible to positive social feedback and rejection, and these platforms capitalize on their vulnerabilities, leading to problematic use. Youths don't develop impulse control, making them less capable of making correct decisions regarding the internet. This leads to countless social media addictions. Infinite scrolling is risky for youth since their ability to monitor and stop engagement is limited compared to adults. Not being able to disconnect leads to high rates of clinical dependency. These are only a few potential risks social media can cause.

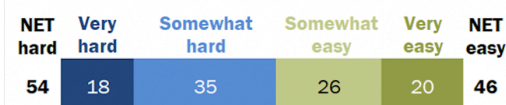
Psychological scientists examine social media's potential beneficial and harmful effects on youth's social, educational, psychological, and neurological development as it's a quickly evolving area of

54% of teens say it would be hard to give up social media

% of U.S. teens who say that overall, the amount of time they spend on social media is ...



% of U.S. teens who say it would be ___ for them to give up social media



Note: Teens refer to those ages 13 to 17. Figures may not add up to the NET values due to rounding. Those who did not give an answer are not shown.

Source: Survey conducted April 14-May 4, 2022.

"Teens, Social Media and Technology 2022"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Figure 2: % of U.S. teens who say it would be hard to give up social media

research for many stakeholders, including youth, parents, caregivers, educators, policymakers, practitioners, and members of the tech industry. It is a joint responsibility to ensure youth well-being. APA has created recommendations based on scientific evidence to help work towards safe social media usage.

APA Social Media Recommendations:

1. It is vital to encourage young people using social media to use features that offer opportunities for online friendship, emotional intimacy, and social support to promote healthy socialization.
2. Social media use and permissions/consenting should be tailored to children's development capabilities; innovations created for adults shouldn't be accessible to children.
3. For ages 10-14, adult supervision, evaluation, discussion, and coaching regarding social media content are recommended. As children get older, they should develop the idea of media literacy.
4. Psychologically harmful content which encourages youth self-harm, eating disorders, harm to others, and other health risk behaviours should be reported, minimized or removed.
5. Cyberhate exposure, including online discrimination, prejudice, hate or cyberbullying towards marginalized groups (e.g., racial, ethnic, gender, sexual, religious, ability status) or toward an individual because of their identity, should be minimized.
6. Youths should be routinely screened for signs of "problematic social media use," which can impact their ability to engage in daily roles and routines and present psychological risks over time.
7. Social media use should be limited so as not to interfere with youth's sleep patterns and physical activity.
8. Social media use should be limited to social comparison, particularly beauty or appearance-related content.
9. Youth social media use should proceed with training in social media literacy to ensure they have developed psychologically for safe and meaningful social media use.
10. Resources should be provided for continued scientific examination of social media's positive and negative effects on youth development.

Conclusion:

Social media is a key factor influencing teenage emotions and mental well-being. Its impact on young, underdeveloped brains is significant and can lead to greater harmful impacts if not contained

correctly. Although social media use has positive consequences, the negative impacts need to be monitored and controlled as a society to protect our youth.

Questions to Consider:

1. How does social media affect teenagers' self-esteem and body image?
2. Are there notable differences in how social media is used by teenagers in different demographic or cultural groups?
3. Does social media usage impact teenagers' academic performance or attention spans?
4. Do teenagers feel that there is enough regulation on social media to protect them?

Topic 2: Parental Responsibilities and Social Media

Social media can help teenagers with healthy development, but it is critically important to focus on how it is used. Parents and caregivers are the experts on their children. They understand what experiences fit their strengths and areas of vulnerability. APA emphasizes parental responsibility for teen social media use because of its significant impact on mental health. There are many primary reasons the APA assigns responsibility to parents.

Primary reasons the APA assigns responsibility to parents:

Adolescents are still developing self-regulation and decision-making skills. As previously mentioned, their prefrontal cortex is not fully matured, which helps impulse control and risk assessment. Excessive and harmful content can increase risks of anxiety, depression, cyberbullying and low self-esteem. Teens are also highly moulded into peer pressure, social comparison and manipulative online content. Parents being the legal guardians of minors includes them overlooking their children's digital footprint aligning with their online behaviour and safety.

Parental Recommendations regarding teenage social media usage:

Encouraging Healthy Usage: Parents need to monitor time spent on social media to ensure it does not mess with sleep, physical activity or in-person relationships. The key idea is balancing to prevent overuse.

Open Communication: Parents must create an environment where their children feel comfortable discussing their online identity, including harmful content.

Modelling Positive Behaviour: Parents are encouraged to set a good example by managing their social media usage and emphasizing the importance of thoughtful engagement.

Establishing Guidelines: Setting age-appropriate boundaries such as limits, restrictions and device-free zones during dinner and bedtime.

Critical Thinking: Help teens evaluate their online encounters while recognizing misinformation and understanding the impact of social comparisons

Addressing risks: Be aware of potential dangers, such as cyberbullying, inappropriate content, or predatory behaviour. Enforce safety measures, such as privacy settings and not sharing personal information.

Conclusion:

Overall, parental responsibility is key in monitoring teenage social media usage while keeping them safe. As social media can be a harmful and scary environment, having adults take part in helping their kids understand the risks and constantly overseeing their platforms will help protect teen's mental health and emotions. By taking an active role, parents can help their teens develop healthy habits and use social media as a tool for connection and learning rather than a source of harm.

Questions to Consider:

1. Should parents be held accountable for any harm caused by their teen's inappropriate online behaviour?
2. How can parents help teens develop critical thinking skills to identify fake news or harmful content online?
3. How do teens respond to cyberbullying, and what mechanisms are in place to help them cope?
4. What role does social media play in shaping teenagers' values and worldviews?
5. How does social media influence communication between teenagers and their families?

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):

In September 2015, the United Nations adopted the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to cover all the pressing matters occurring in the world. The influence social media has over teens raises concerns regarding these SDGs. One affected includes SDG 3: Good Health and Well-Being. This goal ensures healthy lives, promotes well-being for all ages, and relates to teenage social media usage in several ways, mainly concerning mental health and digital well-being. SDG 3 emphasizes promoting



mental health, and target 3.4 aligns with promoting mental well-being and the need for responsible usage of social media to prevent challenges such as low self-esteem, anxiety and depression. SDG 3's focus on enforcing good overall health also requires creating awareness among teens and parents about balanced social media usage and encouraging healthier lifestyles. As APA suggests, teaching teenagers digital literacy is tied to SDG 4: Quality Education. This SDG ensures inclusive and equitable education and promotes lifelong learning opportunities for all. Educating teenagers and other individuals worldwide on media literacy would promote online safety while eliminating and protecting against cyber threats, identity theft, cyberbullying and exposure to inappropriate content. Educating teens on digital literacy equips

Figure 3: SDG 3.4

them with the knowledge and skills to navigate the online world safely and engage appropriately in digital communication. In today's highly active digital society, it empowers to be informed digital citizens. SDG 17, Global Partnerships, also emphasizes strengthening global partnerships to achieve sustainable development, including sharing knowledge, resources, and technologies. Partnerships between governments, tech companies and mental health organizations can help address mental health challenges teenagers are facing. Initiatives, including creating safer online platforms, promoting responsible use and incorporating mental health resources directly into social media apps, intertwine SDG 17's values.



Figure 4: SDG 3



Figure 5: SDG 4



Figure 6: SDG 17

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