

With or by a simple
click of



With the millions of websites, apps, and other platforms for groups to communicate through media all over the internet these days, this is truly the era of social media . Due to this digital era, teenagers like myself are amongst the top users of most social media platforms on the internet.

Whether it's updating a twitter or facebook status, fitting a practical joke into 200 characters or uploading selfies and pictures on instagram, we are on the internet a lot. Social media is a major part of culture for this modern society. Recently, I've seen an increase in the quantity of people on my facebook and twitter feed posting or writing lengthy articles about the negative impacts of social media on youths. Many people seem to have an unfavorable outlook on social media and it's influence on today's young generation. Don't get me wrong, but there are a lot of unfavorable aspects of teenagers having so much freedom on the internet in this day and age. Advertisers have unlimited opportunities to influence and manipulate us. Privacy is not really an option for most people who are using social media. Plus, the internet is an area that allows people to anonymously offend others. Cyber bullying has become a major problem in the last few years. These are all unfavorable aspects of being a part of online groups and it can become dangerously addictive if the user lacks self-control.

That being said, I don't think social media is totally bad but I believe that it is a gift to society. I actually think that being part of the social media world is beneficial to teenagers in this digital era. It provides an interval for youths to share their views, opinions, stories and thoughts. It allows us to connect with people all over the world by an instant tap of a screen or by a simple click of

a button. It can be used inappropriately, and it can also be used for constructive purposes. On the internet and off, bullying has always been a huge problem among youths, and probably will be for a long time to come. I'm not trying to rationalize or justify bullying in any way, but I am simply saying that taking the internet away would not resolve the bullying problems or any other problems included with social media. There are other ways to make a difference.

The people who are in opposition to social media seem to focus so much on the fact that this environment provides users an easy way to spread hatred, and less on the fact that it also provides users an easy way to spread love. At any convenient time, users can formulate a message on a platform like Facebook or Twitter and send it out for anyone in the digital world to see. Sure, many people on social media misuse this opportunity, but what if we motivated them to use it for good instead? The other day, in the centre of this big "makeup free selfie" trend, I used my Facebook and Twitter as a platform to allow my friends to know my view on it all. I made a status update about how I assumed that we should be focusing on people's inner-beauty instead of the way they look with or without makeup. That status got a lot of response, and it felt good to be able to reach out to people and share something important to them, with a few taps on a screen. The thing is, the internet gives you so much freedom and liberties. We now have a relevant opinion because of social media. Conceded, there are a lot of youths who don't really know how to use their voice or opinions for the right reasons yet.

In fact, I'm still figuring that part out myself. Instead of disheartening youths to access the internet, I think people should start urging them to use it for

the right purposes instead of the wrong ones. The youths of today have a voice like we have never had before. Social media can be an awesome environment to uplift for each other, to communicate with people and share our stories and views. Social media gives us a chance to reconnect and keep up with old friends and friends that live far away in isolated areas. It gives us the opportunity to share our stories and get our opinions out there.

Having the liberty to share our views on the internet makes us feel heard. That can be such a powerful and influential feeling, and I think it's a really important one for teenagers to obtain. Without this groundbreaking and innovative creation, though, communication would be dull and boring, so by all means social media should be used. Our society today depends on knowledge. A new and convenient way to spread this knowledge is through social media.

Recently, a few tweets of mine have been gaining admiration, and some have been noticed from popular people on Twitter. Social media platforms have given me and so many other teenagers a lot of power. So now with all these ways to have our opinions and views heard, I think teenagers should be empowered to use that freedom for constructive purposes. People need to start listening to what the young generation has to say and to understand that so much good can come from this opportunity if we are encouraged and accepted offline and online.