

Pressure to be available 24/7 on social media causes teen anxiety and depression

September 11 2015

The need to be constantly available and respond 24/7 on social media accounts can cause depression, anxiety and reduce sleep quality for teenagers says a study being presented today, Friday 11 September 2015, at a British Psychological Society conference in Manchester.

The researchers, Dr Heather Cleland Woods and Holly Scott of the University of Glasgow, provided questionnaires for 467 teenagers regarding their overall and night-time specific social media use. A further set of tests measured sleep quality, self-esteem, [anxiety](#), [depression](#) and emotional investment in social media which relates to the pressure felt to be available 24/7 and the anxiety around, for example, not responding immediately to texts or posts

Dr Cleland Woods explained: "Adolescence can be a period of increased vulnerability for the onset of depression and anxiety, and poor sleep quality may contribute to this. It is important that we understand how social media use relates to these. Evidence is increasingly supporting a link between social media use and wellbeing, particularly during adolescence, but the causes of this are unclear".

Analysis showed that overall and night-time specific social media use along with emotional investment were related to poorer sleep quality, lower self-esteem as well as higher anxiety and depression levels.

Lead researcher Dr Cleland Woods said "While overall social media use impacts on [sleep quality](#), those who log on at night appear to be

particularly affected. This may be mostly true of individuals who are highly emotionally invested. This means we have to think about how our kids use [social media](#), in relation to time for switching off."

The study is presented at the BPS Developmental and Social Psychology Section annual conference taking place from the 9 to 11 September at The Palace Hotel in Manchester.

More information: The 2015 Developmental and Social Psychology Section annual conference takes place from the 9 to 11 September 2015 at The Palace Hotel in, Oxford Street, Manchester, M60 7HA.

Provided by British Psychological Society

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