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SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE INCREASE

Social media usage has increased over the past few years and teens are starting to use social media at a younger age. Social media can help players make connections, network, feel connected, and promote themselves and their team members. However, sometimes social media usage as a sports player can lead teens to compare themselves to other players which increases the player's risk of developing low self-esteem, anxiety, depression, and even suicidal ideation (Memon et al., 2018).

SYMPTOMS OF INCREASED SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE:

- Difficulty concentrating
- Low self-esteem
- Easily distracted
- Decrease in person social activity
- Addiction
- Increase symptoms of anxiety and depression
- Seeking validation

PLAYERS CAN BE IMPACTED BY SOCIAL MEDIA USE IN A VARIETY OF WAYS SUCH AS:

- **Increased stress that impacts their wellbeing and functioning**
- **Low self-esteem about their skills as a player due to what they view online**
- **Missing games or practices due to decreased in person social activity**
- **Posting things online that could potentially impact their individual reputation or reputation of the team**

How can coaches better understand their players who are using social media?

- Set ground rules and boundaries surrounding what players should post on social media
- Learn ways to communicate better with their players
- Understanding how social media use impacts teens differently developmentally
- Increase understanding of ways to handle situations of players posting things on social media that they should not

HOW TO ENSURE YOUR ATHLETES FEEL SAFE AND COMFORTABLE ON THE FIELD: Technology is advancing and social media usage is unavoidable but learning the ways that it impacts players can help increase understanding and improve communication. Parents and coaches play an important role in a player's lives. Increasing knowledge surrounding social media usage, as well as where the teen is at developmentally, can provide many benefits and strengthen relationships and overall wellbeing for all involved.

Ways to do this include:

- Doing research on the impacts of social media usage, both positive and negative (see resources)
- Creating a safe space for the player to come to you if they feel they are struggling with their social media usage
- Knowing how to handle situations involving social media such as having a protocol in place

RESOURCES

[NASP ONLINE](#)

[APA.ORG](#)

[COACHES CLIP BOARD](#)

[PLAY BY THE RULES](#)

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