

Materials	Paper, pen
Learning Outcome	Recognize the pros and cons of social networking and discuss the importance of balancing social networking and real-life connections.

Description

For youth, technology is not just about gaming or social media posts. It is a place to connect and hang out. Explain to the youth that a social network is a place on the internet where interactions occur between friends, and where new friendships and networks are formed. Ask the youth if they have any social networks and discuss them. Discuss with the youth the pros and cons of social networking and ask the youth to write their own list of pros and cons. Encourage the youth to brainstorm the list on their own, but provide the options below if needed.

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Can connect with others with similar interests• Provides a voice• Reduces feelings of isolation• Offers a sense of belonging• Can be used for good (crowdsourcing, advocacy)• Can help you express yourself	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pictures or videos of you shared that you do not want shared• Reduces amount of real-life connections• Can be accessed by unintended audiences• Causes health problems if time is not monitored• Easy platform for bullying (cyberbullying)• False sense of freedom with words and actions

After discussing the list of pros and cons, take it a step further and ask the youth to brainstorm how to manage or solve the cons. Some ideas are included below.

- Ask friends before you post photos or videos of them online and ask them to do the same with you.
- Do not give out personal information online about yourself or your friends.
- Ensure proper privacy settings are in place so unintended audiences cannot access your account.
- Speak up or ask for support if you or someone is being cyberbullied and never use social networking platforms to hurt someone. It is all about balance!
- Practice self-regulation strategies for balancing social networking and physical inactivity with real life connections and physical activity.
- Before sharing or posting,ask yourself if it is something you may regret later.

Emotional Well-Being Competencies



THINK

Develop cognitive skills and strategies that facilitate self-management, decision-making, and relationship skills.



FEEL

Develop affective skills and strategies that facilitate healthy and safe relationships with themselves, with others, and with their environment.



ACT

Practice behaviour skills and strategies that facilitate responsible decision-making, self-awareness, and social-awareness.



Reflection Questions

Reflection is important to support learning for emotional well-being. Consider asking the youth the reflection questions below and discuss the answers together.

- What strategies do you use to manage the amount of time you spend on social networks? If you do not use any strategies, what strategies could you start using?
- Why do you think is it important to balance real-life connections with your social networks?