



David Fairlamb THE FIT FACTOR

LIFESTYLE CHANGE

We have started fitness classes for kids immediately after school – this will stop them snacking on rubbish and keep them away from social media, hopefully forming new healthier habits. Help your child and sign up today or find a class near you.

Don't miss David's tips every Saturday in your Journal

ADOLESCENTS who spend three or more hours a day on social media are doubling their risk of mental health problems, research suggests.

The study of 6,600 kids aged 12 to 15 found "heavy users" were twice as likely to report depression, anxiety and loneliness.

Social media can also make children more likely to have eating disorders or try drugs because it makes them more impulsive, a new study suggests.

Too much social media - which includes Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, YouTube, Instagram and SnapChat - makes them more impulsive, often leading to bad decisions that can affect them for life, warn scientists.

Children spending a significant amount of time looking at screens, and not getting enough sleep, are most vulnerable. They also displayed more aggression and anti-social behaviours than those who never logged on. Excessive screen time leads to impulsive behaviour which was defined as acting without realising the risk involved or

The best moments of my life don't make it to social media

Motivational quote of the day

the consequences involved with the behaviour.

I absolutely get this and feel the negative effect social media has on children is hugely underestimated, both mentally and physically. The amount of time kids spend on social media, often late into the evening and early hours of the next morning leaves them tired and less receptive for the following day. In order to pick themselves up they turn to

quick fix boosts, such as sugary drinks and unhealthy snacks. This in turn makes them hyperactive for a short time then tired and lethargic. Unfortunately, unless this habit can be broken or changed not only is it going to affect their concentration and mental stability it will potentially raise their weight, often leading to health issues and depression. This cycle has become a huge issue and parents need to address it to keep their children fit and healthy.

Usually the first thing 10-16-year-olds do after school is go online and eat unhealthy snacks. We have started classes 4.15-5.15pm for kids whose parents are worried about their kids' obsession with social media and being so inactive.

When they feel more energised they will find motivation and enthu-

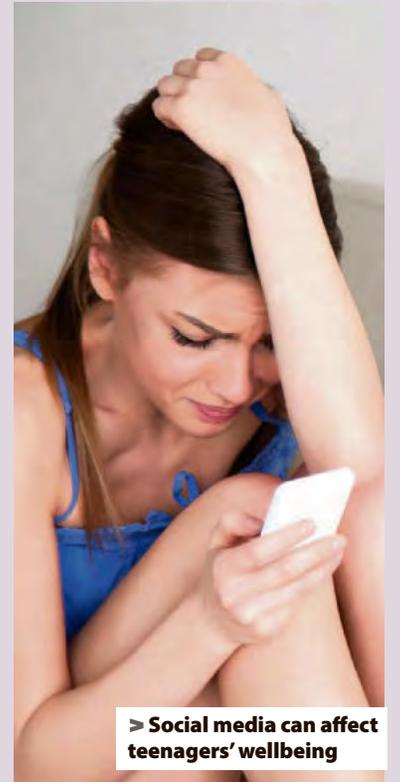
siasm in other areas of their life such as socialising offline and focusing more on their homework.

This feelgood factor will help cut their time on social media, form new healthier habits and make them realise how good they can feel through exercise. If you are one of these despairing parents and need help, let us know.

Trying new things to take your kids away from social media by giving them a chance to see there is more to life than their phone is tough, but as parents it's a work in progress.

Establishing boundaries for when they can use their phone is good. If you can discuss boundaries together and let them see you put your phone down at meal times or upstairs on an evening and totally stay away from it for a few hours, they are more likely to follow suit.

A combination of less time on social media, introducing exercise at a time which would keep them away from devices, therefore less snacking, could have a massively positive effect on your children's health and wellbeing.



> Social media can affect teenagers' wellbeing

FITNESS TIP

Hour after hour on social media doubles the risk of your child having mental health problems – exercise is proven to help these issues, therefore, take steps to get them moving. Of course, this isn't just the case for children and we are all in the same boat – do some exercise as a family. There are many families who train at our Beach Bootcamp classes on Tynemouth Longsands.