

# WHERE MENTORING AND YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH MEET

## Session 2 Recap: Social Media and Current Events

### SOCIAL MEDIA AND MENTAL HEALTH AMONG TEENS

Based on research, social media **experiences** may be more influential to youth mental health than the **amount** of social media use.

Protective factors from social media influence on youth suicide risk: social connectedness, peer support and social engagement



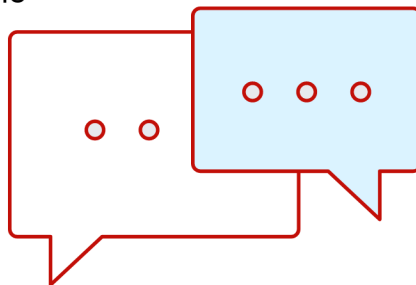
Cyberbullying: “willful and repeated harm inflicted through the use of computers, cell phones and other electronic devices.”

Unique elements of cyberbullying: 24/7 in nature; different aspects of anonymity; potential for a broader audience

Cyberbullying victimization increased during the pandemic: it's highest among younger adolescents (<15) and trans youth (35%).

LGBTQ youth report cyberbullying at nearly 3 times the rate of straight/cis-gender youth.

Black adolescents averaged over 5 racial discrimination experiences per day – more common online than in offline settings.



### RESPONDING TO CYBERBULLYING

#### Targeted by Cyberbullying:

If one-time incident or minor in nature, suggest blocking, ignoring, deleting.

If recurring and/or more severe, investigate what happened and document correspondence. Report to school, authorities, content provider or other appropriate parties.

#### Engaged in Cyberbullying:

Explore the context for why this could have happened and encourage empathy for the other person's situation.

Recognize potential for mental health vulnerabilities.

Make connections to appropriate resources as needed.

#### Witnessed Cyberbullying:

Don't just stand by. Doing nothing when others are being bullied passively encourages that behavior.

Resource for standing up to cyberbullying:  
<https://cyberbullying.org/standing-up-to-cyberbullying-tips-for-teens>

### FOSTERING SAFE & HEALTHY ONLINE SPACES



#### FOR ADULTS :

Give youth space to express themselves in different ways and the outlet to process their emotions.

Follow youth lead and take their agency as paramount – allow them to set the agenda for your discussions or time together.

Build an awareness of social media trends and uses; recognize both positive and negative aspects.

Monitor access, use, and impacts of social media, particularly through open conversation.

Consider the child's mental health vulnerability.

Mitigate exposure to potentially harmful content.

#### FOR TEENS:

Check your mood before going on social media.

Protect your private information when on public sites -- avoid using your name, posting photos etc.

Use the account and privacy settings within each device, app, or network to control who can contact and interact with you, and who can read your online content.

Prioritize friends who are supportive and unfriend/block/unfollow friends who can be toxic.

Develop a relationship with a parent/trusted adult to talk with about online experiences.