Nowadays, social media is one of the most popular forms of communication and information. Social networks have many advantages, but they also have disadvantages. Social networks, which have become literally our "behavioral architects", are full of propaganda about gambling, drugs, alcohol, tobacco and other things that can be harmful to health. As a teenager who opposes the use of drugs, alcohol, tobacco and other things that can be harmful to health, I want to raise the topic of the influence of social media on teenage behavior. My research report examines the influence of social media on teenagers and their encouragement to use illegal substances and interest in gambling. This report is done by using material from the article "Digital Media and Risks to Teens" written by Dan Romer and Megan Moreno.

Overall Impact.

Unfortunately, not all teens these days understand how harmful drugs and alcohol are, how they affect our psyche, and how they can further affect our health. This is what alcohol, tobacco and drug companies profit from. And paid streamers and bloggers show how much fun it is to spin the casino. According to Dan Romer and Megan Moreno, social platforms have a greater impact on teens than other segments of the population. Increased exposure makes us more susceptible to the beliefs of digital content, and often we see social media and bloggers promoting illegal substances and gambling. Consequently, most will take this as a green light and start using themselves and promoting it to the masses.

Alcohol.

Alcohol use among teenagers should be particularly alarming because of its further consequences. Early onset of alcohol use is a powerful predictor of substance use disorders, which may be associated with substance use in the future as an adult. Also, alcohol is dangerous not only for adolescents, but also for adults. Anyone who is under the influence of alcohol, for example, can get into an accident, crash himself, or run over a person. "Alcohol use by teens leads to a long line of injuries and accidents" (Dan Romer & Megan Moreno). Alcohol use is often romanticized and glamorized. Also with the help of alcohol some people drink their problems away and think that it is a way out and it is the only way they can relax. Some artists also romanticize drinking alcohol, and sing about how they forget themselves in alcohol. Consequently, most teenagers, when they hear their favorite artist singing about how alcohol helps them forget about their problems, will do the same. Teenagers, due to increased susceptibility, it is very easy to indoctrinate the information that will be favorable to those who indoctrinate it.

Tobacco use.

It's no secret that a lot of singers sing about cigarettes and smoking. And also, in social networks you can see misinformation that smoking supposedly relaxes. It's all self-indulgence. Cigarette smoke can look beautiful, there can be beautiful photos and videos. But, often such photos are posted by adults. But teenagers seeing, for example, how beautiful cigarette smoke looks from the mouth, will want to repeat the same beautiful photo, and start smoking. I noticed that among my peers, smoking is considered cool. And now, I'm going to distance myself a little bit from the sources, I'm going to tell you about what's going on at the moment. Electronic cigarettes with flavors are very popular now, they look bright, attractive and are sold with different flavors, fruits, berries, drinks, they, unlike cigarettes, have a pleasant smell. And due to the taste, and in general a certain "fashion" on smoking, teenagers start smoking. But, studies show that electronic cigarettes are much more harmful than regular cigarettes with tobacco. Because they contain nicotine, which is addictive, the glycerin in special flavored liquids that teenagers like so much settles on the lungs and clogs the airways. Due to the pleasant odor, parents may not even feel this smell, as they can confuse it with the smell of perfume, and it is not as sharp unpleasant as the smell of cigarettes. Every second video in TikTok is a video in which there is an electronic cigarette, yes, it may not smoke, but the fact that it is present and attracts attention. Nowadays, e-cigarettes are disguised as pens for writing, and are very actively advertised on social networks like TikTok.

Drug use.

I believe that drugs are the worst of the above. It's something that changes your life into a "before" and "after". Unfortunately, a lot of rappers, musicians sing about how cool it is to be high. How cool it is to deal drugs, and often rappers die from them. But, for some reason, people don't emphasize that. I guess there are so many addicts in the world that they don't care about the outcome. All adults who do it know the consequences. I think teenagers are also aware of the harms of using, but after listening to music that sings about how great it is to use, stories about how you literally go to another dimension after you try it, teenagers forget about the very harms that are really proven by millions of deaths, studies, and just living examples, and start trying drugs. Some may be able to quit. But most remain addicted. Because when you don't use, you go into withdrawal and your body, your organism goes through the most severe stress. There is nothing worse for the body than withdrawal from drugs. Naturally, people can't cope and start using again and again. And the cycle never ends. Drugs are a terrible thing. But, the propaganda of this filth, unfortunately, has a place.

Legalization of marijuana

In the U.S., the legalization of marijuana has led to an increase in its use among teenagers. Despite rules that restrict the sale of marijuana, social media platforms are very lucrative for selling marijuana, and easily circumvent the rules restricting sales. "An approving marijuana post on social media is now enough to get a teen's attention" (Dan Romer & Megan Moreno) There is a common misconception on social media that weed and marijuana are not drugs. Teenagers, because of their high susceptibility and gullibility, may take this as truth. Howewer, "narcologists and lawyers do not divide drugs into “light” and heavy, marijuana and other products derived from cannabis are psychoactive substances capable of altering consciousness." ([https://5gkp74.ru/post/tri-mifa-o-legkih-narkotikah](https://5gkp74.ru/post/tri-mifa-o-legkih-narkotikah%20) - Russian resource) "Most importantly “light” drugs do more than just push a person to try “stronger” drugs. They change the way the brain works so that a person can no longer enjoy pleasure without additional stimulation. And marijuana is a serious carcinogen that damages DNA and causes cancer, just like tobacco." ([https://5gkp74.ru/post/tri-mifa-o-legkih-narkotikah](https://5gkp74.ru/post/tri-mifa-o-legkih-narkotikah%20) - Russian resource)

Online gambling.

Gambling is another industry that is gaining popularity very rapidly thanks to social media. Popular streamers are advertising casinos. And all of us, in part, have an inherent sense of gambling. A teenager seeing his favorite streamer advertising casino and he is very funny, will start to do the same, because it is emotions and there is a chance to win more money. Studies show that teens who gamble online are at risk of developing pathological gambling habits. “Social media platforms often feature advertisements for online gambling sites, which may increase interest in gambling among adolescents.” (Dan Romer & Megan Moreno), the authors of the article, believe that much more research needs to be done on teen internet gambling to fully understand the impact on teens, and to develop interventions.

Intervention Methods

In my opinion, social marketing resources should be utilized differently. They should be used to identify and counter the advertising of all of the above. And we need to counter content that glorifies drinking or drug abuse by publicizing more of the consequences of these very actions. Parents need to be more attentive to their children and talk to them about their problems. It is necessary to explain to teenagers more globally, and more accessible about the harm of drugs, alcohol, gambling. I also note that we need to hold accountable those people, often celebrities, who promote the use of risky substances. Social networks should change their privacy settings and ethical principles, and fight against advertising and propaganda. It is better to promote, for example, good deeds and healthy lifestyles instead! Therefore, we need to make it fashion. And then children, instead of using, drinking, and playing in casinos online, will begin to lead a healthy lifestyle. And at the same time, we need to denigrate a lifestyle that promotes alcohol, drugs and gambling. Our world will be better. It is also important not to remain indifferent, and always help and listen to our loved ones. Give them proper support and then they are less likely to resort to such pseudo-solving of problems.

Conclusion

Since social media has a huge impact on us and our thinking. And these social networks are rife with propaganda about drugs, alcohol, smoking and online gambling. Teenagers, who are more vulnerable and susceptible, may read all sorts of misinformation about how drugs are cool and that once you take them you are literally in a different world where you feel good, how you can forget about all your problems while drinking alcohol, and how you can easily make a lot of money on casinos. There's plenty of that on the Internet. And social platforms have more influence on teenagers than other parts of society. A lot of popular singers, rappers sing about how alcohol helps them forget their problems. A teenager who is facing a difficult situation may listen to them and start drinking alcohol. Alcohol is a strong predictor of disorders that can lead to drug use in the future. There are a lot of online casino advertisements, a lot of e-cigarette advertisements in the form of pen for example, and a lot of misconceptions about how drugs are cool. A teenager who is facing problems, who only stays at home and only hangs out on the Internet, is more likely to be exposed to this propaganda. And due to their high exposure and trust, they are more likely to listen to the fact that using is cool, you can make a lot of money in the casino, and become a hostage of digital propaganda and in addition may become addicted to drugs and start losing money into the casino. We need to start using social media in a different way, to show how bad it is to use drugs, what the consequences are, how bad it is to drink alcohol, how bad it is to smoke and what risks await you if you develop addiction. It is necessary to promote a healthy lifestyle and good deeds! And our government needs to pay more attention to digital propaganda.

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Three myths about substances

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