

Social Media and Your Child on the Autism Spectrum Disorder

Andrew McGahan, LCSW/LICSW
Jamell White, Ph.D., LCSW-C
Clinical Directors, NoVA and Fallsgrove JSSA

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Tonight's Objectives

Tonight we will cover and provide insight on the following issues related to the Autism Spectrum population and the use of technology including:

- How technology impacts your child's social-emotional development.
- How to protect against dangers of the internet, social media, cyber bullying, and video gaming.
- How to safeguard your child's online persona and experience.



Erik Erikson's Developmental Stages

- Trust vs. Mistrust (birth-18 mos)
- Autonomy vs. Shame (18 mos- 3yrs)
- Initiative vs. Guilt (3-5)
- Industry vs. Inferiority (6-12)
- Identity vs. Role Confusion (12-18)
- Intimacy and Solidarity vs. Isolation (18-35)
- Generativity vs. Stagnation (35 to 55 or 65)
- Integrity vs. Despair (55 or 65-death)



Erik Erikson's Developmental Stages

Stage	Basic Conflict	Important Events
Infancy (Birth to 18 months)	Trust vs. Mistrust	Feeding
Early Childhood (2 to 3 years)	Autonomy vs. Shame and Doubt	Toilet Training
Preschool (3 to 5 years)	Initiative vs. Guilt	Exploration
School Age (6 to 11 years)	Industry vs. Inferiority	School
Adolescence (12 to 18 years)	Identity vs. Role Confusion	Social Relationships
Young Adulthood (19 to 40 years)	Intimacy vs. Isolation	Relationships
Middle Adulthood (40 to 65 years)	Generativity vs. Stagnation	Work and Parenthood
Maturity (65 to death)	Ego Integrity vs. Despair	Reflection on Life

Developmental Stages and ASD

Developmental Stage		Child with ASD
Industry vs. Inferiority (6-12)	Peer relationships during this stage play an important role in allowing the child to practice social skills.	Adolescents with ASD have difficulty forming social relationships with peers. This is a critical period in social skill development. - Difficulty finding their social group
Identity vs. Role Confusion (12-18)		
Intimacy and Solidarity vs. Isolation (18-35)	Time of forming romantic relationships. Success leads to strong relationships, while failure results in loneliness and isolation.	Young adults who haven't gained the social skills from previous stages struggle in finding romantic partners.

Types of Social Media

- Social Networks (i.e., Facebook)
- Blogs
- Microblogs (i.e., Twitter)
- Discussion forums
- Chat Rooms
- Media Sharing (i.e. YouTube)
- Social email
- Game Station online gaming
- Online Gaming sites

The World of Social Media

- Instagram  **Instagram** Photo and video sharing website
- FaceBook  Personal sharing website- photos, postings, events, instant messaging, etc...
- Twitter  Conversation website. Allows you to "follow" friends, celebrities, or others of interest
- Tumblr  A micro-blogging platform and social networking website



The World of Social Media

- Google Plus and Google Play   **Google play**
Plus: Similar to Facebook
Play: Online Gaming site
- YouTube  Video viewing and sharing website
- Online Gaming sites (both computer based and game station based):
Steam (computer based), XBOX Live, Play Station Network, MMO (massive multi-player- World of Warcraft, computer based)



The World of Social Media

- Pinterest  **Pinterest** Pinterest is a visual discovery tool that people use to collect ideas for their different projects and interests. People create and share collections (called "boards") of visual bookmarks (called "Pins") that they use to do things like plan trips and projects, organize events or save articles and recipes. (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pinterest>)
- Vine (app)  Vine is a mobile app owned by Twitter that enable its users to create and post short looping video clips. Video clips created with vine have a maximum clip length of seven seconds and can be shared to the Vine social network or the social networks (like Facebook or Twitter. (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vine_video)



The World of Social Media

-  **Kik** An app used with smart phones, as well as iTouch, which allows for instant messaging and text messaging
- www.ask.fm Ask.fm is a Latvia-based social networking website where users can ask other users questions with the option of anonymity. This site has been involved in several cases in which cyber-bullying on it had led to suicide. This site is known to have unreliable reporting processes and parent control processes.
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ask_fm



The World of Social Media “Anonymous” Apps

- There are “apps” being used that allow you or you child to remain anonymous while posting comments and such (unlike Facebook or Twitter where as you have a “handle” or identity). The primary concern in relation to the use of such apps is the posting of mean, inappropriate, hurtful, intrusive, etc... posts, to which the one who “posts” holds no responsibility due to the fact that they cannot be identified.



The World of Social Media “Anonymous” Apps

- **Yik Yak** app: Yik Yak is an anonymous social media app. It is available for iOS and Android and it allows people to anonymously create and view posts within a 1.5 mile radius (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yik_Yak) 
- **Whisper**: Whisper is a proprietary, gratis iOS and Android mobile app which purports to allow users to send messages anonymously, and to receive replies. [1][2]Users post messages which are displayed as text superimposed over an image, similar to greeting cards. ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Whisper_\(app\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Whisper_(app))) 
- **Secret**: Secret is an iOS and Android app that allows people to share messages anonymously within their circle of friends, friends of friends, and publicly. It differs from other anonymous sharing apps such as PostSecret, Whisper, and Yik Yak in that it is intended for sharing primarily with friends, potentially making it more interesting and addictive for people reading the updates. 



The World of Social Media “Anonymous” Apps

➤ Here is a “snippet” of an email sent by a FCPS principal in relation to the app “Yik Yak”

□ Dear Parents:

Due to the number of calls we received after the email I sent out earlier this afternoon, I wanted to give more specifics about a social media APP that has been causing some strife among our students the past few days. There is an APP called Yik Yak that is available for students to download on their smart phones. This APP allows users to post anonymously and users in a certain geographical area can see the post. Because the posts are anonymous, some students have been posting inappropriate, vile, and mean-spirited things about some of our students, staff, and administrators. When a post is made, and other users “like” the post, it remains open for others to read. In order for the post to delete, it must receive five “dislikes”.

As you can imagine, the victims of these negative posts have been negatively impacted and are having a hard time focusing on learning. Yesterday, I spoke to the student body on our morning news show. I asked them to delete the APP and take away the power the APP is giving those who are choosing to post negative comments about other students....



Who’s Using Social Media? (Common Sense Media)

<p>Girls</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 77% text daily ➤ 33% have tweeted ➤ 75% post photos 	<p>Boys</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 60% text daily ➤ 22% have tweeted ➤ 42% post photos
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From the Teen Perspective:

Study/Survey Poll by Common Sense Media, 2012 (13-17 years old)

- 90% of US teens have used social media and believe it’s a positive vs. negative influence
- Say they’re addicted to their devices
- Prefer talking in person vs. texting
- 68% text everyday
- 51% use social networking sites
- 11% use Twitter
- 75% have a profile on a social networking site (68% Facebook; 6% Twitter)



Social Media Use by Middle School Students

A survey conducted the week of March 11th was created to get a "snap shot" of the student body use of social media and technology. The following is a summary of the information gathered:

- Middle School Students (6th through 8th grade): 150 Respondents
 - ❑ 42% report the use of a smartphone to text
 - ❑ 33% use a texting app on the ITouch, iPad, or other device
 - ❑ 23% have a Facebook account
 - ❑ 25% have a Twitter account
 - ❑ 61% are on Instagram
 - ❑ 30% are on Google Plus
 - ❑ When asked about playing video games online, 31% reported they will play with "anyone who wants to", not just people/friends they know in "real life".



Social Media Use by Elementary School Students

- Elementary School Students (Grades 3rd through 5th): 69 Respondents:
 - ❑ 89% responded that they like to go "online"
 - ❑ 50% responded they are texting using a cell phone or a texting app
 - ❑ 12% noted they are using Facebook
 - ❑ 7% noted they use Twitter
 - ❑ 23% report using Instagram
 - ❑ 5 students reported the uploading of videos to YouTube
 - ❑ When asked about online video game play, 22% reported that they would play with "anyone who wants to", not just friends they know in "real life".



What's Attractive about Social Media?

- Developmental need for social interaction
- Sense of belonging
- Reduces social anxiety
- Reduces social inhibition
- Establishes an identity



How and Why Teens and Young Adults Use Social Media

- Their profiles are where they create themselves (and can do so based on how they want others to perceive them)
- “Friend” people because it’s socially rude not to (and in some instances a “competition”)
- Posting “comments” are a way to be part of the group, staying informed, and being considered “socially active”
- Social pressure and expectations to use social media- this has become the primary mode for communication for the adolescent and young adult populations.



The Social Reasons for Social Media

- **Facebook:**
 - ❑ Online, you have hundreds of “friends”
- **Chat rooms:**
 - ❑ Ability to have an exchange of ideas with others
 - ❑ Ability to socialize with a group of people
- **Internet dating sites**
 - ❑ Opportunity to practice identifying attractive traits
 - ❑ Opportunity to practice initiating communications
 - ✓ Small talk
 - ✓ Sharing of interests
 - ✓ Inquiring about others’ interests and demonstrating interest
 - ❑ How teens use Facebook/MySpace mimics how they interact in their offline relationships





and your ASD Child or Young Adult

- YouTube can be a very beneficial website for your ASD child and/or young adult:
 - ❑ Pursuit of interest(s)
 - ❑ Can be socially interactive
 - ❑ Can find new areas of interest, new hobbies, new outlets
 - ❑ Videos on social skills, or the use of videos to explain and/or expand one’ s social skills acquisition
- BUT, it can also be a dangerous website as well:
 - ❑ “Over pursuit” of interests- perseveration on preferred topics of interest
 - ❑ Inappropriate videos available for viewing
 - ✓ Topics
 - ✓ Violent images and videos
 - ✓ Nudity



Positives of Social Media

- Opportunity to practice social communications in a more comfortable medium
- Ability to find others with common interests
- Ability to share experiences and feelings with others without having to get "too close"
- Ability to focus on the content of the exchange without the distractions of confusing nonverbal communication
- Ability to think about your responses vs. having to give an immediate response
 - ❑ Provides a time lag in reciprocity
- Ease of communication
 - ❑ Good for those who don't like using the phone or face-to-face interactions



Dangers of Social Media

- Children may misunderstand the reality of their online "friendships"
- Adults may perceive their surface communications on dating sites as more serious than they are
- Teens and adults are vulnerable to predators
- Without monitoring, teens/adults may access inappropriate or adult websites
- Without monitoring, teen/adult may engage in inappropriate communications
- Teen/adult may develop a skewed perception of friendships/romantic relationships
- Anonymity of bullying
- Becoming addicted to social media (constantly checking)



Definition of Bullying

- *Intentional, Repeated* hurtful acts or other behavior, such as name-calling, threatening and/or shunning communicated by one or more children against another.
- These negative acts are not intentionally provoked by the victims and for such acts to be defined as bullying, an *Imbalance of Power* must exist between the bully and the victim. (US Dept. of Ed)



Different Forms of Cyberbullying

- **"Outing"** – Sharing someone's secrets or embarrassing information/images online.
- **"Trickery"** – Tricking someone into revealing secrets or embarrassing information, then sharing it online.
- **"Flaming"** – Online fights using electronic messages with angry and vulgar language.
- **"Slut Shaming"** – Posting of sexual explicit pictures (usually of young women) in an attempt to publically shame them for their actions. Most often the target is UNAWARE that they have been filmed or photographed.
- **"Impersonation"** – Pretending to be someone else and sending or posting material to get that person in trouble or danger or damage that person's reputation or friendships.



Different Forms of Cyberbullying Cont'd.

- **"Harassment"** – Repeatedly sending nasty, mean, and insulting messages.
- **"Denigration"** – "Dissing" someone online. Sending or posting gossip or rumors about a person to damage his or her reputation or friendships.
- **"Exclusion"** – Intentionally and cruelly excluding someone from an online group.
- **"Cyberstalking"** – Repeated, intense harassment and denigration that includes threats or creates significant fear.



Warning Signs

- Seems nervous or jumpy when emails, texts or IMs come in
- Seems angry, depressed, anxious after using the computer
- Seems nervous about engaging in social activities or going to school
- Stops using the computer unexpectedly
- See signs of emotional stress
- Avoid discussions about their online behavior
- Knowing your child's "normal" behavior and identifying things that seem out of the ordinary.



Managing the Dilemmas of Video Game Play

- Some of the most popular games today are those of the FPS genre which contain very realistic and violent images. The "Call of Duty" series is one of the most popular of these types of games. As the level of violence in games increases, the debate has been sparked:
"Can aggressive/violent" behavior be attributed to violent content in video games?"
- The addictive nature of video games
- The benefits and dangers of video game play
- Tips for managing your child's gaming



Violent Video Game Content

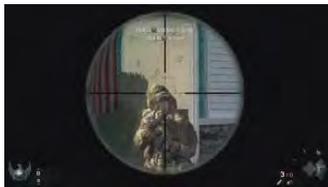
- In 2002 researchers (Anderson and Bushman) developed the General Aggression Model (GAM) in an attempt to study/measure the effect of violent video games on its players. This model does take some of the "pressure" off the video game and the content and attributes that the player's personality is most directly responsible to how one is affected by and interprets the violent content:
 - ❑ Thought process
 - ❑ Feelings
 - ❑ Physiological Responses (heart rate, breathing)
- Basically, one's individual psychological make-up plays a distinct role one's reaction to violence and violent images- some people are predisposed to respond more violently/aggressively to violent video games

<http://www.video-game-addiction.org/>



Violent Video Game Image

- 1st Person Shooter Screen Shot (Call of Duty: Modern Warfare)



Video Game's Effect on the Brain

- As is all aspects of our lives, our brains are in charge of managing our internal and manipulating the external environments.
- Video games, like any other activity, has a direct effect on our brain function, both before, during, and after exposure.
- Studies are being conducted to gain a better understanding of how video games affect our brain function, not only related to both short term and long term, but also while involved in the actual activity.



**Video Game's Effect on the Brain
A Research Study- Continued**

- **Study's Findings:**
 - ❑ The region of the brain called "ventral striatum" had more grey matter in those children identified as "frequent gamers" than the "infrequent gamers". The theory is that the playing of video games frequently lead to a growth of this region of the brain.
 - ❑ The ventral striatum is most often associated with "everything that brings pleasure" (food, money, sex). If you show a smoker a cigarette the ventral striatum becomes activated.
 - ❑ Dopamine (a feel good neurotransmitter) is very active in this section of the brain. (A study in 2005 at Hammersmith Hospital in London found that Dopamine levels in players' brains **DOUBLED** during game play, suggesting a physiological addiction. What happens if the brain has then become DEPEDANT on the game play to regulate Dopamine levels? That is a chemical addiction.)

<http://www.cbc.ca/news/health/story/2011/11/17/video-games-brain-pleasure.html>



**Video Game's Effect on the Brain
Video Game Addiction**

- **"Addiction":** the state of being enslaved to a habit or practice or to something that is psychologically or physically habit-forming, as narcotics, to such an extent that its cessation causes severe trauma. www.dictionary.com
- **Video Game Addiction:**
 - ❑ Most non-school hours are spent on the computer or playing video games
 - ❑ Falling asleep in school due to late hours of video game play (disruption of daily functioning)
 - ❑ Lying about use
 - ❑ Irritability when not playing
 - ❑ Avoidance of other activities that used to be considered important or pleasurable
 - ❑ Choosing video games over friends
 - ❑ Neglecting hygiene
 - ❑ Neglecting personal responsibilities
 - ❑ Overly defensive about use
 - ❑ Obsession or preoccupation about games or the playing of games



Video Game's Effect on the Brain
The "Addictive" Qualities of Video Games

- Video games are created/ designed to have an "addictive" feel to them.
- They incorporate enough difficulty to be challenging, while allowing players to achieve "rewards" and accomplishments to compel them to keep playing.
- Very similar to the design of gambling casino's and games (slots)
- There are "hooks" built in to games that entice players to continue game play with intent of making them "addictive"
- Promote the creation of the "feel good" neurotransmitters (Dopamine and Serotonin)



Video Game's Effect on the Brain
The "Addictive" Qualities of Video Games

- **The "HOOKS":**
 - ❑ High Scores
 - ❑ "Beating the Game"- completing the "campaign" part of the game (many games have multiple modes including online aspects, "story mode (campaign), special features, downloadable content)
 - ❑ Bonus Materials- new weapons, abilities
 - ❑ Role Play- creation of characters and emotional attachment to the character
 - ❑ Relationships Established Online- often interpreted by players as having made new "friends" (will be discussed more)
 - ❑ "Never Ending"- some games literally don't end. MMO's and some RPG's are of this type. There is always more content to discover and enjoy
 - ❑ "Bragging Rights"
 - ❑ Feelings of Success



The "Benefits" vs. the "Dangers" of Video Game Play

<p>Benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Fun and enjoyable ➤ Learning opportunities ➤ Social opportunities (including the ability to play with others, conversational topics, having something in common with others) ➤ Family fun time ➤ Confidence builder 	<p>Dangers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Addiction ➤ Exposure to Mature material ➤ Online Social Concerns (Who are they meeting/interacting with? How to manage the social relationships founded through online arenas and play? Language used online) ➤ Desensitization to violence(?) ➤ Physical consequences) ➤ Skewed sense of reality (?) ➤ Interruption of daily tasks (chores, homework) ➤ Disruption of school performance ➤ Can create conflict (between parents and child)
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Physical Risks of the Over-Use of Video Games

- Migraines
- Sleep Disturbance
- Seizures
- Backaches
- Obesity (due to lack of exercise)
- Eating irregularities
- Hygiene deficiencies
- Carpal Tunnel Syndrome



The Social Implications for Video Game Play

- Our society has become a “screen-obsessed” community.
- Video Games, most particularly for boys (but girls love them too), have become a primary (if not THE primary) mode for interaction with friends.
- Video games are a central aspect to our society’s pop-culture
- There are at three areas of social implications to keep in mind when considering the video game impact on your child:
 - ❑ Isolation Factor- the games have become a distraction/barrier to your child playing with other children (refusing to go outside, will only play video games with other children, child claims not to want friends because all he/she needs is the game)
 - ❑ The meeting of, managing of, and understanding of the relationships formed through online game arenas (XBOX Live, PlayStation Network, Club Penguin, Cartoon Network)- This can be considerably confusing for the ASD/ADHD child (i.e. someone played with online is a “best friend”), wanting to meet someone met online, who are the REALLY playing with?
 - ❑ How do the video games influence the child’s real-life social experiences (reality perspectives)



**Managing Your Child’s Video Game Play
Tips & Strategies**

- **Be Familiar with the games that are being played**
 - ❑ Play them yourself
- **Set limits/establish rules**
 - ❑ Set time limits
 - ❑ Balance outdoor play, reading, exercise or other activities with screen time
 - ❑ Use timers as reminders for shut down
 - ❑ Give “prompts” for shut down- “you have 15 minutes left, 10 minutes, etc...
- **Understanding the “Save Point” Quandary**
 - ❑ In many games you need to reach a “save point” in order to save your progress. Forcing a child off a game BEFORE they can save WILL lead to conflict
- **Role Model screen use**
- **Have realistic expectations**



Basic Tips for Managing Online Behaviors:

- Everything is recorded and shared
- Be smart about what you post (the "Grandparent Rule")
- Clean up your profile
- You have no control over your photos once you send them
- What you post **IS** permanent and/or replicated
- Something posted intended for one person can spiral out of control
- Invisible audiences—people are reading your posts even though you don't know
- Hard to separate public from private



Tips To Help Manage Online Behaviors and Internet Safety

- **Parents become integrally involved with your child's online activities**
- Check out the sites your kids are using (Facebook, MySpace, Instagram, Twitter, You Tube etc.) ***If they have an account, you should too!*** Set conditions that your child friend you with unrestricted access. Constantly monitor the content of what is being posted and if you think it is inappropriate remove that information.
 - ❑ Ask what sites their friends are using as well!
- **Continue talking about the risks and benefits of online friendships**
 - ❑ NEVER publicly post in any online forum personally identifiable information (name, address, school, phone number, where you are going this afternoon, and any links that could provide this information.
 - ❑ Encourage your children to only post information that they would feel comfortable or proud for their parents, grandparents and/or principal seeing.
 - ❑ The "value" of friendships with people they may have never met, support networks, communicating with people sharing similar interests.
 - ❑ Help your child understand the DIFFERENCES of online vs. in-person friendships.



Tips To Help Manage Online Behaviors and Internet Safety

- Read the privacy policies for the sites carefully
- Make agreements about what is acceptable, unacceptable and **the expectation is if there is trouble online that information is shared with an adult.**
 - ❑ Talk specifically about Cyberbullying. Make sure your kids know that you will not take away electronics for coming to you with a problem they are having.
- Ask who their friends are and how they know them!
- Continue to remind kids to only communicate with people they know or have a connection to through someone they know. As harmless as it may seem, online conversations with strangers can lead to danger.
- Establish that **all rules for interacting with people in real life also apply for interacting online or through cell phones.** Convey that Cyberbullying inflicts harm and causes pain in the real world as well as in cyberspace.



Tips To Help Manage Online Behaviors and Internet Safety

- Impress upon your children the LONG LASTING (in some sense- *EVERLASTING*) aspects of the internet. Once posted, it will ALWAYS be there and can ALWAYS be found.
- Have the discussion in relation to the fact that how they represent themselves online will have a lasting effect- colleges, future employers, future boy/girl friends, etc... will have means of viewing their online history and profiles.
- **KNOW ALL OF YOUR CHILD'S PASSWORDS FOR EVERYTHING:** Make this a condition of their use of electronics. The use of the technology is a PRIVILEGE not a right and children need to be aware of this. As parents you have the right to manage and restrict as you see fit (based on trust, maturity, and performance). For young adults, this becomes more difficult- they are "technically adults", but often do not the maturity to manage full online independence. (I suggest the "Driver's License Threshold" as a guide: when they are trusted enough to operate a two ton vehicle then they can be trusted enough to NOT to request passwords anymore).
- Limit screen time



How to set Parental Controls

- Create a standard user account for your children (vs. an administrative account—otherwise, they could bypass your restrictions)
- Each account should have a password
- Parental Controls can allow you to limit the amount of hours each child can use the computer

Read more :
http://www.ehow.com/how_5249054_set-up-parental-controls-computer.html

Good screen shots for setting parental controls:
<http://mobile.pcadvisor.co.uk/features/security/3411255/how-keep-your-kids-safe-online/?pn=3>



Q & A

Do you know who this is?



Master Chief from HALO



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