MHA
Mental Health America

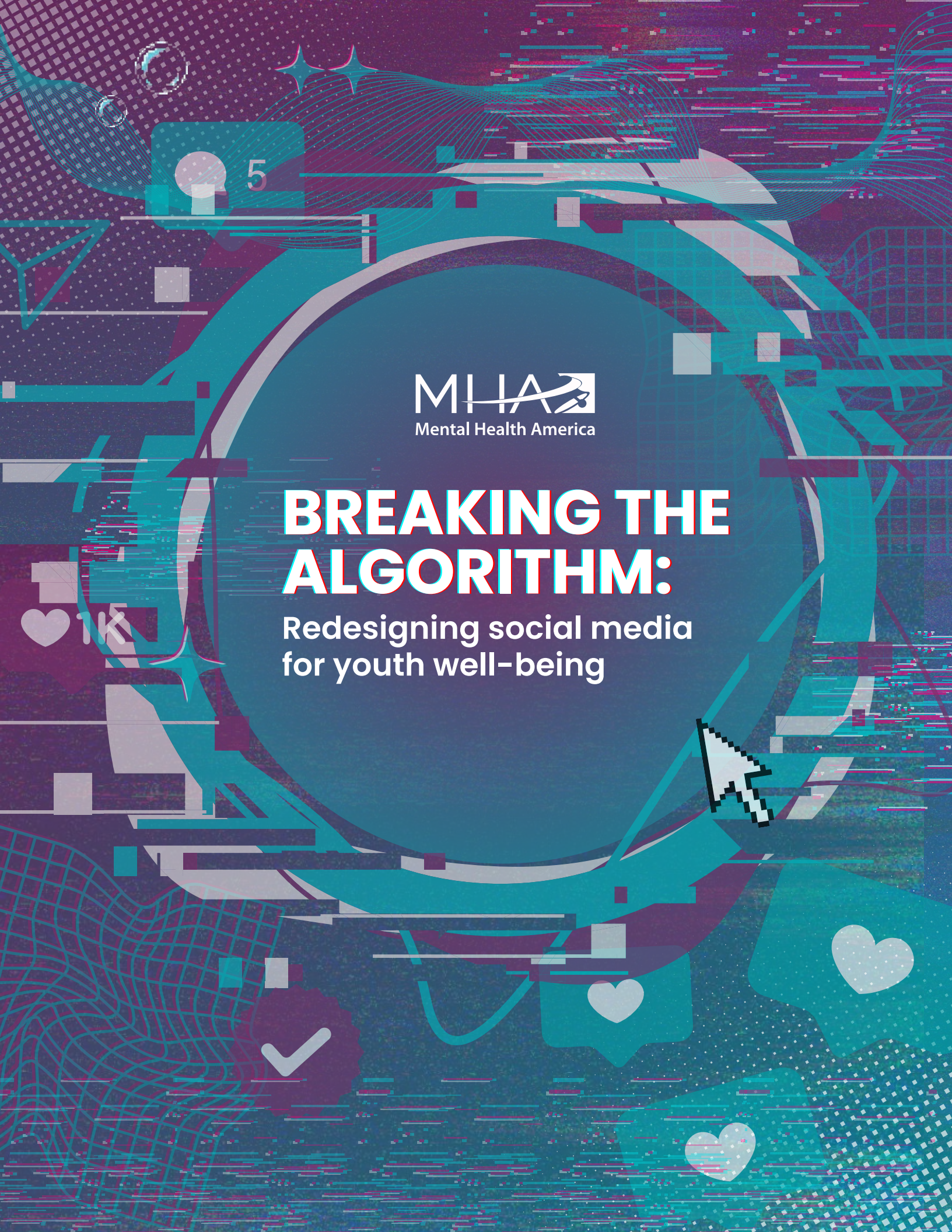# BREAKING THE ALGORITHM:
Redesigning social media for youth well-being

Executive Summary 💡

Social media is a central force in young people's lives, yet its role is complex and deeply individualized. The fragmented, algorithm-driven nature of platforms and the diversity of user experiences defy one-size-fits-all explanations, making it difficult to label social media as purely "good" or "bad" for youth mental health. Untangling the impact of social media is like studying a storm that touches everyone but feels completely different depending on where you stand.

Despite efforts to create a simple narrative about social media's impact on youth mental health, the challenge lies in unraveling a system where everyone is immersed, but no two experiences are ever the same. Further, conversations and solutions are often shaped without the input of those most impacted by social media-- young people themselves.

The Breaking the Algorithm (BtA) project was designed to chart a course for healthier online spaces for youth, by youth. Led by young leaders from across the country, we've convened and heard from young people, tech experts, policymakers, advocates, and researchers to uncover what's missing, what's possible, and what young people want to positively shape the digital landscape. Between June 2023 and December 2024, we hosted a national summit of social media leaders, conducted focus groups with young people, and administered a national survey on youth social media experiences.

The conclusions of this report were interpreted through the lens of our project team of youth leaders from across the U.S. It outlines findings and recommendations to make social media more mental health-friendly for young people.

Key Findings 🔍

Algorithm and Design Features

- Young people generally feel like they can control content; however, they have knowledge gaps about features that could help.

- Problematic content, including misinformation, is prevalent and reinforced by algorithms.

- Youth participants understand that social media is designed to keep them scrolling, yet feel they have limited control in actually logging off.

Online and Offline Peer Interactions

- Social media is necessary to maintain connection, especially for first- and second-generation immigrants and youth from marginalized communities.

- Offline connections can feel hindered and less authentic due to social media.

- Young people want support balancing the positives and negatives of social media.

Digital Wellbeing and Education

- There is a significant gap in digital well-being education, and youth recognize the importance of this knowledge.

- The future of digital wellness provides agency, balance, and understanding of the challenges presented by platforms to enhance real-world productivity.

- Youth need to be educated sooner and receive a more holistic education on digital wellness.

Recommendations📝

ALGORITHM AND DESIGN FEATURES

Well-being-focused algorithms: Develop algorithms that actively promote user well-being by nudging users to take breaks based on their engagement patterns, such as time spent or types of content consumed. Introduce proactive prompts that help users understand and adjust their social media habits, encouraging healthier usage.

Beyond basic screen-time reminders: Incorporate features beyond passive reminders by prompting meaningful self-reflection. These could include periodic questions that challenge cognition, ground users in their physical space, or more assertively disrupt mindless scrolling.

Algorithmic transparency for user empowerment: Demystify algorithmic processes to empower users. Explain why certain content appears and how user actions influence their feeds. Platforms should also offer mechanisms for users to ask questions or provide feedback on their experiences with the algorithm, fostering a more reciprocal and informed relationship.

Design for user agency: Re-evaluate features like infinite scroll and autoplay that encourage endless, passive consumption. Instead of imposing restrictions, allow users to opt out of these designs, allowing them to make active choices about how they engage with content.

Elevate protective features: Ensure that protective features (such as content filters, keyword blocking, and daily usage reminders) are prominently displayed and easily accessible, rather than buried in settings menus. Regularly promote these tools, especially after patterns of concerning engagement behaviors, and educate users on their potential benefits.

ONLINE AND OFFLINE PEER INTERACTIONS

Distraction-free connection mode: Introduce a "physical connection mode" that limits notifications and reduces distractions, enabling users to engage more fully in in-person interactions without feeling tethered to their devices.

Robust and customizable anti-harassment tools: Provide users with advanced, flexible tools to detect and address harassment and cyberbullying. Empower users to tailor these settings to their needs, ensuring that protections are effective across diverse experiences.

Incentivize positive engagement over time spent: Shift platform priorities from maximizing time spent online to promoting meaningful and positive interactions. Platforms could reward healthy behaviors, such as respectful dialogue or constructive content sharing, to foster a more supportive digital environment.

Transparency for research and education on offline impacts: Support independent research into how social media can enhance connections and well-being, focusing on features that balance online and real-world engagement. Increase access for researchers, policymakers, and advocates to promote informed public understanding.

## DIGITAL WELL-BEING AND EDUCATION

Digital wellness education that adapts: Expand school curricula to include managing screen time, recognizing algorithmic impacts, building resilience against misinformation, and developing self-regulation skills – moving beyond traditional topics like cyberbullying.

Support schools with resources: Provide schools with the funding and tools necessary to implement effective digital wellness programs. This includes resources like up-to-date lesson plans, training for educators, and access to technology that supports interactive learning.

Practice education, not punishment: Empower students to practice self-control through education rather than punitive measures. Teach why boundaries are important and how to self-regulate tech use.

Model healthy tech habits: Encourage educators and parents to lead by example, balancing technology use with offline activities and modeling mindful, intentional behaviors.

Collaboration across support networks: Foster partnerships among educators, parents, healthcare providers, and platforms. Encourage platforms to provide toolkits or explainers alongside new features, helping schools and families stay ahead of evolving social media trends.
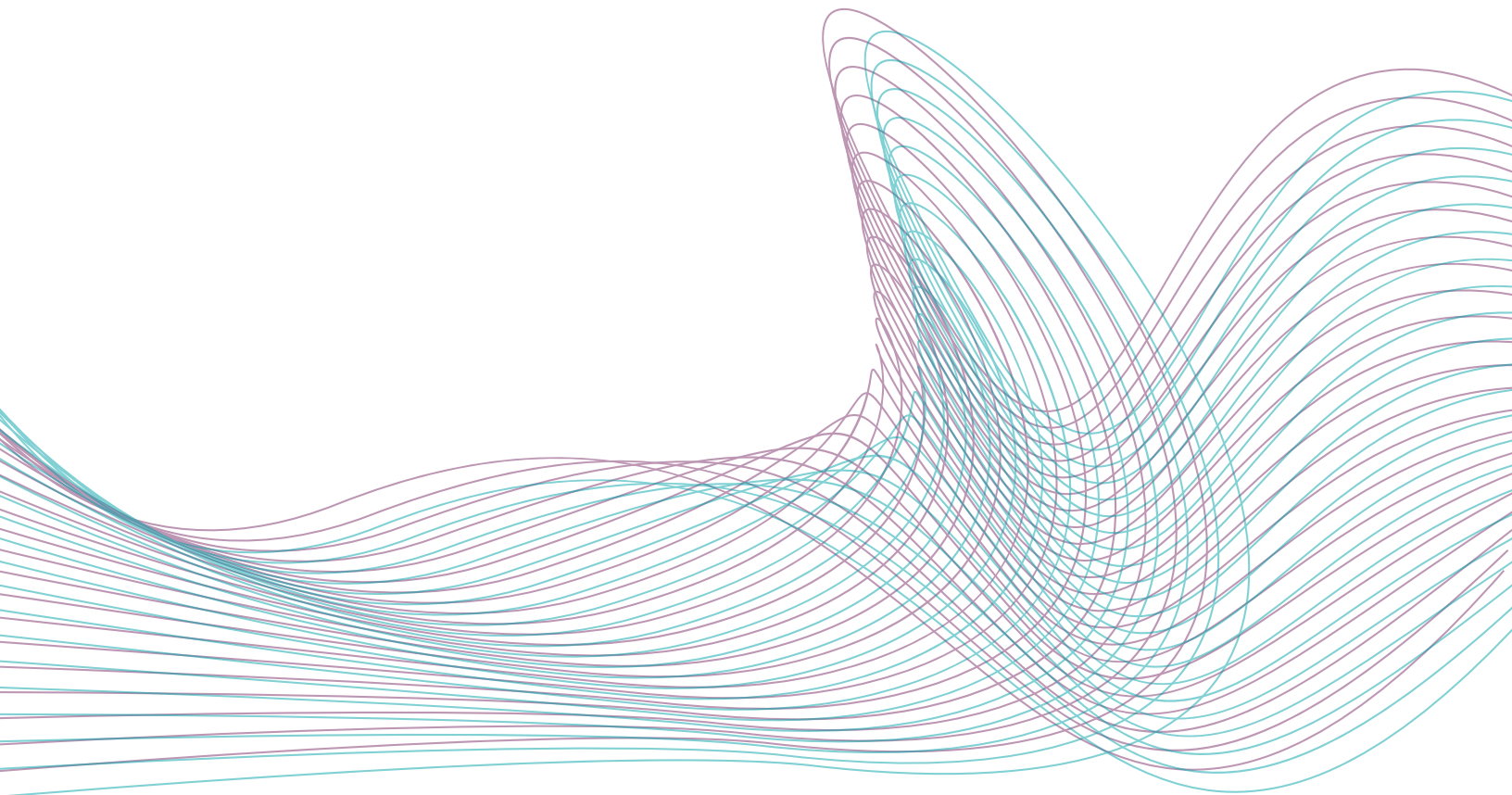
Acknowledgements🙌

This project would not be possible without the contributions of the MHA youth leadership team as well as all contributors to the Breaking the Algorithm Summit, focus group discussions, and survey. We would like to extend our gratitude to all of those who were involved at each stage of the process.

About Mental Health America

Founded in 1909, Mental Health America (MHA) is the nation's leading national nonprofit dedicated to the promotion of mental health, well-being, and illness prevention. Our work is informed, designed, and led by the lived experience of those most affected. MHA's mission is to advance the mental health and well-being of all people living in the U.S. through public education, research, advocacy and public policy, and direct service.

Table of Contents 📌

Background 🌍

Why is it so hard to study the impact of social media?

Social media is a central force in young people's lives, yet its role is complex and deeply individualized. The fragmented, algorithm-driven nature of platforms and the diversity of user experiences defy one-size-fits-all explanations, making it difficult to label social media as purely "good" or "bad" for youth mental health.

The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine's 2024 Consensus Study Report[1] highlights the challenges of understanding this relationship. Social media may shape mental health outcomes, but those outcomes can also influence how young people use these platforms, creating a feedback loop that obscures causality. Adding to the complexity, while platforms are ubiquitous, individual behaviors and experiences are anything but uniform.

In short, untangling the impact of social media is like studying a storm that touches everyone but feels completely different depending on where you stand. **The challenge lies in unraveling a system where everyone is immersed, but no two experiences are ever the same.**

So what *are* people saying about social media's impacts?

Increasingly, researchers and experts are recognizing this nuance. Stark black-and-white narratives are largely absent from serious discussions today, including certain policy conversations. Existing studies on youth perspectives further reflect this complexity:

Young people offer diverse and often ambivalent views on their social media use. For instance, while 72% of teens report feeling peaceful without their phones, 44% also reported feeling anxious in the same situation. Similarly, 38% of teens believe they spend too much time on their smartphones, yet most feel their social media use is "about right." Yet, roughly four in 10 teens (39%) say they have cut back on their time on social media.[2]

However, acknowledging nuance doesn't absolve us of addressing the potential harms of social media. Emerging evidence suggests that its impacts are not evenly distributed, with marginalized groups – such as girls, youth of color, LGBTQ+ youth, and those with preexisting mental health challenges – facing distinct vulnerabilities.[3] When intersecting with broader systemic inequalities, social media provides vital spaces for peer connection and identity affirmation, but it also exposes them to eightened risks of harassment.[4]

Popularly hypothesized effects of social media include social comparison, time displacement, erosion of attention and concentration, decreased sleep and physical activity, and increased depressive and anxious symptoms. These areas require more targeted research, youth-centered solutions, and adaptive approaches. Moreover, they demand that we also listen closely to the lived experiences of young people themselves.
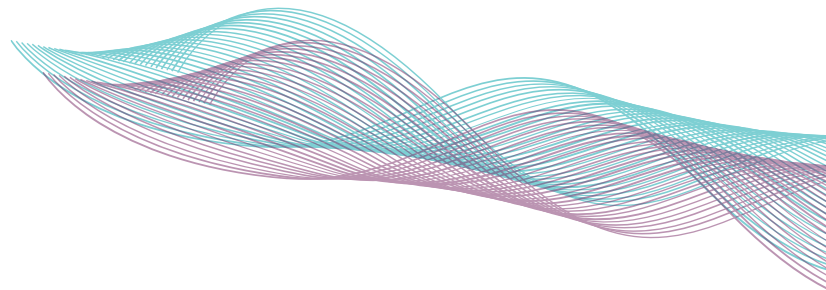
About Breaking the Algorithm 🚀

Process

This project combined quantitative and qualitative methods to explore young people's experiences with social media. Insights were drawn from a hybrid social media summit, survey, focus groups, and existing literature.

Social media summit

The summit was held both remotely and in person on May 7, 2024. The event brought together over 75 youth leaders, researchers, and stakeholders to discuss the challenges of social media. These conversations shaped the development of our research tools, including the survey and focus group questions.

Survey

The survey, conducted in August 2024, received 1,497 responses from individuals aged 13–25, and was promoted via Instagram and MHA's partner network. Responses that (1) were incomplete or (2) came from outside of the United States were excluded. In total, 919 responses were used in our analysis. The survey explored social media use, platform features, peer relationships, and education.

Focus groups

We held three focus groups in September 2024 with 15 participants aged 14-19, including youth leaders from organizations like the American Academy of Pediatrics Center of Excellence on Social Media and Youth Mental Health, #HalfTheStory, the PA Youth Advocacy Network, and the Creative Visions Mental Health Youth Advisory Committee.

Discussions centered on education, algorithms, and peer relationships, providing deeper insights into how young people navigate social media.

Analysis

The five youth members of the MHA leadership team conducted multiple rounds of analysis and refinement. They identified key themes across the summit, survey, focus groups, and existing literature, informed by their lived experience expertise. This process allowed us to share a glimpse into youth perspectives in an area where young people are often left out of the conversation.

Algorithms and design features

Algorithms are at the core of social media, invisibly shaping what users see, how they interact, and how long they stay. In general, these systems are believed to determine content based on user behavior – what they like, share, or linger on – but the exact mechanisms remain opaque. Platforms have little incentive to openly share the processes that shape user experiences. On the contrary, there are strong financial motivations to keep these systems proprietary, as their effectiveness in capturing user attention directly drives advertising revenue and market competitiveness. Still, algorithm and design features are far from neutral tools, and our findings suggest that young people are actively navigating and questioning their interactions with these systems

1. Young people generally feel like they can control content; however, they have knowledge gaps about features that could help.

Young people are increasingly aware that algorithms influence their online experiences. In our survey, 87.7% of participants agree that they are "aware of the 'algorithms' social media platforms use to curate [their] feed." In focus groups, many recognized these systems as profit-driven, designed to maximize engagement. Participants also noted growing awareness of tactics like ragebait, clickbait, and user-generated content designed to "farm" likes and shares.

While 59.4% of youth surveyed "feel like [they] have control over the content they see on [their] feed," few understand the full extent of algorithmic processes or the tools available to manage their experiences. Features like content

preferences, blocking accounts, or keyword filters are inconsistently utilized. For instance, 57.90% of participants have heard of "blocking accounts" as a feature, whereas 89.10% of participants have actually used it. Additionally, 57% of participants have heard of "setting content/keyword filters" as a feature, whereas 13.82% of participants have actually used it.

Our findings suggest that there is a knowledge gap among young people when it comes to existing features for user control and safety. It's notable that even when platforms offer these features – and when those few users take advantage of them – their effectiveness remains uncertain and inconsistent. Users are frequently left unsure whether their actions genuinely shape their experiences or how specific outcomes are determined. As one focus group participant explained:

"The social media algorithm is more complex than most often think, it is harder to control because some apps measure more than just likes, like how long you spent viewing the video."

This lack of clarity perpetuates a sense of helplessness as youth attempt to navigate systems that remain intentionally obscure. Participants discussed trying to filter out content by blocking certain content creators and hashtags, to varying levels of success. One participant described using the "not interested" button to filter harmful content, but noted uncertainty about whether this had any meaningful impact. Such experiences highlight the disconnect between theoretical control and the practical inability to escape algorithmic forces.

2. Problematic content, including misinformation, is prevalent and reinforced by algorithms.

Beyond a lack of control, participants mentioned that algorithms often amplify content that is harmful to their mental health and well-being. Designed to prioritize engagement, algorithms are motivated to push emotionally charged, polarizing, or sensational material that captures attention – regardless of its accuracy or impact.[5] Participants in our focus groups frequently cited the pervasive nature of misinformation and extreme content:

"There is a large culture of misinformation regarding nutrition on social media that has done much to impact my own eating habits and relationship with food."

This is just one example of the ways social media algorithms can expose users to unhealthy content or push them toward extreme and harmful pathways. Another focus group participant recalled being served content with negative narratives about mental health during an already emotionally turbulent period of their life. This unbalanced content distribution risks distorting users' perceptions and compounding their existing struggles and insecurities.

Adding to the challenge, algorithms' mechanisms remain inscrutable. Youth noted that platforms rarely provide clarity on why specific content appears, nor do they design systems to prioritize truthfulness or help disrupt harmful patterns. As some participants observed:

"They radicalize opinions by giving users videos with ideas they already like, so they're only exposed to their own viewpoint."

"Since the algorithm mostly feeds you what you want to see, that can make it really easy to see things one-sided or in an exaggerated way (e.g., political parties or bad news)."

This lack of clarity perpetuates a sense of helplessness as youth attempt to navigate systems that remain intentionally obscure. Participants discussed trying to filter out content by blocking certain content creators and hashtags, to varying levels of success. One participant described using the "not interested" button to filter harmful content, but noted uncertainty about whether this had any meaningful impact. Such experiences highlight the disconnect between theoretical control and the practical inability to escape algorithmic forces.

3. Youth participants understood that social media is designed to keep them scrolling, yet felt they have limited control in actually logging off.

While most youth surveyed felt they had control over the content they see, fewer felt in control of their screen time. It's important to recognize that algorithms influence not only what users view but also how long they stay on platforms, driving behaviors that make it difficult to disengage.

Features like infinite scroll, short-form content, and autoplay are deliberately designed to maximize time spent online. Young people demonstrated significant self-awareness about these tactics, with 86.9% of participants reporting that they are "aware of features…that are designed to keep them on the platform longer." However, this awareness doesn't translate into fully balanced or empowered

bparticipation. Only 41.4% of participants felt they had control over how much time they spent on social media.

Some participants emphasized that screen time alone isn't the best measure of social media's impact, distinguishing between positive and negative experiences. Positive screen time might include meaningful social connection, learning something new, or discovering a hobby or skill. Negative screen time, on the other hand, was often described as the mindless consumption of "empty" — or even harmful — content.

Focus group participants shared how platform features often trap them in a cycle of "doomscrolling" that's hard to escape. Many described losing track of time while scrolling through short-form content, only to realize hours had passed and day had turned to night. As one participant put it, these features "make going online addicting and harder to log off."

This disconnect between awareness and action extends to protective features as well. For instance, 76.90% of participants have heard of "[s]etting in-app daily usage reminders" as a feature, whereas only 47.40% have actually used them.

Ultimately, this tension reflects a broader issue: knowledge of manipulative design does not inherently empower users to resist it. In today's attention-driven economy, young people are commodified as products for ad revenue. At our summit, cross-sector attendees discussed how the profit-driven nature of these platforms often stands in direct opposition to the well-being of their users, particularly as it relates to balanced screen time.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Well-being-focused algorithms: Develop algorithms that actively promote user well-being by nudging users to take breaks based on their engagement patterns, such as time spent or types of content consumed. Introduce proactive prompts that help users understand and adjust their social media habits, encouraging healthier usage.

Beyond basic screen-time reminders: Incorporate features beyond passive reminders by prompting meaningful self-reflection. These could include periodic questions that challenge cognition, ground users in their physical space, or more assertively disrupt mindless scrolling.

Algorithmic transparency for user empowerment: Demystify algorithmic processes to empower users. Explain why certain content appears and how user actions influence their feeds. Platforms should also offer mechanisms for users to ask questions or provide feedback on their experiences with the algorithm, fostering a more reciprocal and informed relationship.

Design for user agency: Re-evaluate features like infinite scroll and autoplay that encourage endless, passive consumption. Instead of imposing restrictions, allow users to opt out of these designs, allowing them to make active choices about how they engage with content.

Elevate protective features: Ensure that protective features (such as content filters, keyword blocking, and daily usage reminders) are prominently displayed and easily accessible, rather than buried in settings menus. Regularly promote these tools, especially after patterns of concerning engagement behaviors, and educate users on their potential benefits.

Online/offline peer interactions👭

Social media serves as a vital bridge to maintain connections, particularly for youth and marginalized communities. However, its pervasive nature can also harm offline relationships by reducing the authenticity and intentionality of in-person interactions. Young people recognize these complexities and seek balance rather than an outright rejection of these platforms.

1. Social media is necessary to maintain connection, especially for first- and second-generation immigrants and youth from marginalized communities.

For many young people, social media is not just a platform for entertainment but a lifeline for maintaining relationships. This is particularly evident for first- and second-generation immigrants and those with families abroad. In focus groups, participants highlighted that social media strengthens existing connections with distant relatives and friends. Participants noted:

"Social media has definitely done a lot to strengthen my relationships, especially with long-distance relationships with my family in other countries."

"I moved from California in 2023, so I use social media to keep in touch with friends and reply to each other's stories and posts. All my relatives besides my parents and brother are living in China as well, so I can really only talk to them through social media."

At the same time, social media offers opportunities to forge new connections, especially for those seeking communities that might not be available in person. Survey data reinforces this sentiment, with 52.8% of respondents indicating that online communities and friendships play a critical role in their social support network, and 48% reporting that these connections affirm their identities. These virtual ties often fill the gaps left by geographical distances and allow youth to feel a sense of belonging, regardless of location. As one participant noted:

"Some of my best friends in the whole world I met online and come from all over the world."

However, the very populations that rely on social media for connection are often the most vulnerable to its harms. Summit discussions identified how social media is frequently an amplifier of what we experience online and offline – including identity-based forms of harassment and discrimination.

Despite these drawbacks, social media's influence on offline relationships isn't entirely negative. Many focus group participants shared how their real-life conversations and interests were shaped by what they encountered online, from specific content and trends to broader cultural conversations. Participants described frequently sharing posts with friends and discussing what appeared on their feeds. In this way, social media doesn't just reflect their offline worlds; it actively influences them in ways that can be both beneficial and harmful.

2. Offline connections can feel hindered and less authentic due to social media.

While social media facilitates connection, it can also hinder the depth and quality of offline interactions. Many participants in focus groups acknowledged that social media sometimes leads to less meaningful face-to-face relationships. One participant explained:

"Social media has impacted my relationships by facilitating constant connectivity, but it has also led to less meaningful interactions. While online relationships can feel more immediate, offline connections sometimes suffer as conversations become more superficial and distracted by digital interruptions."

Digital interruptions, superficial conversations, and distractions often prevent youth from engaging deeply with people in real life. At the same time, the hyperconnectivity of social media can also create a distinct kind of anxiety or hyperawareness. Participants described struggling with feelings of comparison and jealousy, often fueled by social media metrics like likes and engagement. As one participant put it:

"I don't always need to know what's going on in other people's lives."

Survey data underscores these challenges, with 46% of respondents reporting direct exposure to online harassment, which sometimes spills over into offline relationships. Social media can also heighten anxiety and serve as a reason to avoid real-world interactions. Participants described these effects:

"It gives [youth] an excuse to avoid exploring new things and interacting with real people."

"It's too easy to start harassment campaigns against people. I was a victim of one and I'm still scared of certain organizations and people."

3. Young people want support balancing the positives and negatives of social media.

Participants acknowledged the dual nature of social media, and their understanding is that it is neither entirely good nor bad. This aligns with existing research surveying young people and digital technologies.[6] As one participant put it:

"It's like 50% good, 50% bad. Social media allows me to stay connected to so many people, but it can also lead to issues in real life."

Survey results show that over 50% of respondents feel their online interactions have neither positively nor negatively impacted their offline relationships. Focus group participants expressed a desire for balance in their social media use, emphasizing that it should feel *"fulfilling rather than draining"* and improve the quality of their relationships, both online and offline. They also highlighted the diverse ways social media impacts young people. As one participant reminded us, *"teens are not a monolith,"* and social media impacts everyone differently.

Ultimately, the young people we spoke to want tools and education that empower them to navigate the dual nature of social media on their own terms. They emphasized the importance of agency in making informed decisions, rather than imposing outright bans or restrictions.
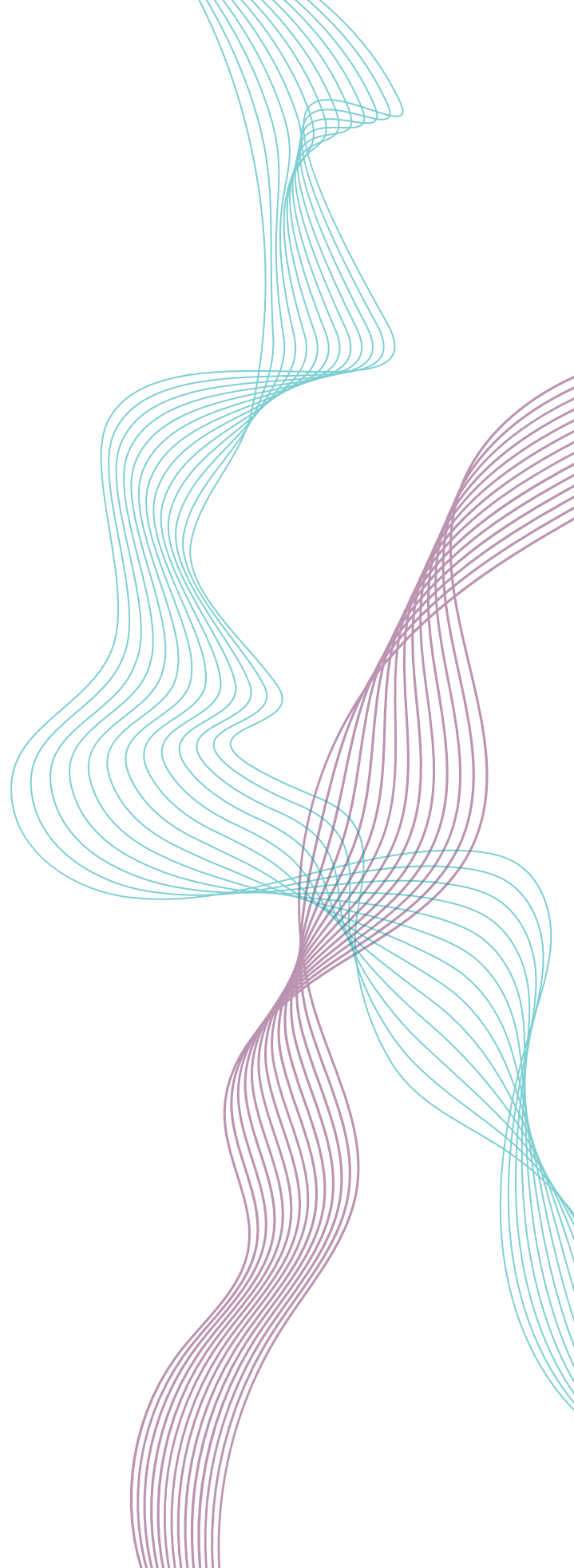
RECOMMENDATIONS 👯

Distraction-free connection mode: Introduce a "physical connection mode" that limits notifications and reduces distractions, enabling users to engage more fully in in-person interactions without feeling tethered to their devices.

Robust and customizable anti-harassment tools: Provide users with advanced, flexible tools to detect and address harassment and cyberbullying. Empower users to tailor these settings to their needs, ensuring that protections are effective across diverse experiences.

Incentivize positive engagement over time spent: Shift platform priorities from maximizing time spent online to promoting meaningful and positive interactions. Platforms could reward healthy behaviors, such as respectful dialogue or constructive content sharing, to foster a more supportive digital environment.

Transparency for research and education on offline impacts: Support independent research into how social media can enhance connections and well-being, focusing on features that balance online and real-world engagement. Increase access for researchers, policymakers, and advocates to promote informed public understanding.

Digital well-being and education 🧠

In the era of digital dependency, there is a growing recognition of the need for comprehensive digital well-being education. Youth understand the importance of being equipped with the knowledge and skills to navigate the challenges presented by social media platforms and the potential for these platforms to enhance real-world productivity. However, current education systems and platforms often fail to provide this guidance, leaving significant gaps in understanding and practice

1. There is a significant gap in digital well-being education, and youth recognize the importance of this knowledge.

Survey data reveals a strong consensus among youth about the importance of digital well-being education. A staggering 94.5% of respondents believe it is essential to teach young people about digital well-being, while 88.7% agree that schools should incorporate this education into their curricula. However, most schools narrowly focus on topics like cyberbullying rather than offering a holistic understanding of digital media and its uses. As one participant shared:

"In high school, I was taught about avoiding cyberbullying, but never learned about how to keep yourself from getting addicted to the internet or how to ensure you don't spend too much time online."

Furthermore, social media platforms themselves often fall short in providing adequate guidance. Over 57% of survey respondents believe platforms fail to offer tools for controlling screen time, curating content, or managing interactions. This lack of transparency and education leaves youth vulnerable to the negative impacts of social media use, including addiction, misinformation, and exposure to harmful content.

2. The future of digital wellness provides agency, balance, and understanding of the challenges presented with platforms to enhance real-world productivity.

The future of digital wellness lies in fostering agency, balance, and a deeper understanding of the digital landscape. Focus group participants emphasized the importance of learning to identify false information, achieving a healthy balance between online and offline activities, and avoiding over-reliance on social media as a coping mechanism. One participant reflected:

"Having a healthy balance between consuming content and offline activities is essential for maintaining productivity and well-being."

Summit discussions also highlighted the need for transparency in data collection, user identity, and algorithms. Participants called for platforms to empower users with more control over their digital experiences, ensuring that content and interactions align with their values and priorities. Nearly 90% of survey respondents agreed that platforms should provide clear and accessible information about digital well-being, reinforcing the importance of user education and control.

3. Youth need to be educated sooner and receive a more holistic education on digital wellness.

To bridge the gap in digital well-being education, schools and communities must adopt a more holistic approach. This includes starting education earlier—ideally in middle school, when most youth begin using social media—and expanding beyond cyberbullying to cover topics like screen time management, content curation, and online safety. One participant suggested:

"Schools barely touch on digital wellness. They should focus on teaching proper usage of social media instead of just warning about its dangers."

Educators and parents also play a critical role in modeling healthy digital behaviors. Providing greater funding for digital literacy programs, developing tools for managing digital exposure, and encouraging balanced usage can create a generation of informed and empowered social media users. By emphasizing agency, balance, and holistic understanding, digital wellness education can enhance both online and offline experiences, paving the way for more productive and meaningful engagement with the digital world.

RECOMMENDATIONS 🧠

Digital wellness education that adapts: Expand school curricula to include managing screen time, recognizing algorithmic impacts, building resilience against misinformation, and developing self-regulation skills – moving beyond traditional topics like cyberbullying.

Support schools with resources: Provide schools with the funding and tools necessary to implement effective digital wellness programs. This includes resources like up-to-date lesson plans, training for educators, and access to technology that supports interactive learning.

Practice education, not punishment: Empower students to practice self-control through education rather than punitive measures. Teach why boundaries are important and how to self-regulate tech use.

Model healthy tech habits: Encourage educators and parents to lead by example, balancing technology use with offline activities and fostering mindful, intentional behaviors.

Conclusion ✦

This report does not attempt to provide a definitive understanding of how all young people use social media – that would be impossible given the diversity of experiences and the ever-changing nature of these platforms. Instead, our goal has been to dig deeply into the perspectives of the young people we engaged, elevating their voices both as participants and as co-researchers. Our findings reveal the nuanced relationships and recommendations participants have with these platforms.

As the digital landscape continues to evolve – whether that is through policy, platform changes, or the growth of artificial intelligence – it will be more important than ever to partner with young people to explore how technology is shaping their lives. **Including youth in research is essential, but their voices must also guide the decisionmaking processes in all of the spaces that impact their online, and offline, lives.** By prioritizing transparency, equity, and collaboration with young people, we can create a future where young people not only navigate social media but shape its evolution in ways that prioritize their well-being and agency.
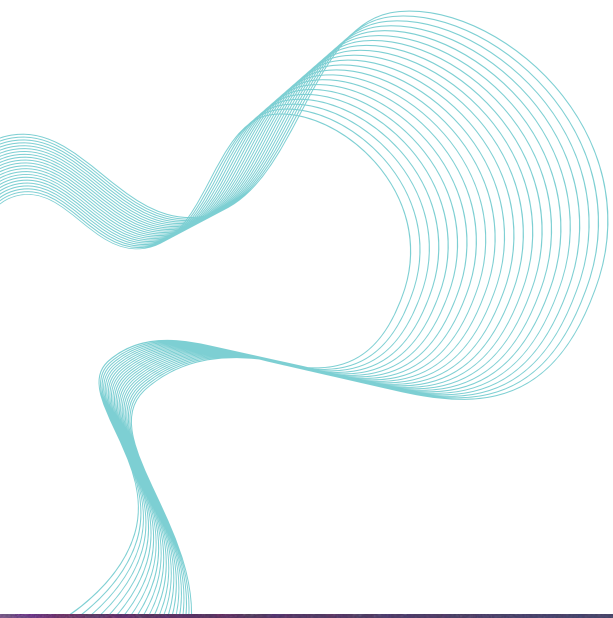
Additional Resources

Office of the Surgeon General Advisory on Youth Social Media and Mental Health

---

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration Kids Online Health and Safety Task Force

---

American Academy of Pediatrics Center of Excellence on Social Media and Youth Mental Health

---

#HalfTheStory Social Media U

Digital Wellness Lab Designing a Roadmap for a Healthier Digital Ecosystem

---

Child Mind Institute Managing Social Media Stress With Mindfulness

---

#GoodForMEdia Parent Guide and Social Comparison Guide

Creative Visions #CreateConnectCare Youth Advisory Committee

Children and Screens Institute of Digital Media and Child Development

---

The Hamilton Lab at Rutgers University - New Brunswick

References 📚

1. National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. 2024. Social Media and Adolescent Health. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. https://doi.org/10.17226/27396.

2. Anderson, M., Faverio, M., & Park, E. (2024, March 11). Screen time: US teens' and parents' experiences, approaches. Pew Research Center. Retrieved from https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/2024/03/11/how-teens-and-parents-approach-screen-time/

3. Nesi, J., Mann, S., & Robb, M. B. (2023). *Teens and Mental Health: How Girls Really Feel About Social Media*. Common Sense Media. https://www.commonsensemedia.org/sites/default/files/research/report/how-girls-really-feel-about-social-media-researchreport_web_final_2.pdf

4. Madden, M., Calvin, A., Hasse, A., Lenhart, A. (2024) A Double-Edged Sword: How Diverse Communities of Young People Think About the Multifaceted Relationship Between Social Media and Mental Health. Common Sense Media, Hopelab. https://assets.hopelab.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/2024-double-edged-sword-hopelab-report_final-release-for-web-v2.pdf

5. Brady, W. J., Jackson, J. C., Lindström, B., & Crockett, M. J. (2023). Algorithm-mediated social learning in online social networks. Trends in Cognitive Sciences, 27(10), 947–960. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tics.2023.06.008

6. Madden, M., Calvin, A., Hasse, A., Lenhart, A. (2024) A Double-Edged Sword: How Diverse Communities of Young People Think About the Multifaceted Relationship Between Social Media and Mental Health. Common Sense Media, Hopelab. https://assets.hopelab.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/2024-double-edged-sword-hopelab-report_final-release-for-web-v2.pdf