



Connect with Kids

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## For the Classroom: Digital Citizenship Video Shortcut: Technical Difficulties

### VIDEO OVERVIEW

Test scores. Competitive team sports. And even technology, where photos on Facebook and posts on Twitter report on who is doing what with whom... and who's been left out. Is technology actually fueling today's teen anxiety? Is this real life or just really stressful for today's teens?

"It's real but it's not real life. And that's what people don't understand. The pictures are real, the messages are real, but it's not real life," says Ellen.

"It's just this little page that can change an entire perception of your relationship with other people," says Alex H.

"If you go on Facebook and see a picture of four of your closest friends in this place that you have no idea where they were, what they were doing, you naturally think, 'Where was I? Did they invite me? Like, what's going on?'" Alex S.

"There's not one minute where you're not, where you're not trying to measure up to something else, and how can you not be depressed if you're so miserable with yourself and anxious be someone else?" adds Ellen.

While today's technology provides incredible information access and connections, experts believe it may also be a source of stress and anxiety for teens. In fact, teen depression and anxiety are at an all-time high, according to a study from San Diego State University.

"About 2 or 3 times as many college students now score very, very high on depression compared to students say in the 1950s," says Jean Twenge, Ph.D., of San Diego State University and one of the authors of the study.

Researchers say today's social networks, reality TV and other media may fuel kids' beliefs that being rich and famous makes you happy.

"People are presenting the best images of themselves [online]. When they're kids it's going to be partying, it's going to be stuff that's cool – and you're going to think, 'I'm not doing that... everybody else is doing that but me.' And that's going to make you feel left out, it's going to make you feel socially ostracized, and that leads to depression and dejection," says W. Keith Campbell, Ph.D. and chairman of the Psychology Department at the University of Georgia.

It's time to talk about media literacy, manipulation and ethical behavior – on and off line.

### DISCUSSION AND SELF-REFLECTION QUESTIONS

In the video, one of the teens says Facebook is "not real life." What does that mean to you? Do you agree or disagree?

In what ways do media fuel depression and anxiety? How can we control that?