

Future Trends Report**Based on Analysis of the Team's Chosen Community / Organisation in Mid-Term and Final Evaluation****Community / Organisation Studied: Teenagers (13-18)****STEP 1. Identify Challenges**

Read the Future Scene carefully and generate ideas for challenges, concerns, and possible related problems. Choose the 5 most important challenges and write them in the space provided. Include applicable research with appropriate in-text citations.

Challenge #1:

Teenagers are easily influenced by what they see online. Teenagers and children are also more gullible and are swayed and influenced easily when they see misleading content online. This can be seen in a study on teenagers and social media, where teenagers are seen to be highly influenced by the number of likes the photo had to like it, instead of liking it on their own accord (Wolpert, 2016). This links to prompt 1, in a sense that teenagers may be manipulated by selective content they view online. According to another study by Pew Research Centre (2018), social media habits and experiences may cause them to lose their individuality. The report stated that 43% of them feel that they feel pressured to only post content that would make them look good. Another worrying 26% noted that social media makes them feel worse about their lives. These statistics imply that teenagers feel that they are unable to show their true selves and rather must only show things that make them look good, which may suppress individuality among teens. This links to prompt 2 which talks about the issue of how social media causes FOMO. Due to teenagers wanting to fit in and not wanting to lose out on something they see online, they may end up simply just following the trends that they see online.

Challenge #2:

Teenagers have the social desire to do what other friends are doing, causing them to lose their sense of individuality. In addition to the always lingering shadow of peer pressure and the fear of being judged for being different, the desire to fit in is also self induced because we believe that fitting in will make us happier. Our society is supposed to differ by encouraging self expression and diversity. If there's always that underlying pressure to be up to date on the newest trends in something as simple as shoes in order to fit in, then people will change until they're seen acceptable enough to be considered "in." (Tao, 2020) The need to fit in has become so great that people feel inclined to suppress their own opinions, even when it comes to a group of friends. This point links to Prompt 3, where people agree with their friend's opinions even though they do not agree personally. This causes them to lose their sense of individuality.

Challenge #3:

Teenagers are also more prone to depression when using social media, contradictory to most people's opinions. Most people only post their enjoyable times on social media, so friends only see the beautiful side of his life, not the bad parts. His friends may feel that they are not enjoying their lives as much as that person, thus leading them to feel dissatisfied with their lives, causing them to fall into depression. Two studies conducted by the US National Institute of Health involving more than 700 students showed that depressive symptoms, such as low mood and feelings of worthlessness and hopelessness, were linked to the quality of online interactions. Researchers found higher levels of depressive symptoms among those who reported having more negative interactions. Another study by In two nationally representative surveys of U.S. adolescents in grades 8 through 12, suicide deaths for those ages 13 to 18, adolescents' depressive symptoms, suicide-related outcomes, and suicide rates increased between 2010 and 2015. Adolescents who spent more time on new media including social media and electronic devices such as smartphones were more likely to report mental health issues, and adolescents who spent more time on non-screen activities were less likely.

Challenge #4:

Because teenagers are easily influenced, some people using social media, or even the social media platforms themselves, can use the teenagers' naivety against them. One such way is to spread fake news and propaganda through the teenagers. Some people who have bad intentions can post news that are not real onto these platforms, and if naive teenagers see it, they might spread misinformation. This could not just cause problems for the teenagers, but even cause wide-scale panic or problems in the society. According to Common Sense Media's report, News and America's Kids (Michael B. Robb, 2017): How Young People Perceive and Are Impacted by the News, less than half of kids agree that they know how to tell fake news stories from real ones.

Challenge #5:

Teenagers may also be easily influenced by strangers they meet online. Teenagers may get in touch with anonymous strangers online, who may be online predators. These strangers may ask teenagers for their personal information and personal particulars, which teenagers may willingly give them, as a result of their naivety. This can result in identity theft, and can also endanger the safety of the teenagers as their particulars can be used and accessed by them . Online predators may also harass these teenagers, or groom them, which may affect their mental health, and affect their ability to focus in school, or even scar them emotionally. Statistics gathered by the FBI have identified more than 50 percent of victims of online sexual exploitation are aged 12- 15, and a study conducted by Crimes Against Children Research Center showed that 77% of targets for online predators were aged 14 and older.

STEP 2. Craft the Underlying Problem

Using the challenges listed in Step 1, identify a problem of major importance to the chosen community / organization in the future. Write your Underlying Problem making sure your question clearly explains the action that will be taken and the desired results/goal of that action.

Incorporating Challenge(s) # 1 and 4

Underlying Problem:

Given that teens may be heavily influenced by social media and could potentially be manipulated by the internet, how might we lighten the heavy influence imposed on teenagers by the internet, and help these teenagers have more free will and control over their lives, by 2030 and beyond?

Why we phrased our Underlying Problem in this way:

We specified that teenagers' relatively young ages causes them to be vulnerable to many different risks in this technologically advanced age. However, in the end we decided that the most severe and important problem that we had identified are the numerous impacts the internet and social media will potentially have on teenagers.

The lack of ability in many teenagers to differentiate real and fake news as well as how easily swayed they can be by what they see online, can impose a heavy influence on them, which is the root cause of this problem we have identified and chosen in our Underlying Problem.

STEP 3. Produce Solution Ideas

Generate solution ideas to the Underlying Problem in Step 2. Choose the 5 most effective solutions and write the elaborated ideas in the space provided. Include applicable research with appropriate in-text citations.

Solution #1: Improvement of social media platforms

Nowadays, there are numerous social media companies which have imposed age restrictions on their social media applications and websites. When you are signing up for an account, the date you fill in for your birth date will be used to calculate your age. If your age is below this limit, you will be prevented from doing so. However, many teenagers ignore this and fake their ages. We suggest that we should allow teens of whatever age to have an social media account, but with the condition that they link it to their parents' so that they can be checked on whenever necessary. Cyberbullying also is prevalent on social media so we suggest implementing a code to not just filter out insults and racial slurs but also preventing the message from being delivered altogether. This can help to protect teenagers from cyberbullying, in addition it is not costly, can increase authenticity of the ages submitted in the sign up, help parents get a greater hold over their children's activity and lastly is quite feasible. On the other hand, the code may be slightly difficult to develop, cyberbullies may try to use other ways to insult their victims and teenagers may continue to fake their ages because they do not wish for their parents too check on them.

Solution #2: Courses on media literacy

We suggest implementing "creative" activities which will focus on critical thinking and creativity. These activities are not meant to be stressful and as such will entail few tests and little to no homework. Aside from that, the option of it being graded may be included if a student achieves a certain score. However, it should be noted that students who take this subject for the long term would have to complete a graded assignment or at least some form of assessment. Such courses would be introduced to people from a young age. While young, people are much more proactive and a large majority of such activities will be held online to provide further convenience. These courses will make it more enjoyable to learn and will be more successful than the usual methods as they are more stress free. Furthermore, teenagers will learn to differentiate and analyse the media they encounter thereon. On the flip side, the solution may take some time to implement and it is hard to guarantee that people might sign up.

Solution #3: Promotion of better lifestyle choices with a multi-pronged approach

The first approach is the promotion of sports events on social media (eg. steps challenges). We can also make Sports Day a holiday with a half day for the celebration to occur properly and to get greater participation. More malls and recreational areas are to be built to encourage teenagers to enjoy their time outside the comfort of their homes and their phones. This does not deprive them of their ability to decide on things by themselves, and helps them to not just socialise with people face-to-face and also to exercise. However, this solution is extremely high cost and due to limited space in Singapore is also not very feasible. This solution might also take a very long time to be implemented.

Solution #4: Banning of social media

This solution suggests that teenagers are banned entirely from social media, and can no longer access these social media platforms. The benefits of this solution is that teenagers will no longer experience the harmful effects of social media on their lives, and will no longer encounter fake news or spread misinformation and will also solve all our previously stated problems, from depression to FOMO. However, even though this solution helps to solve all the problems there are, it does restrict the freedom and free will of the teenagers, as they are not allowed to access these social media platforms, no matter how much they want to. Social media also has its own benefits, such as helping teenagers keep up to date on current affairs, as well as communicate and socialise with others, and by banning social media, we are denying teenagers of all these benefits, which may affect their wellbeing and social life.

Solution #5: Allowing for more face-to-face interactions with others

This solution is meant to reduce the amount of time teenagers spend on social media by increasing the amount of face-to-face interaction. This can be achieved by holding more events in school. For example, classes can bond with each other and through class parties, and other fun games and activities. Schools can also hold more inter-class events, such as friendly sports or arts competitions, which will all increase the face-to-face interaction between teenagers, not only within their class, but with schoolmates as well. Activities and events can also be held outside school, such as fun classes at the community centre that teenagers can take part in. These can include sports lessons, arts and crafts, as well as lessons on other skills, like cooking and programming. These can not only help reduce the amount of time spent online, but can also help teenagers learn new skills.

STEP 4a. Select Criteria

Generate criteria to determine which solution idea does the best job of solving your Underlying Problem and/or addressing the Future Scene situation. Select the 5 most important criteria for measuring solution ideas and write them in the spaces provided.

Criterion #1:

How relevant to our Underlying Problem is our presented solution?

Criterion #2:

Is our presented solution feasible to conduct?

Criterion #3:

How much will our presented solution cost in terms of money?

Criterion #4:

Is our presented solution ethical?

Criterion #5:

How quickly will it take to implement our presented solution?

STEP 4b. Apply Criteria

List the solution ideas from Step 3 on the grid. Use each criterion to rank the solutions on a scale from 1 (poorest) to 5 (best). The weighting for one important criterion may be doubled if necessary.

Step 3 Sol'n #	Solution Idea	Criteria					Total
		1 (x2)	2 (x3)	3	4	5	
#1	Improvement of social media platforms	5	3	2	3	4	28
#2	Courses on media literacy	5	4	3	4	3	32
#3	Multi-pronged approach	4	2	1	5	2	22
#4	Banning of social media	4	1	2	1	3	17
#5	Allowing more social interactions with classmates	3	1	5	2	5	21

STEP 5. Develop an Action Plan and Evaluate its Feasibility

Develop your top-scoring solution idea into an Action Plan. Thoroughly explain how the Underlying Problem is solved, how the plan will be implemented, and how the community / organisation will be affected. Explain how this

Action Plan is feasible with secondary research consulted, preferably also with primary research (feedback from chosen community / organization)

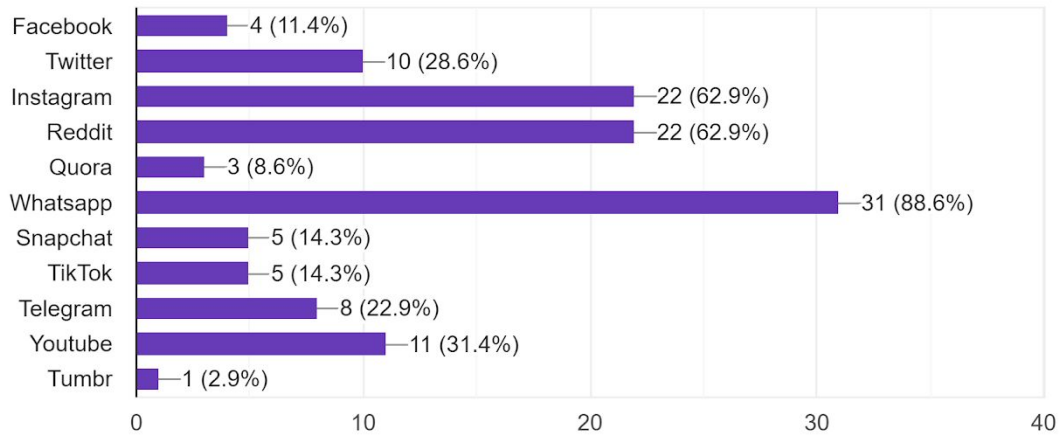
Our action plan implements a four step sequence of instructions that will be carried out in stages in order to maximise efficiency. For step 1, a testing period will be implemented in several schools, this optional subject will be introduced through talks and briefings. Students who wish to take part in these activities may sign up. The participants are not students which are forced to take the subject as it will defeat the purpose of our subject being optional and stress-free, as such, a mutual agreement should be established. Incentives may be provided to students depending on the level of the curriculum introduced. Feedback will be collected at the end of the two month trial. We have found three flaws that step one has: it is time consuming, students may not be invested and younger students may hesitate to take up commitments. The time that has to be spent in order to optimise the work-life balance for students will likely take several attempts to be perfected, however, this time is necessary such that the affected students can be minimised. Students who hesitate to take up such commitments should be convinced during the talks that we intend for schools to give, these talks should highlight the light workload that the subject offers. However, should they still not be convinced, it is still fine as our subject is completely dependent on the willingness of the students, it should not be forced onto them. Step 2 will simply be a continuous repeat of Step 1, the subject will be introduced from region to region slowly while feedback is collected. Step 2 will continue until nation-wide implementation is possible, of course, this will require the feedback of students to be positive. There are two flaws with this step, firstly, it is, once again, a very time consuming process, this is nearly an impossible to avoid hurdle as most adjustments to the curriculum would probably be empirical, as the staff would only be able to balance it based on how they feel, since there is no practical application of this subject with this big of a scale anywhere in the world currently. Secondly, students may give biased feedback, to solve this issue which may occur, we will also collect parents feedback to ensure that the survey results may not be heavily affected by biased feedback. Parents play a very critical role in monitoring our students at home as this subject will mainly be conducted at home. As such, parents should have first hand experience as to whether their child is finding the subject too easy or hard, helping us to find the balance between work and life for the students. Step 3 will be an official declaration of nation-wide implementation, by this time, one to three years would have passed, allowing new batches of students to be exposed to this subject. Students will be strongly encouraged to take up these lessons, as it will greatly help them improve their critical thinking skills and make them significantly more media literate. Optional tests that may be graded will begin. Of course, if it is graded it will also take up some time for studies, this should be a commitment that students should expect if they want this subject to be graded via tests. One flaw we have found is that optional tests may be too easy or hard, however, we will assume that at this point, the curriculum would have solidified, as such, tests should not be too hard nor easy. However, it should be noted that our subject is meant to emphasise on creativity, as such, room for out of the box thinking should be expected in challenging questions. Step 4, by this time, this subject can be brought up to the higher levels of tertiary and secondary education, at this point, the subject can either be a actual curriculum activity, after school optional lessons, or a CCA. All of these decisions should be made after the results of the testing phase and feedback received has been evaluated. At this point, numerous graduating batches of primary school students would have gone into secondary school, as such, it is expected that they should be able to adapt to the secondary school curriculum. At this point, there may be students who have already lost interest, as such, it should be a fully optional curriculum. However, we hope that these students should already have a large arsenal of tools in their disposal at this point. Meaning that we would have been successful in our task to make a large amount of teenagers media literate.

Survey Results (Initial and Final)

Initial Survey Results

What social media apps do you use?

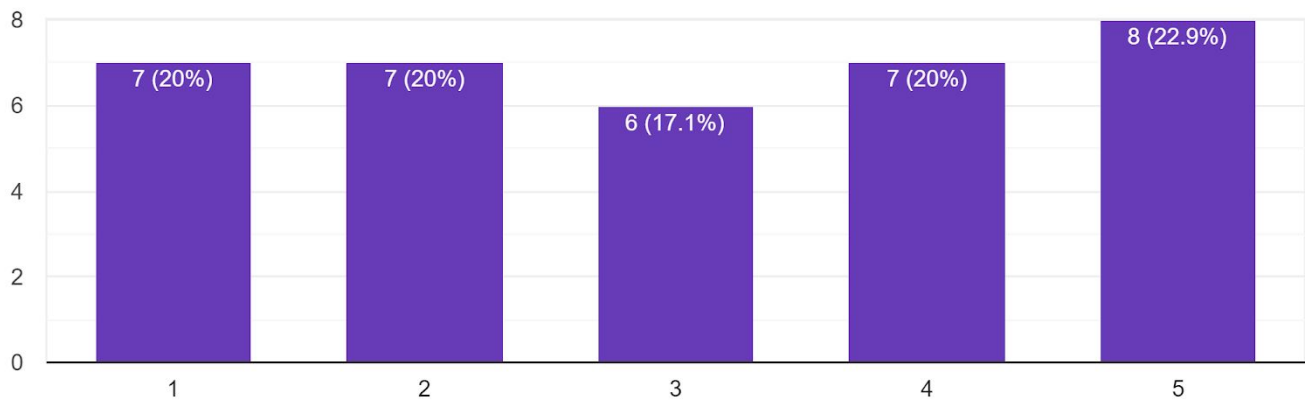
35 responses



Most teenagers use Instagram and Reddit, showing that teenagers use popular social media apps.

How often do you feel the urge to follow/ try out things you have seen online?

35 responses

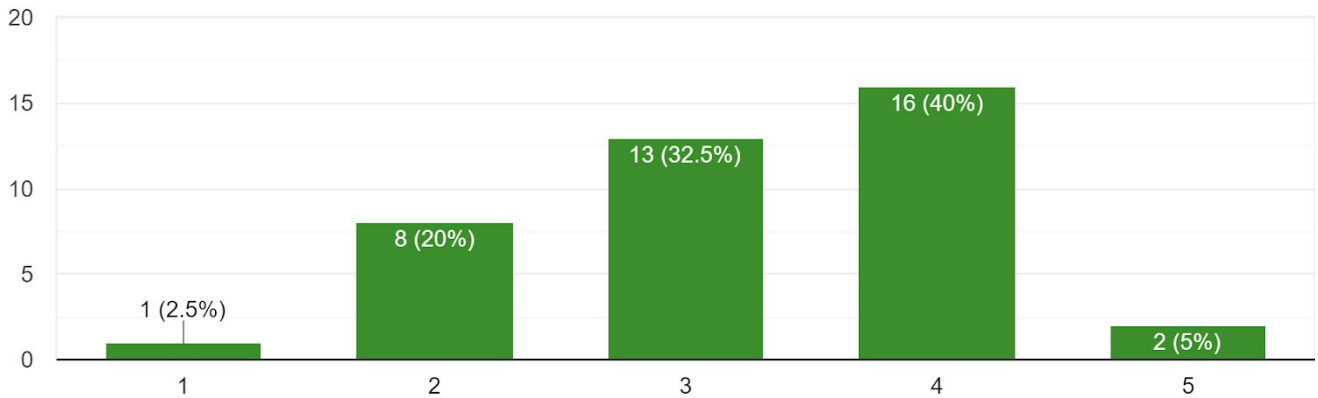


Most teenagers surveyed (22.9%) always feel the urge to try out things they have seen online, showing just how influential social media can be.

Second Survey Results

How often are you affected by peer pressure?

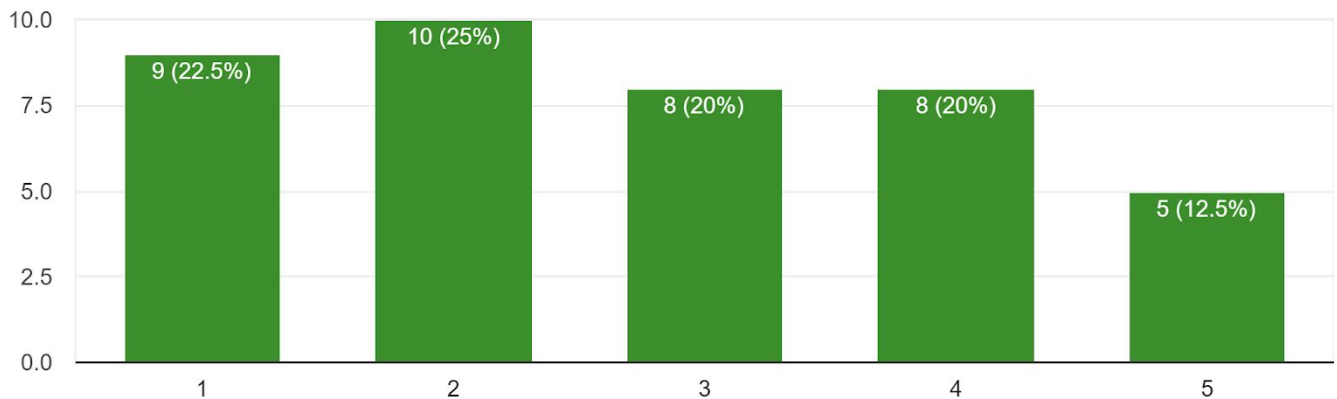
40 responses



18 out of 40 (45%) of respondents are often affected by peer pressure, succumbing to it and doing things they did not intend to do originally.

How much do you follow trends on social media?

40 responses



21 out of 40 (52.5%) of respondents often follow trends on social media, showing us that teenagers are prone to following trends that may harm or not benefit themselves.

