Year 6

Healthy bodies, healthy minds

Lesson 2: Social media and our wellbeing

Lesson context and overview

This is the second of three lessons exploring how best to take care of our bodies and minds to feel good about ourselves. The lesson focuses on ways in which the internet and social media impact on our personal feelings of wellbeing.

Curriculum links Physical health and mental wellbeing: Internet safety and harms
Pupils will learn:
- about the benefits of rationing time spent online, the risks of excessive time spent on electronic devices and the impact of positive and negative content online on their own and other's mental and physical wellbeing
- how to consider the effect of their online actions on others and know how to recognise and display respectful behaviour online and the importance of keeping personal information private
- why social media, some computer games and online gaming, for example, are age restricted
- that the internet can be a negative place where online abuse, trolling, bullying and harassment take place, which can have a negative impact on mental health.

Resources Presentation slides
Paper and pens
FOMO scenarios
Post-it notes or scraps of paper

Key vocabulary social media, comparison, FOMO (fear of missing out)

Learning objectives We will be learning:
- about how what we see on the internet and social media can affect our feelings of wellbeing
- what to do if we feel worried about or affected by something we have seen online.

Learning outcomes We will be able to:
- describe how the internet and social media can affect personal wellbeing
- explain where and how to get help if we feel worried or affected about something we have seen online.

Essential teaching guidance

Please ensure you have read the guidelines on creating a safe teaching and learning environment before delivering these lessons. To create a climate of trust for safe and effective learning, ensure that ground rules are established or revisited before delivery.

Starter/baseline activity

Introduce pupils to the objectives and the key vocabulary for the lesson. Organise pupils into small groups (e.g. groups of three). Give each group a large sheet of paper and ask them to divide it in two by folding the paper down the middle and drawing a line. Set a time limit of five minutes, and ask the groups to write down on one half of the paper all the positive things they can think of about the internet, and on the other half all the negative things.

Once time is up, discuss pupils' responses and perceptions of 'positive' and 'negative' when it comes to the internet. Explain that the internet is an integral part of our lives that brings many benefits. Emphasis that it also brings some risks that we need to be aware of to make sure we use it safely. Point out that one risk is the impact that social media can have on our wellbeing.

Core activities

1. Ask the class to discuss the following questions:
   - *Which social media platforms do you know about?* (Ask for feedback and make a list on the board.)
   - *Why do people use social media?*

Show slide 5 showing logos of social media sites and the age restrictions. Ask if pupils have heard of any of the sites, then ask the following:
   - *Why do social media sites have age restrictions?*
   - *What are the risks of using them for those who aren't old enough?*

Take responses, then explore some of the risks on slide 6. Ensure pupils understand what terms such as 'identity theft' mean.

2. Ask the class if they know what the term 'FOMO' (the final term on the above slide) means. Explain that it means 'fear of missing out' and that it's how people can feel if they think that they are missing out on something that 'everyone else' is taking part in, or if they believe that the images they see online represent reality.

Organise pupils into groups and give each group a FOMO scenario. Ask pupils to read through their scenario and answer the questions underneath. Once the activity is complete, ask the group to share ideas, then ask the class generally what impact these issues could have on the wellbeing of the children in the scenario.

3. Ask pupils where we get information and ideas from, and take some responses (e.g. school, books, websites, etc.). Organise pupils into groups. Ask them to think about all the different places they get information from and to write each source on a separate post-it or piece of paper. They should aim to get 8-10 different sources.

Once the activity is complete, ask the following question: *Which of these sources is the most reliable?* (i.e. which source gives the most accurate information?) Ask pupils to sort their sources on an imaginary continuum from most accurate and reliable to least. Discuss the accuracy and reliability of different information sources.

Explain to pupils that although the internet can be a wonderful resource, the amount of information being shared means that there will be things that are not true and things that are exaggerated or altered to make something look better than it is. Use as an example the air-brushing of photos, whether that be of people or things. Reinforce that what we see is not an accurate picture, it has been enhanced.

Explain that many things on the internet are based on one person's view rather than facts (e.g. vlogs on YouTube are often edited to cut out any mistakes). Vloggers will only show the parts of their lives that they choose to show, which may give the impression that they have amazing lives all of the time as they don't show the full day-to-day reality.

Show slide 9 which signposts sources of support if someone needs more information or is being affected by information they see or read.

Extension activity

Ask pupils to create a 'top tips' list for protecting mental wellbeing when using the internet. Once complete, share some examples.

Plenary

Return to the starter activity about the positives and negatives of the internet. Is there anything pupils can add to their initial brainstorm?

Ask: *What is your top tip for staying safe online?*

Assessment

Pupils' responses to the scenarios can be used to assess their understanding of how social media can impact on wellbeing and their understanding of the help that is available. The information continuum activity can be used to assess pupils' understanding and perceptions of the accuracy of different sources of information.