

#So.Me: Focus Groups

Young People's Information Sheet

Who we are?

We are researchers at the University of Manchester. We're conducting a study to find out about young people's experiences of using social media.

We're inviting you to take part in this study. Before you make a decision about taking part, please read the following information about the research and what you are being asked to do.



We need YOU to tell us all about YOUR experience of using social media!

We want to know how using social media impacts young people's mental health and wellbeing.

Unfortunately, we still don't know a lot about this!

We need young people like you to tell us:

- *What social media platforms you like and how you use them*
- *How you think social media has an impact on you*
- *What you think the challenges and benefits of social media are*

Why have we asked you to take part?

We have been told by your teacher that you would be happy to chat with us about how you use social media. If this is not the case, e.g. you do not use social media or do not want to talk to us about it, that's absolutely fine!

What will taking part involve?

We will meet with you and other young people in your year group. As a group we will discuss your thoughts and experiences of using social media. This will happen in a private space in your school and will take no more than one hour.

If you get involved, we'll give you a £15 voucher to say thank you!

You don't have to answer any questions you don't want to, and you can stop taking part at any time. Sometimes someone might feel upset by talking about their experiences of using social media. If this happens, we will take a break, and you can stop if you'd like.

What will we do with the things you share?



We will record our conversation and then write down the things you say. We will delete the recording at the end of the study but keep the written record (called a 'transcript').



We will also ask you to tell us some background information about yourself, including your age, gender, sexuality and ethnicity. This information is to help us make sure we have spoken to young people with different characteristics and experiences. This information will not be linked to you (it will be anonymous), and only the study researchers will have access to this information.



We will provide you with post-it notes in case you want to write down any additional thoughts based on the conversations we have.



We will store the things you tell us and write safely. All researchers have received training to do this.



We may write about the things you tell us in reports, and we may use quotes from the post-it notes and the discussions we have. We will not use your name or your school's name and it will be extremely unlikely that anyone could identify you from these quotes.



At the end of the study we will store a written version of our discussion and the post-it notes securely. This written version is called a 'transcript'. We will remove any information from the transcript that we think would enable someone to identify you.



We cannot guarantee that we will have removed all information that could identify you. For example, a teacher who knows you very well might still know it is you speaking in the transcript. However, we will store the transcripts in such a way that they will only be accessible to researchers who have special permission. This is why it is very unlikely that someone will identify you.

We will do this because we think your opinions are important and want more people to hear your voice. Storing the transcripts in this way means that more researchers will be able to learn from your experiences too.



During our conversation, if you tell us something or write something on the post-it notes that makes us feel concerned about you, e.g. that makes us believe that you or someone else is at direct risk of harm, we would need to talk to a teacher at your school about this.

What do I do now?

If you would like to take part, then please let your teacher know. They will confirm that your parent/carer is happy for you participate, and confirm when the focus group will take place.

If you have any questions your teacher will be able to help answer them. It is completely up to you if you wish to take part. Please consider all the information given here before making a decision.

You don't have to join in if you don't want to!

Thank you from the #So.Me team.

If you want to know more about this study you can visit www.so-me-study.org