



LIVE TIMEWISE HIGH SCHOOL & BEYOND



Session 7: Relationships and Being Social

Discussion

A recent article in *The Atlantic* reported that Americans are spending less and less time in one another's company. And while the trend was evident across all age groups, it was most pronounced among teens. Between the years of 2003 and 2022, face-to-face socializing among teenagers fell by more than 45 percent.

(<https://effectiveschoolsolutions.com/teenage-social-skills/#:~:text=Strong%20social%20connections%20aren't,being%20and%20with%20school%20connectedness.>)

Why has this happened? Naturally, the pandemic had a lot to do with this. But the drop in face-to-face socialization among teens continues. At the same time on-line socialization has grown significantly. A 2023 poll found teens spend about 5-6 hours a day using on-line social media, and estimates are that even more time is now spent on social media.

What are the benefits of face-to-face, in person socialization? [form meaningful human connection, builds confidence, develop crucial social skills like active listening, communication, conflict resolution, and empathy, contribute to a sense of confidence and self-assuredness, enabling teens to navigate social situations with greater ease, combat loneliness and isolation.]

- How many of you consider socializing on-line to be leisure?
- What about socializing in person?
- Why/why not? What is the difference?

Activity/Reflection

- How would you describe your social life? What challenges do you have? (Post-it note activity?)
- Do you choose your leisure activities to be with friends, or do you choose activities because you are really interested in them? Think about structured free or explore time during school...same question.
- How could you improve your social life if you wanted to?

Other Possible Topics

- How does having a romantic relationship affect your leisure? OR, How do your close friends affect your leisure? Do you find yourself changing your interests to fit in with someone else? Are you the one who typically decides what to do in your leisure time?
- How does your social leisure affect your mental health? Think about what you and your friends and/or romantic partner do during your time together?
- Do you find you do things in your social leisure to please others? Would you feel guilty if you didn't do what the other person or persons wanted to do?
- How have you changed as a person as a result of your relationships with your social group?
- What opportunities for social leisure might you seek out in the future?

Consider:

Finding a balance between social time, family time, academic pursuits, work and personal hobbies is essential for overall well-being.

Not all teenagers are naturally outgoing, and it's important to respect individual differences in social preferences and comfort levels.