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How Social Media Influencers Impact Teenagers' Mental Health

As social media consumes the young generations, it is important to shine a light on the significant impact it has on their mental development.

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of these influencers on trips to great destinations, making you wish you can live that life too.

Now the platform has expanded to TikTok, but the same concept remains, they make everything look so appealing, that now you want it and would do so much to get it. By combining an addictive app on top of a vast range of content and people that use the app. You become accustomed to seeing these influencers and think that it's real life. This greatly relates to mental health and here's why: the target audience for

Instagram is home to the influencer. People who produce content and over time get brand deals and get paid to post because of their high follower count and seemingly perfect life, and more often than not, "perfect bodies". This age of influence started around 2016, at the time YouTube was where this content creator job idea started. Brands pick and choose those that fit their criteria,

give them free products that they hope the creators would put in their videos and review. Advertisements begin and those watching at home are influenced to buy the products by their role models. Hence the term influencers. At the very top, brands send groups

these influencers are teenagers, those whose brains are still developing and are highly impressionable. The influencer sphere tells those watching, how to dress, what foods they think you should be eating, what music to listen to, and above all that, what they should look like.

According to the CDC, one in five teenagers between the ages of twelve and eighteen suffer from at least one diagnosable mental health disorder in the United States. Among these mental health disorders are eating disorders, such as binge-eating disorder, anorexia, bulimia, just to name a couple. “95% of eating disorders are found in people aged 12 through 25” (CDC).

A majority of these influencers are tall, thin and what we traditionally think to be “model-like”. They could have big hips and a tiny waist. What we don’t know, is if it’s genetic, surgically altered, or if they themselves have an eating disorder. Watching these people constantly, youth start to think that’s what they’re supposed to look like to be beautiful. Obviously, this is not the case, however even as a young person myself, I catch myself falling victim to these women and trying to change myself to fit the so-called beauty standard.

Stay true to yourself, make decisions on what’s best for you and try to not be so easily influenced by these influencers.

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