

SOCIAL MEDIA & ATHLETES



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Learning Objective

- Let's talk numbers
- How social media affects athletes
- The good, the bad, and the ugly of social media
- How to help an athlete navigate the social media jungle



Social Media



SEX COMPARISONS OF SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE

FEMALES



AVG. TIME ON SOCIAL MEDIA =
5.1 HOURS/DAY.

TOP 3 MOST POPULAR APPS:

SNAPCHAT
INSTAGRAM
FACEBOOK



MALES



AVG. TIME ON SOCIAL MEDIA =
4.2 HOURS/DAY

TOP 3 MOST POPULAR APPS:

INSTAGRAM
SNAPCHAT
TWITTER



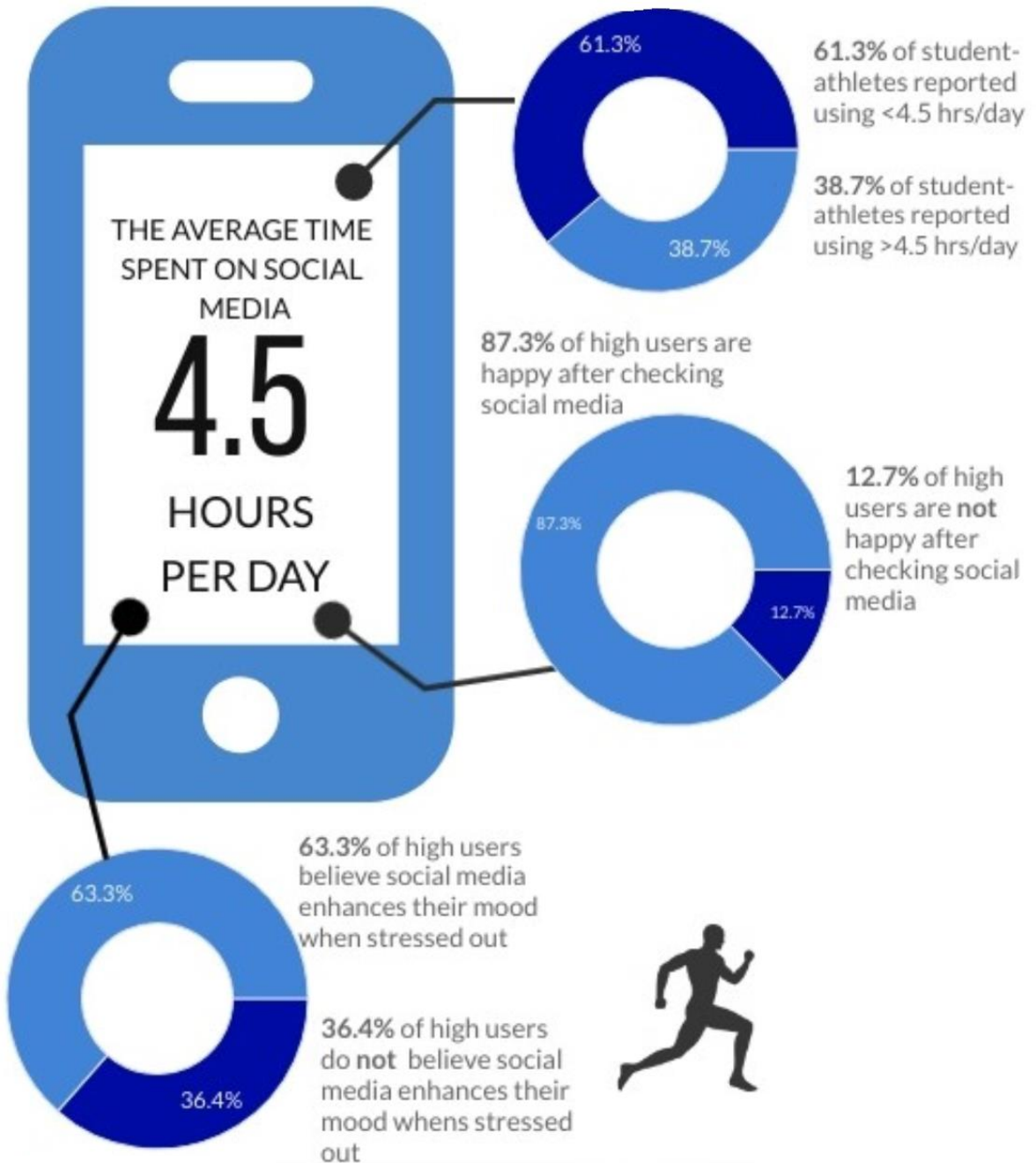
Boston Children's Hospital
Sports Medicine



THE MICHELI CENTER
FOR SPORTS INJURY PREVENTION



HARVARD MEDICAL SCHOOL
TEACHING HOSPITAL



Perceptual results

- A large majority of both female (80.5%) and male (74.5%) student-athletes believed that their social media use was a distraction to everyday activities.
- 72.1% of females and 87.3% of males noted they were generally happy after checking their social media accounts.
- 46.5% of females and 63.6% of males felt that social media helped enhance their mood when they were stressed.
- 52.9% of females and 69.1% of males used social media more when they were emotionally down.



How does social media affect an athlete?

Powered by
Forbes
Hookit
Data

The Impact of Social Media on the Mental Health of Student-Athletes

Positive



Communication



Stress Relief



Motivation

- A negative relationship between females' self-esteem and Facebook.

- A positive relationship between females' self-esteem and TikTok.

- A negative relationship between males' anxiety/depression and Instagram use

Negative



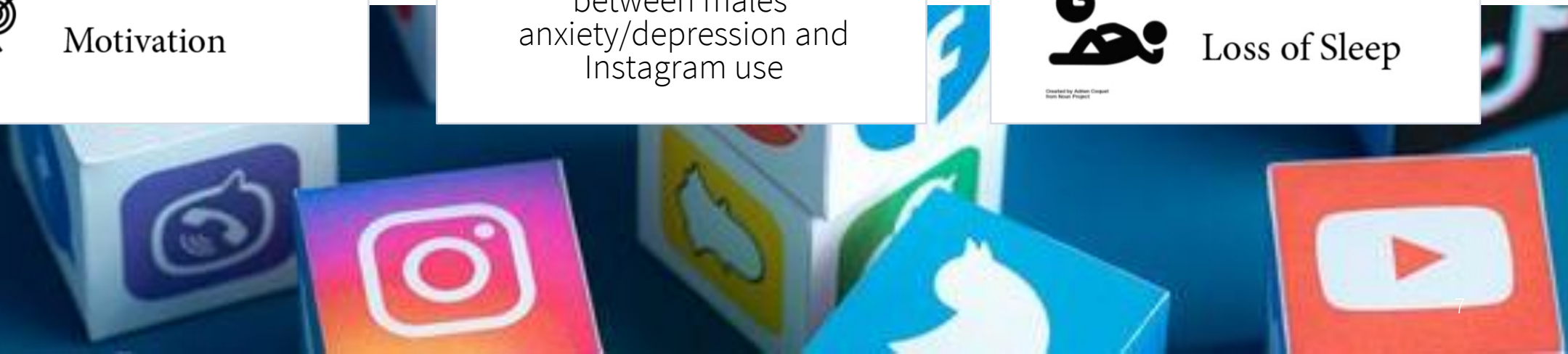
Vulnerability



Procrastination



Loss of Sleep



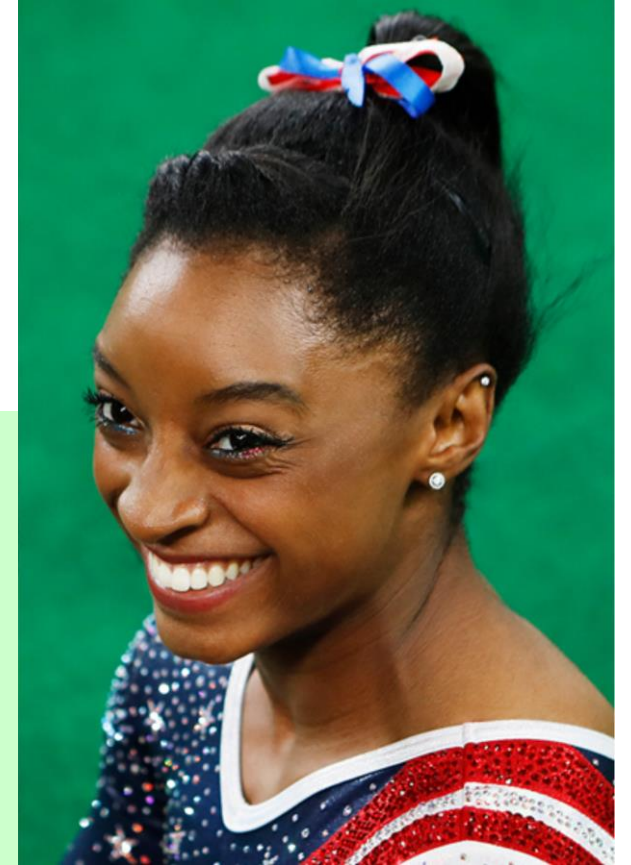
The Good

The Good – “The Athlete’s Voice”



Naomi Osaka has used social media to elevate issues around race. She has made it clear that “before [she is] an athlete, [she is] a Black Woman”.

Biles has pointed to how having such a huge social media platform (she has 1.6 million followers on Twitter alone) stopped the governing body USA Gymnastics from turning a blind eye to harassment allegations against coaches and staff.



Depression

‘Deep Sense of Sadness’ – Venus Williams, Lindsey Vonn and Other Athletes React to Naomi Osaka’s Emotional Post

Published 02/20/2022, 12:38 PM EST



The Good



- Endorsements
- Charities
- Build a fan base
- Express themselves

Cristiano Ronaldo
Followers 619 million

Rate per post

\$3.23 Million USD

The Bad

(and the ugly)

WHAT
SHOWS UP WHEN
SOMEONE SEARCHES
YOU?

26%

of college admissions officers use
Instagram or other social networking
pages to research an applicant.

35%

of those who Googled candidates
discovered something that negatively
impacted their application.

N.H. basketball star stripped of top award after profane tweet



Patrick Welch
@PatrickWelch_15

Shout out to Portsmouth, you may have won in the regular season..... But we won the ship you suck #f[REDACTED]kyourself
3/15/14, 5:25 PM

- Pat Welch helped lead Pembroke Academy to back-to-back Division II basketball championships.
- This cost him the Player of the year award.
- The New Hampshire Basketball Coaches Organization stripped Welch of his award last week because of “flagrant unsportsmanlike behavior.”

"Never let a 140 character tweet cost you a \$140,000 scholarship!"

Body Image



Allie Kieffer



Allie Cain



Serena Williams



Alexa Moreno

Why Allie Kieffer, New York City Marathon Elites Are Talking About Body Image

After being called "big" and fielding constant comments about her figure from the running world, Allie Kieffer has joined the conversation about body image ahead of this year's New York City Marathon.

NEW YORK — In high school people talked about her body in e-mail chains. "She's too big to beat us," she remembers teammates writing. In college it was constant commentary. "You could lose five pounds," she was told, no matter how many pounds she'd already lost or what her current weight was. Coaches, teammates, you name it. Today, it's message boards. "Not buying it. Nobody runs that time at that weight without EPO or blood doping," one anonymous user wrote.

"It was hard for me," Serena said. "People would say I was born a guy, all because of my arms, or because I'm strong. I was different to Venus: she was thin and tall and beautiful, and I am strong and muscular — and beautiful, but, you know, it was just totally different." When asked by *Bazaar* about a 2004 report that on the

In a tweet that's since been deleted, one user posted a cartoon photo of a pig and wrote: "Exclusive pictures of Alexa Moreno at the end of her gymnastic routine." And after Moreno — who is 4 feet 10 inches



Mental Health

20

More than 20% of teens have seriously considered suicide.

The most alarming trend in recent years has been a sharp rise in suicide among Black youth ages 10 to 24.



Figure 1. Suicide rates among males aged 10 years and over, by age group: United States, 2009–2019

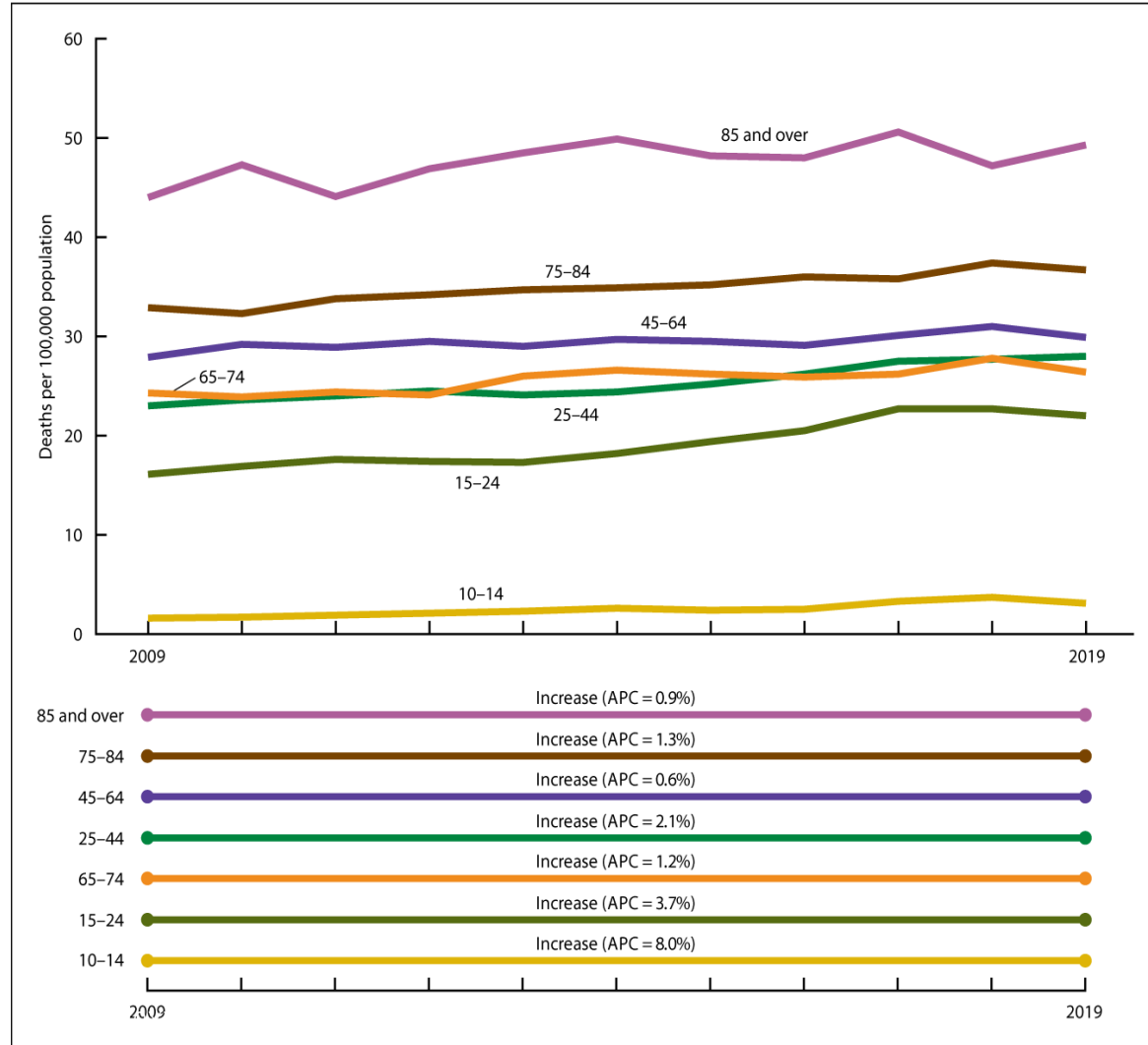
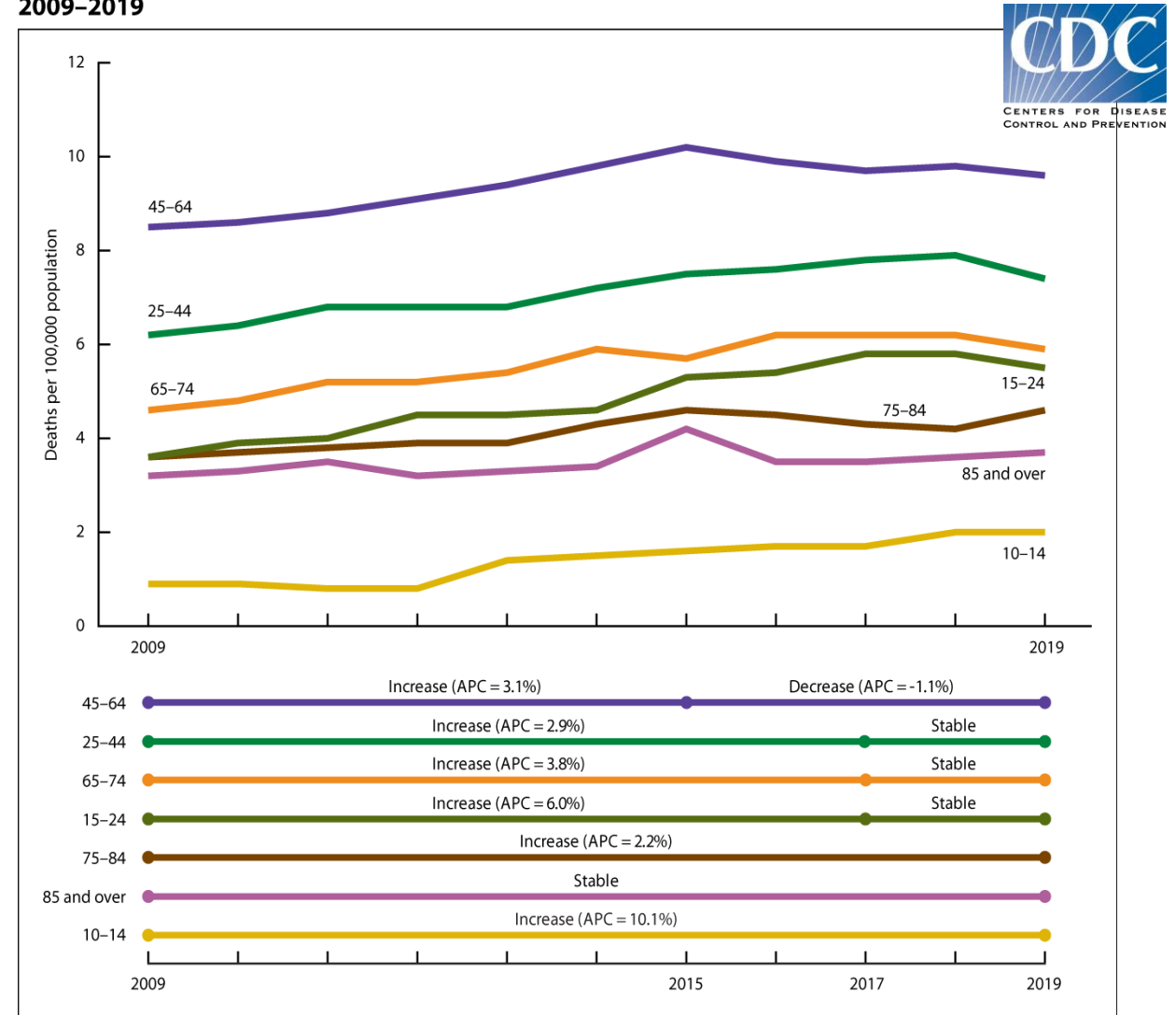


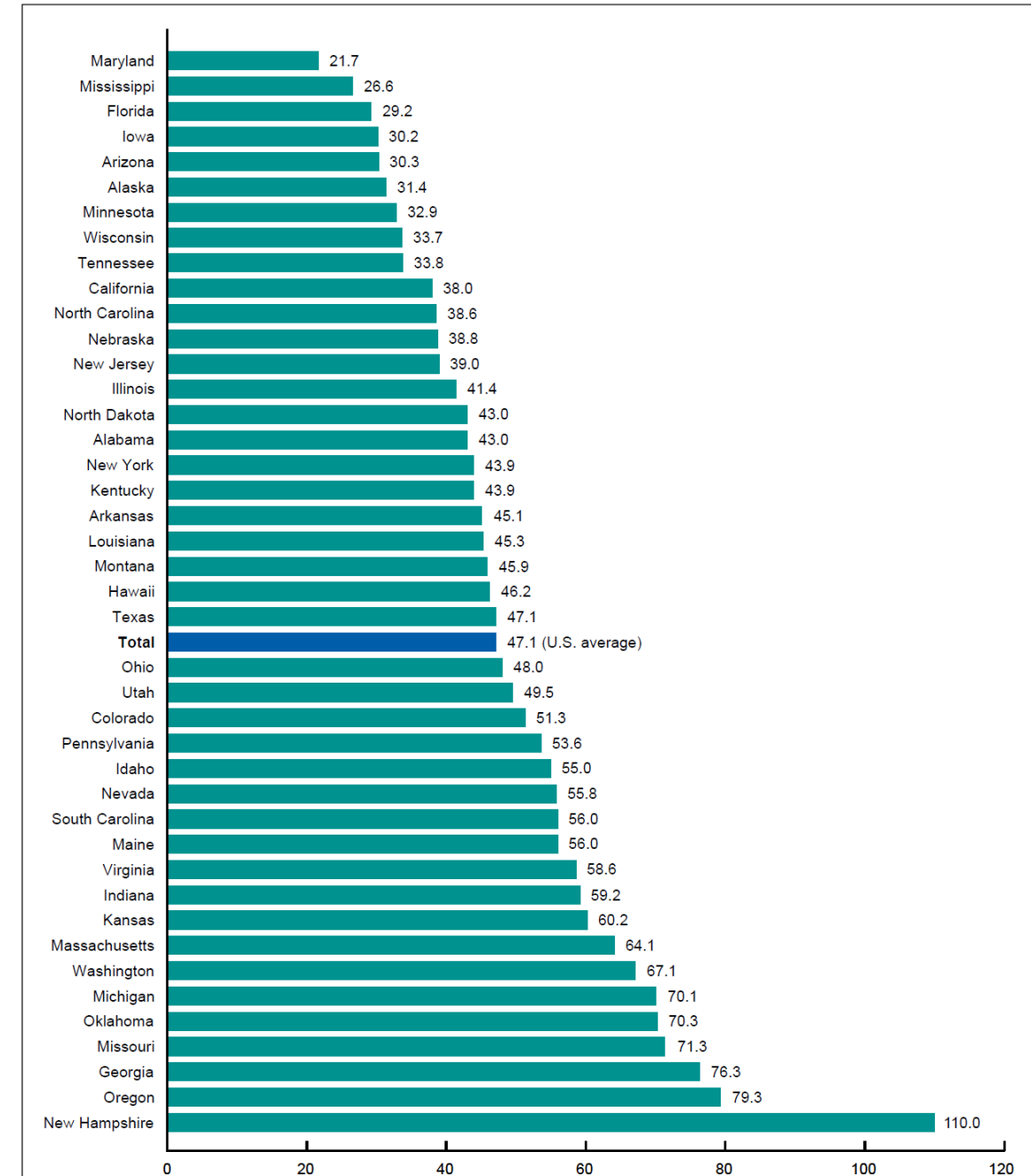
Figure 2. Suicide rates among females aged 10 years and over, by age group: United States, 2009–2019



Depression & Suicide

- Suicide is the 2nd leading cause of death in youth aged 10-24 years old, globally.
- Exposure to social media/internet has the potential to both suggest and reinforce negative thoughts and behaviors.
- Cybervictimization was associated with suicide attempts.
- Themes such as self-loathing, loneliness and feeling unloved were found in content analysis of 3360 randomly selected social media posts from 17 depression-related accounts; 82% of posts were related to depression, suicide or self-harm.

Figure 1. Percent increase in suicide death rates among persons aged 10–24 years: United States and selected states, 2007–2009 to 2016–2018



The background features a sunset sky with a basketball hoop on the left and a person's silhouette on the right. Five circular icons for Instagram and Twitter are arranged in an arc at the top. A large black speech bubble with a white border is centered in the foreground, containing the text 'ONE BAD POST'.

ONE
BAD
POST

What are some things others have done?

- Parents and coaches set up accounts just to monitor their children and players' online activity.
- Some coaches put team captains in charge of policing their own squads.
- Telling students to stay off social media completely would be the wrong message, says Scott Fitch, a varsity boys basketball coach at Fairport High School near Rochester, New York.
- But maybe, minimizing use or turning it off just during the sports season could be an option.

How To Help Athletes Navigate Social Media

Support

It's not just fans comments but also fellow athletes

Emphasize the difference between what is real and what is virtual

Cyber bullying

Educate

It's important to help an athlete understand the effects of social media

What one posts can have lasting impacts on the person and even the sport

Be Positive

Use social media to show good sportsmanship.

Win or lose, urge athletes to praise their teammates and opponents after a big game.

Positive commentary on social media can be just as beneficial to student athletes as negative commentary can be harmful.





PAUSE
BEFORE
YOU POST



Summary

- Both male and female adolescents spend on average 4.5 hrs on social media.
- While there are benefits to using social media, there are also very dangerous risks.
 - Positive: mood, distraction, support, endorsements, voice.
 - Negative: paper trail, body image, depression, suicide
- What can you do - Support, Educate, and Be Positive.
- Is it helpful, is it hurtful, or is it neutral?
- PAUSE BEFORE YOU POST.





Thank you

