

Dear Minister,

I am writing to you regarding the pressing issue of social media.

More and more people have social media accounts than ever, yet fewer and fewer people are reporting that they feel safe online. Shouldn't more be done to limit the toxic effects of modern social media, so that society is protected, safe and happy?

In the past, before today's social media obsession, life was simpler, safer and happier. In those glory days, people were free: free to be themselves, free to socialise, and free to communicate. Back then, not only were friendships more genuine, but communication was more safe too. Without the ability to hide behind a screen, without the possibility of creating an anonymous account, without the mask of a fake account, the opportunity to abuse and bully others was impossible. After getting home from school, children would head straight outdoors to socialise with their friends, rather than spending hours scrolling on social media. Running, laughing and playing until the late hours was a common sight on every street. It was truly a golden age: more healthy and more social. What wouldn't we give to return to those innocent halcyon days?

But now, things are different. When was the last time you went somewhere without seeing anyone on their phone? Scrolling, tapping and messaging people are everywhere you look. Social media is a plague sweeping the modern world: more people addicted to their phones than ever before, and more people unable to focus for more than a few minutes. Shockingly, a recent study from the University of Oxford discovered that people who spend more than 2 hours per day on their phones or tablets experience withdrawal symptoms, similar to alcoholism or drug abuse. Not only is social media addictive, but it also extremely harmful too. The ability to add a filter or photoshop an image has completely warped people's views on what beauty is. Rather than people feeling comfortable in their own, natural skin, these effects have had a toxic impact. People are insecure: insecure in their own skin, insecure in who they are, insecure in themselves. Why is this being allowed to happen in this day and age?

In the future, we must make changes to prevent the problem from worsening. A simple solution would be to ensure that social media platforms have tighter security systems to lock out online predators and trolls. Without free access to anonymous profiles, without dodging consequences and punishments, and without open security, trolls would no longer be able to attack and harm innocent people who simply want to connect with friends. Another easy fix would be to encourage people to limit the amount of time that they are spending online by educating society to make healthier choices. Not only would people spend less time online, but they would rediscover what genuine socialising is, face to face. Society would return to its roots and become a happier, healthier and safer place. People would once again be liberated: liberated from the prison of social media, liberated from their addiction, and liberated from insecurity.

Yours Sincerely,

Mrs Elliott