

DisruptYourFeed 2023 Promoting Resilience in Teen Girls' Social Media Use

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The Female Lead is committed to improving the social and cultural environments for teen girls, and this inevitably includes social media.

This project

- explores how teen girls can be guided to resist the negative pull of social media and benefit from its riches
- Shows steps parents and teachers can take in promoting social media health
- provides a basis for discussions of regulatory control and government policy
- offers companies controlling social media platforms ways of improving the safety and health of their service.

Context

Experiences of lockdown briefly transformed public interest in teens' use of social media from focus on its harms to its capacity for positive connections and remission of isolation. Nevertheless, reports on teens and social media continue to highlight "harms" and "vulnerabilities", and the flurry of interest in social media as a benefit during lockdown has subsided. In fact, debates over the impact of social media on teens - and on teen girls in particular - are growing increasingly heated, with platforms such as Instagram repeatedly described as "toxic"¹. They are blamed for teen girls' vulnerability to depression, anxiety and low self-esteem.

Neutralizing this toxicity is seen as the job of companies that run and manage social media platforms. At the same time, it is argued that such companies lack incentive to take necessary actions. Their aim is to increase time spent on these platforms, and they develop ever more sophisticated algorithms to shape each person's individual "feed",

¹ There are many examples; these include: "How Instagram is Hurting Teen Girls", 29th September 2021; University of London. **UCL Social Research Institute**. Centre for Longitudinal Studies, Millennium Cohort Study.

regardless of the health of that diet. Platforms are seen to develop subversive techniques that activate the reward circuitry of the teen brain, and lead teen users towards shallowness, lowered self-esteem, anxiety and depression.² The Female Lead demonstrates that with creative prompts or small but effective interventions, teen girls can be agents of their own resilience. The two Disrupt Your Feed Projects provide guidance to schools and parents and teens themselves in managing the challenges presented by some aspects of social media.

While some high quality research is being done on psychological inoculation against “fake news” or misinformation campaigns – by developing tools and techniques for distinguishing between free-wheeling absurdities and evidence based journalism³ - and on how young people’s different uses of social media yield different impacts⁴, there is little research, apart that done by The Female Lead, on how teens themselves – particularly teen girls – can maintain their social media health. Our research shows that protecting their wellbeing is a primary concern of teen girls when they talk about social media. Parents and teachers try to limit the time teen girls spend on social media, but this approach is often futile, and can lead to counterproductive tensions between teen and grown-up. It is far more efficient and effective to harness teen girls’ own concerns and work with them to achieve the goals they speak about in interviews with us. These include (1) social media use that keeps them connected to friends and up-to-date with relevant social knowledge including personal and celebrity gossip as well as world news and their specific individual interests, such as drama, art, politics, social justice, (2) a positive self image, and (3) mood management.

The first Disrupt Your Feed project (given this title in response to results that showed how a minor intervention could change teen girls’ social media “feeds”) was born from concern about girls’ social media diet, or the range of profiles they followed and the language they used to describe their interests. The intervention, described in the next section, was shown to have significant positive impact. The second phase of this project set out (1) to assess the longevity of the intervention’s impact, (2) to see

² N. Zagorski. (2017). Using many social media platforms linked with depression, anxiety and risk. *PN. 52, 2: 1-1*

³ See Sander van der Linden (2023) *Foolproof*. W.W. Norton.

⁴ See Amy Orben & Andrew Przybylski. (2019) Screens, Teens, and Psychological Well-Being Evidence from Three Time-Use-Diary Studies. *Psychological Science. 20, 5: 682-696*; Pete Etchells’ forthcoming *Screens are not Your Enemy*. Piatkus.

whether the first results could be replicated on a new cohort of teens and (3), to trial a new intervention to prompt teens' awareness of how social media impacts their mood.

The 2019 Project

The 2019 project drew on work by the data science company Starcount analyzing the social media use of 34,500 teen girls in the UK. This data showed that the interests expressed by teen girls on social media were primarily about beauty, popular music, lifestyle tips and fashion. References to personal and career aspirations and achievements were rare⁵.

The data also showed that of all celebrities teen girls follow, 72% of the 50 most influential are male. But a small percentage (10%) of the girls within those 34000 had a very different social media profile. The words used by teen girls in this group signaled career aspiration and interest in achievement – words such as “writer”, “tech”, “charity”, “reporter”, “chair”, “CEO”, “member”, “journalism”, “aspire”, and “feminist”. This same group showed a different pattern in the profiles they followed. Among the 50 top celebrities they followed, 80% were women.

The first project set out to explore whether – and if so, how - the profiles followed and language used were connected. It was possible that the girls who followed more high achieving women were different in many ways from the 90% who followed so many male celebrities, and that the different profiles followed and the more expansive language used were unconnected, or that they were connected by a third variable. But it was also possible that there was a causal link between these two correlated findings – that the profiles followed influenced the teen girls' social media language. Edwina Dunn, Starcount and The Female Lead identified the correlation. Dr Terri Apter devised an intervention that would test the impact of one on the other. Together they set out to discover whether girls' social media health could be improved by asking them to follow at least 4 high achieving women, women whose interests matched theirs.

In an initial interview with 28 girls, aged between 14 and 17, from 5 different schools and highly diverse backgrounds, we gauged their interests. We then tailored a list of high achieving women for each

⁵ In contrast, boys' social media use showed that while on average they followed and “spoke” a lot of junk, their interests were more extensive and varied, indicating a spread of 12 topics as opposed to the stifling 3 or 4 girls showed.

individual girl, sent it out with the request that she follow four of these women on social media. These role models were carefully presented to offer a rich register of diverse paths to fulfilment. They offered various points of reference not templates into which a teen should shape herself to fit.⁶

To encourage compliance with the intervention we did not ask participating teens to change anything else in their social media use. All we asked was that she include among the people she followed 4 of the women on the list. We returned to interview each girl after about 9 months. We were astounded by what we found:

- **Girls said that their idea of social media had been transformed.** “It’s given me like a completely different outlook on it, because it’s not about – obviously it’s social, but it’s not like about the materialistic side of it,” one girl told us. “It’s about other people doing like really good things, and it’s like education and like learning. And it’s really interesting and I didn’t know if [social media] could be used for that...” Several girls said that the exercise had transformed their views of social media and given them a “completely different outlook.”
- **The exercise changed how day-to-day the girls used social media.** Instead of using it to keep up with friends, or the news, or entertainment, they realized it could offer guidance and vision. One girl said, “normally you’d just have people, like, you know or like, barely know and then suddenly you have someone else and you’re just like ‘Whoa!’ And I’ve followed much more, like, skiers and much more poets and artists now...It’s like the key chain events.”
- **The exercise transformed their social media “feed”.** As one girl said, in following the women suggested by The Female Lead, “other stuff popped up and then I looked at other things to do with [my interests].” A common discovery was that in following the profiles suggested by The Female Lead, other individuals and organizations were recommended by their platforms. One girl who followed an astronaut was now following NASA; then she found the “explore” section (“It’s all quite physics things now. It’s quite funny”). Another girl was now following more political and activist accounts (and joining a Women’s March as a result); and others were following additional writers and actors. Another

⁶ See Foreword by Terri Apter in Edwina Dunn (2017). *The Female Lead: Women Who Shape Our World*. Ebury Press.

15-year-old followed a concert pianist on her list and was amazed by what she learned: “It was [about] competitions they went to...and I would never have known [about] that if I wouldn’t have followed them...I would have just, you know, just had no idea.”

- The intervention inspired some girls to be proactive in cleaning up their feed, One explained, “But really strangely [after she began following the list provided by The Female Lead] I felt things were actually getting me down [before] because I was following all of these models and things, so, I just had a massive cleanse of all the people that I thought were almost toxic...I literally felt like a happier person.”

The 2023 Project

The 2019 DisruptYourFeed project showed that teen girls could be agents of change in their own social media use. But social media itself changes rapidly. It is therefore different for each cohort of teens. Moreover, teens themselves change, and what they assessed as useful in 2019 might have little significance for them in 2023. The second Disrupt Your Feed Project (2023) set out (1) to explore whether the DYF1 project was thought by the participant to have lasting value; (2), to assess with a “role model group” whether the 2019 intervention would be effective in a new cohort of teens; (3) to assess with a “mood diary” group whether raised awareness of moods accompanying social media use would be effective in mood management; (4) to compare any differences in social media use in the role model group and the mood diary group with a control group not subject to any intervention.

General remarks on the 2023 cohort

Participants included 31 girls, aged between 13 and 16-years, from 4 different school and diverse backgrounds. As we embarked on the first round of interviews for DYF2, we were surprised to see how much the landscape had changed for teen girls and social media. New social media platforms presented new benefits and new costs. TikTok and Instagram had risen to prominence, with TikTok presenting pitfalls of time use and Instagram offering a new platform for messaging friends – though for

some girls, Instagram posed the risk of negative self-comparisons with idealized images.

Many girls were grappling with effects of the previous year's lockdowns. Some had found the time at home claustrophobic, some had enjoyed the new closeness and more time with parents and siblings; for them, returning to school wrenched them away from more comfortable ways of living and learning. Whatever their assessment of the lockdowns themselves, the transition back to in person school attendance was difficult. Friendship groups were splintered as one member kept her physical distance and wore a mask, while others wanted to "forget the whole thing and go back to normal." Some realized they no longer fit in with the group that now focused on "boys and silly stuff rather than work." Some explained that over time former close friendships had degraded.

The girls also felt they had changed in other ways. They described themselves as more politically aware, generally, than they had been and were concerned about those who could not afford to eat. Two participants whose family came from Ukraine were deeply anxious about relatives still living in Ukraine.

While observations of the interviewing team were that the younger among this cohort were, in the first interview, less forthcoming and possibly less articulate than the DYF1 participants, there was little detectable difference in the second round of interviews 9 months after the first. On the other hand, the new cohort of teens began with more sophistication about social media use than the cohort we interviewed in 2018/19. They were aware that a platform's algorithms shaped what appeared on social media, and their sense of the dangers was more reputational than physical. The 2019 participants spoke about keeping themselves safe by avoiding intimate exchanges with strangers online. This cohort saw the danger in a careless post that could "stay with them and ruin their life."

Science behind the new intervention

The mood diary intervention is different from exercises in mindfulness that have recently been trialled at school and shown to be ineffective (and in some cases harmful)⁷, and it is different from mental health awareness

⁷ Evidence-Based Mental Health. August 2022. Volume 25:3.

exercises that have attracted reasonable controversy.⁸ It goes beyond tracking correlations commonly addressed between time spent on social media and teen girls’ wellbeing, to explore whether simple techniques known to promote emotion regulation could be applied to social media use.

Teens experience newly emerging and powerful feelings. When their language for describing emotions becomes more granular, they become more resilient in face of negative thoughts and moods.⁹ These new discoveries in neurobiology led us to devise a new, simple tool to moderate negative effects of social media. The intervention involves questioning teen girls at random days and times about their moods and their social media use. We assess whether these prompts to identify their moods and emotions – which activate executive brain activity – help them manage the anxiety and low mood generated by some social media use.¹⁰

Longevity of the 2019 DYF intervention

Participants in the 2019 DYF project spoke about three different ways the effects had lasting impact.

1. They were more aware of how social media was affecting their mood and, as a result, were more careful users. The effect was long lasting, but was tied to a specific social media platform.

“I think [the effect of the previous intervention] lasted probably for as long as I used Instagram, like full time, I guess you would say, because that was, I kept on following everyone and it did make me

⁸ L. Foulkes. (7 February 2022) Mental Health Awareness: Time to Re-Focus. *British Psychological Society*.

⁹ P. Fonagy (2012), What is mentalization? the concept and its foundations in development, in N. Midgley & Ioanna Vrouvra (Eds.), *Minding the child: Mentalization-based interventions with children, young people and their families*, New York: Routledge. See also Daniel Siegel (2014) *Brainstorm*. Scribe, UK edition. pp.107-8.

¹⁰ For the impact of naming feelings on emotion and mood management see: Jared B. Tore and Matthew D. Lieberman (2018, April), Putting feelings into words: A ect label- ing as implicit emotion regulation. *Emotion Review*, 10(2), pp. 116– 124, and J. A. Brooks, H. Shablack et al. (2017), The role of language in the experience and perception of emotion: A neuroimaging meta- analysis, *Social Cognitive and Neuroscience*, 12 (2), pp. 169–183. The impact on teen girls’ moods of some social media use can be seen in Jonathan Haidt (Nov 2021) Facebook’s Dangerous Experiment on Teen Girls. *The Atlantic*; and the research by Meta:

sort of bear in mind what kind of content made me feel good and what kind of content didn't. But I think now that I don't use that platform as much and the different one, I think it would be quite difficult to say cuz it's such different styles of content viewing.”
(17-years at DYF1 now 21-years)

2. Their career goals became more inspirational:

“I think it's just really to run it again I actually feel from personal perspective that being part of the Disrupt Your Feed kind of did subconsciously help inspire me to pursue a career in engineering and obviously at the time to reconsider my goals, But. Yeah, I mean, it, it was really, really helpful and it's helped me become a very kind of balanced social media user now, and that I know what I'm looking for when I go on Instagram rather than I just kind of mindlessly scroll through things and get subconsciously influenced by things that aren't necessarily say positive... I now, I would say a very balanced social media user.” (16-years at time of DYF1, 20-years now)

3. They were using social media less:

“So I think there's definitely been a big change in how I actually use social media now. And I also think I do. I don't really upload. Much personal stuff anymore. So I used to post quite a lot on Instagram. But I very rarely do that anymore. And I do still, I do still check to see what my other friends are up to, but I think I definitely don't use the personal side of social media as much as I did a few years ago.” (17 years at DYF1 now 21 years)

Replication of DYF1 results

Those in the role model group for DYF2 experienced positive effects very similar to those in DYF1.

“I think, at the beginning [of the intervention, being sent role models), I felt, not forced, but I did feel like it was like a responsibility that I had to like someone, like look up on the account for stuff, but I think later just developed into something I would do daily... Because usually, before, my feed was shaped by

celebrities and like, sort of rising artists and very... like mainstream.” (13-year-old)

“Well, my normal content is just literally my friends. So, it's quite a monotonous thing. But looking at the profiles you sent was like getting a new set of friends doing cool things.” (13-year-old)

“I followed several people you sent, but one boxer in particular, maybe because she kept coming up on my feed. It was just nice to see, just because you don't see many female boxers. You look at the top ones, and they're all male. And at the gym I go to there's so many boys, and only me and my friend – we're the only girls, and it feels weird. I thought how much I'd rather be with the girls at school, even though we're not all friends, there's a kind of solidarity. So it really helped seeing the female boxers on social media (16-year-old)

Some found the profiles diluted by the amount they normally viewed:

I think just because I do follow so many people, even the ones I really liked just kind of got lost a bit, but made Instagram more fun. I mean, it was definitely like, it was a sweetshop, full of surprises. But after a while it didn't look so big, because I follow so many.” (13-year-old)

The excitement of the teen girls in the role model group seems at least in one case to have been contagious: one girl from the mood diary group asked her friends who they were now following, so she could join them.

The impact of the Mood Diary intervention

Teen girls in the mood diary group were shown an emotion wheel¹¹ and asked at intervals to describe what they were feeling when on social media.

Though highly articulate and thoughtful, the younger teen girls (aged 14 and 15-years) appreciated prompts to extend their emotional vocabulary and reflect on their responses.

¹¹ Affective Sciences. (2017, September 27). The Geneva Emotion Wheel – CISA – UNIGE. Retrieved from <https://www.affective-sciences.org/gew>

“Normally I don't really know how to use words to express how I'm feeling. So it was helpful to see so many words, and sit back and thinking about it.” *(15-year-old)*

“I found it really helpful actually, because I feel like I don't really usually I wouldn't be that aware or that conscious of like, how I'm feeling with social media and stuff. I feel like this kind of process has made it easier for me to understand how I feel when I'm on social media when I'm using it and when I'm not.” *(14-year-old)*

They gave examples of what they noticed:

“when I'm just scrolling, I feel like it's more like a neutral type of world. Unless there's something that's really exciting that's come up on my page, then it will just give me like a dopamine rush but with like talking to a friend is different. It would make me happier; it would make me like, you know, a bit more automatic scroll.” *(14-year-old)*

The effects were wide ranging: in some cases emotional reflection took the sting of envy out of social media:

“I think it's helpful to be able to like to sit down and think of like, how it's affected me...I feel like, since like, June, I don't really like feel the sort of thing where like, it's like, oh, I wish I was them.” *(15-year-old)*

The mood exercise helped some girls manage their social media feed:

“I'll try and make a conscious effort to unliking on my feed or whatever that comes up that's not good. I wouldn't just like anything that comes up because I'd see so much and so much would make me feel groggy. I feel like it will just be better to like things are interesting and kind of informative, educational. Something that will make you feel positive, depending on your interests. *(15-year-old)*

One teen girl's experience with this exercise was uneasy but potentially useful: it focused her attention on being on social media that made her feel guilty:

“Basically, after [completing the mood diary], I felt a bit guilty because I was like, I should have been studying. I've been on my

phone and then I started getting stressed because of it. I found it better when my mum just took it away from me because then she realizes where she was like, I'll give it back to you later. Once your exams are done.” (15-year-old)

In others, it fostered a more general awareness of the focus of low mood:

[The exercise] “did actually [help me see what was lowering my mood.] I think just kind of assessing my week and what my week was like, I saw what was getting me down. Mainly it was school and then like maybe just home as well, but both of them, sometimes...And I could see when I was low anyway, I was low when I was on social media.” (15-year-old)

Some noticed how their mood influenced their response to social media:

“I mean, kind of depends (how social media affects her mood), what I'm already feeling or what I'm going to look for. I'll see things that make me feel like some really positive thing that can make me look better about whatever it is, or make me like think or feel better, and be more positive. Then, in the same way, as when I'm already feeling kind of low, then I'll see things that would just make things a lot worse.” (15-year-old)

Some noticed how their mood changed when they came off social media. Here a 16-year-old realizes how mood can change quickly according to context:

“I guess like human emotions are always complicated and like affected by multiple things so if you did the survey during your time on social media then you might put like happy, confident and everything, but like the second you turn off is like a different log. You have like the pile of work in front of you that you need to do. So, I guess it shows you like the actual impacts of social media after you've switched off and you're faced with the reality of it.” (16-year-old)

And here a girl struggles valiantly to present the complexities of her own emotional awareness that is not always acknowledged by others:

“I know when I'm hurt. For example, some people don't know when they're going through, like, distress, but I feel like I know

when that's happening or when I'm happy. I can tell the difference. And I also know what to do when I'm in a bad mood. I also, I feel like I deal with things in a healthy way. I hope. I'm not. I personally don't like to communicate with people about how I feel. I like to keep it to myself. I know it's not healthy in some cases, but that's how I deal with it. But in general, like how I feel. I think it's a positive feeling. I don't feel sad all the time, but there are doubts. It's not always going to be positive. I don't feel that all the time. Yeah.

So normally when I am upset it's during my period. So I feel like a lot of people take it as, Oh, she's on her period and we shouldn't take it as seriously as it is. I don't really talk to people about it. I know I should, but I don't really, because I don't want to be invalidated with my feelings and I normally write about it. So it's not like it's not all bottled up. Most of the time it is.”

(15-year-old)

These responses can be compared to those in the Control Group when asked how they feel when they are on social media:

[Whether I notice my feelings] “sort of depends on how extreme my reaction is to the thing. It’s like, if I really, really don't like it, then I'm very aware of it. Yeah. If it's like upset me in a deeper way. Like I’m upset for a couple of days. Yeah, that I can see that. But overall, I don't really notice that much. Like, I'm just sort of okay.”

(15-year-old)

Common themes among the three groups – Role Model, Mood Diary and Control

The most striking difference between the DYF1 cohort and the DYF2 cohort was the different emphasis on idealized and sexual models. *In the DYF1 cohort, feelings of not measuring up to idealized images presented on social media was a major theme. In DYF2 it was more muted and when it arose there were factors other than social media that re-enforced it.* A 15-year-old who felt social media complicated her already uneasy body image explained, “I just feel like my mother could have helped me become more comfortable and also confident with like, developing as well” instead of “always telling me to cover up and worrying whether I should really wear a swimsuit like that.”

The DYF2 cohort, unlike the DYF1 cohort, already used social media to

seek out inspirational models. Therefore, the role model intervention, described by the DYF1 cohort as “transformative” was valued as an extension of their existing practice. The positive effect of this intervention was described in terms of introducing them to additional, missed or unexpected profiles that resonated with and expanded their interests.

In each of the three groups, *teen girls demonstrated proactive efforts to manage their social media feed*. They distinguished between passive uses of social media where they were scrolling through content “mindlessly” and active uses where they searched for posts that fed their interests. When they followed in this way, then, as one 15-year-old explained:

“You can find so much, inspirational photos, yeah, but also actual people that process something step by step – maybe it’s a ballet routine, or maybe sewing. And they’re compacted in short videos. So it’s superquick, which I love, and you can follow every step.”

The former – passive scrolling - left them feeling “bad because I wasted so much time” and “uneasy, kind of weird” but the latter more active pursuits expanded their interests and lifted their spirits about their schoolwork. [“I use social media like you use Google,” one 16-year-old explained.]

They themselves noticed how their more positive use of social media influenced the algorithms that governed their feed. They noticed that they could influence their feed by dismissing some threads or profiles using the “this doesn’t interest me” option. However, *they struggled with their efforts to gain control over social media and expressed anxiety about their lack of power*.¹² As a result, there was considerable cognitive dissonance in that a girl would state one view and moments later assert a contradictory view.

“I think [social media] gives me less anxiety... but it gives me more pressure. So it doesn't make me anxious...it just makes me feel more pressured to be and act and look a certain way...for me, I

¹² This theme is consistent with recent high profile stories in the US describing groups of GenZ that decide to give up mobile phones altogether <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/15/style/teens-social-media.html> or revert to flip phones <https://www.goodmorningamerica.com/wellness/video/gen-millennials-turning-flip-phones-mental-health-96684869> This suggests that in this respect the participants of DYF2 are representative of teens elsewhere.

get really anxious because social media has kind of molded this image into... especially girls that if you go to school you need to look excellent, look excellent to look okay.” (15-year-old)

“I keep away from things that disturb me. I just swipe “not interested.” So I manage that.”

But a moment later, she said, “There can be things that like really shock me, you know, and I can be low, really sad.” (16-year-old)

“I’m safety aware. I know what to look for,” one girl explained. But she follows this with, “The power of social media is extremely strong. And so if you do one small mistake, or if you see one thing, which can be interpreted that way, people can ruin your life.” (15-year-old)

Time management posed a challenge in social media use, and girls cited TikTok as the most “addictive” or time-wasting force. Girls in all three groups said they had deleted the app for TikTok either for a time, or permanently, because it absorbed so much of their time. “You start scrolling and suddenly it’s four hours later.” Some devised methods to regulate their time use such as putting their phone in a parent’s room or deleting the app. Those who re-installed the app set themselves rules: they should look at it only once a week, or for a strictly timed period of the day. The hoped to avoid wasting time while not missing out on what their friends were seeing.

We asked about the girls’ moods generally and also asked them to complete, in the interviews, the *Satisfaction with Life Scale*¹³ that is often used to assess the impact of social media on teen girls’ wellbeing¹⁴. There was no correlation between their general mood (and moods varied enormously, they were most likely to describe their general mood as “up and down”) and their score on the *Satisfaction with Life Scale*. Teen girls could report a very low mood and still recognize that their life is in many ways pretty good. This suggests that the *Satisfaction of Life Scale* may not be a useful measure for their wellbeing.

Conclusions and recommended actions

1. DYF2 confirms the effectiveness, longevity and replicability of the

¹³ Diener, E., Emmons, R.A., Larsen, R.J. & Griffin, S. (1985). The Satisfaction with Life Scale, *Journal of Personality Assessment*, 49, 71-75.

¹⁴ Amy Orban et al. (28 March, 2022). Windows of developmental sensitivity to social media. *Nature*.

DYF1 intervention in which positive and aspirational role models are incorporated in teen girls' social media feed.

Action: Continue to engage schools in rolling out the role model programme as a staple part of personal and social education.

2. DYF2 suggests that exercises involving naming of emotions and prompts to reflect on emotions give teen girls important tools for monitoring their own social media use. DYF2 also suggests that this exercise has benefits beyond social media use.

Action: Incorporate emotion words and mood reflection more widely; extent emotion reflections already in the school curriculum to social media use.

3. DYF2 shows that teen girls are eager to have greater control over their social media feed, and though they show sophisticated awareness of the impact of their social media use on their social media feed, they are daunted by the platform's power. They are also aware of the fast-moving changes of social media (something researchers need to take on board, too). They see keeping up with and managing new innovations in social media as inevitable features of their lives.

Action: Draw this report to the attention of the companies that run social media platforms; alert them to teen girls' responses and get their input. Currently companies hosting social media platforms respond to high profile but rare disasters linked to social media use. It is important to reduce such harm; it is also important to enhance social media use generally. The DisruptYourFeed projects show that social media enhancement - not in the usual sense of "user experience" but in the sense of a healthier social media diet - requires input from the thoughtful, articulate and savvy teen girls themselves. The rich resource of teen girls' own experiences and aims should not be squandered.

Terri Apter's new book, *The Teen Interpreter: a guide to the joys and challenges of raising adolescents*, was published in 2022 to wide acclaim.

With thanks to the amazing students who participated in this study and their wonderful teachers who facilitated the interviews. Participating schools: Parkside Community College, Mulberry School for Girls, Tiffin School, Carshalton High School for Girls.