**Argument Assembler Activity – Social Media Debate – Evidence**

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**“Within our data we noticed that youth are making connections with people they already know from their offline world. They are not engaging in risky behaviors” (Stephanie Reich, Professor of Education, U. of California at Irvine, “Online Social Networking Can Be Good for Teens,” Video, 2013).**

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**Teens have multi-faceted ways of maintaining their relationships. Social relationships are key to teen development, and social media help with building those relationships (Stephanie Reich, Professor of Education, U. of California at Irvine, “Online Social Networking Can Be Good for Teens,” Video, 2013).**

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­­­­­­­­­­­­­ **Social media can be used to broadcast or record fights, so that 50,000 people around the world can now be encouraging a**

**fight in a school or playground (Childhood Development Institute, “Not So Social Media,” Video, 2015).**

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**One way that social media encourages conflict is that posts are permanent, whereas words spoken off-line can be forgotten. Social media seems to be extending the life of disputes and rivalries among teens and their social groups (Childhood Development Institute, “Not So Social Media,” Video, 2015).**

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**One teen says that there’s a big difference between bullying in school and bullying on-line. “The major difference is that I’m only in school for a certain amount of time, but my phone I carry everywhere . . . [Teens] sleep with it [their phone] by their head” (Childhood Development Institute, “Not So Social Media,” Video, 2015).**

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**The video shows examples of online harassment that is racist and discriminatory against LGBTs. The examples were**

**made worse by their being anonymous (Childhood Development Institute, “Not So Social Media,” Video, 2015).**

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**“**[**Newly published research**](http://eab.sagepub.com/content/early/2014/05/31/0013916514539755.abstract) **suggests that the mere presence of a cell phone or smartphone can lessen the quality of an in-person conversation, lowering the amount of empathy that is exchanged between friends. The study, published in the journal *Environment and Behavior,* confirms the findings of a 2013** [**lab-based study**](http://spr.sagepub.com/content/30/3/237) **in a real-world setting. It suggests you don’t have to be actively checking your phone for it to divide your attention. Even without active use, the presence of mobile technologies has the potential to divert individuals from face-to-face exchanges, thereby undermining the character and depth of these connections. Individuals are more likely to miss subtle cues, facial expressions, and changes in the tone of their conversation partner’s voice, and have less eye contact” (Tom Jacobs, “Even Just the Presence of a Smartphone Lowers the Quality of In-Person Conversations,” Pacific Standard, July 14, 2014).**

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**People were once afraid that newspapers would make people less social because of the time they take away from face-to-face interaction, replacing it with reading. In reality, people adapt to new technologies. Research shows that today’s technology – social media – has enabled people to communicate with other people more often, and in more meaningful ways (Keith Hampton, Professor of Communication, Rutgers University, quoted in The Wall Street Journal, “Is Technology Making People Less Sociable,” May 10, 2015).**

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**“It's something everyone suspected, but now it's official: The under-30 crowd is addicted to their cell phones.**

**Those are the findings of a new survey, which showed that as millennials spend more time engaged on social media platforms, it's causing them to be less social in real life. The study, conducted by Flashgap, a photo-sharing application with more than 150,000 users, found that 87 percent of millennials admitted to missing out on a conversation because they were distracted by their phone. Meanwhile, 54 percent said they experience a fear of missing out if not checking social networks” (Uptin Saiidi, “Social Media Making Millennials Less Social: Study,” CNBC, October 17, 2015).**

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**Half of teens say that they are on social media while doing their homework. And about half of all teens also say that**

**being on social media doesn’t distract them from school work and learning. But researchers disagree. A Stanford University study showed that there are very significant negative effects cognitive control and the ability to process information when students are using social media (Kelly Wallace, “Teens Spend a Mind-Blowing Nine Hours a Day Using Media,” CNN, November 3, 2015).**

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**“A new study has found that teenagers who engage with social media during the night could be damaging their sleep and increasing their risk of anxiety and depression. Teenagers spoke about the pressure they felt to make themselves available 24/7, and the resulting anxiety if they did not respond immediately to texts or posts. Teens are so emotionally invested in social media that a fifth of secondary school pupils will wake up at night and log on, just to make sure they don’t miss out” (June Edorie, “Social Media Is Harming the Mental Health of Teens,” The Guardian, September 16, 2015).**

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**“A separate study by the National Citizen Service found that, rather than talking to their parents, girls seek comfort on social media when they are worried. The survey also suggests that girls are likely to experience stress more often than boys – an average of twice a week. Teens' night-time use of social media 'risks harming mental health.’ Read more**

**It is becoming more and more obvious how the pressures of social media disproportionately affect teenage girls (June Edorie, “Social Media Is Harming the Mental Health of Teens,” The Guardian, September 16, 2015).**

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**Given the extent of the use of social media, even if it wasn’t especially harmful, the sheer fact that teens are spending so**

**much time away from school and studying every day means that social media must have a negative impact on students’ academic achievement (June Edorie, “Social Media Is Harming the Mental Health of Teens,” The Guardian, September 16, 2015).**

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**There are more people on Facebook right now than there were on the entire planet 200 years ago. Social media is bringing the world closer together, and generating concern about global affairs where there was none, even recently (CASE Foundation, “Social Media as a Power for Good,” video, 2013).**

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**“Social media has created a digital global village, enabling democracy and mobilizing activism.” For example, in**

**Mexico social media is used to identify and fight drug cartel activity and operations. And in India, social media is used to call out governmental corruption (University of East Anglia, “Does Social Media Have the Power to Change the World?” video, 2014).**

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**“The communication benefits offered by our smartphones allow us to meet and keep in touch with people we might**

**never have ordinarily known. I have many work colleagues I've never met in person but with whom I've carried out enlightening conversations through email and messaging. I have family members and neighbors in my social media list that live throughout the country, and I have been able to keep up on what they're doing to get to know them, and vice versa (Scott Matterson, Tech Republic, “Are Smartphones Making Us Less Social?” December 8, 2014).**

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**“There have always been escape hatches for antisocial or just plain bored people to use in order to avoid contact with**

**others. If it involves something to preoccupy your time, you can use it to ignore people, whether it's a book, a crossword puzzle, a music player or a smartphone. If you're playing Candy Crush or some other solitary pursuit on a smartphone it might be argued you're missing out on the society around you, but many people who seek to be left alone for some quiet time just aren't going to walk up to strangers and ask about their day in the absence of all other forms of entertainment. It's a foolish argument to state that antisocial people will become social butterflies with no escape hatches to avoid it” (Scott Matterson, Tech Republic, “Are Smartphones Making Us Less Social?” December 8, 2014).**

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**“Indeed, social scientists who study young people have found that their digital use can be inventive and even beneficial.**

**This is true not just in terms of their social lives, but their education too. So if you use a ton of social media, do you become unable, or unwilling, to engage in face-to-face contact? The evidence suggests not. Research by Amanda Lenhart of the Pew Research Centre, a US think-tank, found that the most avid texters are also the kids most likely to spend time with friends in person. One form of socializing doesn't replace the other. It augments it” (Clive Thompson, “Teenagers and Social Networking: It Might Actually Be Good for Them,” The Guardian, October 5, 2013).**

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**“Parents are wrong to worry that kids don't care about privacy. In fact, they spend hours tweaking Facebook settings or using quick-delete sharing tools, such as Snapchat, to minimize their traces. Or they post a photograph on Instagram, have a pleasant conversation with friends and then delete it so that no traces remain” (Clive Thompson, “Teenagers and Social Networking: It Might Actually Be Good for Them,” The Guardian, October 5, 2013).**

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**“In fact, the online world offers kids remarkable opportunities to become literate and creative because young people can now publish ideas not just to their friends, but to the world. And it turns out that when they write for strangers, their sense of "authentic audience" makes them work harder, push themselves further, and create powerful new communicative forms” (Clive Thompson, “Teenagers and Social Networking: It Might Actually Be Good for Them,” The Guardian, October 5, 2013).**

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