



THE YOUTH COMMITTEE

SHSMUN'20



United Arab
Emirates



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SHSMUN's youth committee aims at empowering MUN newcomers to engage in debate and bringing youth under one roof to discuss a variety of pressing issues. The youth committee follows in the steps of the UN rules of procedure. However, it does not apply the representation of countries like in other committees, but instead allows the newcomers to freely express their own opinions on the issues at hand. "If the mind can conceive it, one can achieve it," and this idea is the basis which we are working upon to encourage delegates and amplify their potentials.

Topic 1: Vaping

1. Introduction to the topic:

The electronic cigarette or e-cigarette is a modern product that is based on a handheld battery-powered vaporizer that simulates smoking through a variety of characteristics, such as the hand-to-mouth action; however, this does not include burning tobacco. Using an e-cigarette is known as "vaping," and the user is referred to as a "vaper." The user inhales an aerosol called vapor, and e-cigarettes typically have a heating element that atomizes e-liquid. E-cigarettes are automatically activated by taking a puff; others turn on manually by pressing a button. Most versions are reusable, though some are disposable. E-liquids usually contain propylene glycol, glycerin, nicotine, flavorings, additives, and differing amounts of contaminants. E-liquids are also sold without propylene glycol, nicotine, or flavors.

2. The debatable risks and benefits:

The benefits and the health risks of e-cigarettes are uncertain. There is tentative evidence they may help people quit smoking, although they have not been proven to be more effective than smoking cessation medicine. There is concern with the possibility that non-smokers and children may start nicotine use with e-cigarettes at a rate higher than anticipated than if they were never created. Following the possibility of nicotine addiction from e-cigarette use, there is concern children may start smoking cigarettes. Regulated US Food and Drug Administration nicotine replacement products may be safer than e-cigarettes, but e-cigarettes are generally seen as safer than combusted tobacco products. The long-term effects of e-cigarette use are unknown, which also raises doubts concerning the actual safety of the device.

According to John Hopkins Medicine, "there's almost no doubt that they expose you to fewer toxic chemicals than traditional cigarettes." Nevertheless, it causes you to crave a smoke and suffer withdrawal symptoms if you ignore the craving. Nicotine is also a toxic substance. It raises your blood pressure and spikes your adrenaline, which increases your heart rate and the likelihood of having a heart attack.

3. Epidemiology:

Among youth, e-cigarettes are more popular than any traditional tobacco product. In 2015, the U.S. surgeon general reported that e-cigarette use among high school students had increased by 900 percent, and 40 percent of young e-cigarette users had never smoked regular tobacco. There are three reasons e-cigarettes may be particularly enticing to young people. First, many teens believe that vaping is less harmful than smoking. Second, e-cigarettes have a lower per-use cost than traditional cigarettes. Finally, vape cartridges are often formulated with flavorings such as apple pie and watermelon that appeal to younger users. Both youths and adults find the lack of smoke appealing. With no smell, e-cigarettes reduce the stigma of smoking. “What I find most concerning about the rise of vaping is that people who would’ve never smoked otherwise, especially youth, are taking up the habit,” says Blaha from John Hopkins medicine. “It’s one thing if you convert from cigarette smoking to vaping. It’s quite another thing to start up nicotine use with vaping. And, it often leads to using traditional tobacco products down the road.”

4. Recommendations:

Your job, delegates, throughout this conference, is to consider the above benefits and risks concerning vape, and stating your personal opinions and stances towards the topic.

5. Questions to consider:

- Are vaping devices saving society from the dangers the high percentage of chemicals in traditional cigarettes bring?
- Are all the risks worth the benefits of e-cigarettes?
- Are e-cigarettes actually increasing the prevalence of smoking in today’s world and harming the younger ones instead of saving those who have already become addicted?

References:

<https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/wellness-and-prevention/5-truths-you-need-to-know-about-vaping>

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Topic 2: Social Media

1. Introduction to the topic:

Social media is a very relevant issue of discussion in this day and age. According to Tufts, “social media refers to the means of interactions among people in which they create, share, and/or exchange information and ideas in virtual communities and networks”. Almost everyone uses social media nowadays, and the different types of platforms continue to increase in number. It is hard to imagine a time when people were not connected via social media and were not constantly updated on each other’s lives through numerous posts, including photos, texts, and more.

2. The history of social media:

Social media has rapidly risen to become a vital part of our everyday life. Internationally, over 2.6 billion people use social media. According to historycooperative.org, “social media is understood as the different forms of online communication used by people to create networks, communities, and collectives to share information, ideas, messages, and other content, such as videos”. Some are simply used for communication, such as messaging applications like Whatsapp and Viber, while others are profile-based, such as Facebook and LinkedIn. There are other types as well, such as YouTube and GMail. Most people link the beginning of the emergence of social media to the 19th century, when telegraphs were used as a means of communication, since social media’s ability to connect different people is one of its most prominent characteristics. However, this connection definitely did not happen online at first. Online communication began to happen around the 1980s, when personal computers became more widespread, and then around the 1990s, with the rise of blogging.

3. The debatable risks and benefits:

While social media is a great tool to bring people closer, it is also quite dangerous. Not only is one’s privacy compromised, but there is also a large risk to become addicted to this type of “social interaction”. In addition, social media has made cyberbullying as easy as a click of a button. Teenagers today are subjected to haters online who, because of their hiding behind a screen, are more likely to say even harsher words than ones they would say face-to-face. Furthermore, social media acts as a distraction to students everywhere. As mentioned on eastside-online.org, “as social media is becoming so much more popular, students all over the country and in various grades spend a large amount of their time communicating online”. Instead of doing homework, children are spending their time at home scrolling through different social media applications for hours on end. An article posted on medicalxpress.com discussed a recent study by Lancaster University finding that “social media stress can lead to social media addiction”. According to this research, a greater diversity of social media activities meant a higher risk for addiction as the users are spending more time on those different platforms overall.

While these issues should not be ignored, social media is not all bad. Social media has connected people from all around the world, relatives and strangers alike. It is also a means for people away from their families to keep in touch. People who feel left out in their own communities are finding groups of similar people they can bond with online. To add, businesses are probably benefiting from this rise in social media use the most. Today's market is almost always online, so it has become increasingly easy to reach all types of people at once. Online businesses are also on the rise. Despite these facts, social media remains a controversial topic in many conversations today.

It is no question, then, that social media is now an inseparable part of our world. The real question, however, is whether this increase of worldwide users is really all that beneficial in the long run. While several people stand with social media and its ongoing popularity, advocating for its power in today's world and ability to unite more than divide, social media still presents very real risks. Whether or not these risks are worth people turning their backs on social media altogether is still a debate.

To many, it is intriguing to see what the next generation of adults, who have documented their lives online since they were practically children, will be like. These people are growing up in both a world of reality and fantasy – one world where they cannot be but their true selves and the other where they can practically be anything they want to be. It is almost as if every child or teenager will now grow up with two different versions of themselves – if not more.

The topic and debate of social media brings about the discussion of another important issue – online dating. Some do not mind this now widespread way to form new relationships, while others still do not feel safe meeting and socializing with strangers online. While online dating has been prevalent for quite a while, the recent booming of social media just makes it easier and more accessible.

4. Recommendations:

- Become familiar with general information about social media and why it has become so widespread today
- Research both the advantages and disadvantages of social media before taking a stance
- Pick a side and stick to it – how do you think social media has affected our society?
- Have enough arguments to back up your opinion on social media
- Be ready to support your arguments with proven facts

5. Questions to consider:

- Is social media an advantage to all age groups alike? Can people of all ages benefit from these platforms?
- What are some of the risks social media presents?
- Are new ways of meeting people (i.e. dating websites and applications) a competitor for traditional ways of meeting people and getting to know them?
- Is the continuously increasing ease by which people can communicate online (i.e. texting, which has now become a part of most other social media platforms) replacing true human connection – the basis for establishing meaningful relationships?
- Could people who have now lived through a somewhat of a digital age manage life without social media?
- Does social media merely make already-existing processes easier or does it actually provide entirely new ways and opportunities?
- What might be different in a world without social media?

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