Social Media Influences on Tobacco Use in Adolescents

Social media use in adolescents:

- 1/3 of students in grades 4-6 have a Facebook account
- 16% of students in grades 4-6 and 47% in grades 7-11 have a Twitter account
- YouTube is the most popular website amongst Canadian youth (75%)
- 77% of students in grades 6-12 get more than the recommended 2 hours of screen time on most days of the week

Our youth are watching

- Repeated exposure to tobacco ads on social media increases the chance that youth will begin to use tobacco products.
- Viewing a friend’s online pictures showing them drinking and partying can increase smoking and alcohol use among adolescents.

Take Action, Reduce the Harm

- Avoid screen time for children younger than 2 years of age. Limit screen time to one hour or less for children 2-4 years and to two hours or less for all other children and adolescents.
- Provide media education for children and adolescents at home, school and within the community.
- Increase education on the negative effects of viewing risky content online.

Youth Exposure to Tobacco Products on Youtube:

- Videos predominantly portray smoking as glamorous and desirable rather than addictive and deadly
- Tobacco appears in 22% of popular music videos

Sources:
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