Digital Diet: Addressing the Effects of Social Media & Internet Addiction on Stress and Anxiety Levels in Students

Brianna Janey

A Senior Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for graduation in the Honors Program
Liberty University
Fall 2020
Acceptance of Senior Honors Thesis

This Senior Honors Thesis is accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for graduation from the Honors Program of Liberty University.

______________________________
Brianna O’Neal, M.F.A.
Thesis Chair

______________________________
Stacy R. Cannon, M.F.A.
Committee Member

______________________________
James H. Nutter, D.A.
Honors Director

______________________________
Date
Abstract

The contents of this thesis will address the effects of social media and internet addiction on stress and anxiety levels within students. The research process began by comprehensively defining the problem as being how online usage affects the levels of stress and anxiety within students. After establishing the problem, a review of existing literature presenting possible solutions to this problem was conducted. Each artifact was assessed for overall effectiveness in relation to the target demographic. Finally, a cohesive digital social good campaign that seeks to encourage students to create mindful online habits is presented as a creative solution that successfully integrates the research conducted through both intentional aesthetics and thoughtful content.
Digital Diet: Addressing the Effects of Social Media & Internet Addiction on Stress and Anxiety Levels in Students

On April 30, 1993, English computer scientist Tim Berners-Lee released the source code for the world’s first web browser and editor, dramatically and forever altering the way humans communicate with one another. The birth of the WorldWideWeb changed the way the world worked and continues to affect our daily lives over twenty years later. Today, the online world has expanded beyond simple HTML websites and is dominated by intricate social, video, and gaming platforms that span across countless operating systems. Over 4.39 billion people are estimated to use the internet—more than half of the global population (History.com). We now live in a world where the current generation of youth has never known life without this instant connectivity; everything from social interactions to education is being experienced almost completely online.

Defining the Problem

Since the invention and expansion of the internet has provided the rising Generation Z, those born in 1996 and later, with an unprecedented level of access and connectivity, it has completely revolutionized the way they communicate and share information, becoming an increasingly integral part of their daily lives (Meet Gen Z). However, while it has saturated nearly every aspect of our culture, we are only just beginning to take note of all the ways it impacts our lives. For example, identified rates of anxiety and depression in young people (ages 16-24) have increased by 70 percent over the past 25 years, perhaps not-so-coincidentally correlating almost exactly with the timeline of global internet accessibility (Status of Mind). With a growing emphasis being placed on mental health and wellbeing within the high school
and college student communities, it is important to stop and evaluate exactly how internet usage affects the daily life of the average high school or college student.

A major area of concern about the effects of internet usage on the mental health and wellbeing of students is its relation to stress and anxiety levels. As students spend more time online, a correlated increase in the amount of stress and anxiety can often be observed, which then permeates across other aspects of both their social and academic lives. Factors that contribute to this rise may include both the amount of time being spent online, as well as the specific content that is being consumed. In order to combat this issue, I have created a cohesive and persuasive digital social good campaign that challenges the target demographic to reevaluate their current online habits and encourages them to build more mindful online practices. Such practices include not only limiting the amount of time spent online, but also regulating the content consumed and working to create a positive online environment for both the student and those with whom they interact. However, before presenting the creative solution, the problem must be properly defined in order to clearly convey the purpose of this research.

**Time Spent Online**

One primary correlation between internet usage and levels of stress and anxiety is the amount of time students are spending online. In recent years, studies have shown that teens and young adults today spend an unprecedented amount of time on social media sites and the internet as a whole. According to a study conducted by Common Sense Media, the typical teenager (between the ages of 13 and 18 years old) spends an average of about nine hours per day online (Rideout 13), while a survey conducted by Educause found that the average young adult (between the ages of 18 and 29 years old) may spend anywhere from three to eight hours total online per day (Galanek, et al.). At the high end of this spectrum, students are consuming online
content for the same equivalent of time as the average full-time worker spends at their job. Another way to put those figures into perspective, that amount of time spent online also equates to an average of about 2,500 hours per year, which is equivalent to over 100 days. In essence, most high school and college students are spending nearly a third of their year consuming various forms of online content.

While the overall amount of time being spent online is certainly concerning, exactly how that time is being spent is also crucial in identifying how internet usage leads to higher levels of stress. Time spent online may be spread across multiple devices and include both productive activities like homework and study as well as passive ones like social media, streaming, and gaming. The aforementioned study by Common Sense Media reported that the majority of the time teenagers spend online falls under the categories of either passive consumption or communication. College students told Educause that they spend almost half of their online time doing homework and research, yet social media and streaming combined take up almost just as much time (Galanek, et al.). By and large, when considering only passive activities, the time students spend online consists predominantly of social media apps and sites.

Current high school and college students are by far the most active age group on social media, with 94 percent reporting to a study conducted by Hill Holliday that they use at least one social media platform, and 46 percent admitting that they use social media almost constantly (Meet Gen Z). This generation has grown up so completely immersed and surrounded by the online world, that half of them even admit that their online and physical interactions often blend together. Average daily social media consumption for both teens and young adults is about 2 hours (Rideout & Galanek), which translates to an entire month out of every year spent mostly passively scrolling on their smartphones. According to an article published in the North Carolina
Medical Journal, teens and young adults are particularly drawn to social media usage because of their developmental stage. The article states:

“During adolescence, rapid development of the brain’s socioaffective circuitry may heighten sensitivity to social information, increasing the drive for social rewards and concern over peer evaluation. Important developmental tasks of adolescence include the establishment of intimate peer relationships, increasing independence from adults, and the exploration of identity. Social media offers a prime context for navigating these tasks in new, increasingly complex ways: peers are constantly available, personal information is displayed publicly and permanently, and quantifiable peer feedback is instantaneously provided in the form of ‘likes’ and ‘views’. (Nesi 116) ”

Teens and young adults thus use social media as a means to fulfill their innate desires for connection, self-identity, and acceptance. However, this often leaves them vulnerable to placing too much emphasis on their online personas and becoming obsessed with such social platforms.

In a research study conducted by the Royal Society for Public Health, it is stated that social media could be considered more addictive than cigarettes or alcohol, and that at least five percent of young people are affected by social media addiction (Status of Mind). This addiction often leads to physical side effects like lack of sleep, which may be connected with increased levels of stress and anxiety. A correlation can also be made between stress levels and the number of social media sites with which users are engaging. In a study that surveyed young adults asking them to report usage of 11 various social media platforms, those who reported using 7-11 platforms were more than three time more likely to report high levels of anxiety than those who used 0-2 platforms (Primack, et al. 3). The study conducted in 2019 by Hill Holliday identified Instagram, Snapchat, and Facebook as the most popular social media apps used by this age
DIGITAL DIET

Teens and young adults often have profiles on several or all of these specific apps or similar ones, with the average user engaging in at least four separate platforms. This need to engage with multiple kinds of social platforms is closely related to social media addiction.

**Negative Effects of Social Media Use**

When asked what specific online activities typically leave them feeling more stressed or anxious, social media is almost always identified as a key source of negativity. Common negative effects related to stress and anxiety as a result of frequent social media usage include feelings of loneliness and insecurity as well as the fear of missing out. While 74 percent of teens and young adults believe that social media provides more benefits than drawbacks in their own lives, 48 percent of social media users also report that they have experienced feelings of anxiousness, sadness, and/or depression as a result of social media usage (Meet Gen Z). An interesting point to note is that many of the reasons students typically give for using social media are often directly linked to negative effects associated with a moderate to high level of internet usage. Some level of these effects may be linked with the amount of time spent engaging in social media but are more closely related to the actual content being consumed and/or created.

**Loneliness**

A typical young person often associates their preference of social media platforms over somewhat more traditional methods of communication with the idea that social media provides them with the opportunity to interact with a broader community of people and allows them to be more connected with friends and family who are not physically present. Yet, in a survey of young people conducted by the Royal Society for Public Health, the results showed that most feel as though popular social media apps like Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and Snapchat actually increase the amount of loneliness they experience (Status of Mind). In this case, hours
spent online are accompanied by a void of true personal interactions. Even when a group of high
school or college aged friends are hanging out in a physical setting, it would not be atypical to
find them spending more time engrossed in their individual virtual devices rather than interacting
with one another. This degree of loneliness is often an accompanying or attributing factor to
higher levels of anxiety, as it creates a longing for social interaction and acceptance.

**Insecurity**

Another consistent problem created by frequent social media usage is the development of
high levels of insecurity typically stemming from negative online experiences in the form of
comparison and/or cyberbullying. In her article entitled “How Using Social Media Affects
Teenagers,” Rachel Ehmke states the following about the role social media and comparison play
in insecurity levels within teens:

> Peer acceptance is a big thing for adolescents, and many of them care about their image
> as much as a politician running for office, and to them it can feel as serious. Add to that
> the fact that kids today are getting actual polling data on how much people like them or
> their appearance via things like “likes.” It’s enough to turn anyone’s head. Who wouldn’t
> want to make herself look cooler if she can? So kids can spend hours pruning their online
> identities, trying to project an idealized image.

She goes on to discuss how teenagers have always been worried about self-image, but the online
world puts them face to face with more pressure than ever before. From fun and seemingly
harmless Snapchat filters to excessive use of Photoshop, social media constantly bombards its
users with comparison traps. In the study conducted by Hill Holliday in 2019, it was determined
that 35 percent of social media users within the student age group state that social media has
“hurt their self-esteem or made them feel insecure,” an increase from 29 percent when the same
study was conducted in 2017. Because most teens and young adults already have some degree of insecurity typically associated with adolescence and a lack of self-identity, they are the most susceptible to the pitfalls of comparison, creating obsessive behavior and higher levels of stress and anxiety. Comparison also engenders the feeling that one must create the perfect digital persona in order to measure up to everybody else. One young adult social media user, surveyed in the previously mentioned study, commented in regard to the negative effects of social media, “feeling like you have to perform in some way or create some sort of image for yourself on your profile can be anxiety-provoking” (Meet Gen Z). Teens and young adults often end up portraying themselves online in a way that is completely different from who they are in reality. This creates an ongoing source of stress and anxiety as they attempt to keep up this digital persona.

While comparison is an internal issue linked with insecurity and social media, students also experience external pressures and attacks in the form of cyberbullying. Today, about seven out of ten young people claim to have experienced some form of cyberbullying, with 37 percent of all young people stating that they experience cyberbullying at a high-frequency rate (Status of Mind). Unfortunately, the indirect and impersonal nature of online communication via social media platforms has made it significantly easier for students to be cruel to one another. For example, while girls typically do not like to be confrontational or disagreeable in face-to-face interactions, they may become more relationally aggressive in digital social exchanges (Ehmke). Instead of learning how to disagree without jeopardizing a relationship, online interactions are teaching adolescents to be harsh without hesitation or consideration for the relationship. These attacks are often personal and cut deep, causing high levels of self-doubt and insecurity in young people. Victims of bullying are also more likely to experience low academic performance, feelings of loneliness, depression, stress, and anxiety (Status of Mind).
Fear of Missing Out

Though a somewhat newer concept, another aspect of social media usage that contributes to increased feelings of stress and anxiousness in students is the “fear of missing out,” more commonly referred to as the shortened acronym, FOMO (Status of Mind). Fear of missing out is actually a recognized form of social anxiety that stems from the belief that others may be having fun while the person experiencing the anxiety is not present, resulting in the need to be constantly connected so that nothing happens without them. About 25 percent of teenage and young adult social media users say that social media has made them feel like they were missing out on something (Meet Gen Z). Students surveyed by RSPH reported that they experience the highest levels of FOMO from the social media apps Facebook, Instagram, and Snapchat, respectively in ascending order. This particular form of anxiety is often difficult to identify, as it is normal for teens and young adults to want to be included. It becomes an issue when this desire creates heightened levels of worry and obsessive tendencies.

Impact on Students

Although all of these effects are burdensome on their own, their combined weight is increasingly heavy when applied to the lives of students. When it comes to students specifically, there seems to be a relatively endless cycle between stress and anxiety and social media usage. The majority of students are at least somewhat aware of the negative effects of social media, yet they continue to use it, nonetheless. In this cycle, social media is often used as an escape from reality in order to avoid responsibilities like studying and coursework. While this temporary fix provides some momentary relief and fulfillment, studies actually show that using social media as a means of procrastination results in higher levels of academic stress, which in turn contributes to
the overall negative effects that the internet has on student lives as a whole (Meier 67); thus continuing the never-ending cycle between intense levels of stress and anxiety and an attempt to escape these ever-present worries through social media usage. Why not break the cycle by avoiding social media altogether? In spite of convincing data showing the negative effects of social media usage, 55 percent of teens and young adults still believe it has an overall positive impact on their happiness (Meet Gen Z).

**Reviewing Existing Literature**

Now that the need for this research has been clearly demonstrated through the identification and explanation of the problem, a review of existing literature seeking to solve this problem will be discussed in order to identify the gaps within existing knowledge on the subject. Upon a simple Google search inquiring about stress and social media, the majority of the results are articles and blog posts with various steps and tips on how to reduce the amount of time spent online. Countless self-help books have been written about this topic, so it would be impossible to review them all. For the purpose of this study, three separate literary works which seek to solve the same problem that has been proposed through this research will be reviewed and briefly assessed for overall effectiveness in relation to the target demographic.

**Artifact 1**

The first Artifact that will be reviewed is the book *Digital Detox: the Ultimate Guide to Beating Technology Addiction, Cultivating Mindfulness, and Enjoying More Creativity, Inspiration, and Balance in Your Life!* (2018) by productivity expert Damon Zahariades. This book is for anyone who is struggling with internet and/or social media addiction and is willing to do whatever it takes to break the cycle. Zahariades writes about the factors that contribute to online addictions and claims various life-changing benefits you could experience by taking a
“digital detox.” In the book, he clearly identifies specific steps to take on your way to this digital detox.

The methods Zahariades suggests would most likely be considered very extreme by both teens and young adults. This age group is aware of the negative effects of social media use but has considered the pros and cons and determined that the benefits outweigh the drawbacks. Because of this preexisting mentality, and the need for electronic devices to complete coursework and study, the drastic changes suggested within Digital Detox would not be sustainable for students in the long term.

Artifact 2

The second related artifact found is a book entitled Digital Minimalism: Choosing a Focused Life in a Noisy World (2020), written by New York Times bestselling author Cal Newport. In this book, Newport applies the Vox Minimalist approach of knowing how much is just enough in the digital realm. In writing Digital Minimalism, he sought to provide deep and meaningful solutions to the overarching problems created by internet and social media addiction that go beyond simple tips and hacks. Newport calls his solution the “digital clutter” and describes it as a rapid transformation:

Much like decluttering your house, this lifestyle experiment provides a reset for your digital life by clearing away distracting tools and compulsive habits that may have accumulate haphazardly over time and replacing them with a much more intentional set of behaviors, optimized, in proper minimalist fashion, to support your values instead of subverting them. (60)

The book itself is structured into two parts. In the first section, Newport lays the foundations for digital minimalism, discussing its philosophies and arguing why he believes it is the best solution
to the problem. The second section is about practices, giving tangible steps on how to cultivate a sustainable digital minimalist lifestyle.

While the principles within this book could be applied in the life of a student, many of the steps would be not feasible simply because internet usage has become an integral part of schooling, making many of the steps that suggest removing distracting tools altogether highly improbable and thus essentially ineffective. The idea behind the digital declutter is to refocus and discover activities outside of the online world. This could be beneficial for students, but as it has already been pointed out, the majority of students believe that social media has a positive impact on their lives. The likelihood of them maintaining a lifestyle that nearly abandons its use is highly unlikely.

**Artifact 3**

The final book that was found which also tries to solve a similar problem to the one proposed through this research is *The Tech Diet for your Child & Teen: The 7-Step Plan to Unplug & Reclaim Your Kid's Childhood (And Your Family's Sanity)* (2020) by Brad Marshall. Aimed towards the parents of young children and teenagers, this book seeks to provide a solid plan that can be easily put to action within a family unit in order to reduce the amount of time children are spending online. Marshall touts that his methods differ from those typically seen in other similar publications:

If you’ve read other books or interviews with experts, they typically suggest you ‘write up a plan or contract’ to encourage a healthy balance. In my experience, these are light on detail or you get a general proforma. Some books include a few pages on this area and that’s it – an afterthought…With this book, I provide you with a comprehensive guide to a realistic Tech Diet. (Introduction)
In the beginning of this book, he draws from psychological research in order to explain the science behind screen addictions. He then goes on to present his “comprehensive” solutions.

As with *Digital Minimalism*, the practical steps Marshall encourages focusing primarily on the reduction of the amount of time children and teens are spending online. This would be ineffective for the same reasons stated above. However, the general tone of this book is candid, friendly, and positive, which could resonate with the target audience for this project.

**Analysis**

While the tips, steps, and practices suggested in existing literary works addressing the topic of online addictions may be suitable for their target demographics, they do not translate well when trying to apply them in the lives of high school or college students. The majority of existing research focuses primarily on the amount of time being spent online. However, it is evident from the research that while this is a concern, suggesting drastic regulations of internet and social media usage would not be a sustainable method of reducing the amount of stress and anxiety students feel as a result from their time spent online. While abandoning social media for a period of time may temporarily reduce the amount of stress students experience, the reality is that most of them will find themselves wanting to re-engage.

**The Creative Solution**

After comprehensively defining the problem as the positive correlation between student online activity and the levels of stress and anxiety experienced and evaluating the ineffectiveness of prior discussions, a solution can now be explored. Because the problem is digital in nature and the target demographic spends a great deal of time on social media, it would follow that the solution should also be digital in order to meet the audience where they are. A creative solution integrated through social media and other digital avenues would make the solution easily
accessible for the target demographic, increasing its likelihood for success. As such, the solution being proposed is a cohesive digital social good campaign with visual aesthetics that follow current design trends in order to best capture the attention of the desired audience. This campaign would integrate the research that has been gathered regarding internet and social media usage, which suggests that while countless solutions focusing primarily on the amount of time being spent online have been proposed and implemented, it may not be the most effective way to reach students directly. Instead, it would be more effective to focus on how teens and young adults spend their time online and what kinds of content they are consuming.

For this reason, this cohesive digital campaign compels the student to take a closer look at their current online habits by asking them to join a brief 14-day challenge. At two weeks long, this challenge is just long enough to begin building a habit (Gardner 10) but short enough that it does not seem like a daunting commitment. It consists of a list of practical steps that have been created to specifically address issues discovered through this research. The goal of the challenge is to encourage students to build more mindful practices by not only limiting the amount of time they spend online, but also regulating the content they consume and working to create a positive online environment for both themselves and those with whom they interact. This increase in positivity would thereby reduce the overall effects of social media on levels of stress and anxiety.

**Significance**

This digital social media campaign is better suited for the target audience than the existing literature because it communicates with them directly via their preferred method of receiving information. While books may be more comprehensive in nature, the assumption is made that the audience is already aware of the problem and is actively seeking out a solution. With a digital campaign, both the problem and the solution are presented to the audience through
DIGITAL DIET

platforms that they use on a regular basis, simultaneously making them aware of the issue and compelling them to action. This solution is also unique in comparison to the existing literature because it moves away from the idea of eliminating social media altogether. Instead, it directly addresses the effects of social media on the lives of students in a feasible manner by focusing on fostering positive online experiences through mindful intake and intentional habits.

The Process

After determining that a social good campaign would be a suitable solution, the first step was to brainstorm potential names for the campaign. This step is particularly crucial, as it can set the tone for the rest of the project. A good starting point was to write out a list of words and ideas associated with the overall message of creating mindful online habits (See figure 1). The concept that related to the research the most was “Digital Diet,” as it encompasses the idea of limiting not only the amount of social media intake, but the specific kinds of intake.

Figure 1. This is an image of the brainstorming process.
Once a name was selected, the next step was to explore concepts for a logo (See figure 2 & 3). When trying to develop a logo for this campaign, factors like current aesthetics that are popular to the target demographic as well as the overall goal to engender a more positive online environment were considered. While several iconic solutions were explored, a typographic solution seemed to fit the best because it allows the purpose of the campaign to be clearly identified without prior awareness.

Figure 2. This is an image of initial thumbnail sketches for the logo in which both iconic and typographic solutions were explored. The idea behind the icons was to combine visual elements associated with both parts of the name of the campaign: “digital” and “diet”. However, many of these solutions felt forced and awkward.
Figure 3. This is another image of logo thumbnail sketches with a few further explorations of word and letter marks. Iconic elements were incorporated in order to give the mark distinguishing elements instead of relying solely on a typeface.

When a concept had been selected, it went through several iterations of digital refinement before arriving at a final solution (See figure 4).
Figure 4. This is an image of the phases of digital refinement of the logo. This particular style of typeface was selected based on the current prominence of “retro” style typography on Instagram (Marcos 08). This bubbly and energetic typeface breaths life and positivity into the design. The integrated icons were carefully crafted to reflect the styling of the typeface as well.

**Final Product**

After the logo was finalized, everything else began to fall into place. A brand identity system was quickly developed which could be used across all of the visual elements within the campaign (See figure 5–7).
Figure 5. This is an image of the final logo.

Figure 6. This is an image demonstrating the final color palette. The palette as a whole was inspired by social media trends which suggest that muted colors are currently popular (McCready 1). The specific colors were selected to reflect the happy and positive environment that the campaign is trying to promote. According to color theorist and brand identity expert Jill
Morton, the warm orange and yellow signify vitality and happiness, while the contrasting and cool blue-green brings a sense of calm.

Figure 7. This is an image of the typography chosen for the campaign.

Once the fundamentals of the brand identity had been finalized, elements for the campaign itself were created. Because the research showed that Instagram was one of the most popular sites used by students and is primarily used for sharing images, the best solution was to create a series of graphics made specifically for that platform. Each graphic reinforces the Digital Diet theme by juxtaposing illustrations associated with both diets and social media (See figure 8–10). The visual and verbal voices of these graphics were carefully crafted as to best ensure that they fit the primary goal of this campaign to create an uplifting environment, while still bringing attention to the problems of social media usage. Much of the meaning of these posts is implicit, drawing subconscious connections between dieting and the message being conveyed.
Figure 8. This is an image of the first Instagram post. The illustration of the scale correlates with the wording on the accompanying text graphic. This post calls viewers to evaluate the emphasis they are putting on certain aspects of social media and work to drop those things.
Figure 9. This is an image of my second social media post. The illustration of the smartphone on the plate coincides with the wording on the text graphic. With this graphic, viewers are challenged to carefully assess the content they are taking in.
Figure 10. This is an image of my final social media post. The illustration of the bench press is connected to the wording on the corresponding text graphic. The notable direct message iconography combined with the barbell demonstrates the idea that what we share can lift others up or weigh others down. The accompanying messaging asks viewers to be aware of the content they personally create and share, ensuring it helps engender a positive online environment rather than begging comparison or tearing others down.

The most crucial part of this campaign was the challenge itself. Because the focus of this campaign was to reach the target audience by using platforms they use on a regular basis, a designed document was created so that it could be easily accessed and viewed on smart phones (see figures 11 & 12). The official “Digital Diet” expands upon the ideas that are conveyed through the Instagram posts, giving actual practical steps on how those principles can be applied. First, steps 1-3 of this “Digital Diet” address feelings of loneliness by reducing distractions and the amount of time spent online, this way the participant has more time to focus on physical
interactions. Next, steps 4-6 address the issues of insecurity and FOMO by filtering out content that creates comparison and encouraging the intake of content that fosters positive attitudes. Finally, steps 7-9 take it further by promoting intentional behaviors that will help engender an online environment that is beneficial to others.
Figure 11. This is an image of the official “Digital Diet”.
Figure 12. This is an image of a simplified version of the “Digital Diet” that would be posted as a highlighted Instagram story which could be easily screenshots and saved at any time.
The final element created for this campaign was a website that provides information and additional support for those seeking to engage with the campaign. For the website, three individual pages were designed. The first page is a general landing page that grabs the attention of the viewer (See figure 12). The second page is a contact page that provides visitors with additional contact information and also allows them to reach out directly via a fillable form (See figure 13). The final page of the website contains the call to action, asking visitors to consider joining a 14-Day challenge to take the official “Digital Diet” (See figure 14). Since the target audience spends a lot of their time on mobile devices, the interactive challenge was also incorporated through a daily text message service that guides them through the official Digital Diet and gives encouragement and extra challenges along the way (see figures 15-17).
Figure 12. This is an image of the home page of the Digital Diet website. The overall layout and design of this microsite is clean and simple, calling attention to what is most important, but still allowing for easy navigation. The tag phrase “Mindful intake for a happier mind” was added here in order to further identify the purpose of the site.

Figure 13. This is an image of the contact page of the Digital Diet website.
Figure 14. This is an image of the call to action page of the Digital Diet website. Visitors may either sign up to receive a copy of the official “Digital Diet” along with daily text reminders and encouragement, or choose to simply download the document and try it out on their own.
Figure 15. This is an image showing how the 14-day challenge would be initiated after visitors register through the website.
Figure 16. This is an image of sample text messages that would be received during the challenge.
Figure 17. This is another image of sample text messages.

Conclusion

Limitations

While the research shows how this creative solution could theoretically be implemented, the next step to determine its actual effectiveness would be to implement the campaign. Further study and surveys would need to be conducted regarding how successfully it impacts the target audience. The campaign could also be expanded by promoting it on additional social media sites in order to increase the overall reach.
Final Thoughts

Although the success of the campaign itself could not be determined in this study, this creative solution does reach its goal of addressing the effects of social media and internet addiction on the levels of stress and anxiety in high school and college students. It does this by presenting practical steps through a medium that the target demographic encounters every day in a way that is visually crafted to capture their attention.
Works Cited


McCready, Ryan. “5 Social Media Graphic Design Trends You Need To Know For 2020.” 


