

The Importance of Social Networks in College

Most people know the name Myspace or Facebook when they hear them. Those in college can hardly go a day without hearing one of them or more than a few hours without checking on them. For those not as familiar with the social networks of Facebook or Myspace, here is a short summary. Basically both of these programs allow people to create a profile outlining their interests such as what music they listen to, what movies they like and so on. Some people even post their birthdays or hometowns. In the case of Facebook, each profile has a 'wall' on which friends can post short messages or sayings they want to share. If one has a more private message he wants to share, he can send a message directly to another user. Unlike the wall post, no one will have access to this but the person sending and receiving the message. Beyond these simple things, a plethora of new programs or 'applications' are springing up. These allow a user to do anything from sending an egg that will hatch over a few days to challenging people to a 'duel' in an online game.

Everyone familiar with these programs knows that there is a great number of Facebook and Myspace 'addicts' that cannot seem to function without logging on at least once a day. People are beginning to question whether or not these sites are healthy for students. There exist concerns about the safety of those who use it. An identity may be stolen or a user could be followed or stalked which could lead to any number of unfortunate outcomes. However, if Facebook and Myspace is used in moderation and the user is careful about privacy, these problems are easily avoidable. The problem of stalking is only really an issue if the potential stalker can find where this person lives. So if the user does not include that information on his or her profile, then there is no concern. As long as the numerous applications do not distract from one's social life in person, then these are not a problem either.

The positive outcomes of Facebook

Because Facebook is an online network, it is much easier to keep in touch with friends scattered all over the country or even the world. Acquaintances from high school can attain a profile and add their friends to their lists and share messages or wall posts. This is an excellent way to keep in touch without requiring a phone call, which can come at inconvenient times. The messages and wall posts create a perfect way to talk to old friends at both people's convenience. In addition, it is a great way to meet people as well. Say two people run into each other at a party and all they get are each other's names. If they have a Facebook, they can be found again later and perhaps a new friendship can arise where one otherwise would not have. All one has to do to get a great, safe experience out of using Facebook or Myspace is to be careful what information is posted and keep it from taking too much time away from other things.