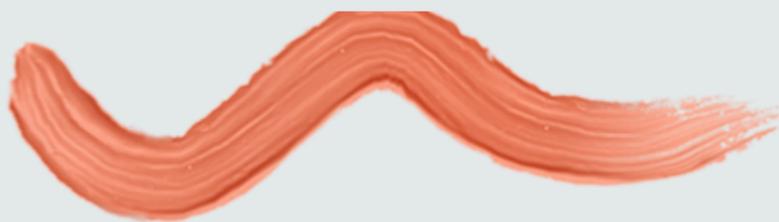




# TIKTALKING ABOUT YOU

GAINING A DIFFERENT TYPE OF VIEW



*Exploring the unconscious impact that social media has  
on 10-12 year-olds' self-identity.*

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## 1. Introduction

### ***1.1 Who provides this workshop?***

[Follow Your Sun](#) is an organization founded by Kiymet Schipper and Myrthe Oostenbach, who decided to start a project that would address something that they thought the world needs and which they could contribute to. Thus, in 2016 they decided to quit their job to follow their own Sun, and in 2017, the Follow your Sun Foundation was officially established. By following their Sun themselves, Myrthe and Kiymet hope to show others that it is possible to live a life that suits you best (Follow Your Sun, 2020).

“Follow Your Sun provides tailor-made workshops and teaching programs in which participants discover what gives them energy, what they are naturally good at and what they consider important for themselves and the world around them.” (Follow Your Sun, 2020). Therefore, with the help of students from the Rebuilding Education course at the Honours College of Leiden University, they now provide this workshop.

### ***1.2 What is the workshop?***

*Exploring the unconscious impact that social media has on 10-12 year-olds' self-identity.*

This is an introduction session that is aimed at students aged 10 to 12 years old and is meant to provide both information and material for self-reflection on how they use social media. Through three activities carried out in the session, the children have the opportunity to reflect and discuss on how they use social media, if they do, and what their experience is with it.

### ***1.3 Why is this workshop different?***

This workshop includes both the materials needed to give it and a complete guide on how to impart it, step by step. Therefore, anyone who wishes to give this workshop to their classroom does not need to do any additional work as all the steps and activities are explained in detail. All the elements of this workshop are explained and justified through an academic background, which makes it easy to understand the reasoning behind every section, and also its purpose. There are three activities scheduled with each one including

the elements of reflecting, positive encouragement, and discussions. The focus of this workshop is children’s self-identity, which means that not only will children have the opportunity to learn about social media and how they can have more control over how to use it, but there is also ample opportunity for students to reflect on who they are. Students will be able to explore the complexity and beauty behind their identity, and how social media can fail to capture everything that one is.

## 2. Glossary

This is a collection of common terms associated with social media use, and concepts which are used throughout the workshop.

Term	Definition
<i>Social Media-Related terms</i>	
Stories	A picture/video posted to someone’s profile, which can be viewed for 10 seconds in the ‘stories’ section of various social apps. They are often used to give a brief update on someone’s life.
Posts	Any type of media that is uploaded to someone’s profile and stays there permanently, but can be deleted by the user.
Feed	The incoming stream of content (e.g. stories, posts) you see from other users that you follow or that the media algorithm suggests to you.
Follower	A social media user who has subscribed to see what you post.  (verb: “following”)
Likes	Typically symbolized by a heart, they are public demonstrations which can be given to someone’s uploaded content as a show

	of approval, appreciation, or agreement.
FOMO	“Fear Of Missing Out”, usually referring to missing out on social opportunities.
Hashtag	A hashtag (#) is a way of categorizing your posts on social media to other posts on the same subject or trending topic by placing the symbol before the word.
Frequently used social media applications	<p><i>TikTok</i>: A highly popular social media platform for sharing 1-3 minute-long videos about a large variety of topics</p> <p><i>Snapchat</i>: A social media communication app to send pictures or videos only viewable to the receiver for a fleeting amount of time</p> <p><i>Instagram</i>: A social media platform where users can upload pictures as posts, short videos and stories which can be liked and commented on by anyone.</p> <p><i>YouTube</i>: A platform widely used for the upload and consumption of videos, falling within any imaginable topic.</p>
Private mode	A function where someone’s uploaded content is only visible to their followers.
Timeline	The chronological order in which one’s own posts show up on their profile and is viewable for other users.
<i>Theoretical Justification-related terms</i>	
Self-Determination Theory	The idea that individuals are motivated to grow and develop when the following three psychological needs are supported: autonomy (sense of ownership over one's actions), competence (feeling that one can succeed and grow), and relatedness (a sense of connection and belonging).
Social brain development	The connection between development of

	the brain and social processes and competencies.
Limbic system	Center for emotions.
Superior temporal sulcus	An example of a social brain part.
Myelination	A process in the nervous system (including the brain) during which some important functions will be strengthened (information travels faster as a result of myelination).
Intrinsic motivation	Doing something for the sake of the inherent enjoyment and satisfaction derived from the activity itself.
Extrinsic motivation	Doing something because of external pressures, such as punishments and rewards.

**3. Activities**

*Background*

The purpose of these activities is to improve relatedness and provide the students with a safe environment to talk about their social media habits with the help of interactive exercises.

**3.1 Photoshop Lineup**

20 minutes

Slides 4-17

Background

Given the concept of a flexible identity, which is elaborated on in the [theoretical background of this workshop](#), which can change depending on the context that one finds themselves in, it is relevant to look into how social media plays a part in this (Seargeant & Tagg, 2016). The identity that children create and engage with on social media will likely be different than

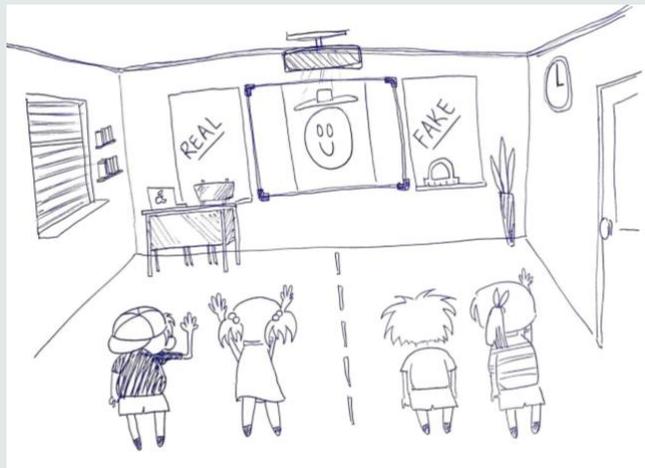
how they create their identity offline, and the match between these identities is something worth exploring for them as they observe their own 'identity creating' behavior.

The students won't necessarily learn something with mere exposure. Because of this, it is important to involve the children with the subject matter, by having the activity in the classroom and the discussion. This requires further processing and therefore the lessons learnt have a higher chance of being remembered (Ormrod, 2011).

The activity will closely resemble what the students will probably see and be exposed to in their (adult) life, instead of being something abstract. This is also known as authentic activities, which are those that closely resemble what people experience in everyday life, in this case outside of the classroom (Ormrod, 2011). With this, there is a higher probability that the students will apply the gained knowledge outside the classroom as well, which is ultimately the goal of the workshop.

### Materials

- Enough room to walk in the classroom and divide it into two halves the students can stand in
- The [slides with the pictures](#) that will be shown



### Instructions

1. Ask the students to stand up
2. Divide the classroom into two halves: one half says "no photoshop" and the other half says "photoshop"
3. Show the 10 photos included in the slides of the workshop materials (Slides 5 to 16)

4. The children have to decide whether or not the photo that is shown is photoshopped or not, depending on their judgment, they must stand on the side of the classroom they identify with for each picture.
5. After the exercise there will be time for a group discussion on why they made these judgments, and whether they think about the pictures being photoshopped or not.
  - a. This could also be done during the exercise if there's a clear division between the students

### Learning goals

With this activity, students will be able to:

- Recognize modifications in face- or body structure in pictures
- Evaluate whether the pictures are photoshopped
- Name the characteristics that are common in photoshopped pictures, which are summarized by DEEP and include:
  - Distortion in background
  - Extremely smoothed out skin on face/body
  - Exaggerated features (hips, abs, etc.)
  - People are made skinnier
  - DEEP! Easy to remember.
- Be able to recognise photoshopped pictures in their everyday social media use
- Develop a conversation about internalized beauty standards and being able to state them
  - Identify and verbalize these standards as a reflection of what is assumed to be photoshopped in the pictures. For example, what is assumed to be photoshopped might be seen as more beautiful. For example, it might be assumed that photoshopped equals to more beautiful.

The students will also experience the following:

- Be exposed to different kinds of edited photos which are often used in social media.
- By asking whether they think the photo is real or not, they have to reflect upon their own thoughts on the matter, and how they perceive beauty standards, among other connotations of edited pictures. For example: "Is editing pictures wrong?"

- Might open up about their own insecurities if they feel comfortable enough, or at least talk about their own experience on social media when it comes to posting pictures and seeing others'.
- Reflect on the difference between reality and social media as reflected by people's posted pictures and what they look like in reality.

### Discussion questions

*Before starting the discussion, students should be given the instruction that they should listen carefully to their peers. Before answering any question, they must paraphrase what the person who participated before them just said, in order to show that they are listening to each other.*

- Did you find the exercise difficult or easy? Why?
- Will you look at posts differently now that you know photoshopping is such a common practice?
- Do you know people who edit their photos?
- Have you ever thought of editing your photos? Why, or why not?
- How do you feel about people editing their photos? Why do you think they edit them?
- Do you sometimes feel like you 'have to' edit your photos in order to post or appear on social media?

*Allow the students to take a 5 minute break before the next activity.*

### **3.2 Draw Your Timeline**

**25 minutes**

*Slides 18-19*

### Background

Social media can be a great way to express yourself, but how do people decide what to share with others and what they would rather keep to themselves? The rise of social media has provided a platform on which people can create their own social circle and from that, a new form of identity can emerge (Hongladarom, 2011). With this exercise, the students will gain more awareness about what they are posting online and what their intention is

behind this decision. Furthermore, they will get insight about how they are perceived by others and whether or not they are informed about this.

By using drawing instead of speaking, the students are able to express themselves more easily because their cognitive load is reduced, which consequently ensures that the working memory can be used for the reflective part of the activity (Ormrod, 2011). Furthermore, this method is not only age-appropriate and productive but it is also experienced as more enjoyable for students (Luthuli et al., 2019).

In this activity, students will recreate their timeline, which could be their online profile for any social media they use, or simply an online portfolio which could be about anything the students choose.

### Materials

- Magazines
- Scissors
- Glue
- Pens, markers, colored pencils
- Activity handout

*Draw your Timeline*

Profile picture

Bio/self-description:

Caption:

Caption:

Caption:

Caption:

Caption:

Caption:

### Instructions

1. The students get the template “Draw Your Timeline”, included in the materials of the workshop, which contains 6 squares.
2. Students do not write their names on it.
3. The profile picture should be left blank, and they can include a picture of themselves after the workshop to make their ‘paper profile’ more personalized.
4. They can copy by drawing what they post on social media on the paper. Using cutouts from magazines they can also use the squares to make a collage of pictures instead of drawing.
5. For the children that do not use social media:
  - a. If they do not want to do that or they do not use social media, they can draw what they would want to show if they used social media.
  - b. Talk to those around you that do use social media about why they do, and if you want to, about why you don’t.

6. There will also be newspapers and magazines provided so the students can use that to express themselves as well.
7. After they are finished, the 'paper profiles' will be randomly given out to other students. *Explain to students that when they create a profile online it's the same thing as handing it over to someone, because it's just as visible and accessible by anyone who can access their profile.*
8. The students have to figure out whose timeline it is.
9. At the end, there will be a group/class discussion about the timelines.

### Learning goals

With this activity, students will be able to:

- Explore how they choose to portray themselves online
- Examine their interests, and if they choose to show these online, and if so, how and to what degree
- Question whether they are comfortable with (not) being recognized by their 'paper profile'
- Have awareness that their social media profile is as public and exposing as directly handing the 'paper profile' over to another student

Furthermore, the students will experience the following:

- Think about the things they want to share
- Information about how others perceive them based on their timeline
- Reflect on how who they are vs how they present themselves online and the relationship between these two concepts

### Discussion questions

*Before starting the discussion, at least five students should volunteer to make a positive comment about the timeline in front of them, and a good thing they think it says about the person who created it.*

- How did you feel about giving away your timeline?
- Do you want to share your timeline?
- Is there a reason that you drew this picture?

- What do you think of the timeline in front of you? Try to keep the comments positive and neutral, remember that this is a reflection of part of the life of someone in this room.
- Is there a big difference between how you present yourself and how the person who has your timelines sees you, and how you are in 'real life'?
- If you were recognised by your 'paper profile', do you feel comfortable with that?
- When using social media, do you enjoy observing what others post, their life?
- Is it good for you and does it add value to you to observe what others post?

*Allow the students to take a 5 minute break before the next activity.*

### **3.3 Iceberg challenge**

20 minutes

Slides 20-21

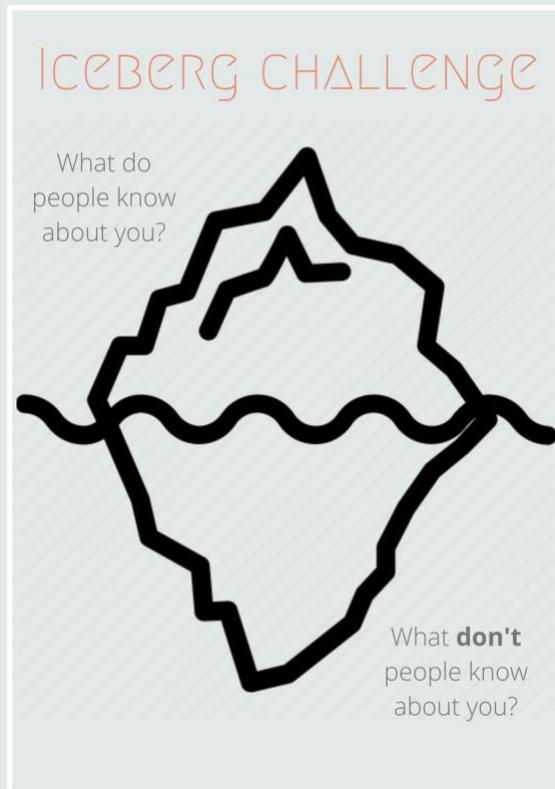
#### Background

Now that students have been able to discuss the difference between their online and offline identity, and who they are as a person who can have both of these identities, the following activity will be the final opportunity in the workshop for deeper self-reflection. Students have been able to think about who they are, and what is important to them, therefore, this activity will expand on these reflections by allowing for further self-reflection and conversations about what students think of themselves.

Self-identity is a malleable concept - it is largely dependent on the social context (Sherwood, 1965). Thus, it is important to draw children's attention to the differences between the social context of social media and their community. Social media is focused on surface-level, mostly visible qualities of people. Since children use social media in increasing numbers, it is beneficial to remind them that that is not all there is to people.

#### Materials

- Pens
- Activity handout



### Instructions

1. Hand out the papers with the iceberg printed on them
2. On the peak: the students write/draw/stick on the things that people know about them
3. On the bottom: the students write what people don't know about them
4. The students won't be forced to read what they write out loud, it will be just for themselves but they are welcome to speak about what they wrote at the end of the activity
5. Optionally, prompts can be given to help them out
  - a. Do people know
    - i. Your favorite foods?
    - ii. If you have siblings?

- iii. The thing that always makes you happy?
  - iv. Your favorite song?
  - v. What makes you sad?
  - vi. What are some of your fears?
6. Discussion about the takeaway message, which is that there is so much to the people around us that we can't begin to know simply through social media, and our peers are much more complex and beautiful than we can imagine.

### Learning goals

With this activity, students will be able to:

- Identify differences between their outward qualities (those that someone appears to have and which are easily known by their peers) and their invisible qualities (those that are not obvious at first sight)
- Understand the difference between what they see in their peers versus how their peers view themselves
- Discover alternative and untouched aspects of their own self-identity
- Learn more about how their peers view and define themselves
- Realize the complexity behind one's identity and the variety of things that makes us 'us'.

### Discussion questions

- Name two facts that you didn't know before about the student sitting next to you.
- How do you think what you drew compares to what you present of yourself on social media?
- How do you think what you see of other people reflects who they are as people?
- If any student is open to it, they can volunteer to say out loud one thing they wrote on the top half of the paper and one on the bottom half.
- Imagine opening your social media and seeing a person that you follow posting a picture on vacation, looking like the happiest person alive. Would you start comparing yourself to them? What would you tell someone who feels bad when seeing that picture?

Concluding message:

“You have all been very brave in opening up, so please give yourselves a pat on the back and a round of applause for your peers!”

*If the students agree to, post up the timelines and icebergs around the classroom at the end of the workshop as a reminder of the conversations they had and what they learnt.*

## **4. Conclusion**

15 minutes

### **4.1 Recap questions:**

*Slide 22*

1. What are the main characteristics that can show you whether a picture is photoshopped? Remember DEEP.
2. What internalized beauty standards did you realize you hold?
3. What is something you discovered about yourself today that you hadn't thought of before? For example, a word to define yourself, or an interest you rediscovered.
4. Each student will be given a turn, where the entire class will be asked to say something they didn't know about them.

### **4.2 Wrap-Up**

“So, today we learnt about the impact that social media can have on us, and how we can actively reflect on what these impacts are. We want you all to go out into the world, not necessarily using social media less, because there are many things that can come from it, but just being more aware. We hope you can take something away from today's session and that you enjoyed it. Thank you for your participation!”

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