

CAN'T LOOK AWAY

**The Case Against
Social Media**

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The Case Against Social Media

Produced & directed by
PERRI PELTZ and MATTHEW O'NEILL
Running time: 75 minutes

JOLT.FILM



Bloomberg

[Watch the Trailer](#)

[Film Website](#)

ADVISORY WARNING

The film referenced in this discussion guide contains conversations about suicide, death and drug use that some viewers may find disturbing.

Viewer discretion is advised.

We would encourage any viewers who've been affected by the content or know someone who's been affected to consider reaching out to the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline. Call or text 988 to connect with a trusted support network.

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INTRODUCTION

Can't Look Away is a powerful documentary that exposes the hidden dangers of social media and its devastating effects on young users. The film unpacks how algorithm-driven engagement contributes to increased anxiety, depression and suicidal ideation among youth, while also highlighting online exploitation, drug selling to minors, privacy violations and the lack of corporate accountability. Through expert insights and real-life stories, *Can't Look Away* urges audiences to rethink the role of social media in shaping mental health.

This film serves as both a wake-up call and a tool for education and awareness, equipping parents, educators and community leaders with the knowledge and strategies that can help them push for safer digital environments.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Thank you for watching *Can't Look Away* and taking the next step in discussing its urgent themes. This guide is designed to facilitate thoughtful conversations about the film's key issues and help audiences explore ways to create meaningful change.

Whether you're hosting a screening, participating in a panel discussion or engaging in a community event, this guide provides:

- ▷ A film overview to ground the discussion.
- ▷ Key questions to prompt conversation and reflection.
- ▷ More information and resources to help foster online safety, mental health awareness and community engagement.

We encourage you to use this guide as a resource to deepen your understanding and inspire action toward a safer digital future.

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FILM OVERVIEW

Social media has become an inescapable part of modern life, but behind its glossy veneer lies a troubling reality. *Can't Look Away* reveals how tech companies have deliberately designed addictive platforms that expose children to harmful content, contribute to rising mental health crises and facilitate online exploitation.

Key Themes Explored in the Film

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| ❶ The link between social media engagement, recommendation algorithms and rising rates of anxiety, depression and suicidal ideation among young users. | ❷ The growing threats of online exploitation include sextortion, illicit drug sales and cyberbullying. | ❸ The role of social media in amplifying misinformation and harmful trends. |
|--|--|---|

Highlighting these issues, *Can't Look Away* could spark an essential dialogue about how we can reclaim digital spaces and protect future generations from preventable harm.

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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Personal Reflections

1. How did this film make you feel about your own social media use and your child's? Did it change your perception of how platforms operate?
2. Were there any particular stories or statistics in the film that stood out to you regarding your own or your child's experience? Why?
3. Have you or your child ever witnessed or experienced online harassment, exploitation or harmful content? How did you respond?

Youth Mental Health, Social Media & Suicidal Ideation

1. The film highlights how social media addiction affects young people's mental health. At what age do you think children should be given access to social media?
2. What do you think are the biggest risks for young people using these platforms?
3. What role do you think social media plays in fueling anxiety, depression and suicidal ideation among young users?
4. Research has shown that exposure to self-harm and pro-suicide content on social media contributes to increased suicide risks. What level of responsibility do you think platforms have to remove harmful content?
5. What interventions can schools, parents, and mental health professionals implement to help young people struggling with social media's impact on mental health?
6. How can we encourage young users to seek help when experiencing suicidal thoughts or emotional distress linked to social media use?

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Online Exploitation & Safety Risks

1. The documentary exposes how social media platforms are used to facilitate sextortion, cyberstalking and illicit drug sales. What responsibility should tech companies have to prevent these practices?
2. What policies or interventions could help protect young users from online predators?
3. How can parents and educators better equip young people to navigate digital spaces safely?

Digital Privacy & Data Protection

1. What steps can individuals take to better protect their privacy online?
2. How could data privacy laws and transparency requirements hold social media platforms accountable?

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MORE INFORMATION & RESOURCES

Learn

- Learn about online safety best practices through organizations including
⇒ [Common Sense Media](#),
⇒ [The National Center for Missing & Exploited Children](#) and ⇒ [Stop Sextortion](#).
- Explore insights from Richard Freed on why social media and devices are designed to be addictive and how they affect youth behavior. ⇒ [Read more](#)
- Assess digital dependency with Cris Rowan's Screen Addiction Quiz, which helps evaluate the impact of screen exposure on mental health and development. ⇒ [Take the quiz](#)
- Share insights from the film on social media using #CantLookAwayFilm, #ProtectOurKids and #StopSextortion. [Refer to suggested hashtags in social media toolkit.]

Protect

- Protect your digital well-being and review and update your social media privacy settings.
- Limit social media screen time and encourage digital detox practices. Dr. Victoria Dunckley's 30-Day Plan to "Reset Your Child's Brain" offers a structured guide to help families reduce screen dependency, particularly for children struggling with ADHD and other challenges. ⇒ [Explore the plan](#)
- Use ScreenStrong Resources to guide conversations about screen time limits and the long-term effects of digital overuse. Its tools include a textbook for kids and parents to better understand screen management. ⇒ [Access resources](#)
- Have open conversations with young people about responsible social media use and the impact of online exposure. Fair Play's Screen Aware Action Kit provides conversation starters and tips to help families navigate social media. ⇒ [Get the kit](#)

Prevent, Report & Support

- If you or someone you know is struggling with suicidal thoughts, seek help immediately.

Resources for Immediate Support:

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline:
Call or text 988 for 24/7 confidential support.

Crisis Text Line:
Text HOME to 741741 to connect with a trained crisis counselor.

The Trevor Project (LGBTQ+ youth support):
Call 1-866-488-7386 or text START to 678678.

The Jed Foundation (youth mental health):
Resources at ⇒ [jedfoundation.org](#)
- If you suspect online exploitation or harassment, report it to the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC) or ⇒ [CyberTipline.org](#)
- Seek support from mental health professionals if social media is undermining your well-being. Consider exploring the Digital Addiction Treatment Center, which offers strategies to help families and individuals break free from harmful screen habits. ⇒ [Find help](#)

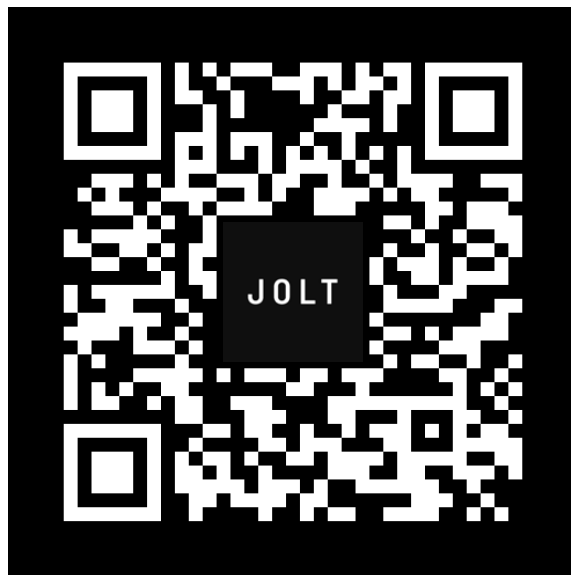
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CONCLUSION

Can't Look Away is more than just a documentary—it's a powerful resource for every community, every guardian, every young person. The film sheds light on the hidden dangers of social media and urges us to be more aware of the dangers on our screens, while empowering young people to navigate digital spaces more safely.

By continuing these conversations, engaging in community conversations about building stronger protections and taking proactive steps to safeguard online communities, we can push for a future where social media prioritizes the well-being of its users over profit.

For more information on hosting a screening or getting involved in the campaign, visit the ⇒ [Can't Look Away website](#).



Scan the QR code to watch the film and get involved with the campaign

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