Limiting time on social media helps reduce depression, and muting strangers on Instagram reduces fear of missing out (FOMO) and social comparison.

### Background
- Too much social media use has been shown to negatively impact well-being.
- Following more strangers on social media apps is correlated with lower subjective well-being.

### Aims
- Examine whether limiting social media use leads to increased well-being.
- Examine whether a causal relationship exists between muting strangers on Instagram and increased well-being.

### Methods
- UPenn undergraduates recruited from SONA.
- 4 week intervention.
- Social Media platforms—Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat.
- Qualtrics survey with various well-being measures.
- Objective measure of screentime.
- Intervention group 1 limited social media usage, intervention group 2 limited social media usage, muted strangers, stopped using TikTok.

### Results
- Limiting social media use to 60 minutes per day (versus unlimited use) led to reductions in depression $[F(2, 132) = 4.536, p = .013]$ for the most distressed participants.
- Muting strangers on Instagram, in addition to limiting time, led to significant reductions in fear of missing out $[F(2, 45) = 3.468, p = .040]$ for the most distressed participants.
- Muting strangers also led to significant reductions in social comparison $[F(2, 132) = 3.69, p = .028]$.

### Discussion
- Highly distressed individuals may benefit the most from limiting social media usage and muting strangers on Instagram.
- Difficulties with Instagram:
  - Reels
  - Stranger content
  - Shopping/business model
- Difficulties with muting:
  - Glitchy
- More sophisticated methodology.

### References

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