- Social networking

Social media ‘link’ to poor behaviour

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FREQUENT use of social media could be linked to harmful behaviours in children and young people, such as drinking, taking drugs, smoking and gambling, a study has suggested.
Exposure to alcohol advertising on different platforms had the strongest evidence of harm, researchers said. A team from the University of Glasgow, the
University of Strathclyde and Public Health Scotland examined the impact of social media on young people aged 10-19.
They looked at data from 73 studies carried out between 1997 and 2022, comprising 1.4 million teenagers with an average age of 15. The analysis found daily social media use was associated with the likelihood of drinking alcohol (48%), drug use (28%) and smoking (85%) compared with infrequent users.
In terms of alcohol use, researchers identified stronger associations in people aged 16 and older.
Smoking and tobacco use was more frequent in low- to middle-income countries compared to high-income countries.