

Social media increasing stress levels

AAP

Social media is causing people to become increasingly anxious as users feel pressured to be constantly connected, a new survey says.

According to the Cenovis Chill Pill Survey, 63 per cent of respondents feel social media is contributing to stress levels.

About a third (37 per cent) of these people feel under pressure to be in constant contact, and 35 per cent say there is an expectation to respond quickly to messages.

Thirteen per cent of stressed users say they feel pressure to be witty in writing status updates on Facebook.

La Trobe University law student Nikkita Venville says she can relate to the survey's findings.

"There's a bit of pressure to have a unique status that people will laugh at and press the 'like' button," the 24-year-old from Melbourne told AAP on Monday.

Ms Venville said she felt "out of loop" if she did not check or respond to messages on Facebook regularly.

"You always have to know what's going on," she said.

"Even when you're out you think, 'I wonder what's on Facebook', and it's the first thing I have to check."

The survey also found that women feel more stressed than men, with 69 per cent saying they felt pressure to be interesting in their status updates, as opposed to only 39 per cent of men.

Ms Venville said that she was spending so much time on Facebook that she asked her sister to change her password so she could study for her exams.

"I did feel like a bit of my social life had (gone) because I couldn't keep in contact with the people I usually kept in contact with - and I didn't know what was going on," she said.

"People were saying haven't you got my Facebook message instead of calling me up to invite me (to parties).

Ms Venville finally broke her Facebook sabbatical by hacking into her profile through her mum's account.

"It was my birthday, and I wanted to know what people wrote on my wall," she explained.

The survey was conducted by Galaxy research on behalf of sanofi-aventis Consumer Healthcare, interviewing 420 Australians over 18 years of age.