

Student's Name

Professor's Name

Course Name/Code

Date

### **Strong Expository Body Paragraph**

**[Topic sentence]** One of the primary ways social media contributes to adolescent anxiety is by exposing teenagers to a constant stream of curated, idealized images that invite social comparison. **[Supporting evidence and explanation]** A 2023 study published in *JAMA Pediatrics* found that adolescents who spent more than three hours per day on image-based platforms reported significantly higher rates of anxiety and depression than peers with lower usage, even after controlling for pre-existing mental health conditions (Riehm et al., 2023). The mechanism researchers identified was not passive exposure but active comparison: users who rated themselves as frequently comparing their appearance or lifestyle to others' posts showed the steepest increases in anxiety symptoms. This effect was strongest among girls aged 13–15, whose self-reported anxiety scores increased by 27% for every additional hour of daily image-platform use. **[Concluding and transition sentence]** While the scale of this effect is significant on its own, it is compounded by a second factor, specifically the way platform algorithms are designed to maximize the time users spend making exactly these comparisons.

