# Detailed Speaker Notes: Social Media Stakes Presentation

## Slide 1: Title Slide

Welcome. Today, we’ll explore how social media affects our world across five key areas: social, political, economic, ethical, and health. This topic is especially relevant in 2025, as global debates over AI, free speech, data privacy, and mental health intensify.

## Slide 2: Introduction

Social media is no longer just a tool for connection—it is a major force shaping behavior, beliefs, and institutions. Platforms like Facebook, TikTok, and X (formerly Twitter) now influence elections, business models, mental health, and even legislation. We’ll examine these impacts using current data and real-world examples.

## Slide 3: Social Stakes

On one hand, platforms like Instagram and Reddit connect users across cultures and foster movements like #MeToo and #FridaysForFuture. On the other hand, social media has contributed to increased online harassment, filter bubbles, and the rise of loneliness. A 2023 Pew Research study found 41% of American teens said social media made them feel worse about themselves.

## Slide 4: Youth & Identity

Teenagers are particularly vulnerable. In 2021, internal research leaked from Meta (Facebook) showed Instagram worsened body image issues for 1 in 3 teen girls. The rise of influencers has created unrealistic standards for success, beauty, and lifestyle, often driven by edited or AI-enhanced images.

## Slide 5: Political Stakes

Social media played a central role in spreading misinformation during major elections: U.S. 2016, 2020, and Brazil’s 2022 election. Fake news, bots, and deepfakes have been used to sway public opinion. Russia’s Internet Research Agency has been repeatedly linked to election interference.

## Slide 6: Regulation & Free Speech

There’s ongoing debate about platform responsibility. Should X or TikTok remove hate speech? In 2024, the EU’s Digital Services Act (DSA) began regulating large platforms, requiring transparency and moderation accountability. In the U.S., Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act remains under fire for shielding platforms from liability.

## Slide 7: Economic Stakes

Social media generates massive revenue through user data. Meta made over $130 billion in ad revenue in 2023 alone. The creator economy also flourishes—YouTubers, TikTokers, and streamers are now full-time jobs, yet heavily dependent on algorithms. Sudden policy shifts—like YouTube’s 2023 demonetization wave—can jeopardize livelihoods.

## Slide 8: Ethical Stakes

Algorithms prioritize engagement, often at the cost of truth. YouTube's recommendation engine has been shown to lead users toward extreme content. In 2022, Twitter whistleblower Peiter Zatko revealed major flaws in content moderation and safety practices. Biases embedded in AI and opaque moderation policies exacerbate inequalities.

## Slide 9: Consent & Data Ethics

Surveillance capitalism—a term coined by Shoshana Zuboff—describes how companies harvest and profit from our behavior data. Users rarely read or understand Terms of Service. In 2023, TikTok faced scrutiny for storing European user data in China, leading to EU investigations and a €345 million fine.

## Slide 10: Health Stakes – Mental Health

Platforms fuel comparison culture, leading to anxiety and depression. The American Psychological Association found a 40% increase in reported anxiety among teens from 2012 to 2022. Instagram’s like count removal experiment in 2021 aimed to reduce pressure—but results have been mixed.

## Slide 11: Health Stakes – Screen Addiction

The average person spends over 2.5 hours daily on social media. Dopamine-driven designs (infinite scroll, push notifications) make these platforms addictive. In 2024, France launched a national campaign on digital hygiene, encouraging youth to limit screen time and use apps like Forest or Opal.

## Slide 12: Solutions – Regulation & Literacy

Governments are stepping in: the EU’s DSA, U.S. proposals to reform Section 230, and even TikTok bans in some countries. Equally important is education: Finland and the Netherlands have included digital literacy in school curricula. UNESCO also released 2023 guidelines promoting ethical AI in media.

## Slide 13: Conclusion

Social media is a powerful tool that brings people together but also deepens divides. Addressing its impacts requires collaboration between users, tech companies, educators, and policymakers.