

How Teens Use Social Media

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Common Sense Media recently published a research article on teen's use of social media. The study is titled [Social Media, Social Life: Teens Reveal Their Experiences](#) . In this revealing national study,

over 1,000 teens aged 13 to 17 shared about their use of social media.

Key Findings

Here are some key findings from the study.

Seventy percent of teens use social media more than once a day. That is a 36 percent increase from 2012. The vast majority of teens believe that social media has a positive influence on their lives. Social media plays a heightened positive and negative role in the lives of vulnerable teens.

Teens increasingly communicate via text and social media rather than through face-to face contact. They perceive that social media gets in the way of their personal relationships.

Many teens think that tech companies manipulate them so that they will spend an increasing amount of time on social media. They believe that their time on social media distracts from homework, personal relationships and sleep.

Some teens find it difficult to regulate themselves on social media.

Increasingly, teens are exposed to hate speech and other negative influences, including bullying, on social media.

Teens see social media as an avenue for creative expression.

Support and Guide Your Teens

How can parents guide their children to minimize the negative affects of social media on their lives? Here are some thoughts from Common Sense.

Help your teens to regulate themselves by staying mindful of how they are feeling before, during and after a social media session. Teach them that they can block anyone who makes them feel bad.

Check in with your son or daughter about what is working and not working in their social media life. Remind them that their life is more than just what they do on social media.

If necessary, set rules about when they need to be

off social media, such as during homework time, dinner time or when going to sleep.

Become familiar with your teen's favorite social media by downloading and trying it out. Ask to friend your children or share your feeds with them.

Be a role-model on the use of social media by putting aside your phone so that you can give your children your full attention.

Encourage your teens to be a force for good on social media. If they encounter hate speech, racist, sexist, homophobic or bullying messages, they can block, report or unfriend the person sharing it. Teach your teens how to disagree respectfully, Encourage them to stand up for people who are being denigrated.

Teens have a complex relationship with social media, and it will certainly continue to be part of their lives. Parents need to support and guide their children in the use of social media. This guidance can be very valuable to them.

With love and affection,

Rosemarie

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