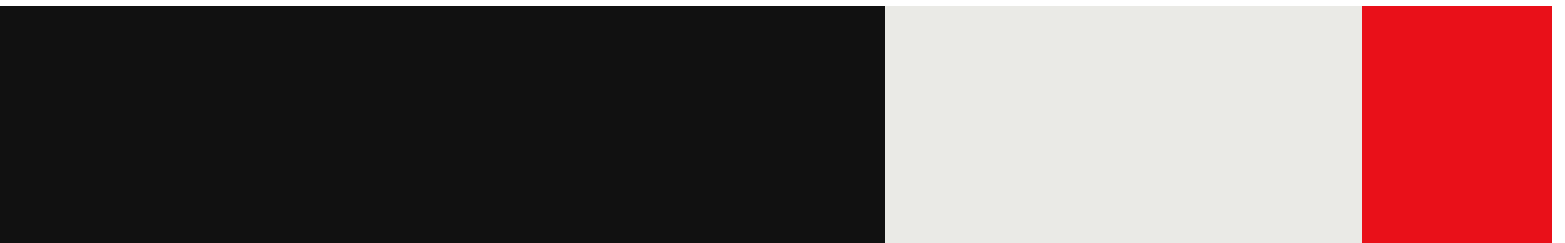


Teens feel good about social media, but the data tells another story

Article



The news: Despite the pandemic, the growth of **TikTok**, and the proliferation of smart devices, today's young adults say they are **spending less time on social media than their counterparts of five years ago**, [per](#) a new CivicScience survey.

- In 2017, **40%** of respondents ages 18 to 24 said they spend less than two hours a day on social media. In 2022, that number jumped to **51%**.

By the numbers: The self-reported responses confirm changes like a shift away from **Facebook** but also conflict with other data points about teen social media usage.

- Fifty-six percent of respondents said they used Facebook daily in 2017, compared with just 29% in 2022. Daily use of **Instagram** has fared better among both age groups, ringing in at 43% in 2017 and 41% in 2022.
- Today's young consumers also seem to feel better about their dependence on mobile devices. In 2017, 71% of respondents said they felt addicted to their devices, compared with 56% last year.

The kids are not all right: While the CivicScience data shows that younger demographic groups think they're spending less time on social media and feel better about its mental health impact, other data points suggest otherwise.

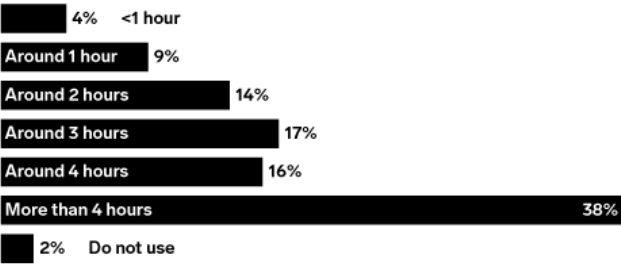
- In a December poll of Gen Z consumers from Morning Consult, **38%** said they spend more than four hours per day on social media. Platforms like TikTok, aware of concern about their addictive feeds and short-video format, have introduced features specifically designed to limit time spent.
- Social media's prominent role in culture may lead young people to think less of it, but studies from third-party groups and even social platforms themselves draw a correlation between social media use and deteriorating mental health.
- 83% of educators who were approached by students about mental health concerns said that social media usage had a negative impact on teens, ranking it in the top four causes alongside bullying and family stressors, per a CVS and Morning Consult survey. In 2021, a leaked report from Instagram revealed internal data correlating usage to negative mental health effects in teen girls.

Our take: Gen Z's relatively positive perception of social media platforms is a sign of their prominent place in culture. But even if they feel OK about it, data shows social media can have negative mental health impacts.

- Regulators have been gearing up to attempt to curb social media's influence, citing teen safety and mental health as a prominent factor at every turn.

Average Daily Time Spent With Social Media by US Gen Z, Nov 2022

% of respondents



Note: n=1,000 ages 13-25
Source: Morning Consult, "National Tracking Poll #2211008," December 12, 2022
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