

# The Love-Hate Relationship Between Teens and Their Smartphones

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It seems like teenagers would appreciate taking a break from their smartphones, if only they knew how.

A survey of 13- to 18-year-olds conducted for [Screen Education](#), a nonprofit group focused on reducing screen time, found that teens consider more than half of their friends "addicted" to their phones.

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#### US Teen Smartphone Users' Attitudes Toward Their Phone, April 2018

% of respondents

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- 60%** of teens' friends are addicted to their phones

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  - 58%** feel that people generally expect them to respond immediately to notifications

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  - 52%** have extended stretches of time when spending time with friends on weekends in which they are all silently sitting together and not talking to each other while on their smartphones

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  - 41%** feel overwhelmed every day by the quantity of notifications they receive

*Note: ages 13-18; select responses shown  
Source: Screen Education, "Teen Smartphone Addiction National Survey 2018" with support from EMI Research Solutions and Stark Statistical Consulting, June 20, 2018*

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www.eMarketer.com

The survey uncovered widespread anxiety about phone usage, ranging from feelings of pressure to respond immediately to notifications, to a sense of being overwhelmed by the flow of messages and information they receive.

The survey also found a mixed response when it came to limiting screen time. On the one hand, 65% said they wished they were better

able to limit the amount of time they spend on phones. On the other, 69% said they had successfully reduced the amount of time they spend on phones.

Similarly, while 69% said they would like to spend more time socializing face to face rather than online, more than half said that when they do spend time together with friends, there are long stretches where they are on their phones, not talking with each other.

Of course, it's not just teens who are conflicted. A 2017 study from [Deloitte](#), conducted by [Ipsos MORI](#), found that **most people check their device approximately 47 times per day**. (Among the younger people surveyed, the frequency was almost twice as high—roughly 86 times a day.)

That study, too, found a yearning to reduce screen time. Fully 47% of those polled said they were taking actions to reduce the time they spend with their device, either by keeping it out of sight or by simply turning it off.

Efforts to limit mobile time don't appear to be working terribly well, though. According to our latest estimates, the average US adult will spend about 215 minutes per day with mobile devices. And that time is expected to increase in coming years.