



The benefits and pitfalls of media use

Hellenic Medical Society of Australia
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Outline

Child and adolescent brain development

The benefits of media use

What do we know about how young people use media?

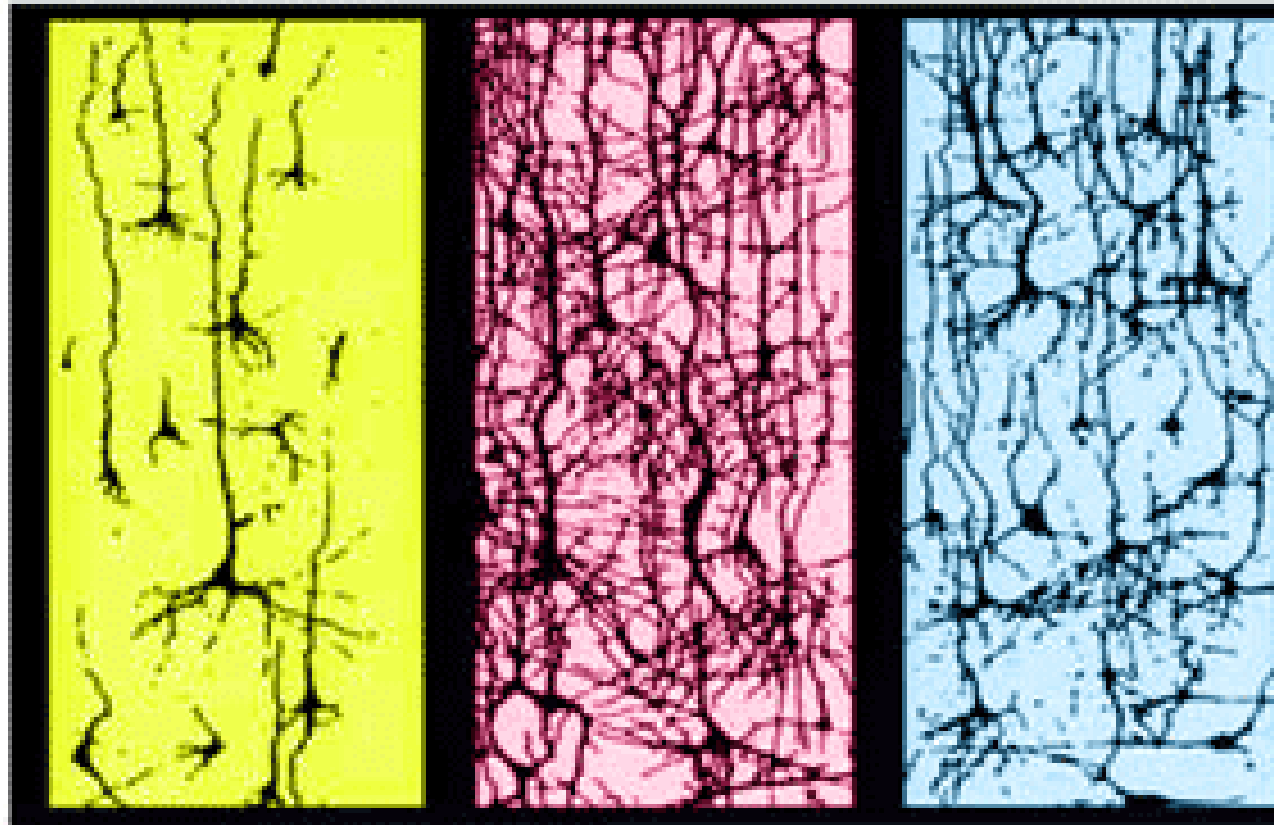
Problematic media use

Tips for young people

Tips for parents

Experience Shapes Brain Architecture by Over-Production Followed by Pruning

Center on the Developing Child  HARVARD UNIVERSITY



birth

6 years

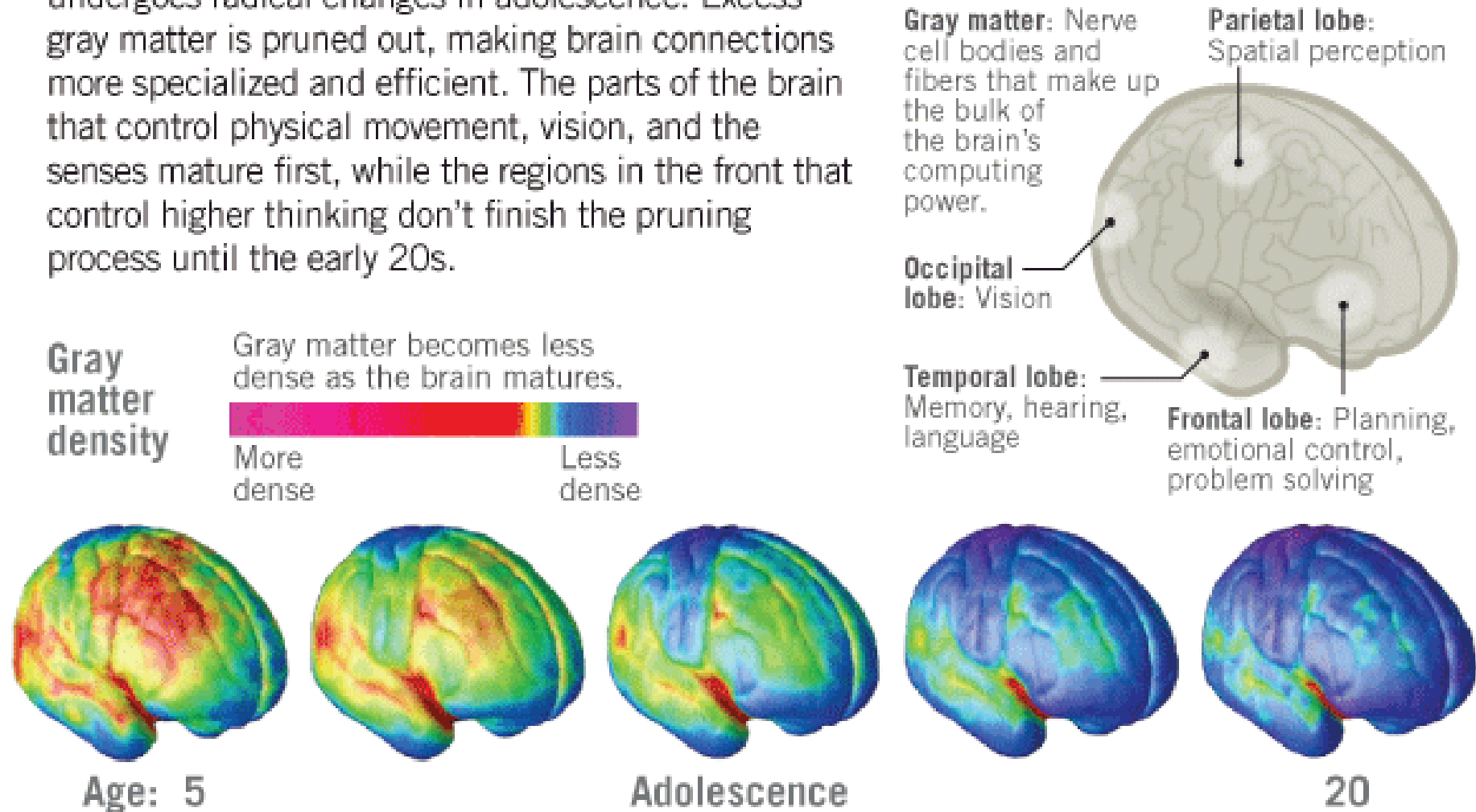
14 years

Use it or lose it:
Experiences
shape brain
development

Source: Shonkoff, J. P. (2008) **

Growing a Grown-up Brain

Scientists have long thought that the human brain was formed in early childhood. But by scanning children's brains with an MRI year after year, they discovered that the brain undergoes radical changes in adolescence. Excess gray matter is pruned out, making brain connections more specialized and efficient. The parts of the brain that control physical movement, vision, and the senses mature first, while the regions in the front that control higher thinking don't finish the pruning process until the early 20s.



Source: "Dynamic mapping of human cortical development during childhood through early adulthood," Nitin Gogtay et al., *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, May 25, 2004; California Institute of Technology

THE ADOLESCENT BRAIN

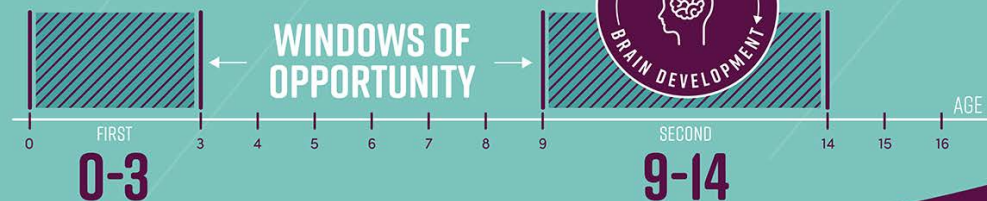
A SECOND WINDOW OF OPPORTUNITY

EARLY ADOLESCENCE IS
**A TIME OF RAPID
LEARNING AND
BRAIN DEVELOPMENT**

THESE INCLUDE
INCREASES IN
SENSATION-SEEKING,
MOTIVATION FOR SOCIAL
RELATIONS AND SENSITIVITY TO
SOCIAL EVALUATION.

A PERIOD OF
**VULNERABILITY
AND OPPORTUNITY**

PUBERTY INITIATES INTENSE
LEARNING & BRAIN
DEVELOPMENT, WHICH LEAD TO
STRUCTURAL REMODELING AND
NEURAL RE-CONFIGURATION OF
KEY BRAIN SYSTEMS. IT'S A
CRUCIAL TIME TO INVEST IN
ADOLESCENTS.



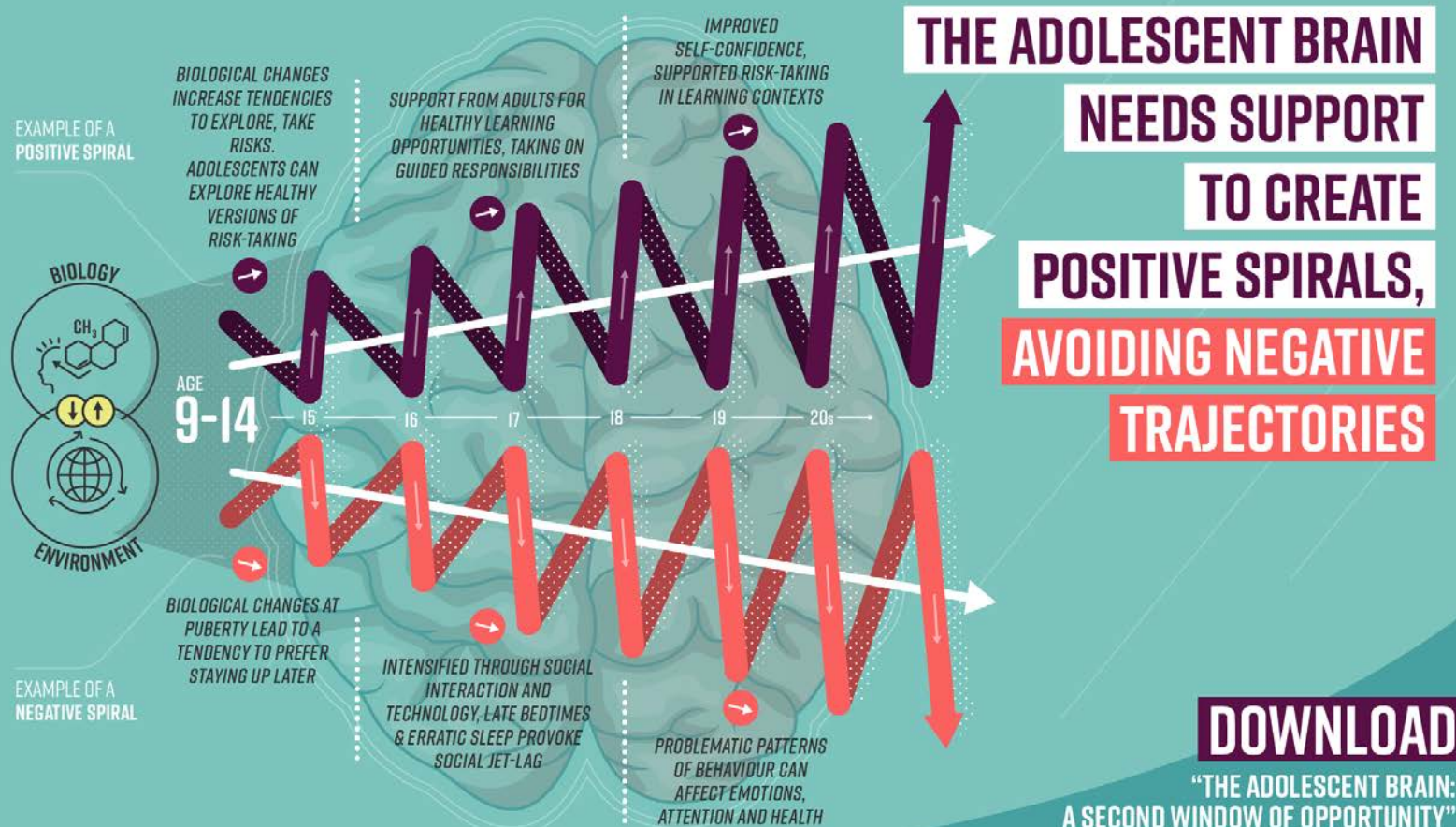
DOWNLOAD

"THE ADOLESCENT BRAIN:
A SECOND WINDOW OF OPPORTUNITY"

WWW.UNICEF-IRC.ORG/ADOLESCENT-BRAIN

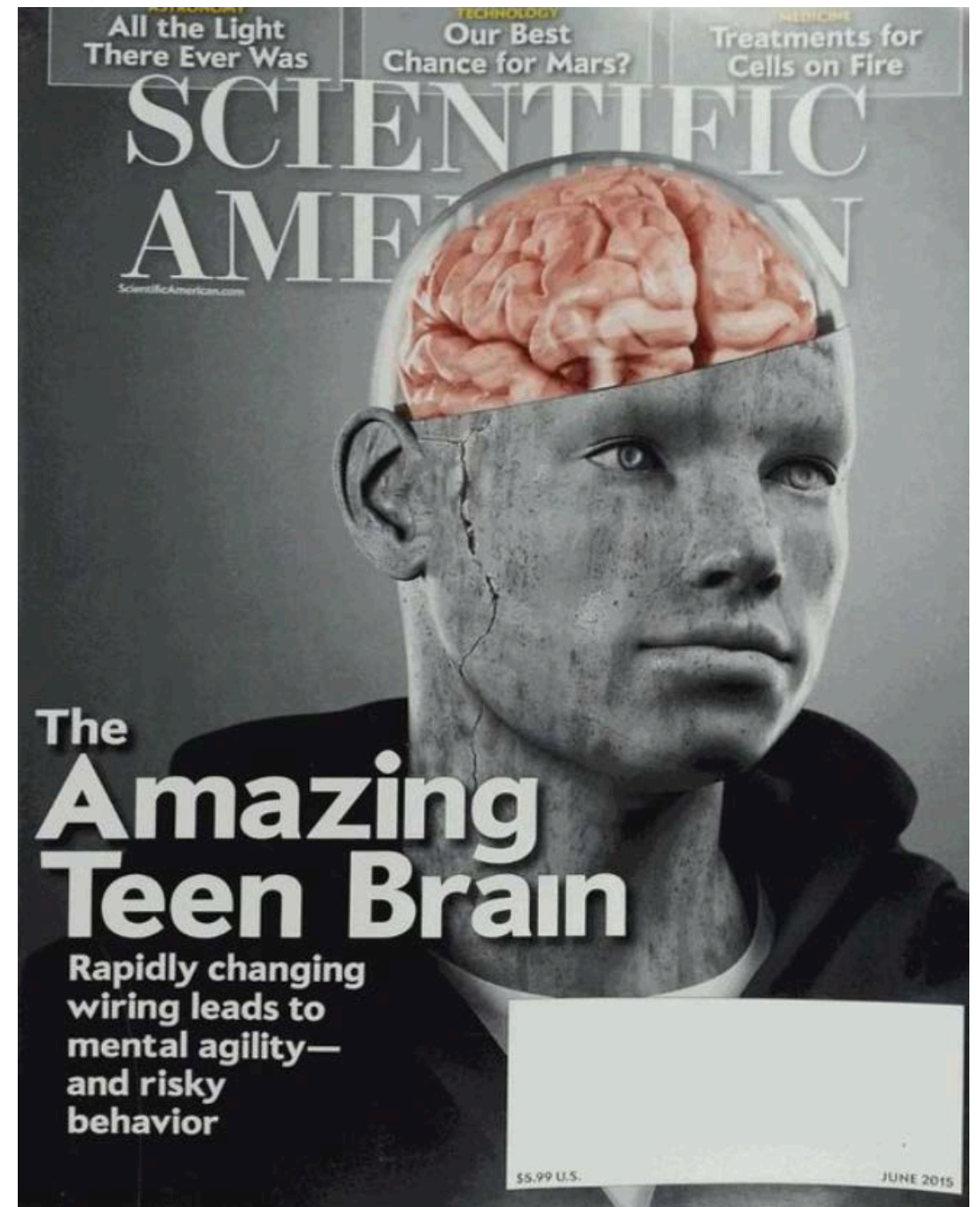
POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE SPIRALS

DURING ADOLESCENT BRAIN DEVELOPMENT



Qu: Why are young people always looking at screens?

A: Media provide a fertile environment for Adolescent Development



A Fortnite character is shown from a third-person perspective, gliding through the air. The character is wearing a green and brown tactical suit with a backpack and yellow gloves. They are holding onto a blue and purple glider. The background features a vibrant, stylized landscape with rolling green hills, a river, and a town with various buildings. The sky is a mix of purple and pink, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. The word "Experience" is written in a large, white, sans-serif font in the upper right portion of the image.

Experience

Identity



Independence



A high-angle photograph looking down into a large, open courtyard. The courtyard is filled with a massive crowd of people, many of whom are holding up white signs or papers. The crowd is dense and extends far into the background. Several large, white, classical-style columns are visible, framing the central area where the crowd is gathered. The scene appears to be a large-scale protest or demonstration.

**WHEN YOU TELL
THE TEENAGERS NO**

Social Consciousness

**AND THEY SKIP SCHOOL TO
OVERTHROW THE GOVERNMENT ANYWAY**

Benefits of media use



Social participants
and active citizens



Developing a voice
and building trust



Content creators,
managers and distributors



Collaborators and
team players



Explorers and
learners



Becoming independent and
developing resilience



Developing key
and real world
skills

A young woman with curly hair is smiling while looking at her smartphone. She is standing in a school hallway, leaning against a locker. In the background, other students are walking, and the hallway is brightly lit.

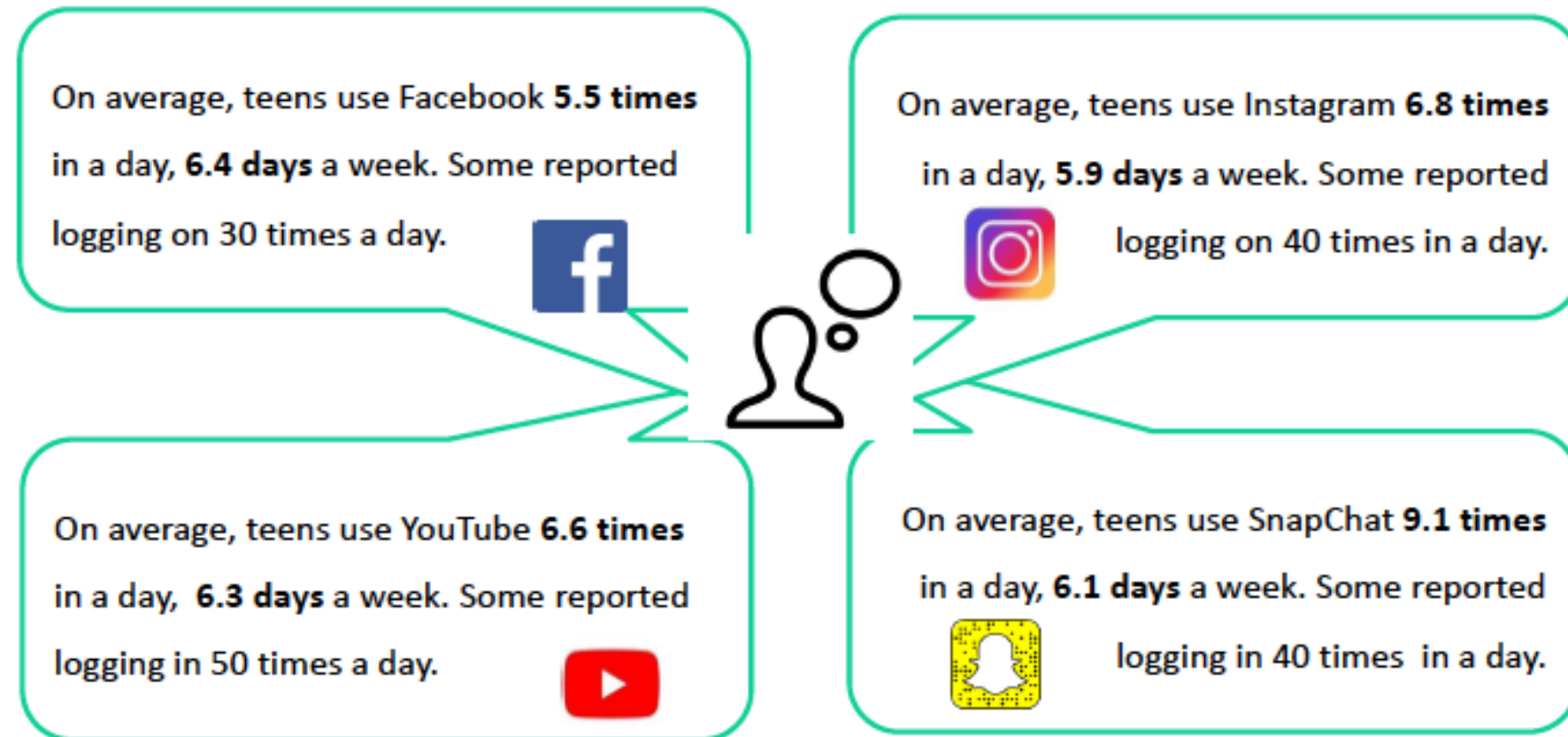
92% ONLINE EVERY DAY

24% CONSTANTLY

30% MORE THAN ONE
DEVICE AT A TIME

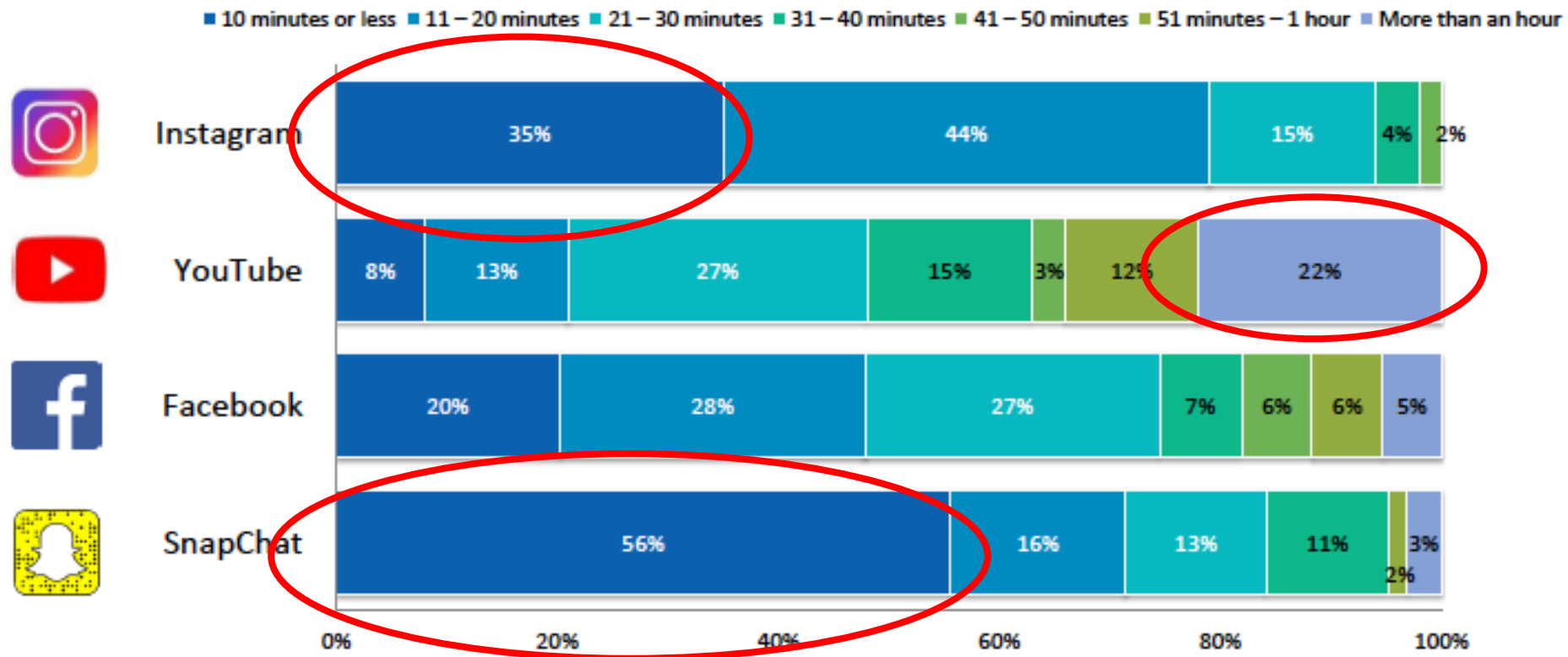
How often do teens use social media platforms?

Australian teens are logging on multiple times a day, and most days of the week. They reported using social media platforms **5 to 9 times in a day** with some reporting using their favoured channels up to **50 times** in a day.



How much time do teens spend on social media each time they use it?

Australian teens are logging on repeatedly throughout the day. The majority of teens spent **half an hour or less** each time they used Instagram, Facebook or SnapChat, but the total time spent online was 3.3 hours on average per day. Close to **one in four** of teens spent **more than an hour** on YouTube each time they logged on.



Digital Me: Aust Psychological Society



Do teens feel pressure online?

Social media is affecting the wellbeing of Australian teens. Almost **two in three** reported feeling pressure to look good on social media. **Three in five** agreed that they felt validated when others 'liked' or 'retweeted' their posts. Close to half felt bad about themselves if no one responded in this way to their posts.

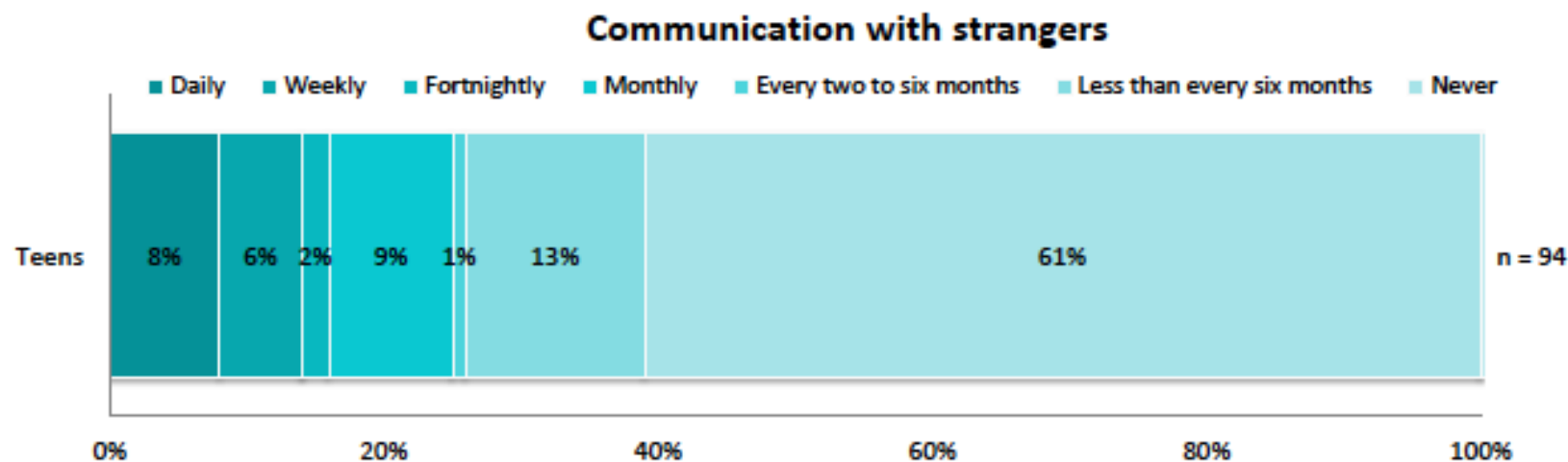
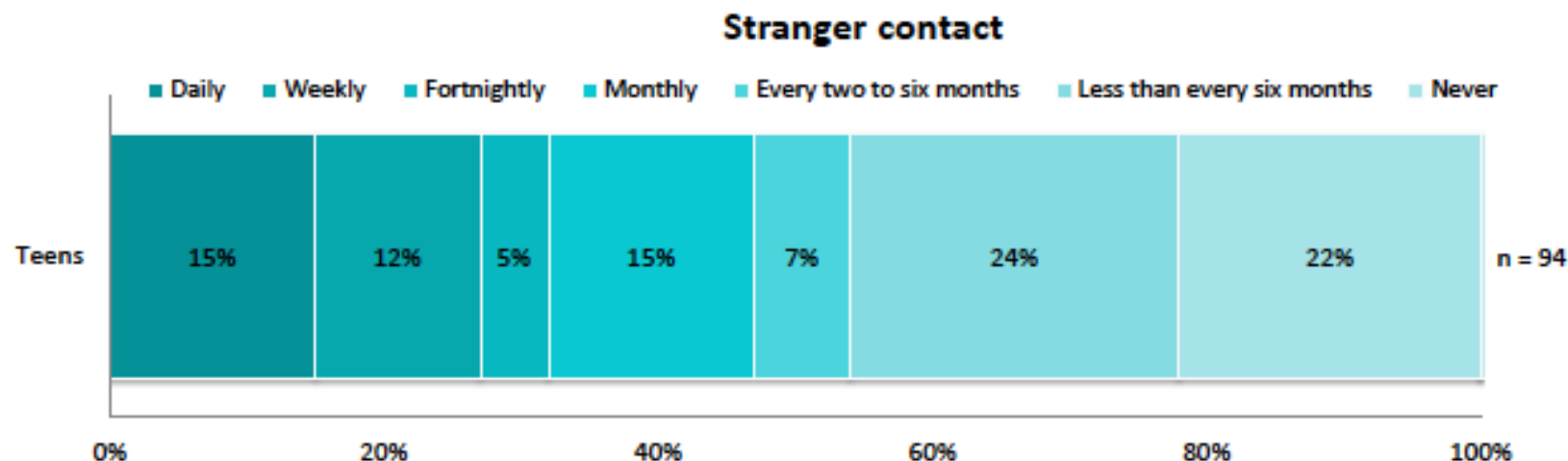
% of teens who agreed with the statement:

63% feel pressure to look good in the photos on social media.
59% feel validated and recognised when others 'like' or 'retweet' their posts.
56% feel left out or excluded after seeing photos of their friends together at something they weren't invited to.
53% avoid choosing profile pictures showing certain personal characteristics.
46% feel bad about themselves when nobody comments on or 'likes' or 'retweets' their photos or posts.
44% find it easier to interact with people online rather than face-to-face.
41% sometimes feel everyone is living the dream except them after looking at social media posts.
40% find it annoying when people add filters / edit their profile pictures and don't look how they actually are.
38% add filters / edit their profile pictures to represent who they want to be or to be more attractive.



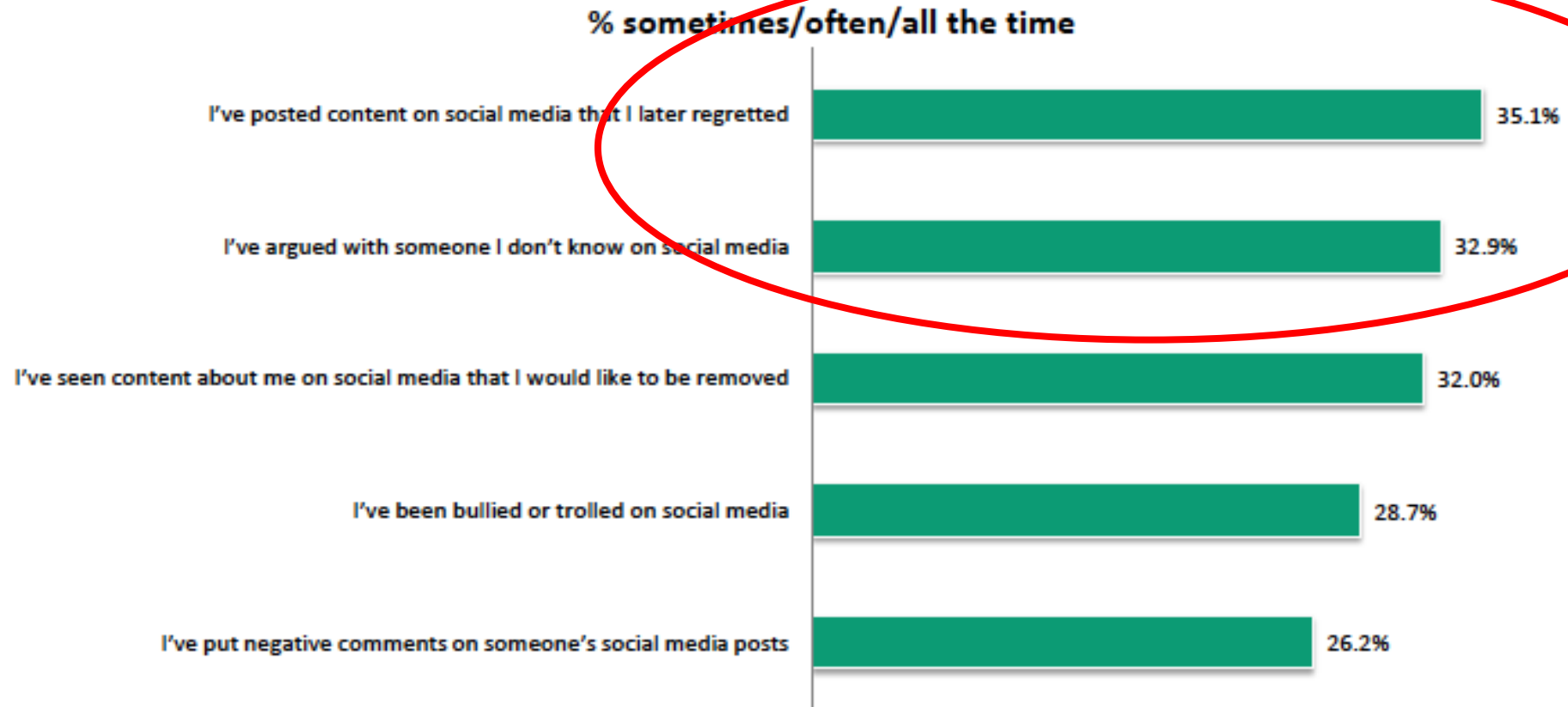
Contact with strangers

Interaction with strangers online is now common via social media. Fifteen per cent of teens reported being contacted by strangers daily in Facebook alone. Nearly 10% reported that they actively communicated with, or responded to, strangers daily.



Cyberbullying and antisocial behaviour online in teens

Australian teens are being exposed to worrying behaviour online – or engaging in it themselves. **One-third** of the Australian teens had argued with someone they don't know and posted content that they later regretted. **Over a quarter** had experienced bullying on social media over the past 12 months.

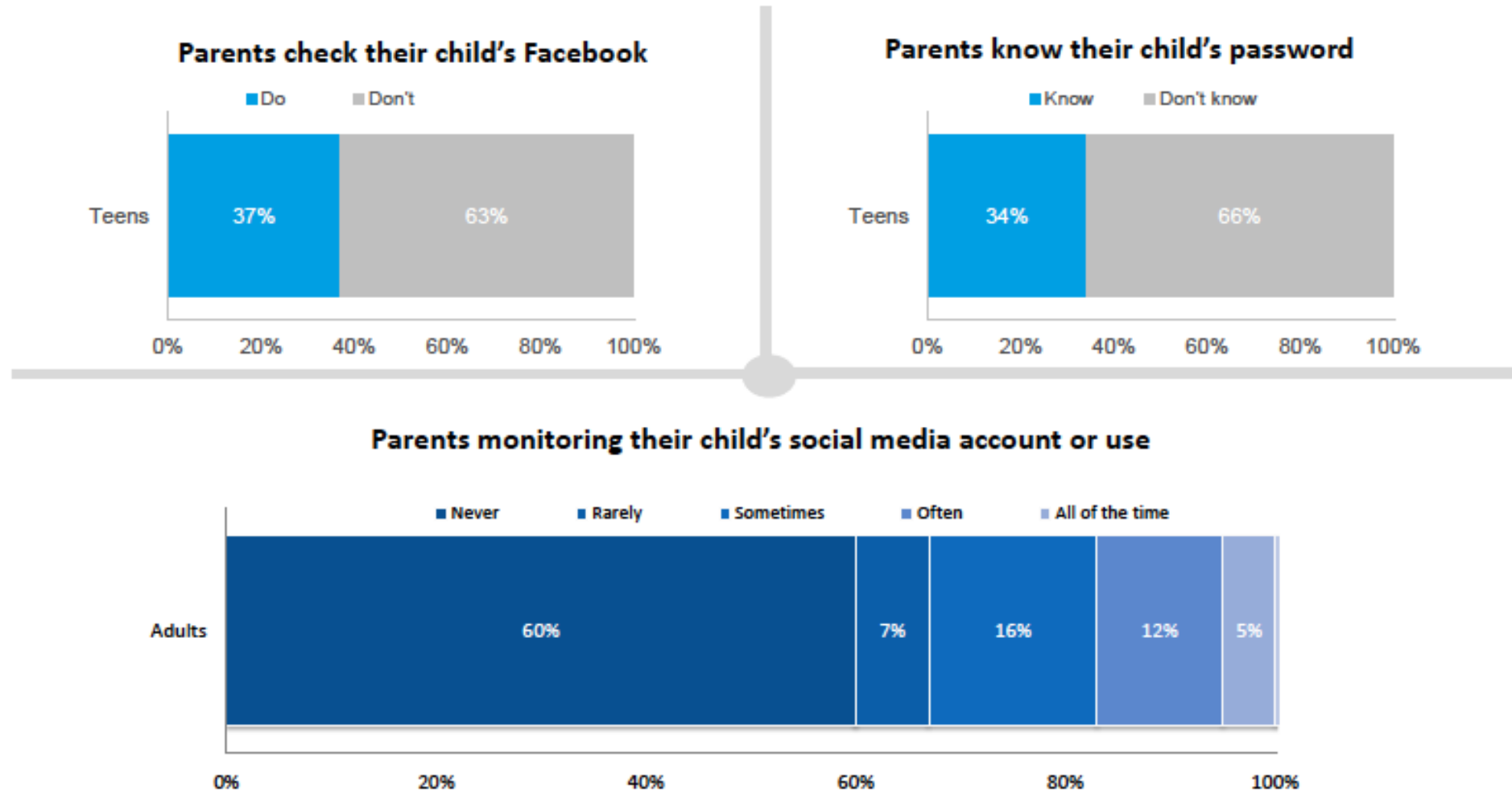


Digital Me: Aust Psychological Society

Monitoring of social media by parents



Teens and parents agree that little checking of social media activity occurs. Teens report that the majority of parents don't check their Facebook profile or know their password. **Three in five** parents stated they never monitor their child's social media accounts or use.

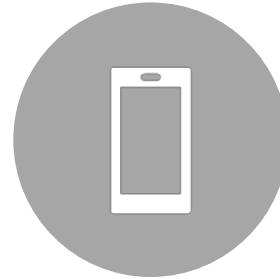


Q. My parents [know/don't know] my Facebook password and [do/don't] check up on what I do on Facebook. (n=497 teens)
Q. I have monitored my child's social media account/use over the past 12 months. (n=650 parents)

Types of problematic media use



Problem gaming (M>F)



Social media use (F>M)



Pornography use (M=F)



Information-bingeing
(Youtube, Reddit etc)

Does my child have a problem?

Irritability

Withdrawal
symptoms -
FOMO

Decreasing
school
performance

Late to school

Poorer self-
care

Secrecy

Withdrawal
from previous
activities

Excessive time
in own room

What to do when there is a serious problem

Can only be managed
when young person is
ready to confront it

Talk to your doctor

Complete abstinence is
unsustainable

Need to build capacity
to use interactive
media as tools in
mindful ways rather
than abstinence

Individualised
management plan

Sleep: NO devices in
the bedroom

Strategies to help with problem media use

Develop list of offline activities

Technology/device-free time

Social activities (going out with friends or family)

Exercise

Positive reinforcement often and early for small steps. Recognise the need to go slowly

Relapses are common; be non-judgemental and try again

Ten tips for Adolescents



Build Relationships

Maintain perspective: Social media are edited

Choose support wisely

Check less

Connect with your family

Switch OFF to SLEEP

Choose friends, not bullies: Learn to BLOCK

Be a good citizen

Think big picture: THINK before sharing images or videos

Break out of your 'technococoon'

Tips for Parents



Recommended screen time in Australia

- Under 2 years old – **ZERO** screen time
(including watching television, electronic media, DVD's, computers and electronic games)
- 2-5 years – Less than 1 hour p/day
- 5-17 years – Less than two hours p/day



Personal Information

- Think about the type of content/photos/videos you share
- Be mindful about how you use media
- Model safe online behaviour

Social Media

- Discuss privacy settings with your child and check your own
- Use the internet with your children- play the games, ask questions
- Encourage positive screen content that you can enjoy together

Screen Time

- Negotiate key rules together – e.g. when to use, how long
- Agree ahead of time how and when to switch OFF
- Consider a family media use plan

Inappropriate content

- Keep your child connected to healthy respectful relationships both online and offline.
- Emphasise the importance of respectful relationships
- Consider the use of parental controls and filtering software if you are concerned with your younger children

Cyberbullying

- Be vigilant
- Key signs: Change in personality, decline in school work, appearing lonely and distressed
- Report serious cyberbullying to the social media services and to the Office of the eSafety Commissioner

Contact with Strangers

- Help your child understand why its important to be vigilant about new 'online' friends
- Encourage your child to tell a trusted adult if they feel uncomfortable
- Capture screen shots of messages in case you need to report to police
(PrtScr) or (Command-Shift-4)

Common issues arising

Should we cut off the internet?

- Case-by-case basis
- May need detox program before further management
- Internet/technology free times should be discussed by treating team, parents and the young person

Easier to go cold turkey rather than to lower use

- BUT: be careful when coming back to the 'real' world

[Home](#) > [Mobile Phones To Be Banned Next Year In All State Schools](#)

Mobile Phones To Be Banned Next Year In All State Schools

Minister for Education

26 June 2019

Education

Media Release

Mobile phones will be banned for all students at Victorian state primary and secondary schools from Term 1 2020, to help reduce distraction, tackle cyber bullying and improve learning outcomes for students.

Minister for Education James Merlino today announced the reform at McKinnon Secondary College, which has seen the benefits of its mobile phone ban on student learning and social behaviour. Teachers at the school have reported that students are more focused during class and communicating more in the school yard.

According to the latest research from Headspace, around 53 per cent of young Australians have experienced cyberbullying.

Teachers and parents also frequently raise concerns about the use of mobile phones during school hours as a cause of constant distraction in classrooms. Rolling out a state-wide policy will provide consistency and certainty for parents, students and school communities.



No mobile phones in classrooms policy:

**BETTER CLASSROOMS,
BETTER RESULTS,
BETTER OUTCOMES**

Banning of Mobile Phones in Schools

Online safety

A guide for parents and carers



eSafetyparents

[eSafety.gov.au/parents](https://esafety.gov.au/parents)

eSafetyparents

SCREEN SMART PARENT TOUR

Select any topic to get started. You can close at any time during the tour and pick up where you left off.

Social media



Screen time



Personal information



Inappropriate content



Cyberbullying



Contact with strangers



Don't have time now? [Download our facts and tips](#)



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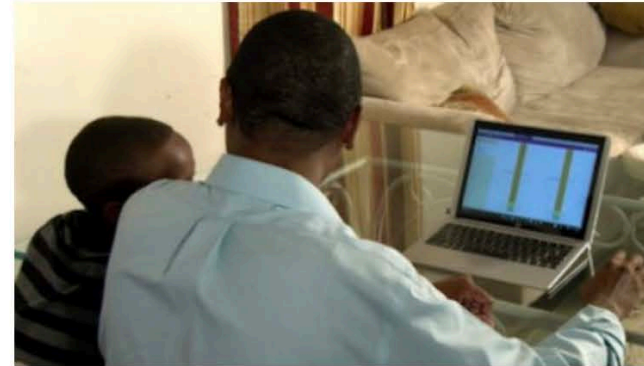
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How to Make a Family Media Use Plan

From TV to smartphones to social media, our lives are dominated by 24/7 media exposure. Despite this, many children and teens have few rules around their media use.

Parents, help your children balance their online and off-line lives!



Create Your Personalized Family Media Use Plan:

Visit [HealthyChildren.org/MediaUsePlan](https://www.healthychildren.org/MediaUsePlan) to create a personalized Family Media Use Plan that works within your family's values and busy lifestyles.

This interactive tool developed by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) includes

Further information

Office of the eSafety Commissioner:

- www.esafety.gov.au

Parentline: 1300 30 1300

eHeadspace: 1800 650 890

Alannah and Madeline Foundation – eSmart program

- www.esmart.org.au

Center on Media and Child Health

- Ask the Mediatrixian
- www.cmch.tv



Questions?