

Survey: Snapchat and Instagram are most popular social media platforms among American teens

April 21 2017



Credit: Jourden C/public domain

A new nationally representative survey of American teenagers age 13-17 finds that teens have shifted their favored social media platforms and are now most likely to use Instagram and Snapchat. The study by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research also found that while almost all teens—91 percent—use the regular text messaging tool on their mobile phones, 40 percent of teens also use messaging applications like Kik, WhatsApp, or Line on a smartphone.

Key survey findings include:

- 76 percent of American teens age 13-17 use Instagram.
- 75 percent of teens use Snapchat.
- 66 percent of teens use Facebook, essentially flat from 2015, when Pew Research Center data showed 71 percent of U.S. teens using the site.
- 47 percent of teens use Twitter.
- Fewer than 30 percent of American teens use Tumblr, Twitch, or LinkedIn.

The survey also found that black teens are more active on social media and messaging apps than their white peers. Historically, black teens report greater smartphone use than white teens, and are now more likely to use [social media platforms](#) optimized for mobile phones. Key findings from the survey on black teens include:

- 86 percent of black teens use Snapchat; 71 percent of white teens do so.
- 35 percent of black teens use Tumblr, compared with 22 percent of white teens.
- 40 percent of black teens say they use Snapchat almost constantly, and 33 percent say the same for Instagram. Just 22 percent of white teens say they use Snapchat that frequently; for Instagram, it is 19 percent.

- 18 percent of black teens use five or more messaging apps, such as Kik, WhatsApp, or Line, while 6 percent of white teens do so.
- Black teens are more likely than white teens to use Kik, Skype, or FaceTime daily.

The study also finds that tablet access surpasses use of desktop computers among American teens, with 54 percent of youth having access to a desktop, compared with 68 percent of teens having access to a tablet computer. Laptops (80 percent) and smartphones (89 percent) are the most common devices that teens use to access the internet.

"Understanding how teenagers use devices like tablets, desktops, and laptops may seem like old news," said Amanda Lenhart, senior research scientist at The AP-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research, and a co-author of the report. "But the varying degrees of access of different groups to these platforms have implications for education and future facility with tech tools, including those needed for the workplace."

Provided by University of Chicago

Citation: Survey: Snapchat and Instagram are most popular social media platforms among American teens (2017, April 21) retrieved 25 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2017-04-survey-snapchat-instagram-popular-social.html>

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