



Introducing the Digital Well-Being Index

At Snap, nothing is more important than the safety and well-being of our Snapchat community. We have in place, and consistently enforce, policies and rules that detail the type of content and behavior that are acceptable on Snapchat. We offer tools and resources to help Snapchatters stay safe, and we engage with others in industry and across the tech ecosystem to better protect teens and younger users in particular.

To offer insight into how teens and young adults are faring online, particularly following the COVID-19 global pandemic, in 2022, we conducted research into Generation Z’s digital well-being. The study, which draws upon more than four decades of subjective well-being research, was adapted for the online environment to produce a Digital Well-Being Index (DWBI), a measure of Gen Z’s psychological well-being online.

We surveyed teens (aged 13-17), young adults (aged 18-24) and parents of teens, aged 13 to 19 in six countries: Australia, France, Germany, India, UK and the U.S. We asked respondents about their exposure to various online risks and, from those results and other attitudinal responses, devised a DWBI for each country and a combined reading across all six. The research was conducted between April 22, 2022, and May 10, 2022.

DWBI Readings for 2022

The first Digital Well-Being Index for the six geographies stands at 62, a somewhat average reading on a scale of 0 to 100 – neither particularly favorable, nor especially worrisome. By country, India scored the highest DWBI reading at 68, and France and Germany came in below the six-country average, each at 60. Australia’s DWBI is 63; the UK matched the six-country reading at 62, and the U.S. came in at 64.

The index leverages the PERNA model, a variation on an existing research vehicle, comprising 20 sentiment statements across five categories: **Positive Emotion**, **Engagement**, **Relationships**, **Negative Emotion** and **Achievement**. Respondents were asked to state their level of agreement with each of the 20 statements, taking into account all of their online experiences on any device over the preceding three months. An example statement in each of the five categories follows. For a full inventory of all 20 statements, see [this link](#).

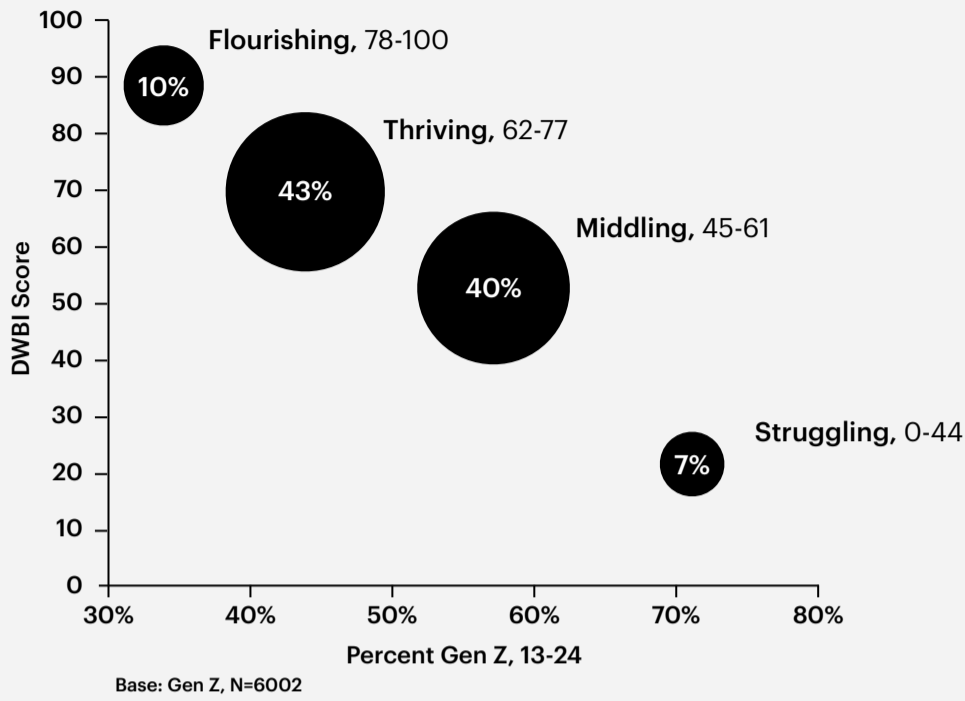
Role of Social Media

A DWBI score was calculated for each respondent based on the 20 sentiment statements. Their scores were aggregated into four DWBI groups: Flourishing (10%); Thriving (43%), Middling (40%) and Struggling (7%). (See next page for details.)

Index Category	Sample Sentiment Statement
Positive Emotion	Often felt delighted
Engagement	Got completely absorbed in what I was doing online
Relationships	Have people in my life online who really care about me
Negative Emotion	Worried about what other people might be saying about me online
Achievement	Was able to grow in my skills and abilities



DWBI Group Sizes & Score Ranges



DWB Group	Description
Flourishing (Very high)	Extremely positive – rate everything at the top end of the scale
Thriving (High)	Average top two box across the dimensions; may not be top box on everything but experiences overall are very positive
Middling (Medium)	“Mid-range” in their evaluations. Mix of favorable and unfavorable ratings; everything’s not rosy
Struggling (Low)	Rate all dimensions on the low end of the scale (1-3 range); consistently encounter negative experiences and outcomes

Q5. Which, if any, of the following have happened to you personally ONLINE, on any electronic device during the past three months? Select all that apply

Not surprisingly, the research showed that social media plays a major role in Gen Z’s digital well-being, with more than three-quarters (78%) of respondents saying social media had a positive influence on the quality of their lives. That belief was even stronger among teens (84%) and males (81%) compared to Gen Z young adults (71%) and females (75%). Parents’ opinion (73%) about social media’s influence slightly outpaced that of Gen Z adults.

Those Flourishing saw social media as a positive influence in their lives (95%), while those found to be Struggling said it was less so (43%). More than a third (36%) of those Flourishing agreed with the statement, “I cannot live my life without social media,” while only 18% of those determined to be Struggling agreed with it. Those percentages were effectively flipped with respect to the inverse statement, “The world would be a better place without social media.” (Flourishing: 22%, Struggling: 33%).

Other Key Results

Our digital well-being research yielded other interesting findings. Below are some highlights. The full report can be viewed [here](#).

- Digital well-being is more dependent on the nature and quality of online interactions and less dependent on how much time is spent on social media.
- Personally targeted risks (e.g., bullying, sexual risks) exhibit a strong relationship to digital well-being, while “normalized” risks (e.g., impersonation, misinformation) have a weak relationship.
- Parents are largely in tune with their teens’ digital well-being. In fact, teens whose parents regularly checked in on their online and social media activities had higher digital well-being and retained higher levels of trust from their parents. Conversely, the subset of parents who did not regularly check in about teens’ digital experiences significantly underestimated teens’ risk exposure (by nearly 20 points).
- Not surprisingly, Gen Zers with vaster support networks are more likely to be Flourishing or Thriving online, and those with fewer support assets were more likely to be Struggling or Middling. Support assets were defined broadly as people in the young person’s life – parents, caregivers, teachers, other trusted adults or friends – who care about them, listen to them or believe they will be a success.