

# The Digital Well-Being Index

## Key Research Results

Snap Inc. conducted research into the digital well-being of teens and young adults. Fielded from April 22 to May 10, 2022, the study polled a total of 9,003 people, including 500 teens (aged 13-17), 500 young adults (age 18-24) and 500 parents of teens aged 13-19 in each of six countries: Australia, France, Germany, India, UK and the U.S. The results produced our first Digital Well-Being Index (DWBI) for each country and a combined reading across all six. Below are some top-line research results.

- The inaugural **Digital Well-Being Index** came in at **62** – on a scale of 0-100, the score is neither particularly strong nor especially worrisome.
- Of the six countries included in the research, **India scored the highest DWBI at 68**, while **France and Germany** both posted the lowest readings at **60**. **Australia's DWBI is 63**; the **UK** matched the six-country average of **62**, and the **U.S.** scored **64**.
- The research asked teens about their **exposure to 14 different risks<sup>1</sup>** over the three-month period prior to the study, roughly February to May 2022. We also asked about respondents' relationships online and sought their reflections about the quality of those digital interactions.
- All elements combined to generate four DWBI groups. Young people in the six countries were found to be Flourishing (10%), Thriving (43%), Middling (40%) or Struggling (7%). These results have basically adhered to the 80/20 rule, with roughly 10% at each end of the scale and approximately 80% in the middle. Results offer an opportunity to continue to propel young people toward more positive and rewarding online experiences.

## Risks

- Of the 6,002 teens and young adults surveyed, **76%** said they had **experienced** at least one **online risk** over the three-month period.
- Teens' risk exposure (68%) was less than that of the Generation Z young adults (83%), and parents were quite accurate in estimating that their teens, aged 13-19 (66%), had experienced risk.
- Perhaps not surprisingly, **females** reported being **exposed to sexual risks** and **unwanted contact** more so than males – the case across both age demographics. (% of teen females exposed to sexual risks: 24% v. teen males: 18%; % of Gen Z young adult females exposed to sexual risks: 37% v. Gen Z young adult males: 27% - % of teen females exposed to unwanted contact: 35% v. teen males: 30%; % of Gen Z young adult females exposed to unwanted contact: 43% v. Gen Z young adult males: 33%).

<sup>1</sup> The 14 risks are: unwanted contact, fake news and misinformation, online bullying and harassment, hate speech, non-consensual intimate imagery, online impersonation, account hijacking, threats of violence, unwanted sexual attention, thoughts of self-harm, violent extremist content/messages, weapons sales, illegal drug sales and thoughts of suicide.

## Relationships

- According to parents, 62% of teens aged 13-19 **told their parents** when they experienced some risk online, and more than seven in 10 parents (71%) of 13-17-year-olds said they **regularly checked in** with their teens about the teens' online activities.
- Parents of older teens (18 or 19) were less likely to check in (54%), and were less accurate in their predictions of what their older teens were experiencing online, sometimes underestimating risk exposure by around 20 points.
- According to teens, 77% said they went to a parent when seeking help after experiencing an online risk, while a preponderance of Gen Zers (51%) sought help from a friend.
- Of those who reached out to a parent, both teens and young adults preferred speaking with their moms, by a wide margin, compared to their dads: Teens who talked to mom v. dad: 48%, 25%; young adults who talked to mom v. dad: 43% v. 23%.
- On average, just 12% of teens and 18% of young adults sought help from online platforms.
- Nearly eight in 10 parents said they agree completely, a lot or a little with the statement: "**I trust my teen to act responsibly online** and don't feel the need to actively monitor them."
- Young people who reported having a larger number of "**support assets**" also registered higher digital well-being. Support assets were defined as people who look out for Gen Zers at home or school, within the community, and among friends and peers. Of those with zero to three support assets, the majority (72%) were also in the Struggling DWB category. Of those who reported seven to 12 assets, 64% were deemed Flourishing.

## Reflections

- To calculate the DWBI, we asked respondents to rate their agreement with a total of 20 sentiment statements across five well-being categories, that we call the **PERNA model**, adapted for the online environment from a long-standing research theory. PERNA stands for **P**ositive Emotions, **E**ngagement, **R**elationships, **N**egative Emotions, and **A**chievement. There were four such statements in each of the five categories.
- A list of all **20 sentiment statements** can be found [here](#).
- Across the six countries, **78%** of respondents said **social media** had a **positive influence** on their daily lives. That belief was significantly stronger among teens (84%) compared to Gen Z young adults (71%).
- Full research results can be found [here](#).



## Snapchat's Family Center

These and other research findings were used to inform Snapchat's new Family Center, an in-app suite of tools designed to enable parents, caregivers and other trusted adults to know who their teens are friends with and who they are communicating with on Snapchat. For more on Family Center, see this [link](#).