

# Special Report on Social Media and Mental Health

42 Street **NQRW**

Exit →

**NYC**<sup>TM</sup>  
Health

42  
St

42  
St





Dear Fellow New Yorkers:

Social media is a dominant presence in our daily lives, reshaping the world we live in and the ways we interact with each other, bringing with it a range of unintended consequences. The New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene's (NYC Health Department's) **Special Report on Social Media and Mental Health** aims to understand these consequences – good and bad – across our city. This first-of-its-kind report utilizes data from teens, parents and caregivers to decipher the complex attitudes and usage patterns many New Yorkers have around social media, as well as its associations with mental health.



As a father of three young children, I know firsthand the pull and power social media has on young New Yorkers. While some of the negativity that young people experience on social media still exists in the real world – such as bullying and isolation – social media has amplified and exacerbated these issues. At the same time, it has created new issues, including distorting body image, damaging self-esteem and inviting addiction. Rather than protect our children from this harmful impact, social media platforms have been designed to be as addictive as possible. Like tobacco in our air, chemicals in our water or lead in our paint, social media is, no doubt, a toxin in our digital environments, impacting youth mental health.

To address this, we must know what we are up against. The NYC Health Department's Special Report on Social Media and Mental Health will lay the groundwork for understanding and analyzing social media's impact on youth and their parents and caregivers. This report is critical to addressing the mental health needs of all New Yorkers, but particularly our children and teens, and supports the commitment to address the crisis of youth mental health we laid out in "**Care, Community, Action: A Mental Health Plan for NYC.**" We can use these data to address this problem using interventions we know work – prevention, harm reduction, education, regulation and research. It will require a collaborative response from health care workers, policymakers, parents and caregivers, and business leaders. And it starts by having a common understanding of the risks and the opportunities for action.

I am proud to put this report forward as a critical step in that process, for the sake of the well-being of our youth and all New Yorkers.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ashwin Vasani'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'A'.

Ashwin Vasani, MD, PhD  
Commissioner  
New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

# Contents

**6** Executive Summary

**8** Introduction

**10** Background and Definitions

**12** A Majority of Children, Teens and Parents Are Accessing Some Form of Social Media

**15** How Frequently Teens and Adults Use Social Media Is Associated With Depression and Anxiety Symptoms

**18** Teens and Parents Use Social Media Often Because They Are Bored

**23** Parents of Children and Teens Have Mixed Perceptions About How Much Time Their Child Spends Using Social Media

**26** Children, Teens and Parents Report Both Positive and Negative Impacts of Social Media on Their Mental Health

**34** Do Parents Have Enough Information About Social Media To Share With Their Children?

**36** Teens Who Have Conflicts With Their Parents About Social Media Use Have Greater Rates of Depression and Anxiety Diagnoses

**38** A Resounding Majority of Parents Believe the Government Should Put Legal Restrictions on the Types of Access That Social Media Companies Give to Teens

**40** Summary and Call to Action

**41** Authors and Acknowledgments

**42** Appendix

# Executive Summary

Social media has become a staple in the lives of many, especially children and teens. This new reality represents potential opportunities and risks to the mental health of younger users. This report presents analyses from data collected from two surveys conducted in 2023. It is the first study of its kind led by a public health agency in a large metropolitan city like New York.

We examine the social media habits and related mental health experiences of children, teens and parents in NYC. We highlight the complex factors that affect social media use and mental health, identify areas of concern, and provide guidance for next steps to address potential areas of harm and prevent them from expanding.

## Key Findings

- **Social Media Use and Frequency:** A majority of children (54%), teens (93%) and parents (78%) use some form of social media. There are mixed perceptions among parents around whether the amount of time their child spends using social media is too much or not, but many feel that frequency of use is a concern. Of those surveyed, 107,000 parents<sup>1</sup> of children age 8 to 12 years old (45%) and 172,000 parents of teens 13 to 17 years old (46%) feel their child uses social media too much.
- **Social Media and Mental Health:** Our findings suggest that children who use social media experience higher rates of anxiety (16%) than children who do not use social media (12%). Teens who use social media experience anxiety (27%) and depression (14%) at higher rates than teens who do not (9% and 4%, respectively). While the 4% difference in anxiety rates among children is concerning, there is a much larger difference, up to 18%, for teens. Parents who use social media also report that they themselves are more likely to have depression or anxiety compared with parents who do not use it.
- **Conversations About Social Media Use:** A majority of parents of NYC's children (65%) and teens (54%) report that they know how to, and do, talk to their child about social media. This number is higher than the national average, suggesting that efforts to raise awareness may have begun to work and should be continued.
- **A Resounding Majority of Parents Believe the Government Should Put Legal Restrictions on the Types of Access That Social Media Companies Give to Teens:** Seventy-eight percent of parents want their government to protect teens by blocking access to some content on social media platforms. Given that we found that there are some positive reasons to use social media, we must be thoughtful in crafting legislation so that we can preserve the good while responding to this overwhelming demand for action.
- **Social forces, such as racial or economic status, shape awareness of the potential downsides of social media use:** There is a 14% gap between parents who live in high-poverty ZIP codes (74%\*) and parents who live in low-poverty ZIP codes (60%\*) who believe they have enough information to talk to their child about social media use. What remains unclear is what information parents are receiving and whether that information is comprehensive of both benefits and potential harms.

<sup>1</sup>"Parents" is used here to include biological parents, stepparents, adoptive parents, legal guardians and other caregivers. For definitions of terms used in this report, see Page 11.

\*Data should be interpreted with caution due to small sample size.

## Recommendations

- **Education and Awareness Campaigns:** Develop comprehensive educational campaigns to raise awareness of the risks of social media use and promote healthy digital habits among teenagers, parents, educators and health care providers. These campaigns can be tailored to individual groups of interest based on the data presented in this report.
- **Digital Literacy Programs:** Implement social media safety and digital literacy programs in schools and community centers to equip teenagers with the knowledge and skills to navigate social media responsibly and seek help when needed.
- **Community Enrichment Programs:** Offer parents, children and teenagers safe and fun social activities in their neighborhoods as alternatives to social media or device use.
- **Regulations Imposed on Social Media Companies:** Establish and enforce regulations requiring social media companies to implement robust content moderation policies, digital well-being features and data privacy protections to better protect teens.
- **Research and Monitoring:** Continue to study the impacts of social media on mental health for young people, maintaining a constant improvement strategy as new data and information arise.

The study of the mental health impacts of social media is still new. Many of the findings in this report have the potential to advance the scientific consensus around this issue at a time when youth mental health is in dire need of support and understanding.

The political response to these impacts is equally new. Our City has been and will continue to be a leader in introducing policies and programs that take action to protect people from the harms of social media. The analyses presented here will help target our responses. We now have a better sense of some of the social, economic and racial factors that affect social media's impact and a clearer understanding of the details of that impact. Our response must be multifaceted. We must protect our citizens, especially those most vulnerable, from the negative consequences of social media. At the same time, we must recognize that social media may have some positive impacts and ensure that we preserve those effects.

NYC has historically been at the forefront of the public health response to complex and challenging situations. We will, as always, find the right way to help our people. This report goes a small but crucial way toward showing what form that help should take.

## Who Is This Report For?

This report may be useful for policymakers, community leaders, school officials, the media, parents and caregivers, community organizations, advocates, and anyone who wants or needs research data on social media use in NYC.



# Introduction

Social media is a part of our lives, and there is reason to expect younger people are at particular risk for the negative effects of social media use. The ubiquity and pervasive nature of social media platforms means young people are constantly exposed to its effects on their mental health, both positive and negative, as they spend an increasing amount of their time online and in front of phones and other screens.

This report analyzes data from two surveys conducted in the fall of 2023 to understand the social media habits and mental health status of children, teens and parents. In doing so, we describe the complex nature of social media use and related factors, such as perceptions of social media's impacts on mental health, time spent on social media and reasons why social media is used.

## Children and Social Media

For children under the age of 13, exposure to technology and its impact on their mental well-being is a special concern given their stage of neurological, social and emotional development. Children are widely and frequently exposed to screens and digital devices, which can affect their cognitive development and emotional regulation.<sup>2</sup> Parents face challenges in managing screen time and ensuring that their children and teens engage in healthy activities that promote positive mental health. To this end, we examine self-reported reasons for social media use among children, teens and their parents. One particularly common reason is "boredom," which is cited by 90% of teens and 66% of parents of teens. This result is of interest because it represents an excellent opportunity for well-designed interventions and alternatives to screen time, which should inspire novel interventions that give New Yorkers something less risky to do than use social media.

## Teens and Social Media

For teens, social media has become an increasingly important part of social life. Platforms like YouTube, Instagram, Snapchat, and TikTok offer opportunities for connection, self-expression and exploration of identity. However, they also present risks such as cyberbullying, body image distortion, social comparisons and the pressure to cultivate a curated online persona. Constant exposure to idealized images and lifestyles can contribute to feelings of inadequacy and low self-esteem among teenagers. Exposure to violent or dangerous content can lead to violence or risk-taking offline. The addictive nature of social media can also interfere with sleep patterns, exacerbate feelings of loneliness and isolation, and hinder offline social interactions. The pressure to constantly be connected and to maintain a certain type of online presence and image can be overwhelming for teens, increasing the potential to develop symptoms of anxiety, depression or both. For example, we found that teens who use social media are at least three times more likely to have a diagnosis of depression or anxiety than those who do not. While social media use among teens clearly has a wide variety of effects on their mental health,<sup>3</sup> it is our duty to determine and mitigate the most harmful effects through a combination of education, training and tools.



<sup>2</sup>Anderson DR, Subrahmanyam K. Digital screen media and cognitive development. *Pediatrics*. 2017;140(Suppl 2):S57-S61. doi:10.1542/peds.2016-1758C

<sup>3</sup>Valkenburg PM, Meier A, Beyens I. Social media use and its impact on adolescent mental health: An umbrella review of the evidence. *Curr Opin Psychol*. 2022;44:58-68. doi:10.1016/j.copsyc.2021.08.017



## Parents and Social Media

Parents of teens and children are being asked to understand, evaluate and manage the use of technology that the most advanced research in the world does not yet have a clear grasp on. They are being asked to perform these impossible tasks while they themselves are likely using social media, making it challenging to model good digital citizenship and behavior for children and teens. This puts them in a difficult and paradoxical position. In our survey we see results such as that a substantial number (45%) of parents think their child uses social media too much and an overwhelming majority (78%) want the government to regulate social media for teens and children. When we see results like this, we break down our findings by demographic characteristics. Here, we see that parents with higher incomes, or those who are the recipients of privilege – be it racial, economic or due to neighborhood conditions – are the most concerned about the social media use of their children and teens. This suggests that on top of competing demands made on families of lower income and less privilege there may be an unequal awareness of the potential harms of social media that the City of New York hopes to combat.



## Why Is This Report Important?

To our knowledge, this is the first survey and analysis of social media use of its kind led by a public health authority in a big city – especially one as large and diverse as New York. As this report is at the cutting edge of our understanding of a complex social phenomenon, its conclusions must be seen as a critical step toward understanding rather than definitive. The potential cost to the health of young New Yorkers makes this work necessary and important. The ways forward suggested by the data must be addressed now if we are truly committed to protecting the mental health of our teens and children.

## What Are We Currently Doing as a City?

To address the mental health needs of NYC's children and teens, it is essential to recognize the role of social media in shaping their experiences and perceptions. In 2023, the NYC Health Department and Rockefeller Foundation held an initial event to discuss **youth mental health and social media usage**. At the event, young people stated clearly that social media was harming them. Participants said that they were looking to adults to be better role models and to help them moderate and adjust their social media use to protect them from harm rather than to control or punish social media use. Participants at this event **framed social media as a digital toxin**. Public health offers a framework for solutions to address it through harm reduction, prevention, education, regulation and research, just as with other environmental toxins.

Mayor Eric Adams and the NYC Health Department then presented a **social media and youth mental health action plan** containing specific guidance and proposing reforms to social media platforms such as content moderation, parental controls, and limits on algorithmic boosting and ads

specifically targeted at minors. The Commissioner of Health also issued a public **Health Advisory**, declaring social media a threat to youth mental health and recommending that parents, teachers and other adults delay mobile device and social media use until at least age 14 and institute “tech-free times” at school, home and other relevant settings.

These are all important actions to protect the mental health of our children and youth, and evidence of NYC’s commitment to protecting the mental health of young people, a key pillar of “**Care, Community, Action: A Mental Health Plan for NYC**,” released by the Adams Administration in early 2023. But NYC cannot do it alone. We will need broad leadership and partnership, especially from Congress and federal officials, to address this 21st-century public health challenge.

Research generating more knowledge about the impacts of social media on NYC residents, especially children, teens and parents is foundational to this effort. This report begins to address this urgent issue with the first analysis of local public health data on the reported impacts and correlations between social media use and mental health. While the challenge in understanding and combating the negative impacts of social media on mental health is daunting, we are proud to be at the forefront, advancing an understanding of social media and suggesting areas for intervention and action.

## Background and Definitions

### The Family Mental Health Survey: Description and Purpose

In Fall 2023, the NYC Health Department conducted the two-part Family Mental Health Survey (FMHS) to assess the state of youth mental health among NYC residents from the perspective of parents of children age 5 to 17 years old and from the perspective of teens age 13 to 17 and their parents. This was the first local mental health survey to investigate attitudes and behaviors regarding social media use. Specifically, the survey aimed to achieve the following:

- Identify the prevalence of mental, emotional, developmental and behavioral health symptoms among NYC youth.
- Explore various dimensions of mental health, encompassing factors such as access to and utilization of mental health services; encounters with social stressors and support systems; experiences related to racism and discrimination; social media engagement; substance use; and involvement with the criminal legal system.
- Understand areas in which parents may be experiencing heightened stress and need additional support, including issues related to social media use.
- Explore areas of need related to mental health, such as access to and utilization of mental health services.
- Identify and monitor the factors associated with emotional wellness that may prevent or mitigate mental health symptoms among youth.

## Who Was Included in the Survey?

Respondents were eligible for the parent survey if they were 18 or older, lived in one of the five boroughs of NYC (the Bronx, Brooklyn, Manhattan, Queens and Staten Island) and were the parent, guardian or caregiver of at least one child age 5 to 17 who regularly lived in their house. Respondents were eligible for the teen survey if a parent indicated on their survey that they had a teenager residing in their household and provided permission for the survey team to contact the teen to participate separately. Teens needed to be age 13 to 17.

This report describes a variety of mental health factors for children, teens and parents. To help in understanding which groups are being discussed and the differences between them, we provide details about the data presented and a list of definitions for reference.

## Definitions

**Parent:** “Parent” is used throughout to refer to both parents or guardians and other kinds of caregivers. This is because a large majority (91%) of those who participated in the survey indicated they were a biological parent, stepparent or adoptive parent. Other forms of caretakers we may refer to as “parents” may include relations such as grandparents.

**Child:** In this report, “children” refers to people age 8 to 12. We did not ask questions related to social media if parents indicated their child was age 5 to 7.

**Teen:** In this report, “teen” means a person age 13 to 17. All teen survey responses were given by either the teen themselves or their parent. We always note in the text whether the data refer to the teen’s opinion or to their parent’s opinion.

**Mental health:** A state of emotional, psychological, social and behavioral well-being. It is not simply the absence of mental illnesses or symptoms of mental illnesses. Mental health affects how we think, feel, act and relate to other people.

**Mental illness:** A treatable condition that can be diagnosed by a health care professional. These conditions may affect a person’s ability to think clearly, manage their emotions or behavior, or interact with others. In this report we look primarily at anxiety and depression disorders and report both diagnoses and symptoms.

**Depressive symptoms:** Depressive symptoms include experiencing little interest or pleasure in doing things; feeling down, depressed or hopeless; having trouble falling asleep; feeling tired or having little energy; experiencing a poor appetite or overeating; feeling bad about oneself; having trouble concentrating; and lethargy or restlessness.

**Social media:** There is no definition of social media widely accepted by all researchers. We follow the definition used by the U.S. Surgeon General in “**Social Media and Youth Mental Health: The U.S. Surgeon General’s Advisory**,”<sup>4</sup> taken from Carr and Hayes (2015),<sup>5</sup> which defines social media as “internet-based channels that allow users to opportunistically interact and selectively self-present, either in real time or asynchronously, with both broad and narrow audiences who derive value from user generated content and the perception of interaction with others.”

<sup>4</sup><https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/sg-youth-mental-health-social-media-advisory.pdf>

<sup>5</sup>Carr CT, Hayes RA. Social media: Defining, developing, and divining. *Atl J Commun*. 2015;23(1):46-65.

doi:10.1080/15456870.2015.972282

**Race, ethnicity:** Socially constructed categories based in shared heritage that can be biological, cultural or both. In this report we use the following categories, which parents self-selected: Asian or Pacific Islander, Black, Latino, White, and Other or multiple races. All respondents who identified as Asian or Pacific Islander, Black, white, or another or multiple races also identified as non-Latino unless otherwise noted.

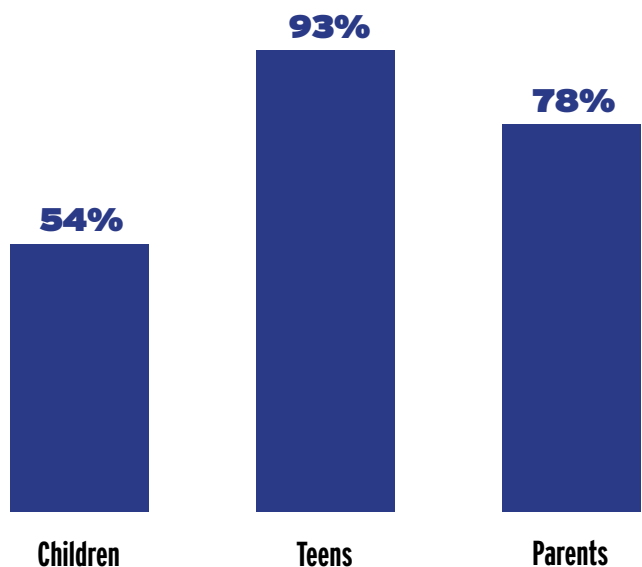
**Neighborhood poverty:** Neighborhood poverty is determined by the ZIP code-level income-to-poverty ratio from the five-year American Community Survey, 2018 to 2022. Neighborhood poverty is classified according to the percentage of the ZIP code population living below 100% of the federal poverty threshold (FPT). The FPT is determined by household income, size and composition. A low-poverty ZIP code is one in which 0% to less than 10% of the population lives below 100% of the FPT; a very high-poverty ZIP code is one in which 30% to 100% of the population lives below 100% of the FPT.

A description of the demographics of those surveyed appears in the Appendix of this report. Also, we provide the surveys' data tables online. To find the data tables alongside the PDF of this report, visit [nyc.gov/health](https://nyc.gov/health) and search for **youth mental health and social media usage**.

## A Majority of Children, Teens and Parents Are Using Some Form of Social Media

Parents of 54% of children in NYC report their child uses some form of social media. Ninety-three percent of teens report using some form of social media. There is clearly a sharp increase in the use of social media during the teenage years. Among NYC parents age 18 and older, 78% report using some form of social media.

### Social Media Use Among Children, Teens and Parents



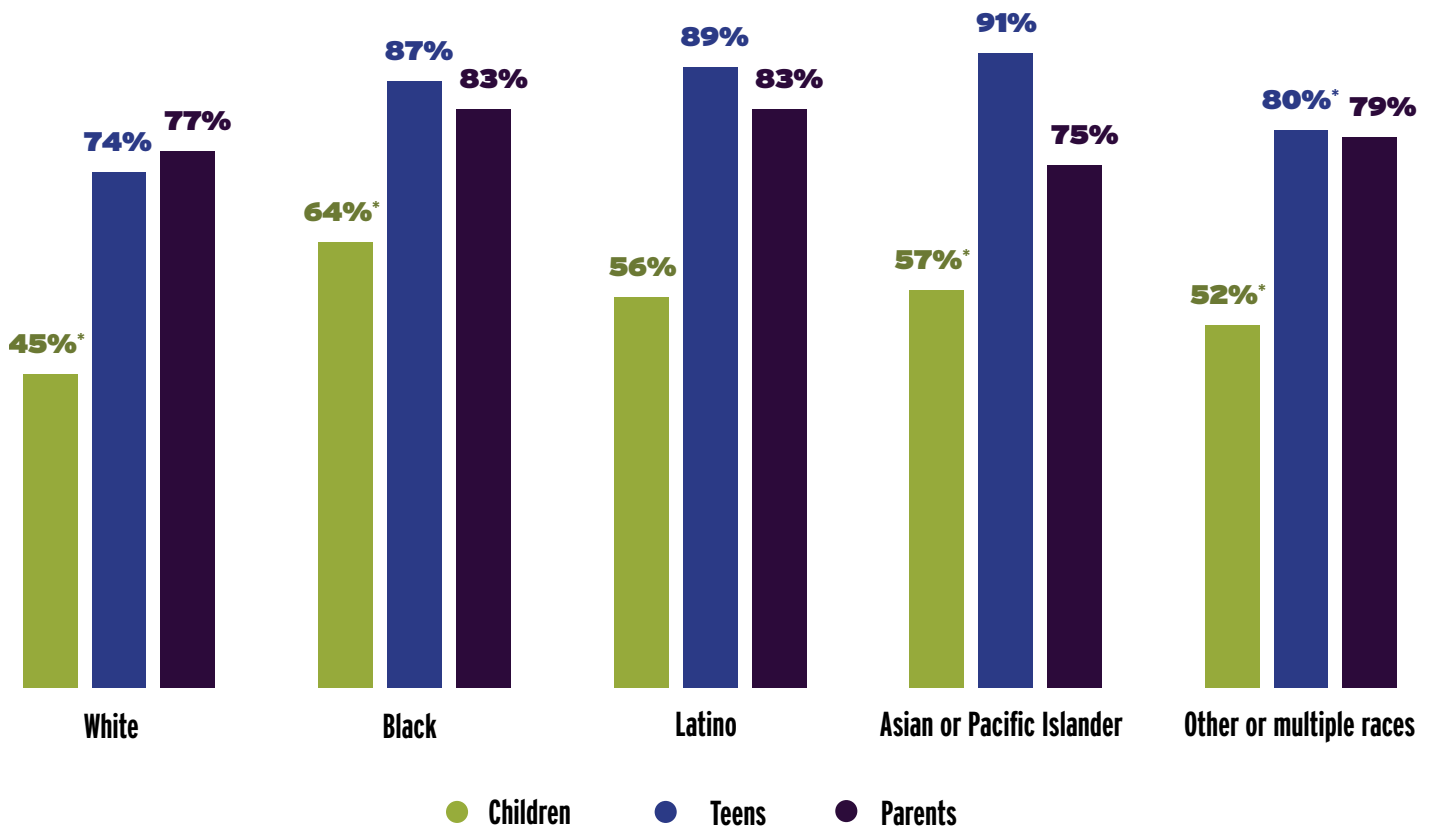
Rates of social media use vary across racial groups. In fact, parent reports indicate a nearly 20% difference in social media use between Black children (64%\*) and white children (45%\*). Similarly, parents of Black (87%), Latino (89%), and Asian or Pacific Islander (91%) teens are up to 15% more likely to report that their child uses social media compared with parents of white teens (74%).

Black (83%) and Latino (83%) parents are more likely to use social media themselves compared with white parents (77%).

These findings encourage us to consider social media use through the lens of racial inequity, and take into account the cumulative advantages and privileges conferred upon certain racial and demographic groups. This inequity could result in some systematic patterns of social media use that are potentially more harmful than others. This perspective should encourage new areas of research and types of interventions.

\*Data should be interpreted with caution due to small sample size.

## Racial and Ethnic Differences in Social Media Use

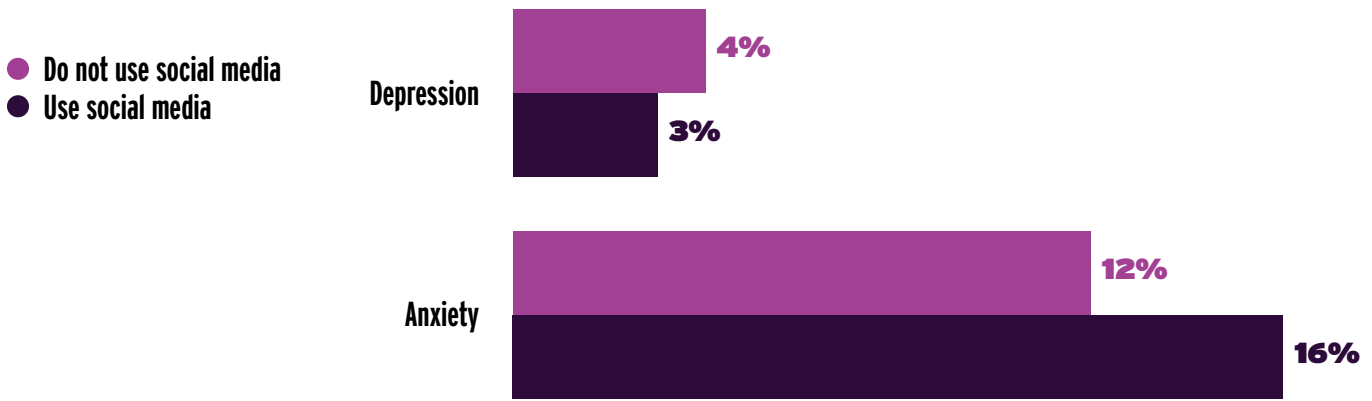


We also see differences in social media use according to the type of school a child attends. Specifically, children who attend public or charter schools (57%) or another school type (78%\*) are up to 40% more likely to use social media than children who attend private school (34%\*). Among teens who use social media, parents report a 30% difference in usage between those who attend public or charter schools (89%) or another school type (93%) compared with parents of teens who attend private school (58%\*). These findings demonstrate that social media use correlates with markers of relative economic privilege, suggesting that among families of greater economic privilege there may be greater awareness of the risks of social media use or more alternative activities for children to spend time on. These or other factors could make social media use lower in children and families with greater privilege. This once again suggests that social media use is potentially an issue of equity.

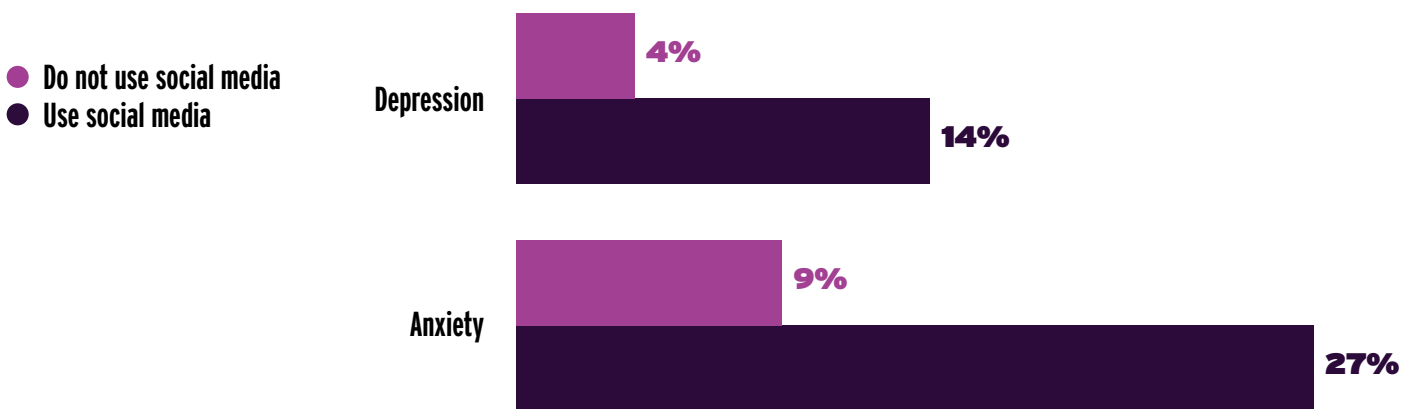
Among children in NYC who use social media, 16% have an anxiety diagnosis and 3% have a depression diagnosis, whereas among children who do not use social media, 12% have an anxiety diagnosis and 4%\* have a depression diagnosis. Parents of NYC teens who use social media are more likely to report that their teen has an anxiety diagnosis (27%) or depression diagnosis (14%) than parents of teens who do not use social media (9% and 4%, respectively). Parents who themselves do not use social media are less likely to have indicators of depression (12%) or mild anxiety (25%) compared with parents who do use social media (15% and 30%, respectively). These findings are some of the most **urgent** and **compelling** results of our analysis, and the potential negative effects on mental health justify further research and intervention.

\*Data should be interpreted with caution due to small sample size.

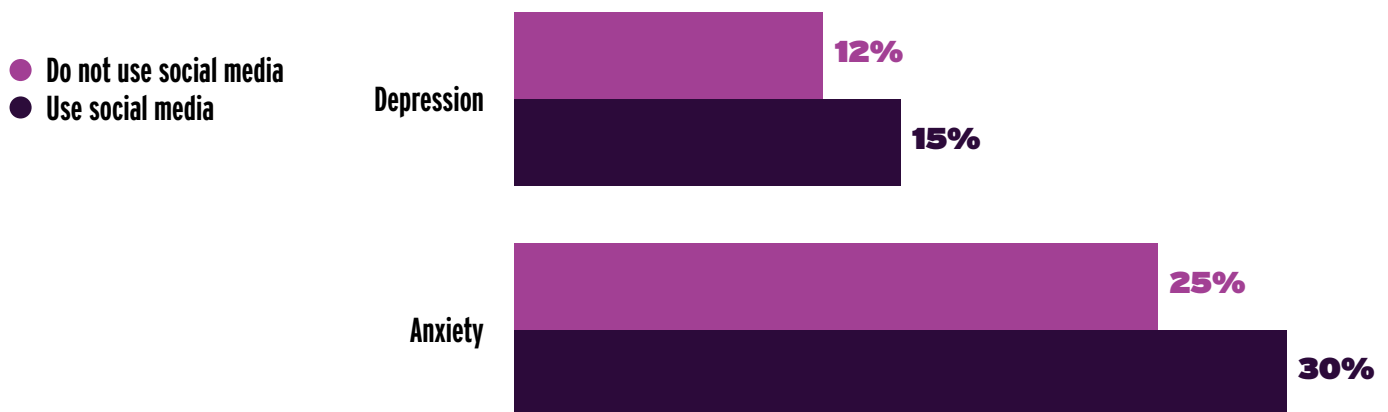
### Rates of Depression and Anxiety Among Children Age 8 to 12



### Rates of Depression and Anxiety Among Teens Age 13 to 17



### Rates of Depression and Anxiety Among Parents

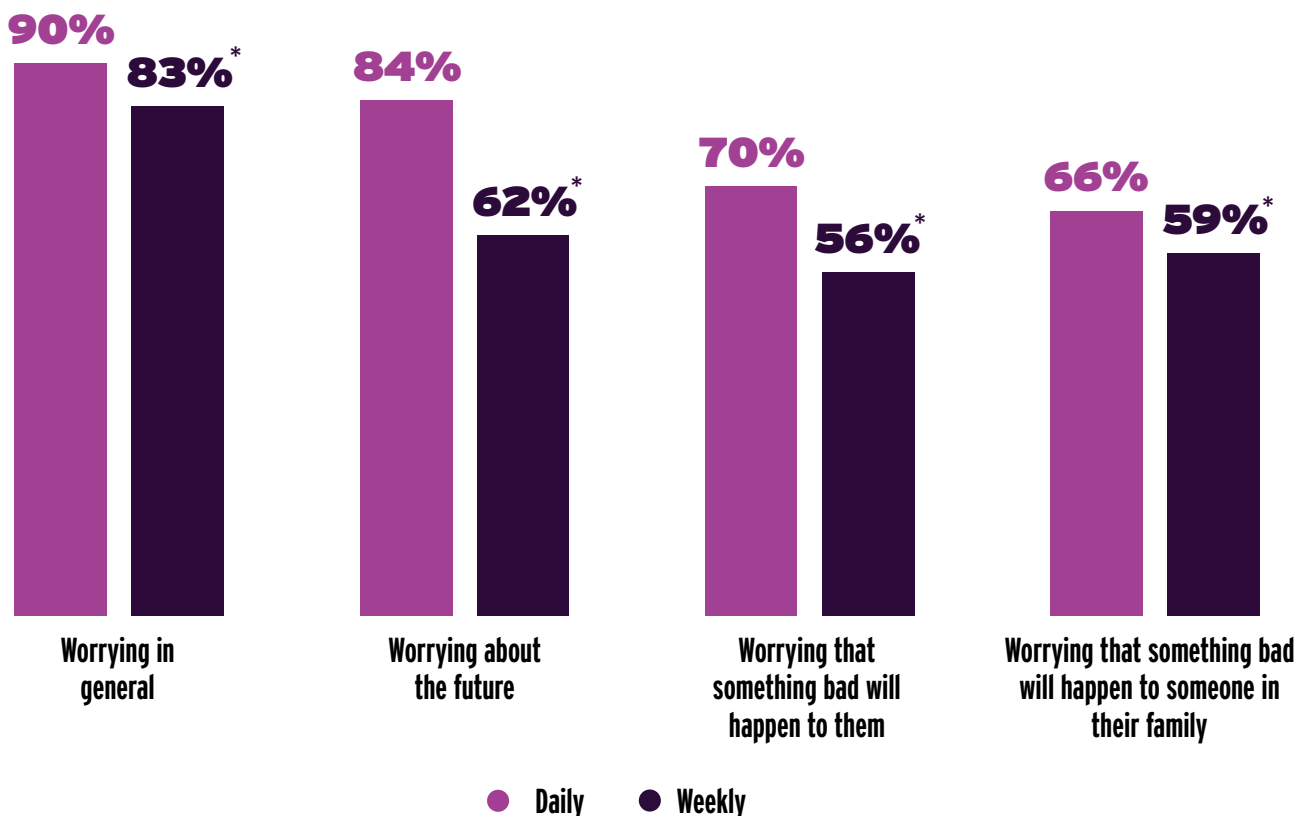


# How Frequently Teens and Adults Use Social Media Is Associated With Depression and Anxiety Symptoms

We assessed frequency of social media use, categorized as daily use or weekly use, and found important increases in mental health diagnoses and mental health-related symptoms as social media use becomes more frequent.

Among teens who report using social media **daily**, 90% report worrying in general, 84% report worrying about the future, 70% report worrying that something bad will happen to them and 66% report worrying that something bad will happen to someone in their family. When we look at teens who use social media **weekly**, these percentages decrease nearly 10%, with 83%\* worrying in general, 62%\* worrying about the future, 56%\* worrying that something bad will happen to them and 59%\* worrying that something bad will happen to someone in their family.

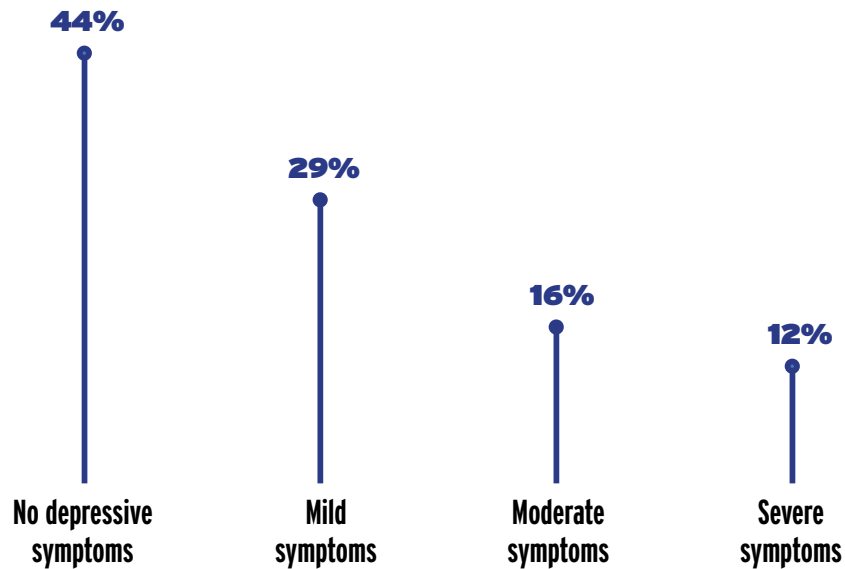
## Frequency of Feelings of Anxiety Among Teens Who Report Using Social Media Daily and Weekly



\*Data should be interpreted with caution due to small sample size.

Among teens who report using social media **daily**, 44% report no depressive symptoms and 56% report at least some depressive symptoms. The severity of symptoms among daily teen social media users breaks down to 29% who report mild symptoms, 16% who report moderate symptoms and 12% who report severe symptoms. Among teens who report using social media **weekly**, 61%\* report no depressive symptoms and 24%\* report mild depressive symptoms.

### Frequency of Depressive Symptoms Among Teens Who Report Using Social Media Daily

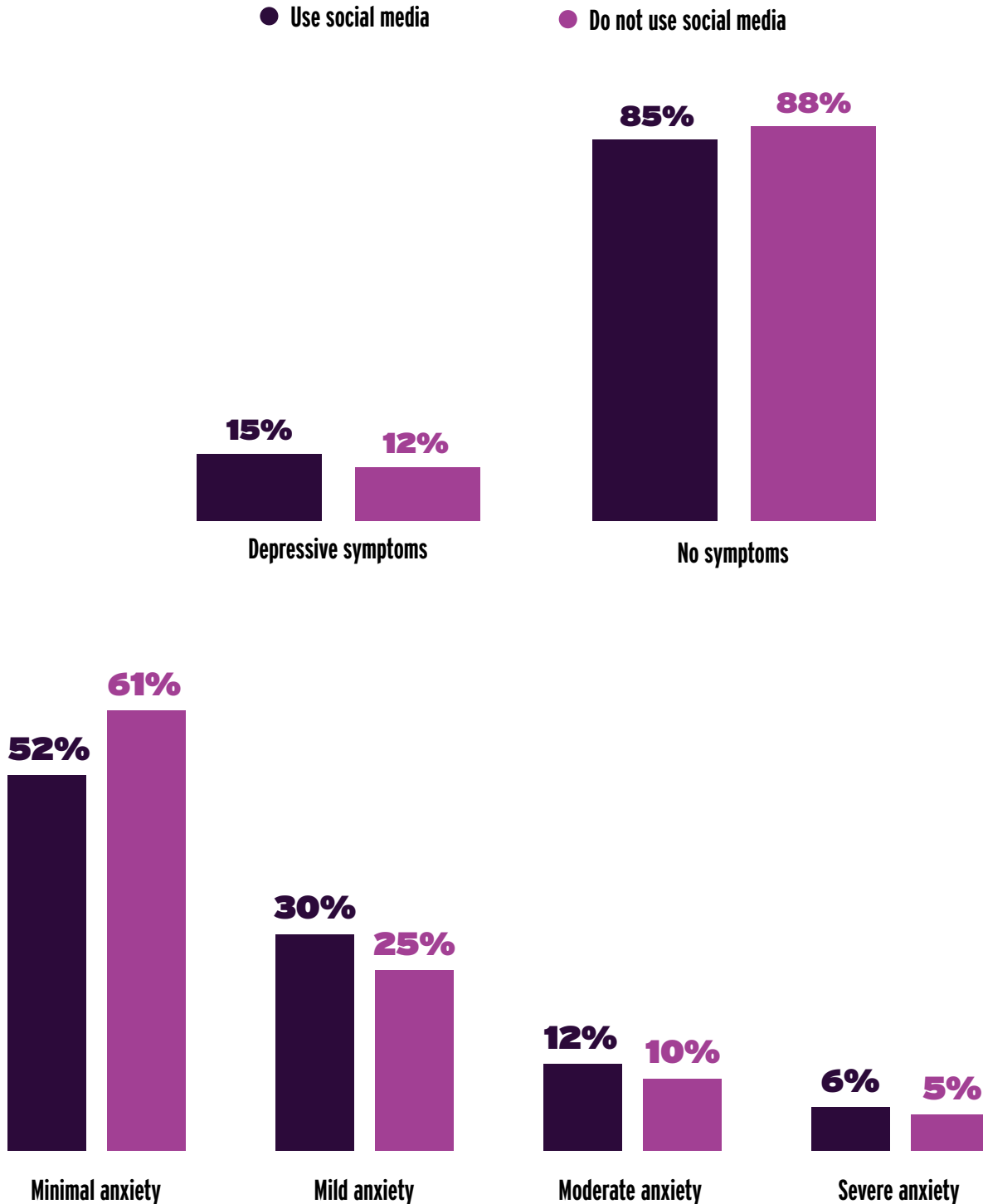


\*Data should be interpreted with caution due to small sample size.



Parents who use social media daily are more likely to report symptoms of anxiety compared with parents who never use social media (25% and 9%, respectively), with a 16% difference between the two groups. Parents who use social media daily are also more likely to report indicators of depression (15%) compared with parents who never use social media (12%).

### Frequency of Depressive and Anxious Symptoms Among Parents Who Do and Do Not Use Social Media



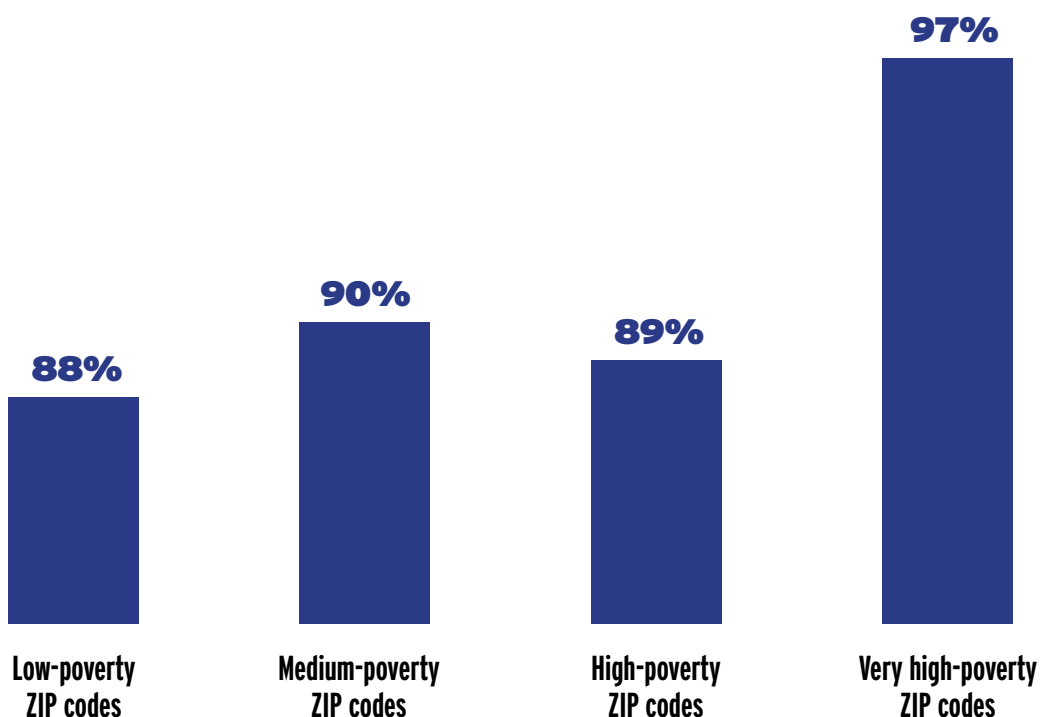
# Teens and Parents Use Social Media Often Because They Are Bored

Teens tell us they use social media platforms for a variety of reasons. Most often, teens report they use social media to be entertained (98%), to learn new things (91%) or because they felt bored (90%). Teens report there are many ways social media makes them feel, including more connected to friends' lives (67%), that it gives them a place to show creativity (65%) and that they are part of a community they cannot access otherwise (55%). Parents give similar reasons for why they use social media, including for entertainment (92%), because it gives them information (90%), lets them learn new things (85%) and makes them feel connected (69%), and, like teens, because they feel bored (66%).

Many of these responses show that the effects of social media are complex and are neither wholly positive nor wholly negative. While misinformation is a persistent problem in online spaces, using social media to learn new things encourages curiosity, a positive and prosocial emotion. **Boredom**, however, is a highly cited reason for social media use and **offers more of a challenge** for groups looking to promote mental health. Because it represents a **negative emotional experience**, and because it offers the **opportunity for programmatic interventions**, we have further analyzed the data on social media use due to boredom.

Teens who report residing in areas of very high poverty are nearly 10% more likely to use social media because they are bored (97%) compared with teens residing in low-poverty ZIP codes (88%). Parents residing in very high- (69%) and medium-poverty (67%) ZIP codes are also more likely to use social media because they are bored compared with parents residing in low-poverty areas (63%). These findings may reflect historic disinvestment in some neighborhoods leading to fewer safe alternative activities and may therefore help identify potential interventions.

## Boredom and Social Media Use Among Teens by Neighborhood Poverty



The percentage of teens who report using social media because they are bored is similar across racial and ethnic categories, with 90% of white, 87% of Black, 92% of Latino, 93% of Asian or Pacific Islander teens and 87%\* of teens identifying as Other or multiple races reporting this reason. Parents who are Black (69%), Latino (69%), and Asian or Pacific Islander (66%) are more likely to use social media because they are bored compared with parents who are white (61%). It is difficult to make a definitive statement about why a racial difference exists in parent social media use from boredom but not in teen use. More monitoring or innovative interventions may be needed.

Male teens (88%) are less likely to use social media because they are bored compared with female teens (93%). Parents who identify as transgender, nonbinary or another gender identity not listed (81%\*) are more likely to use social media because of boredom compared with parents who identify as women (66%) and men (65%), with an almost 16% difference between the groups.

Among teens who use social media, those who are homeschooled (99%\*) are more likely to use social media because they are bored compared with teens who attend private school (90%), suggesting that a lack of offline peer social connections plays a role in this use.

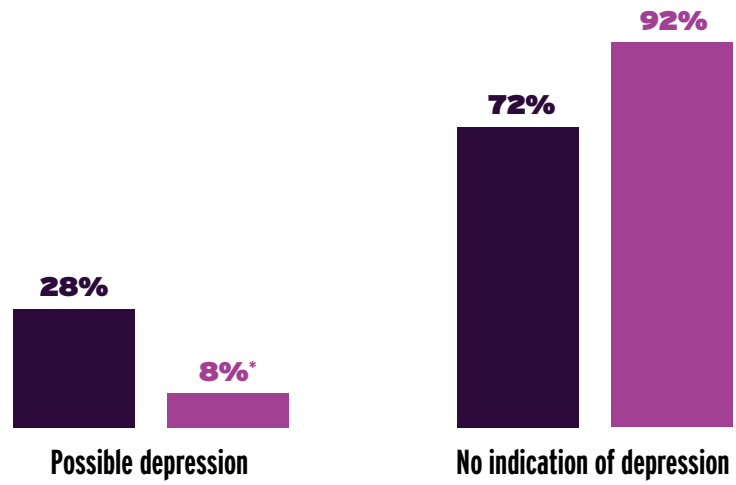
Teens who use social media in part from boredom are **more likely** to have **indicators of depression** (28%) compared with teens who do not use social media when they are bored (8%\*), with a difference of 20% between the two groups. Teens who use social media when bored are also more likely to worry about things often (28%) compared with teens who do not use social media when bored (16%\*), with a 12% difference between the groups. Further, there is a nearly 20% difference between teens who use social media when bored (28%) and teens who do not use social media when bored (10%\*) who say they always worry about the future. These findings suggest that **the use of social media during an unpleasant emotional state** such as boredom might be **particularly harmful** to mental health.

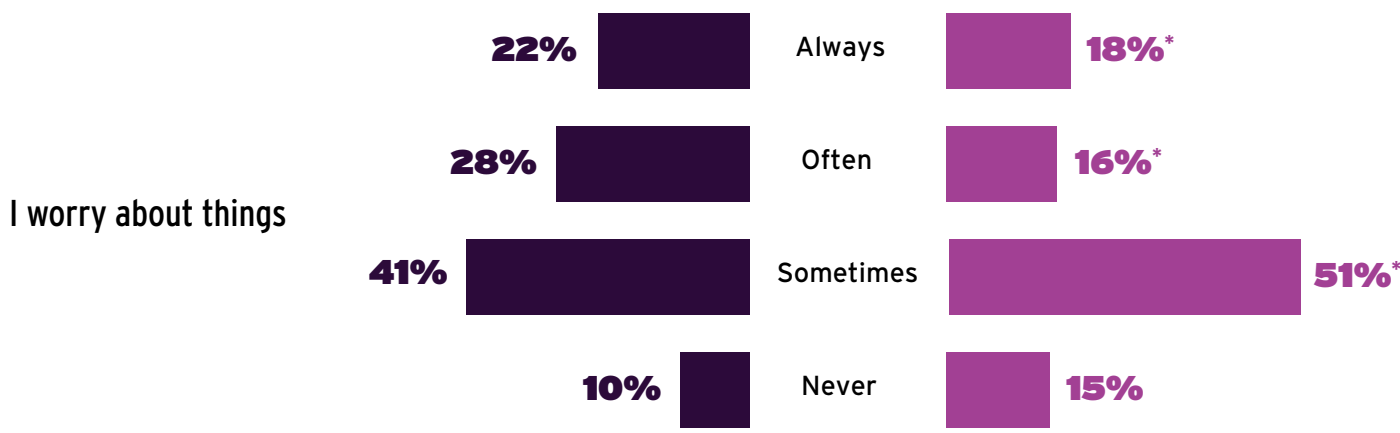
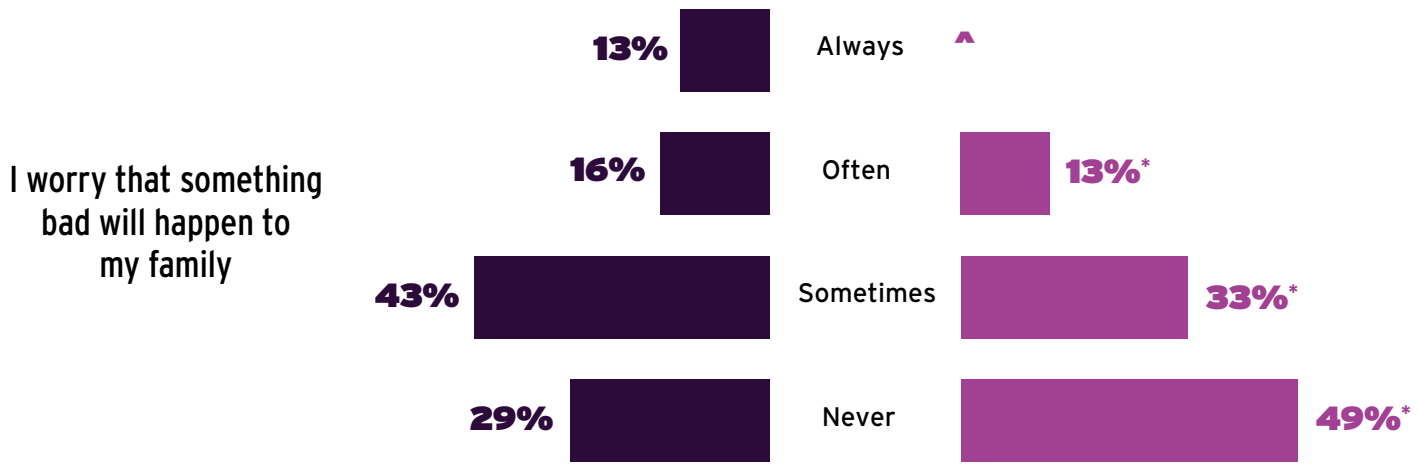
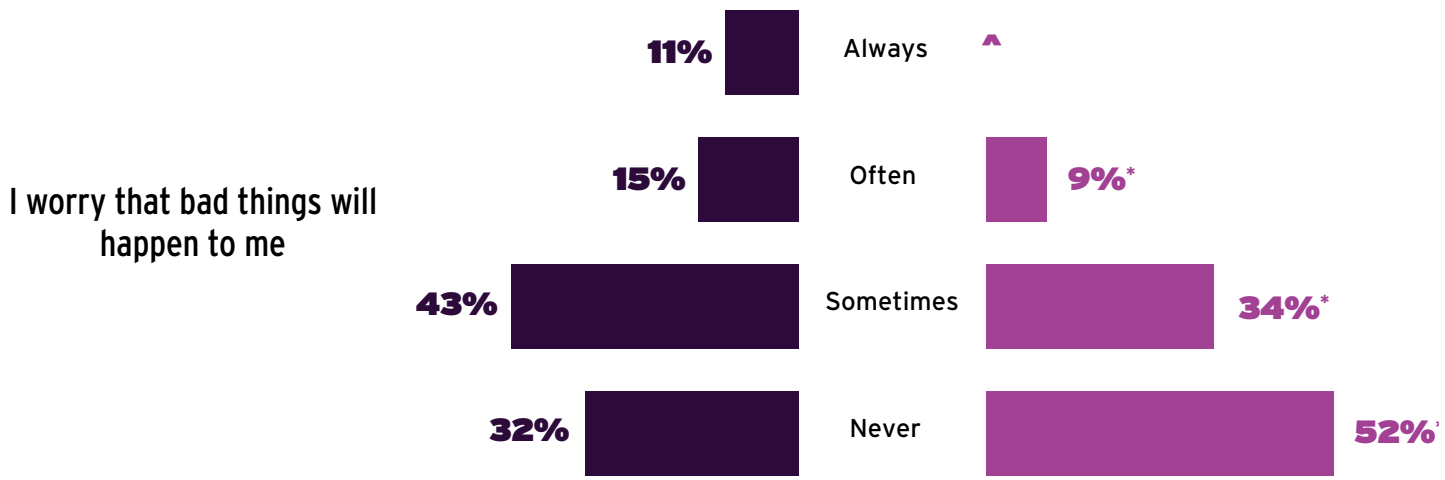
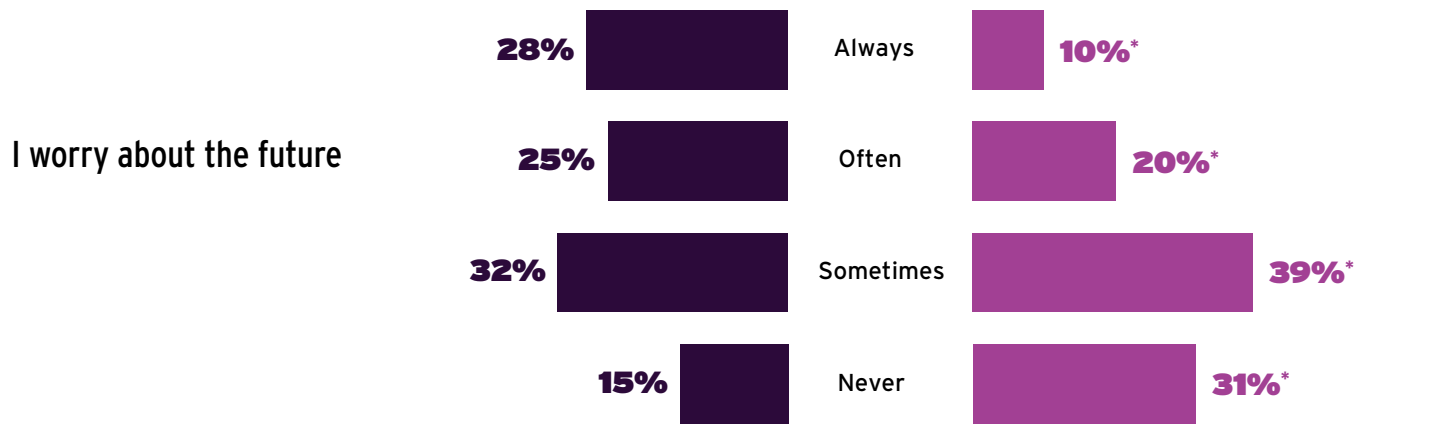
\*Data should be interpreted with caution due to small sample size.



## Social Media Use Due to Boredom and Associations With Depressive and Anxious Symptoms Among Teens

- Social media use while bored
- No social media use while bored



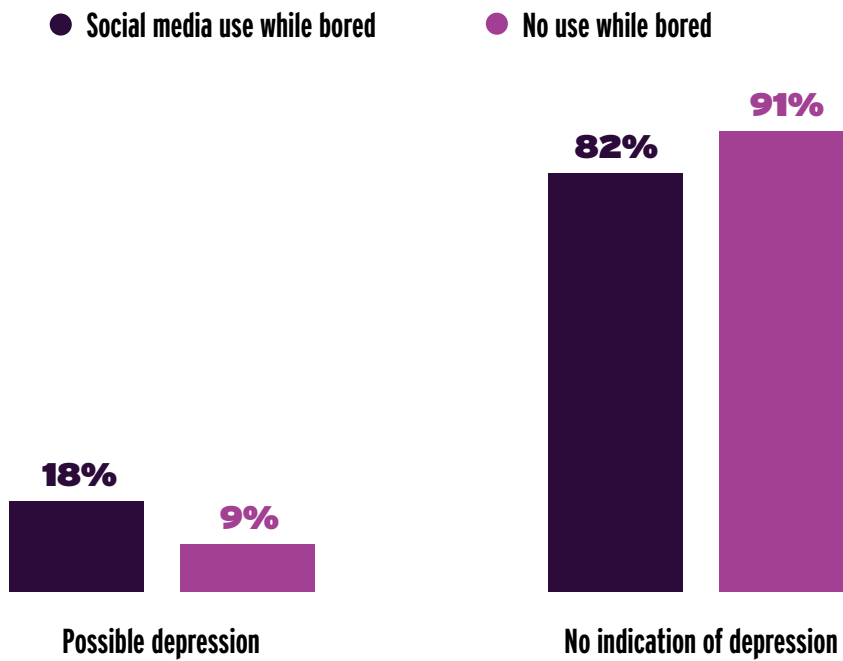


\*Data should be interpreted with caution due to small sample size.

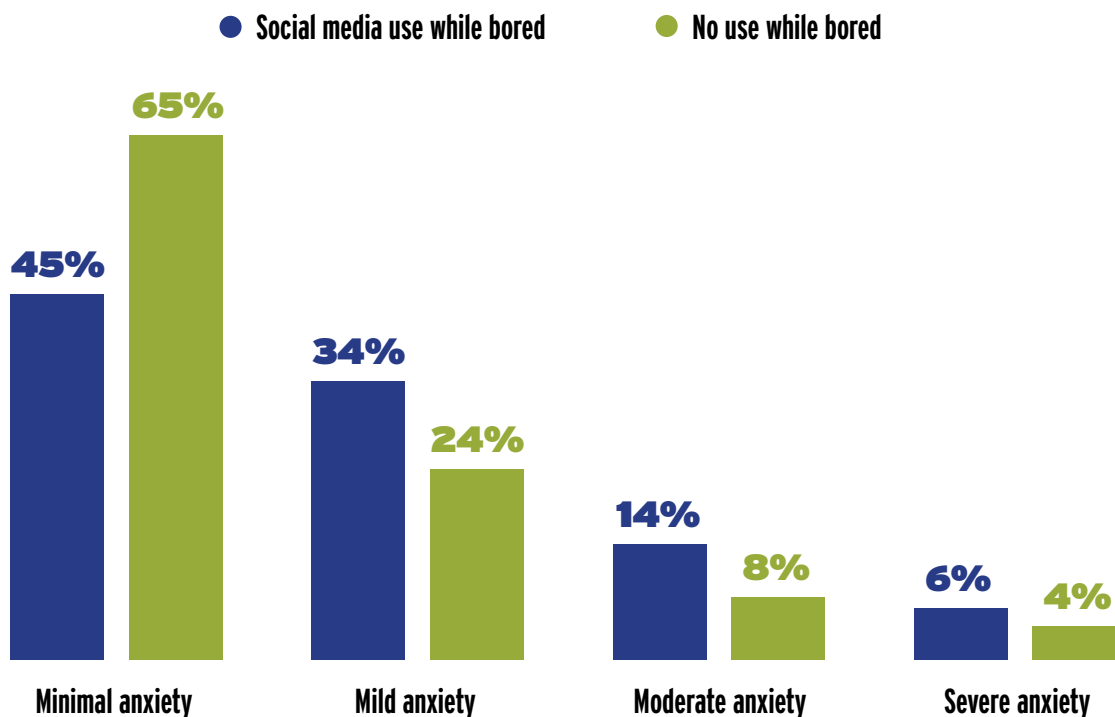
Teens who do not use social media when bored are 20% more likely to say they never worry that bad things will happen to them (49%\*) and never worry that something bad will happen to someone in their family (52%\*) compared with teens who do use social media when bored (29% and 32%, respectively).

Parents who use social media when they are bored are more likely to have indicators of depression (18%) or mild anxiety (34%) compared with parents who do not use social media when they are bored (9% and 23% respectively).

### Social Media Use Due to Boredom and Associations With Depressive Symptoms Among Parents



### Social Media Use Due to Boredom and Associations With Anxious Symptoms Among Parents



# Parents of Children and Teens Have Mixed Perceptions About How Much Time Their Child Spends Using Social Media

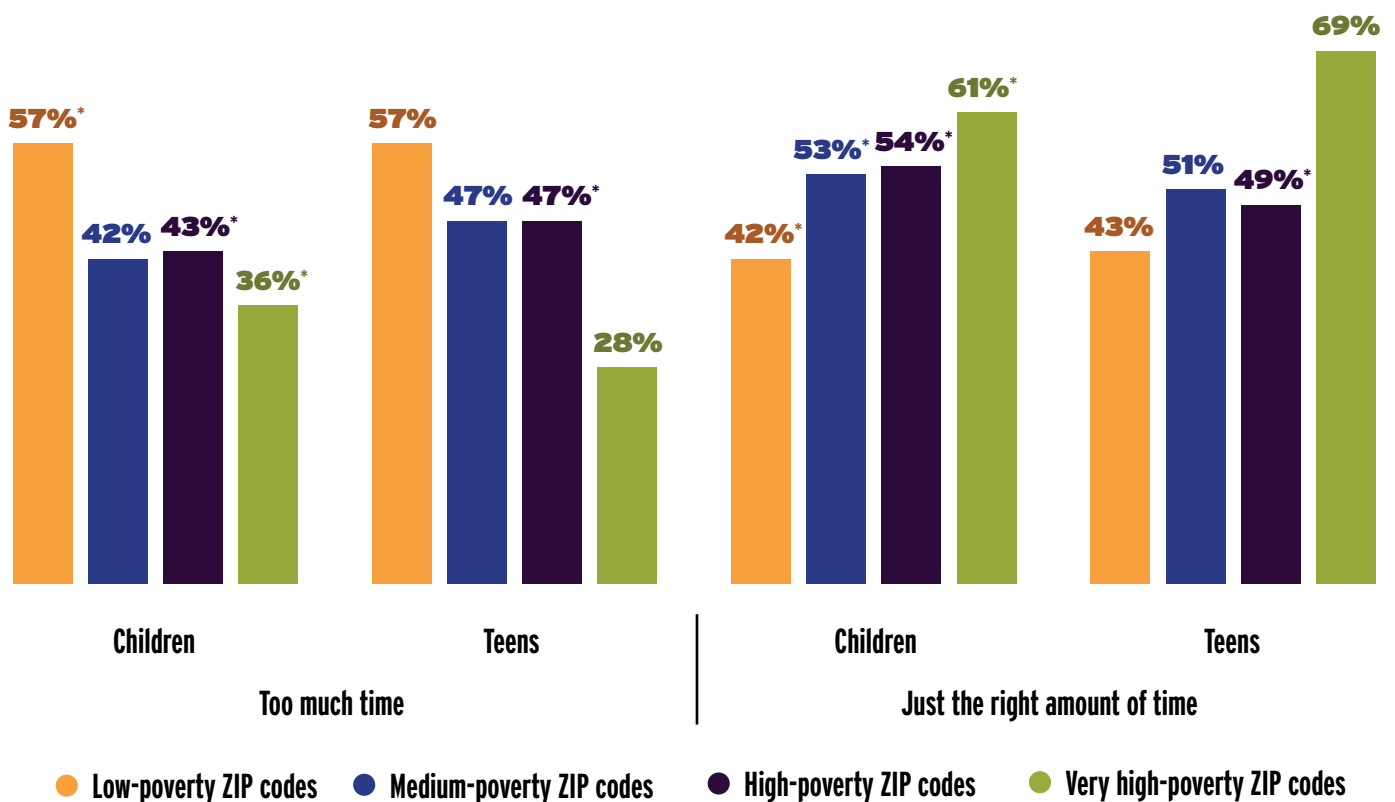
The parents of a substantial number of children, 107,000 (45%), say their child uses social media too much. Among teens, there is a similar pattern, with the parents of 172,000 (46%) teens reporting that their teen uses social media too much. Although neither of these responses constitutes an outright majority, they show that parents have substantial concerns about children’s and teens’ social media use.

Among parents who report using social media themselves, 34% feel they spend too much time using it, while 60% feel that the amount of time they spend on social media is just right. Parents appear to be more concerned with the time their children and teens spend on social media than with their own use. This may represent an understanding of the special challenges social media poses during development.

Parents of children (36%\*) and teens (28%) who reside in very high-poverty ZIP codes are less likely to report that their child uses social media too much compared with the parents of children (57%\*) and teens (57%) who reside in low-poverty ZIP codes. There is as much as a 30% difference between those residing in very high- and low-poverty ZIP codes.

Similarly, parents who reside in medium-, high- and very high-poverty ZIP codes are less likely to indicate that they themselves use social media too much (34%, 28% and 30%, respectively) compared with parents who live in low-poverty ZIP codes (39%). There is as much as an 11% difference between those who reside in ZIP codes of poverty and those who do not.

## Time Spent on Social Media Among Children and Teens by Neighborhood Poverty



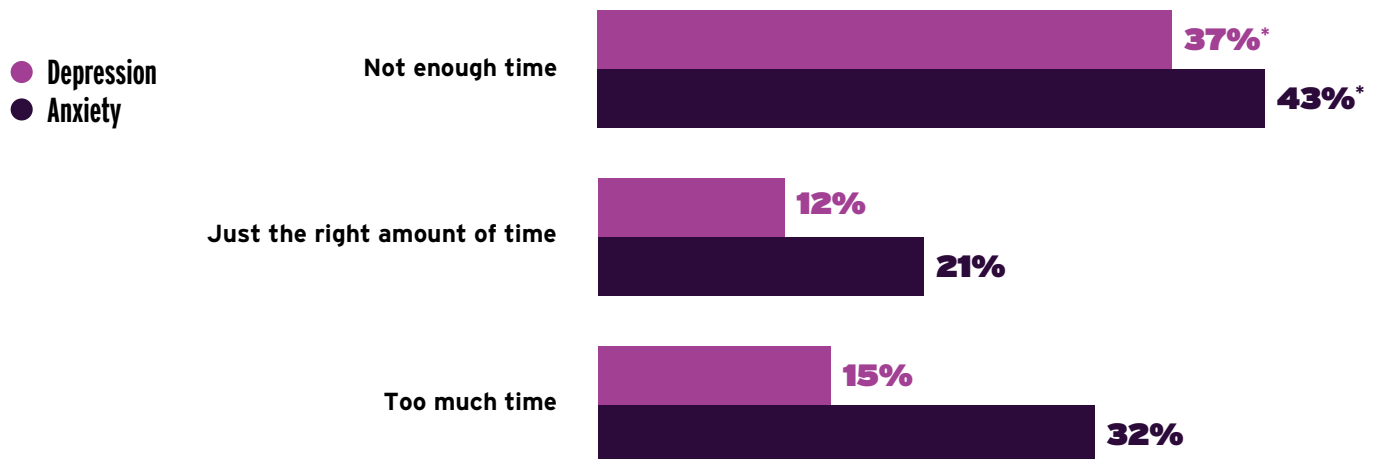
\*Data should be interpreted with caution due to small sample size.

Parents of Latino children are less likely (31%) to feel their child uses social media too much compared with parents of white children (55%\*), with a nearly 25% difference between the two groups. Parents of Black (45%\*) and Latino (37%) teens are less likely to feel their teen spends too much time on social media compared with parents of white teens (61%\*), by a nearly 24% difference. White parents are also more likely to feel that the amount of time they themselves spend using social media is too much (47%), by a difference of up to 20% compared with other racial and ethnic groups.

Among parents who feel their child spends too much time using social media, 50%\* have a child who attends private school, 44% have a child who attends public or charter school and 74%\* have a child who attends another school type. The parents of teens who attend public or charter school (45%) are also less likely, by 20%, to feel their teen spends too much time on social media compared with those who attend private school (65%\*).

Parents who feel their teen spends too much time on social media (32%) are more likely to indicate that the teen has an anxiety diagnosis compared with parents who feel their teen spends just the right amount of time on social media (21%), by a nearly 11% difference. Parents who feel their teen spends too much time using social media (15%) are also more likely to report that their child has a depression diagnosis than parents who feel their teens spend just the right amount of time on social media (12%).

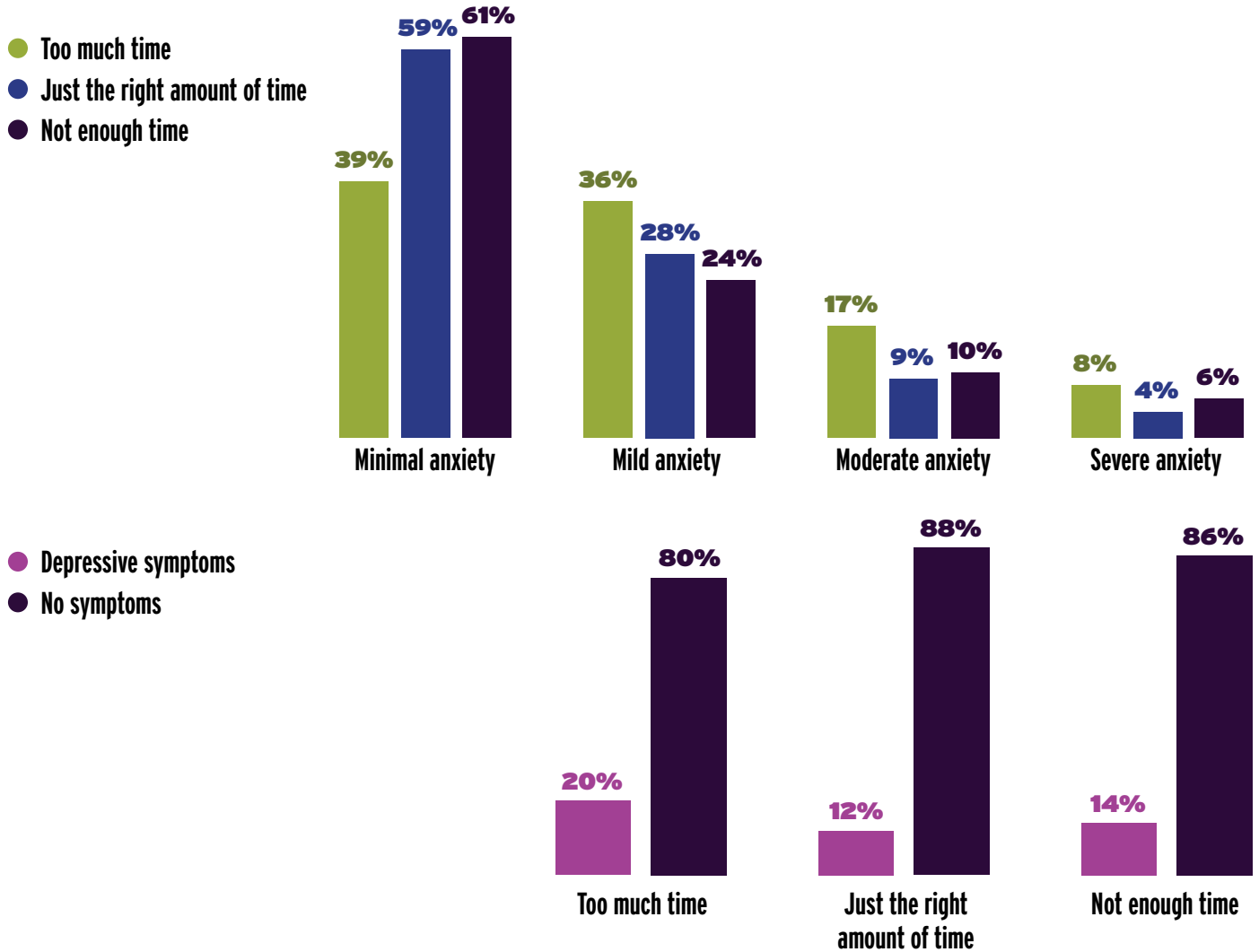
### Time Spent on Social Media and Mental Health Diagnoses Among Teens



Parents who feel that the amount of time they themselves spend on social media is too much are more likely to report moderate anxiety symptoms (17%) compared with parents who feel the time they spend on social media is just right (9%) or too little (10%). Parents who feel they spend the right amount of time on social media are less likely (88%) to report any indicators of depression than those who feel they spend too much time on social media (79%.) Parents who feel they spend too much time on social media are up to 9% more likely to report indicators of depression (20%) compared with parents who feel the time they spend on social media is just right (12%) or too little (14%).



## Time Spent on Social Media and Symptoms of Anxiety and Depression Among Parents



Parents who identify as transgender, nonbinary or another gender not listed are more likely to feel that the amount of time they spend on social media is too much (51%\*) compared with parents who identify as women (33%). There is a nearly 20% difference between these groups.



\*Data should be interpreted with caution due to small sample size.

# Children, Teens and Parents Report Both Positive and Negative Impacts of Social Media on Their Mental Health

The parents of 11% of NYC children report that social media impacts their child's mental health in a negative way. Parents of 5% of children report that social media has a positive impact on their child's mental health. Thirty-two percent of parents report that social media has both a positive and a negative impact on their child's mental health, and 52% report that social media does not impact their child's mental health at all.

NYC teens are mixed in how they think social media impacts their mental health. Among teens, 26% report that social media does not have an impact on their mental health, 12% report that social media has a positive impact on their mental health, 58% report that social media has both a positive and a negative impact on their mental health, and 4% report that social media has a negative impact on their mental health. While these results are mixed, the data also suggest that more study is needed to understand the accuracy of self-reported mental health symptoms in relation to social media use. This is especially clear considering that data from the same survey suggests that more time on social media is associated with worsened mental health symptoms.

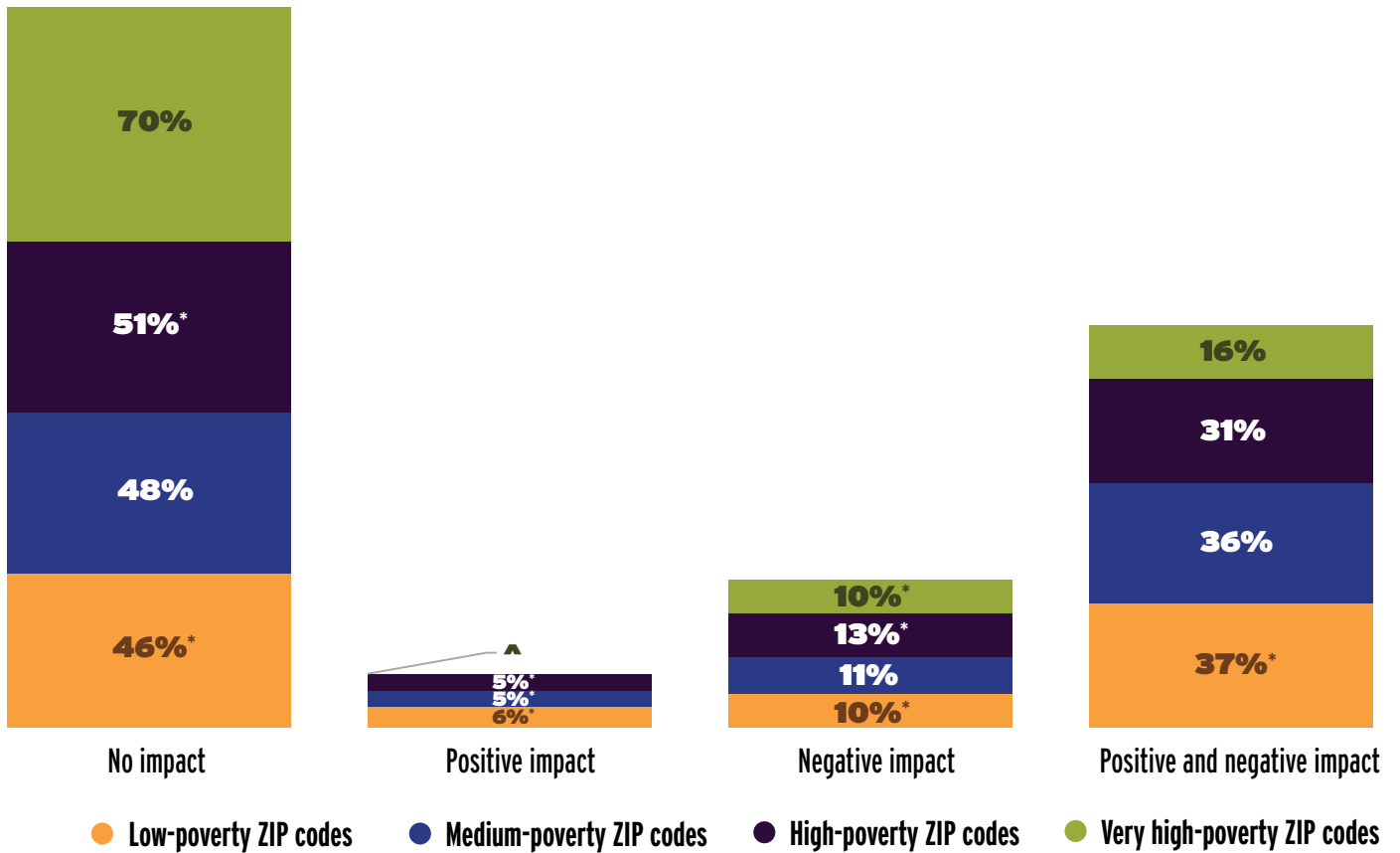
## Teens Say ...

social media has a positive impact on their mental health	<b>12%</b>
social media has a negative impact on their mental health	<b>4%</b>
social media has a positive and negative impact on their mental health	<b>58%</b>

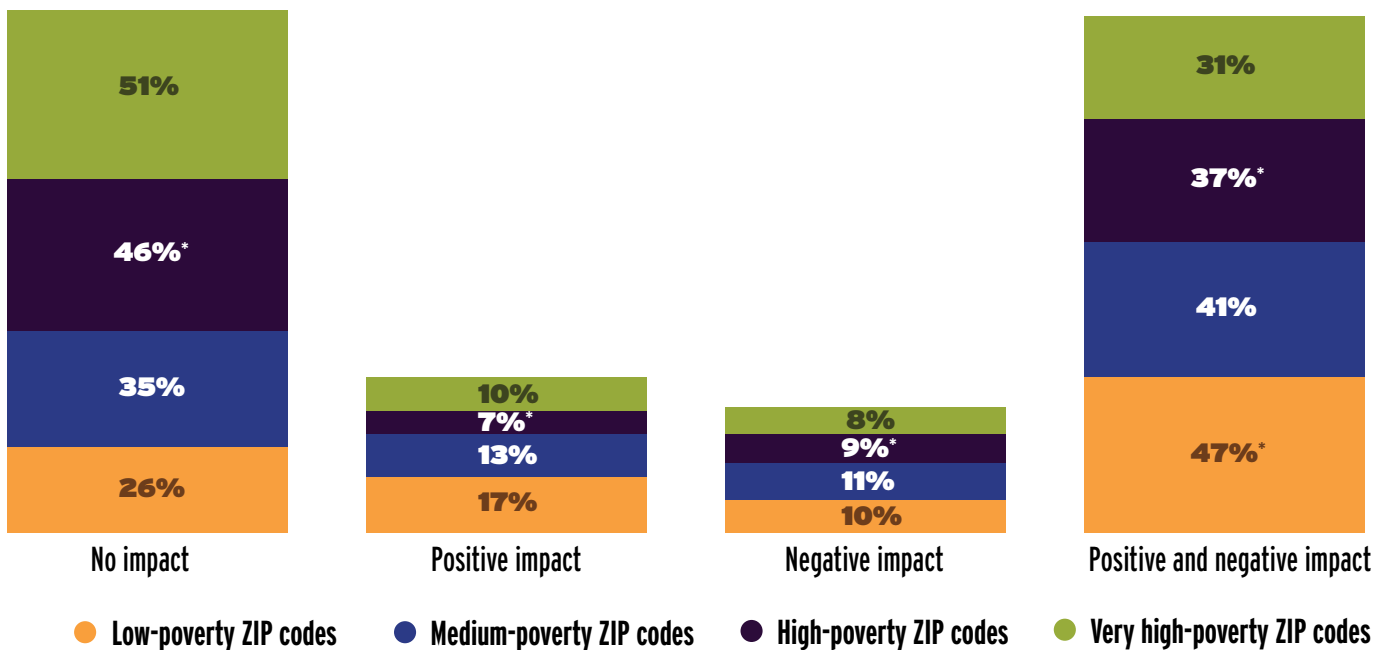
Parents of children who reside in very high-poverty ZIP codes are more likely to report that social media does not impact mental health (70%) compared with parents of children who reside in low-poverty ZIP codes (46%\*), by a difference of 24%. Similarly, teens who reside in very high- (51%) and high-poverty ZIP codes (46%\*) are more likely to report that social media has no impact on their mental health compared with teens who live in low-poverty ZIP codes (26%), by a difference of 25%.

\*Data should be interpreted with caution due to small sample size.

## Experiences of Poverty and Perceived Impact of Social Media on Mental Health Among Children



## Experiences of Poverty and Perceived Impact of Social Media on Mental Health Among Teens

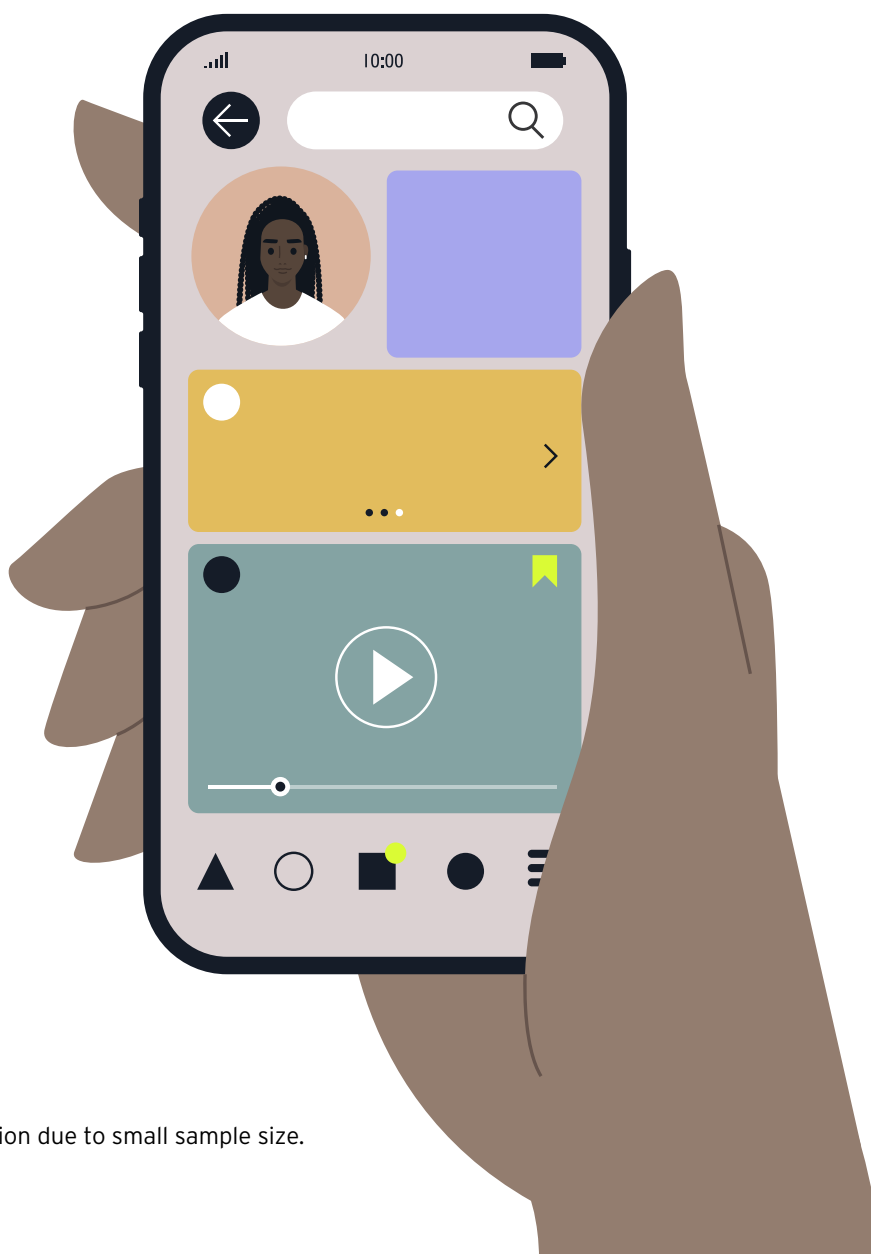


\*Data should be interpreted with caution due to small sample size.

Parents of white children (57%\*) are more likely to indicate that social media does not have an impact on their child's mental health compared with parents of Asian or Pacific Islander children (36%\*), by a 21% difference. Children reported as belonging to the Other or multiple races (76%\*) category are more likely to have parents who say that social media does not have an impact on their mental health than white children (57%\*), by a difference of nearly 20%.

The parents of 28%\* of Asian or Pacific Islander teens report that social media has no impact on their teen's mental health. Parents of 38% of white teens, 40% of Black teens, 43% of Latino teens, and 29%\* of teens identified as Other or multiple races also report that social media has no impact on their teen's mental health.

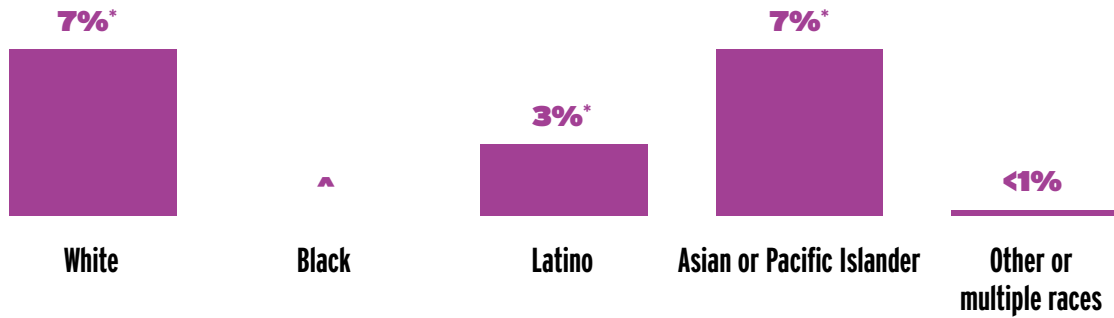
The parents of children identified as Other or multiple races (< 1%\*) are less likely to report that social media has a positive impact on their mental health compared with the parents of white children (7%\*).



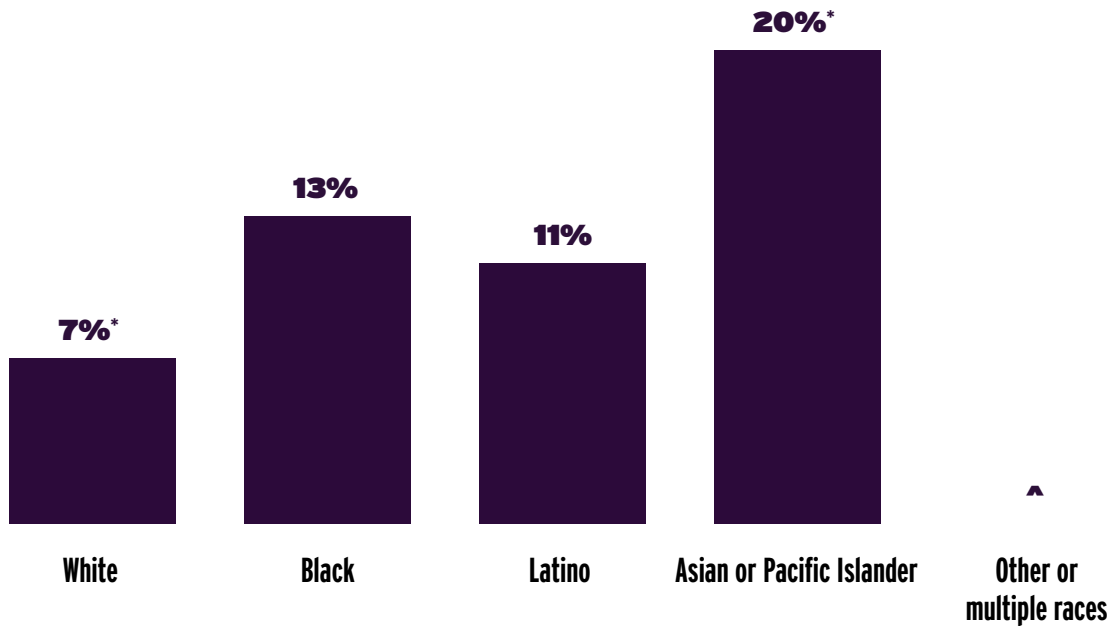
\*Data should be interpreted with caution due to small sample size.

The parents of 7%\* of white teens report that social media has a positive impact on their mental health. So do the parents of 13% of Black teens, 11% of Latino teens, 20%\* of Asian or Pacific Islander teens, and < 1% of teens who identify as Other or multiple races.

### Racial and Ethnic Differences Among Children Whose Parents Feel Social Media Has a Positive Impact on Their Mental Health



### Racial and Ethnic Differences Among Teens Whose Parents Feel Social Media Has a Positive Impact on Their Mental Health

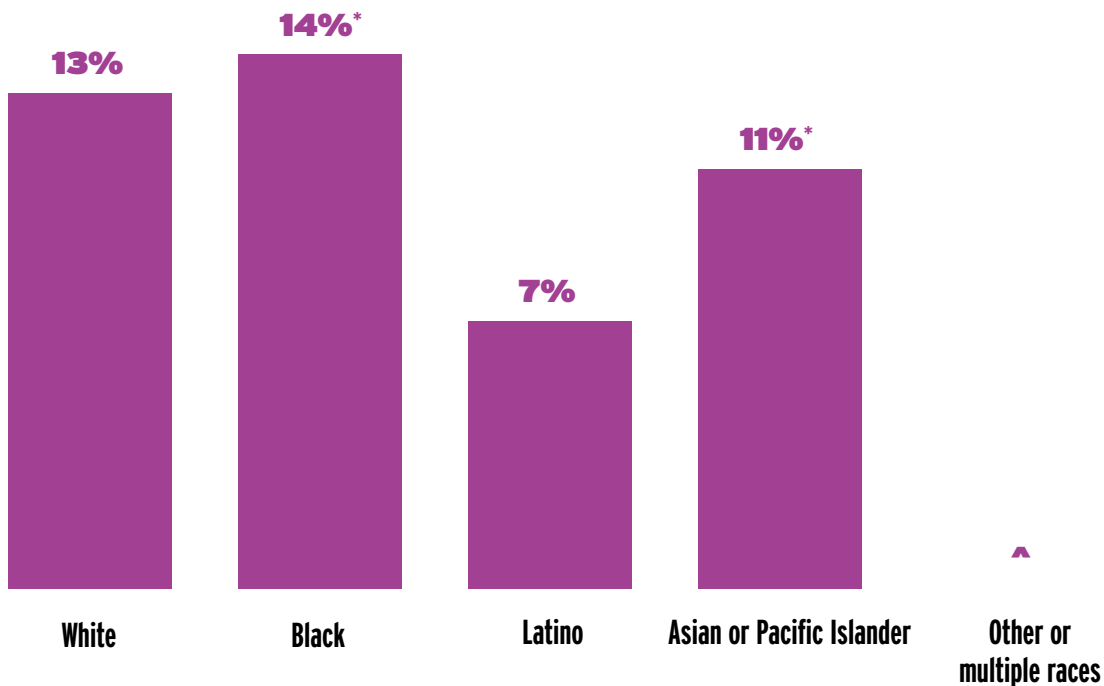


\*Data should be interpreted with caution due to small sample size.

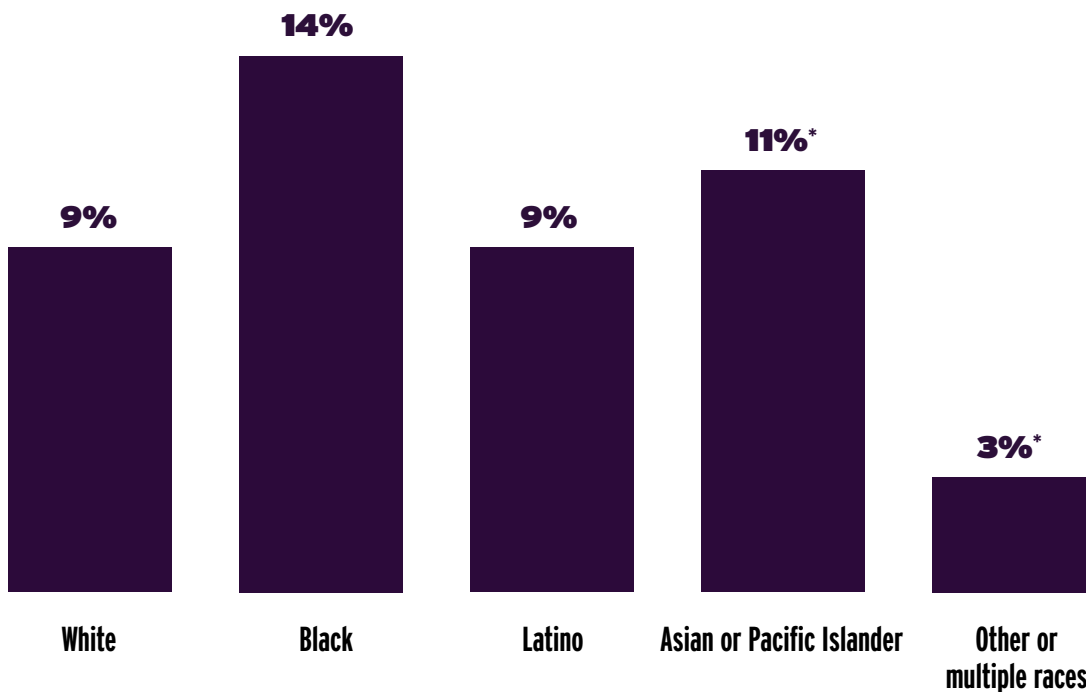
Parents of Latino children are least likely to report that social media has a negative impact on their child's mental health, at 7%, followed by parents of Asian or Pacific Islander (11%), white (13%) and Black children (14%\*).

Parents of Other or multiple race teens (3%\*) are less likely to report that social media has a negative impact on their mental health than the parents of white teens (9%).

### Racial and Ethnic Differences Among Children Whose Parents Feel Social Media Has a Negative Impact on Their Mental Health



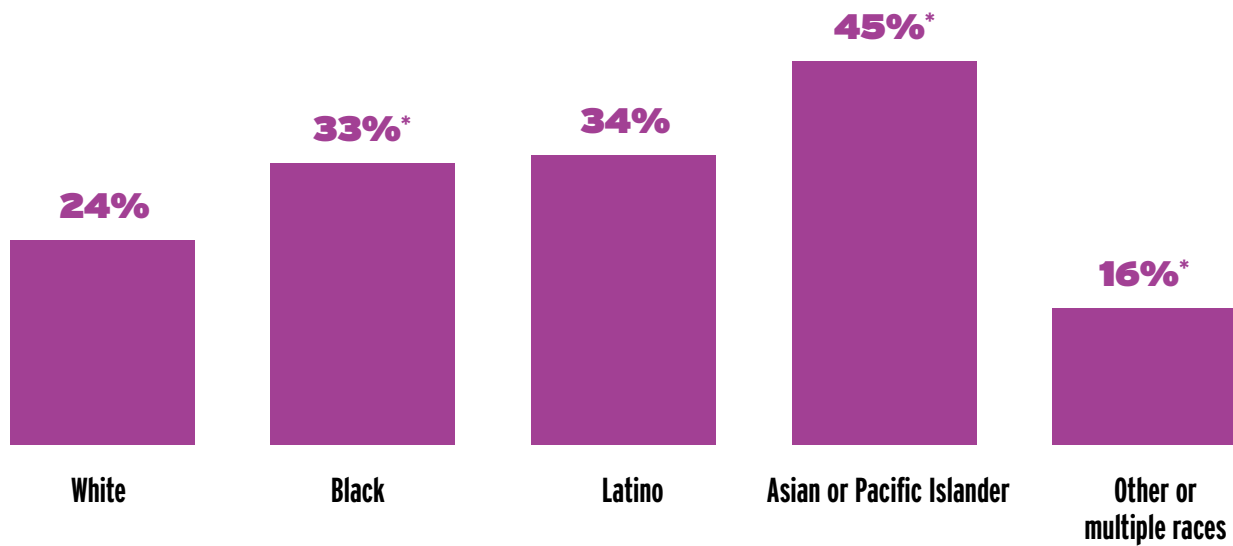
### Racial and Ethnic Differences Among Teens Whose Parents Feel Social Media Has a Negative Impact on Their Mental Health



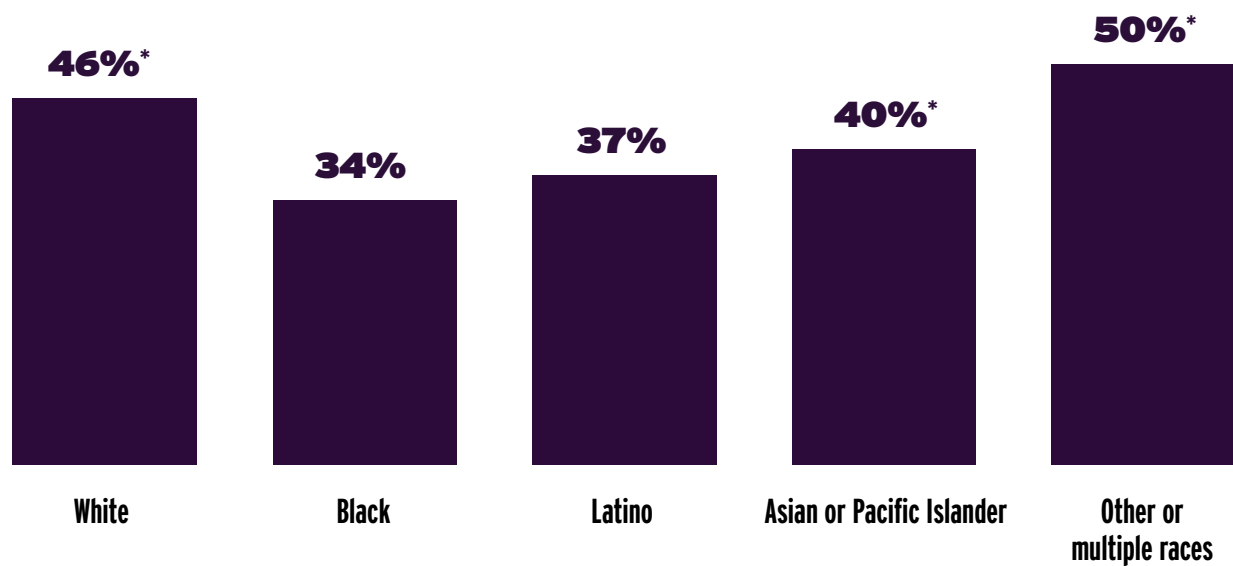
\*Data should be interpreted with caution due to small sample size.

Across racial and ethnic categories there are slight differences in the percentage of parents reporting that social media has both positive and negative impacts on teen mental health. The parents of 40%\* of Asian or Pacific Islander, 34% of Black, 37% of Latino, 50% of Other or multiple race, and 46%\* of white teens see social media as having both positive and negative impacts on teen mental health.

### Racial and Ethnic Differences Among Children Whose Parents Feel Social Media Has a Positive and Negative Impact on Their Mental Health



### Racial and Ethnic Differences Among Teens Whose Parents Feel Social Media Has a Positive and Negative Impact on Their Mental Health



\*Data should be interpreted with caution due to small sample size.

Parents whose children who attend private school (68%\*) are more likely to report that social media does not have an impact on their child’s mental health compared with children who attend public or charter school (50%), by a difference of nearly 20%. Similarly, the parents of teens who attend private school (48%\*) are also more likely to indicate that social media has no impact on their teen’s mental health compared with parents of teens who attend public or charter school (36%), by a difference of 12%.

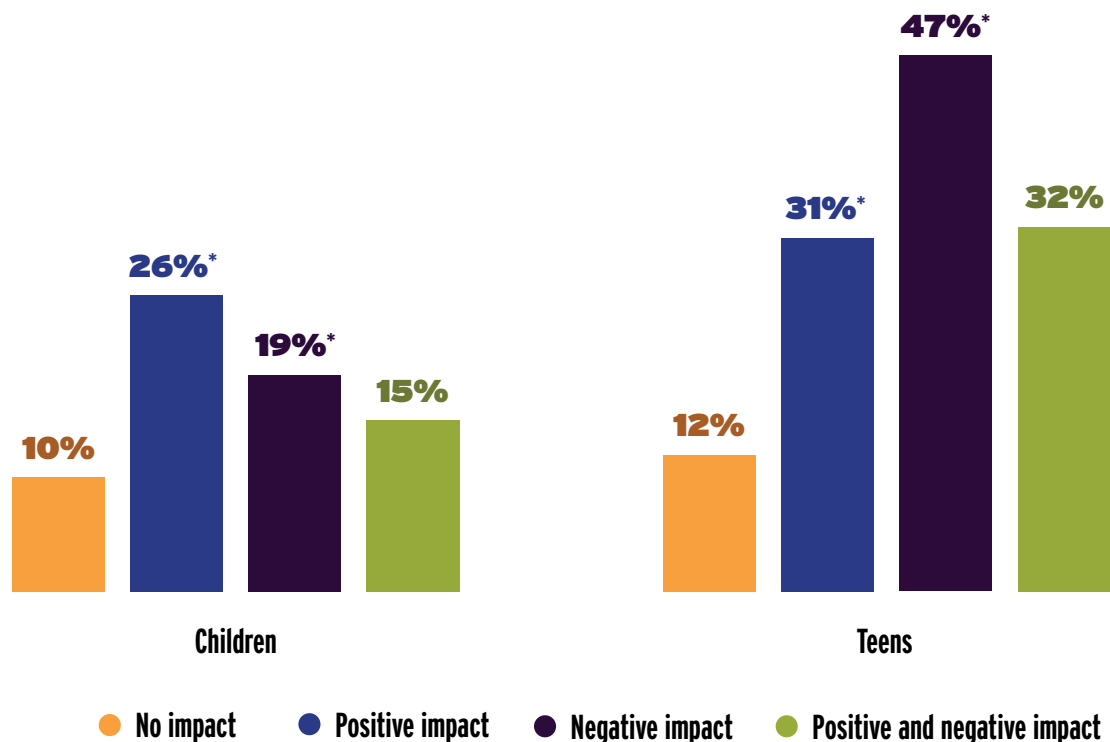
The parents of children who attend public or charter school (6%) are more likely to endorse social media as having a positive impact on their child’s mental health compared with the parents of children who attend private school (< 1%\*).

The parents of children (14%\*) and teens (13%) who attend private school are about as likely to report that social media has a negative impact on their child’s mental health as the parents of children (10%) and teens (10%) who attend public or charter school.

The parents of children who attend public or charter school (34%) are more likely to report that social media has both a positive and a negative impact on their child’s mental health compared with the parents of children who attend private school (18%), with a 16% difference between the two groups.

In fact, teens who feel social media has a positive impact (31%\*), a negative impact (47%\*), or both positive and negative impacts on their mental health (32%) are more likely to have an anxiety diagnosis compared with teens who report that social media has no impact on their mental health (12%). There is as much as a 35% difference between these groups.

**Side-by-Side View of Perceived Impact of Social Media on Mental Health and Anxiety Diagnosis Status Among Children and Teens**



\*Data should be interpreted with caution due to small sample size.



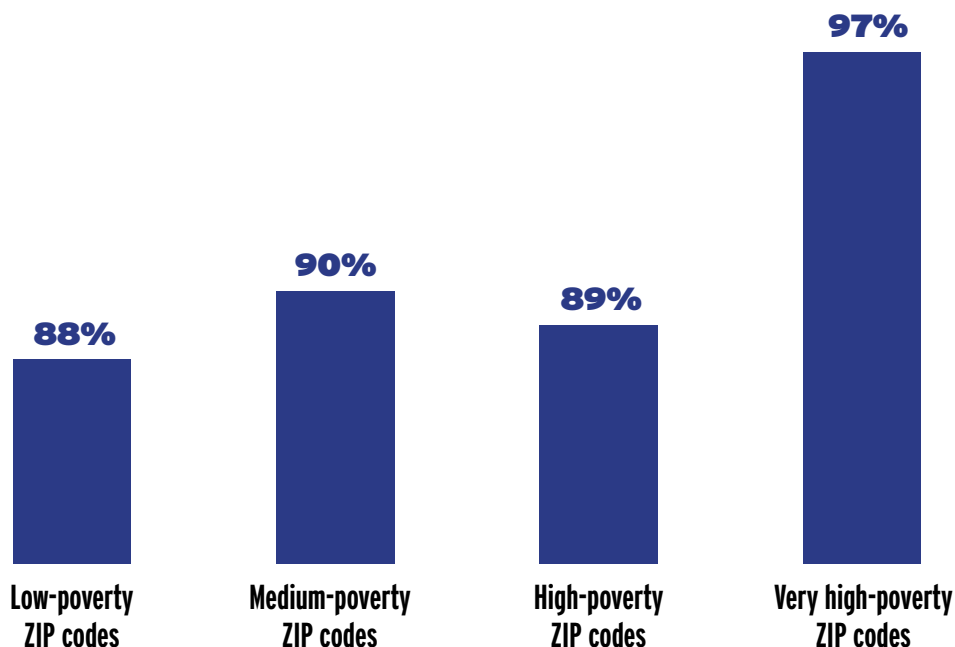
These results are somewhat surprising and might be interpreted in several different ways. One consideration is that teens with an anxiety diagnosis may be more attuned to effects on their mental health, both positive and negative. Teens who do not have an anxiety diagnosis may not monitor their mental health as closely, and therefore may be more likely to report that social media use has no impact on their mental health.

The association between an anxiety diagnosis and believing social media use has mental health effects exists for teenagers but not for children. This might be a result of the increased rates of anxiety disorder diagnosis among teens as compared with children. It could also, again, represent a failure of awareness. These findings may represent an opportunity to intervene at a younger age, even if children are not yet fully cognizant of the effects of social media use. We can initiate more conversations and implement more preventative measures to make children more aware of the positive and negative effects social media use can have on their mental health in preparation for their teenage years.

Thankfully, rates of depression diagnosis are low among children who use social media. Among children whose parents report that social media does not have an impact on their mental health, has a negative impact, or has both positive and negative impacts, 3%\*, 2%\* and 3%, respectively, have a depression diagnosis.

The rates of depression diagnosis among teens who use social media is much higher. Parents who report that social media has both positive and negative impacts (16%) or a negative impact (25%\*) on their teen's mental health are more likely to report that their teen has a depression diagnosis compared with those who say social media does not have an impact on their teen's mental health (6%). There is as much as a 19% difference between the groups. Similarly, parents who report that social media has a negative impact on their teen's mental health are substantially more likely to say that their child has fair (27%\*) or poor (11%\*) general mental health compared with parents who report that social media does not impact their teen's mental health (8% and 1%\*, respectively), by a difference of as much as 26%.

### Perceived Impact of Social Media Use on Mental Health and Depression Diagnosis Status Among Teens



\*Data should be interpreted with caution due to small sample size.

# Do Parents Have Enough Information About Social Media To Share With Their Children?

Access to appropriate information about digital safety and well-being is critical for parents and providers so they can know how to talk about these concepts with their children and teens. Among parents with 8- to 12-year-old children, 66% report that they have enough information to discuss social media use with their child now or in the future. Among parents of teens, 67% report the same.

**54% of teens' and 65% of children's parents report that they do talk with their teen or child about social media use and feel they know what to say about it.**

This contrasts with national data<sup>6</sup> indicating that parents feel they do not have enough information or tools to address social media use, as well as with the fact that the science of the effects of social media is still newly in development. Also, it could reflect New York's success in promoting awareness of the effects of social media use.

Parents of Asian or Pacific Islander children (40%\*) and teens (32%\*) are less likely to report that they talk to their child about social media use and feel they know what to say about it than parents of white children (68%\* and 57%\*, respectively), with as much as a 28% difference between the groups.

Parents of children who reside in very high-poverty ZIP codes (80%\*) are more likely to report that they talk to their child about social media use and feel they know what to say about it compared with those who reside in low-poverty ZIP codes (60%\*), by a difference of 20%.

**26% of teens' and 26% of children's parents report that they do talk with their teen or child about social media use but do not know if they are saying the right things.**

<sup>6</sup>Auxier B, Anderson M, Perrin A, Turner E. Parenting children in the age of screens. Pew Research Center. Published July 2020. Accessed June 12, 2024. <https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/2020/07/28/parenting-children-in-the-age-of-screens>

\*Data should be interpreted with caution due to small sample size.

Parents of children who reside in very high-poverty ZIP codes are less likely to report that they talk to their child about social media use but do not know if they are saying the right things (14%\*) compared with parents of children who reside in low-poverty ZIP codes (32%\*), by a difference of 18%.

Parents of teens who reside in very high- and high-poverty ZIP codes are less likely to report that they talk to their teen about social media use but do not know if they are saying the right things (23% and 15%, respectively) compared with parents of teens who reside in low-poverty ZIP codes (37%), by a difference of as much as 22%.

**15% of teens' and 6% of children's parents report that they do not talk with their teen or child about social media use because they do not think it is an issue for them.**

Asian or Pacific Islander children are more likely to have a parent report that they talk to them about social media use but do not know if they are saying the right things (49%\*) compared with white children (27%\*), by a difference of 22%. Interestingly, these findings are the reverse of those for Asian or Pacific Islander teens, who are nearly 20% less likely to have their parent report that they talk to their teen about social media use but do not know if they are saying the right things (19%) compared with white teens (36%\*).

**54% of teens' and 65% of children's parents report that they do talk with their teen or child about social media use and feel they know what to say about it.**

Parents of Asian or Pacific Islander teens (35%\*) are more likely to report that they do not talk to their teen about social media use because they do not think it is an issue for them compared with the parents of white teens (7%\*). There is a nearly 30% difference between the two groups.

Only 3%\* percent of children had parents who responded that they do not talk to their child about social media use, even though they think it is an issue for their child, because they do not know enough. This shows that most parents who think social media is an issue for their child do attempt to have a conversation, even if they are not confident in their knowledge. It is important to provide opportunities for education for both groups of parents so they can begin or continue to talk with their child about this issue.

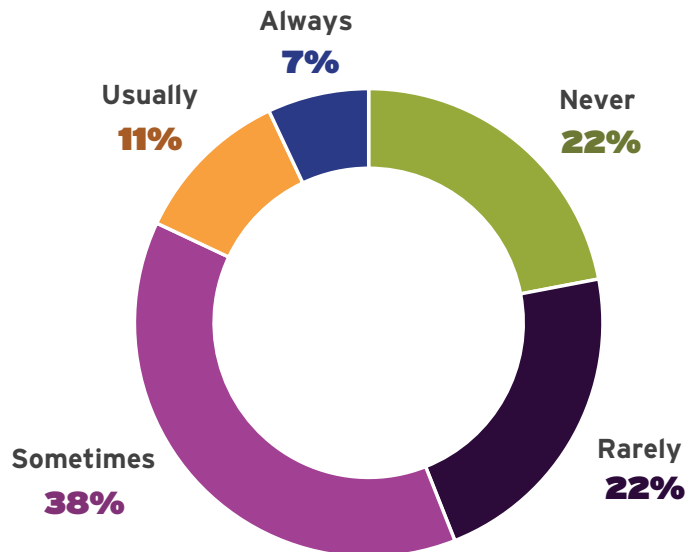
\*Data should be interpreted with caution due to small sample size.

# Teens Who Have Conflicts With Their Parents About Social Media Use Have Greater Rates of Depression and Anxiety Diagnoses

Conflicts between parents and children are considered normal in parent-child interactions. Social media use is one area where conflicts may frequently arise. All data in this section come from surveys of parents, and so represent only the parent perspective on conflicts about social media.

Among children who use social media, the parents of 22% rarely or never have conflicts about the child's social media use. The parents of 26% of teens who use social media report that they never have conflicts about their teen's social media use. Another 32% of teens have parents who report that they rarely have conflicts about social media use, while 30% sometimes have conflicts about social media use, 8% usually have conflicts about social media use and 4% always have conflicts about social media use.

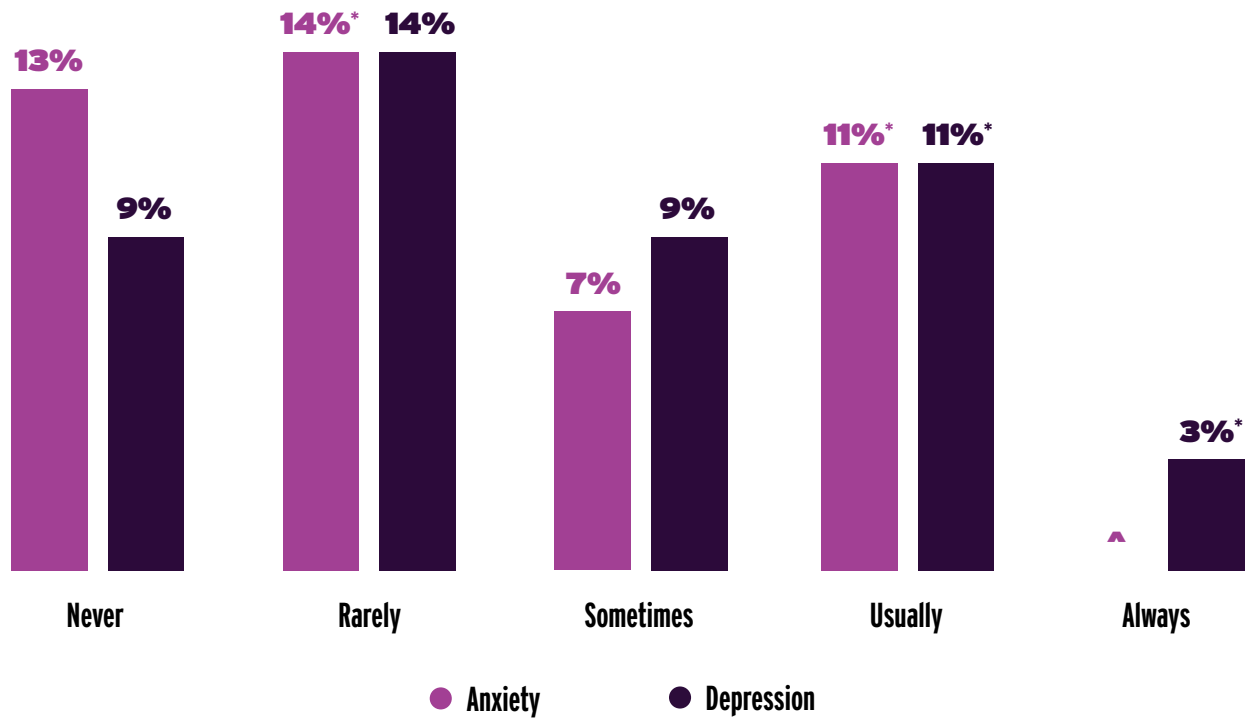
## Conflicts Between Parents and Their Child About Social Media Use



Parents who report that they always have conflicts with their teens about social media use are more likely to also report that their teen has received a depression diagnosis (49%\*) than parents of teens who report that they never have conflicts about social media use (13%), by a difference of 36%. Similarly, teens whose parents report always having conflicts about social media use are substantially more likely to have their parent report that they received an anxiety diagnosis (61%\*) compared with teens whose parents report never having conflicts about social media use (18%), with a 43% difference between the two groups.

\*Data should be interpreted with caution due to small sample size.

## Conflicts Between Parents and Their Teen About Social Media Use and Associations With Mental Health Diagnoses



\*Data should be interpreted with caution due to small sample size.

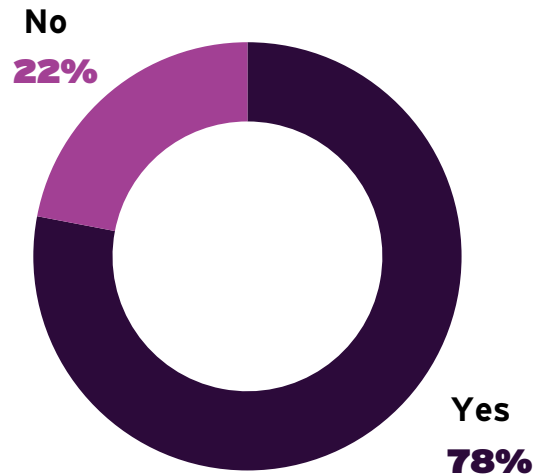
# A Resounding Majority of Parents Believe the Government Should Put Legal Restrictions on the Types of Access That Social Media Companies Give to Teens

Seventy-eight percent of parents of children and teenagers, an overwhelming majority, agree that it is the government's responsibility to put legal restrictions on the types of content teens can access on social media platforms.

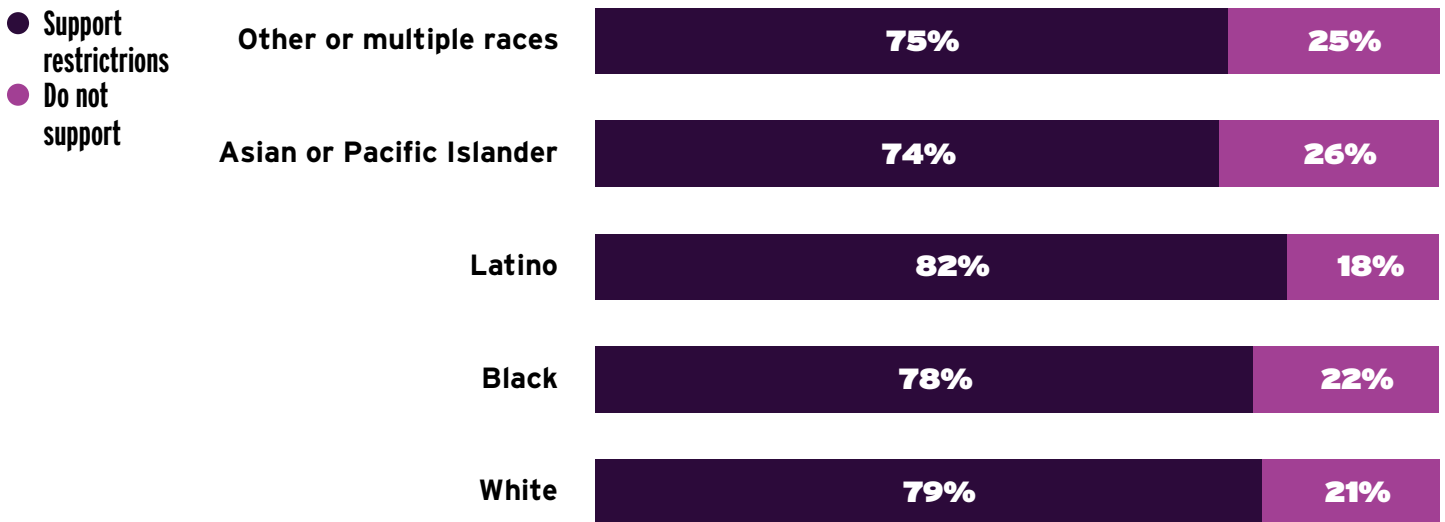
Asian or Pacific Islander parents (74%) are less likely to report that the government should put legal restrictions on the types of access social media companies give teens than white parents (79%). Parents across all age groups had similar feelings about government regulation of the access social media companies give to teens.



## A Majority of Parents Support Government Restrictions on the Types of Access Social Media Companies Give to Teens



### Racial and Ethnic Differences in Perceptions of Government Regulations and Social Media for Teens Among Parents



Parents who identify as transgender, nonbinary or as another gender not listed are up to 33% less likely to desire that the government put legal restrictions of the types of access social media companies give to teens compared with parents who identify as female (48%\* and 81% respectively). Considering that a top reason cited for social media use is connecting to communities one might not otherwise have access to, it is reasonable to assume that these parents might fear that legal restrictions could reduce that access. It is therefore vital that legal regulations ensure continued access to these communities even as they protect against the negative effects of social media use.

\*Data should be interpreted with caution due to small sample size.

# Summary and Call to Action

It is necessary but difficult work to understand the use of social media and assess its effects on the mental health of children, teens and parents.

**One major theme we have found in this report is the role that social forces, such as racial or economic status, play in shaping awareness of the potential downsides of social media use.**

- We see a 14% difference between parents living in high-poverty ZIP codes (74%\*) and parents living in low-poverty ZIP codes (60%\*) who believe they have enough information to talk to their child about social media use. While there is not enough information available in general about the effects of social media use – even as this report adds to the body of research – this represents a particularly uneven problem of awareness.
- What remains unclear is what information parents are receiving and whether that information is comprehensive of both benefits and potential harms.
- There is a 20% gap between parents of teens who attend public or charter schools (45%) and parents of teens who attend private schools (65%\*) who think their teen spends too much time on social media. Teens who attend public or charter schools may represent another population of interest.
- Overall, we find several measures of racial, economic and educational status that show that families of higher status are more wary of social media use.

**The differences identified in the perception of social media use among those who experience poverty may not be purely due to awareness. These families may be facing more urgent life concerns that require them to often prioritize basic needs over concerns about social media.**

- Social media's impacts may be overshadowed by the fact that these children, teens and parents are experiencing more pressing issues relating to their general physical, social and psychological well-being.
- Although social media may be perceived as a lesser concern by people in higher-poverty areas, it is still necessary to provide targeted education and resources about the impacts that social media can have on well-being. A relative lack of immediate need does not mean there is no need.
- We must continue to direct awareness to the potential impacts of social media on well-being and provide tailored support to better address the unique experiences of different groups. This will better allow for responses to the fundamental needs and perceptions of children, teens and parents who live in a variety of socioeconomic situations. We can better equip all communities to manage and benefit from social media use more effectively.

To achieve health equity, it is critically important for NYC to ensure that parents in high-poverty ZIP codes have access to accurate information about the potential effects of social media use and support in talking to their kids about it. This will require us to issue advisories and best practices for social media use and ensure they are widely available, accessible and culturally competent. It also requires us to ensure that youth have equitable access to meaningful social and recreational activities as alternatives to social media use.

\*Data should be interpreted with caution due to small sample size.



NYC has, for better and for worse, a history of responding to complex, developing, uncertain and urgent public health problems. The NYC Health Department, the largest and oldest local health department in the country, has risen to these challenges time and time again. The data presented in this report suggest new ways to study and respond to the mental health crisis youth are experiencing and to the role that social media plays in it. All avenues will be explored, all promising interventions will be tried, and once again New York will emerge as a healthier and more equitable city.

## Acknowledgments

Thank you to everyone who contributed to this report.

**Lead Author:** Meghan Hamwey

**Additional Authors:** Keith Gordon, Nicole Stratton, Jaynisha Jackson, Jasmine Abdelnabi

**Other NYC Health Department contributors:** Commissioner Dr. Ashwin Vasan, Marnie Davidoff, H. Jean Wright, Sung Woo Lim, Fangtao He, Wendy Deng, Ahuva Jacobowitz, Leigh Reardon, Stephen Immerwahr, Kevin Robinson, Anne Schuster, Gretchen Van Wye, Maura Kennelly, Adrienne Verrilli, Jennifer MacDonald, Ryan Nichols, Elizabeth Pawlowski, Tfashema Bholanath, Melanie Close, Jo-Anne Caton, Christina Norman

**Suggested Citation:** Hamwey M, Gordon K, Stratton N, Jackson J, Abdelnabi J. Special report on social media and mental health. New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. June 2024:1-44. <https://www.nyc.gov/assets/doh/downloads/pdf/mh/social-media-mental-health-report-2024.pdf>



# Appendix: Survey Demographics and Details

To view the data tables for all the surveys referenced in this report, visit [nyc.gov/health](https://nyc.gov/health) and search for **youth mental health and social media usage**.

## Parent Survey

This survey was completed by 22,484 parents, guardians or other caregivers (“parents”) of a child or teen age 5 to 17 residing in NYC. The survey was weighted to sum to the 2017-2021 American Community Survey (ACS) estimates for NYC households containing children age 5 to 17. An estimated 1,177,499 parents in households with children age 5 to 17 in NYC were included in our analysis.

- About 25% of the parents of a household with a child age 5 to 17 self-identified their race or ethnicity as white, 16% identified as Black, 32% identified as Latino, 22% identified as Asian or Pacific Islander, and about 4% identified as another race.
- Among parents of a household with a child age 5 to 17 included in this survey, 70% reported their gender identity as women, 29% as men, and 1% as transgender, nonbinary or another gender identity not listed.
- When asked about location of residence, about 14% of respondents reported living in Manhattan, 18% reported living in the Bronx, 32% reported living in Brooklyn, 29% reported living in Queens and 8% reported living in Staten Island.
- About 39% of the sample reported speaking another language other than English at home. Of those included in the sample, about 73% of respondents reported being employed, 12% reported being unemployed and about 15% reported not being in the labor force.
- Among households with a child age 5 to 17 that were included in this survey, the age of parents ranged from 18 to 65 or older. About 2% of parents reported their age as 18 to 24, about 2% reported their age as 25 to 29, 6% reported their age as 30 to 44, about 49% reported their age as 45 to 64, and about 41% reported their age as 65 or older.
- Among this sample, about 21% of parents of children age 5 to 17 reported that the highest level of education acquired was a graduate degree or professional degree, 27% reported a college or bachelor’s degree, 22% reported completing some college, 21% reported completing high school, and 10% reported not completing high school or equivalent.
- Among the sample, 21% of respondents reported living in ZIP codes of low poverty, 47% reported living in ZIP codes of medium poverty, 20% reported living in ZIP codes of high poverty and 12% reported living in ZIP codes of very high poverty.

## Parent Proxy Survey

A total of **4,625 records** were retained for the final child dataset; this sample was randomly selected from the parent survey. Weights were then adjusted to align with the 2022 ACS one-year estimate of New Yorkers age 5 to 17.

Of the estimated 1,198,740 people age 5 to 17 included in this survey:

- About 25% of the parents self-identified their race as white, 16% identified it as Black, 32% identified it as Latino, 22% identified it as Asian or Pacific Islander, and about 4% identified it as Other or multiracial.

- 70% of parents reported their gender identity as women, 29% reported it as men, and 1% reported it as transgender, nonbinary or another gender identity not listed.
- About 19% of children included in this sample reside in a low-poverty ZIP code, 44% in a medium-poverty ZIP code, 21% in a high-poverty ZIP code and 16% in a very high-poverty ZIP code.
- Among teens, 22% reside in a low poverty zip code, 47% in a medium poverty zip code, 18% in a high poverty zip code and 12% in a very high poverty zip code.
- 21% of parents reside in a low-poverty ZIP code, 47% in a medium-poverty ZIP code, 20% in a high-poverty ZIP code and 12% in a very high-poverty ZIP code.
- The age of parents ranged from 18 to 65 or older. About 2% of parents reported their age as 18 to 24, about 6% reported their age as 25 to 29, 49% reported their age as 30 to 44, about 41% reported their age as 45 to 64, and about 2% reported their age as 65 or older.
- 21% of parents reported that the highest level of education acquired was a graduate degree or professional degree, 27% reported a college or bachelor's degree, 22% reported completing some college, 21% reported completing high school, and 10% reported not completing high school or equivalent.
- The race or ethnicity of about 25% of children was reported by parents as white, 20% as Black, 35% as Latino, 14% as Asian or Pacific Islander, and about 6% as another race.
- About 83% of children attended public or charter schools, 15% attended private school, and about 2% attended another school type (such as homeschool, trade school or not enrolled currently).
- About 91% of the children had a respondent who identified as the biological or adoptive parent, and about 9% had a caretaker of some other type of relation.
- About 39% of children were age 13 to 17, 23% were age 5 to 7 and 39% were age 8 to 12.

## Teen Survey

A total of **2,557 records** were retained for the final teen dataset. The survey was weighted to align with the 2022 ACS one-year estimate of New Yorkers age 13 to 17. An estimated 463,554 teens age 13 to 17 were represented. The survey captured self-reported data from the teens after consent was attained from their parent.

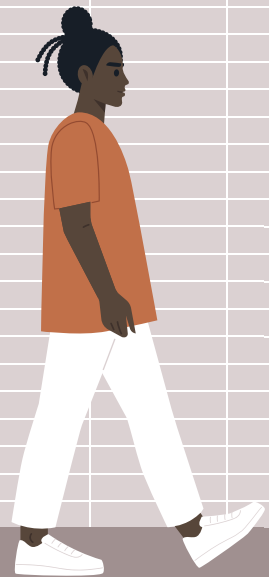
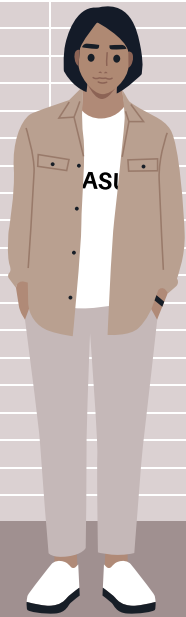
- About 24% of teens self-identified their race or ethnicity as white, 23% as Black, 34% as Latino, 14% as Asian or Pacific Islander, and about 5% as another race. In instances where teen race or ethnicity was missing, these data were imputed.
- 47% of teens reported their gender identity as girls, 50% as boys, and 3% as transgender, nonbinary or another gender identity not listed.
- About 22% of teen resided in a low-poverty ZIP code, 47% in a medium-poverty ZIP code, 19% in a high-poverty ZIP code and 12% in a very high-poverty ZIP code.
- About 18% of teens reported attending private school, 80% reported attending public or charter school, and 2% reported attending another school type (such as homeschool, trade school or not enrolled currently).



42 Street **N Q R W**

Exit →

42 St



[nyc.gov/health](https://nyc.gov/health)