

# Topline

N=1,337 ages 14-22

Conducted February 12 - March 19, 2018

Margin of error: +/- 5.0 percentage points  
at the 95% confidence level among all respondents

\* Denotes less than .5% but greater than zero.

## Digital Health Practices, Social Media Use, and Mental Well-Being Among Teens and Young Adults in the U.S.

By Victoria Rideout, M.A. and Susannah Fox

Q1. Have you ever gone online, whether through a website, a search engine, an app, or any other means, to look for information on any of the following health topics? Please select all that apply. **ITEMS RANDOMIZED**

Depression	39
Drug or alcohol abuse	24
Diet and nutrition	52
Fitness and exercise	63
Eating disorders (such as anorexia or bulimia)	18
Pregnancy	28
Birth control	30
STDs (sexually transmitted diseases, such as herpes or HIV/AIDS)	26
Stress	44
Anxiety	42
Sleep disorders	27
Smoking	20
Cancer	24
Diabetes	16
Heart disease	14
Any other mental health issue – please specify	6
Any other physical health issue – please specify	6
None of the above	13
Don't Know	-
Skipped on web/refused	*
<b>N=</b>	<b>1,337</b>

If selected any in Q1

Q2. Which of the following are reasons why you've searched for health information online: Please select all that apply.

	<b>Among online health seekers</b>	<b>Among all</b>
To get information about a health issue you were dealing with yourself	74	64
To get information about a health issue affecting somebody you know	53	47
To get information for a school or other outside project	55	48
Other – please specify	5	5
Don't know	-	-
Skipped on web/refused	*	*
<b>N=</b>	<b>1,172</b>	<b>1,337</b>

If searched to get information about a health issue affecting self or somebody else in Q2

**Q3. Thinking about the most recent time you looked for information online about a health issue affecting you or somebody you know, how helpful was the information you found?**

**HALF SAMPLE SHOWN RESPONSE OPTIONS IN REVERSE ORDER**

**Among online health seekers looking for themselves or others (86% of all)**

<b>Very/Somewhat helpful NET</b>	<b>94</b>
Very helpful	29
Somewhat helpful	65
<b>Not at all/Not too helpful NET</b>	<b>6</b>
Not too helpful	6
Not at all helpful	1
Don't know	-
Skipped on web/refused	*
<b>N=</b>	<b>972</b>

If searched to get information about depression, stress, or anxiety for self or somebody else in Q2

**Q3a. Please give us an example of a time you went online to get health information about depression, stress or anxiety. What was the situation? Did you find what you were looking for? Did it help? If so, how?**

**OPEN END, SELECTION OF QUOTES INCLUDED IN REPORT.**

Q4. Have you ever connected to a health provider  
(such as a doctor, nurse or therapist) through:  
Please select all that apply. **ITEMS RANDOMIZED**

Text messaging	8
Online messaging	10
Video chat	4
An app	5
None of the above	80
Don't know	-
Skipped on web/refused	*
<b>N=</b>	<b>1,337</b>

Q5. Have you ever gone online to find other people who might have health concerns similar to yours?

Yes	39
No	61
Don't know	-
Skipped on web/refused	*
<b>N=</b>	<b>1,337</b>

If no in Q5

Q6. Why haven't you ever gone online to find others who might have health concerns similar to yours? Please select all that apply.

**ITEMS RANDOMIZED**

**Among those who haven't tried to find health peers online**

I haven't had any serious health issues	55
I don't know how to find people online with similar concerns	9
I don't trust advice online from people I don't know	25
People I "meet" online are too different from me	3
I would rather talk to people in person	36
I prefer to rely on advice from health providers	33
Other – please specify	3
Don't know	-
Skipped on web/refused	1
<b>N=</b>	<b>817</b>

If yes in Q5

**Q7. Were you successful in finding people online with health concerns similar to yours?**

	<b>Among those who tried to find health peers online</b>	<b>Among all</b>
Yes	84	33
No	16	6
Don't know	-	-
Skipped on web/refused	-	-
Haven't tried to find health peers online		61
<b>N=</b>	<b>515</b>	<b>1,337</b>



If yes in Q5

**Q8. Have you ever tried any of the following ways to find people online with health concerns similar to yours? ITEMS RANDOMIZED**

	<b>Among those who have tried to find health peers online</b>				<b>Among all: Yes</b>
	Yes	No	DK	SKP/ REF	
Social media sites (like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, or Snapchat)	48	49	-	2	19
Through blogs	40	58	-	3	15
Through commenting on other people's public posts (e.g., on YouTube or other)	37	60	-	3	14
Online forums on specific topics	73	23	-	3	28
<b>N=515</b>					<b>1,337</b>

If yes to social media sites in Q8

Q8a. While trying to find people with health concerns similar to yours on social media sites, have you ever tried any of the following? **ITEMS RANDOMIZED**

	<b>Among those who have tried to find health peers online</b>				<b>Among all: Yes</b>
	Yes	No	DK	SKP/REF	
Hash tag searches on social media	47	51	-	1	9
Private social media groups (such as closed Facebook groups)	45	53	-	1	9
Posting your own queries on social media	42	56	-	2	9
Following somebody with similar health concerns on social media	71	27	*	1	13
<b>N=264</b>					<b>1,337</b>

If yes in Q7

Q9. Thinking about the most recent time you found people online with health concerns similar to yours, how helpful was it to find them? **HALF SAMPLE SHOWN RESPONSE OPTIONS IN REVERSE ORDER**

**Among those who found health peers online**

<b>Very/Somewhat helpful NET</b>	<b>91</b>
Very helpful	20
Somewhat helpful	71
<b>Not at all/Not too helpful NET</b>	<b>9</b>
Not too helpful	9
Not at all helpful	*
Don't know	-
Skipped on web/refused	-
<b>N=</b>	<b>446</b>

If yes in Q5 and did not search for information about depression, anxiety, or stress in Q1

Q9a. Please give us an example of a time you went online to try to find other people with health concerns similar to yours. What was the situation? How did it turn out?

**OPEN END, SELECTION OF QUOTES INCLUDED IN REPORT.**

Q10. Have you ever done either of the following?

ITEMS RANDOMIZED

	Yes	No	DK	SKP/ REF
Shared your own personal health experience online	15	83	-	2
Read or watched someone else share about their health experience online	61	39	-	*

**N=1,337**

If missing Q9A and shared own personal health experience or heard someone else's health experience online in Q10

Q10c. Please give us an example of a time you shared about your personal health experience or read or watched someone else share about their health experience online. What was the situation? **OPEN END, SELECTION OF QUOTES INCLUDED IN REPORT.**

Q11. [There is no Q11.]

Q12. Have you ever used a mobile app related to any of the following? Please select all that apply. **ITEMS RANDOMIZED**

Fitness	45
Period/menstruation	20
Nutrition	26
Depression	5
Meditation/mindfulness	11
Mood tracker	6
Sleep	20
Stress reduction	9
Medication reminder	7
Quitting smoking	4
Alcohol or drug abuse	2
Birth control	7
Any other health-related topic – please specify	1
None of the above	34
Don't know	-
Skipped on web/refused	2
<b>N=</b>	<b>1,337</b>

If selected any in Q12

Q13. Do you currently use any mobile apps related to health issues?

	<b>Among those who have ever used a health app</b>	<b>Among all</b>
Yes	40	25
No	60	75
Don't know	-	-
Skipped on web/refused	*	*
<b>N=</b>	<b>888</b>	<b>1,337</b>

If selected any in Q12

**Q14. Thinking about the most recent health-related mobile app you've used, how helpful was it?**

**HALF SAMPLE SHOWN RESPONSE OPTIONS IN REVERSE ORDER**

**Among those who have ever used a health app**

<b>Very/Somewhat helpful NET</b>	<b>76</b>
Very helpful	27
Somewhat helpful	49
<b>Not at all/Not too helpful NET</b>	<b>24</b>
Not too helpful	18
Not at all helpful	6
Don't know	-
Skipped on web/refused	*
<b>N=</b>	<b>888</b>

If selected any in Q12

**Q15. If you have a favorite health-related app, please tell us briefly what the app is and how it has been helpful to you.**

**OPEN END, SELECTION OF QUOTES INCLUDED IN REPORT.**

Q16. Which social media sites, if any, do you use?  
 Please select all that apply. **ITEMS RANDOMIZED**

Facebook	62
Twitter	37
Instagram	68
Snapchat	69
Discord	11
Tumblr	11
Reddit	18
LinkedIn	12
Other – please specify	4
None, I don't use social media	7
Don't know	-
Skipped on web/refused	*
<b>N=</b>	<b>1,337</b>



If selected any in Q16

Q17. Which social media site do you use most often?

	<b>Among social media users</b>	<b>Among all</b>
Shown if yes to Facebook in Q16 (n=881) Facebook	23	21
Shown if yes to Twitter in Q16 (n=503) Twitter	6	6
Shown if yes to Instagram in Q16 (n=897) Instagram	24	22
Shown if yes to Snapchat in Q16 (n=916) Snapchat	32	30
Shown if yes to Discord in Q16 (n=116) Discord	4	4
Shown if yes to Tumblr in Q16 (n=191) Tumblr	1	1
Shown if yes to Reddit in Q16 (n=158) Reddit	6	5
Shown if yes to LinkedIn in Q16 (n=185) LinkedIn	1	*
Shown if yes to Other in Q16 (n=43) Other social media site specified in Q16	3	2
Don't know	-	-
Skipped on web/refused	*	*
Don't use social media	NA	7
<b>N=</b>	<b>1,242</b>	<b>1,337</b>

If selected any in Q16

Q18. How often are you on social media?

HALF SAMPLE SHOWN RESPONSE OPTIONS IN REVERSE ORDER

	Among social media users	Among all
<b>Almost constantly</b>	18	17
<b>Daily NET</b>	70	64
Several times a day	59	54
Once a day	11	10
<b>Weekly or less NET</b>	13	12
A few times a week	8	7
Once a week	2	2
Less than once a week	2	2
Don't know	-	-
Skipped on web/refused	-	-
Don't use social media	NA	7
<b>N=</b>	<b>1,242</b>	<b>1,337</b>

If selected any in Q16

Q19. How often do you post or share something on social media?

HALF SAMPLE SHOWN RESPONSE OPTIONS IN REVERSE ORDER

	Among social media users	Among all
<b>Almost constantly</b>	4	4
<b>Daily NET</b>	26	24
Several times a day	18	17
Once a day	8	7
<b>Weekly or less NET</b>	70	59
A few times a week	19	18
Once a week	14	13
Less than once a week	30	28
Never	7	6
Don't know	-	-
Skipped on web/refused	*	*
Don't use social media	NA	7
<b>N=</b>	<b>1,242</b>	<b>1,337</b>

If selected any in Q16

**Q20. How important is social media to you for:**

**ITEMS RANDOMIZED, KEEP ITEMS B AND C TOGETHER;  
HALF SAMPLE SHOWN RESPONSE OPTIONS IN REVERSE ORDER**

	<b>Very somewhat important NET</b>	Very Important	Somewhat Important	<b>Not at all/ not too important NET</b>	Not too Important	Not at all Important	DK	SKP/ REF
A. Keeping up with what's going on in your social circle	<b>70</b>	26	44	<b>29</b>	18	11	-	1
B. Communicating with your close friends	<b>76</b>	43	34	<b>23</b>	17	6	-	1
C. Making new friends or connections	<b>46</b>	12	34	<b>53</b>	35	18	-	1
D. Getting support or advice when you need it	<b>43</b>	12	31	<b>56</b>	32	24	-	1
E. Expressing yourself creatively	<b>52</b>	18	33	<b>47</b>	30	18	*	1
F. Getting inspiration from others	<b>57</b>	18	39	<b>42</b>	28	14	*	1
G. Feeling less alone	<b>46</b>	15	30	<b>54</b>	30	24	*	1

**N=1,242**

If selected any in Q16

**Q21. Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?**

**ITEMS RANDOMIZED, KEEP ITEMS B AND C TOGETHER;  
HALF SAMPLE SHOWN RESPONSE OPTIONS IN REVERSE ORDER**

<b>Among social media users</b>	<b>Strongly/ Somewhat agree NET</b>	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	<b>Strongly/ Somewhat disagree NET</b>	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	DK	SKP/ REF
I feel like I always need to show the best version of myself on social media	<b>53</b>	14	39	<b>47</b>	25	22	-	*
I prefer to communicate with people through social media rather than in person	<b>31</b>	8	24	<b>69</b>	35	33	-	*
I see so much bad news in social media that it makes me stressed and anxious	<b>46</b>	9	37	<b>53</b>	32	21	*	1

**N=1,242**

If selected any in Q16

**Q22. Have you ever done any of the following:**  
Please select all that apply.

**ITEMS RANDOMIZED, KEEP ITEMS D AND E TOGETHER**

	<b>Among social media users</b>	<b>Among all</b>
A. Taken a break from social media	51	47
B. Deleted a social media account after a personal conflict	18	17
C. "Stalked" someone on social media	20	19
D. Been trolled on social media	23	21
E. Trolled someone else on social media	12	11
F. None of the above	29	27
Don't know	*	*
Skipped on web/refused	1	1
Don't use social media	NA	7
<b>N=</b>	<b>1,242</b>	<b>1,337</b>

If selected any in Q16

**Q23. When you use social media, how often do you**

**ITEMS RANDOMIZED, KEEP ITEMS A AND B TOGETHER;  
HALF SAMPLE SHOWN RESPONSE OPTIONS IN REVERSE ORDER**

<b>Among social media users</b>	<b>Often/ Sometimes NET</b>	Often	Sometimes	<b>Never/ Hardly ever NET</b>	Hardly ever	Never	DK	SKP/ REF
A. Get negative comments from others	<b>26</b>	3	23	<b>73</b>	41	32	-	1
B. Get positive comments from others	<b>82</b>	32	50	<b>18</b>	12	6	-	*
C. Feel like other people are doing better than you	<b>57</b>	15	42	<b>43</b>	27	15	-	*
D. Feel left out	<b>34</b>	7	27	<b>65</b>	39	27	-	*
E. Post something but get hardly any comments or likes on it	<b>55</b>	13	43	<b>44</b>	28	16	-	1
F. Use social media as a way to avoid dealing with your problems	<b>27</b>	7	21	<b>72</b>	32	40	-	1

**N=1,242**

If selected any in Q16

**Q24. How often do you do each of the following on social media**

**HALF SAMPLE SHOWN RESPONSE OPTIONS IN REVERSE ORDER**

<b>Among social media users</b>	<b>Often/ Sometimes NET</b>	Often	Sometimes	<b>Never/ Hardly ever NET</b>	Hardly ever	Never	DK	SKP/ REF
Post selfies	<b>40</b>	11	29	<b>60</b>	34	26	-	*
“Like” other people’s posts	<b>87</b>	50	37	<b>12</b>	8	4	-	1
Comment on other people’s posts	<b>66</b>	17	49	<b>34</b>	28	6	-	*
Create and share original content	<b>58</b>	17	41	<b>41</b>	28	14	-	*
Share links to content created by others	<b>57</b>	15	42	<b>43</b>	25	18	-	*
Send private or direct messages to people	<b>67</b>	29	37	<b>33</b>	26	7	-	*
Browse other people’s feeds without liking or commenting on them	<b>78</b>	29	49	<b>21</b>	16	5	-	1
Delete things you previously posted	<b>39</b>	7	31	<b>61</b>	40	21	-	*

**N=1,242**



If selected any in Q16

### Q25. Which comes closer to your view?

HALF SAMPLE SHOWN RESPONSE OPTIONS IN REVERSE ORDER

#### Among social media users

I spend too much time and energy on social media	24
I am comfortable with the amount of time and energy I spend on social media	73
I don't spend enough time and energy on social media	3
Don't know	-
Skipped on web/refused	*
<b>N=</b>	<b>1,242</b>

If selected any in Q16

Q26a. Which of the following statements comes closest to the truth for you? When I'm feeling depressed, stressed, or anxious, using social media usually:

**HALF SAMPLE SHOWN FIRST TWO RESPONSE OPTIONS IN REVERSE ORDER**

**Among social media users**

Makes me feel better	27
Makes me feel worse	15
Neither	57
Don't know	-
Skipped on web/refused	1
<b>N=</b>	<b>1,242</b>

If selected any in Q16

**Q26b.** Which of the following statements comes closest to the truth for you? When I'm feeling depressed, stressed, or anxious, using social media usually:

**HALF SAMPLE SHOWN FIRST TWO RESPONSE OPTIONS IN REVERSE ORDER**

**Among social media users**

Connects me to helpful support and advice	20
Sends me down a rabbit hole	15
Neither	65
Don't know	-
Skipped on web/refused	1
<b>N=</b>	<b>1,242</b>

If selected any in Q16 and better or worse in Q26a

**Q27.** In what ways does social media make things [better/worse] when you are feeling depressed, stressed, or anxious?  
How do you use social media at those times?

**OPEN END, SELECTION OF QUOTES INCLUDED IN REPORT.**

Q28. Over the last 2 weeks, how often have you been bothered by the following problems?

	Not at all	Several days	Over half the days	Nearly every day	DK	SKP/REF
Little interest or pleasure in doing things	53	30	11	7	-	-
Feeling down, depressed, or hopeless	57	27	10	6	-	1
Trouble falling asleep, staying asleep, or sleeping too much	42	31	16	11	-	-
Feeling tired or having little energy	35	38	14	13	-	*
Poor appetite or overeating	59	22	9	9	-	*
Feeling bad about yourself – or that you are a failure or have let yourself or your family down	59	23	10	8	-	*
Trouble concentrating on things – such as reading the newspaper or watching television	58	26	8	7	-	*
Moving or speaking so slowly that other people could have noticed. Or, the opposite – being so fidgety or restless that you have been moving around a lot more than usual	78	11	6	5	-	*

**N=1,337**

Q29. Over the last 2 weeks, how often have you been bothered by the following problems?

	Not at all	Several days	Over half the days	Nearly every day	DK	SKP/REF
Feeling nervous, anxious, or on edge	50	31	11	8	-	*
Not being able to stop or control worrying	57	26	9	8	-	*
Worrying too much about different things	46	33	11	10	-	*
Trouble relaxing	54	28	10	7	-	*
Being so restless that it's hard to sit still	73	14	9	4	-	-
Becoming easily annoyed or irritable	40	40	12	8	-	*
Feeling afraid as if something awful might happen	62	23	8	7	-	*

**N=1,337**

Q30. In the past MONTH, how often have you felt

	Never	Almost never	Sometimes	Fairly often	Very often	DK	SKP/ REF
That difficulties were piling up so high that you could not overcome them?	35	23	24	11	7	-	-
That things were going your way?	13	15	44	22	6	-	-
That you were unable to control the important things in your life?	27	29	27	12	5	-	*
Confident about your ability to handle your personal problems?	13	10	32	30	15	-	*

**N=1,337**

Q31. Please indicate how often each of the statements below is descriptive of you.

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	DK	SKP/ REF
I feel in tune with the people around me	6	15	46	33	-	*
No one really knows me well	19	30	36	15	-	*
I can find companionship when I need it	7	19	33	41	-	1
People are around me but not with me	21	30	30	18	-	1

**N=1,337**

Q32a. What time do you typically fall asleep on school/work nights?

12:00 AM	8	1:00 PM	*
12:30 AM	3	1:30 PM	*
1:00 AM	6	2:00 PM	*
1:30 AM	5	3:00 PM	*
2:00 AM	3	4:00 PM	*
2:30 AM	1	5:00 PM	1
3:00 AM	2	5:30 PM	*
3:30 AM	*	6:00 PM	*
4:00 AM	1	7:30 PM	*
4:30 AM	*	8:00 PM	1
5:00 AM	*	8:30 PM	2
6:00 AM	*	9:00 PM	5
7:00 AM	*	9:30 PM	4
9:00 AM	*	10:00 PM	16
9:30 AM	*	10:30 PM	9
10:00 AM	*	11:00 PM	17
11:00 AM	*	11:30 PM	8
11:30 AM	*	Don't know	-
12:00 PM	1	Skipped on web/refused	3
12:30 PM	2		

**N=1,337**



Q32b. What time do you typically wake up on days you have school/work?

1:00 AM	3	11:30 AM	*
1:30 AM	*	12:00 PM	1
2:00 AM	*	12:30 PM	*
2:30 AM	*	1:00 PM	*
3:00 AM	*	1:30 PM	*
3:30 AM	*	2:00 PM	*
4:00 AM	1	2:30 PM	*
4:30 AM	2	3:00 PM	*
5:00 AM	5	3:30 PM	*
5:30 AM	9	4:30 PM	*
6:00 AM	17	6:00 PM	*
6:30 AM	17	6:30 PM	*
7:00 AM	10	7:00 PM	*
7:30 AM	5	8:00 PM	*
8:00 AM	10	9:00 PM	*
8:30 AM	3	10:00 PM	*
9:00 AM	5	10:30 PM	*
9:30 AM	2	11:00 PM	*
10:00 AM	4	Don't know	-
10:30 AM	1	Skipped on web/refused	4
11:00 AM	1		

**N=1,337**

Q32c. What time do you typically fall asleep when you don't have school/work the next day?

12:00 AM	11	1:00 PM	2
12:30 AM	5	1:30 PM	*
1:00 AM	9	2:00 PM	*
1:30 AM	5	2:30 PM	*
2:00 AM	9	3:00 PM	*
2:30 AM	3	3:30 PM	*
3:00 AM	3	4:00 PM	*
3:30 AM	3	4:30 PM	*
4:00 AM	2	5:00 PM	1
4:30 AM	*	5:30 PM	*
5:00 AM	1	6:00 PM	*
5:30 AM	2	7:00 PM	*
6:00 AM	1	7:30 PM	*
6:30 AM	*	8:00 PM	*
7:00 AM	*	8:30 PM	*
8:00 AM	*	9:00 PM	1
8:30 AM	*	9:30 PM	2
9:00 AM	*	10:00 PM	5
9:30 AM	*	10:30 PM	5
10:30 AM	*	11:00 PM	10
11:00 AM	*	11:30 PM	10
11:30 AM	*	Don't know	-
12:00 PM	1	Skipped on web/refused	4
12:30 PM	1		

**N=1,337**

Q32d. What time do you typically wake up on days without school/work?

12:00 AM	1	1:00 PM	2
12:30 AM	1	1:30 PM	1
2:00 AM	1	2:00 PM	3
2:30 AM	*	2:30 PM	1
3:00 AM	*	3:00 PM	1
4:00 AM	*	3:30 PM	*
4:30 AM	*	4:00 PM	*
5:00 AM	1	4:30 PM	*
5:30 AM	*	5:00 PM	*
6:00 AM	2	5:30 PM	*
6:30 AM	1	6:00 PM	*
7:00 AM	4	6:30 PM	*
7:30 AM	3	7:30 PM	*
8:00 AM	10	8:00 PM	*
8:30 AM	6	8:30 PM	1
9:00 AM	11	9:00 PM	*
9:30 AM	8	9:30 PM	*
10:00 AM	15	10:00 PM	*
10:30 AM	8	10:30 PM	*
11:00 AM	7	11:00 PM	*
11:30 AM	2	11:30 PM	*
12:00 PM	4	Don't know	-
12:30 PM	2	Skipped on web/refused	4

**N=1,337**

Q33. What sex were you assigned at birth,  
on your original birth certificate?

Male	49
Female	51
Don't know	-
Skipped on web/refused	*
<b>N=</b>	<b>1,337</b>

Q34. How do you describe yourself?

Male	49
Female	50
Transgender	*
Do not identify as male, female, or transgender	1
Don't know	-
Skipped on web/refused	*
<b>N=</b>	<b>1,337</b>

Q35. This next question is about sexual orientation. Which of the following best represents how you think of yourself?

Lesbian or gay	3
Straight, that is, not lesbian or gay	82
Bisexual	7
Something else	3
I don't know the answer	5
Skipped on web/refused	1
<b>N=</b>	<b>1,337</b>