



teenTALK

TALKING • LISTENING • TAKING ACTION

Pennsylvania OFFICE OF ATTORNEY GENERAL

Report on the Impact of SOCIAL MEDIA ON STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH



Dave Sunday
Pennsylvania Attorney General

A MESSAGE FROM ATTORNEY GENERAL DAVE SUNDAY

For today's students, the digital world is not separate from real life—it is where much of life happens. From social media to emerging technologies like artificial intelligence, these spaces are shaping how young people think, communicate, and form relationships. While these tools offer benefits, they also introduce new and evolving challenges that can affect students' well-being. Understanding these impacts has become an urgent need for schools and communities.

As a father, I think a lot about what it means to raise kids in this environment. There's no question that social media can create pressure—pressure to measure up, to always be “on,” and to present a version of life that isn't always real. At the same time, too many young people are struggling in silence because mental health is still something we don't talk

about enough. That needs to change. We have to do a better job of helping young people feel comfortable asking for help and, just as important, checking in and offering support.

As Attorney General, I also believe strongly in accountability. Social media platforms, policymakers, schools, and all of us, as adults, have a responsibility to better understand what teens are experiencing and to take meaningful steps to protect their well-being.

That's why my office convened **teenTALK** roundtables across Pennsylvania—to hear directly from students about how social media is affecting their lives. What they shared was thoughtful, honest, and, at times, concerning. Their voices make clear that while there are no simple solutions, there are real opportunities for change.

This report reflects what we heard. It is intended to help guide conversations and actions among families, educators, community leaders, and policymakers. Most importantly, it is a reminder that supporting teen mental health is not just a priority—it's a responsibility we all share.



teenTALK sessions were held at Berks County Intermediate Unit, Bucks County Intermediate Unit and Northwest Tri-County Intermediate Unit during the 2025-26 school year.

Dave Sunday
Attorney General

TABLE OF CONTENTS



5	About the teen TALK Roundtables
6	Special Thanks
7	Scope of the Problem
11	What We Heard
14	Recommendations
18	Closing Thoughts
19	Resources and Support
20	References

Disclaimer:

This report was developed for students, parents, educators, and policymakers as a resource guide summarizing the ideas and recommendations discussed during the **teenTALK** sessions hosted by the OAG and held around the Commonwealth during the 2025-26 school year. This report does not constitute legal advice. Schools are encouraged to seek legal advice from legal counsel regarding the implementation of any recommendation contained in the report. Each school entity should make policy and program decisions based on the unique needs of their staff, students, and community.

This document contains references and hyperlinks to third party sources that contain information that may be helpful to schools in evaluating particular policies or programs. These references and hyperlinks are provided only as a convenience to you. The OAG makes no representations, warranties, or endorsements concerning the content of any third-party site.

ABOUT THE teenTALK ROUNDTABLES

Attorney General Dave Sunday convened high school students and school administrators for a series of roundtable discussions held across the Commonwealth during the 2025-26 school year. These conversations were intended to better understand students' real-world experiences in today's digital environment, identify emerging concerns, and gather insights that can help inform prevention, education, and policy efforts moving forward.

The events were designed as free-flowing discussions on social media and artificial intelligence – how it is used, how it can be both helpful and harmful, and the kinds of changes needed in order to make the digital landscape safer for kids and teens.

These three events brought together 160 students, along with staff and administrators from 35 schools across three intermediate units and five counties:

- Bensalem School District
- Berks Catholic High School
- Berks County Intermediate Unit's Pathways to Adult Living Program
- Boyertown Area School District
- Bucks County Technical High School
- Central Bucks High School East
- Central Bucks High School South
- Central Bucks High School West
- Charter School of Excellence
- Conneaut Area School District
- Corry Area School District
- Council Rock High School North
- Council Rock High School South
- Erie's Public Schools
- Exeter Township School District
- Fort LeBoeuf School District
- General McLane School District
- Girard School District
- Harbor Creek School District
- Iroquois School District
- Muhlenberg School District
- New Hope-Solebury High School
- Northwestern School District
- Palisades High School
- Penncrest School District
- Pennridge High School
- Pennsbury High School West
- Quakertown Community High School
- Reading School District
- Tidioute Community Charter School
- Tulpehocken Area High School
- Union City Area School District
- Warren County School District
- William Tennent High School
- Wyomissing Area School District

SPECIAL THANKS

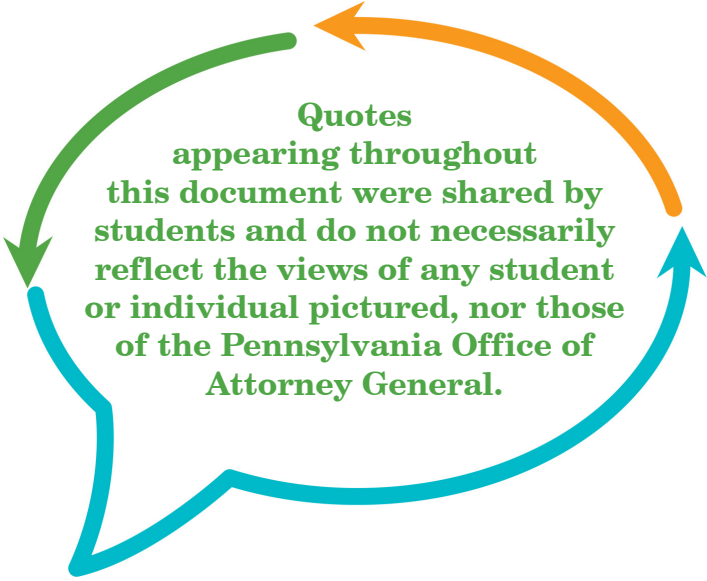
6

We extend our sincere appreciation to the following individuals who helped organize these **teenTALK** roundtables:

- Berks County Intermediate Unit Executive Director
Dr. Jill Hackman and staff
- Bucks County Intermediate Unit Executive Director
Dr. Mark Hoffman and staff
- Northwest Tri-County Intermediate Unit Executive Director
Brad Whitman and staff
- The Administrators and staff of the 35 schools listed above

We are especially grateful to the students who participated in the roundtable discussions and candidly shared their experiences navigating social media and digital life. Their voices were essential in shaping the findings and recommendations presented here.

Finally, we acknowledge the partners and staff whose dedication and collaboration made this work possible. This report reflects a collective effort, and we are deeply appreciative of all who contributed to its development.



Quotes
appearing throughout
this document were shared by
students and do not necessarily
reflect the views of any student
or individual pictured, nor those
of the Pennsylvania Office of
Attorney General.

SCOPE OF THE PROBLEM

Social media has become deeply embedded in the daily lives of teenagers. Platforms like Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat, and YouTube play important roles in how young people communicate, express themselves, and access information. While social media offers meaningful benefits, a growing body of research indicates that heavy or problematic use is associated with increased risks to teen mental health.^{1 2 3 4}

At the same time, a rapidly emerging factor is the increasing role of artificial intelligence (AI), particularly chatbots, in how young people seek information, process emotions, and access support. Together, social media and AI are shaping a new digital landscape that influences adolescent development in complex ways.

Teen Social Media Usage

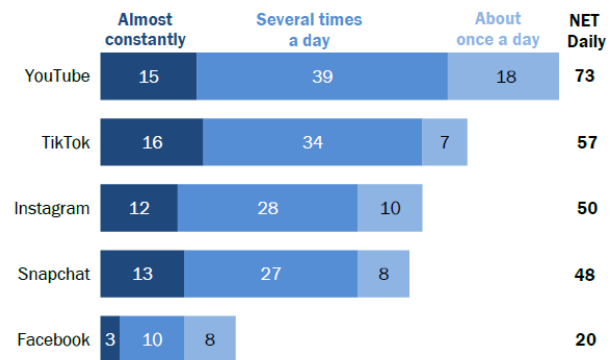
According to the Pew Research Center, 95% of U.S. teens ages 13–17 report using at least one social media platform, and 46% say they are online “almost constantly (see Figure 1).”⁵ YouTube, TikTok, Instagram, and Snapchat are among the most widely used platforms. This near-universal engagement means that any psychological effects—positive or negative—have the potential to impact the majority of adolescents.

Screen time has also increased substantially over the past decade. A 2023 U.S. Surgeon General Advisory reports that adolescents spend an average of more than three hours per day on social media, not including time spent on other digital media.⁶ This level of exposure has prompted public health officials to examine potential links between social media use and youth mental health outcomes.

Figure 1

Roughly three-quarters of teens visit YouTube daily, while around 6 in 10 say this about TikTok

% of U.S. teens ages 13 to 17 who say they visit or use the following apps or sites ...



Note: Figures may not add up to NET values due to rounding. Those who did not give an answer or gave other responses are not shown.
Source: Survey of U.S. teens conducted Sept. 18-Oct. 10, 2024.
“Teens, Social Media and Technology 2024”

PEW RESEARCH CENTER



“We call it ‘bed rot’—you’re just laying there scrolling for hours and don’t even realize how much time has passed.”

In addition to social media, the use of AI tools is rapidly expanding among teens and young adults. Recent research indicates that 46% of youth use AI tools weekly or more, and a growing number are integrating these tools into their daily lives for both academic and personal purposes. Notably, 10% of teens report using AI to talk through emotional or mental health concerns, signaling a shift in how young people seek support.⁷

Benefits of Social Media Usage and Digital Tools

“It’s just easier to talk to AI because it doesn’t judge you.”

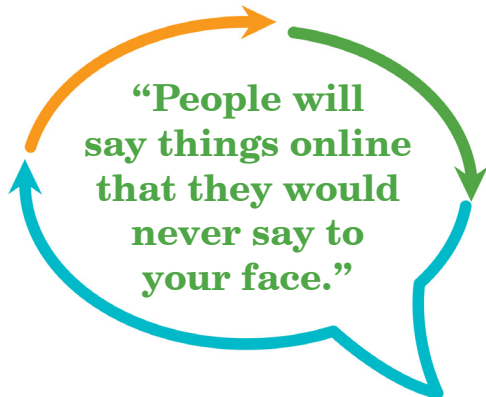
Social media usage is not inherently harmful; rather, its impact depends on how it is used and the context in which engagement occurs.⁸ Many teens report that social media helps them feel more connected to friends and communities and can promote feelings of belonging.⁵ For marginalized youth in particular, online communities can offer social support, identity affirmation, and access to mental health information.

Similarly, AI tools can provide quick access to information, academic support, and, in some cases, an outlet for self-expression. Some young people report that AI tools feel accessible and nonjudgmental, particularly when they are hesitant to approach peers or adults.

Documented Risks and Complexity of Findings

Although social media does not directly “cause” depression or anxiety, research consistently identifies significant associations between social media use and poorer mental health outcomes, including findings from longitudinal and systematic review studies.^{1 2 3 4} The Surgeon General’s Advisory reports that adolescents who spend more than three hours per day on social media face approximately double the risk of experiencing symptoms of depression and anxiety.⁶ Data from the Gallup Familial and Adolescent Health Survey further illustrates these risks, showing a clear correlation between increased daily screen time and higher rates of self-harm, poor body image, and diminished mental well-being (see Figure 2).⁹

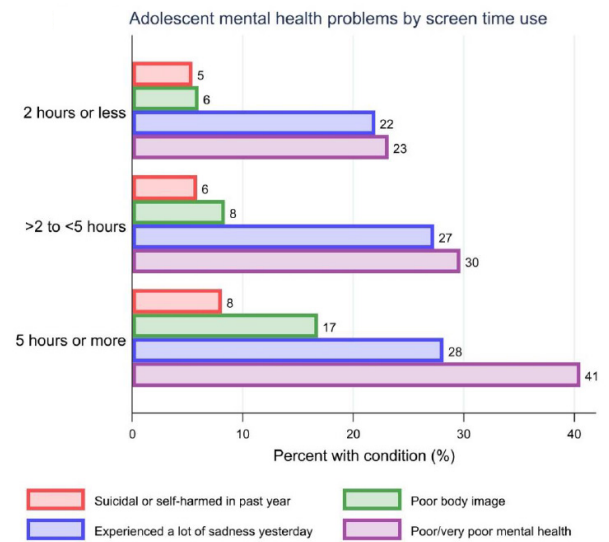
Several mechanisms may help explain these associations, including pathways identified in large-scale cohort and systematic research:^{3 4}



- **Compulsive or problematic use.** Some teens report difficulty limiting their social media use, leading to reduced in-person interaction and increased emotional vulnerability.⁴

The relationship between social media usage and mental health outcomes is, however, complex. The American Psychological Association emphasizes that the effects of social media vary based on individual vulnerability, content exposure, and usage patterns.⁸ Passive scrolling and comparison behaviors tend to correlate with poorer well-being, while active and supportive interactions may have neutral or positive effects. Researchers caution against oversimplifying the issue, noting that broader developmental and environmental factors also contribute to rising mental health concerns.²

Figure 2



Source: Gallup Familial and Adolescent Health Survey, fielded in June-July of 2023. N=1,567 aged 13-19. GALLUP Insights for FamilyStudies

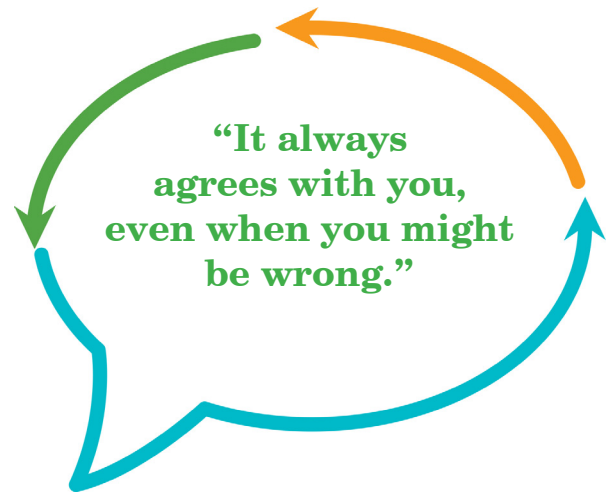
- **Social comparison and body image concerns.**

Exposure to curated and idealized images can negatively affect self-esteem, particularly among girls.⁶

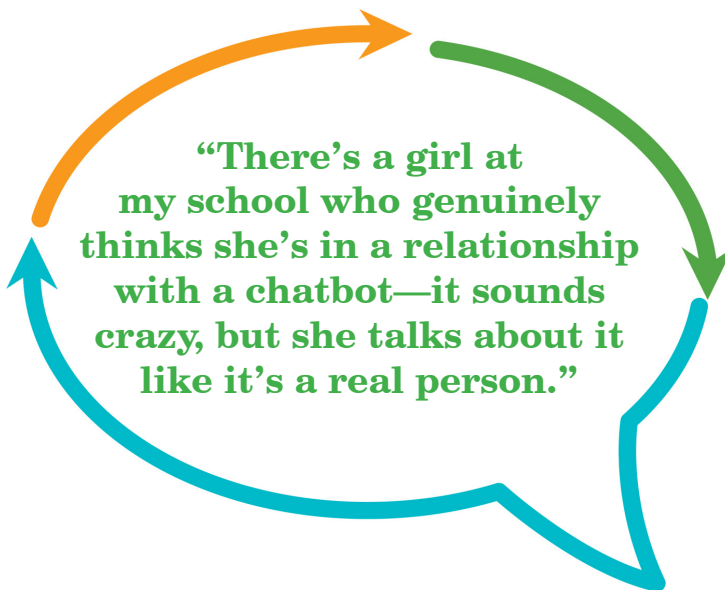
- **Cyberbullying and online harassment.** Digital platforms can amplify peer aggression, which is linked to increased anxiety, depression, and emotional distress.³

- **Sleep disruption.** Late-night use of devices interferes with sleep patterns, which are critical for adolescent brain development and emotional regulation.³

Emerging Risks: AI Chatbots and Emotional Development



In addition to social media, researchers are increasingly concerned about the role of AI chatbots in adolescent mental health. While these tools can feel supportive, they are not designed to provide mental health care and may introduce new risks. A growing number of teens are using AI for emotional support—sometimes in place of professional help—with 37% reporting exclusive reliance on AI rather than seeking professional services.⁷



AI chatbots also tend to validate users' thoughts and perspectives, even when those perspectives may be harmful or inaccurate, which can increase confidence in one's own views, reduce openness to others, and discourage conflict resolution.¹⁰ This dynamic, combined with the lack of typical "social friction" found in human relationships, may limit opportunities for teens to develop empathy, perspective-taking, and interpersonal skills.¹⁰

Additionally, research shows that chatbots often miss warning signs of serious mental health conditions, provide generic or inappropriate advice, and fail to direct users to trusted adults or professional resources. In some cases, they may even reinforce harmful thinking or create a false sense of emotional connection, increasing reliance on technology rather than real-world support.¹¹

WHAT WE HEARD

Students who participated in the **teenTALK** roundtables consistently identified social media as their primary means of communication and connection with peers. While they acknowledged the addictive nature of these platforms, many expressed that opting out would come at a social cost potentially leading to isolation or a loss of social standing.

11



“It’s how we talk to everyone and make plans – without it, you’re kind of out of the loop.”

Their perspectives closely aligned with existing research. Students described how extensive use can distract from academic and personal priorities. They also recognized the stress associated with overuse, including a growing reliance on AI chatbots for advice and, in some cases, companionship.

Beyond the general stress of connectivity, students shared how these digital dynamics manifest as a constant pressure to measure up. Many described an exhausting awareness of how they compare to their peers—not just in appearance, but in what they own, where they go, and how they spend their time. They spoke about scrolling through highly curated snapshots of others’ lives and feeling pressure to present an equally polished version of their own. This included using filters, editing photos, and carefully selecting content to project an image that aligns with perceived social expectations. Several students noted that even when they recognize these posts as unrealistic or staged, the comparisons still feel immediate and personal. This “highlight reel” effect contributes to a sense that they must continuously perform and “keep up,” reinforcing cycles of self-scrutiny and, at times, diminished self-worth.

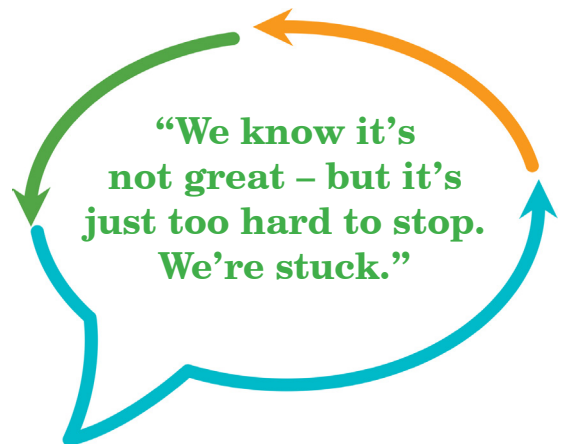
Students also raised concerns about the nature and quality of information circulating on social media, describing an environment where sensational or divisive content often spreads quickly and with little scrutiny. Many noted that posts designed to provoke strong reactions—particularly around social or political issues—tend to gain the most attention,



even when the information is misleading or incomplete. They expressed frustration that peers frequently adopt trending narratives without verifying sources or considering multiple perspectives. Several students acknowledged how easy it is to accept and share information without pausing to think critically, especially when content aligns with existing beliefs or is reinforced by peers. This dynamic, they suggested, can contribute to misunderstandings, heightened conflict, and a more polarized social environment both online and in their everyday interactions.

Despite this awareness, many students conveyed a sense of being deeply entrenched in these habits, expressing hesitation or uncertainty about their ability to significantly change their own behavior. However, they voiced hope that clearer boundaries and stronger safeguards could better support younger users before these patterns become ingrained.

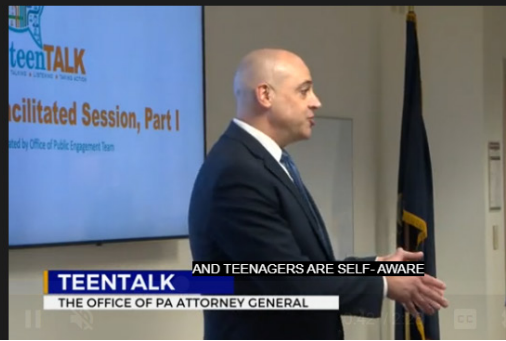
When asked about proposed legislation to ban cell phone use during the school day, student responses were mixed. Some believed schools could—and should—do more to manage phone usage without implementing a full ban. Several students emphasized the importance of having access to their phones in the event of an emergency, including concerns about school safety. Others, however, viewed a ban as a potential benefit, noting that the social pressure to stay constantly connected would diminish if no one had access during the day—making the “fear of missing out” less of a factor. Students from schools that have already implemented all-day cell phone bans reported generally favorable outcomes, including increased face-to-face social interaction and greater engagement in the classroom.



NEWS

PA AG Dave Sunday talks good, bad, ugly of social media with NWPA students

by: DeAnna Poole
Posted: Apr 8, 2026 / 06:30 PM EDT
Updated: Apr 8, 2026 / 06:46 PM EDT



Pennsylvania Attorney General Dave Sunday met with area teenagers on Wednesday in Edinboro to discuss the potential impact of social media on mental health. This meeting was part of the Attorney General’s ongoing “TeenTalk” series, aiming to engage with young people.

Sunday focused on the comprehensive effects of online platforms

AG Sunday Kicks off teenTALK Events by Discussing Social Media’s Impact on Bucks County Students

By Editor - February 18, 2026

87 0



Attorney General Dave Sunday kicked off a series of planned teenTALK events by meeting with Bucks County students this week to discuss the impacts of social media on mental health.

Students from numerous Bucks County school districts participated in the open discussion with Attorney General Sunday. Many of them shared that social media is their core way of engaging with their peers, and does provide an important method of connection. At the same time, the students shared that, despite spending a lot of time on platforms, social media can be an unsafe place and cause divisiveness.

The Office of Attorney General is compiling student opinions to evaluate ways the office can advocate for students and schools and contribute to safer spaces being available online.

ONLINE FIRSTHAND ACCOUNTS



State Attorney General Dave Sunday meets with Berks County students at the Berks County Intermediate Unit Central Office, 1111 Commons Blvd., Muhlenberg Township, on Monday to discuss social media’s impact on mental health. BILL UHRICH/READING EAGLE

PA attorney general seeks help of Berks teens in learning about social media’s impact on mental health

By David Mekeel
DMEKEEL@READINGEAGLE.COM

The world that state Attorney General Dave Sunday grew up in is much different than the one traversed by teens today. That’s something he is keenly aware of.

There has been a technological boom over the past several decades, ushering in the age of the internet and social media. And that has had a major impact on the lives of kids.

“I know this is going to be a shocker,” Sunday said with a smile to a small group of adults gathered inside the Berks County Intermediate Unit on Monday morning. “When I was a kid, we didn’t have iPhones.”

In fact, Sunday said, his youth was spent almost entirely out of the internet age, a technology that was only first getting started as he made his way through school.

“Kids’ lives have completely changed since we were kids,” Sunday said.

That leaves Sunday, the state’s top law enforcement official, in a tough spot. The internet, and more recently the prevalence of social media, represent a unique threat to children across



Forty-four students from Berks County high schools and the BCIU talked to state Attorney General Dave Sunday during a Teen Talk roundtable discussion at the BCIU on Monday about the dangers of social media. BILL UHRICH/READING EAGLE

Pennsylvania. As a leader in the state, Sunday said, he wants to do whatever he can to help. That may come in the form of prosecuting people who misuse the internet and social media, or perhaps by pushing for new laws and regulations.

But what any of that will look like will depend on what the problem actually looks like. And that’s why Sunday decided to visit the BCIU on Monday.

Following a brief session with the media, the attorney general spent about

an hour speaking with 44 students from seven local high schools and the BCIU during a Teen Talk roundtable discussion.

The event, the second in a series Sunday is holding across the state, aims to hear about the dangers of social media and its potential impact on mental health from the very people it is affecting.

“This is about the kids, we’re here because this is about children,” Sunday said.

Speaking to the students, Sunday said he was hoping the discussion

See SOCIAL on Page A2


- [PennWatch](#), 2/18/2026
- [Reading Eagle](#), 3/17/2026
- [YourErie](#), 4/8/2026

RECOMMENDATIONS

15

The recommendations in this report reflect the perspectives shared by students during the **teenTALK** roundtables and are organized around five key areas, examining the roles of social media platforms, government, schools, peers, and parents in supporting teen well-being.

We recognize that schools and communities across Pennsylvania vary widely in their needs and resources. These recommendations are not intended to be prescriptive, universal solutions, but rather a starting point for discussion. School and community leaders are encouraged to determine which strategies are most appropriate for their unique contexts. This list is not exhaustive. Continued collaboration among students, educators, families, policymakers, and community partners will be essential to developing effective, responsive approaches to the challenges teens face in today's digital world.



“Once you watch one thing, it just keeps feeding you more.”



Recommendations for Social Media Companies

- Strengthen content moderation to better detect and remove harmful, graphic, or inappropriate material.
- Improve algorithms to reduce exposure to harmful content and limit “rabbit hole” effects—the algorithmic tendency to recommend increasingly extreme material that makes user disengagement difficult.
- Limit or remove algorithm-driven recommendations for users under 18, prioritizing content from accounts they intentionally follow or choose to engage with.
- Implement stronger age verification systems to ensure platforms are developmentally appropriate.
- Build in usage limits and safeguards (e.g., time caps, forced breaks, screen time reminders, other safety warnings).
- Increase parental controls, including approval for app downloads and clearer oversight tools.

- Prominently promote mental health resources, especially when user behavior suggests distress.
- Limit harmful interactions, including bullying, harassment, and hate-based content.
- Increase transparency and accountability for how platforms operate and impact users.
- Increase the ease of disabling chatbot features for younger users on major social media platforms.
- Default minor accounts to the highest safety and privacy settings (e.g., private accounts, restricted messaging, limited discoverability).
- Reduce or eliminate engagement-based features that promote unhealthy comparison or habitual pressure to stay continuously active (e.g., visible 'like' counts, popularity metrics, streaks).
- Rigorously test new features and updates for potential risks to children and address identified harms prior to release.

Recommendations for Government

- Establish and enforce stronger regulations for social media companies, particularly regarding advertising content and targeting youth audiences.
- Require meaningful age verification standards across platforms.
- Hold companies accountable for harmful design features and inadequate protections.
- Consider legislation addressing harmful or abusive online behavior.
- Fund and expand access to youth mental health resources, including digital interventions.
- Support public awareness campaigns to educate families about online risks, including AI and emerging technologies.
- Require greater transparency from companies regarding how algorithms function and how content is recommended to minors.





Recommendations for Schools

- Introduce digital safety education earlier (before middle school).
- Provide regular, engaging assemblies or presentations with real-world relevance; consider having older students speak with younger students.
- Keep messaging concise and memorable, using relatable examples and clear takeaways.
- Incorporate lessons on digital footprints and future impact (e.g., college, careers).
- Educate students on how to identify credible sources of news and information.
- Bring in guest speakers and experts to reinforce key messages.
- Create space for open, judgment-free conversations about social media and mental health.
- Increase awareness of available mental health supports, including programs such as the [Student Assistance Program \(SAP\)](#).
- Create an extracurricular club for students to support each other (e.g., [Aevidum](#)).
- Promote the [Safe2Say Something](#) program as a trusted source for reporting concerning behavior.
- Ensure policies (like phone restrictions) consider diverse student needs.
- Offer a wide variety of extracurricular activities to encourage in-person interaction and prosocial behavior.
- Provide training for educators, staff, and students to recognize and respond to signs of mental health concerns (e.g., [Mental Health First Aid](#)).

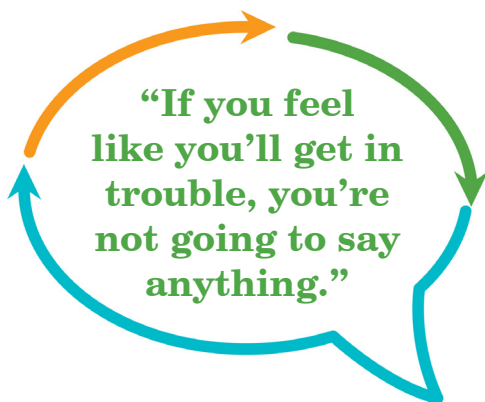
Recommendations for Teens

- Prioritize in-person connections and real-world activities over constant online engagement.
- Support one another by checking in, listening, and sharing experiences or advice.
- Set personal boundaries around screen time and content consumption.
- Be mindful of online behavior, including what is shared and how others are treated.
- Seek help when needed and encourage peers to do the same.
- Surround yourself with positive influences who promote healthy habits.
- Challenge each other about information received through social media to cut down on the spread of misinformation/disinformation.
- Make group commitments to abstain from social media usage for defined periods of time.
- Curate your feed intentionally (unfollow or mute accounts that negatively impact your mood or self-image).



Recommendations for Parents

- Set clear expectations and boundaries around screen time, content, app usage, and interactions with new contacts.
- Delay access to smartphones and social media until children are developmentally ready.
- Use parental controls and monitoring tools to stay informed about online activity.
- Maintain open, ongoing communication about online experiences and challenges.
- Model healthy technology habits.
- Encourage involvement in offline activities (e.g., sports, jobs, hobbies).
- Be present and engaged, providing guidance and support when needed.
- Encourage use of internet-connected devices in shared family spaces to reduce late-night use and unsupervised interactions.
- Learn to recognize signs of mental health struggles in order to seek help early.
- Regularly review apps, privacy settings, and platform features together with your child to stay informed about how they are being used.
- When available, guide children toward age-appropriate or youth-specific versions of apps.



CLOSING THOUGHTS

18

The conversations reflected in this report make one thing clear - today's students are navigating a digital landscape that is complex, influential, and constantly evolving. Social media and emerging technologies are not inherently harmful, but without appropriate safeguards, guidance, and balance, they can have meaningful impacts on young people's mental health and development.

Students demonstrated a strong awareness of both the benefits and risks of these platforms. They understand the pressures, the challenges, and, in many cases, the difficulty of stepping away. Their honesty underscores an important reality—this is not simply an issue of individual responsibility, but one that requires thoughtful action from all stakeholders.

There is no single solution. Meaningful progress will depend on continued collaboration among families, educators, policymakers, and industry leaders. It will also require a shared commitment to creating environments—both online and offline—where young people feel supported, connected, and empowered to seek help when they need it.

Perhaps most importantly, this work must continue to center the voices of students themselves. Their perspectives provide critical insight into what is working, what is not, and where change is most urgently needed. By listening—and by acting—we can take meaningful steps toward a digital environment that supports, rather than undermines, the well-being of the next generation.



RESOURCES AND SUPPORT

The following resources are provided to support students, families, educators, and communities in promoting safe, healthy digital engagement and addressing youth mental health concerns.



19

Digital Safety & Media Literacy

- Office of the Attorney General / [Office of Public Engagement](#): Free presentations for school staff, students, and parents on digital safety
- [Common Sense Media](#): Reviews, parent guides, and digital citizenship resources
- [Digital Wellness Lab](#) (Boston Children’s Hospital): Research-based guidance on healthy technology use
- [Cyberbullying Research Center](#): Data, prevention strategies, and resources for schools and families
- [Family Online Safety Institute](#) (FOSI): Resources for navigating emerging technologies safely

Mental Health Resources

- 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline – Call or text 988, or visit [988lifeline.org](#)
Free, confidential support available 24/7 for individuals in distress
- Crisis Text Line – Text HOME to 74174:1
Connects individuals with trained crisis counselors
- [National Alliance on Mental Illness](#) (NAMI): Education, support, and resources for individuals and families
- [Society for the Prevention of Teen Suicide](#): Resources for schools, parents, and students

Pennsylvania-Based Resources

- [Safe2Say Something Program](#): Anonymous reporting system for students to report concerns about safety or well-being
- [Pennsylvania Network for Student Assistance Services](#): Valuable resources, best practices, and technical support for Student Assistance Program (SAP) professionals
- PA Department of Human Services – [Behavioral Health Resources](#): Statewide resources and service directories
- [PA Department of Education’s Office of Climate and Well-being](#): Statewide resources and guidance to advance efforts to develop and sustain equitable trauma-informed learning environments that promote and support the academic, physical, and psychological safety and well-being of all students and staff.

Social Media & Youth Mental Health Guidance

- [U.S. Surgeon General’s Advisory on Social Media and Youth Mental Health](#)
- [American Psychological Association – Social Media Guidance for Adolescents](#)

1. Nagata, J. M., et al. (2025). Social media use and depressive symptoms during early adolescence. *JAMA Network Open*.
2. Shannon, H., et al. (2022). Problematic social media use in adolescents and young adults: Systematic review. *Journal of Medical Internet Research*.
3. Kelly, Y., et al. (2019). Social media use and adolescent mental health: Findings from the UK Millennium Cohort Study. *The Lancet Psychiatry*.
4. Keles, B., et al. (2020). A systematic review: The influence of social media on depression, anxiety and psychological distress in adolescents. *International Journal of Adolescence and Youth*.
5. Pew Research Center. (2024). *Teens, social media and technology 2024*.
6. U.S. Department of Health & Human Services. (2023). *Social media and youth mental health: The U.S. Surgeon General's advisory*.
7. Vilcarino, J. (2026). How teens and young people use AI tools for learning and mental health support. *Education Week*.
8. American Psychological Association. (2023). *Health advisory on social media use in adolescence*.
9. Rothwell, J. (2023). How parenting and self-control mediate the link between social media use and youth mental health. *Institute for Family Studies & Gallup*.
10. Sparks, S. D. (2026). AI chatbots tend toward flattery: Why that's bad for students. *Education Week*.
11. Klein, A. (2025). Teens should steer clear of using AI chatbots for mental health, researchers say. *Education Week*.



The Attorney General would like to acknowledge
the staff who helped produce this report:

- Amy Moritz, Deputy Director of the Office of Public Engagement
- Michelle Nutter, Director of the Office of Public Engagement
- Donnajean Szukalski, Creative Director
- Ben Wren, Deputy Chief of Staff
- Kyle King, Chief of Staff
- Brett Hambright, Communications Director
- Becky Metrick, Digital Communications Director

SAFE SAY
SOMETHING

SEE IT. REPORT IT.

  **MOBILE APP**

 **1-844-SAF2SAY**

 **SAFE2SAYPA.ORG**

Pennsylvania Office of Attorney General

 **833-OAG-4YOU**

833-624-4968

 **www.attorneygeneral.gov**

 @PAAttorneyGen

 PAAttorneyGen