

## **Addendum: Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project Report List and Summaries of Research on Teens and Technology Use (2007 – 2010)**

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**Note:** This is an interactive document that includes hyperlinked report titles and references which direct the reader to the full report or a section within the report.

### **[Social Media & Mobile Internet Use Among Teens and Young Adults](#)**

Release Date: Feb 3, 2010 | Authors: *Amanda Lenhart, Kristen Purcell, Aaron Smith, Kathryn Zickuhr*

Two Pew Internet Project surveys of teens and adults reveal a decline in blogging among teens and young adults and a modest rise among adults 30 and older. In 2006, 28% of teens ages 12-17 and young adults ages 18-29 were bloggers, but [by 2009 the numbers had dropped to 14% of teens and 15% of young adults](#).

Much of the drop in blogging among younger internet users may be attributable to changes in social network use by teens and young adults. Nearly [three quarters \(73%\) of online teens](#) and [an equal number \(72%\) of young adults](#) use social network sites. By contrast, older adults have not kept pace; some 40% of adults 30 and older use the social sites in the fall of 2009.

Additionally, teens ages 12-17 do not use Twitter in large numbers – [just 8% of online teens 12-17 say they ever use Twitter](#), a percentage similar to the number who use virtual worlds. This puts Twitter far down the list of popular online activities for teens and stands in stark contrast to their record of being early adopters of nearly every online activity.

However, even as blogging declines among those under 30, [wireless connectivity continues to rise in this age group](#). “We often look to younger generations to see where technology use might be headed in the future,” lead author [Amanda Lenhart](#) noted. “People under 30 have often been in the vanguard of internet and cell-phone use, and it will be interesting to see how much of their enthusiasm for new gadgets is a time-of-life issue, and how much will ripple through the broader culture in the coming years.”

New survey results also show that among adults 18 and older, Facebook has taken over as the social network of choice; [73% of adult profile owners use Facebook, 48% have a profile on MySpace and 14% use LinkedIn](#). “Blogging appears to have lost its luster for

many young users,” said Lenhart. “The fad stage is over for teens and young adults and the move to Facebook -- which lacks a specific tool for blogging within the network -- may have contributed to the decline of blogging among young adults and teens.”

Lenhart also pointed out that many of the functions that blogging served for teens in the mid-2000s for communicating about their lives and updating their activities for their friends have become central activities on social networking sites. “[Microblogging and status updating on social networks have replaced old-style ‘macro-blogging’ for many teens and adults](#),” she said.

## **[Teens and Sexting \(2009\)](#)**

*Release Date: Dec 15, 2009 | Author: Amanda Lenhart*

As texting has become a centerpiece in teen social life, parents, educators and advocates have grown increasingly concerned about the role of cell phones in the sexual lives of teens and young adults. A new survey from the Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Project found that 4% of cell-owning teens ages 12-17 say they have sent sexually suggestive nude or nearly nude images or videos of themselves to someone else via text messaging, a practice also known as “sexting”; 15% say they have received such images of someone they know via text message.

Focus group findings show that sexting occurs most often in [one of three scenarios](#):

1. Exchanges of images solely between two romantic partners
2. Exchanges between partners that are then shared outside the relationship
3. Exchanges between people who are not yet in a relationship, but where often one person hopes to be.

“Teens explained to us how sexually suggestive images have become a form of relationship currency,” said Amanda Lenhart, Senior Research Specialist and author of the report. “These images are shared as a part of or instead of sexual activity, or as a way of starting or maintaining a relationship with a significant other. And they are also passed along to friends for their entertainment value, as a joke or for fun.”

Teens also described [the pressure they feel](#) to share these types of images. One high school girl wrote: “When I was about 14-15 years old, I received/sent these types of pictures. Boys usually ask for them or start that type of conversation. My boyfriend, or someone I really liked asked for them. And I felt like if I didn’t do it, they wouldn’t continue to talk to me. At the time, it was no big deal. But now looking back it was definitely inappropriate and over the line.”

The report also reveals that teens who are more intense users of cell phones are more likely to receive sexually suggestive images. For these teens, the phone has become

such an important conduit for communication and content of all kinds that turning it off is nearly unthinkable.

“The desire for risk-taking and sexual exploration during the teenage years combined with a constant connection via mobile devices creates a ‘perfect storm’ for sexting,” said Lenhart. “Teenagers have always grappled with issues around sex and relationships, but their coming-of-age mistakes and transgressions have never been so easily transmitted and archived for others to see.”

### **Teens and Distracted Driving (2009)**

*Release Date: Nov 16, 2009 | Authors: Mary Madden, Amanda Lenhart*

One in four (26%) of American teens of driving age say they have texted while driving, and half (48%) of all teens ages 12 to 17 say they’ve been a passenger while a driver has texted behind the wheel.

These findings form the centerpiece of a new report from the Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Project that looks at teens, mobile phones and distracted driving. The report is based on a telephone survey of 800 teens ages 12-17 and a parent or guardian as well as 9 focus groups with middle and high school students.

“Many teens understand the risks of texting behind the wheel,” said Amanda Lenhart, Senior Research Specialist at the Internet & American Life Project and co-author of the distracted driving report, “but the desire to stay connected is so strong for teens and their parents that safety sometimes takes a backseat to staying in touch with friends and family.

Boys and girls are equally likely to report texting behind the wheel as well as riding with texting drivers. As teens get older, they are more likely to report riding with drivers who text.

### **Teens and Mobile Phones Over the Past Five Years: Pew Internet Looks Back (2009)**

*Release Date: Aug 19, 2009 | Author: Amanda Lenhart*

Teenagers have previously lagged behind adults in their ownership of cell phones, but several years of survey data collected by the Pew Internet & American Life Project show that those ages 12-17 are closing the gap in cell phone ownership. The Project first began surveying teenagers about their mobile phones in its 2004 Teens and Parents project when a survey showed that 45% of teens had a cell phone. Since that time, mobile phone use has climbed steadily among teens ages 12 to 17 – to 63% in fall of 2006 to 71% in early 2008.

In comparison, 77% of all adults (and 88% of parents) had a cell phone or other mobile device at a similar point in 2008. Cell phone ownership among adults has since risen to 85%, based on the results of our most recent tracking survey of adults conducted in April 2009. The Project is currently conducting a survey of teens and their parents and will be releasing the new figures in early 2010.

### **Networked Families (2008)**

*Release Date: Oct 19, 2008 | Authors: Barry Wellman, Aaron Smith, Amy Wells, Tracy Kennedy*

The internet and cell phones have become central components of modern family life. Among all household types, the traditional nuclear family has the highest rate of technology usage and ownership.

A national survey has found that households with a married couple and minor children are more likely than other household types — such as single adults, homes with unrelated adults, or couples without children — to have cell phones and use the internet.

The survey shows that these high rates of technology ownership affect family life. In particular, cell phones allow family members to stay more regularly in touch even when they are not physically together. Moreover, many members of married-with-children households view material online together.

### **Teens, Video Games and Civics (2008)**

*Release Date: Sep 16, 2008 | Authors: Amanda Lenhart et al.*

The first national survey of its kind finds that virtually all American teens play computer, console, or cell phone games and that the gaming experience is rich and varied, with a significant amount of social interaction and potential for civic engagement. The survey was conducted by the Pew Internet & American Life Project, an initiative of the Pew Research Center and was supported by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation. The primary findings in the survey of 1,102 youth ages 12-17 include --

Game playing is universal, with almost all teens playing games and at least half playing games on a given day. Game playing experiences are diverse, with the most popular games falling into the racing, puzzle, sports, action and adventure categories.

Game playing is also social, with most teens playing games with others at least some of the time and can incorporate many aspects of civic and political life.

Another major findings is that game playing sometimes involves exposure to mature content, with almost a third of teens playing games that are listed as appropriate only for people older than they are.

- 34% of American teens have played a computer or console game at school as part of a school assignment.
- 31% of parents of teen gamers say they always or sometimes play games with their children.

### **Writing, Technology and Teens (2008)**

*Release Date: Apr 24, 2008 | Authors: Amanda Lenhart, Sousan Arafeh, Aaron Smith, Alexandra Macgill*

Teens write a lot, but they do not think of their emails, instant and text messages as writing. But teens also believe good writing is essential for success and that more school writing instruction would help them.

- 38% of teens say they have used text shortcuts in school work such as “LOL” (which stands for “laugh out loud”);
- 25% of teens have used emoticons (symbols like smiley faces :- ) ) in school work.
- 50% of teens (ages 12-17) say they sometimes use informal writing styles instead of proper capitalization and punctuation in their school assignments;
- 48% of teenagers’ parents believe that their child is writing more than the parent did during their teen years; 31% say their child is writing less; and 20% believe it is about the same now as in the past.
- 50% of teens say their school work requires writing every day; 35% say they write several times a week. The remaining 15% of teens write less often for school.
- 82% of teens report that their typical school writing assignment is a paragraph to one page in length.
- 65% of teens say they usually write their school assignments by hand.
- 94% of teens use the internet at least occasionally to do research for their school writing assignments. Nearly half (48%) do so once a week or more.

### **Teens and Social Media (2007)**

*Release Date: Dec 19, 2007 | Authors: Amanda Lenhart, Mary Madden, Aaron Smith, Alexandra Macgill*

Content creation by teenagers continues to grow, with 64% of online teenagers ages 12 to 17 engaging in at least one type of content creation, up from 57% of online teens in 2004.

Girls continue to dominate most elements of content creation. Some 35% of all teen girls blog, compared with 20% of online boys, and 54% of wired girls post photos online compared with 40% of online boys. Boys, however, do dominate one area - posting of video content online. Online teen boys are nearly twice as likely as online girls (19% vs. 10%) to have posted a video online somewhere where someone else could see it.

The survey found that content creation is not just about sharing creative output; it is also about participating in conversations fueled by that content. Nearly half (47%) of online teens have posted photos where others can see them, and 89% of those teens who post photos say that people comment on the images at least "some of the time."

However, many teen content creators do not simply plaster their creative endeavors on the Web for anyone to view; many teens limit access to content that they share.

There is a subset of teens who are super-communicators -- teens who have a host of technology options for dealing with family and friends, including traditional landline phones, cell phones, texting, social network sites, instant messaging, and email. They represent about 28% of the entire teen population and they are more likely to be older girls.

### **[Parent and Teen Internet Use \(2007\)](#)**

*Release Date: Oct 24, 2007 | Author: Alexandra Macgill*

Parents today are less likely to say that the internet has been a good thing for their children than they were in 2004. However, this does not mean there was a corresponding increase in the amount of parents who think the internet has been harmful to their children. Instead, the biggest increase has been in the amount of parents who do not think the internet has had an effect on their children one way or the other. Fully, 87% of parents of teenagers are online -- at least 17% more than average adults.

Parents check up on and regulate their teens' media use, not just in terms of the internet, but with television and video games as well. However, those rules lean slightly more towards the content of the media rather than the time spent with the media device.

In looking at parents and teenagers together we found that teens are likely to view technology devices more positively than their parents. Parents and teens tend to own a similar number of technology devices (2-3), but the type of devices differ.

### **[Teens and Online Stranger Contact \(2007\)](#)**

*Release Date: Oct 14, 2007 | Author: Aaron Smith*

Fully 32% of online teens have been contacted by someone with no connection to them or any of their friends, and 7% of online teens say they have felt scared or uncomfortable as a result of contact by an online stranger. Several behaviors are associated with high levels of online stranger contact, including social networking profile ownership, posting photos online and using social networking sites to flirt. Although several factors are linked with increased levels of stranger contact in general, gender is the only variable with a consistent association with contact that is scary or uncomfortable--girls are much more likely to report scary or uncomfortable contact than boys.

### **Cyberbullying (2007)**

*Release Date: Jun 27, 2007 | Author: Amanda Lenhart*

About one third (32%) of all teenagers who use the internet say they have been targets of a range of annoying and potentially menacing online activities – such as receiving threatening messages; having their private emails or text messages forwarded without consent; having an embarrassing picture posted without permission; or having rumors about them spread online.

### **Teens, Privacy and Online Social Networks (2007)**

*Release Date: Apr 18, 2007 | Authors: Amanda Lenhart, Mary Madden*

The majority of teens actively manage their online profiles to keep the information they believe is most sensitive away from the unwanted gaze of strangers, parents and other adults. While many teens post their first name and photos on their profiles, they rarely post information on public profiles they believe would help strangers actually locate them such as their full name, home phone number or cell phone number.

At the same time, nearly two-thirds of teens with profiles (63%) believe that a motivated person could eventually identify them from the information they publicly provide on their profiles.

This report, based on a survey and a series of focus groups conducted by the Pew Internet & American Life Project examines how teens, particularly those with profiles online, make decisions about disclosing or shielding personal information.

Some 55% of online teens have profiles and most of them restrict access to their profile in some way. Of those with profiles, 66% say their profile is not visible to all internet users. Of those whose profile can be accessed by anyone online, nearly half (46%) say they give at least some false information. Teens post fake information to protect themselves and also to be playful or silly.

## **Social Networking Websites and Teens (2007)**

*Release Date: Jan 7, 2007 | Authors: Amanda Lenhart, Mary Madden*

More than half (55%) of all online American youths ages 12-17 use online social networking sites. The survey also finds that older teens, particularly girls, are more likely to use these sites. For girls, social networking sites are primarily places to reinforce pre-existing friendships; for boys, the networks also provide opportunities for flirting and making new friends.

## **Teen Content Creators and Consumers (2005)**

*Release Date: Nov 2, 2005 | Authors: Amanda Lenhart, Mary Madden*

American teenagers today are utilizing the interactive capabilities of the internet as they create and share their own media creations. Fully half of all teens and 57% of teens who use the internet could be considered Content Creators. They have created a blog or webpage, posted original artwork, photography, stories or videos online or remixed online content into their own new creations.

Teens are often much more enthusiastic authors and readers of blogs than their adult counterparts. Teen bloggers, led by older girls, are a major part of this tech-savvy cohort. Teen bloggers are more fervent internet users than non-bloggers and have more experience with almost every online activity in the survey.

Teens continue to actively download music and video from the internet and have used multiple sources to get their files. Those who get music files online believe it is unrealistic to expect people to self-regulate and avoid free downloading and file-sharing altogether.

## **Presentations**

### **[Social Media and Young Adults](#) (slides)**

*Release Date: Feb 4, 2010 | Author: Amanda Lenhart*

This presentation covers [recent findings](#) on wireless, mobile internet use, social networks, content creation, blogging, Twitter and sexting among teens and young adults.

### **[Networked Learners](#) (slides)**

*Release Date: Dec 2, 2009 | Author: Lee Rainie*

In the opening keynote, “Networked Learners,” Lee Rainie discusses the latest findings of the Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project about how teenagers and young adults have embraced technology of all kinds — including broadband, cell phones, gaming devices and MP3 players. He describes how technology has affected the way “digital natives” search for, gather and act on information.

### **[Teen Content Creators](#) (slides)**

*Release Date: Nov 18, 2009 | Author: Kathryn Zickuhr*

Slides about teen content creators, shown at [The Power of Youth Voice: What Kids Learn When They Create With Digital Media](#).

### **[Eating, Thinking and Staying Active with New Media](#) (slides)**

*Release Date: Jun 2, 2009 | Author: Mary Madden*

Mary Madden presented these slides to the Media-Smart Youth expert panel discussion hosted at the National Institutes of Health. Her presentation discussed the integration of the internet into daily life and what this means for educational programs that seek to engage youth through new media.

### **[It's Personal: Similarities and Differences in Online Social Network Use Between Teens and Adults](#) (slides)**

*Release Date: May 23, 2009 | Author: Amanda Lenhart*

This presentation dives into the demographics of teen and adult social network users and looks at how youth use of social networks compares to use by adults, both in frequency, but also in purpose and behavior.

### **[Teens and the internet](#) (slides)**

*Release Date: Jan 9, 2009 | Author: Lee Rainie*

This presentation pulls together Pew Internet data about how teens use the internet, their cell phones, and other technology. It explores how the world of digital natives is different from their predecessors.