

► Profile of Kids in Grades 10 and 11

Going Online

Cell phone and smartphone ownership peaks in grades 10 and 11 (87% and 85% respectively) with students primarily going online through their phones or portable computers. These grades are also the peak years for students reporting they sleep with their cell phones and using them in class to chat with friends without their teacher knowing.

Given these are older teens, it's not surprising that over half say there is no supervision of their Internet use at home. Household rules have also declined, with 26 percent of Grade 10 students and 37 percent of Grade 11 students saying there are no Internet rules in their homes. Although kids in these grades are the least likely to turn to their parents if they have a problem online, it's important to note that over half (57% and 55%) still say they trust their parents to help them.

Favourite Activities

Students in grades 10 and 11 are fully immersed in social media, with nearly all (94% and 95%) having Facebook accounts. Online gaming has declined while downloading and streaming music, TV shows or movies is up. (Although students were not asked if they had illegally downloaded content, the majority say that illegal downloading is not a big deal.)

Interestingly, students in Grade 11 spend more time looking up online news and current affairs (65%) than sports (41%) and celebrities (56%). This age group is also more likely to look online for sensitive topics such as sexuality with the number doing this doubling from Grade 8 (10%) to Grade 11 (20%). Looking for pornography also peaks with these older students, with more than a third (33% and 35%) admitting to doing this.

Privacy Attitudes

More than half of these teens pretend to be older to register on age-restricted websites. Many also assume other identities to protect their privacy (45% and 50%) and to play jokes on friends (46% and 50%).

Given the popularity of social networking, it is not surprising that these students are active – and proactive – in managing their social lives online:

- Three quarters have deleted things they've posted online to prevent someone else (most often parents and family members) from seeing it.
- Two thirds have asked someone who had posted something about them to remove it to prevent someone else (most often friends, parents and family members) from seeing it.
- If an unwanted image is posted, most will ask the poster directly to take it down (85% and 79%) or will untag the photo themselves (71% or 72%).
- Six out of ten have used privacy tools to block strangers from seeing their social networking posts.

Kids this age are much less willing to share their online lives with the adults in their lives:

- 95 percent say their friends should be able to read their social networking posts, compared to half who would share them with parents and only 9 percent who would share them with teachers.
- By Grade 11, 33 percent would share their password with their best friend compared to 14 percent who would share it with parents (over half say they wouldn't share their passwords with anyone).
- Three quarters say kids should not be forced to friend their parent(s) on social networking sites.

Online Meanness

Students in Grade 10 are more likely than students in other grades to say they have been the recipients of mean or cruel online behaviour (47%). At the same time, 57 percent say it was rarely a serious problem for

them. This could be explained by the fact that the main way this age group engages in mean online behaviour is through name calling (82%).

These older teens have a number of strategies for dealing with cyberbullying, with their top choices:

- ignoring it;
- talking to the person face-to-face; and
- asking friends for help.

Turning to adults is a less popular option. By Grade 11 only 19 percent would ask parents for help and that drops to 4 percent who would ask a teacher and 5 percent who would contact the police.

These students are most likely to have encountered sexist or racist content online: a third say this happens at least once a week. While most believe this sexism and racism is wrong and it's important to speak out, almost seven out of ten say they don't do so because most of the time people are just "joking around". They also have similar attitudes towards cyberbullying, with most saying that sometimes parents/teachers call it bullying when kids are really just joking.

Sexting Activity

Students in grades 10 and 11 with cell phones are more likely than younger students to have sent a sext of themselves to someone, although these numbers are still relatively small (11% in Grade 10 and 14% in Grade 11). One quarter of students in Grade 10 who have sent a sext of themselves say it was forwarded by the recipient; a number that declines to 17 percent in Grade 11. Students in this age group are also more likely than students in grades 7 to 9 to report having received a sext directly from someone.

Learning Skills for the Internet

Although most students in grades 10 and 11 try to make sure online information is correct when doing schoolwork (89% and 87%), they're less likely to do so than their younger peers. However, they still turn to teachers when they need help in similar numbers, with half of them doing this.

While many of these teens are still learning about Internet topics from their teachers and parents, they are more likely than their younger peers to be learning about these topics independently – either by reading about them online or from their friends.

Students in grades 10 and 11 have learned about the following topics:

- searching for information online: from teachers (48% and 52%); from parents (38% and 31%), from the Internet (27% and 32%) and from a friend (38% and 38%);
- authenticating online information: from teachers (47% and 51%); from parents (26% and 25%), from the Internet (23% and 30%) and from a friend (19% and 19%); and
- how to use privacy settings: from teachers (15% and 11%); from parents (30% and 21%), from the Internet (38% and 52%) and from a friend (38% and 34%).

There are still gaps in these students' education: a majority – the highest of all the grades – have never had someone explain online privacy policies or terms of use to them (77% and 80%), and a third have never learned how companies collect and use personal information online.

All statistics are from MediaSmarts' 2014 study *Young Canadians in a Wired World*, Phase III: www.mediasmarts.ca/ycww.