

# Posting, scrolling, chatting & snapping

Youth (14-15) and  
social media in 2019





## Preface

In the world of social media, everything is rapidly new and rapidly old. Platforms that were hugely popular a few years ago are past their prime in 2019 (do teens still use Facebook?) or are even considered antique (who remembers MySpace?).

That's why it is important to re-establish which social media are embraced by youth, how these platforms are used and what feelings social media use brings about. Does it make them insecure and jealous, or cheerful and inspired?

To obtain representative data, we conducted a national survey in collaboration with Kantar, among 1,000 Dutch 14- to 15-year-olds. At this age, youth are most sensitive to reactions from peers and have a strong tendency to compare themselves with others.

With this report we share our findings with the general public. We think they can be useful not only to researchers, but also parents, educators, health organizations, marketers, politicians, policymakers and journalists.

This is a brief version of the original Dutch report.

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Together we are **Team AWeSome: Adolescents, Well-being and Social Media**. Team AWeSome researches the effects of social media on adolescents. This report is our first publication. Do you want to follow our research? Check: [www.project-awesome.nl](http://www.project-awesome.nl) or [www.ccam-ascor.nl](http://www.ccam-ascor.nl).

### Colophon

#### Research

This research was executed by the University of Amsterdam, department CcaM (Center for Research on Children, Adolescents, and the Media), under the auspices of prof. dr. Patti Valkenburg.

#### Fieldwork

The fieldwork was carried out by research agency Kantar.

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# 1

## Popularity of platforms

### Which social media do young people use?

As Figure 1 shows, WhatsApp is most popular among Dutch 14- to 15-year-olds. Almost all use this messenger service (96%), followed by photo- and videoplatforms Instagram (83%), YouTube (82%) and Snapchat (67%).

### How often?

Many teens use multiple platforms. Figure 2 shows how often 14-to 15-year-olds check the four most popular social media. WhatsApp is again the front-runner: Most users (58%) are on this platform 1 to 12 times a day.

### How long?

On the days that young people use a platform, how much time do they spend on it? YouTube takes up the most time: A bit over half (51%) of the users watch more than 1 hour a day.

### Boys and girls

Girls check WhatsApp, Instagram and Snapchat more often than boys and also spend more time on these platforms. Figure 3 shows how many boys and girls check social media more than 12 times a day. Figure 4 shows how many boys and girls spend more than an hour on each platform.

Figure 1 - Platform use

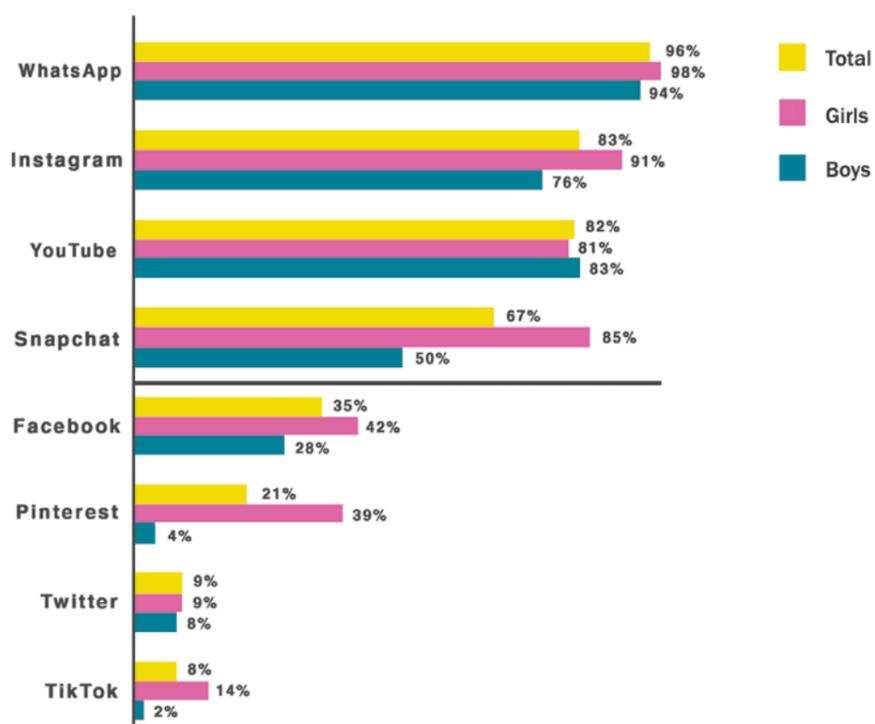


Figure 2 - Frequency of checking the four most popular platforms

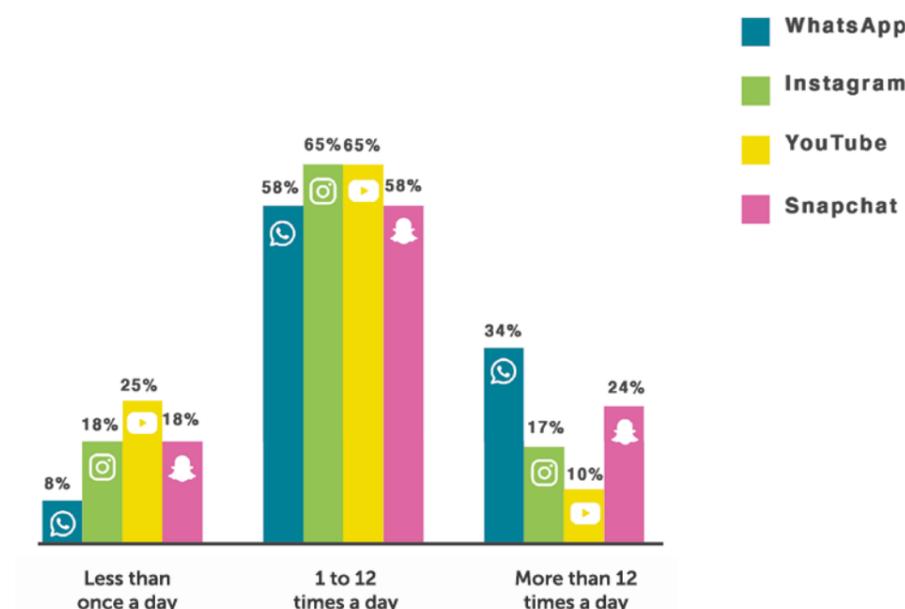


Figure 3 - Boys and girls who check social media more than 12 x a day

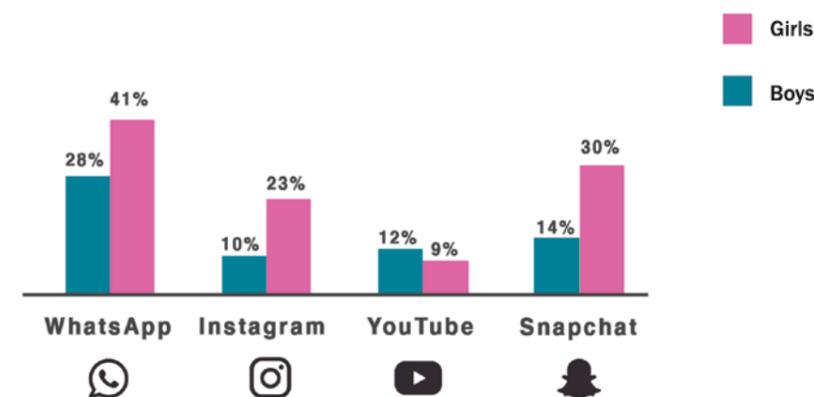
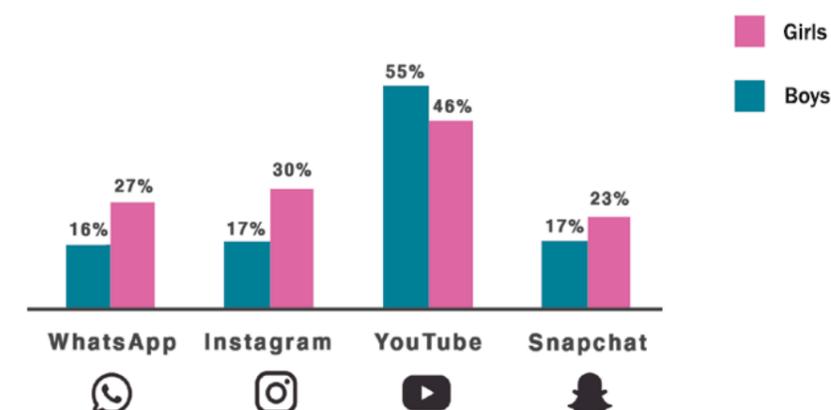


Figure 4 - Boys and girls who use social media more than one hour a day





# 2

## Games as social media

Gaming may not be the first thing that comes to mind when talking about social media. But, if you ask teens, gaming is a social activity. During multiplayer games, for example, communication is key. And, chatting about games continues well after the game has ended.

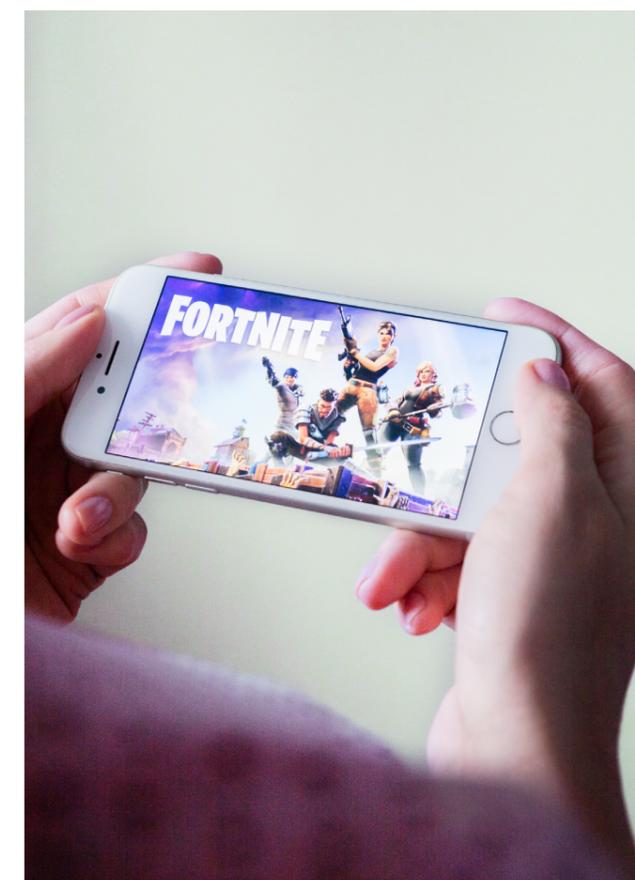
### How often and how long?

Almost all boys (98%) and girls (83%) play games. Nearly half of all youngsters (41%) play on a daily basis.

Two-thirds (67%) do this 1 to 4 hours a day on the days they play. And no less than 16% plays 4 hours or more on those days.

### Social aspect

- \* most gamers (62%) communicate about gaming during or after playing games;
- \* this happens through the game itself (70%), or via social media such as WhatsApp (66%);
- \* one in four uses Discord as a means to communicate about games, during or after gaming.



# 3

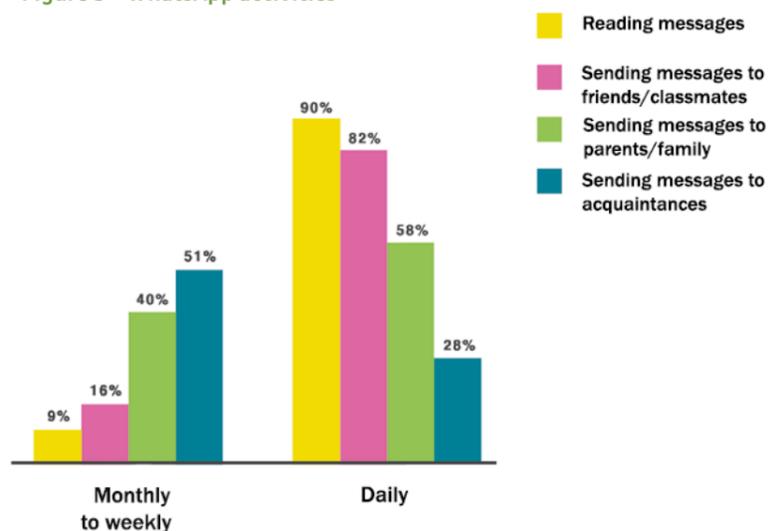
## What do teens do on social media?

Youngsters can use each platform for different purposes. How are the four most popular platforms used?

### WhatsApp

Figure 5 shows that the majority of WhatsApp users (90%) read messages at least daily. Most (82%) also send messages each day to friends/classmates.

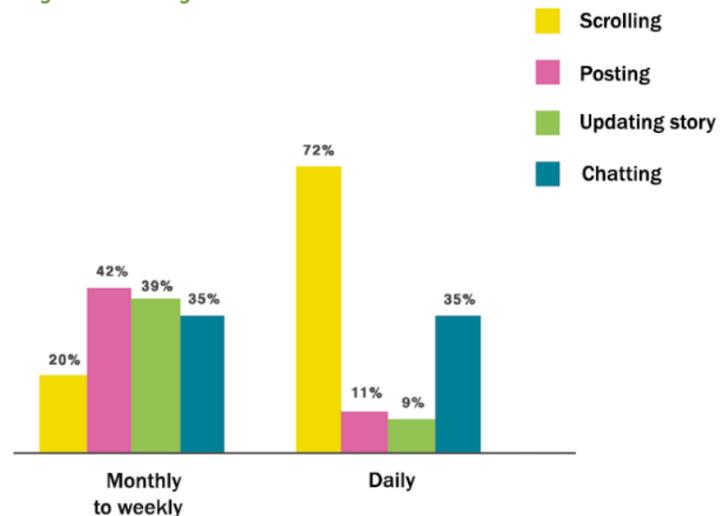
Figure 5 - WhatsApp activities



### Instagram

Scrolling through posts of others is the activity most 14- to 15-year-olds (72%) engage in (see Figure 6). Chatting and posting happens less frequently.

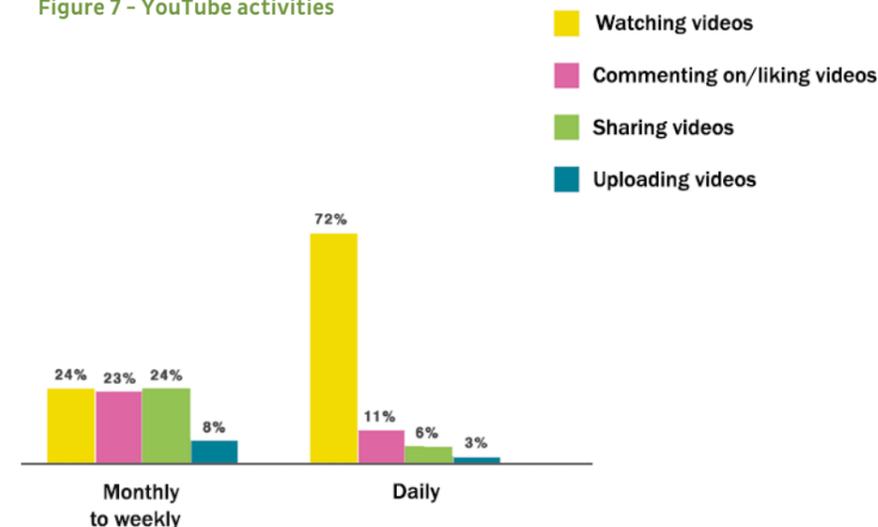
Figure 6 - Instagram activities



### YouTube

Figure 7 shows what teens do on YouTube. Watching videos is the most popular activity. The majority (72%) engages in this daily. Responding to videos and uploading own videos is less popular.

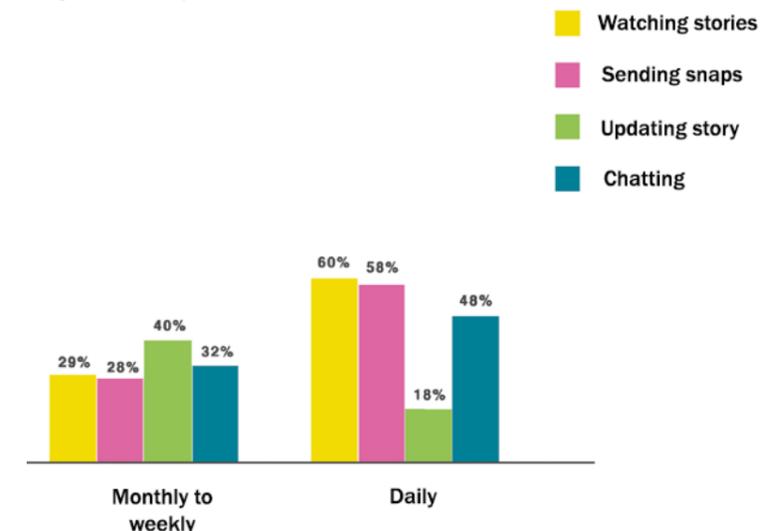
Figure 7 - YouTube activities



### Snapchat

Teens most frequently watch snaps and stories of others (see Figure 8). Almost two-thirds of the users (60%) do this on a daily basis. Sending snaps and chatting are also popular activities.

Figure 8 - Snapchat activities



# 4

## The importance of feedback

How much do teens value feedback to the content they post on social media? And what do they care about most: the substance of this feedback, the quantity, or the time it takes to receive it?

### WhatsApp

On WhatsApp teens care about:

- \* fast responses – two-thirds of the users (66%) want replies quickly;
- \* positive responses – an equal number of teens finds positive feedback important (65%).

### Instagram

For Insta-posts, teens find important:

- \* positive responses – over two-thirds of users (69%) value positive feedback;
- \* number of likes – half of the users (51%) find the quantity of feedback important;
- \* speed of likes and comments – fast responses are important for less than half (42%) of the users.

### Snapchat

For snaps, youngsters value:

- \* positive responses – more than half (56%) of the users find positive feedback important;
- \* the number of responses – 37% of users care about the quantity of feedback;
- \* fast responses – important for 36% of users.

### Self-disclosure

Which platforms do young people use to share their feelings and worries?

- \* WhatsApp – 61%
- \* Snapchat – 46%
- \* Instagram – 34%

# 5

## Comparing yourself to others

Social media seem designed to compare yourself to others. Yet, it happens less often than we may think. Less than half (41%) of 14- to 15-year-olds do this at least sometimes.

### Feelings

Figure 9 shows that youngsters experience more positive than negative emotions when comparing themselves to others on social media.

Figure 9 - Feelings and emotions when comparing yourself to others

