



How Canada's youth are using social media

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The vast majority of Canadian teens are using social media daily, according to a new report.

The findings are the latest from Media Technology Monitor's MTM Jr. report, which researches media habits of youth from seven to 17 years old. It found that seven in 10 children in this group use social media, with half of seven- to 11-year-olds and 85% of teens using social media in the past month.

In terms of frequency, 82% of teenage social media users access it daily, compared to only 44% of those aged seven to 11. Usage via any platform doesn't vary drastically by gender or household income, but is much higher among children that have their own cellphone (88%) or have used a cellphone in the past month (82%) than those who do not have their own cellphone (52%).

Watching video is the most popular activity, with 78% of children on social media using it for that purpose. Messaging (70%) is the second most popular activity, followed by looking at content others have posted (55%). Those aged 12 to 17 are more likely to view content posted by others than younger children (66% vs 33%), to like or react to a post (64% versus 33%) and to leave a comment (38% versus 18%).

TikTok is the biggest social media platform used by kids, with 53% of those using social media having used the platform in the past month. The next most-used platforms are Snapchat (42%), Instagram (40%) and Facebook (37%). With the exception of Facebook, those platforms are more popular with girls than boys. Instagram users are more likely than any others to be using social media daily, although only one in five youth using Instagram are posting photos.

Usage of social media platforms can vary notably when comparing Anglophones and Francophones. English-speakers are more likely to be using Discord, Pinterest, WhatsApp and Twitter than their French-speaking counterparts. Francophones lean more into using TikTok, Instagram, BeReal, Facebook and the kids version of its Messenger app. Snapchat is one of the only platforms with similar levels of usage across both language markets.