How Kids React When Parents Go Social

Contributed by eMarketer
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Younger teens â€˜hate itâ€™ when parents try to make friends

eMarketer estimates that 74.9% of teen Internet users were regular social network users in 2009, rising to 78.2% in 2010. By 2014, 85.7% of teen Internet users will use social networks.

With the youth audience at such high levels of social network penetration, adults have fueled the bulk of growth on sites like Facebook in 2009 and 2010.

Even at such heavy usage rates, teens will account for just 14.6% of all social network users in 2010 and 12.7% in 2014, according to eMarketerâ€™s projections.

How young people perceive the influx of older users into their turf depends on their age, according to a survey of myYearbookâ€™s most active members conducted by the site and Ketchum in May 2010.

A majority of younger teens reportedly hate it or feel annoyed or nervous when their parents are on the same social network, but among more mature 18- and 19-year-olds that percentage fell to 27%.

Still, no more than one-fifth of teens in any age group actually liked having their parents in their network.

myYearbook is a teen-oriented site, so itâ€™s possible that its users are especially averse to hanging out online with their parents.

Asked what social networking site they most associated with their parents, 75% said Facebook while only 8% said myYearbook.

Once parents do show up on a childâ€™s social site of choice, however, teens are generally willing to open up.

More than half of high school students surveyed by Kaplan gave their parents full access to their social profiles.

Still, more than one-third of high school students chose to keep parents out entirely.

â€œIn a Facebook era, the online arena serves as a new channel for parents to keep tabs on what and how their kids are doing, and itâ€™s notable that a sizeable percentage of todayâ€™s teens seem comfortable with that dynamic,â€• said Justin Serrano, senior vice president of Kaplan Test Prep and Admissions, in a statement. â€œBut for the most part, the parent-teen online relationship is still relatively uncharted territory. What weâ€™re seeing is that parents are increasingly expressing interest in being able to monitor their kidsâ€™ progress online, and teens are adjusting to this in different ways.â€•

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