TalkTalk: Teenage Loneliness and Technology Report 2019

TalkTalk
For Everyone

TalkTalk has a long history of leading industry efforts to ensure the internet is a safer place for young people. But as technology constantly evolves, it presents new issues and challenges. That is why TalkTalk has recently looked at the relationship between loneliness and technology in teenagers, exploring if and how technology should be seen as a source, symptom or solution to tackling this growing issue. The results shed a light on the digital divide within families.

1

Intergenerational tech tensions: **Half** of teenagers think technology makes them feel less lonely but only a **quarter** of parents agree
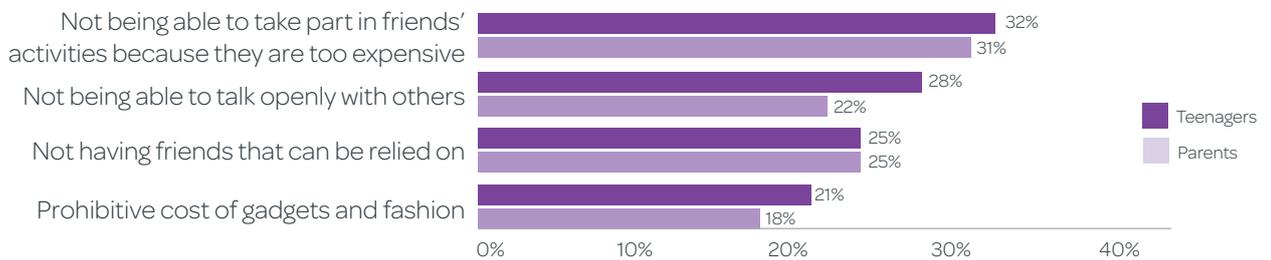
Pie chart 1: 20%, 26%, 54%
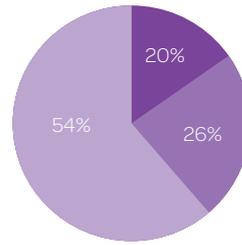
Is using internet and social media making your child more lonely or less lonely? (parents of young people aged 13 - 16)

Pie chart 2: 8%, 48%, 44%
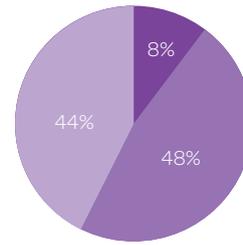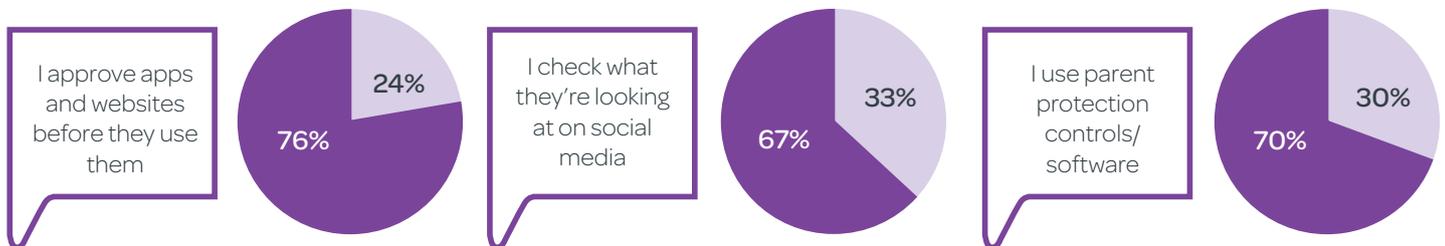
Is using the internet and social media making you more lonely or less lonely? (young people aged 13 - 16)

Legend:
- More lonely
- Less lonely
- Neither

2

Traditional issues (money, trust, friendships and shyness) are the **top causes of teenage loneliness** rather than technology-led factors

Cause	Teenagers	Parents
Not being able to take part in friends' activities because they are too expensive	32%	31%
Not being able to talk openly with others	28%	22%
Not having friends that can be relied on	25%	25%
Prohibitive cost of gadgets and fashion	21%	18%

Axis: 0% 10% 20% 30% 40%

Legend:
- Teenagers
- Parents

3

70% of parents worry about their children's use of tech, but only a minority **(30%)** of parents surveyed use protection controls and software

Legend:
- No
- Yes

I approve apps and websites before they use them — 76% / 24%

I check what they're looking at on social media — 67% / 33%

I use parent protection controls/ software — 70% / 30%

4

41% of parents have never discussed loneliness with their teenagers so **TalkTalk** has partnered with **Internet Matters** to develop advice and support for parents on how to start a dialogue with young people on this sensitive topic

What we're doing

TalkTalk is delighted to have signed the Government's Loneliness Pledge – committing to working together towards best practice in supporting potentially lonely employees.

Our parental filter, HomeSafe, allows parents to control what content their children access, and signposts to expert safety advice from Internet Matters.

TalkTalk is committed to using our academic-endorsed quantitative and qualitative findings to inform policy making. We will share our research with the academic community and regulators to improve outcomes for lonely and potentially lonely teenagers.

TalkTalk will promote independent guidance from Internet Matters aiming to advise teenagers and their parents about the tools available to them to make their online experience a safe and positive one.

To find out more and download the full report, please visit www.talktalkgroup.com/talking-loneliness