ONLINE SAFETY/ACROSS GENERATIONS:
HOW CHILDREN AND SENIORS USE THE INTERNET

Key findings from surveys among seniors and parents of online children, conducted September 2018
FINDINGS AMONG SENIORS
Methodology

- 701 telephone interviews among Americans age 62 and older
- Total includes oversamples among:
  - African-American seniors (total of 151)
  - Hispanic seniors (total of 144)
  - Low-income seniors (total of 322)
- Interviewing conducted September 24 to 30, 2018
- Margins of error = ±3.7 percentage points for the full sample, ±4.3 for online seniors, ±7.2 for seniors not online
Differences Between Online and Offline Seniors

How often do you go online and use the Internet, whether using a computer, smartphone, tablet or other mobile device?*

Compared to others, seniors not online are:
- Older
- More racially/ethnically diverse
- Less educated
- Lower income

Online daily: 53%
Online monthly/less: 8%
Not online: 20%
Online weekly: 19%

Online seniors:
- All seniors: 80%
- Whites: 83%
- African Americans: 63%
- Hispanics: 64%
- Low income: 64%

* Additional information in question: “This includes doing things like sending or receiving e-mail, visiting websites, making video calls using Skype or Facetime, using apps on a smartphone, or using social media like Facebook, LinkedIn, or Twitter.”
Differing views about the role of the Internet today

When it comes to the role of technology and the Internet in society today, I think:

- Positives outweigh the negatives
- Positives and negatives are about equal
- Negatives outweigh the positives
- Not sure

All seniors

- Positives outweigh the negatives: 30%
- Positives and negatives are about equal: 24%
- Not sure: 14%
- Negatives outweigh the positives: 32%

Online seniors

- Positives outweigh the negatives: 34%
- Positives and negatives are about equal: 24%
- Not sure: 8%
- Negatives outweigh the positives: 16%

Seniors not online

- Positives outweigh the negatives: 34%
- Positives and negatives are about equal: 25%
- Not sure: 16%
- Negatives outweigh the positives: 25%

+6 positive for all seniors

+10 positive for online seniors

-9 positive for seniors not online
Online seniors use many avenues for Internet access; income is not much of a factor.

I use this device to go online:

- Desktop or laptop computer: 82% (among online seniors) 80%
- Smartphone, iPhone, Android phone: 76% 70%
- Tablet, iPad, Kindle Fire, Samsung tablet: 60% 57%
- Voice-controlled, Internet connected speaker (Google Home, Amazon Alexa): 21% 26%
Online seniors take advantage of much of what the Internet has to offer.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Currently go online to do</th>
<th>Don't currently do online but interested</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Use navigation services (Google Maps, Waze)</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use social media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter)</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use online banking</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase everyday goods</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video calls (Facetime, Skype, Facebook Video Chat)</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete forms/submit info to gov't agencies (SSA, DMV)</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Seniors who are online express appreciable interest in using the Internet for health applications and grocery delivery.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Currently go online to do</th>
<th>Don't currently do online but interested</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communicate with doctor, nurse, health professional</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use ridesharing apps (Uber, Lyft)</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Order groceries for delivery to home</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wear remote health monitoring device connected to Internet (heart rate, blood pressure, glucose)</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Interest in most applications is higher among Hispanics than among white or African-American seniors.
Online seniors are moderately confident in the security of their online lives.

How confident are you that you are taking the appropriate steps to keep your personal information, private data, and finances safe and secure when you are using the Internet and doing things online?

(among online seniors)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extremely/very confident</th>
<th>Extremely confident</th>
<th>Somewhat confident</th>
<th>Not confident</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>58%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Extremely/very confident</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Whites</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African Americans</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanics</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online less than 5 years</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online 5 to 14 years</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online 15 years/longer</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low-income seniors</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school grads/less</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some college</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College grads</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ID theft and hacking top seniors’ list of concerns.

VIGILANCE: Seniors who express high confidence in their online safety steps are as concerned as low confidence seniors about each item.

EXPERIENCE: Seniors who have been online for 15 years or longer express less concern (an average of 15 points lower) about each item than do seniors who have less online experience.
Most seniors take steps to protect their personal information online.

Which of these things have you done that people can do to keep their personal information, private data, and finances safe and secure when using the Internet and doing things online?

(among online seniors)

- Strong passwords (upper/lower case, numbers, symbols): 50%
- Different passwords for different accounts: 44%
- Anti-virus protection on computer: 43%
- Operating systems and apps kept updated: 35%
- Security/privacy settings on social media/online accounts: 27%
- Multi-factor authentication; multiple steps to log in: 24%

93% of online seniors have done at least one, 46% have done two or more.
Online seniors prioritize family when seeking help with technology or the Internet.

I have turned to these people for assistance in using electronic devices to go online and using the Internet:

(among online seniors)

| Source of Assistance                                      | Whites (% | African Americans (% | Hispanics (%)
|-----------------------------------------------------------|-----------|-----------------------|-----------------
| Adult children, adults in my family                       | 49%       | 53%                   | 41%            
| Tech support rep in person at store, on phone, online     | 38%       | 16%                   | 19%            
| Grandchildren, young people in my family                  | 33%       | 32%                   | 31%            
| Friends or neighbors                                      | 23%       | 29%                   | 19%            
| My Internet Service Provider                              | 24%       | 17%                   | 25%            
| My mobile phone company                                   | 17%       | 13%                   | 14%            
| Librarian, someone at local library                       | 3%        | 7%                    | 1%             
| Someone at senior center, community org                   | 2%        | 6%                    | 5%             

(All numbers rounded to nearest whole number)
Most seniors who are not online have little interest in being so.

(among seniors not online)

I have considered using the Internet

- 22%

I have NOT considered using the Internet

- 77%

Fewer than one in five seniors who are not currently online express interest in any of the online applications tested.
Why not online? It’s more about privacy concerns and lack of interest than cost.

*This is a MAJOR reason why I do not use the Internet:*

(among seniors not online)

- Rather do things in-person or over the phone: 68%
- Concerned about identity theft, personal information/finances: 62%
- Distrust online sources: 56%
- Don’t have technical skills, confused about how to do things: 54%
- Too much inappropriate or offensive content online: 49%
- Don’t think it would bring me real benefit or make my life better: 44%
- Can’t afford devices I need to buy to do more online: 29%
- Can’t afford Internet service: 28%
Encouragement to get online varies substantially by socioeconomic status.

Have your children, grandchildren, or other younger family members encouraged you to use the Internet?

(among seniors not online)

- Family has not encouraged me to use the Internet: 47%
- Family has encouraged me to use the Internet: 47%

Note: The data is presented as percentages for different socio-economic groups:

- Men: 53%
- Women: 43%
- Whites: 53%
- Nonwhites: 35%
- High school grad/less: 31%
- Some college/more: 75%
- Income under $23K: 46%
- Income $23K/more: 55%
Online or not, many seniors have discussed online safety with young people.

Have you talked to any young people under age 18 – your grandchildren, your children, or any other young people – about the importance of THEM being safe online?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I have talked to young people under age 18 about online safety</th>
<th>I have NOT talked to young people about online safety</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All seniors</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online seniors</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seniors not online</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Have talked to young people:
- Whites: 53%
- African Americans: 57%
- Hispanics: 47%
FINDINGS AMONG PARENTS
Methodology

- 673 online interviews among parents whose children age 2 to 17 are online
- Total includes oversamples among:
  - African-American parents (total of 151)
  - Hispanic parents (total of 149)
  - Low-income parents (total of 244)
- Interviewing conducted September 18 to 26, 2018
- Credibility interval = ±3.8 percentage points for the full sample, higher among subgroups
Parents generally find technology makes parenting easier.

In general, technology and the Internet has made my job as a parent:

- **53%** A lot easier
- **35%** Has made no difference
- **18%** Has made harder

### Ways that technology and the Internet has made my job as a parent:

#### Ways technology/Internet has made my job easier:
- Help with homework: 14%
- Keeps kids entertained: 11%
- Access to information: 11%
- Educational: 10%
- Keeps child busy, occupied: 9%

#### Ways technology/Internet has made my job harder:
- Have to monitor content: 11%
- Child always wants to play online: 11%
- Inappropriate/mature content: 10%
- Child won’t do anything else: 6%
- Addictive: 6%
Though feelings on this change as children get older.

- **Have child age 2 to 5**: 65% EASIER, 14% HARDER
- **Have child age 6 to 9**: 55% EASIER, 26% HARDER
- **Have child age 10 to 12**: 47% EASIER, 31% HARDER
- **Have child age 13 to 17**: 48% EASIER, 38% HARDER
- **Whites**: 50% EASIER, 31% HARDER
- **African Americans**: 60% EASIER, 19% HARDER
- **Hispanics**: 55% EASIER, 26% HARDER
Parents see many positive effects of technology use, but a couple of clear negatives.

*Has had more positive effect minus more negative effect*
Parents’ confidence in managing tech use diminishes when kids become teens.

On a scale from 0 to 10, how confident you feel in your ability to keep track of and manage your child’s use of technology, including electronic devices and being online?

| Have child age 2 to 5 | 66% |
| Have child age 6 to 9 | 57% |
| Have child age 10 to 12 | 60% |
| Have child age 13 to 17 | 43% |
| Whites | 54% |
| African Americans | 68% |
| Hispanics | 57% |
Content trumps time management as a concern for parents.

Which one of these are you generally more worried about in use of technology and the Internet?

| Content and things my child sees and hears when online and using technology | 64% |
| Amount of time my child spends online and using technology | 32% |

- Satisfied with control I have in this area
- Wish I had more control in this area

**Content**
- 56% satisfied
- 44% wish for more control

**Time**
- 42% satisfied
- 58% wish for more control
Content concerns spike when kids are age 6 to 12.

Which one of these are you generally more worried about in use of technology and the Internet?

- More concerned about content
- More concerned about time spent

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Have child age 2 to 5</th>
<th>Have child age 6 to 9</th>
<th>Have child age 10 to 12</th>
<th>Have child age 13 to 17</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>57%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>72%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Use of parental controls varies, but interest is high.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Control</th>
<th>Use this</th>
<th>Don't use but interested in</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Smartphone/tablet setting limiting websites can visit</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home computer program limiting websites can visit</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I get message/child needs permission to download app/spend money</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Game console setting limiting types of websites/games</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Settings preventing child from interacting with others in games/apps</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smartphone/tablet setting limiting times of day one can be online</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home Wi-Fi programmed to only work with certain devices/times</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Game console setting limiting times of day one can play</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>42%</td>
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63% of parents use at least one of these controls, higher among Hispanics (70%) and parents of 6- to 9-year-olds (77%).
Most parents approach educating their children about online safety as an ongoing process.

- **The need to be safe and guard personal information when using technology**
  - My child fully understands/appreciates this: 59%
  - My child does not fully understand/appreciate: 41%

- **The things you say and do online do not necessarily disappear even if you delete them**
  - My child fully understands/appreciates this: 57%
  - My child does not fully understand/appreciate: 43%

How often do you have discussions with your child about being safe online and protecting personal information?

- **Less/never**
  - 23%
- **Monthly**
  - 13%
- **Few times a month**
  - 30%
- **At least weekly**
  - 34%

64% at least a few times a month
Parents say the dynamic of technology influences shifts as children age.

Which one or two of these sources are the biggest influences on your child in how he/she uses technology?

- Me and/or my spouse: 39%
- His/her friends: 32%
- His/her brothers or sisters: 9%
- People he/she meets, watches online: 8%
- Adult family member other than me/spouse: 6%
- Teachers, coaches, other adults: 5%

By child's age:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Parents influence</th>
<th>Friends influence</th>
<th>Net parents influence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age 2 to 5</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>+43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 6 to 9</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>+4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 10 to 12</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 13 to 17</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>-10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Parents rate themselves as modeling good—if not perfect—technology behavior for their children.

What grade would you give yourself for the job you are doing in setting a good example and being a good role model in showing your child the kind of behavior you expect when using technology and being online?

- Give myself a “A” 32%
- Give myself a “B” 50%
- Give myself a “C” 14%
- Give myself a “D/F” 4%
- Top of the Class (give myself an “A”) 51%
  - African Americans
  - Parents of 10- to 12-year-olds 42%
  - College grads 37%

How I Could Be Better Role Model (parents giving themselves “C/D/F”)
- Spend less time online 24%
- Use my phone less 17%
- Spend more time interacting with child 10%
- Be more strict, set more rules 9%
- Monitor child’s online activity more 5%
Technology can bring families together.

**Effect of technology on communication among my family members—including extended family outside our household:**

- **Better communication:**
  - Income $100K+: 67%
  - Hispanics: 65%
  - Millennials: 64%
  - College grads: 63%
  - Dads: 61%
  - Total: 57%

- **Worse communication:**
  - Total: 13%

- **No effect on communication:**
  - Total: 30%

**How often do you and your child use technology together (go to websites, play video games, do educational activities, look at social media posts)?**

- **Very/fairly often:**
  - African Americans: 54%
  - Hispanics: 53%
  - Millennials: 52%
  - Total: 54%

- **Occasionally:**
  - Dads: 33%
  - Total: 34%

- **Rarely/never:**
  - Total: 12%