Family Online Safety Institute

HART RESEARCH ASSOCIATES

The Online Generation Gap

Contrasting attitudes and behaviors of parents and teens

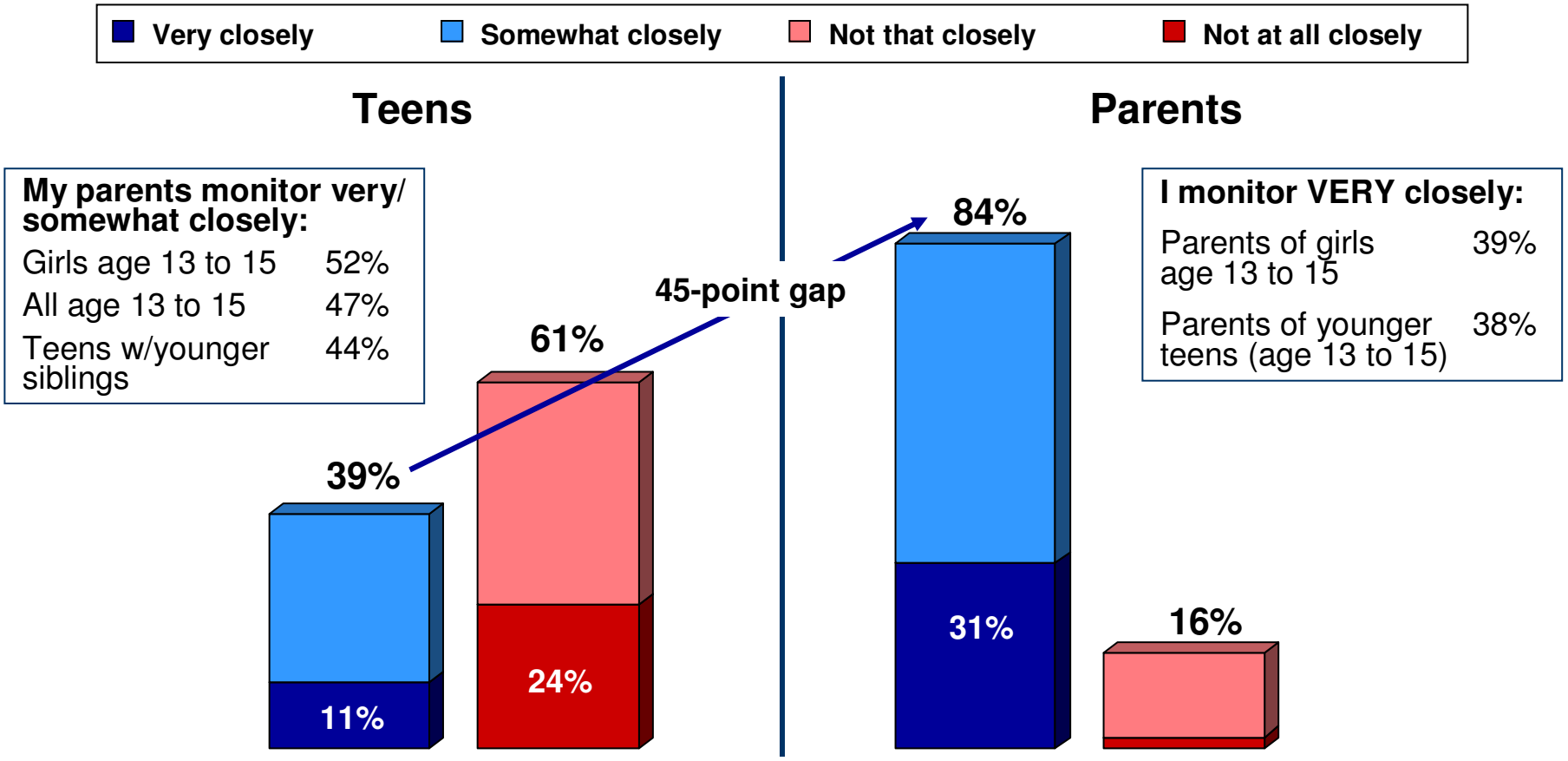
Google Microsoft

Methodology

- **Two surveys were conducted online October 2 – 10, 2012, among:**
  - 511 teens age 13 to 17 who access the Internet at least occasionally
  - 500 parents of teens age 13 to 17 who access the Internet at least occasionally
    - To simplify administration of the parents' survey, respondents were asked to think about their child who had the most recent birthday in answering the survey's questions.

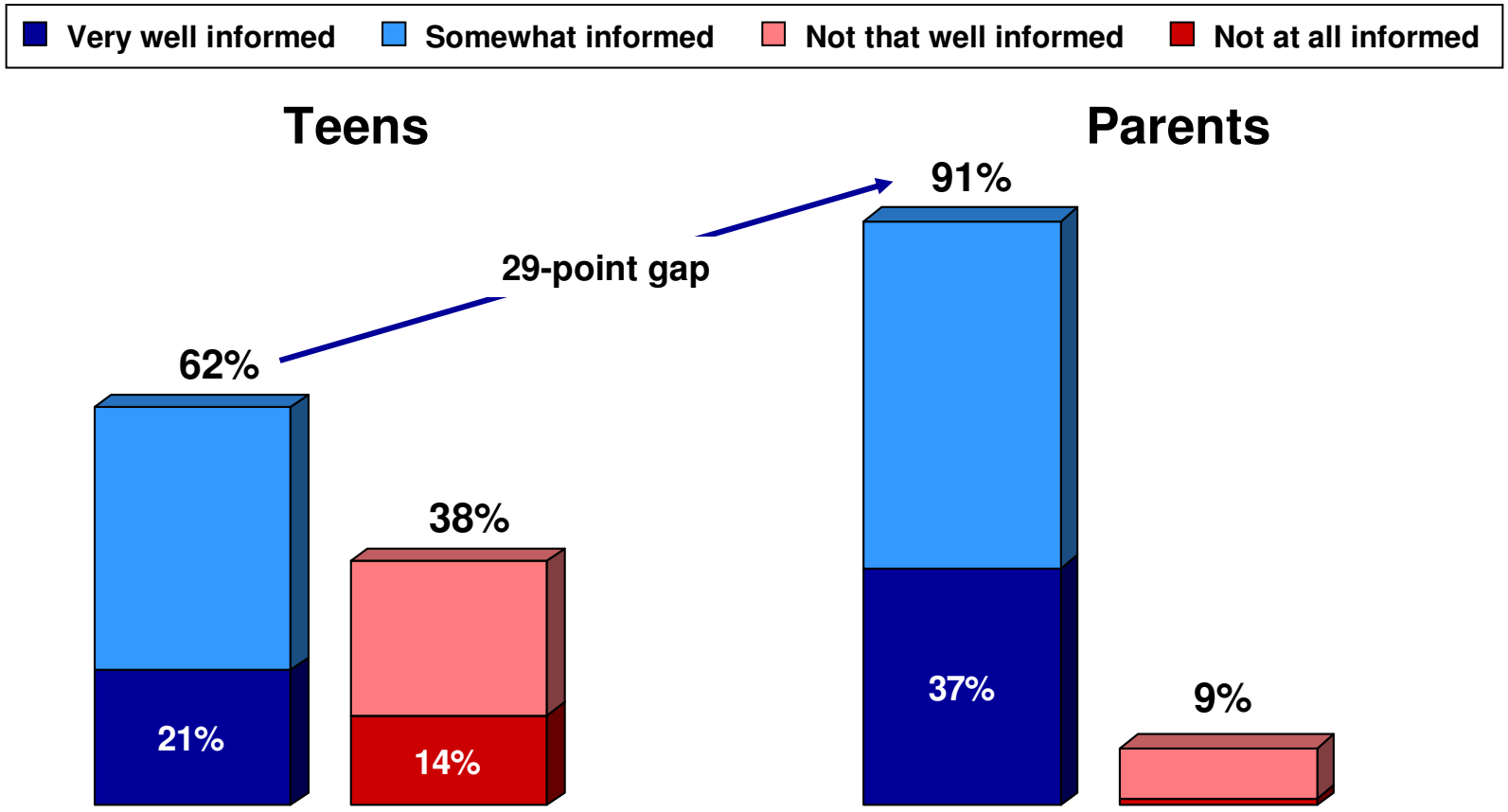
A gap exists between parents' and teens' perceptions of parents' monitoring.

How closely do [your parents/you] follow or monitor what [you do/your child does] online or on a cell phone?



Parents feel better informed about teens' online activity than teens think parents are.

How well informed do you think [your parents/you] are about what [you do/your child does] online and on a cell phone?



Teens and parents are largely in sync on teens' use of online and mobile platforms.

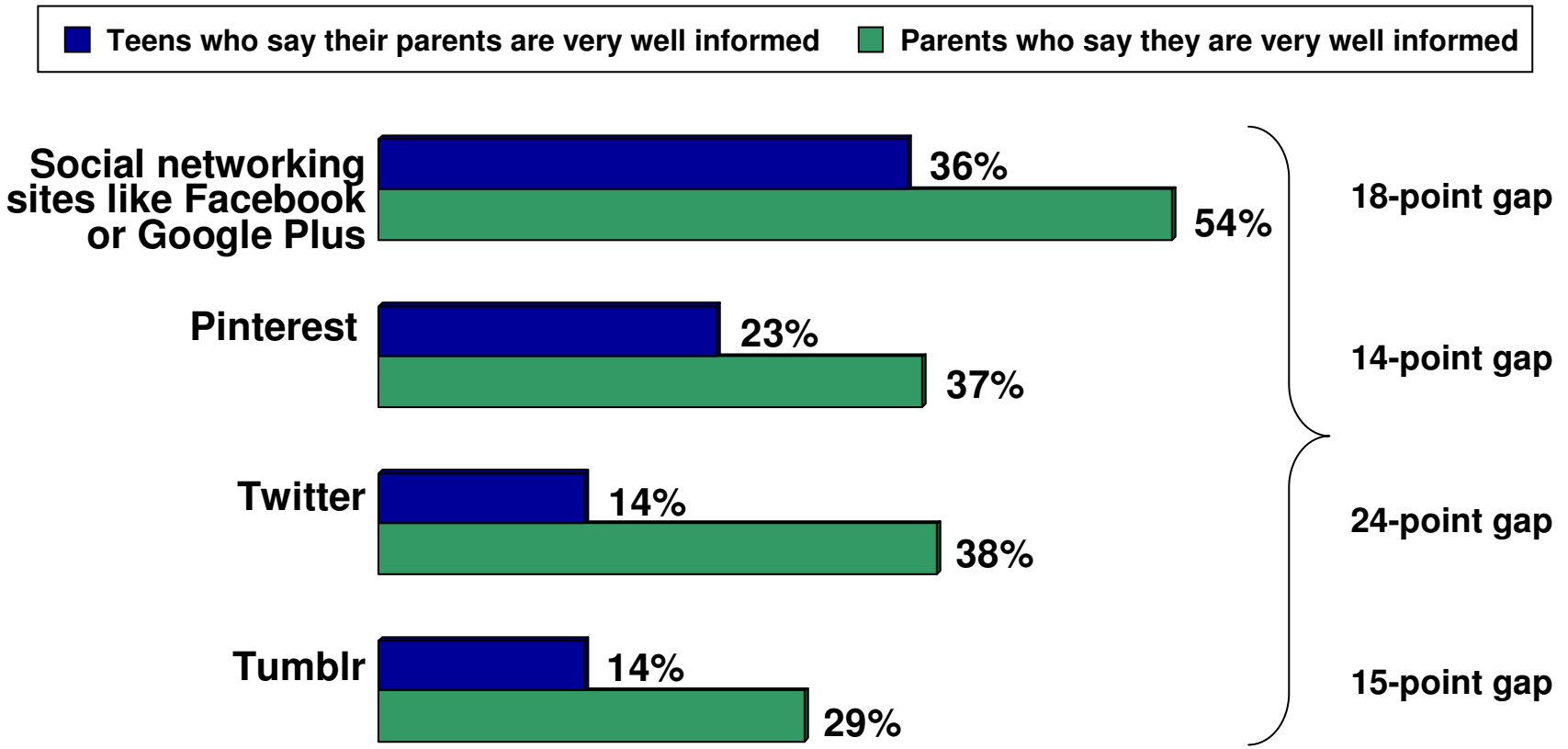
[I have/my child has] done this in the past 30 days/daily

	Teens	Parents
Sent an e-mail	90%	89%
Used online social networking site (Facebook/Google Plus)	88%	86%
Sent/received text message	86%	90%
Used online instant messenger like Facebook chat or Google chat	78%	75%
Collaborated on homework or a school project online	68%	76%
Communicated by text or headset with other players while playing a game online	45%	54%
Sent or received messages on Twitter	42%	40%
Posted a comment on a blog post or news article	42%	40%

	Teens	Parents
Posted a video on YouTube	29%	29%
Posted a photograph on Instagram	28%	35%
Posted or received comments on Instagram	24%	34%
Post or blog on Tumblr	23%	20%
Pinned something or commented on something on Pinterest	23%	26%
Used a service on cell phone like Foursquare or Loopt to "check in" to locations or share location with friends	17%	25%

Notable gaps exist in perceptions of how well informed parents are.

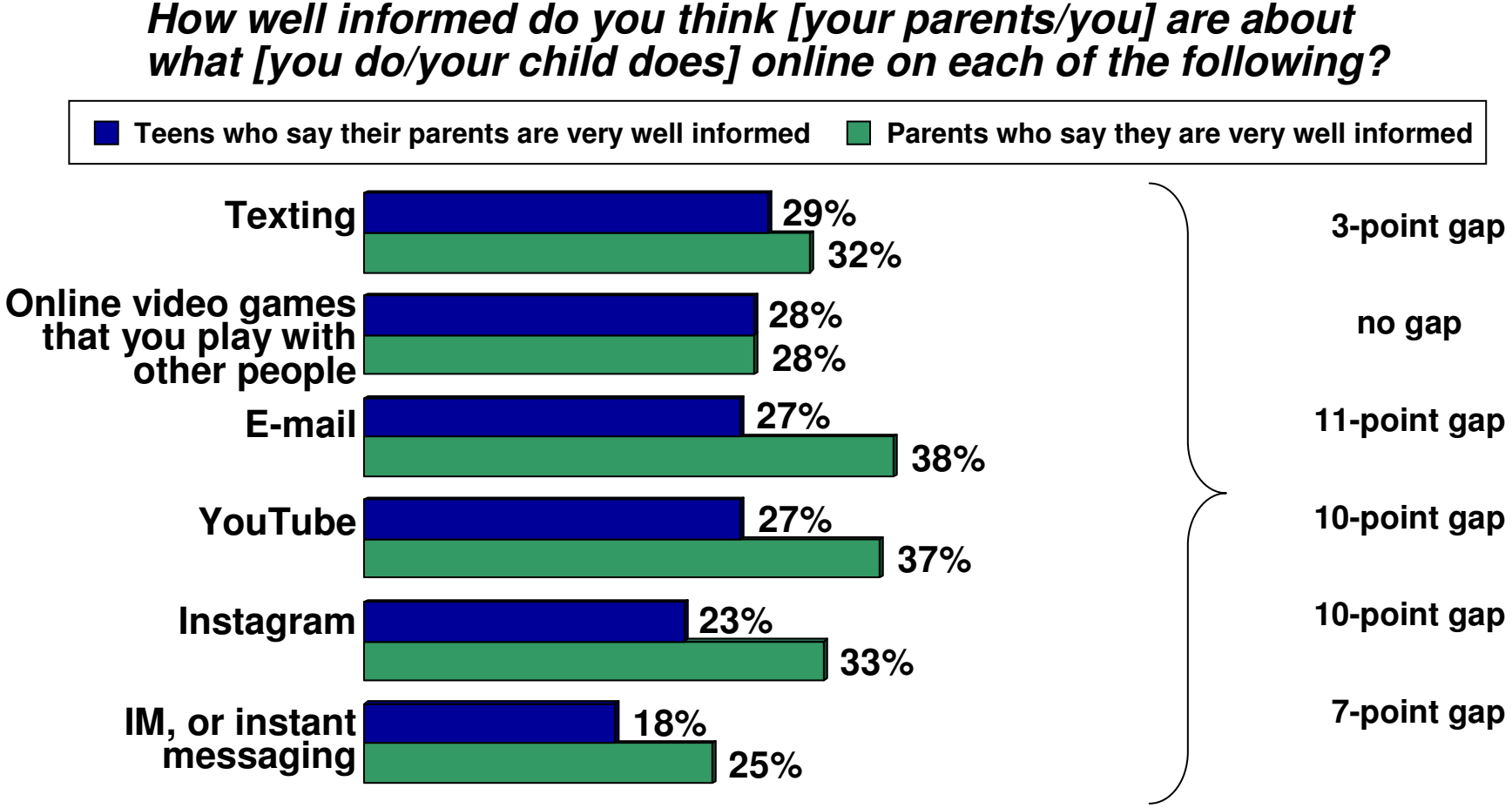
How well informed do you think [your parents/you] are about what [you do/your child does] online on each of the following?



*Each item asked of teens/parents who say they have/their child has used it in the past 30 days

For other online platforms, perceptions are more aligned.

How well informed do you think [your parents/you] are about what [you do/your child does] online on each of the following?



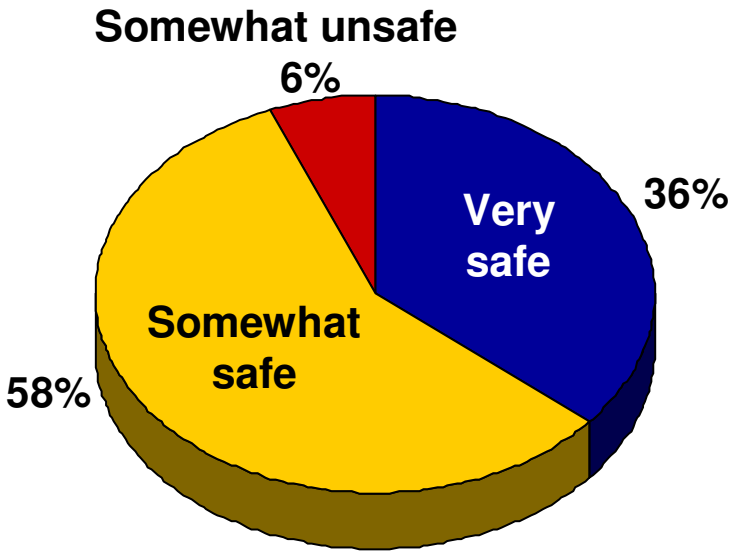
*Each item asked of teens/parents who say they have/their child has used it in the past 30 days

Teens and parents report similar perceptions about how safe teens feel online.

How safe do you feel [you are/your child is] when online?

Teens

Parents



By how informed teens say parents are about their online activities:	Feel very safe
Parents very well informed	41%
Parents somewhat well informed	37%
Parents not well informed	34%

By how informed parents feel about their child's online activities:	Child is very safe
Very well informed	48%
Somewhat/less well informed	28%

For teens, being "safe" online means privacy is protected.

Secure, not scared

Privacy

No Viruses

No one has my personal information

No predators

No stalkers

Free from hackers

No one can harm me

For parents, safety involves privacy and avoiding "stranger danger" scenarios.

Don't visit dangerous sites

Only talk to people he/she knows

Safe from predators

Tracking/monitoring teens' use

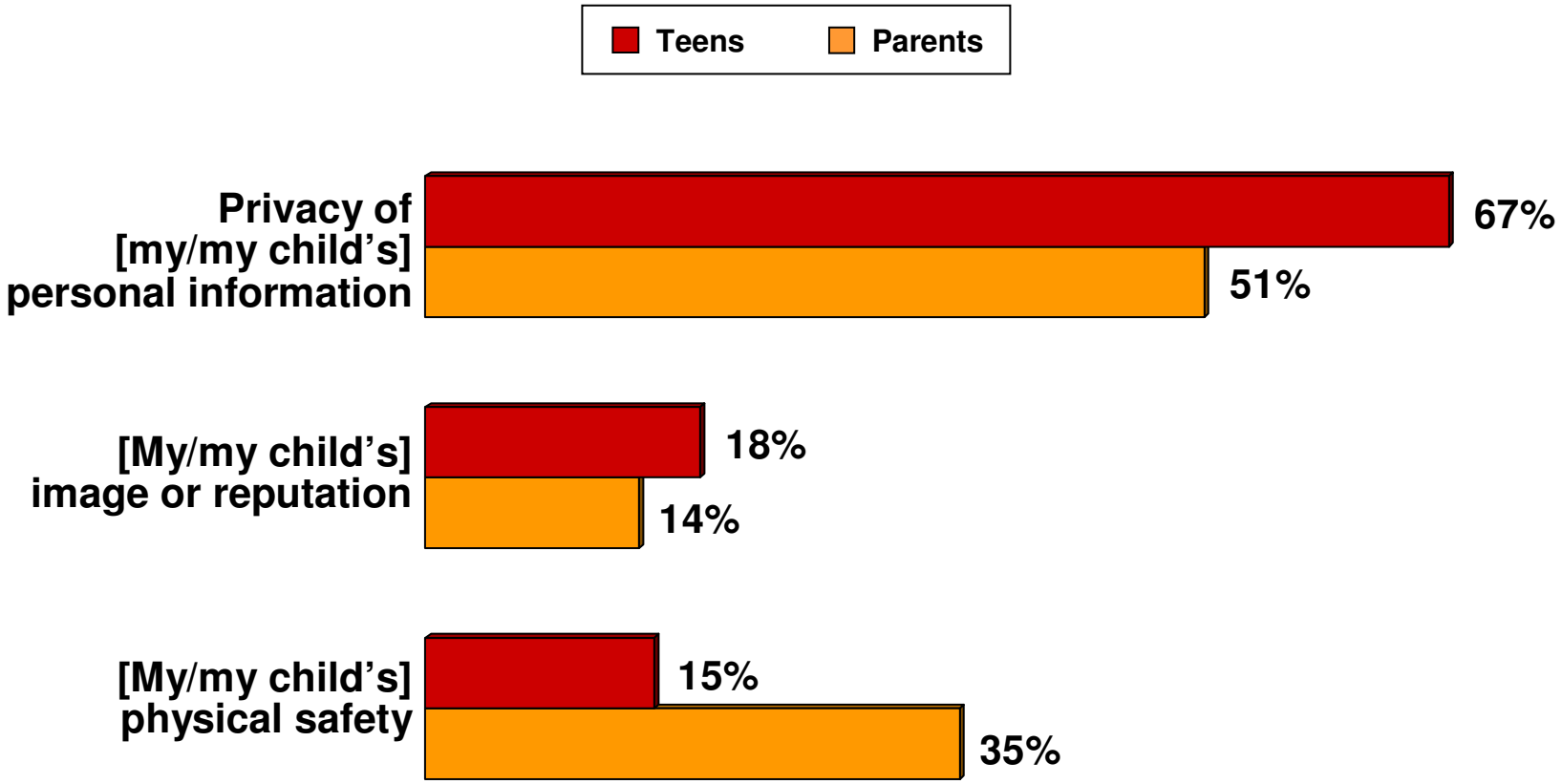
No conversations with strangers

No porn sites

Don't reveal personal information

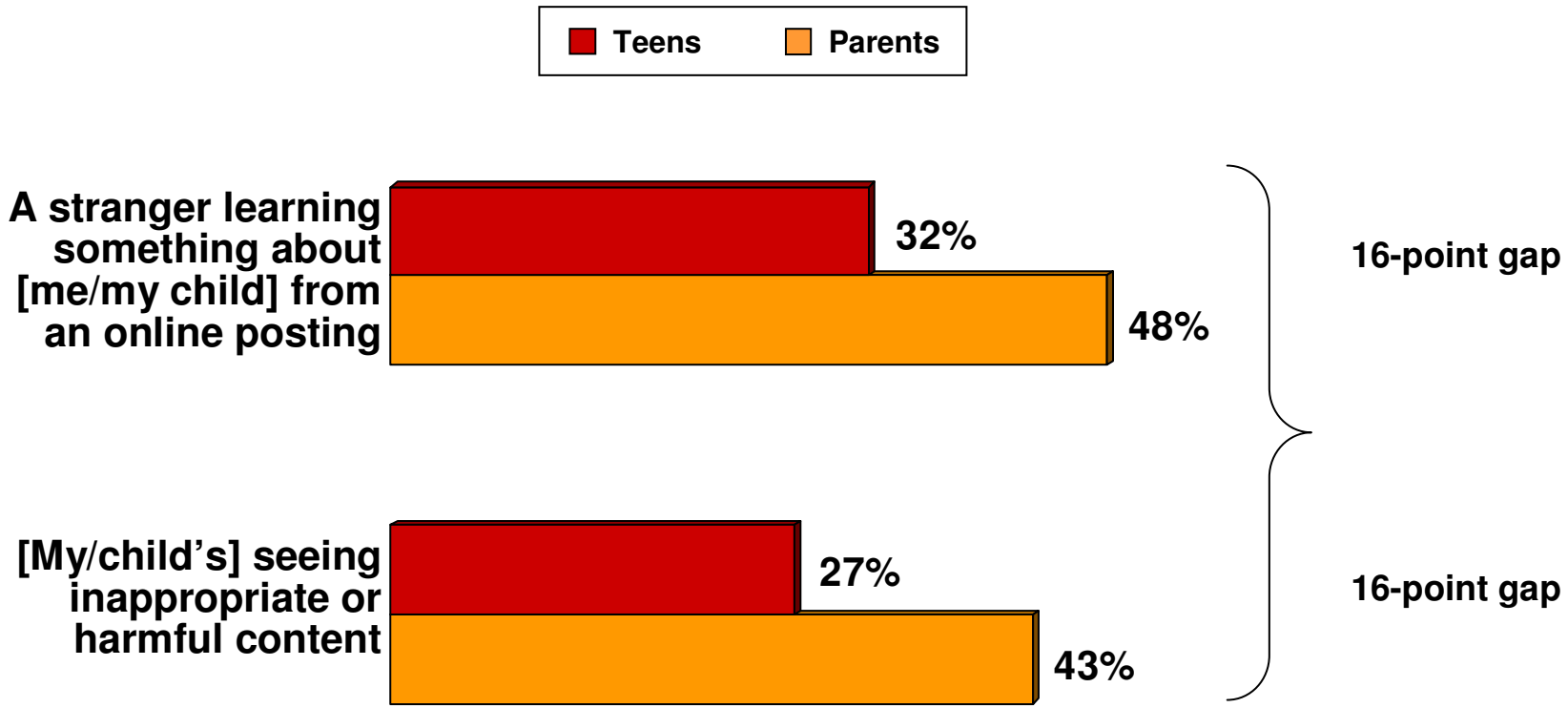
Privacy tops teens' and parents' concerns about teens' online activity.

This concerns me most about [my/my child's] online activity:



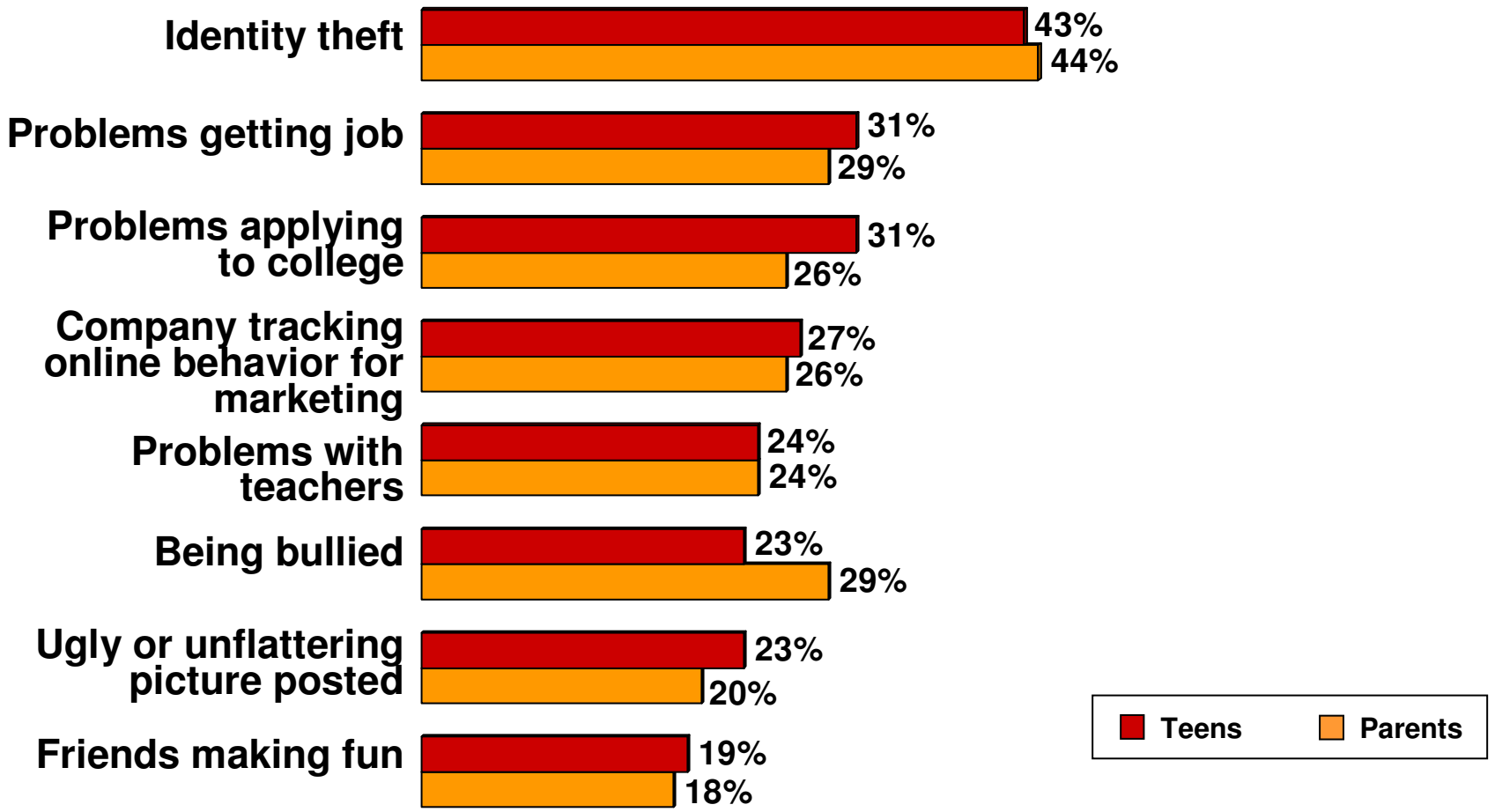
Parents' and teens' attitudes differ on "stranger danger" and content.

I am VERY concerned about this happening as a result of [my/my child's] online activity:



Other online hazards elicit similar levels of concern among teens and parents.

I am VERY concerned about this happening as a result of [my/child's] online activity:



Notable proportions of teens report risky online behaviors.

- **Nearly half of teens say they have done each of these things online with someone they don't know personally:**
  - **Friended them on a social networking site (49%)**
  - **Shared movie/TV/game recommendations (49%)**
  - **Chatted online (44%)**
- **Half have shared at least one of the following types of personal information online with someone they don't know:**
  - **The city/town where they live (35%)**
  - **Their first and last names (31%)**
  - **The school they attend (25%)**
  - **Their phone number (21%)**
- **Fewer have done the following online with someone they don't know:**
  - **Made plans to meet in person (11%)**
  - **Shared their address (6%)**
  - **Shared their password (3%)**

Teens rely on parents and other adults for information about protecting themselves online, while parents look to the media.

Teens

I have gotten info from this source about protecting myself online:

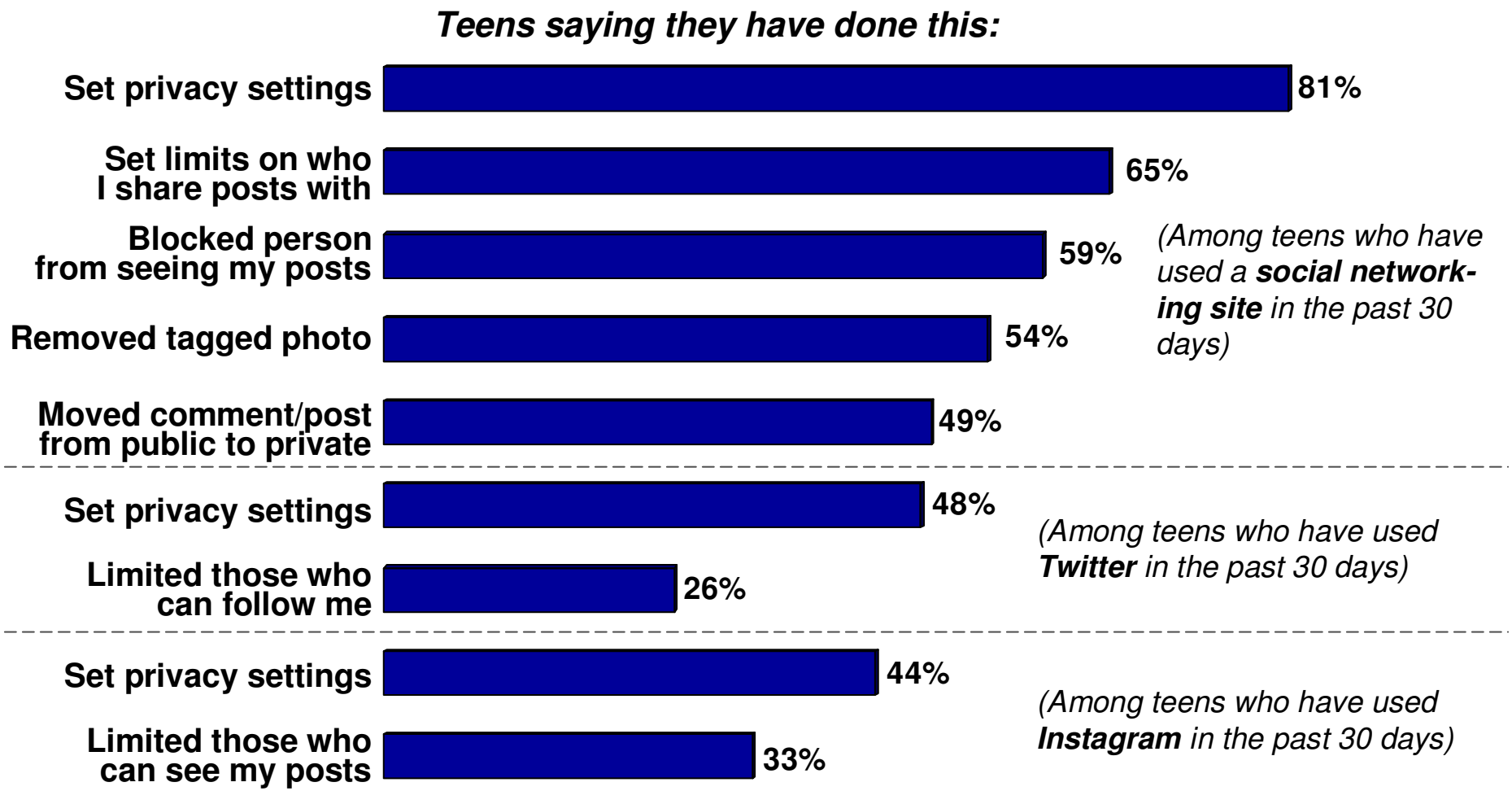
My parents	74%
School or teachers	66%
Other adults (coaches, relatives, parents of friends)	51%
General news media	48%
Friends	40%
Social media, such as Facebook or Twitter	29%

Parents

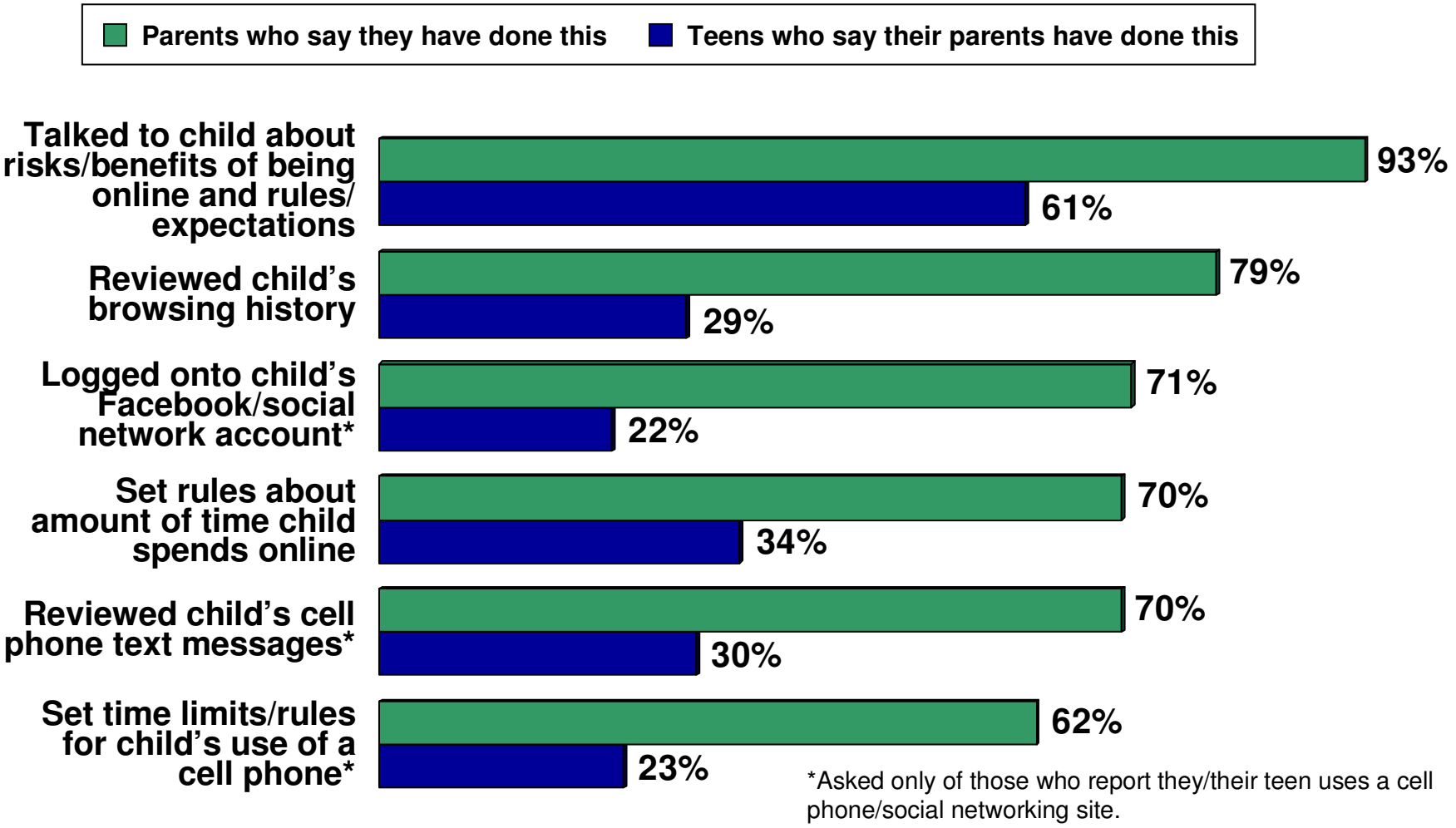
I have gotten info from this source about protecting my child online:

General news media	59%
Other parents	46%
Other adults I know (coaches, relatives)	44%
Child's school or teachers	33%
Social media, such as Facebook or Twitter	30%
My children	21%
Haven't gotten information about this from any source	11%

Teens report taking many steps to protect their privacy and information online.



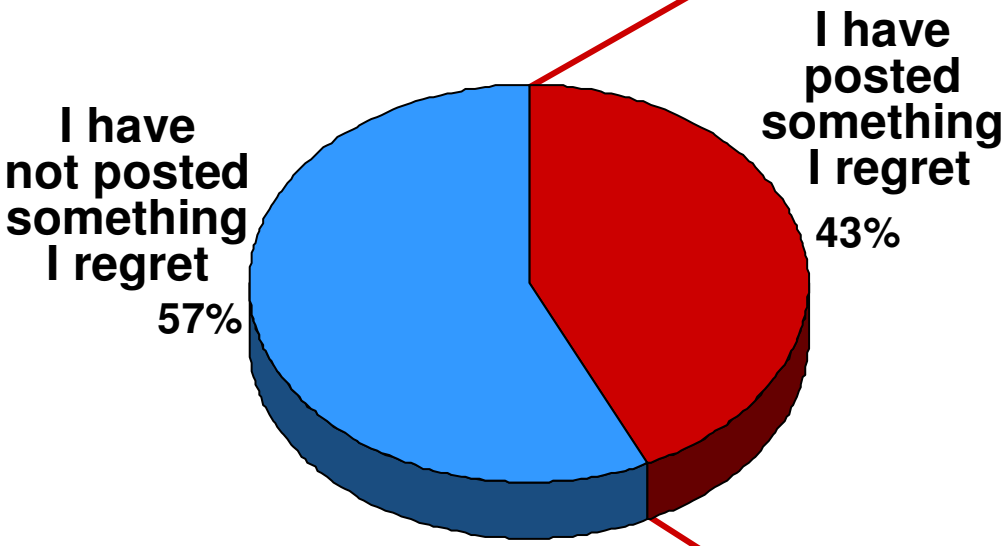
Parents report protecting their children in ways teens are unaware of.



*Asked only of those who report they/their teen uses a cell phone/social networking site.

Two in five teens admit to having posted something online that they later regretted.

Teens: Have you ever posted something online that you later regretted and wish you had not posted?



Top reasons for regretting post:

Mean to someone else	28%
Shared more info about myself than I should have	28%
Other people teased me	21%
Got in trouble with parents, teacher, or boss at work	20%
Got in trouble with friends	12%