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Common Sense is the leading independent nonprofit organization dedicated to helping kids thrive in a world of media and technology. We empower parents, teachers, and policymakers by providing unbiased information, trusted advice, and innovative tools to help them harness the power of media and technology as a positive force in all kids' lives.



www.commonsense.org

# A LETTER FROM OUR FOUNDER

Friends,

Privacy is top of mind for American consumers like never before. Click by click we are sharing our likes, locations, and updates not only with friends and family but also with companies. And every month it seems consumers are at the mercy of another data breach. Companies have failed to keep our personal information secure.

Families are doing their part to set parental controls and double-check privacy settings. But the burden of safeguarding sensitive data can't be on consumers alone.

Common Sense wanted to understand how parents and teens actually feel about data privacy and companies' obligation to protect it. This report includes a nationally representative sample of parents and teens who told us, in no uncertain terms: Privacy matters.

Fortunately, the tide is starting to turn. After years of online privacy violations and more than a decade of unregulated tech, there are finally protections in place for families and consumers in Europe, with the implementation of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Common Sense is working to ensure that families in the United States get similar rights, starting with a new law in California that will give families more control over their privacy starting in 2020.

For 15 years, Common Sense has been a strong advocate for kids and families, and we have long fought for stronger privacy laws. Now is a unique moment to win stronger privacy rights for every member of the family, at home and in schools. I hope you will join us in this effort.

Jim Steyer



James P. Steyer, founder and CEO

# WHY PRIVACY MATTERS FOR KIDS

Children today, nearly all of whom have access to a device at home, are tracked unlike any other generation. Growing up with mobile technology from birth gives kids access to new opportunities, but it also means that their devices collect information about them constantly. All this data makes children uniquely valuable to tech companies and adds to their digital footprints, which can extend beyond parents' control.



# A DECADE OF PROTECTING KIDS' PRIVACY

Privacy has been a major focus for Common Sense for the past decade, tracking mobile technology's meteoric rise among young people. Technology continues to change, but our commitment to ensuring the digital well-being of kids remains.

### 2009

Releases white paper highlighting importance of **digital literacy** in helping kids protect their privacy online

# 2010

Is first to publicly state companies should not track kids

Participates in the first-ever Congressional hearings on kids and mobile privacy

# 2012

Advocates for updates to modernize and strengthen the Children's Online **Privacy Protection Act (COPPA)** 

Champions California's "Eraser Button" law, giving kids under 18 the right to delete information they post online

# 2014

Spearheads California's landmark **Student Online Personal Information** Protection Act (SOPIPA), now in more than half of states (See map on page 11.)

# 2015

Leads kid and family support of the California Electronic Communications **Privacy Act** 

## 2016

Sponsors California's Early Learning **Privacy Information Protection Act** 

With connected devices and toys on the rise, releases report highlighting privacy implications for kids, families, and schools

## 2018

## California Consumer Privacy Act,

sponsored by Common Sense, passes unanimously, giving 40 million consumers unprecedented privacy rights

# KIDS' PRIVACY BY THE NUMBERS

Kids under 8 lack the cognitive ability to understand the persuasive intent of advertisements.1

By 2019 the market for kids' digital advertising is expected to reach \$1.2B.

**58%** of 12- to 15-year-olds think it's easy to delete their information online.5

1 in 10 kids has a smart toy or voice-activated device.7

One-third of all K-12 students in U.S. schools use school-issued devices.9

Over 50% of 6,000 free children's apps may serve kids ads that violate COPPA.<sup>2</sup>

Over **75%** of kids 8-11 can't distinguish advertising from other content.4

California is the only state with protections that give teens the right to delete information they post.6

60% of connected devices don't provide proper information on how they collect, use, and disclose users' personal information.8

There have been at least 386 cybersecurity incidents in schools since 2016.10

Graff, Kunkel, & Mermin. (2012). Government can regulate food advertising to children because cognitive research shows that it is inherently misleading. Health Affairs 31 (2), 392-398.

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<sup>4.5</sup> Ofcom. (2016, November), Children and parents: Media use and attitudes report.

Privacy Rights for California Minors in the Digital World Act.

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 $<sup>2016\</sup> GPEN\ Privacy\ Sweep\ on\ Internet\ of\ Things.\ Retrieved\ from\ https://ico.org.uk/about-the-ico/news-and-events/news-and-blogs/2016/09/privacy-regulators-study-finds-internet-of-things-shortfalls/news-and-blogs/2016/09/privacy-regulators-study-finds-internet-of-things-shortfalls/news-and-events/news-and-blogs/2016/09/privacy-regulators-study-finds-internet-of-things-shortfalls/news-and-events/news-and-blogs/2016/09/privacy-regulators-study-finds-internet-of-things-shortfalls/news-and-events/news-and-blogs/2016/09/privacy-regulators-study-finds-internet-of-things-shortfalls/news-and-events/news-and-blogs/2016/09/privacy-regulators-study-finds-internet-of-things-shortfalls/news-and-events/news-and-blogs/2016/09/privacy-regulators-study-finds-internet-of-things-shortfalls/news-and-events/news-an$ 

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K-12 Cyber Incident Map, Retrieved from the K-12 Cybersecurity Resource Center website: https://k12cybersecure.com/m

# **PRIVACY PRINCIPLES DO NOT TRACK** Children and teens shall not be tracked online Our approach is grounded in core ideas and shall not be profiled or subject to behavioral that can further digital well-being and ads based on their personal information or online privacy for kids, families, and communities: activity. **ACCESS** Children and teens shall be able to easily access, modify, and delete the personal information they choose to share. **FAMILY ENGAGEMENT** Parents and families should educate themselves about their privacy options and the best ways to safely and responsibly create, communicate, and learn online. **OPT IN** Children's and teens' personal information shall not be shared without their parents' or their express, informed consent. **CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY Companies shall be transparent with families** about their privacy and security practices, minimize personal information collection and retention, and appropriately safeguard any personal information they do collect.



# PRIVACY MATTERS POLL KEY FINDINGS

In May 2018, Common Sense Media and SurveyMonkey® conducted an online survey of parents and teens to learn more about their views on the importance of privacy and data sharing and their willingness to give personal information to get something they want. Below are some of the key findings.

### More than nine in 10 parents and teens think it's important that websites clearly label what data they collect and how it will be used.

Most agree that it is at least "moderately" important for social networking sites to clearly label what information they are collecting and how it will be used (94 percent of parents vs. 93 percent of teens), though teens are less likely to say than parents it is "extremely" important (41 percent vs. 58 percent, respectively) (see Figure 1).

Ninety-seven percent of parents and 94 percent of teens say it is "important" for sites to ask permission before selling or sharing their personal information (see Figure 2).

### Very few people think sites do a good job explaining what they do with users' information.

Only a third (36 percent) of teenagers agree that social networking sites do a good job explaining what they do with users' data, and nearly the same proportion (34 percent) disagree. Parents of teens are much more negative, with almost twice as many (54 percent) saying that social networking sites and apps don't do a good job explaining what they do with users' data as those who say they do a good job (32 percent).

FIGURE 1. Importance of clearly labeling information being collected and how it will be used, parents vs. teens

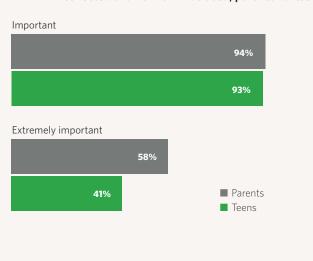
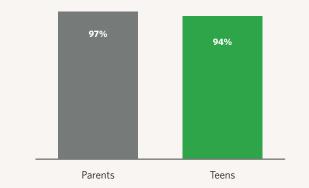


FIGURE 2. Percent of parents and teens who say it is "important" for sites to ask permission before selling or sharing their personal information







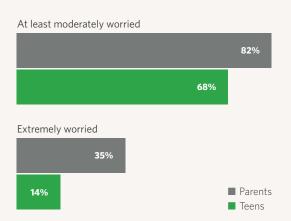
### Less than half of parents and teens agree that they would give personal details to sites to get something they want.

Only 38 percent of parents and 40 percent of teens at least "somewhat" agree with the statement "I will give details about myself to a website or app to be able to get something I want." It is unclear whether those who are neutral or disagree understand that participation on social media often involves giving personal information to sites (whether through interests, geolocation, or usage patterns).

### Most parents and teens are concerned about ad targeting by social media sites.

Eighty-two percent of parents are at least "moderately" worried that social networking sites use their data to allow advertisers to target them with ads, with 35 percent saying they are "extremely" worried about this practice. Concern is slightly lower among teens; sixty-eight percent say they are at least "moderately" worried about this, with just 14 percent saying they are "extremely" worried (see Figure 3).

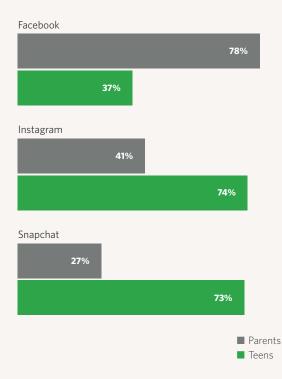
FIGURE 3. Level of concern about ad targeting by social media sites, parents vs. teens



### Parents and teens are not using the same social networking sites.

More than three-quarters (78 percent) of parents use Facebook, compared with just 37 percent of teens. By contrast, nearly three quarters of teens use Instagram (74 percent) and Snapchat (73 percent), compared with just 41 percent and 27 percent, respectively, of parents (see Figure 4).

FIGURE 4. Social media sites used, parents vs. teens



### The vast majority of parents have talked to their teens about social media privacy.

More than three-quarters (78 percent) of parents with teenagers say their teens use social networking sites, and nearly nine in 10 (88 percent) of these parents say they have talked to their teens about how they can protect their privacy online.

### Both parents and teens have taken steps to address their privacy.

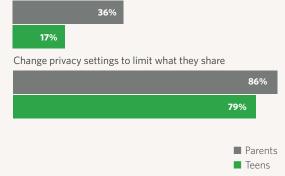
About eight in 10 teens (79 percent) have changed their privacy settings on a social networking site to limit what they share with others. Slightly more parents (86 percent) say they have done the same with their own privacy settings (see Figure 5).

### Only a small minority of people read the terms of service on social networking sites.

Only 17 percent of teens say they read the terms of service "almost all the time," compared to 36 percent of parents (see Figure 5).

#### FIGURE 5. How parents and teens address privacy on social media sites

Read terms of service agreement



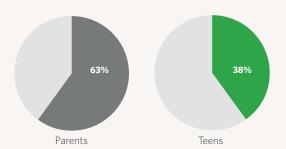
### Most parents and some teens are concerned about fake accounts and bots.

Two-thirds (66 percent) of parents say they are "very" or "extremely" concerned about fake accounts and bots on social media platforms being used to sell them things or influence them, compared to 38 percent of teens.

## A majority of parents and teens had heard of the Facebook/Cambridge Analytica controversy, and parents were much more likely to be cautious about social media as a result.

Seventy-four percent of parents and 61 percent of teens had at least heard of the controversy, with 38 percent of parents saying they had heard a lot about it, compared to 30 percent of teens. The controversy made 63 percent of parents more cautious about using social media, while fewer teens adjusted their behavior (only 38 percent of teens said it made them more cautious). However, teens were more likely to be selectively cautious about using Facebook—26 percent of teens said they would be more cautious about Facebook specifically but not other social media, compared to 12 percent of parents (see Figure 6).

FIGURE 6. Effects of Facebook/Cambridge Analytica controversy—percent who say they are more cautious about using social media



# STATES LEAD ON PRIVACY

Over the past decade, society has witnessed massive changes in the way media and technology intersect with how we work and live. The federal Children's Online Privacy Protection Act protects kids under 13, but that is not sufficient. Families and kids of all ages need safeguards in place to keep their sensitive online data safe. That is why states across the country are taking critical steps to protect privacy.

#### The California Consumer Privacy Act of 2018

The CCPA, which goes into effect in January 2020, guarantees new data privacy rights for the state's 40 million consumers, with kids under 16 winning extra protections. These are those new rights:

Notice: It guarantees consumers the right to know what data about them is being collected.

Consent: It guarantees consumers the right to opt out of their data being sold.

**Deletion**: It guarantees consumers the right to delete all their private data, with exceptions.

Access & portability: It guarantees consumers the right to access, download, or transfer their data.

Kids' rights: Kids under 16, or their parents, must opt in to consent to the sale of their data.

**Enforcement**: The attorney general can levy fines, and consumers can sue for breaches.

#### How does California's law compare to the EU's GDPR?

In general, the CCPA provides many of the key data subject rights of the GDPR, but it does not provide all of them. It also does not contain the internal record-keeping, auditing, and data privacy officer requirements.

Protections	GDPR	ССРА
Notice about information practices	Yes	Yes
Data portability/right to have information sent to a third party	Yes	Yes
Right to delete info you've provided	Yes	Yes
"Personal information" broadly defined	Yes	Yes
Right to access personal information	Yes	Yes
Covers all internet service providers and edge providers	Yes	Yes
Allows for private right of action	Yes	Only for certain data- breach cases
Requires data minimization	Yes	No
Lawful purpose for data use, including opt-in consent or legitimate interest	Yes	No
Right to be forgotten	Yes	No
Right to correct information	Yes	No
Right to object to automated decision-making	Yes	No
Security requirements for all personal information	Yes	No

Around the country, states are working to protect the online privacy and safety of Americans, especially younger Americans. Key recent steps forward include:

More than 30 states have passed laws protecting students' privacy since California's Student Online Personal Information Protection Act passed in 2014.

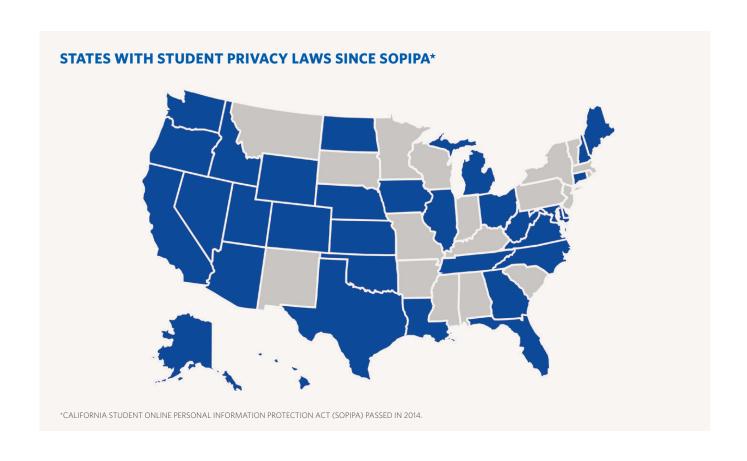
Vermont passed a law shining a light on "data brokers." These are the companies that collect, aggregate, and resell information about you and your family—and they usually operate in secrecy. The new law will require data brokers to register publicly, to keep your data secure, and inform you if there is a data breach.

Illinois has worked to protect its residents' "biometric **privacy."** Illinois has the strongest law in the country protecting your fingerprints, face, and other biological identifiers. Civil rights and kids' groups are working to protect the 2008 law from legislative and legal challenges.

New Mexico is suing app manufacturers for violating kids' **privacy.** The state filed suit under the Childrens' Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA) in 2018 accusing the makers of thousands of apps of illegally collecting and storing the data of kids who signed up for them. This is an important case for social media privacy protections. Other states like New York and New Jersey announced COPPA settlements in 2018.

#### Alabama became the 50th state to oversee data breaches.

Almost every American has had their data stolen—and now all 50 states have given them tools to respond. Generally these laws require data to be held securely and for companies to quickly warn consumers when it is stolen.





# PRIVACY BY DESIGN

Parental controls are not enough. Companies should build in privacy and security from the ground up by incorporating sound privacy and security policies and practices at every stage of product development. By incorporating privacy and security into the architecture of a product and involving designers and engineers from the beginning, companies will be in a better position to protect consumers and their market share.

### What Tech Companies Can Do

Technology has already revolutionized how our kids learn and play. Now companies have a responsibility to build products with their youngest users in mind.



### **Design humane products.**

More moderators, smarter and more transparent algorithms, and ethical design can help ensure that our kids have access to quality, trustworthy content.



### Make privacy the default.

Companies should make strong privacy settings the default and make sure family-management tools are easy to find and use.



#### Protect our data.

Companies should always notify users and ask permission before sharing, selling, or using people's personal data.



#### Call out fake news.

We need to know where our news is coming from. Platforms should label nonhuman accounts (aka bots) and clarify whether content is factual.



### Don't target kids with ads.

Children's time and attention should never be used for profit.



#### Fund independent research.

We need more research to inform product design and determine how media and tech use affects children's healthy development.

# IN THE NEWS: CALIFORNIA CONSUMER PRIVACY ACT



# California passes strictest online privacy law in the country

California just passed the nation's toughest data privacy law.

Gov. Jerry Brown signed the California Consumer Privacy Act of 2018 on Thursday, hours after its unanimous approval by the State Assembly and Senate.

The law, which takes effect in 2020, gives consumers sweeping control over their personal data. It grants them the right to know what information companies like Facebook and Google are collecting, why they are collecting it, and who they are sharing it with. Consumers will have the option of barring tech companies from selling their data, and children under 16 must opt into allowing them to even collect their information at all.

Assembly member Ed Chau and state Sen. Robert Hertzberg introduced the legislation on June 21. It drew the support of some privacy advocates including Common Sense Media.

"The state that pioneered the tech revolution is now, rightly, a pioneer in consumer privacy safeguards, and we expect many additional states to follow suit," James P. Stever, CEO and founder of Common Sense Media, said in a statement. "Today was a huge win and gives consumer privacy advocates a blueprint for success. We look forward to working together with lawmakers across the nation to ensure robust data privacy protections for all Americans."

Read complete article on www.cnntech.com.



# California passes nation's toughest online privacy law

Consumers will be granted sweeping new online privacy protections under a first of its kind California law signed by Gov. Jerry Brown Thursday.

The new law is the nation's toughest and could serve as a model for other states.

"This is now the de facto law of the land," said James Steyer, founder of Common Sense Media and one of the bill's backers. "It's a win for every citizen in the United States."

Under the law which takes effect in January 2020, consumers will have the right to know what personal information companies are collecting and why and with which businesses it's being shared. They will also have the right to direct companies to delete their information and not to sell it. And the law restricts sharing or selling the data of children younger than 16.

Read complete article on www.usatoday.com.

# The Washington Post

# California legislators just adopted tough new privacy rules targeting Facebook, Google and other tech giants

California legislators on Thursday adopted sweeping new rules that restrict the data-harvesting practices of Amazon.com, Facebook, Google and Uber, a move that soon could spur other states and Congress to take aim at the tech industry.

The California Consumer Privacy Act is one of the toughest U.S. regulations targeting Silicon Valley, where recent privacy mishaps — many involving Facebook — have left consumers clamoring for greater protections online. The law requires tech giants to disclose the kind of data they collect about consumers and allows Web users to opt out of having their information sold to third parties, including advertisers.

The new privacy rules, which are slated to come into effect in 2020, apply only to residents in the Golden State. That leaves time for corporate critics such as AT&T, Comcast, Facebook and Google to resume lobbying aggressively to revise it over the next year.

Read complete article on www.washingtonpost.com.

### THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

# The new tech avengers

An unlikely triumvirate of Silicon Valley insiders is holding the industry accountable on privacy and addiction

Read complete article on www.wsj.com.

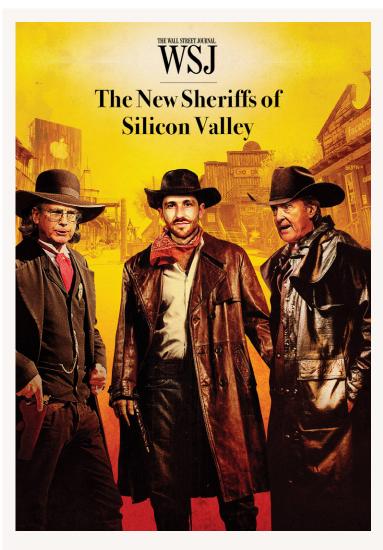


Image: Sean McCabe, Wall Street Journal

### APPENDIX: Common Sense Media/SurveyMonkey® Privacy Matters Poll Toplines

Methodology: This SurveyMonkey online poll was conducted May 5-22, 2018, among a national sample of 19,063 adults, including 3,222 parents with children between 13 and 17 years old and 985 teenagers age 13 to 17. Respondents for this survey were selected from the nearly 3 million people who take surveys on the SurveyMonkey platform each day. The modeled error estimate for this survey is plus or minus 2.5 percentage points among parents of teenagers, and 3.5 percentage points among teens. Data have been weighted for age, race, sex, education, and geography using the Census Bureau's American Community Survey to reflect the demographic composition of the United States age 18 and over.

#### Which of the following social networking sites have you used in the last year? (SELECT ALL THAT APPLY)

	Parents of Teens	Teens
Facebook	78%	37%
Instagram	41%	74%
Twitter	29%	36%
Snapchat	27%	73%
None of the above	14%	13%
No answer	1%	1%

#### Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: In general, social networking sites and apps do a good job explaining what they will do with my data. (AMONG SOCIAL MEDIA USERS)

	Parents of Teens	Teens
Strongly agree	9%	8%
Somewhat agree	16%	28%
Neither agree or disagree	21%	30%
Somewhat disagree	22%	21%
Strongly disagree	32%	13%
No answer	0%	0%

#### How important is it for social networking sites to clearly label what information is collected about you and how it is used? (AMONG SOCIAL MEDIA USERS)

	Parents of Teens	Teens
Extremely important	58%	41%
Very important	26%	29%
Moderately important	10%	21%
Slightly important	3%	6%
Not at all important	2%	2%
No answer	1%	0%

#### How important is it for social networking sites to ask for your permission before sharing or selling your personal information? (AMONG SOCIAL MEDIA USERS)

	Parents of Teens	Teens
Extremely important	77%	69%
Very important	15%	15%
Moderately important	6%	9%
Slightly important	1%	4%
Not at all important	1%	2%
No answer	0%	1%

#### How worried are you that social networking sites use your data to allow advertisers to target you with ads? (AMONG SOCIAL MEDIA USERS)

	Parents of Teens	Teens
Extremely worried	35%	14%
Very worried	22%	17%
Moderately worried	26%	37%
Slightly worried	8%	17%
Not at all worried	9%	15%
No answer	0%	1%

#### Have you ever changed your privacy settings on a social networking site to limit what you share with others? (AMONG SOCIAL MEDIA USERS)

	Parents of Teens	Teens
Yes	86%	79%
No	14%	20%
No answer	0%	1%

#### What are your reasons for not adjusting your privacy settings? (AMONG SOCIAL MEDIA USERS WHO HAVEN'T CHANGED THIER PRIVACY SETTINGS)

	Parents of Teens	Teens
Too difficult to find	14%	10%
Hard to understand what the settings do	7%	8%
I am comfortable with my privacy settings the way they are	28%	24%
Other (please specify)	48%	56%
No answer	3%	2%

#### How often do you read the "terms of service" on social networking sites, which detail about what personal data social networks and apps collect? (AMONG SOCIAL MEDIA USERS)

	Parents of Teens	Teens
Every time	18%	5%
Almost every time	18%	12%
Occasionally/Sometimes	33%	25%
Almost never	20%	22%
Never	10%	35%

#### What are your reasons for not reading the terms of service? (AMONG SOCIAL MEDIA USERS WHO "ALMOST NEVER" OR "NEVER" READ THE TERMS OF SERVICE)

	Parents of Teens	Teens
Hard to understand	14%	7%
Too long	8%	6%
Not interested in what they have to say	66%	65%
Other (please specify)	12%	21%
No answer	0%	0%

#### Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: I will give details about myself to a website or app to be able to get something that I want. (AMONG SOCIAL MEDIA USERS)

	Parents of Teens	Teens
Strongly agree	8%	8%
Somewhat agree	30%	31%
Neither agree or disagree	25%	32%
Somewhat disagree	18%	17%
Strongly disagree	19%	10%
No answer	0%	1%

#### How concerned are you that there are fake accounts and "bots" on social media platforms that are used to try to sell you things or influence you? (AMONG SOCIAL MEDIA USERS)

	Parents of Teens	Teens
Extremely concerned	40%	18%
Very concerned	25%	20%
Moderately concerned	20%	34%
Slightly concerned	7%	14%
Not at all concerned	6%	13%
No answer	1%	1%

#### Do any of your teenage children between 13 to 17 years old use a social networking site?

	Parents of Teens
Yes	78%
No	21%
No answer	1%

#### Do you believe that social networking companies should be allowed to collect teenagers' personal data for any of the following reasons? (SELECT ALL THAT APPLY)

•	
	Parents of Teens
To deliver better-targeted ads	8%
To allow for parental controls	45%
None of the above	49%
No answer	1%

#### Have you ever spoken to your teenager about how they can protect their privacy online?

	Teens
Friends	88%
Family members	10%
Businesses/Brands	1%

#### How much have you heard about the recent controversy regarding Facebook and Cambridge Analytica?

	Parent of Teens	Teens
A lot	38%	38%
A little	36%	36%
Nothing at all	24%	24%
No answer	2%	2%

#### Has this controversy caused you to be more cautious using social media, more cautious using just Facebook, or has it not affected your social media use?

	Parents of Teens	Teens
More cautious about all social media	63%	38%
More cautious about Facebook, but not other social media	12%	26%
No effect	23%	35%
No answer	1%	1%

#### Gender

	Parents of Teens	Teens
Male	46%	50%
Female	54%	50%

#### Race/Ethnicity

	Parents of Teens	Teens
White	54%	55%
Black	17%	14%
Hispanic	19%	22%
Asian	3%	4%
Other	7%	5%

#### What is the last grade of school you completed?

	Parents of Teens
Did not complete high school	4%
High school or G.E.D.	27%
Associate's degree	10%
Some college	22%
College graduate	27%
Post graduate degree	10%

# COMMON SENSE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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