Using Digital Advertising to Reach Youth

For Tobacco Prevention & Cessation Campaigns
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Campaign content graciously included with written permissions from Truth Initiative ® (pgs. 55, 58, 60, 62) and the Bureau of Tobacco Free Florida (pgs. 55, 64, 66).

Other acknowledgments included on pages where information appears from other sources, with each instance provided by the authors or organizations listed.

For inquiries, please contact: Allie Rothschild, arothschild@rti.org and TJ Bukowski, tbukowski@rti.org

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This document was last substantially updated November 2022, and minor updates were made June 2023 to reflect recent changes for TikTok and Meta-based platforms.
Due to the quick-moving nature of digital advertising, some information in this guide may no longer be up-to-date by the time you read it. Throughout the guide, you can find resources for staying updated.

Due to quickly changing regulations around TikTok in various U.S. states and in the federal government, please make sure to be aware of your own jurisdiction’s restrictions on messaging with this platform.
"YOUTH": Sources differ in how they define youth. Our primary sources, Common Sense Media and Pew Research Center, surveyed individuals between 13 and 18 years of age and 13 and 17 years of age, respectively. For this guide, youth generally refers to individuals 13- to 18-years of age, unless otherwise noted. Also, due to limitations in data for this specific age group, in some instances we have expanded to a more general demographic, using Generation Z to represent this population.

"TARGETING": Targeting is a frequently used advertising term that describes the way in which ads are served to specific groups, individuals, or demographics on social media platforms. We recognize this as problematic language and support moving toward an alternative. The use of this term will be limited throughout this guide but will be present to align with the feature names and terminology used by and on the large social media platforms. We encourage readers to learn more via CDC’s Health Equity Guiding Principles for Inclusive Communication.
What Information Can You Find in This Guide?

✔️ You Will Find:
Information specific to digital advertising, such as social media ads, paid video ads, and digital ad networks.

❌ You Won’t Find:
Information specific to traditional advertising, such as print, broadcast TV/radio, magazines, and out-of-home (OOH).

Additional Sources:
• This guide was developed primarily using data from nonprofit research institutes and digital advertising platforms.
• Key sources for tables and statistics are shown on each page.
• See end of guide for full list of citations and related research.
OVERVIEW

Modules & Content Map

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**Ad Targeting Capabilities**
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**Youth Content Considerations**
What are best practices for tailoring campaign content to youth?

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YOUTH DIGITAL MEDIA USAGE

What digital advertising-capable media platforms do U.S. youth use the most?
Youth Media Usage Overview

Media channels that youth use the most
In 2021, youth spent, on average, more than a third of each day in front of a screen—8 hours and 39 minutes.*

As such, it is critical to know on which screens and platforms to deliver messaging to effectively reach youth with digital ads.

*COMMON SENSE MEDIA | THE COMMON SENSE CENSUS: MEDIA USE BY TWEENS AND TEENS (2021); pg. 3
Digital Device Ownership and Access among Youth

According to surveys conducted by Pew Research Center (2022) and Common Sense Media (2021), nearly all youth now own a “smart” mobile device, capable of connecting to the internet, texting, gaming, video chatting, and watching online TV and videos.

Smartphones are the most common “smart” mobile devices used by youth, with 95% of U.S. teens reporting access to and 88% reporting ownership of one. The popularity of other digital devices has remained stable over the years, with 90% of teens reporting access to a desktop or laptop at home and 74% reporting access to a tablet at home—both of which can be used to access digital platforms that deliver ads.

In the reporting views for most digital ad platforms, you can see the device(s) your audiences primarily view your ads on. Content will appear and function differently on different devices, so these insights can be used to design and tailor your youth-centered campaign to best fit the device(s) most used by your audiences.
**Demographic Breakdown – Smartphone**

Percentage of American youth who own or have access to a smartphone at home, by demographic:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GENDER</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>95%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>95%</td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGE</th>
<th>13–14</th>
<th>15–17</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13–14</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>98%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RACE</th>
<th>ETHNICITY</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HOUSEHOLD INCOME</th>
<th>&lt;$30K</th>
<th>$30K–$74,999</th>
<th>&gt;$75K</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt;$30K</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>96%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

95% of American youth, aged 13 to 17, own or have access to a smartphone at home.

Ensure your content is optimized for mobile.

Youth smartphone ownership is widespread, with almost universal access across gender and household income, and minor differences in access based on age and race/ethnicity. Overall, rates of smartphone access have increased substantially, from 73% of youth with access in 2014–2015 to 95% in 2022.
Percentage of American youth who report having or having access to a laptop or desktop computer at home, by demographic:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GENDER</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RACE</th>
<th>ETHNICITY</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>89%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGE</th>
<th>13–14</th>
<th>15–17</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HOUSEHOLD INCOME</th>
<th>&lt;$30K</th>
<th>$30K–$74,999</th>
<th>&gt;$75K</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The gap in access to computers (desktop or laptop in the home) is diminishing, but inequities related to socioeconomic status remain.

90% of American youth aged 13 to 17 own or have access to a desktop or laptop at home.
Differences in Daily Screen Use

Although youth spend, on average, a third of their day in front of a screen, disparities in average daily total screen use exist across gender, racial/ethnic, and socioeconomic lines.

1) Male youth spend significantly more time in front of a screen per day compared to female youth—9 hours and 16 minutes per day for males, compared to 8 hours and 2 minutes per day for females.

2) White youth are on their screens for 7 hours and 49 minutes per day—significantly less than Black youth (9 hours and 50 minutes per day) and Hispanic/Latinx youth (10 hours and 2 minutes per day).

3) Youth from higher income families ($100,000 or more annually) average a little more than 7 hours of daily screen use, while youth from middle income ($35,000–$99,000 annually) and lower income (<$35,000 annually) families are on their screens for an average of 9 hours and 34 minutes and 9 hours and 19 minutes per day, respectively.
Disparities in home internet access are fairly pronounced in the United States, according to a 2021 report using 2019 American Community Survey (ACS) data.

1) In 2019, 95% of youth aged 3 to 18, had home internet access, with 6% of youth relying on smartphones to access the internet.

2) The percentage of home internet access was highest for Asian (99%) and white (96%) youth, followed by Hispanic (92%) and Black (91%) youth. American Indian/Alaskan Native youth reported disproportionately less home internet access at 83%.

3) When broken down by socioeconomic status (SES), 99% of youth from families in the highest income quartile had home internet access, while only 89% of youth from families in the lowest income quartile had access.

4) Additionally, when examining parental education level as an indicator of SES, the percentage of youth with home internet access was significantly higher for those whose parents had attained a bachelor’s degree (99%), compared to youth whose parents had less than a high school degree (83%).

The intersectionality of race/ethnicity and SES further compound these inequities.
In 2021, 13- to 18-year-olds split their screen time across smartphones, tablets, laptops, videogame consoles, and more. However, to reach youth on those devices, it is important to target ads on the platforms youth are spending time on—either through the platform’s native advertising* or through a third-party display network.

To determine which channels and platforms to use, consider which activities youth spend the most time doing on their devices. Not every activity allows for receiving digital ads, but most do. According to a nationally representative survey of 13- to 18-year-olds, youth spend the most time on screens doing the activities shown to the right.

*Native advertising refers to ads that follow the look and feel of the platform on which they appear, making them more appealing and less disruptive to users.
Digital Advertising Lessons Learned from the COVID-19 Pandemic

Survey findings show that the COVID-19 pandemic and its associated lockdowns greatly increased the amount of time youth spent in front of screens. Although comparisons can be made between pre-pandemic and pandemic times, comprehensive information about teen screen media usage is not yet available for 2022, making it too early to tell whether these trends reversed or continued into the third year of the pandemic. Common Sense Media found that overall screen media use (which includes TV, smartphone, and computer use) increased 17% for teens aged 13 to 18—from 7 hours and 22 minutes spent daily on screens in 2019 to approximately 8 hours and 39 minutes in 2021. Social media usage also increased, with youth spending, on average, 17 more minutes per day on these platforms between 2019 and 2021.

1) Consistently monitor and keep your finger on the pulse of digital media changes. New platforms are consistently being released and newer features are being made available; youth preferences in platforms are varying and external contextual factors, such as global pandemics, are happening. As a result, the digital landscape is and will always be changing—be prepared.

2) Reach your audience where they are. Use resources like Pew Research Center, Nielsen, and Common Sense Media to stay informed on updates and changes in trends and preferences.

3) Embrace uncertainty and be flexible, iterative, and adaptive. Be ready to pivot and always keep context at the forefront of media campaign strategies.

Nielsen provides recommendations for examining and integrating lessons learned during this critical time period into future digital strategies.
Social Media Platform Usage Overview
“A quarter of teens who use Snapchat or TikTok say they use these apps *almost constantly*, and a fifth of teen YouTube users say the same.”
Youth Social Media Usage Overview

Even though youth are spending a significant amount of time online, many are selective about how they spend that time, especially when it comes to social media platforms. As a marketer, understanding and keeping up with these usage patterns and preferences is crucial, as they can guide decisions related to ad targeting and message strategy.

According to Pew Research Center, in 2022, the most popular social media platforms among individuals aged 13 to 17 were YouTube, TikTok, and Instagram, with 95% of youth reporting ever use of YouTube, 67% ever use of TikTok, and 62% ever use of Instagram. Ever use of Snapchat has substantially increased from 41% use in 2014–2015 to 59% use in 2022, while ever use of Facebook has plummeted from 71% ever use in 2014–2015 to 32% ever use in 2021.

According to Piper Sandler’s Taking Stock with Teens® spring 2022 report, TikTok overtook the other social media platforms as teens’ favorite for the first time. In the report, 33% of teens reported TikTok as their favorite social media platform, followed by 31% reporting Snapchat and 22% reporting Instagram as their favorite; Snapchat had consistently ranked first amongst teens since fall 2016. Of note, Piper Sandler does not consider YouTube to be a social media platform. A different report by Common Sense Media, however, found that among the 79% of 13- to- 18-year-olds who reported weekly use of social media and online videos, the greatest proportion (32%) reported they “didn’t want to live without” YouTube, followed by Snapchat (20%), TikTok (13%), and Instagram (13%).

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*PEW RESEARCH CENTER | TEENS, SOCIAL MEDIA AND TECHNOLOGY 2022
COMMON SENSE MEDIA | THE COMMON SENSE CENSUS: MEDIA USE BY TWEENS AND TEENS (2021)*
PIPER SANDLER | TAKING STOCK WITH TEENS® (SPRING 2022)
PIPER SANDLER | TAKING STOCK WITH TEENS® (SPRING 2020)
Youth Use of Social Media Platforms

Percentage of Youth Using Platform

### YouTube

Owned by Google; the largest video-sharing social media site in the world. Users can upload videos or view videos from others.

- 95%

### TikTok

A short-form video-sharing platform that has quickly become popular among youth and young adults. Users post entertaining, interesting, and funny videos, usually set to the tune of popular songs or sounds.

- 67%

### Instagram

Owned by Meta. A highly visual platform where users can share videos and images with their followers through posts or stories.

- 62%

### Snapchat

A highly visual social media platform where users can send short-lived photos or videos (Snaps) to their friends, update their stories, or visit the Discover page for news. Extremely popular among youth as a messaging app.

- 59%
Youth Use of Social Media Platforms

Percentage of Youth Using Platform

**Facebook**
Owned by Meta. The largest social media site in the world. Designed to help users stay connected with their friends and family through sharing of text posts, links, photos, and videos.

32%

**Twitter**
A platform that encourages users to stay on top of trending topics and engage in relevant conversations through short posts with text and/or images.

23%
Youth Use of Social Media Platforms

**Twitch**
Owned by Amazon. A live-streaming platform mostly used by gamers to stream their game play or watch other gamers. Ads are present but not yet widely available to advertisers.

**Reddit**
A forum website structured by conversation threads (“subreddits”) on wide-ranging topics. Although youth usage is low, youth-centered subreddits can be popular, such as /r/teenagers, which has 2.9 million members.

**WhatsApp**
Owned by Meta. Youth popularity for this messaging app is high due to interactive features and perceived data security. Ads are not allowed within the app, but an option exists to run ads on Facebook that encourage users to message organizations or brands on the WhatsApp platform.

**Tumblr**
A microblogging site where users can post pictures, join communities, and participate in self-expression. Popularity has waned among all ages over time.
LinkedIn
Professional networking site typically used by workers and employers. Although youth may join as part of applying to universities or entry-level jobs, the overall usage among youth is too low to warrant consideration.*

Pinterest
A virtual scrapbooking social media site where users can create themed boards and add images and links to the boards. Popularity among youth has varied but generally has been low over time.*

*Percentage of Pinterest and LinkedIn use among youth is not available in the Pew 2022 survey.
Consider these demographic differences when determining which platform may most effectively reach your intended audience.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic Breakdowns</th>
<th>YouTube</th>
<th>TikTok</th>
<th>Instagram</th>
<th>Snapchat</th>
<th>Facebook</th>
<th>Twitter</th>
<th>Twitch</th>
<th>WhatsApp</th>
<th>Reddit</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total [Aged 13–17]</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Total U.S. Youth</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>14%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>8%</td>
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<td><strong>Race/Ethnicity</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>16%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Household Income</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Less than $30k</td>
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<td>72%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$30k–$74,999</td>
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<td>68%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>57%</td>
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<td>24%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Geography</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Organic vs. Paid Social Media

**Organic Social Media**

Organic social media is non-paid content shared with others through an organization’s social media page. When posting organic content to your social media page, you can expect those who see it to be (1) your followers, (2) your followers' followers (if your followers share your post), or (3) people following or searching for specific keywords or hashtags used in your post.

**BENEFITS**
- Offers a great way to keep your current audience engaged and build relationships with followers.
- Provides an avenue to test out potential paid content with a smaller audience in a non-paid space.

**LIMITATIONS**
- Reach is limited, especially as many platforms continue to de-prioritize organic content.
- Creating content and engaging with followers on a regular basis can be time-consuming.

**Paid Social Media**

Paid social media is content placements paid for by an organization so that audiences beyond its followers will see the content. This strategy can be supported through precise ad targeting options provided by the platforms. When you run paid advertisements, you can expect those who see it to be (1) the audience you are trying to reach and (2) that audience’s followers (if they share the post).

**BENEFITS**
- Expanding audience reach is a great way to increase brand awareness and gain new followers.
- It is also a great way to drive campaign-related results (e.g., traffic to website, sign-ups for programs).

**LIMITATIONS**
- Cost may vary, depending on the number of audiences you try to reach and the degree of targeting.
- Ad comments should be routinely monitored and reviewed, which can be time-consuming.
#1: YouTube, Snapchat, TikTok, and Instagram Are Favorites

Although many social media platforms are available, youth have clear preferences for platforms like YouTube, TikTok, Instagram, and Snapchat and should be reached through those accordingly.

#2: Online Video Dominates Screen Time

Online video consumption among youth is increasingly taking place on streaming platforms (e.g., YouTube) and smart devices, requiring a shift from traditional media ad placement.

#3: Preferences Are Always Changing

Youth are always seeking new digital media experiences, with streaming, temporary, and video-forward features projected as the most up-and-coming.
CONSIDERATIONS FOR Staying on Top of Youth Media Trends

#1 Review Evidence
- Keep up with newly published evidence on youth media usage and behaviors.
  - Recommended resources include Pew Research Center, Common Sense Media, Piper Sandler, Morning Consult, and Nielsen.
- Subscribe to digital media/marketing trade and social media platform publications.
- Seek out news coverage for large-scale changes on major social media platforms in response to privacy concerns and regulatory actions.

#2 Attend Conferences
- National conferences, such as Social Media Week, are hosted in major cities and provide excellent opportunities to find out the latest trends from platform representatives.
- The National Conference on Health Communication, Marketing, and Media (NCHCMM) is an example of a government-focused conference.
AD TARGETING CAPABILITIES

What targeting capabilities are allowed on digital ad platforms commonly used by youth?
Targeting Features

Key information about targeting features to reach youth on each platform via paid advertisements
# QUICK VIEW: Social Media Advertising Platforms

**Provided by each platform**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Channel</th>
<th>Data Platform</th>
<th>% Teens Using Platform*</th>
<th>Under 13</th>
<th>13–17</th>
<th>18+</th>
<th>By Device</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>YouTube</td>
<td>Google Ads (YouTube)</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TikTok</td>
<td>TikTok Ads</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instagram</td>
<td>Meta Ads Manager</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☑</td>
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<tr>
<td>Snapchat</td>
<td>Snapchat Ads Manager</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☑</td>
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<tr>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td>Meta Ads Manager</td>
<td>32%</td>
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<td>☑</td>
<td>☑</td>
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<tr>
<td>Twitter</td>
<td>Twitter Ads</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twitch</td>
<td>Twitch Advertising</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reddit</td>
<td>Reddit Ads</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>☑</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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**Available** ✅ | **Unavailable** ✗
### DEMOGRAPHICS
- **AGE (13–65+)**
- **GENDER (“MEN,” “WOMEN,” “ALL”)**
- **LANGUAGE**

Instagram allows you to target ads to any age from 13 through 65+ and gives you the option to target “Men,” “Women,” or “All” (an aggregate of “Men” and “Women” users). This targeting is based on demographics self-selected by a user. Instagram also provides the opportunity to target on a variety of languages, which can be selected based on the intended audience. Note: Gender-based targeting is longer available to those under 18 due to recent privacy changes.

### GEOGRAPHICS
- **COUNTRY**
- **STATE**
- **DMA**
- **CITY/COUNTY**
- **POSTAL CODE**

Instagram allows you to target a range of locations—from country and designated market area (DMA) all the way to postal code. You can also add a radius up to 50 miles to account for surrounding areas and can exclude locations in these categories as well. Additionally, Instagram offers the ability to target people who live in the specified location, were recently in the location, or are traveling in the location. Note: Targeting more granularly than city is no longer available for those under 18 due to recent privacy changes.

### ADVANCED TARGETING
- **DEMOGRAPHICS**
- **INTERESTS**
- **BEHAVIORS**

Instagram allows you to target users based on keywords related to demographics (e.g., “in college,” “parents with toddlers”), interests (e.g., “gardening,” “action movies”), or behaviors that are determined by users’ activity within the Instagram (or Facebook) app (e.g., people who recently clicked on a “shop now” call-to-action or are using an Apple device). Note: Advanced targeting is no longer available to those under 18 due to recent privacy changes.

Click [here](#) for more information on Meta advertising. Note: Account may be required to access any Meta links.
### DEMOGRAPHICS
- **AGE (13–65+)**
- **GENDER ("MEN," "WOMEN," "ALL")**
- **LANGUAGE**
  
  Facebook allows you to target ads to any age range from 13 through 65+ and offers the option to target “Men,” “Women,” or “All” (an aggregate of “Men” and “Women” users). This targeting is based on demographics self-selected by a user. Facebook also provides the opportunity to target on a variety of languages, which can be selected based on the intended audience.

### GEOGRAPHICS
- **COUNTRY**
- **STATE**
- **DMA**
- **CITY/COUNTY**
- **ZIP CODE**
  
  Facebook allows you to target a range of locations—from country all the way to postal code. You can also add a radius up to 50 miles to account for surrounding areas and can exclude locations in these categories as well. Additionally, Facebook offers the ability to target people who live in the location, were recently in the location, or are traveling in the location.

### ADVANCED TARGETING
- **DEMOGRAPHICS**
- **INTERESTS**
- **BEHAVIORS**
  
  Facebook allows you to target users based on keywords related to demographics (e.g., “in college,” “parents with toddlers”), interests (e.g., “gardening,” “action movies”), or behaviors that are determined by users’ activity within the Facebook (or Instagram) app (e.g., people who recently clicked on a “shop now” call-to-action or are using an Apple device). Note: Advanced targeting is no longer available to those under 18 given recent privacy changes.

Click [here](#) for more information on Meta advertising. Note: Account may be required to access any Meta links.
**DEMOGRAPHICS**

- **AGE (18–65+ OR “UNKNOWN”)**
- **GENDER (“MALE,” “FEMALE,” “UNKNOWN”)**
- **LANGUAGE**

Despite heavy use by youth, YouTube does not provide an age range younger than 18 for ad targeting, limiting the usefulness of YouTube for advertising to youth; note, some word-of-mouth workarounds exist that use one or more advanced targeting features to reach youth audiences. Gender can be selected as “Female,” “Male,” or “Unknown.” For all demographics, “unknown” refers to users that YouTube does not have demographic data on.

**GEOGRAPHICS**

- **COUNTRY**
- **STATE**
- **DMA**
- **CITY/COUNTY**
- **POSTAL CODE**

YouTube provides a standard mix of location options for targeting YouTube ads, with the most granular option being postal code. Depending on the campaign, targeting YouTube ads by state, county, or city should suffice. The accuracy of location focusing on Google platforms in the United States is known to be high due to the large numbers of Google users in the United States.

**ADVANCED TARGETING**

- **DEVICE**
- **KEYWORDS/TOPICS**
- **AUDIENCE SEGMENTS**

YouTube provides numerous advanced targeting features, some of which cannot be found on other digital advertising platforms. These advanced features leverage Google’s search ecosystem—for example, by allowing advertisers to serve videos to users based on keywords they have used in prior Google Search queries. Users can also be targeted using a variety of topics as well as predetermined audience segments, which have been determined based on users’ interactions with Google services over time. YouTube users who previously interacted with your YouTube channel can also be targeted.

Click [here](#) for more information on YouTube advertising.
DEMOGRAPHICS

- AGE (13–50+)
- GENDER (“MALE,” “FEMALE,” “ALL”)
- LANGUAGE

Snapchat allows you to target any age range from 13 through 50+ and gives you the option to select “Male,” “Female,” or “All” (an aggregate of “Male” and “Female” users). These demographics are based on what has been self-selected by a user. Snapchat also provides the opportunity to target on a variety of languages, which can be selected based on the intended audience.

GEOGRAPHICS

- COUNTRY
- STATE
- CITY/COUNTY
- DMA
- POSTAL CODE

Snapchat allows you to target a variety of locations from country to postal code. An option also exists to exclude locations in these categories.

ADVANCED TARGETING

- ADVANCED DEMOGRAPHICS
- PREDEFINED AUDIENCES
- DEVICE TYPE

Snapchat allows you to target users based on predefined audiences (e.g., "coffee lovers" or "trivia gamers") or device type (e.g., operating system, device make). Snapchat also allows for more advanced targeting based on keywords related to certain demographic information (e.g., “moms,” “married people,” “household income: $25,000–$49,999”), though these data points are acquired from third party sources (Datalogix and Experian) and require a license purchase.

Click here for more information on Snapchat advertising.
TikTok Features

**DEMOGRAPHICS**
- **AGE (13–55+)**
- **GENDER (“MALE,” “FEMALE,” “NO LIMIT”)**
- **LOCATION**

TikTok allows you to target any age range from 13 through 55+, but requires using predefined age categories (e.g., 13–17). TikTok also gives you the option to select “Male” or “Female,” or to not specify gender. These features are based on what is listed on a user’s profile. TikTok also provides the opportunity to target a variety of languages, which can be used to reach specific audiences.

**GEOGRAPHIC**
- **COUNTRY**
- **STATE**
- **DMA**
- **CITY (beta)**

Since releasing their self-serve advertising platform in 2020, TikTok’s location-based targeting has expanded. Ads can be now be targeted as granularly as city and DMA. Note that as of November 2022, these features were still in beta and available for U.S. advertisers only; additionally, limited cities were available for targeting. These options will likely expand as TikTok’s self-serve ad platform evolves.

**ADVANCED TARGETING**
- **INTERESTS**
- **BEHAVIORS—VIDEO AND CREATOR INTERACTIONS**
- **DEVICE**

TikTok gives you the option to target your ads based on the types of videos users are interested in (e.g., “pets,” “skin care,” “travel”). Users can also be targeted based on how they’ve interacted with videos on TikTok (e.g., you can select to serve ads to users who have “shared” or “commented” on videos about “social issues” or “music”) and how they’ve interacted with creators (e.g., you can serve ads to users who have “followed” or “viewed profile” of creators who post about “fitness and health”). As well, multiple options exist to target ads by device (e.g., by operating system, carrier, device price).

Click [here](#) for more information on TikTok advertising.
### DEMOGRAPHICS

- **AGE (13–65+)**
- **GENDER ("MALE," "FEMALE," "ANY GENDER")**
- **LANGUAGE**

Twitter provides a standard set of demographic targeting, including the ability to target users starting at ages 13 and above. Twitter allows you to target age ranges, such as “18–24,” or above a certain age, such as “13+” or “18+.” Ages are based on the birthdates Twitter users have documented in their profile.

### GEOGRAPHICS

- **COUNTRY**
- **STATE**
- **DMA**
- **CITY/COUNTY**
- **POSTAL CODE**

Geographic targeting on Twitter can be limited if Twitter users have selected to make their location private, among other factors. Twitter does not publicly announce how many users have these settings active on their accounts. However, Twitter notes that their geotargeting is based on someone’s recent location, as determined by several signals.

### ADVANCED TARGETING

- **DEVICE TYPE**
- **DEVICE OPERATING SYSTEM**
- **DESKTOP OR MOBILE**
- **INTEREST**
- **PRIOR TWEETING BEHAVIOR**

Twitter provides multiple targeting options centered around the device used by an audience, which is particularly important for ad types that work better on certain devices over others; for instance, vertical video works better on mobile phones than on laptop screens. Advanced targeting allows you to serve ads to users with set interests (e.g., “cooking”) as well as users with select prior tweeting behavior (e.g., mentioning specific keywords and topics or following influential Twitter accounts).

Click [here](#) for more information on Twitter advertising.
Considering Evaluation During Implementation

When setting up social media advertising campaigns, it is important to keep evaluation goals in mind and communicate them with those implementing the campaign. Often, evaluation is not thought about until the campaign is over; however, this approach can have negative implications on what data from the platforms are available for measuring results across demographics.

Targeting options across social media platforms offer flexibility in what parameters you can choose from; however, the output of these data after the campaign has run its course is limited. Many platforms only offer metrics (e.g., impressions, clicks) in their own predefined categories or do not offer breakdowns for the same granular choices that advertisers are given.

For example, if you run a campaign focused on reaching 15- to 24-year-olds but want to evaluate how the campaign was delivered and performed among 15- to 20-year-olds (not of legal purchasing age of tobacco products) compared to 21- to 24-year-olds (of legal purchasing age), you will need to set up two separate campaigns for these age groups to provide you with the data breakdowns to make this comparison. If not, the platform will only give you a breakdown of metrics in predefined age categories (e.g., 13–17, 18–24) that don’t match your evaluation goals.

Set up campaigns intentionally and strategically to ensure their alignment with both implementation and evaluation goals.

**Implementation Goal:**
Reach 15- to 24-year-olds in the U.S. with anti-vaping messaging on social media.

**Evaluation Goal:**
Compare how campaign messages performed between 15- to 20-year-olds vs. 21- to 24-year-olds.

**Campaign Setup Option 1:**
Run one campaign targeting 15- to 24-year-olds in the U.S.

*This option will only provide you metric breakdowns in predefined age categories (13–17 and 18–24), which doesn’t support the evaluation goal.*

**Campaign Setup Option 2:**
Run two otherwise identical ad campaigns:
- Campaign 1 targeting 15- to 20-year-olds
- Campaign 2 targeting 21- to 24-year-olds

*This option will allow you to look at metrics by each age group, giving you what you need to assess your evaluation goal.*
Using the Pixel to Optimize Ads

Most of the top social media platforms (Instagram, Facebook, Snapchat, TikTok, and Twitter) offer the ability to use what is called a "tracking pixel" to enhance reaching audiences and optimizing ads for desired results. The tracking pixel is a small piece of code that goes on your website and keeps track of actions (called conversions) from users who have either viewed or clicked on one of your social media advertisements. Once the pixel is installed, advertisers have the option to optimize their ad campaign toward one of their conversions (e.g., clicking on a sign-up button on the website). This strategy is popular among marketers looking to increase actions on their website directly from an ad campaign. Due to privacy restrictions, pixel tracking has become more limited for audiences under 18 years of age.

Learn more about the Facebook and Instagram pixel.
Learn more about the Snapchat pixel.
Learn more about the TikTok pixel.
Learn more about the Twitter pixel.

Note: Account may be required to access any Meta links.
Reaching Key Demographics with Privacy Implications

As more emphasis has been placed on data privacy and protection, reaching intended populations, such as audiences with certain key demographics (e.g., race, ethnicity, sexual orientation) and youth under 18 years of age has become more challenging. In instances where advanced targeting may not be feasible, it is strongly suggested you consider the following when selecting the channels and strategies for your campaign:

- **Platforms allow you to target geographically to all ages, including youth (with some limitations by platform). States, counties, DMAs or cities can be selected to hit key segments of your audience. Use this feature to target areas with high rates of youth tobacco use or point-of-sale exposure when detailed targeting options are not available.**

- **Certain platforms have advanced demographic features that can improve your ability to reach specific demographic subgroups.**

- **The pixel and other integrated features utilize algorithms to find and capture similar audiences to those who have interacted with your ads or website, allowing you to reach audiences with similar, specific demographic characteristics.**

- **Though youth use social media platforms similarly, some demographic differences exist. Consult this table to assess which platforms may most effectively reach your key demographics.**

- **Discuss with your media agency additional campaign design and implementation strategies that may assist with reaching key demographics or high-risk populations.**

- **Note: Some targeting features, especially when targeting to those under 18, are no longer available due to recent privacy changes.**
SUMMARY OF AD TARGETING CAPABILITIES

#1: Consider How Privacy for Youth Limits Targeting Abilities Across Platforms

Many platforms have restrictions around using advanced targeting tools to reach youth under 18. Despite being most widely used among youth, YouTube is the largest platform to limit age targeting to 18+ only.

#2: Utilize Other Targeting Tools to Reach Specific Audiences

Even on platforms with limited advanced ad targeting for youth under age 18, tools like geotargeting and pixel tracking can be used to reach desired audiences.

#3: Consider Evaluation from the Start

To ensure you can get the data you need to evaluate campaign goals and examine demographic breakdowns, be intentional about how you set up campaigns from the start.
ACTION STEPS
Handling Platform Evaluation Limitations

#1 Confirm that Platform Age Reporting Is Sufficient for Your Needs

- It is better to determine early whether the age data provided by digital ad platforms is sufficient for your needs.
- Utilizing targeting by device, geolocation, and other options may be useful for overcoming platform limitations that restrict ad targeting of users under 18 years of age.

#2 Consult with a Digital Marketing Agency for an Advantage

- Digital marketers typically develop lists of ad networks and websites known to have high youth traffic that you can use for your campaign.
- Age-targeting limitations change frequently and experts are typically aware of major shifts in what platforms will allow.
What are best practices for tailoring campaign content to youth?
Content Considerations
Values and priorities among youth important to consider in content creation
One key factor in creating effective messages for specific audiences is being able to define and understand the audience so you can tailor content to their interests, beliefs, and values. Although potentially very time-consuming, audience analysis presents an opportunity to extrapolate existing research on age groups and generations as comparable audiences.

Although millennials were once the novel group of youth and young adult consumers, today’s youth are part of a new generation called Generation Z. Pew defines this generation as anyone born after 1996. Although this generation has similarities to its millennial predecessors, research exhibits many key differences that should be considered when creating messages for the Gen Z audience. Gen Z teens prefer authentic and realistic narratives, video-heavy content, and engaged communities, so tailoring content in these ways would help your message resonate with this audience.
Gen Zers nurture and maintain their online presence to represent their most genuine selves—from the spontaneous sharing of stories to candidly messaging with brands—giving marketers the opportunity to listen and partake."

FACEBOOK (2019) | GEN Z: GETTING TO KNOW THE ‘ME IS WE’ GENERATION
One of the most significant core values among Generation Z is authenticity. Gen Z youth are more willing to follow and support brands that are honest, transparent, and true to themselves. Results from a 2020 report on Gen Z found that 82% of Gen Z participants trusted a brand more when images used in the brand’s advertisements included real customers, and 77% said they trusted a brand more if the brand used images that were not Photoshopped. Generally, Gen Z youth can see right through disingenuous, fake messaging, so posting such content can quickly diminish this audience’s trust.

When creating authentic content for youth, keep in mind that they would rather have messages from brands blend into their usual social media feeds than stand out. Consequently, you should focus on unedited, unpolished, relatable pictures and videos, instead of heavily branded and produced content.

Lastly, because these youth value authentic content, they tend to favor relatable social media influencers over celebrities. These influencers are users with sizable social media followings who usually create content in a niche topic area, heavily engage with their audiences, and may be paid to promote products or brands. In fact, one-third of Gen Z respondents reported that they believe the opinions of online influencers more than those of their family or friends. When thinking about using influencers to spread campaign messaging, research who the youth in your audience most trust and relate to. See the next three slides for more information on finding the right influencer for your campaign, as well as some of the potential risks of using influencers.
Finding the Right Influencers

Working with influencers for your campaign for the first time can be intimidating, especially when it comes to potentially handing off your campaign’s messaging (and credibility) to someone not affiliated with your organization.

To get started, first focus on what goal you want to accomplish with an influencer—be it to increase awareness (look for higher follower count); send traffic to your campaign site (look at level of audience engagement); or reach niche audiences (examine audience demographics). Establishing a concrete vision here will help inform what type of influencer you use, what platform you search for them on, and what kind of content you will ask them to produce for your campaign.

To find influencers, some platforms like TikTok have in-platform tools to connect campaigns with creators. If you want to find a celebrity or other high-profile influencers, you’ll likely need to work with an influencer talent management company. You can also search hashtags, users, and similar campaigns directly on social media platforms to find existing influencers.

INFLUENCER FIT FACTORS TO KEEP IN MIND

- Choose an influencer based on your goals. Consider various factors (follower size, engagement levels, audience demographics) depending on what you want to accomplish.
- Messaging matters. Find the messages that most resonate with audiences for increased engagement.
- Work with the same influencer more than once. Consistent use of an influencer can help establish credibility and ensure your message is received by key audiences.
- Find balance. Allow influencers some creative liberty and the ability to speak to their followers in their own voices, while maintaining strict guidelines around fact-based language.

The Minnesota Department of Health partnered with a medical influencer known as Doctor Leslie to create two videos on TikTok to promote a teen smoking cessation program, My Life My Quit, in 2021 (TikTok Video 1; TikTok Video 2).

Insights summarized from Allison Alexander and Karina Jimenez-Donovan, U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Center for Tobacco Products (CTP), on a November 18, 2021, CDC OSH Media Network Call.
Influencer Breakdowns, Benefits, and Drawbacks

People often conflate influencers with celebrities; however, influencers can be more niche content creators who have fostered smaller but highly engaged communities. In fact, using influencers with high follower counts may not be necessary based on your goals and might not fit into your campaign’s budget. Micro influencers, who are generally categorized in the industry as having between 10K and 100K followers, may be a sweet spot for reaching an audience, that while demographically cohesive, engaged, and impressionable, is still sizable. Activating nano influencers, who are generally categorized as having between 1K and 10K followers, is another key tactic to reach extremely engaged and loyal communities in authentic and relevant ways. Both options are typically more affordable than high-profile celebrities or influencers with larger audiences, though some high-profile celebrities may work with you at little or no cost if the topic is meaningful to them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Influencer Type</th>
<th>Estimated Following</th>
<th>Benefits</th>
<th>Drawbacks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mega Influencers</strong></td>
<td>More than 1 million followers</td>
<td>Potential for widespread audience reach and impact; may have more diverse audience base; experience with partnerships and branding; good for mass awareness campaigns</td>
<td>Usually have less intimate relationship with followers and thereby can be seen as less trustworthy in audience’s eyes; expensive; greater degree of exposure if missteps occur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Macro Influencers</strong></td>
<td>100K to 1 million followers</td>
<td>Typically have more engaged audiences with a still-high reach potential; strong connection with audience base</td>
<td>Cost may still be out of reach of most public health agencies; audiences may be too broad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Micro Influencers</strong></td>
<td>10K to 100K followers</td>
<td>Often considered more trustworthy and reliable than larger influencers; less costly and more accessible; more narrowly defined audiences</td>
<td>Lower potential reach; may be more difficult to find; may desire more creative freedom to retain authentic voice/brand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nano Influencers</strong></td>
<td>1K to 10K followers</td>
<td>Cost-efficient; may have very loyal audience (almost considered peer-to-peer); most narrowed audience; hungry for exposure; considered highly relatable and real</td>
<td>Less experienced; substantially less reach; may desire more creative freedom to retain authentic voice/brand</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Challenges of Working with Influencers

Working with influencers offers a host of benefits. Influencers can spread your message widely, blend your content into the native look and feel of a platform, and speak to loyal followers in a relatable and authentic way that augments audience trust. But there are also inherent risks—the influencer can say or post something that tarnishes the brand image, or the audience could react negatively to the content.

To help mitigate these risks, properly vet an influencer’s existing content and online presence to help detect any patterns of misconduct prior to beginning a working relationship. Ensure the influencer’s community aligns with your intended audience. Establish, communicate, and document clear guidelines and ground rules (e.g., explicit non-smoking status).

Also, consider the fine line between your control of the messaging and content and the influencer’s desire to remain authentic and relatable. This balance becomes especially important for public health campaigns, as you must ensure the messaging is factual and legitimate but still in the influencer’s voice. Work with your media agency or other health communicators to find this balance and produce the right contractual agreement.
Create a Community

Today’s youth are “digital natives”—they grew up with digital media and do not know a world without it. They have spent their whole lives making connections with others online and value these online relationships and communities immensely. In fact, more than half (56%) of Gen Zers are friends with someone they only know online and have never met in person, and almost a quarter of Gen Zers (23%) trust someone they meet online more than someone they meet in person.* Because of this, Gen Zers expect the same level of communication and online connection with brands.

According to a 2019 Spotify study, 62% of Gen Zers and millennials believe brands have the power to create communities based on common interests and passions. Gen Zers do not just want to consume content; they want to be an active part of it. As such, simply posting videos and articles on various social media platforms will not do the trick with this generation. Instead, you must be ready to engage with your audience through pictures, polls, comments, hashtags, and videos.

If your brand has a big audience or following, the need to interact with them regularly can seem overwhelming. If feasible, a dedicated community manager can help with tasks such as responding to comments and developing interactive content like polls and quizzes to keep youth involved and engaged.

*WP ENGINE (2020) | GENERATION INFLUENCE: RESULTS FROM THE 2020 GEN Z REPORT

SPOTIFY (2019) | EVERYTHING YOU WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT GEN Z (BUT WERE AFRAID TO ASK)

Image credit: Charli D’Amelio, TikTok
From what we already know about their screen time and social media usage, video is clearly a major part of youths’ daily media consumption. Video-heavy platforms like Snapchat and TikTok have risen in popularity and have become favorites over more text-based platforms like Twitter, emphasizing that teens have a strong preference for the rich content that video provides. When you are creating video content for your brand, consider the overall goal of the video, how long it should be, and what platforms you will use.

When it comes to video length, two types should generally be considered: short-form and long-form. For platforms like Snapchat or TikTok, interesting or funny short-form videos (typically less than a minute) are key to successfully engaging youth. As brands and creators increasingly joust for your audience’s attention, you must think critically and creatively about capturing the viewer’s attention right away. Aim to “hook” your viewer right at the beginning by either showing the most interesting part of the video first or promising a story if the viewer continues watching.

Creating short-form video content can seem impossible—how do you tell a compelling story in such a short time? Remember these helpful tips when creating short-form content:

- The purpose of short-form video, especially on social media, is to convince your audience to learn or watch more and/or drive visits to your website. Creating videos that evoke emotions or leave viewers intrigued can help motivate them to take these types of actions.
- Developing a variety of videos for each social media platform can be a lot of work. A content creator or content team could help manage the workload, but additional costs are associated with this.
- Short-form videos can also be created in less time-consuming ways. For example, pulling smaller clips from existing long-form videos can give you short-form content that, when placed on social media, drives the audience to your website or social media page to watch more.
Despite shorter attention spans, Gen Z youth are generally inquisitive. With multiple devices giving them constant access to the internet, Gen Z is poised to be one of the most informed generations yet. They enjoy long-form videos on platforms like YouTube or Instagram to educate themselves on new topics and learn new skills. A 2022 Ipsos survey conducted on behalf of YouTube found that over half of Gen Z watches longer versions of video content they discover on short-form video apps. In terms of consuming information, a 2018 survey conducted by Google found that 80% of youth reported that YouTube helped them become more knowledgeable about something; furthermore, a 2018 Pearson study found that Gen Z youth ranked YouTube as their preferred learning method, compared to in-person group activities, interactive games, and books.

As platforms expand their video offerings (e.g., Instagram videos under 15 minutes are now shared as Reels; TikTok increasing video lengths to 10 minutes), you should continue to create a combination of short- and long-form videos. With placement on the appropriate channel(s), these videos can create unique and engaging experiences for youth audiences.
Mobile-Friendly Content

As stated earlier, 95% of youth have access to a “smart” mobile device. Additionally, most of the social media platforms highly popular among youth (Snapchat, Instagram, and TikTok) have limited desktop access and are primarily visited by youth on smartphones. Because of this, an important consideration in content creation for social media is creating a mobile-friendly experience for the user.

For example, reports find that most mobile device users report watching videos on their phone without sound, especially as they are scrolling on their phone in public or on the go. As a result, including captions that allow users to watch videos without turning their sound on is a great way to keep mobile device users engaged. Other ways to make content mobile friendly include using less text (heavy text can be harder to read on mobile devices) and making sure that any website content linked to social media content is also optimized for mobile devices.
Messaging Considerations Related to Tobacco Prevention

When creating tobacco prevention content for youth, keep some messaging considerations in mind to increase the success of your digital campaign.

First, utilizing key messages and themes originally aimed at adult audiences can be a great way to repurpose content for youth if time and resources are limited. Well-executed and emotionally evocative ads, even when originally intended for adult audiences, can be effective in changing youth knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors. For example, research shows that young people responded well to the same messages as adults about the serious health effects of tobacco use, secondhand smoke, and deceptive industry marketing practices.*

Fortunately, several powerful tobacco prevention campaigns are currently running in the U.S. that can be shared with youth via social media platforms or otherwise used for inspiration. The CDC Media Resource Campaign Center (MCRC) provides free and low-cost tobacco campaign materials.

Second, examining the tobacco industry’s marketing and prevention efforts can be an important learning opportunity. In terms of prevention ads, the industry’s approaches should not be replicated; these ads typically avoid messages around serious health consequences, instead focusing on messages about “peer pressure” and “decision-making skills.”* Evaluations of these industry prevention ads consistently show their ineffectiveness in preventing youth tobacco use. Likewise, understanding the industry’s deceptive marketing practices can be key to developing counter-strategies.

More information on industry marketing tactics and loopholes can be found in Appendix A.
Using a call-to-action can help take your ads beyond educating and building awareness to prompting an individual to actually take action. Your call-to-action will be dependent on the behavior you hope to encourage or change, but examples include directing youth to your website, connecting them with resources, and encouraging them to call a quit line or sign up for a cessation texting program. Discuss with your media team call-to-action language, imagery, and other strategies you can use to get youth to click, call, quit, and more. See some examples of different call-to-action options on the right.
Content Considerations by Platform

How to create content for youth on the most popular social media and video platforms
Instagram is a highly visual social media app that typically consists of carefully curated content from brands and users. The platform provides brands with a creative way to communicate with their audiences; posting unique content will help your messages stand out among the rest. Although it started as a simple photo-sharing app, Instagram has evolved and now offers several options to create and post content.

- **Instagram Feed**: Serves as a source of ongoing curated content from other users or brands that the user chooses to follow, as well as sponsored content (ads) from brands. Content usually takes the form of short videos or images accompanied by a caption.

- **Instagram Stories**: A place for temporary posts or ads (shown for 24 hours) that are either pictures or short videos, usually accompanied with text or other special effects and engagement options that are built into the app.

- **Instagram Video**: A place where users and brands can post edited videos in longer formats, up to 60 minutes long. These longer videos will show up in the feed, but only as a short 1-minute clip that can be expanded for continued viewing.

- **Instagram Reels**: Recently introduced to compete with TikTok, Instagram Reels is a short-format video feed where users can post 90-second clips that are typically funny and entertaining and contain audio, text, and special effects.
Considerations and Tips

- Captions on Instagram posts can be used as a “micro-blog” to provide more information to accompany the visuals. Try to catch the reader’s attention in the first sentence because the text box cuts off after three lines (requiring users to click to read more).

- Instagram Stories are great for short-form video and have many built-in features like polls, questions, quizzes, countdowns, and more for engaging younger audiences. All users now can include links directly to websites in their stories.

- Instagram Video is great for repurposing long-form video content on a new platform. Content that works well includes tutorials, interviews, and behind-the-scenes videos.

- Due to similarities between Instagram Reels and TikTok, you can repurpose content across the two platforms to save time, but be sure to keep up with the ever-changing social media landscape and replace or remove any features that are not consistent or may no longer be consistent across the platforms.

The truth® campaign uses short-form video in a look-and-feel native to Instagram to encourage youth to find healthy ways to manage stress and anxiety. Watch the video here.
Users use Facebook to connect and share thoughts, photos, and videos with friends through public posts, in smaller groups, or via private messages.

- **Facebook Feed**: A place where users and brands can share photos, videos, news articles, or others’ posts to their followers. Ads on Facebook are also commonly placed on the news feed and are shown to an audience that you target based on demographics, location, and interests.

- **Facebook Stories**: Like Instagram Stories, this is a place for temporary (24-hour) posts or ads that are either pictures or short videos, usually accompanied with text or other special effects that are built into the app.

- **Facebook Watch**: Facebook’s video-on-demand service that allows users and brands to upload their own short- and long-form videos. Facebook Watch also includes premium video content (e.g., TV shows, news programming) that Facebook pays to have produced; uploading your own content is free.

- **Facebook In-Stream Video**: A paid video placement where content appears before, during, or after other existing videos on the platform.

- **Facebook Audience Network**: A paid advertising placement where you can run your ads across partner mobile sites and apps other than Facebook.
Considerations and Tips

- When running Facebook paid advertisements that drive users to more content on your website, track results from users who view or click on your ads via the Facebook pixel and use that information to optimize future ad buys.
  
  o Facebook can optimize ads for specific actions on your website, such as clicking on a link or signing up for a program. As people perform these actions, the pixel tracks that information and looks for similar users who will also react positively to your content.

- Unlike most mobile-only social media apps, Facebook is frequently used on both desktop and mobile, so create image and video content that will look good on both devices.

- Although paid content will drive the most results, it is still important to build a well-designed Facebook page and keep it updated with organic content for new audience members who want to learn more about your organization.

The truth® campaign uses a static post and a short-form video with strong call-to-action language on Facebook to encourage youth to join a text-based quit program and continue the fight against Big Tobacco.

Click Here to learn more about creating Facebook content.

Note: Account may be required to access any Meta links.
YouTube is a video-sharing social media platform where users and brands can upload short- and long-form videos that others can watch and engage with.

- **YouTube Channel Videos**: Videos that users upload to their YouTube channel, which people can find through search or recommended videos. These videos can easily be shared across other social media platforms or embedded into a website. Posting videos to a channel is free.

- **YouTube Skippable Videos**: A paid advertising placement that appears before, during, or after other videos and allows viewers to skip after 5 seconds.

- **YouTube Non-Skippable or Bumper Videos**: A paid advertising placement that appears before, during, or after other videos and must be watched in full.

- **YouTube Display Ads**: A paid advertising placement that appears to the right of a featured video and above the video suggestions list on desktop devices only. This placement is only for static content.

- **YouTube Overlay Ads**: A paid advertising placement that appears as a semi-transparent overlay on the lower 20% portion of a video. This placement is only for static content.

- **YouTube Shorts**: While not currently ad-supported, this newer format mimics TikToks and Reels with short-form vertical videos created and uploaded natively in-app and featuring music overlays and other creative features.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Video ad format</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Platform</th>
<th>Spec</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Skippable video ads</td>
<td>Skippable video ads allow viewers to skip ads after 5 seconds.</td>
<td>Computer, mobile devices, TV, and game consoles</td>
<td>Plays in video player (option to skip after 5 seconds).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-skippable video ads</td>
<td>Non-skippable video ads must be watched before a video can be viewed.</td>
<td>Computer, mobile devices, TV, and game consoles</td>
<td>Plays in video player. 15 or 20 seconds in length, depending on regional standards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bumper ads</td>
<td>Short, non-skippable video ads of up to 6 seconds that must be watched before a video can be viewed. Bumper ads are turned on when skippable or non-skippable ads are turned on.</td>
<td>Computer, mobile devices, TV, and game consoles</td>
<td>Plays in video player, up to 6 seconds long.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overlay ads</td>
<td>Overlay image or text ads that can appear on the lower 20% portion of a video.</td>
<td>Computer only</td>
<td>468x60 or 728x90 pixels in size</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Image credit: [YouTube Advertising Formats](#)
Considerations and Tips

• Both short- and long-form video content can work very well on YouTube. Long-form is typically better for organic videos, while short-form works well for ads that appear during or before other video content.

• Regardless of length, make sure to catch the viewer’s attention in the first few seconds. YouTube has an endless number of videos, so if users are not drawn in right away, they will likely click on another video.
  o Showing the most interesting part in the beginning of your video and using storytelling to pique interest among viewers are popular strategies for grabbing attention.

• For the most part, viewers go on YouTube either to learn something or be entertained. To create content that sticks, try to evoke emotions, impress viewers with new information, and/or create something that your audience will want to share with others.

• If possible, relate videos to trending topics or popular YouTube trends to help make your videos more discoverable.

The truth® campaign posts 15- and 30-second (i.e., short-form), attention-grabbing videos that can be repurposed for social media, as well as long-form videos—such as interviews and user-generated content—for audiences who are already engaged. Watch the video here.
Snapchat is a video- and image-sharing social media platform where users and brands share compelling short-form videos that usually tell a story or entertain.

- **Snapchat Stories**: Users and brands can post temporary images and videos that will show to their followers. These videos are typically short and are accompanied by text or other features, such as filters or stickers, that are built into the app. Posting videos to Stories is not associated with a cost.

- **Snapchat User Story Ads**: A paid advertising placement where your image or video will show in between videos that other users post to their stories.

- **Snapchat Publisher and Creator Story Ads**: A paid advertising placement where your ads run within or between a brand’s (e.g., Teen Vogue) stories in the “Discover” section of the platform.

- **Snapchat Spotlight**: Although not currently ad-supported, Spotlight is a tab or dedicated space on Snapchat where users can scroll through a feed of short (up to 60 seconds) engaging videos. Spotlight videos are similar to YouTube Shorts, TikToks, and Instagram/Facebook Reels.

Single Image or Video Ad requirements:
- File type: .jpg, .png, .mp4, or .mov
- Aspect ratio: 9:16
- Resolution: 1080px x 1920px
- Length: 3-180 seconds
- Attachments: Website, app, long form video or AR Lens

**Brand, headline, and calls-to-action**
- Brand: Up to 25 characters with spaces
- Headline: Up to 34 characters with spaces
- Calls-to-action: Select the CTA text. Snapchat applies the visual and places the CTA on the ad

Image credit: Snapchat, Single Image or Video Ads. Detailed specifications [here](#).
CONSIDERATIONS

• Users on Snapchat come to the platform looking for authentic, unpolished, unedited content.
  
  o A great way to engage younger audiences on this platform is to do behind-the-scenes videos, share tips and tricks, or hold Q&As.

• Like Instagram Stories, Snapchat has a lot of built-in features like filters, geotags, and augmented reality lenses that can help amplify content easily.

• Keep in mind that content, other than Spotlight videos, is temporary. Anything posted on your story will disappear after 24 hours, so be sure to save anything you may want to keep or repurpose later.

• The temporary nature of Snapchat creates a beneficial sense of urgency that encourages users to check the platform multiple times a day. Create new content often to keep up with users’ interactions with the platform.
TikTok is another video-heavy platform, with a focus on funny, witty, and entertaining short-form videos. Videos typically follow a popular trend set to a background of music or an audio clip. Videos can be viewed in two tabs on TikTok: the “Following” tab, which shows videos from accounts the user follows, and the “For You” tab, which shows videos that are popular or that the algorithm feels the user might like based on other videos the user has watched or liked within the app.

- **TikTok Video Posts**: Short-form videos that users and brands can post to their TikTok pages. These videos will be seen by followers in the “Following” tab of TikTok and might show up in the “For You” page for certain users if the video gains popularity or is determined to be relevant to a user based on their previous activity in the app. Recently, TikTok has expanded the length of captions on video, which can include text and hashtags, in order to increase search functionality within the app.

- **TikTok Video Ads**: Short videos that you can pay to have placed in between other videos on the “For You” page. This placement also allows a caption, which can include text and hashtags, to accompany the video. Videos can be between 5 and 60 seconds long, though TikTok recommends sticking to between 9 and 15 seconds.

Image credit: TikTok, [TikTok Placement](https://www.tiktok.com/ads).

Detailed specifications [here](https://www.tiktok.com/ads).
CONSIDERATIONS

- Due to the authentic nature of the app, content should feature real people and, like Snapchat, should appear unpolished.

- If creating original video content for TikTok sounds overwhelming, you can still get involved in the platform in other ways. For example, creating branded hashtags is a popular strategy among brands to gain awareness through user-generated content on the platform. A branded hashtag encourages users to create videos based on a theme. If your hashtag gains popularity, you can end up with thousands of user-generated videos that relate back to your brand and your message. Asking influencers or other popular users to participate in the challenge initially can help encourage others to participate.

  o Note: Although this is a great way to get your audience involved, there is a risk of losing control of the content that other users post using the hashtag. If you decide to run a branded hashtag, consider having someone monitor the hashtag and report any inappropriate content that may appear.
Twitter is a micro-blogging social media platform where users and brands share short thoughts, images, and videos with their followers.

- **Tweet**: A 280-character text-based content placement that also allows for attached images, a short video, a GIF, or a poll. When a user or brand posts a Tweet, the Tweet will show to their followers, and potentially their followers’ followers if any followers choose to retweet the Tweet. If hashtags are used, the Tweet will show up if someone is searching via that hashtag.

- **Promoted Tweet**: Similar to a Tweet, but shown to an audience that targeted through demographics, location, and/or interests. Promoted Tweets, which can include text, image, and/or video, will show in timelines between other Tweets, on users’ profiles, and at the top of search results.

- **Additional Twitter Formats**: Promoted text, image, and video ads are often the most popular ad formats on Twitter. However, additional formats like pre-roll ads and timeline takeovers are available. More information can be found [here](#).
Hashtags are a great way for organic Tweets to gain a broader audience beyond your followers. However, limit hashtags to one or two per Tweet to avoid overwhelming the reader.

Keep content short and sweet. Try to focus on one idea for each Tweet to be clear and concise.

Although Twitter is mostly text-based, you can add images, GIFs, and videos to help catch users’ attention and create a more memorable message.

Use a call-to-action, questions, and polls to encourage conversations, engagement, and action with your audience.

The truth® campaign uses Twitter to promote its #ThisIsQuitting hashtag and texting program to help youth quit vaping.

https://twitter.com/truthorange/status/1334928625574039553

Click Here to learn more about creating Twitter content.
SUMMARY OF YOUTH CONTENT CONSIDERATIONS

#1: Be Authentic
Youth generally want to see unpolished, authentic, and relatable content from brands and influencers on social media.

#2: Engage with Your Audience
Just posting content on social media is not enough—youth want to be a part of the conversation and want brands to build communities based on shared interests and affinities.

#3: Create Mobile-Friendly Video Content
When creating content, think mobile-friendly, and focus on both short-form and long-form video to grab youths’ attention and engage them to learn more or become more involved.
CONSIDERATIONS FOR Content Creation

#1 Use Digital Tools and Resources
- Most social media websites offer their own resources to help you succeed in creating content for their sites. Check them out to learn more.
- Use existing tools that make creating content easy. Adobe Spark and Canva have built-in templates for making graphics and videos for social media platforms.

#2 Adapt Existing Content
- Repurpose available ads and posts found in CDC’s Media Campaign Resource Center and FDA’s Tobacco Education Resource Library.

#3 Consider a Content Manager
- Creating content can be an extensive and time-consuming task, especially if you are using multiple social media platforms to disseminate messages. If feasible, consider a content manager or content team to help oversee content management and ensure cohesion across platforms.
Appendix A

Tobacco and Vaping Industry Advertising

How youth are exposed to tobacco and nicotine product content on social media, plus regulations and industry loopholes on common youth platforms
Youth Exposure to Tobacco and Vaping Content

**INFLUENCERS**

- Social media users with large followings (influencers) have been recruited and paid by the tobacco industry to promote products, increase brand awareness, and drive sales.

- This influencer strategy has also served as a means of skirting platform bans on paid tobacco and vaping advertisements.

- Influencers may appear to youth on social media as independent and authentic, despite being financially or otherwise compensated as “brand ambassadors.”

- Facebook and Instagram announced in December 2019 that influencers would no longer be allowed to promote tobacco and vaping content.

**AFFILIATE AND PARTNER PROGRAMS**

- Tobacco and vape brands and shops offer affiliate programs, in which content creators receive incentives and commissions for driving followers to make online product purchases.

- Different than influencers who are paid to post content, affiliates (who also may have large followings) post content such as product reviews organically but include a distinct affiliate link or discount code.

- Although they are not paid per post by the brand, each referral or purchase using the link or code generates a commission for the affiliate.
Youth Exposure to Tobacco and Vaping Content

**User-Generated Content**

- User-generated content across all social media platforms is largely unregulated and does not require access restriction based on age.

- As a result, user- and youth-generated content featuring vaping and tobacco products, vape modifications, and vaping tricks is widely accessible to young audiences.

- Peer-to-peer promotion of such content is amplified through popular hashtags, some of which were industry-created and -promoted.

- Although Instagram now hides some of these hashtags, #vape had over 30 million user- and brand-generated posts at the beginning of 2021.

**Organic Industry Content**

- A 2020 study in *Tobacco Control* by O’Brien et al. found most leading e-cigarette, hookah, cigar, and smokeless tobacco brands had an active account on at least one social media platform.

- O’Brien et al. found that brand pages rarely abided with age gating policies (on platforms that offered them), often did not display required health warnings, included images of young people, and emphasized flavored products.

- Tobacco and vape brands, as well as independent vendors, use hashtags (e.g., #vaping, #vapelife) to integrate their content into a stream of organic, user-generated posts that use the same hashtag.

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**Notes:**

- STANFORD (2019) | [JUUL ADVERTISING OVER ITS FIRST THREE YEARS ON THE MARKET](#)
- STANFORD (2019) | [RAPID GROWTH OF JUUL HASHTAGS AFTER THE COMPANY CEASED SOCIAL MEDIA PROMOTION](#)
- TOBACCO CONTROL (2020) | [SOCIAL MEDIA USE BY LEADING US E-CIGARETTES, CIGARETTE, SMOKELESS TOBACCO, CIGAR AND HOOKAH BRANDS](#)
- TOBACCO CONTROL (2018) | [PROMOTION OF TOBACCO PRODUCTS ON FACEBOOK: POLICY VERSUS PRACTICE](#)

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**Image Credit:**

- @aspirecigs Instagram bio, October 2022

**Note:** Account may be required to access any Meta links.
For years, major social media platforms have held explicit policies banning paid advertisements for tobacco and nicotine products; however, as the tobacco and vaping industry continued to utilize overt and covert strategies and loopholes to market its products and target younger audiences, regulatory bodies and the platforms recognized the need to establish firmer policies and guidelines to combat these deceptive practices.

As a result, since 2018, FDA and the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) have issued warning letters and extended guidelines on nicotine warning labels and partnership disclosures between influencers and advertisers on social media. Having selected this one of its enforcement priorities, FDA has also committed to continued monitoring and surveillance of targeted marketing of vaping products to youth, particularly on social media. Moreover, in June 2019, Facebook and Instagram announced required age gates (18+) for brand pages that post tobacco or vaping-related content, as well as the prohibition of all private sales, trades, transfers, and gifting of tobacco products on the platforms. In response to a loophole that allowed continued use of influencers to promote these products, Facebook and Instagram instituted a ban on branded content for tobacco and vaping products in December 2019, thereby halting the use of influencers to promote these products.

FDA (2019) | FDA, FTC TAKE ACTION TO PROTECT KIDS BY CITING FOUR FIRMS THATA MAKE, SELL FLAVORED E-LIQUIDS FOR VIOLATIONS RELATED TO ONLINE POSTS BY SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCERS ON THEIR BEHALF

FTC (2019) | FTC-FDA WARNING LETTERS: INFLUENTIAL TO INFLUENCERS AND MARKETERS

FACEBOOK (2021) | RESTRICTED GOODS AND SERVICES

INSTAGRAM BUSINESS BLOG (2019) | HELPING CREATORS TURN THEIR PASSION INTO A LIVING
Regulations and Loopholes on Social Media, cont.

Although these regulatory advancements should help increase industry transparency and reduce youth exposure to tobacco and vaping products on social media, the following challenges and loopholes remain.

- Each platform is regulated independently, resulting in discrepancies in policies and enforcement practices across platforms. Though restrictions on paid advertising are universally more stringently enforced than before, organic brand posts and user-generated content lack necessary oversight.

- Facebook and Instagram have now banned influencers from promoting vaping and tobacco products, but accountability and enforcement are key to ensuring compliance. Processes to detect violations are not error-proof, and influencers may not disclose partnerships in defiance of the guidelines. Also, prior to the ban, the tobacco industry dodged FTC disclosure requirements by recruiting overseas influencers, who maintained sizable numbers of U.S. followers while residing in countries with fewer regulations and disclosure requirements—an indication the industry could seek loopholes in the new platform policies as well.

- The tobacco industry will most likely continue to organically market their products and brands on social media platforms. Although this may not provide audience reach equivalent to paid partnerships, organic posts will allow brands to continue to have a presence and build communities on social media. Age gates, although required on these brand pages, have been shown to be inadequately implemented and enforced.
E-Cigarette Advertising Snapshot: JUUL

As of 2022, the tobacco and vaping industry’s ability to advertise and promote its products on social media is limited, but as recently as 2015, this arena was largely unregulated. JUUL was one of the first major vaping brands to strategically market and promote its products on social media, doing so at a time when oversight was minimal, and policies were lax. JUUL’s 2015 Vaporized campaign, which officially launched its product line, seemingly overtly advertised to younger audiences; the bright, eye-catching ads and organic posts featured young, attractive models with trendy outfits engaging in playful, often child-like poses. This youth-oriented content, coupled with JUUL’s extensive use of branded hashtags and paid influencers on Facebook and Instagram, amplified brand awareness and sent sales skyrocketing.

As rates of youth e-cigarette use rose in tandem with JUUL sales, so did concerns over JUUL’s advertising practices across social media.

In 2018, FDA announced an investigation into JUUL’s marketing practices; by November 2018, JUUL had voluntarily shuttered its Instagram and Facebook accounts (after deleting 4,000+ posts deemed “youth-oriented”), disbanded its affiliate program, and limited its sale of flavored products. In a letter announcing these decisions, JUUL Labs reported that “more than 99% of all social media content related to JUUL Labs is generated through third-party users and accounts with no affiliation to our company,” emphasizing the sheer magnitude of user-generated JUUL- and vaping-related content in response to JUUL’s marketing and the need for more stringent regulation and enforcement on social media.

As a result of these investigations, in September 2022, JUUL reached a $439 million settlement with 34 states and territories for its use of deceptive marketing and sales practices aimed at youth.

- STANFORD (2019)/ JUUL ADVERTISING OVER ITS FIRST THREE YEARS ON THE MARKET
- JUUL LABS (2018)/ JUUL LABS ACTION PLAN
- AP NEWS (2022) | JUUL TO PAY NEARLY $440M TO SETTLE STATES’ TEEN VAPING PROBE

Images from the 2015 JUUL Vaporized campaign. These, and additional campaign images, can be found in the Stanford Research into the Impact of Tobacco Advertising (SRITA) collection.
Appendix B
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES AND GLOSSARY

Return to overview here.
CDC’s Media Campaign Resource Center

CDC’s MCRC provides free and low-cost tobacco education campaign materials to inform audiences about the harmful effects of commercial tobacco use. The browsable collection includes youth-oriented content that can be repurposed or adapted to support communications efforts.


CDC’s E-Cigarettes and Youth Quick Facts Page

This Quick Facts page provides an overview of e-cigarettes and their risks for kids, teens, and young adults. The page also includes answers to frequently asked questions about nicotine and tobacco products and provides additional resources for teens, parents, educators, and more.


Last reviewed April 2021
CDC’s Best Practices Users Guide: Youth Engagement

This guide supplies program managers with information on how to best engage youth as part of a comprehensive tobacco control program. Youth involvement can be a key factor in changing environmental and social norms and reducing pro-tobacco influence.

[Image: Youth Engagement in Tobacco Prevention and Control]


Industry-Sponsored Youth Prevention Programs Brief

This CDC Evidence Brief documents the continued interference of the tobacco industry in school settings and the ineffectiveness of its sponsored youth prevention curriculum. The brief suggests continued independent public health- and school-based prevention efforts.

[Image: EVIDENCE BRIEF: TOBACCO INDUSTRY-SPONSORED YOUTH PREVENTION PROGRAMS IN SCHOOLS]

https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic_information/youth/evidence-brief/index.htm

Last reviewed June 2019

Additional Resources for Creating Social Media Content

https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic_information/youth/evidence-brief/index.htm
American Lung Association
Plan to End Youth Vaping

The American Lung Association released a comprehensive plan to end youth vaping. The plan includes a public awareness campaign on the dangers of vaping geared toward parents of youth. The campaign includes a public service announcement and website with facts, conversation starters, and resources.

Center for Tobacco Products Exchange Lab

Run by FDA CTP, the Exchange Lab provides free print materials, syndicated web content, interactive media, and downloadable images to share on social media. The content communicates the dangers of tobacco use. Some of the materials are youth-focused.

Additional Resources for Creating Social Media Content

https://www.lung.org/quit-smoking/helping-teens-quit/talk-about-vaping

https://digitalmedia.hhs.gov/tobacco/
This article provides an overview of teen social media and technology use, including demographic differences.

The Common Sense Census: Media Use by Tweens and Teens
Based on findings from a national survey, this report provides an overview of media use by tweens and teens in the U.S., as well as a snapshot on youth use of and attitudes towards social media.

Taking Stock with Teens®
This Piper Sandler report provides insights into Gen Z and teen behaviors, habits, and brand preferences.

Social Media Fact Sheet
This article provides demographic-aggregates on social media use in the U.S.
**The Common Sense Census: Media Use by Tweens and Teens**

Based on findings from a national survey, this report provides an overview of media use by tweens and teens in the U.S., as well as a snapshot on youth use of and attitudes toward social media.

**The Internet and the Pandemic**

This article looks at the pandemic’s impact on Americans’ internet and screen use.  

*September 2021*

**Teens, Social Media and Technology 2018**

This article provides an overview of the most popular social media platforms teens use and the demographic differences in use.  

*May 2018*

**Considerations for Creating and Placing Mass-Reach Tobacco Counter-Marketing Ads**

This CDC OSH document covers best practices and lessons learned when developing and/or placing mass-reach tobacco counter-marketing ads and campaigns.

*May 2017*
**Algorithm:** Each social media platform has its own algorithm that uses a variety of metrics, calculations, and signals to recommend relevant posts to users.

**Branded Hashtags:** Hashtags that are unique to a brand or campaign. Branded hashtags are great for finding relevant user-generated content and can also be used in social media listening.

**Conversions:** Specified actions taken by a user as a result of seeing your ad that you have elected to track, such as clicking on a link or signing up for a mailing list.

**Handle:** An individual’s username/profile name (formulated as @username).

**Hashtags:** Characters, words, or phrases preceded by the hash symbol (#). Clicking on a hashtag will show you all the posts that have used or tagged that hashtag. (On Instagram, you can follow hashtags—top content with that hashtag will show up in your feed occasionally. On TikTok, you can add hashtags to your favorites to access them quickly.) Hashtags are also searchable and categorical.
**Influencer:** A content creator who produces engaging content for their follower base, usually based on a specific topic area (e.g., fitness, cooking, photography). There’s no clear-cut rule on what makes a mega, macro, micro, and nano influencer but below is a common categorization:

- **Mega Influencer:** 1 million+ followers
- **Macro Influencer:** 100,000 to 1 million followers
- **Micro Influencer:** 10,000 to 100,000 followers
- **Nano Influencer:** 1,000 to 10,000 followers

**Memes:** Humorous images or videos often accompanied with text that quickly spread or go viral across the web.

**Native Advertising:** Ads that follow the look and feel of the platform on which they appear, making them more appealing and less disruptive to users.

**Organic Content:** Unpaid content.

**Pixel:** A small piece of code that goes on your website and keeps track of actions from users who have either viewed or clicked on one of your social media advertisements.
**Smart Devices**: Devices that connect to apps, the internet, a local network, or another device using a wireless connection.

**Streaming Platforms**: On-demand, online entertainment platforms that offer access to television shows, movies, and other streaming media.

**Targeting**: Targeting is a frequently used advertising term that describes the way in which ads are served to specific groups, individuals, or demographics on social media platforms. We recognize this as problematic language and support moving toward an alternative. The use of this term is limited throughout this guide but may be present to align with the feature names and terminology used by and on the large social media platforms. We encourage readers to learn more via CDC’s [Health Equity Guiding Principles for Inclusive Communication](#).

**Targeting Keywords**: Terms related to interests and/or behaviors that can be used as advanced targeting on many social media platforms.
**User-Generated Content (UGC):** Content created and posted by users that organically (unpaid) promotes an organization or brand’s products, services, or messaging; brands or organizations can repost (with permission, and usually crediting the original poster) this content, showing users authentically using their product or services or discussing their messaging. If the user is compensated, then the content is considered an ad and should include some indication of paid partnership, advertisement, or sponsorship.

**Youth:** Sources differ in how they define youth. Common Sense Media surveyed individuals 13 to 18 years of age, while Pew Research Center surveyed individuals 13 to 17 years of age. In this guide, youth generally refers to individuals 13 to 18 years of age, unless otherwise noted. Due to limitations in data for this specific age group, in some instances we have expanded to a more general demographic, using Generation Z to represent this population.