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# **NEW SURVEY REVEALS ALMOST 6 IN 10 TEENS TAKE A BREAK FROM SOCIAL MEDIA**

*Most of the breaks are voluntary and teens report feeling better for the experience*

**CHICAGO, April 27, 2017** — A new survey reveals that 58 percent of American teens report taking significant breaks from social media, and that many of these breaks are voluntary. The findings are drawn from a broader Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research survey that explores teens' [social media, messaging, and video content habits](#), with a special focus on understanding if and why teens take breaks from the social media platforms that are so prominent in their lives.

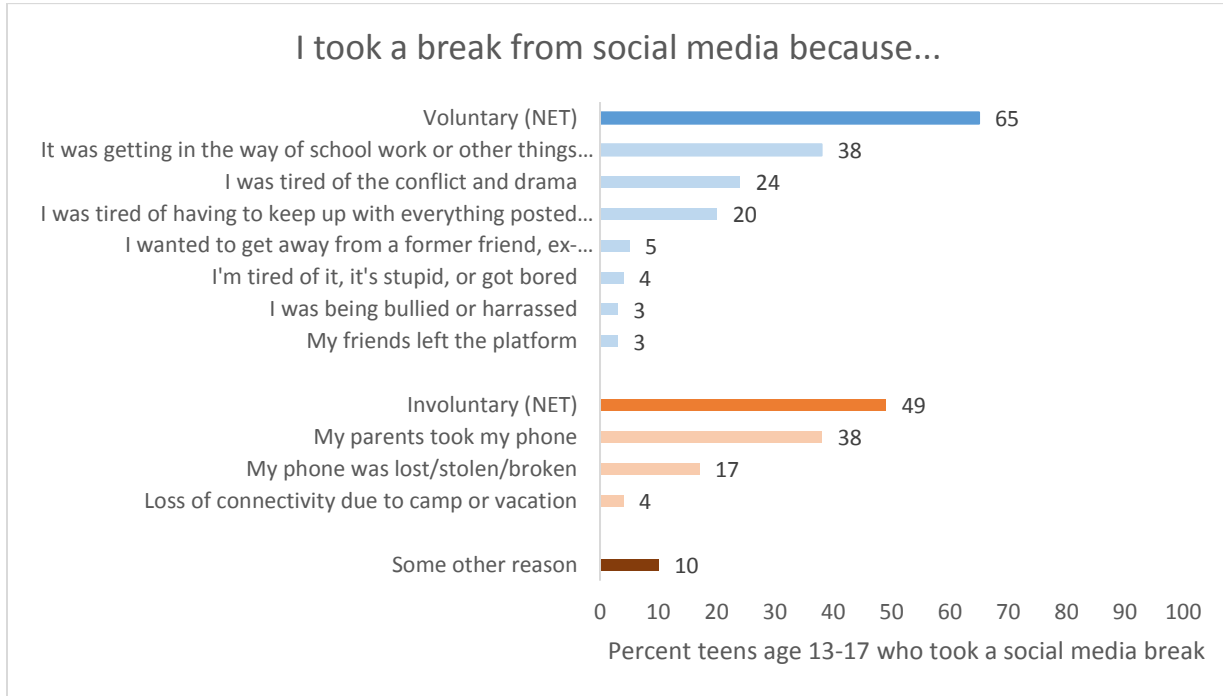
The survey found that 65 percent of teens who took a social media break did so voluntarily, primarily for the following reasons:

- 38 percent said it was getting in the way of work or school.
- 24 percent were tired of the conflict and drama.
- 20 percent were tired of having to always keep up with what was going on.

The survey found that breaks from social media vary by family income, with teens in households earning less than \$50,000 per year more likely to take a break. Such breaks tend to be longer than those taken by teens in higher-income households.

The main reason for involuntary breaks from social media is that parents took away their devices, affecting 38 percent of break-takers, while another 17 percent took a break because their device was lost or stolen.

Teens who took voluntary breaks reported feeling better for the experience, while those who took involuntary breaks reported feeling more anxious about what they were missing and wanting to return to social media quickly.



Question: Why did you take a break from social media? Please select all that apply.

Source: AP-NORC Center poll conducted December 7-31, 2016, with 790 teenagers age 13-17 nationwide

“While it might seem surprising to hear that teens who are usually thought of as such fervent users of social media are taking breaks, many teens have very good life or relationship management reasons for taking time away from these platforms,” said Amanda Lenhart, senior research scientist at The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research, and a co-author of the report. “But taking breaks from social media isn’t without consequences, for those who are off involuntarily or of their own volition. For many teens, being off social media removes them from a major site of social and emotional support as well as their dominant conduit for news and information.”

Among the report’s other key findings:

- 58 percent of teens who use social media have taken at least one break from the platforms.
- 23 percent of teens who have not taken a break from social media have wanted to take one.
- 60 percent of teens who have taken breaks from social media have taken three or more, 22 percent have taken two, and 18 percent have taken just one break from the platforms.
- About half of teens say their social media breaks are typically a week or longer.
- Boys are more likely to take longer breaks, with 36 percent of boys taking breaks of two weeks or longer from social media, while 22 percent of girls reported breaks of similar length.

Complete survey findings are available at [www.apnorc.org](http://www.apnorc.org).

#### About the Survey



This survey was conducted by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research and with funding from NORC at the University of Chicago. Interviews for this survey were conducted between December 7 and December 31, 2016, with teenagers age 13-17 representing the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Adult panel members were randomly drawn from AmeriSpeak, and after confirming that there were children of the appropriate age in the household, permission was sought from a parent or guardian to survey a teenager. If a given panelist had multiple teens at home, one teen was randomly selected to participate. Completed interviews were conducted with 790 teenagers, 739 via the web and 51 via telephone. Interviews were conducted in both English and Spanish, depending on respondent preference.

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The two organizations have established The AP-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research to conduct, analyze, and distribute social science research in the public interest on newsworthy topics, and to use the power of journalism to tell the stories that research reveals.

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