

2026

U.S. Future Report Illinois

Illinois Teens Are Growing Up with Technology — and Learning How to Shape Its Role

Young people in Illinois are growing up during a period of extraordinary technological change. Artificial intelligence (AI) is joining search, social platforms, messaging, video, and other digital tools that are already embedded in how teens learn, create, communicate, find information, and navigate everyday life.

The public conversation about young people and technology often begins with competing assumptions about its benefits and risks. The U.S. Future Report - Illinois, a survey of 1,000 Illinois teens aged 13-17, starts somewhere different: by listening to teens themselves.

The data below reflect what we can learn when young people's experiences are brought more directly into the conversation — and why listening to teens can help families, educators, technology companies, policymakers, and communities better understand how to best support the next generation in our increasingly digital world.

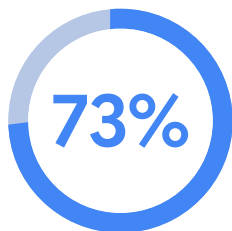
Below are some of the key findings.

[Click here or scan the QR code to read the full U.S. Future Report.](#)

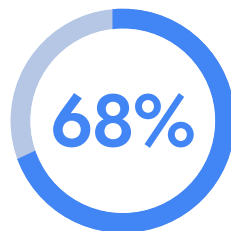


Key Findings

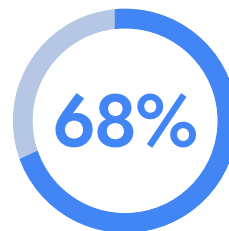
AI and learning



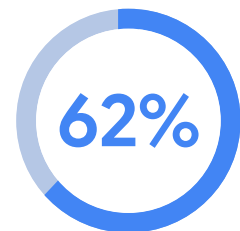
Teens report using AI tools for learning weekly or more often



Teens agree with the statement, "AI tools have helped me discover new interests or skills"



Teens say AI tools have greatly or somewhat improved their creative writing

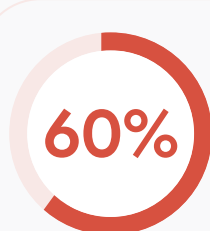


Teens say AI tools have greatly or somewhat improved their making visual art

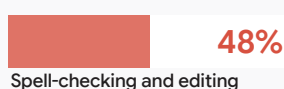
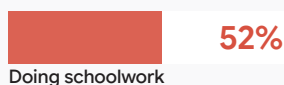
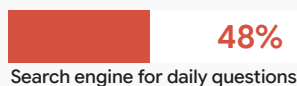
AI adoption



Teens report having used Gemini for school or creative projects



Teens report using AI tools in the past year for research for homework



27% of teens say their school has not approved any AI tools for use with schoolwork.

Video as a learning tool



Teens report watching YouTube videos to learn something new for school



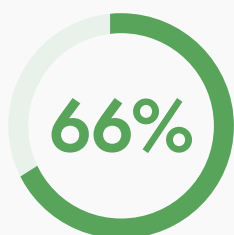
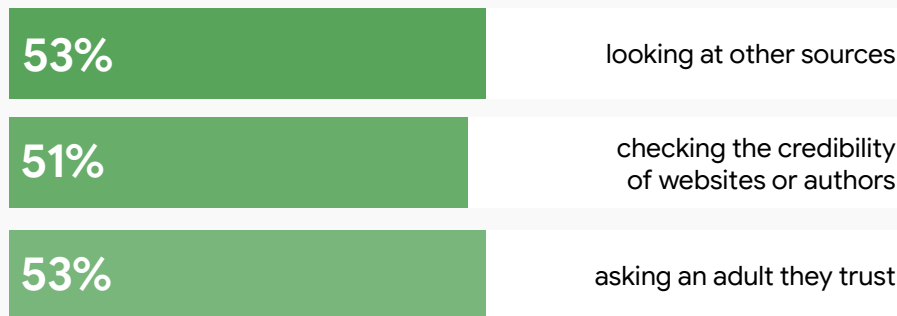
Teens report watching videos to help with their learning for school or fun weekly or more often

Trustworthiness and Digital Literacy



When using the internet, AI, or other technologies for learning, teens say they always or often think about the trustworthiness of the information they find

Teens say they check whether information they find online is trustworthy by...

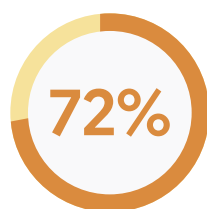


Teens say young people should begin to be taught digital literacy and responsibility by fifth grade

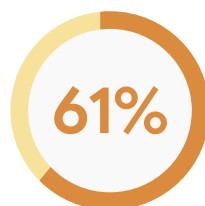


Teens report that their school currently offers digital literacy or technology classes

Online wellbeing and support



Teens describe their current balance between online and offline activities as balanced



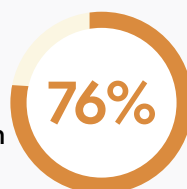
Teens in Florida say they trust their parents or other adult family members most to guide them about healthy online habits; **no other** response reaches **11%**



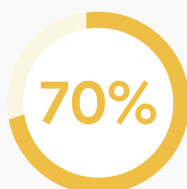
Teens say they would be very or somewhat likely to approach a parent or guardian about suspected scams or fraud online, privacy settings or concerns, uncomfortable interactions with others online, or being cyberbullied or harassed online.

Notable Subgroup Findings

Teens report using AI tools for learning weekly or more often

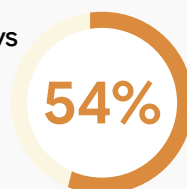


Male

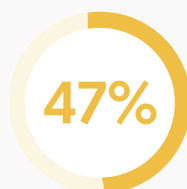


Female

Teens say they always or often think about the trustworthiness of the information they find



Ages 13-15



Ages 16-17

Methodology

RXN conducted a survey of 1,000 Illinois teens ages 13–17 between April 23 and May 26, 2026, with a margin of error of $\pm 3.1\%$. To provide additional context, RXN conducted a virtual focus group in Illinois on May 27, with six teens ages 13–17.