



THE CYBERSMILE FOUNDATION

DIGITAL WELLBEING 2022

A national report examining the
impact of social media use on
Gen Z wellbeing in the U.K.



Our Digital Wellbeing 2022 report offers significant new insights into how social media use is impacting the daily lives of an entire generation. With evolving technology and increased platform retention times - Gen Z users are being impacted to an extent beyond anything we have previously discovered. These findings offer Cybersmile valuable insights into the digital wellbeing of 16 to 24-year-olds in the U.K. and will play a key role in helping us to tailor our support resources, develop new educational materials and create effective awareness campaigns.

Dan Raisbeck

Co-founder
The Cybersmile Foundation

The findings of Digital Wellbeing 2022 are stark. They underline the vital importance of education from an early age in the safe and respectful use of social media. Social media's edited versions of reality offer perfect bodies and perfect worlds, which nearly 9 in 10 participants in the study reported had a negative impact on how they feel about themselves, their bodies and their lives. Young people are rightly concerned about addiction and increased anxiety, the amount of time taken away from studying, and the detrimental effect of this time on the basics of good self-care, such as exercise and nutrition. Cybersmile's Digital Wellbeing 2022 report highlights the very real damage unbalanced usage of social media platforms can do.

Dr Barbara Mariposa

Wellness & Equity
Cybersmile Advisory Panel





I feel so lucky that I'm able to be myself and express how I feel and who I am on social media, it's amazing to be able to see so many different people from across the world, to connect with them and share experiences. Most of the time it is an incredible experience, but now and then it can get tough online.

It is important to get some extra help if you ever find yourself struggling because your mental health and wellbeing is super important. Talk to your friends or family about how you are feeling or reach out to the incredible team at Cybersmile for help.

Holly H

Cybersmile Ambassador

It can sometimes be hard for us to understand the difference between the real world and the digital world as we can often become engrossed in a pixelated reality. The way we look after our own wellbeing, learn how to use the internet productively and communicate through it is key - and education should be introduced at an early age to encourage balance and knowledge as well as looking out for red flags and knowing what to do! I encourage my followers to be aware of their personal wellbeing when using social media and that my young and parent followers practice this through family activities that can be done in a fun and safe way - encouraging meaningful social and digital interactions while building trust. Your digital wellbeing is so important!

Amazing Arabella

Gen Z Influencer



STUDY OVERVIEW

QUESTIONS ASKED

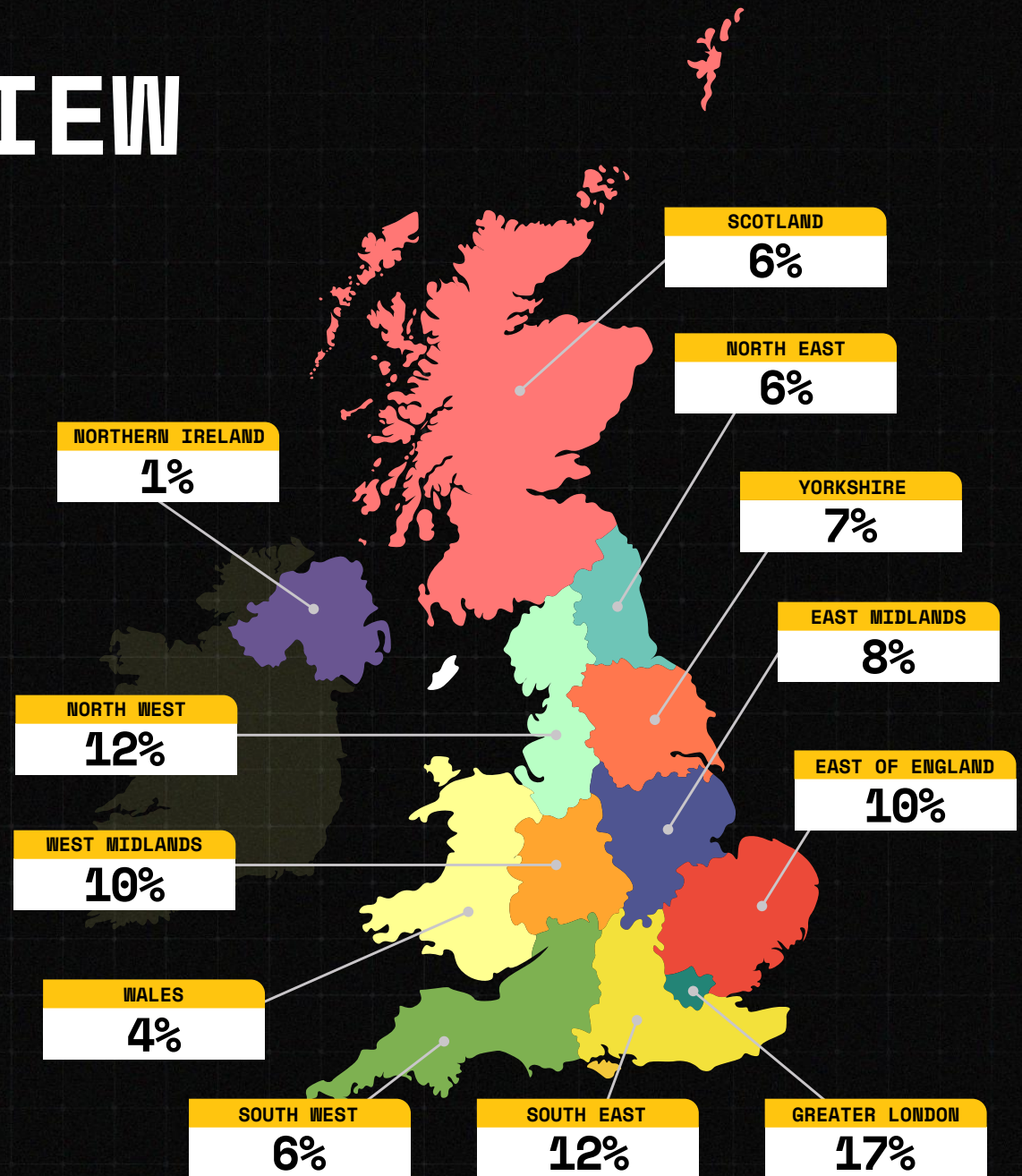
10

AGE RANGE

16—24

RESPONDENTS

1,000



Q1

To what extent are the following areas of your life positively or negatively impacted by the amount of time you spend online?

Sleep

15%

VERY NEGATIVELY IMPACTED

36%

SOMEWHAT NEGATIVELY IMPACTED

22%

NO IMPACT

12%

SOMEWHAT POSITIVELY IMPACTED

11%

VERY POSITIVELY IMPACTED

4%

I DON'T KNOW

51% of respondents indicated that their sleep is negatively impacted by the amount of time they spend online.

Diet



32% of respondents indicated that their diet is negatively impacted by the amount of time they spend online.

Exercise



32% of respondents indicated that their exercise is negatively impacted by the amount of time they spend online.

Study

12%

VERY NEGATIVELY IMPACTED

28%

SOMEWHAT NEGATIVELY IMPACTED

29%

NO IMPACT

16%

SOMEWHAT POSITIVELY IMPACTED

10%

VERY POSITIVELY IMPACTED

5%

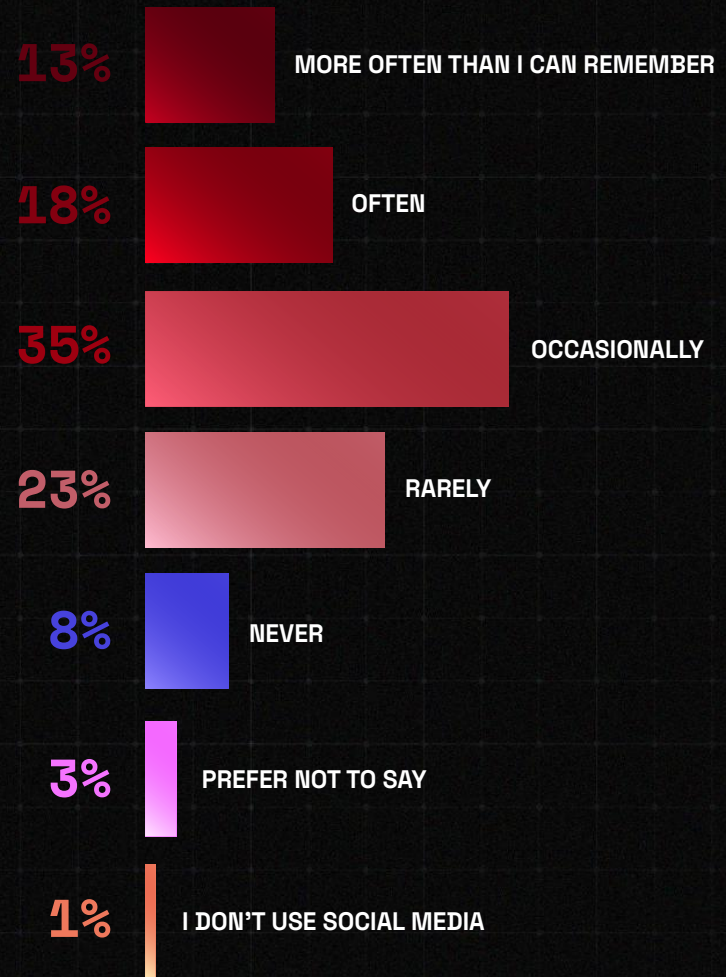
I DON'T KNOW

40% of respondents indicated that their study is negatively impacted by the amount of time they spend online.

Q2

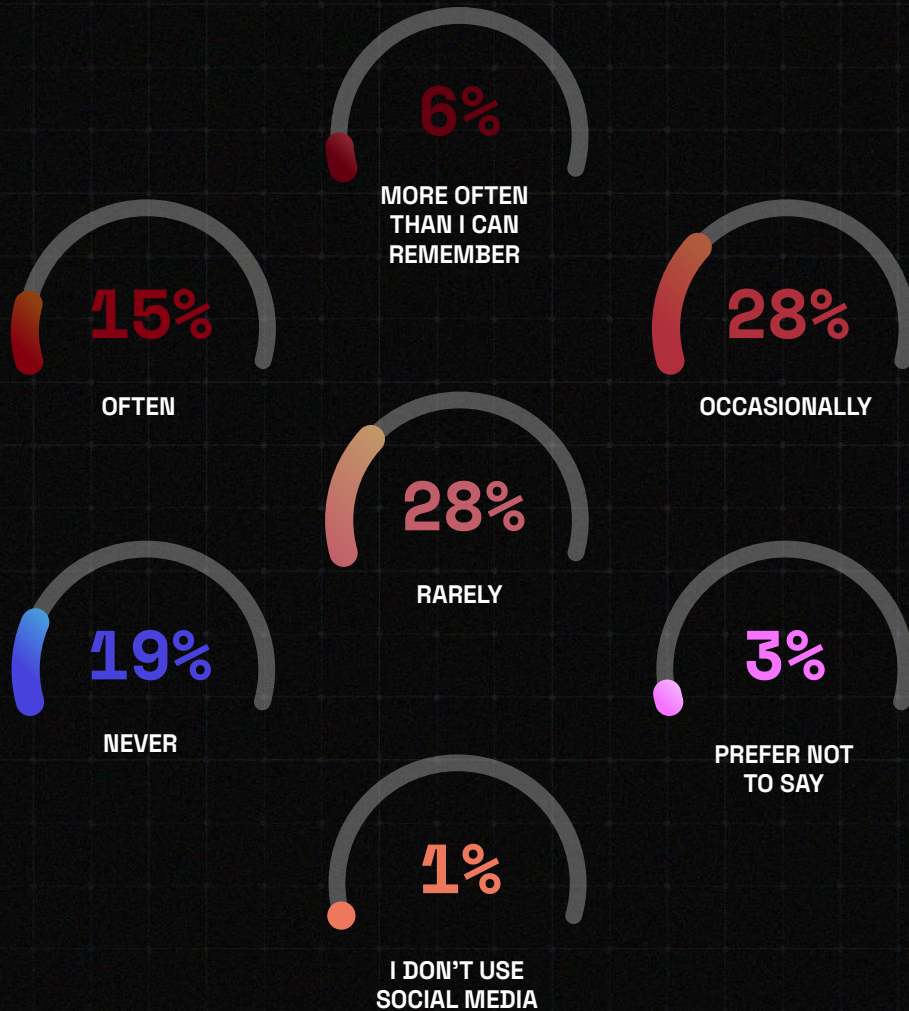
How often, if ever, has your social media use negatively affected your mental health?

89% of respondents indicated that social media has negatively affected their mental health.



Q3

How often, if ever, has your social media use negatively affected your physical health?

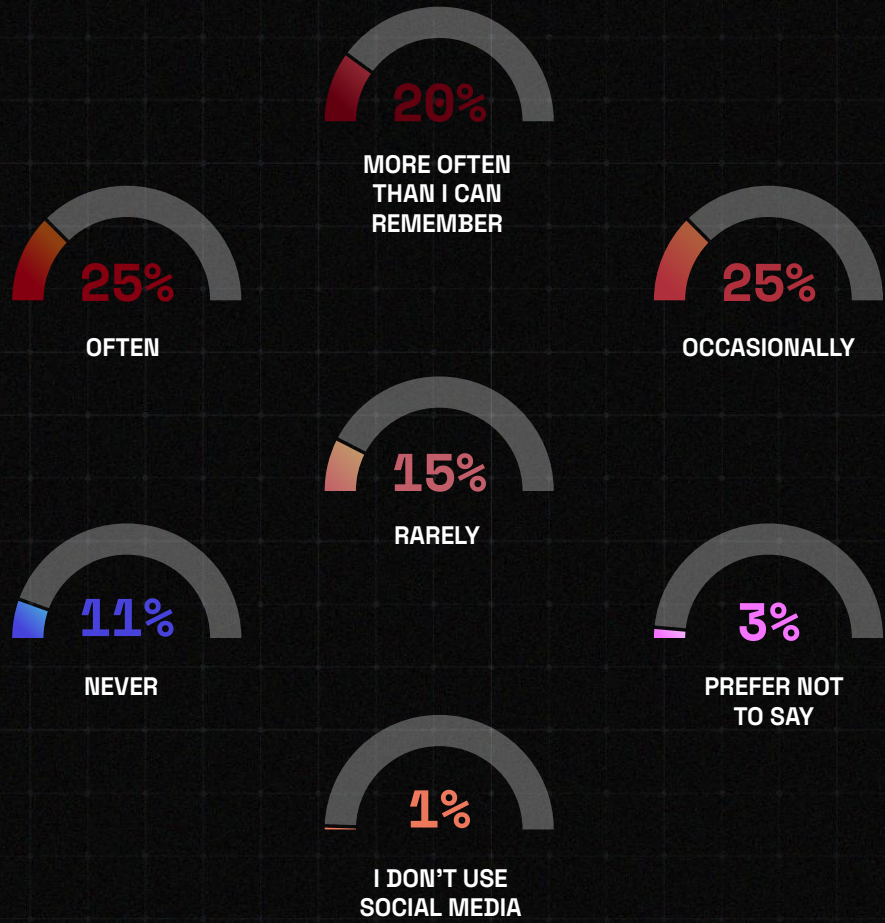


77% of respondents indicated that social media has negatively affected their physical health.

Q4

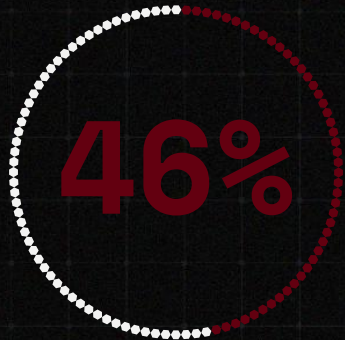
How often, if ever, has social media negatively affected the way you feel about your own body?

85% of respondents indicated that social media has negatively affected the way they feel about their own body.

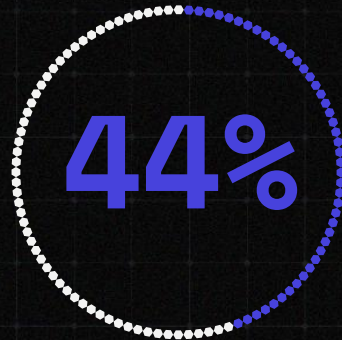


Q5

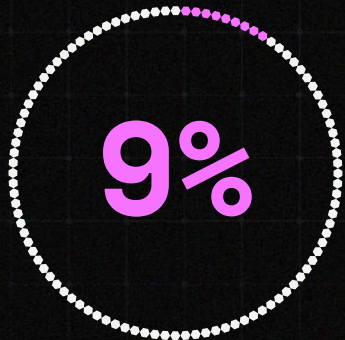
Has social media ever made you want to permanently change a part of your body through surgery?



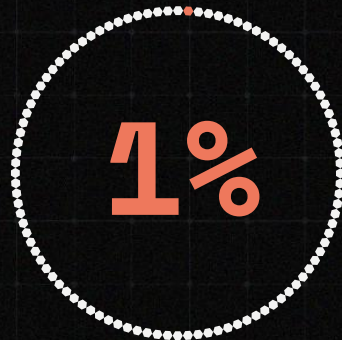
YES



NO



PREFER NOT
TO SAY



I DON'T USE
SOCIAL MEDIA

46% of respondents indicated that social media had made them want to permanently change a part of their body through surgery.



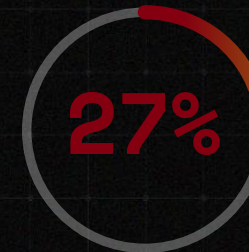
Q6

How often, if ever, has any content on social media made you feel pressured to be perfect?

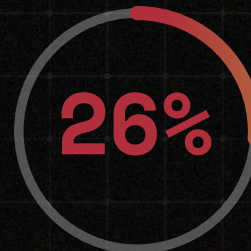
87% of respondents indicated that content on social media has made them feel pressured to be perfect.



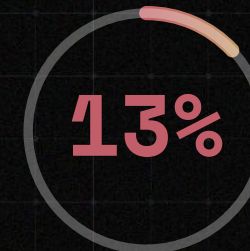
MORE OFTEN THAN I CAN REMEMBER



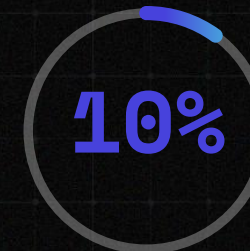
OFTEN



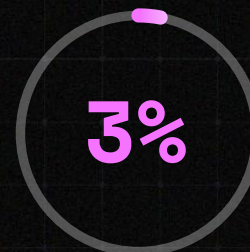
OCCASIONALLY



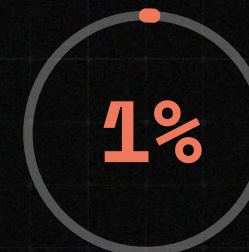
RARELY



NEVER



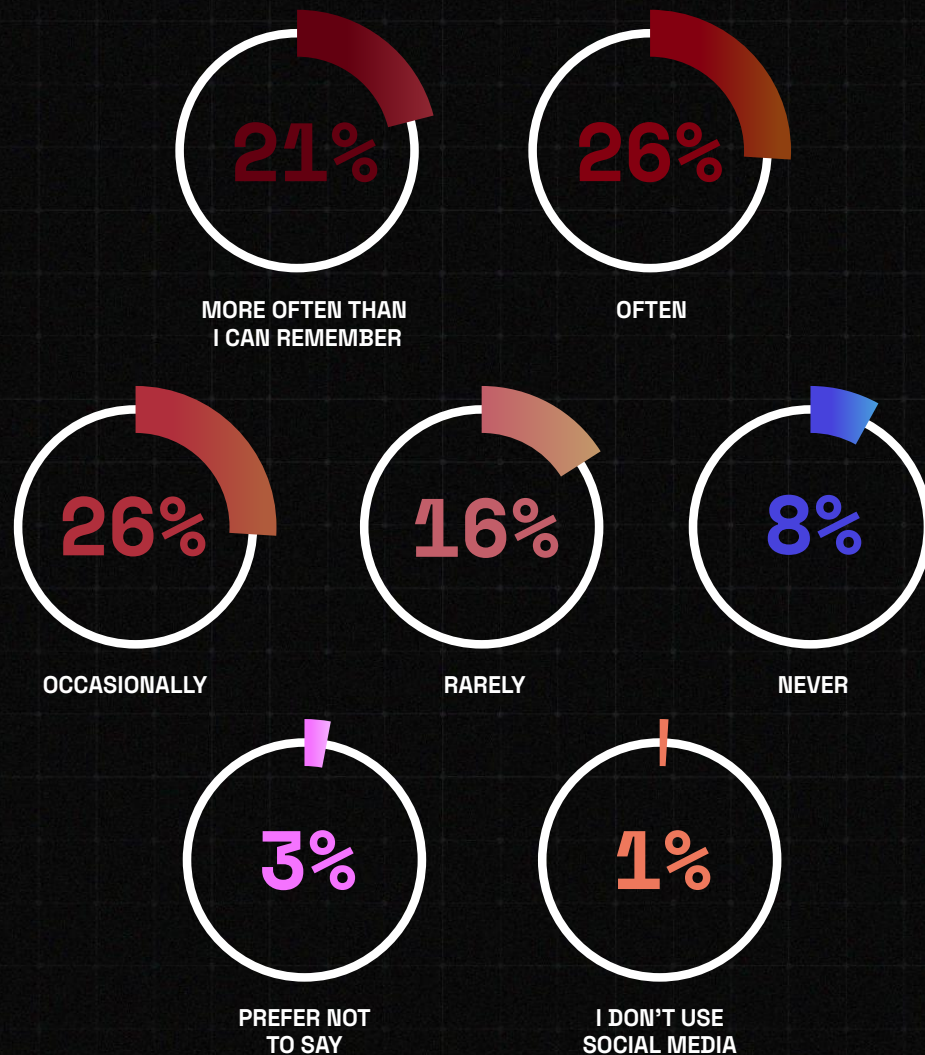
PREFER NOT TO SAY



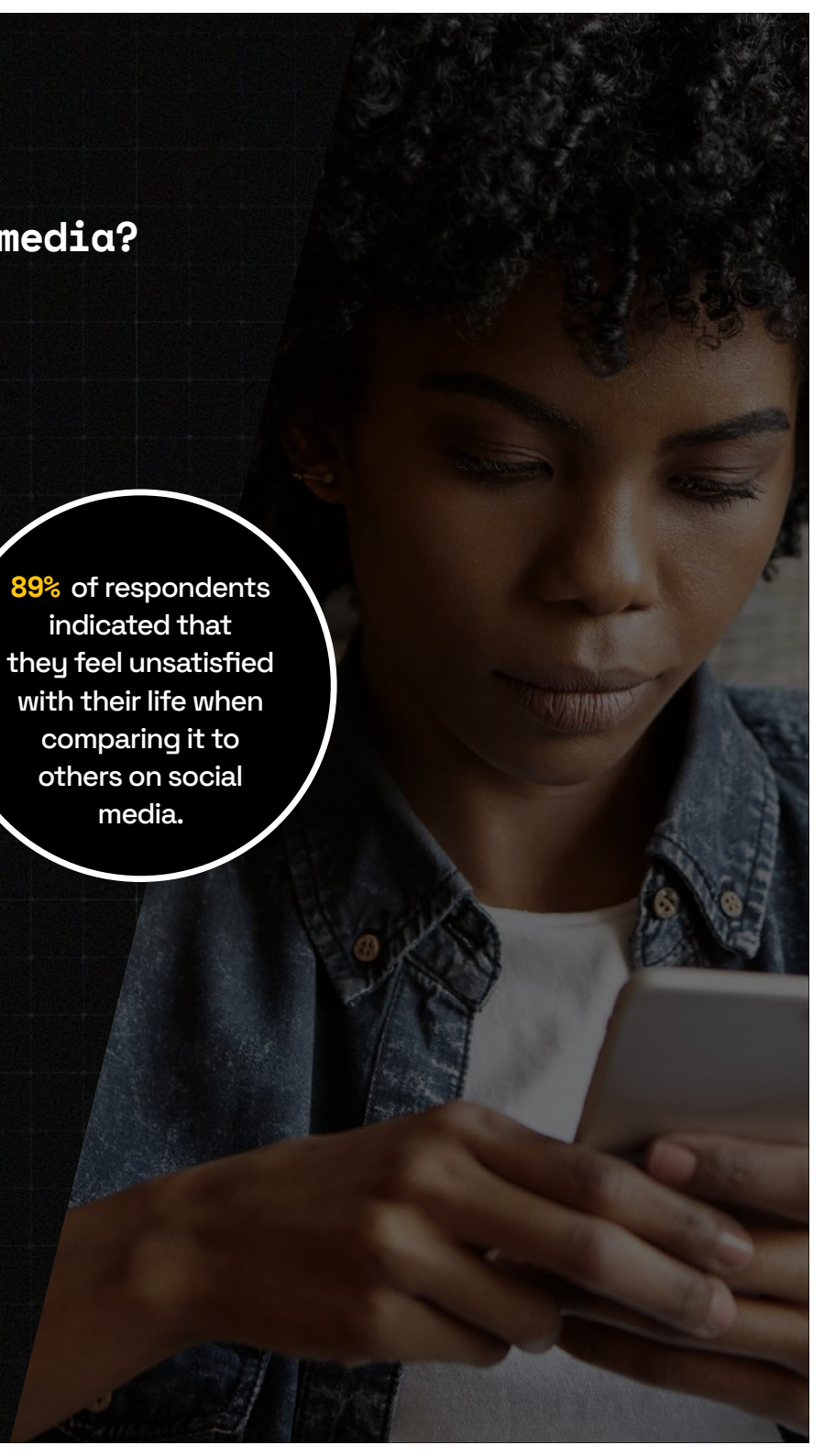
I DON'T USE SOCIAL MEDIA

Q7

How often, if ever, have you felt unsatisfied with your life when comparing it to others on social media?



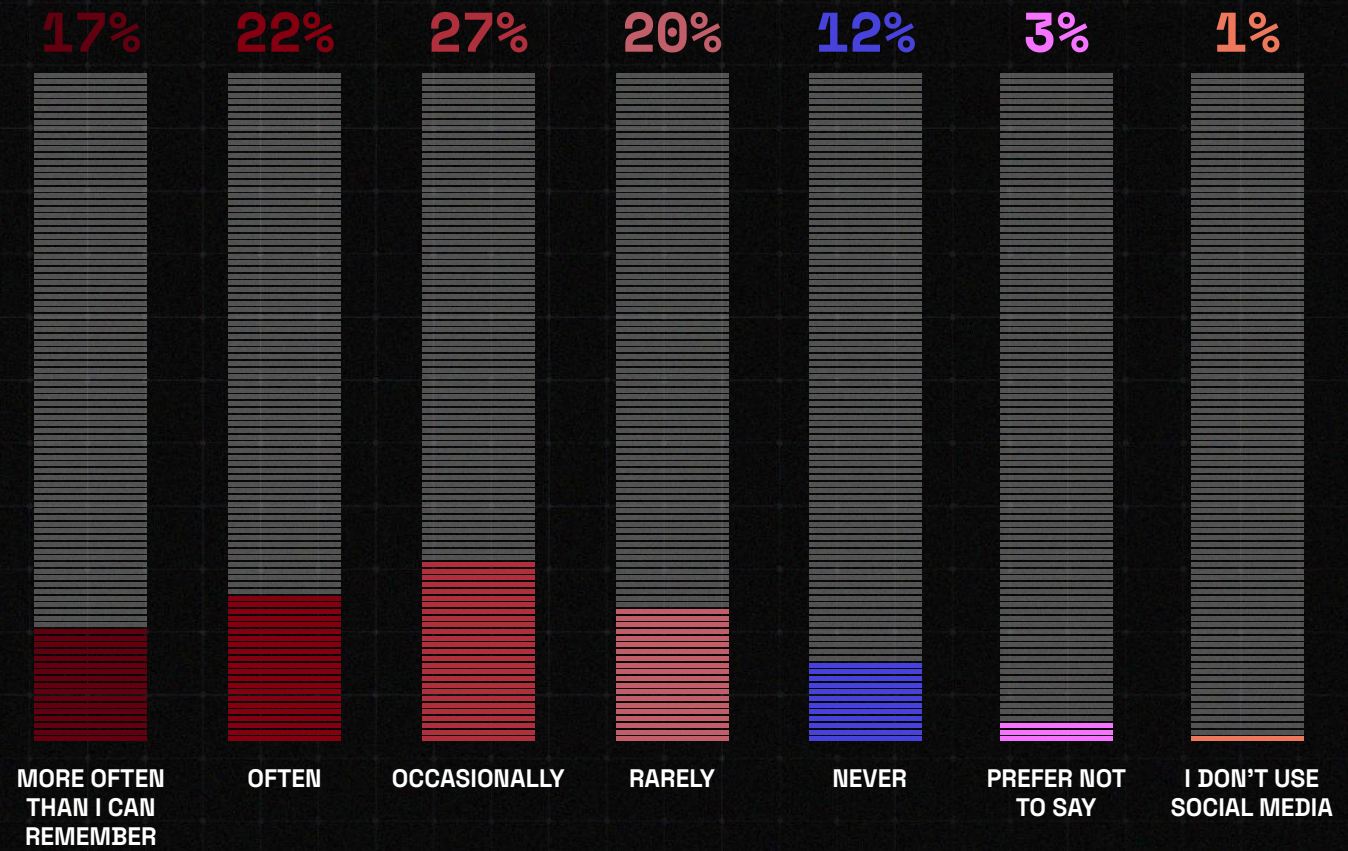
89% of respondents indicated that they feel unsatisfied with their life when comparing it to others on social media.





How often, if ever, has social media use ever made you feel anxious?

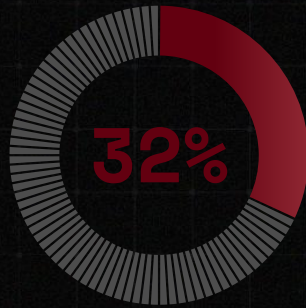
86% of respondents indicated that social media use had made them feel anxious.



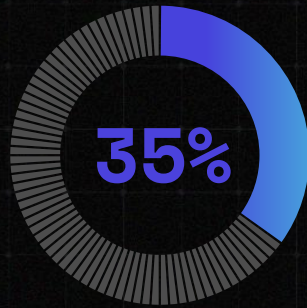
Q9

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

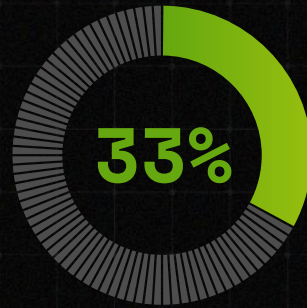
I FEEL ADDICTED TO BAD NEWS ONLINE



AGREE



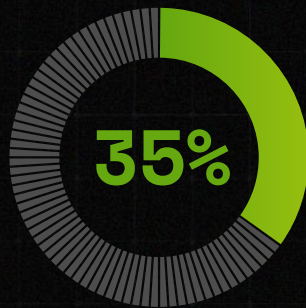
NEITHER AGREE
NOR DISAGREE



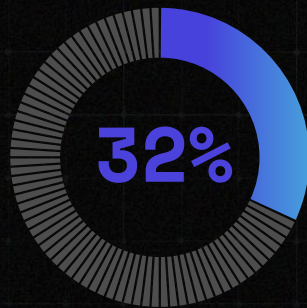
DISAGREE

32% of respondents indicated that they feel addicted to bad news online.

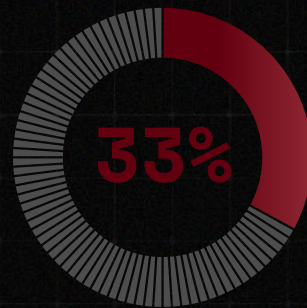
I FEEL SAFE TO SHARE MY OPINIONS AND VIEWS ONLINE



AGREE

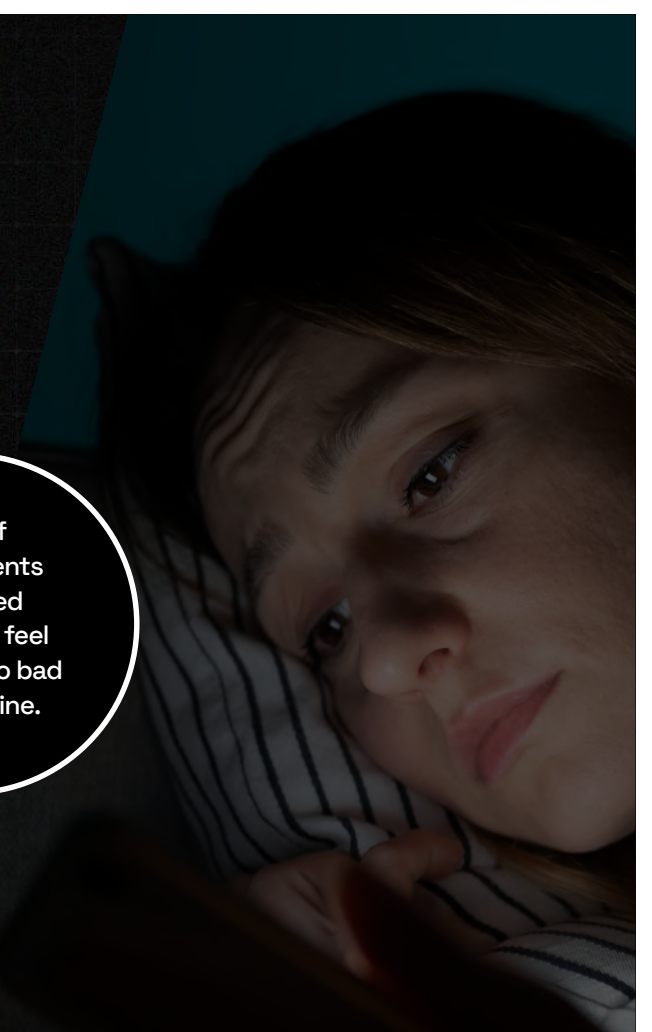


NEITHER AGREE
NOR DISAGREE



DISAGREE

33% of respondents indicated that they didn't feel safe to share their opinions and views online.

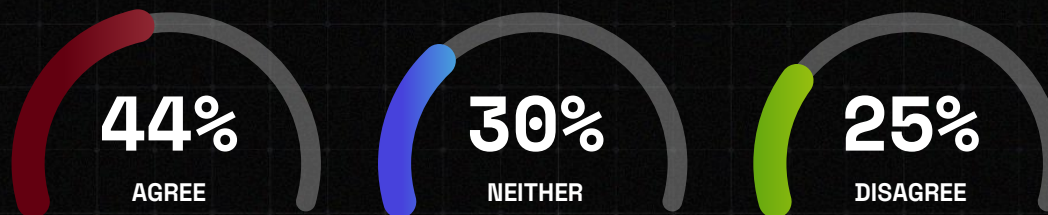


Q10

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

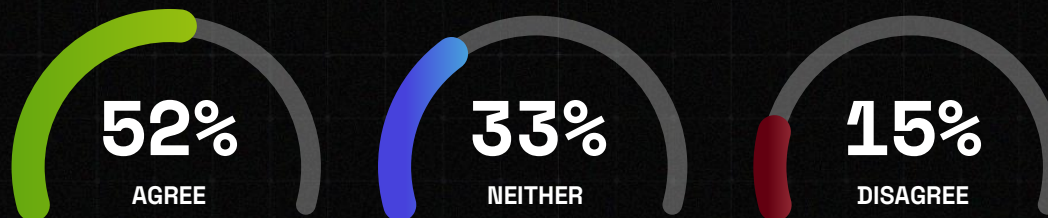
44% of respondents indicated that they are worried they have an addiction to social media.

I AM WORRIED THAT I HAVE A SOCIAL MEDIA ADDICTION



52% of respondents indicated that they feel better when they spend less time on social media.

I FEEL BETTER WHEN I SPEND LESS TIME ON SOCIAL MEDIA



ABOUT THE CYBERSMILE FOUNDATION

The Cybersmile Foundation is a multi-award-winning nonprofit organisation committed to digital wellbeing and tackling all forms of abuse and bullying online.

We work to promote kindness, diversity and inclusion by building a safer, more positive digital community and encouraging people to realise their full potential without the fear of ridicule and abuse.

Through education and the promotion of positive digital citizenship, The Cybersmile Foundation reduces incidents of cyberbullying and provides professional help and support services to children and adults around the world.



THE CYBERSMILE FOUNDATION

U.S. WEST

530 Lytton Avenue
2nd Floor
Palo Alto
CA 94301

U.S. EAST

99 Hudson Street
5th Floor
New York
NY 10013

U.K. AND INTERNATIONAL

3 London Bridge Street
3rd Floor
London
SE1 9SG

Email: info@cybersmile.org

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