

THE ONLINE ANTHILL

So much of kids' lives have shifted online, it's getting harder to keep up with their frenetic life in the virtual space. So here's a broad update of the news that matters...

- **Teenagers conceal their online behaviors from their parents.**

Even though they're close to their parents, that doesn't mean kids are transparent with them. Half of them hide what they do online from their parents, according to pollsters at Harris Interactive. Common behaviors include clearing browsers, deleting text messages, and creating private email addresses. All this is possible because parents aren't all that great at monitoring their teenagers' online activities—only half of them check on what their kids are doing in the virtual space. The main culprit? Nearly half of parents of 16- 17-year-olds (45%) admit they don't have *time* to monitor activities.

- **Kids are logged on to the Internet for a good chunk of their day.**

On average, teenagers spend two hours and 20 minutes a day on the Internet, with the bulk of that time (one hour and 50 minutes) spent on social networks. Nine in 10 teenagers (90%) maintain a profile on at least one social site—Facebook is the clear winner here (with YouTube, MySpace, and Twitter following). While they're logged on to these sites, three-quarters of teenagers (73%) play games. Also, more than half of teenagers (54%) do not personally know all of the people they've "friended," and almost a third (29%) wish they could "unfriend" their parents.

- **Facebook fatigue is already setting in.** Just when you were starting to think Facebook would rule the world, teenagers are already showing signs that they're over it. One in five Facebook users (19%) have stopped using the site or are visiting it less frequently. And two-thirds (68%) of them started decreasing their time in the last six months. Nearly half of the ship-jumpers (45%) stopped going to the site because they got bored, and a quarter (28%) said they're simply more interested in visiting other web sites. One in six (16%) say they stopped because their parents joined.

- **The older they get, the more they blog and chat and download media online.** The number of kids who blog, chat, and download media more than doubles as they move from their preteen years into adolescence.