

Family  
Online Safety  
Institute

2023 RESEARCH REPORT

# GENERATIVE



EMERGING HABITS,  
HOPES AND FEARS

Conducted by

**KANTAR**

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While other forms of artificial intelligence have been around for many years – from Google Translate to Siri to autocorrect – generative AI made an impressive public debut with the launch of ChatGPT one year ago this month.

**Since that time, a proliferation of genAI tools and platforms have emerged including Bard, Claude, Dall-E2 and Midjourney. The recently released ChatGPT4 allows users to upload photos and files and then generate reports, descriptions and analysis of the content. Based on a photo of the inside of your fridge, it can come up with suggested meals and how to prepare them. And we're only at the beginning of what's possible.**

The implications of this new technology on teens and their parents are many. How will genAI affect how kids are taught in school and do homework? What will the impacts - both positive and negative - be on job prospects for parents, and the teens who will soon be entering the market? Who will bear responsibility for the negative influence that genAI tools may bring in the form of disinformation and deepfakes?

We set out with these and many other questions as we surveyed teens and parents across the US, Germany, and Japan about their use of genAI and what their hopes and fears are for this fast moving technology. We found curiosity and optimism, though there are plenty of concerns right below the surface. While many express a sense of inevitability about genAI's advances, there also remains a hopeful caution that we may be able to harness this latest technological revolution in a way that serves society and individuals alike.

**Stephen Balkam, CEO Family Online Safety Institute**  
November 2023



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## About this study:

This study was conducted by Kantar on behalf of the Family Online Safety Institute. It explores the current awareness levels\*, perceptions and engagement of both parents and teens toward generative AI (genAI).

The goal of the study is to assess the current understanding and usage of generative AI tools among parents and teens, including their perceived benefits as well as risks and concerns.

The study delves into the emerging habits, the hopes, and the fears of parents and teens when it comes to this powerful technology. Research was conducted in the United States, Germany, and Japan. This multi-country approach points to interesting similarities and differences in how parents and teens view generative AI in their market today.

\*After capturing their unprompted awareness along with open-ended examples of generative AI, parents and teens were given two definitions to help clearly distinguish between traditional and generative AI. The two definitions given were as follows:

- **Traditional AI:** A system that focuses on performing a specific task intelligently. It responds to set of inputs and has the capability to learn from data and make decisions or predictions based on that data.
- **Generative AI:** A system capable of generating new text, images, or other media in response to prompts, based on data that already exists.

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## Methodological Overview

This study was conducted in a two-phase approach, including both qualitative and quantitative elements:

### Phase I: Qualitative Focus Groups and Journal

28 parents and 30 teens participated across the US, Germany (DE), and Japan (JP).

Qualitative focus groups with parents and teens aged 13-17 were conducted in the US and Germany, and parents and teens were interviewed separately. The US and German focus groups were conducted from July 6 - July 12, 2023.

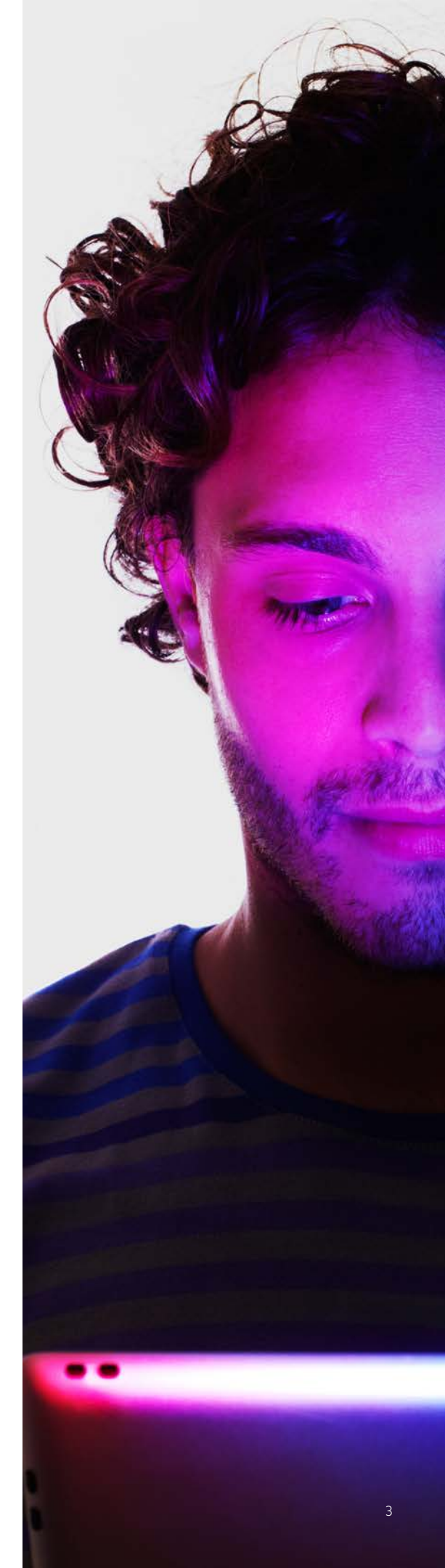
A qualitative, 3-day online journal activity was conducted in Japan only. The qualitative journal activities were conducted from July 11 - July 13, 2023.

 US	 DE	 JP
n= 7 Parents	n= 11 Parents	n= 10 Parents
n= 9 Teens	n= 11 Teens	n= 12 Teens

The qualitative work informed the design of the online survey for Phase II.

### Phase II: Quantitative Survey

An online quantitative study was conducted across the US, Germany, and Japan. Both parents and their teens participated in the same survey, where the parent completed the first half and their teen the second. 1000 surveys (combined parent and teen responses) were completed in each of the three countries, for a total sample of ~3,000 parents and ~3,000 teens. The quantitative survey was fielded among parents and teens aged 13-17 years old.



# KEY LEARNINGS

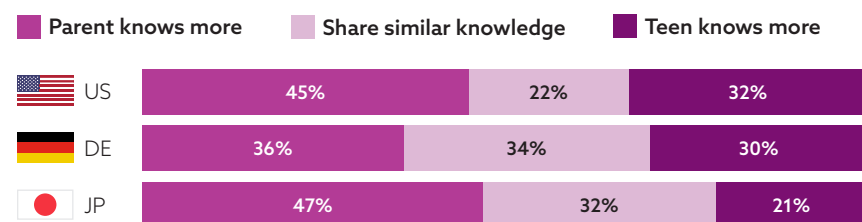


## 1

When it comes to generative AI, teens and parents are fairly evenly matched in their awareness of the technology – a departure from most other tech topics.

What's more, teens agree that parents have an edge in the perceived understanding of it, at least for now. Nearly half of US and Japanese teens (**45%** and **47%**, respectively) believe that their parents know more about genAI than they do, with roughly one-third of German teens (**36%**) saying the same.

Teens' perception on who is more knowledgeable about genAI

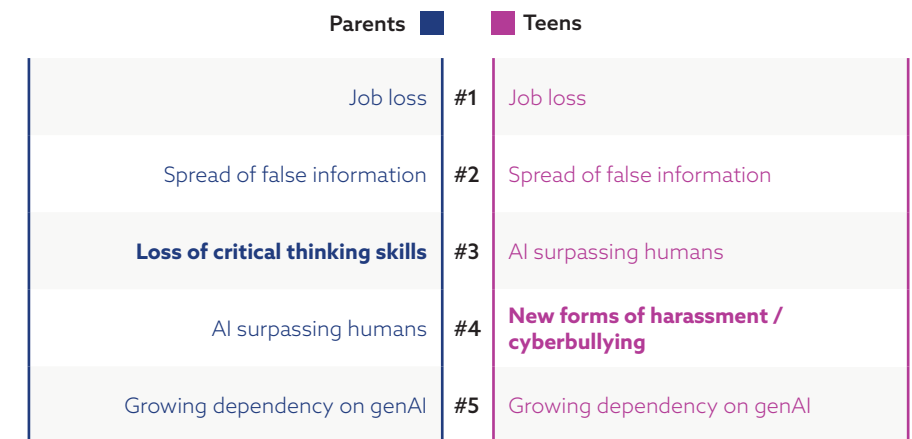


## 2

Two family-specific concerns about genAI include cyberbullying and loss of critical thinking skills.

Top concerns about generative AI include some unsurprising topics, likely driven by recent mass media coverage on the following elements: potential job loss, misinformation and AI surpassing human capabilities. However, this research uncovers two concerns specific to families: cyberbullying and loss of critical thinking. Teens are acutely aware of the potential for genAI to be used for more sophisticated means of bullying, or to create new or intensified forms of harassment. From parents' perspective, many express trepidation that their teens will lose opportunities to engage in deep analysis, original ideas and meaningful thinking.

Top 5 concerns or risks among all parents and all teens



## 3

Despite their concerns, a majority of parents feel positive about their teens using genAI.

Having experienced the proliferation of mobile devices and social media, parents are clear-eyed about both the costs and benefits of genAI even as these tools are just emerging.

Parents' sentiment and perception of teens using genAI today: feel positive





# 4

Most parents and teens expect and accept that genAI is here to stay and that it will be more embedded and ubiquitous in work, school, and their personal lives.

They recognize that they must adapt and learn to use genAI to complement their human abilities if they are to thrive in future academic and work settings.

Agree more with: ■ Parents ■ Teens

Using genAI tools will be a vital skill to have to remain competitive in school or career vs. society won't rely on it as much as we are talking about it



GenAI will augment or supplement humans, but we'll still need human creativity vs. it will surpass human capabilities and take over many tasks



Using genAI will make it easier to stay connected with others vs. it will make it harder to stay connected with others

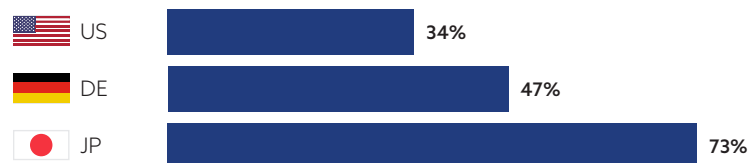


# 5

Today, a majority of Japanese parents and nearly half of German parents say that they don't have enough information and education about genAI.

In order to have meaningful conversations with their teens about these tools, parents express that they need more information on genAI, a challenge that is intensified by the rapid pace of change in the field.

Parents say they need more information about genAI

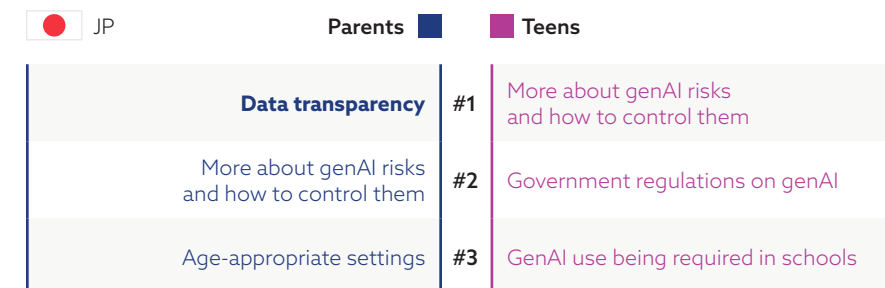
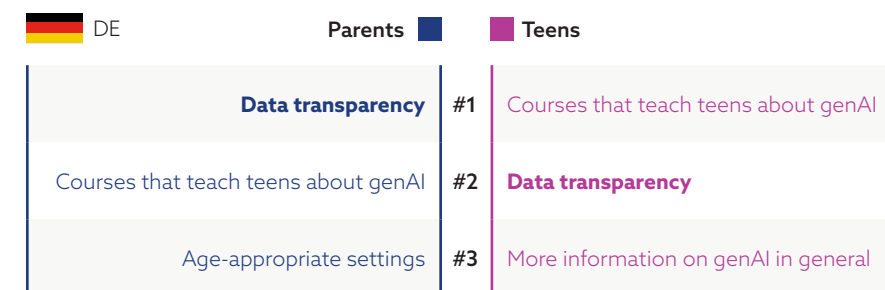
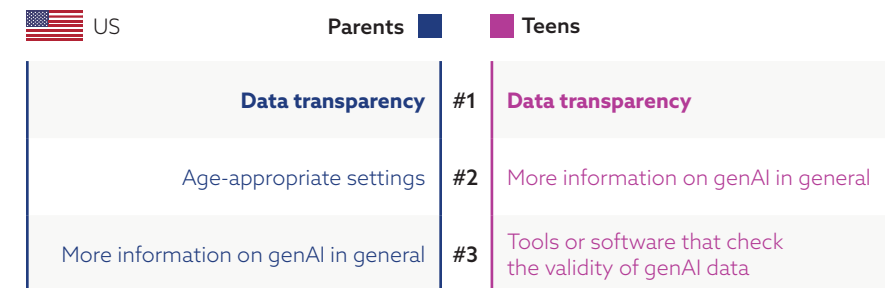


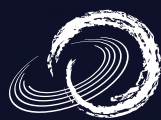
# 6

Transparency is critical to addressing parents' genAI concerns.

Parents and teens rank transparency of data practices as one of the top factors that would address many of their genAI concerns - with the exception of Japanese teens, who indicate that school classes and requirements would help alleviate their worries. Nearly half of all parents want more transparency as to the authenticity of the data. Transparency about the origin of the data is also on parents' minds.

Top 3 factors that would help address concerns about genAI





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