

Cox Mobile Survey Shows 86% of Sandwich Generation Say Managing Online Safety for Teens and Aging Parents Adds Stress to Their Lives

ATLANTA, July 25, 2025 – They're called the sandwich generation, those in their late 30s to 50s juggling teenagers and aging parents, and they're feeling the pressure when it comes to digital safety. *Connecting the Digital Dots: Online Habits and Safety Concerns Across Three Generations*, a new survey from Cox Mobile shows that 86% of this cohort feels managing online safety for their children and parents adds stress to their lives. Nearly 1 in 3 say that stress can feel overwhelming.

Why it Matters: Worries are turning into reality. Online predators, inappropriate content, cyberbullying, and identity theft top the list of concerns for those in the sandwich generation.

When it comes to their teens:

- Roughly one in three respondents report that their teens have been exposed to inappropriate content over the past 12 months.
- More than a quarter have experienced cyberbullying.
- 20% encountered online predators.

And for their parents:

- More than a third said that their parents had experienced phishing scams, malware, and/or data breaches in the last year.
- 60% are worried about the risk of identity theft.

Across the board, respondents consider social media one of the greatest threats to online safety.

"Technology has incredible potential to foster connection, learning, and independence across all generations, but families shouldn't have to navigate the digital landscape alone," said Jill Murphy, chief content officer at Common Sense Media. "When we equip parents and caregivers with practical tools and knowledge, digital safety becomes less overwhelming and more integrated into everyday family life."

Some Good News: Most sandwich generation respondents report discussing online safety with their teens and parents regularly – many do so daily or several times a week. They are coaching them to take more precautions, such as creating strong, unique passwords (62%), enabling multi-factor authentication (56%), and removing unsafe apps and channels altogether (53%).

"Today's families are more digitally connected than ever, and for the sandwich generation, this means managing technology use

and ensuring safety for themselves, their teens, and their aging parents,” said Colleen Langner, Chief Residential Officer of Cox Communications. “Our Cox Mobile research shows that this generation is actively taking steps to protect their families online. We’re here to make that job a little easier for people of all ages with tools and guidance that help make online safety feel less overwhelming and more manageable.”

Additional Findings and Resources:

Beyond the Sandwich Generation, *Connecting the Digital Dots* reveals how teens and older adults are navigating screen time, social media, mental health, and AI use.

To view the full findings and access online safety resources, visit www.coxmobilesafety.com.

About the Connecting the Digital Dots Survey

Cox Communications commissioned a blind survey of U.S. teens, seniors, and the sandwich generation in May of 2025 to learn more about their online habits and safety concerns. Respondents to the survey included a total of 500 teens between the ages of 13 and 17, 500 seniors aged 65+, and 600 parents (ages 39 – 59) of teens between the ages of 13 and 17 with aging parents. The margin of error for this survey is +/-4% for each age group.

About Cox Communications

Cox Communications is committed to creating meaningful moments of human connection through technology. As the largest private broadband company in America, we own network infrastructure that reaches more than 30 states. Our fiber-powered wireline and wireless connections are available to more than 12 million homes and businesses and support advanced cloud and managed IT services nationwide. We’re the largest division of Cox Enterprises, a family-owned business founded in 1898 by Governor James M. Cox that is dedicated to empowering others to build a better future for the next generation.

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Additional assets available online:

<https://newsroom.cox.com/2025-07-24-Cox-Mobile-Survey-Shows-86-of-Sandwich-Generation-Say-Managing-Online-Safety-for-Teens-and-Aging-Parents-Adds-Stress-to-Their-Lives>