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The Kids are Alright*

A survey of the privacy habits and preferences of teens and their parents on social networks

October 2010

* *Improvement Needed*

Key Findings

- **It's a Family Affair (on Facebook)** – Facebook was the most often used social network. Many teens are responsible for getting their parents onto Facebook and most are friends with their parents.
- **Privacy is Important** - Privacy is important to parents and teens when using social networking websites.
- **Teen Monitoring** - While parents feel their teens are responsible with their privacy they still report a high-level of monitoring and seem to be aware of how much their teen is using these kinds of websites.
- **Teens Need Oversight** - There are many pitfalls to using social networking – over posting, over-friending, over sharing - websites and teens report falling into them more frequently than their parents. Open discussions about how to use these websites and what are appropriate practices for their age are definitely needed.
- **Parent Awareness** - Many parents may be unaware that their teen is blocking specific content from them.
- **Parent Control** - Parents want to have greater control of their teen's information and in some cases are asking the social networking companies to help them.
- **More Education Needed.** From all sectors including schools, government, and organizations engaged – both corporate and non-profit – on Internet privacy, security, and safety
- **Privacy Practice Improvement:** More social networks and companies using social networking tools need to understand the privacy issues and provide more transparent policies, easier to access controls, and default settings that better protect this special group
- **Teens' Use in the Future** - We feel that there is an open question when it comes to how teens will use social networking in the future. Will their use mirror their parents as they mature or will their standards of use become the mainstream?

Highlights



- 80 percent of parents and 78 percent of teens feel in control of their personal information on social networking sites;
- 84 percent of parents are confident their teen is responsible with personal information on a social networking site;
- 72 percent of parents surveyed monitor their teens' accounts, with 50 percent of these monitoring weekly, 35 percent daily and 10 percent monthly;
- 82 percent of parents feel they should be able to delete information from their teens' accounts by contacting Facebook or other sites;
- 18 percent of teens have been embarrassed or disciplined as a result of a posting;
- 80 percent of teens use privacy settings at some point to hide content from certain friends and/or parents;
- 68 percent of teens surveyed have *at some time* accepted friend invites from people they don't know, with 8 percent accepting all; 34 percent accepting some; and 26 percent accepting rarely.

Approach and Methodology

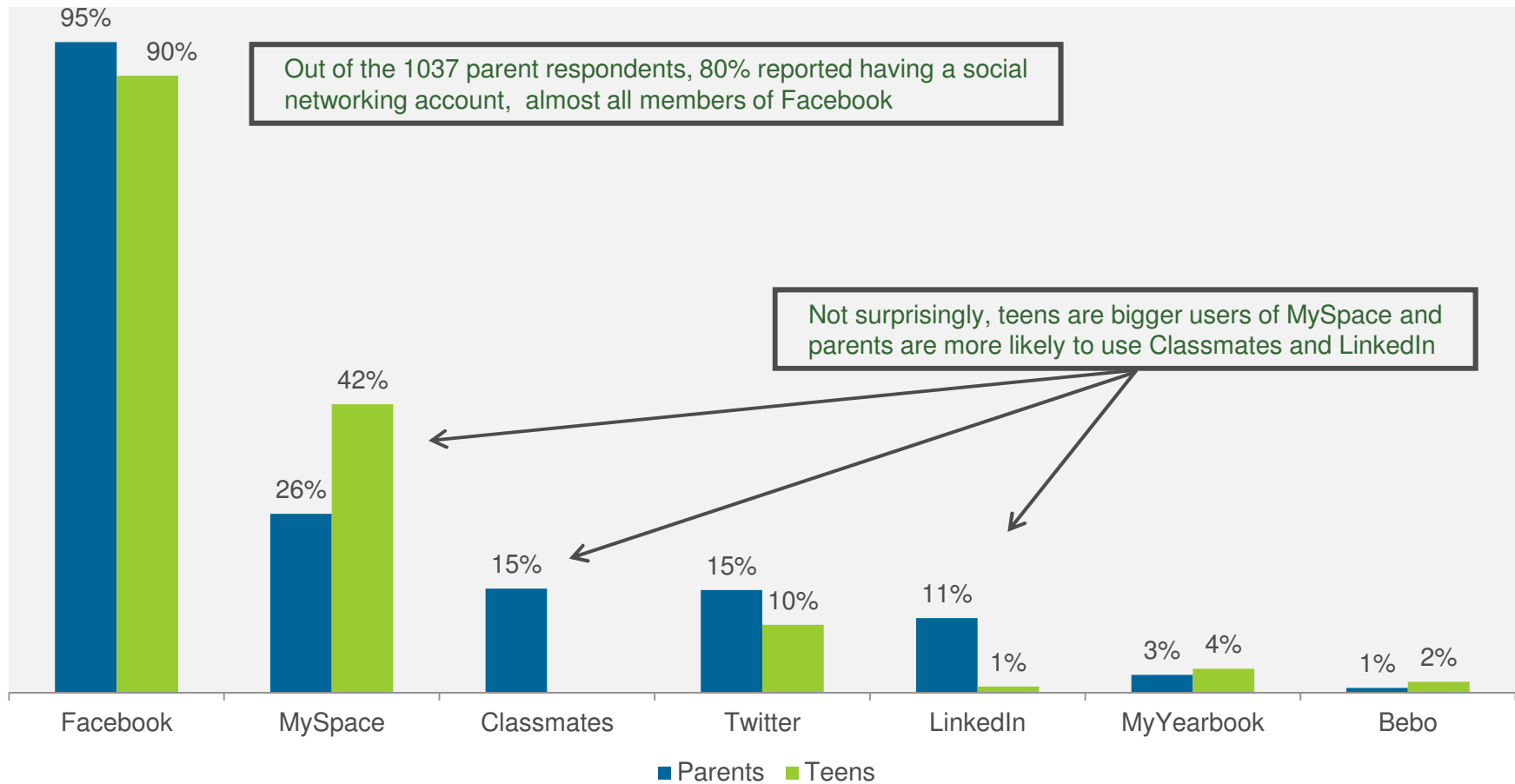
- **Survey Timing**
 - The survey was conducted between June 24 and July 1, shortly after the announcement of Facebook privacy policy changes in April and June 2010
- **Survey Methodology**
 - Email invitations were sent to 4,000 of Lightspeed Research's MySurvey Panelists. These panelists reported having a teenager in the household when joining the MySurvey panel. Of the 1,929 panelists who responded to the survey, 1,037 qualified and completed the survey.
 - The data was weighted to demographic estimates of online households with a teen having a social networking account. These estimates were created by applying data collected in October 2009 by Lightspeed Research to 2009 Current Population survey data.



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Parent and Teen Use of Social Networking

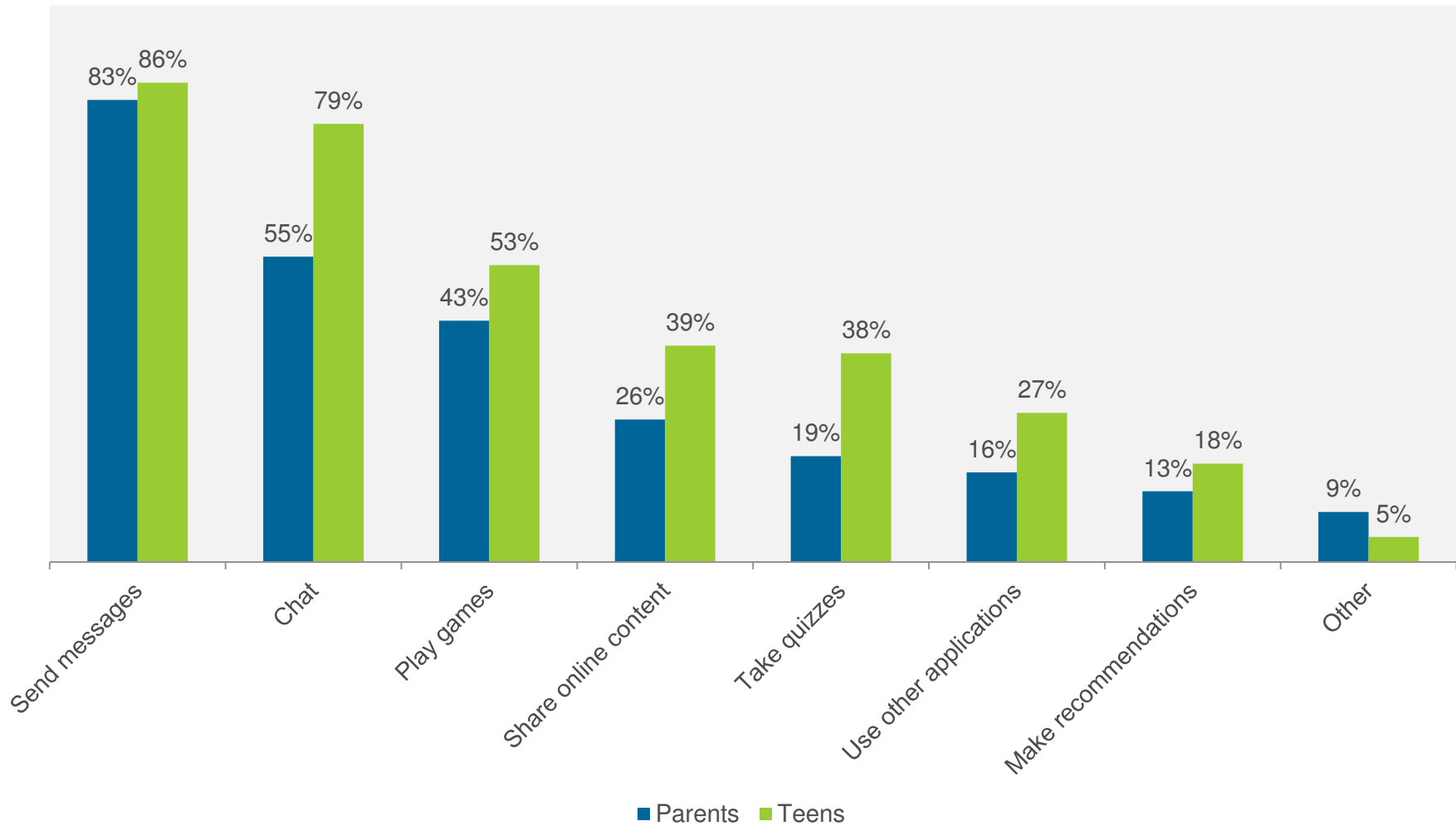
Facebook is dominating use by both parents and teens



Parent Question: Which of the following social networking websites do you use? (Select all that apply) (N=825)

Teen Question: Which of the following social networking websites do you use? (Select all that apply) (N=1037)

Teens engage in more activities on social networks than parents

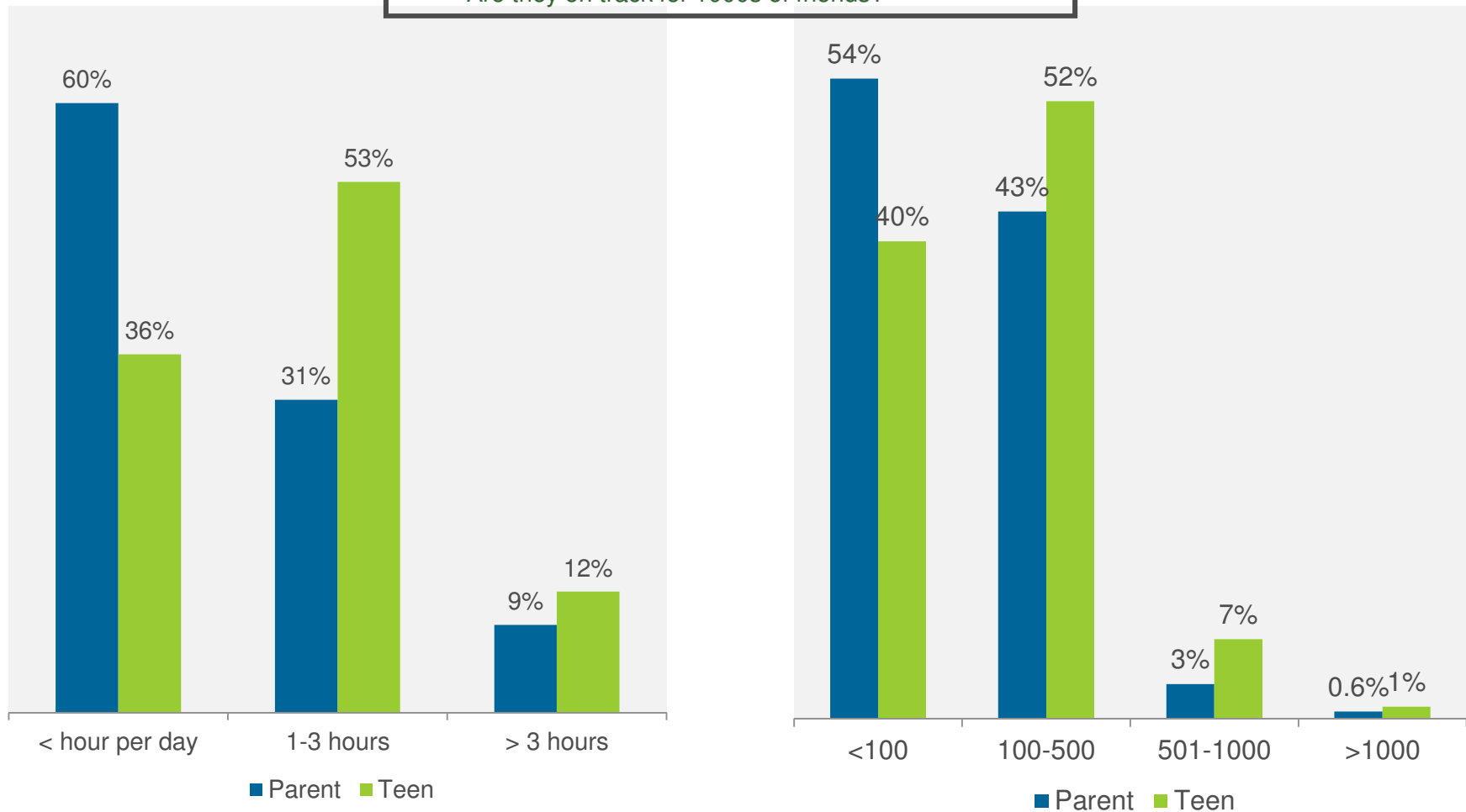


Parent Question: Which of the following activities do you engage in on social networking sites? (N=825)
Teen Question: Which of the following activities do you engage in on social networking sites? (N=1037)

Teens spend more time than their parents on social networks and are more likely to have more than 100 friends



How will teens usage change as they grow older?
Are they on track for 1000s of friends?



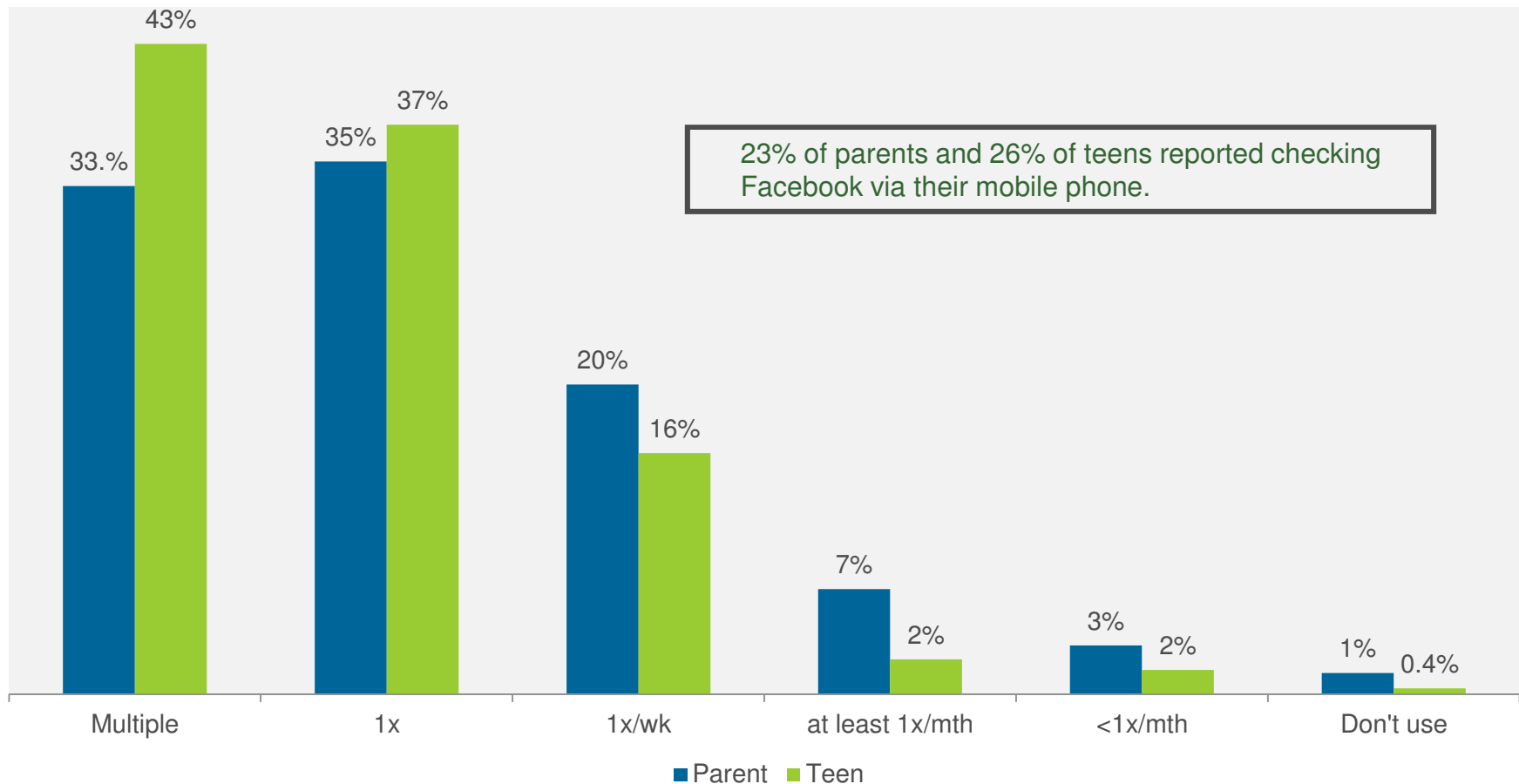
Parent Question: How many Facebook friends do you have? (N=783)

Teen Question: How many Facebook friends do you have? (N= 933)

Parent Question: How much time would you estimate you spend on social networking websites on an average day? (N=825)

Teen Question: How much time would you estimate you spend on social networking websites on an average day? (N=1037)

The majority of parents and teens are checking their Facebook accounts at least once a day, with many checking multiple times



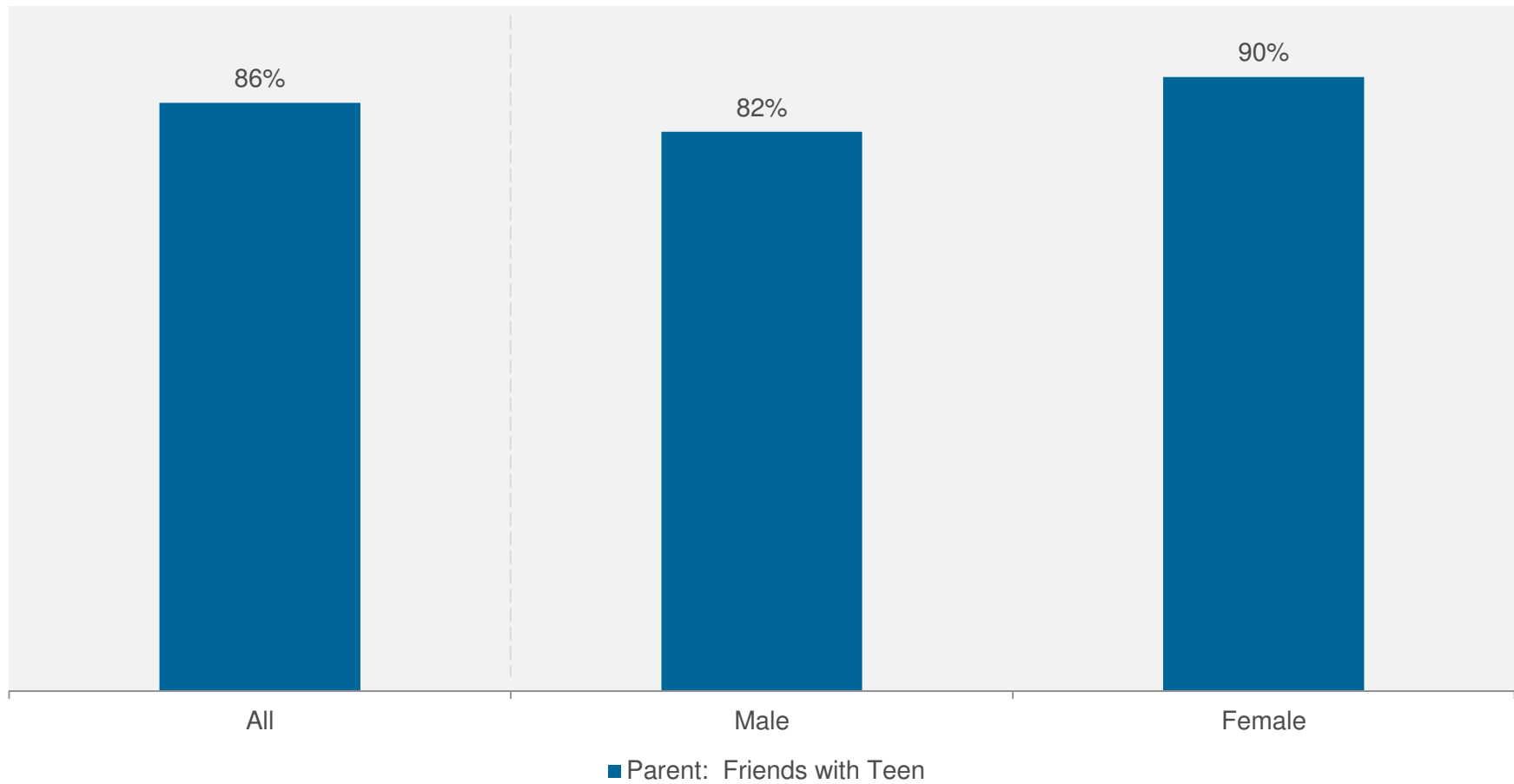
Parent Question: How often do you check Facebook? (N=783)

Teen Question: How often do you check Facebook? (N=933)

Parent Question: Do you check Facebook on your mobile phone? (N= 783)

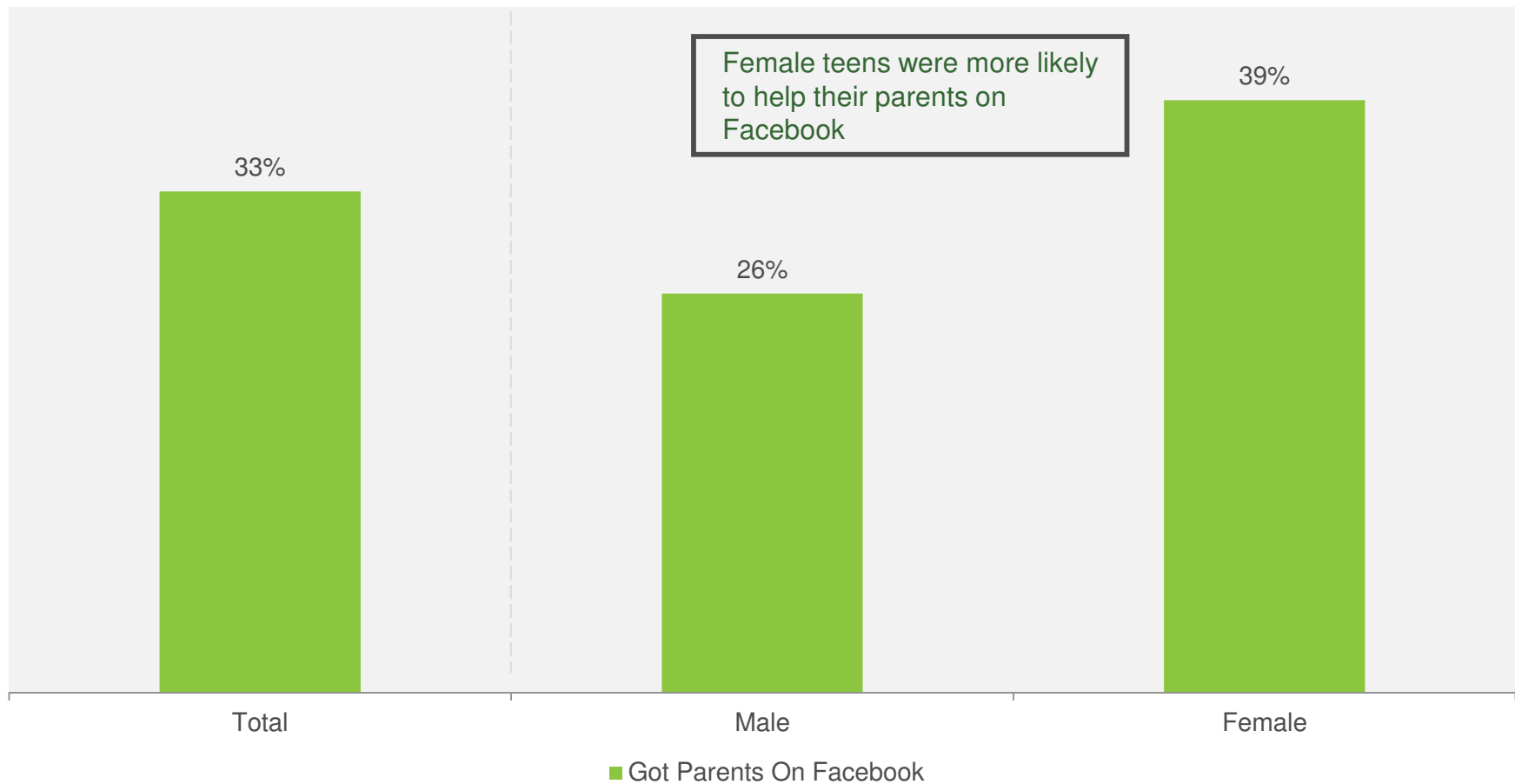
Teen Question: Do you check Facebook on your mobile phone? (N= 933)

Most parents are friends with their teens, although more likely with a female teen than a male teen



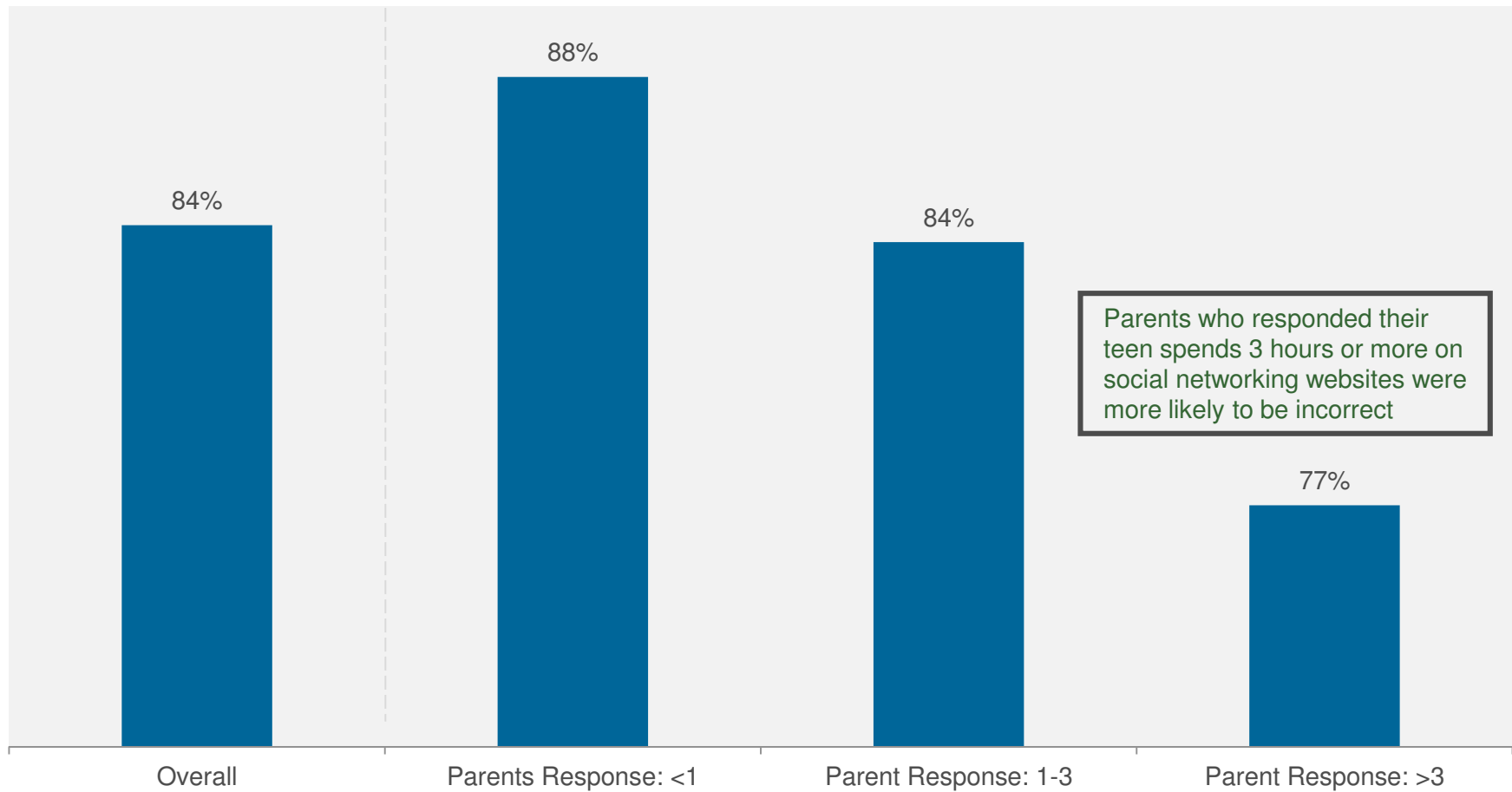
Parent Question: Are you friends with your teenager on Facebook? (N=725)

In households where both the parent and teen have Facebook accounts, more than a third of teens reported getting their parent to join Facebook



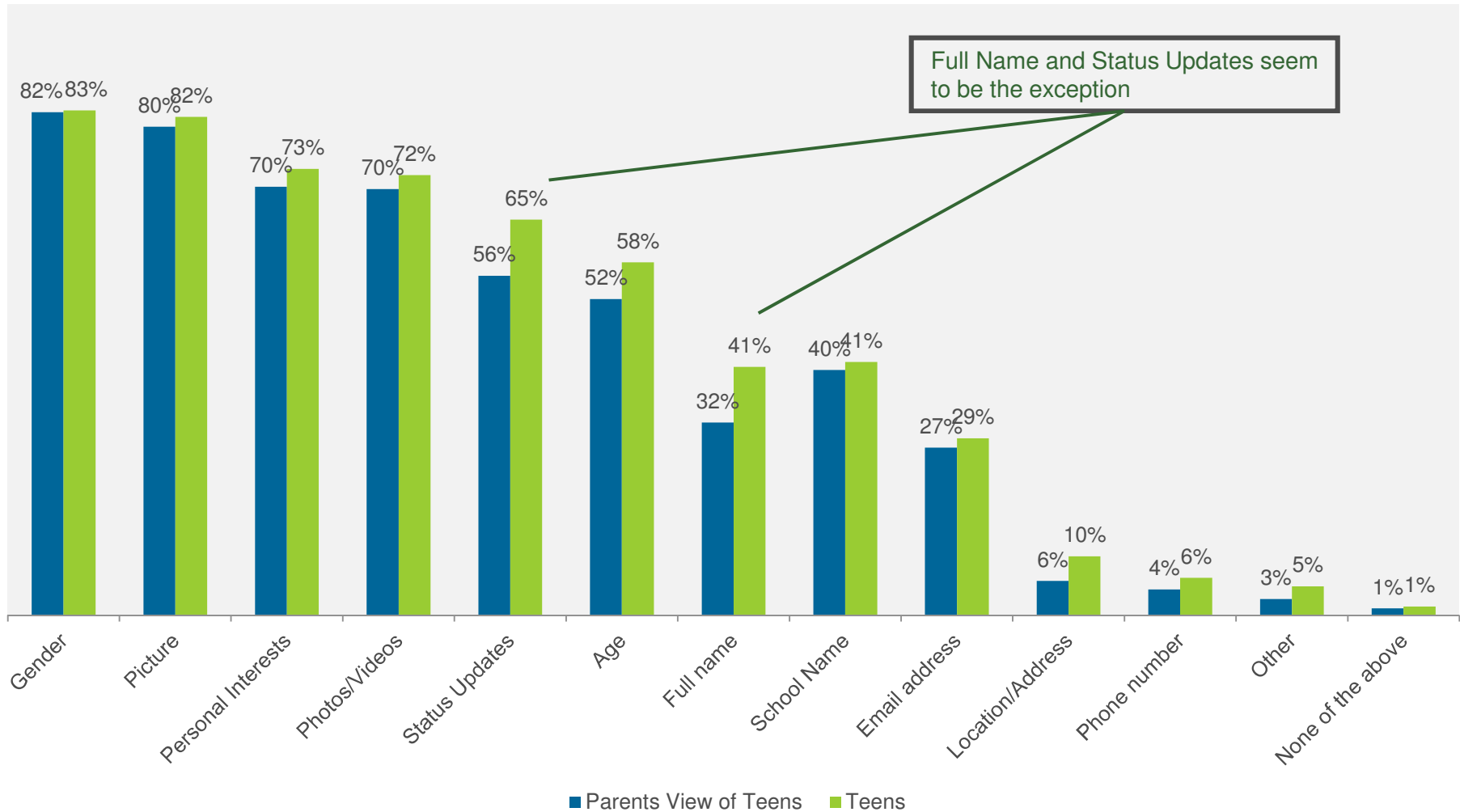
Teen Question : Did you help get one or both of your parents on Facebook? (N=725)

Parents have a very good idea of how much time their teens are spending on social networks with over 84% correctly predicting how much their teens use these types of websites



Parent Question: How much time would you estimate your teen spends on social networking websites on an average day? (N=1037)
Teen Question: How much time would you estimate you spend on social networking websites on an average day? (N= 1037)

Parents have a fairly accurate understanding of what types of data teens are posting



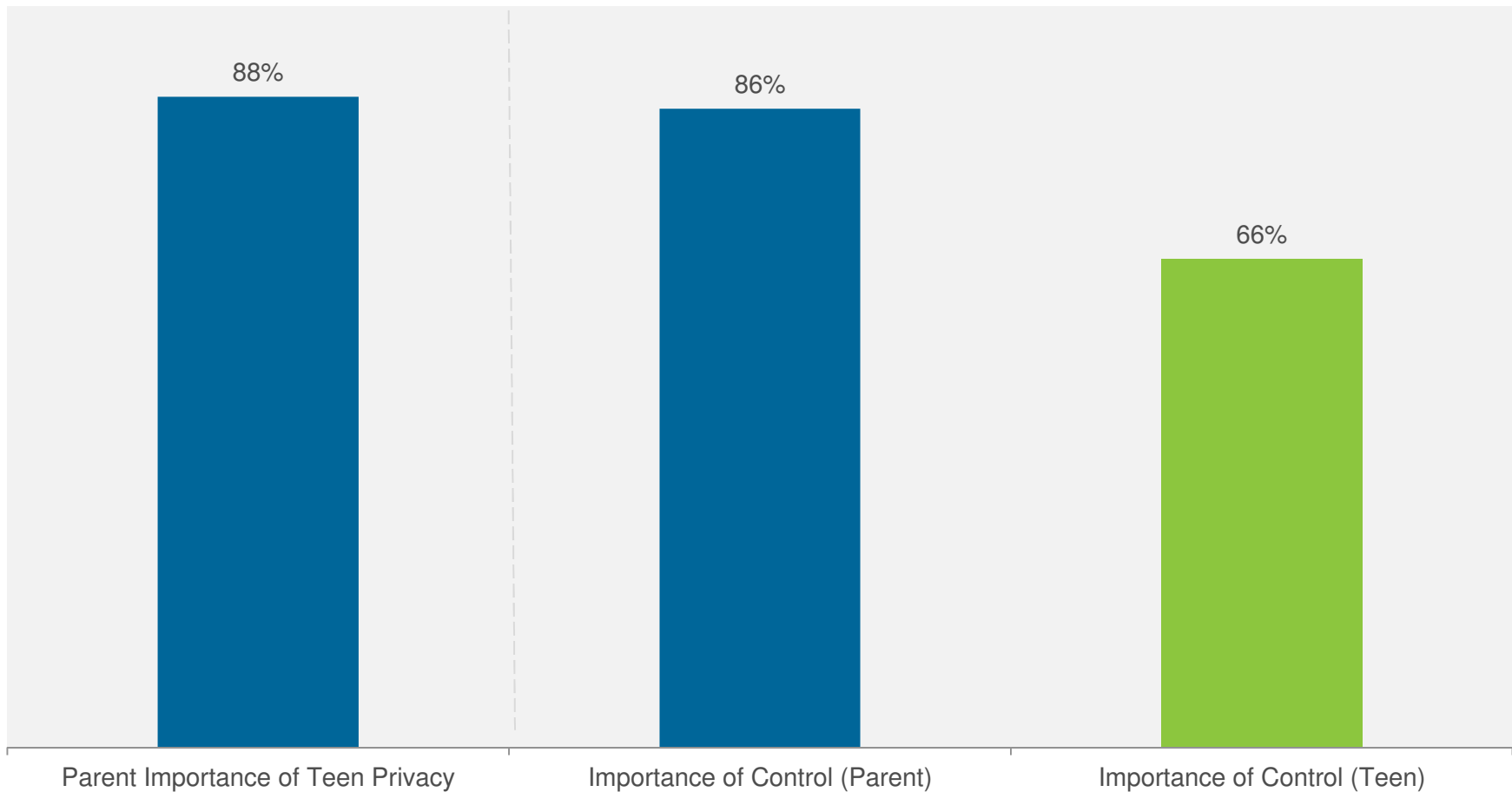
Parent about Teen Question: Which of the following types of data do you think your teen posts on their social networking profile? (N=1037)
 Teen Question: Which of the following types of data do you post on your social networking profile? (N=1037)



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Social Networking: The Importance of Privacy and Control

Privacy for teens is important to their parents and control of their own information is important to both parents and teens

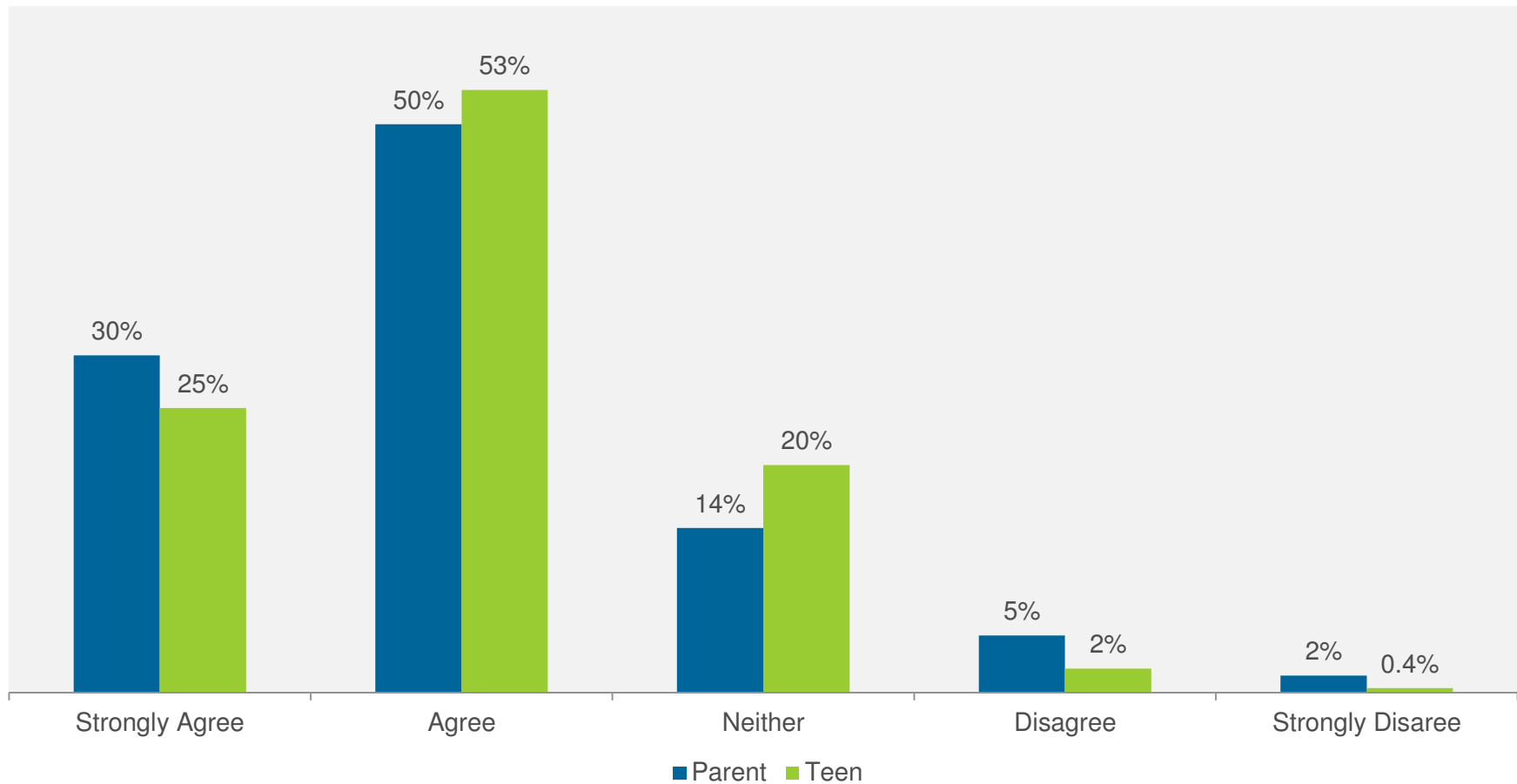


Parent Question: How important to you is your teen's online privacy on a social networking site? (N=1037) - Top 2 Box

Parent Question: How important is it that you control who gets to see your information on a social networking site? (N=825) – Top 2 Box

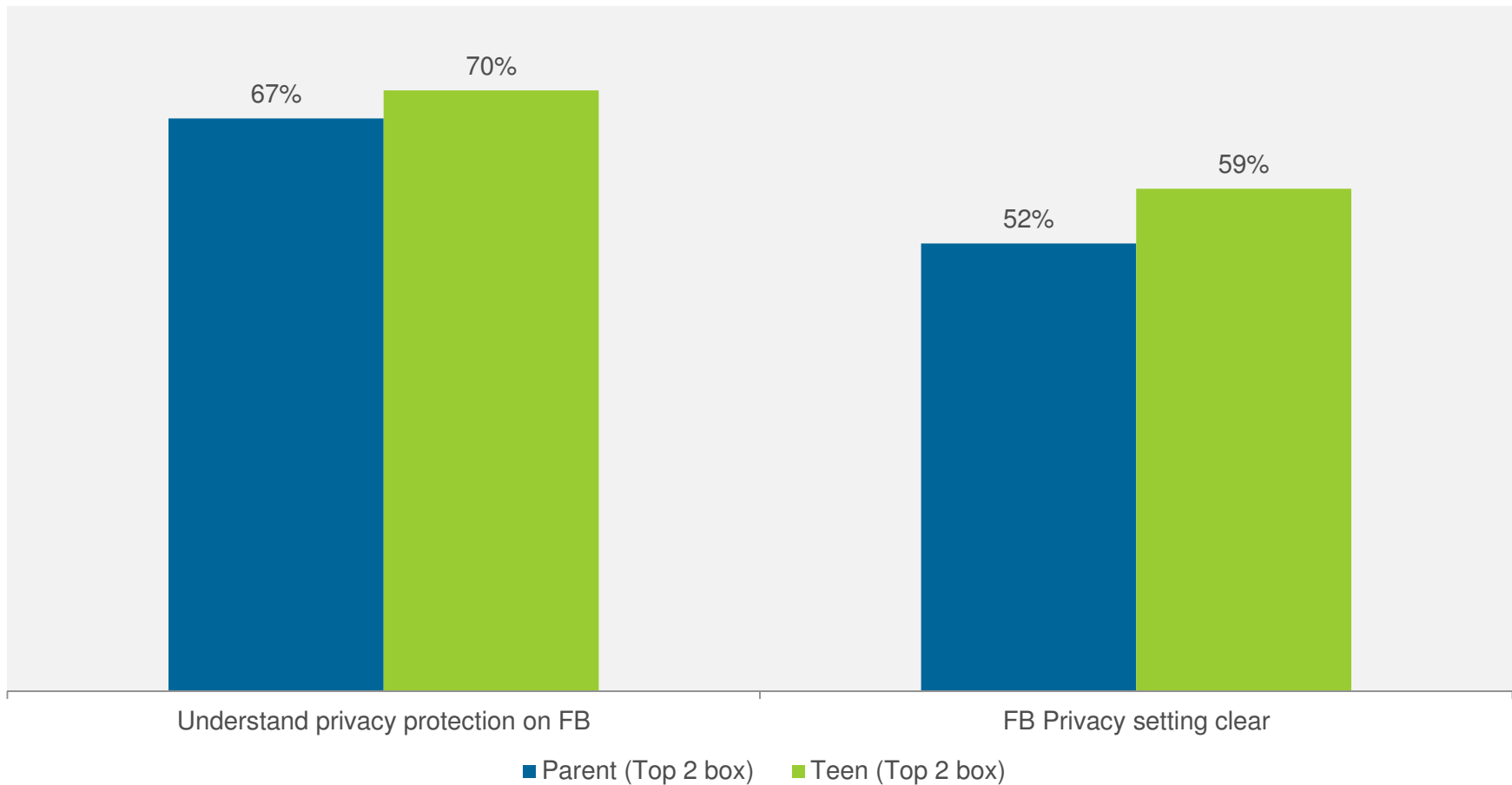
Teen Question: How important is it that you control who gets to see your information on a social networking site? (N=1037) – Top 2 Box

But generally both parent and teen users feel in control of their information on social networking websites



Parent Question: I feel in control of my personal information when using social networking websites? (N=825)
Teen Question : I feel in control of my personal information when using social networking websites? (N=1037)

The majority of both parents and teens understand how to protect their privacy on Facebook and feel Facebook's privacy controls are clear and easy to use



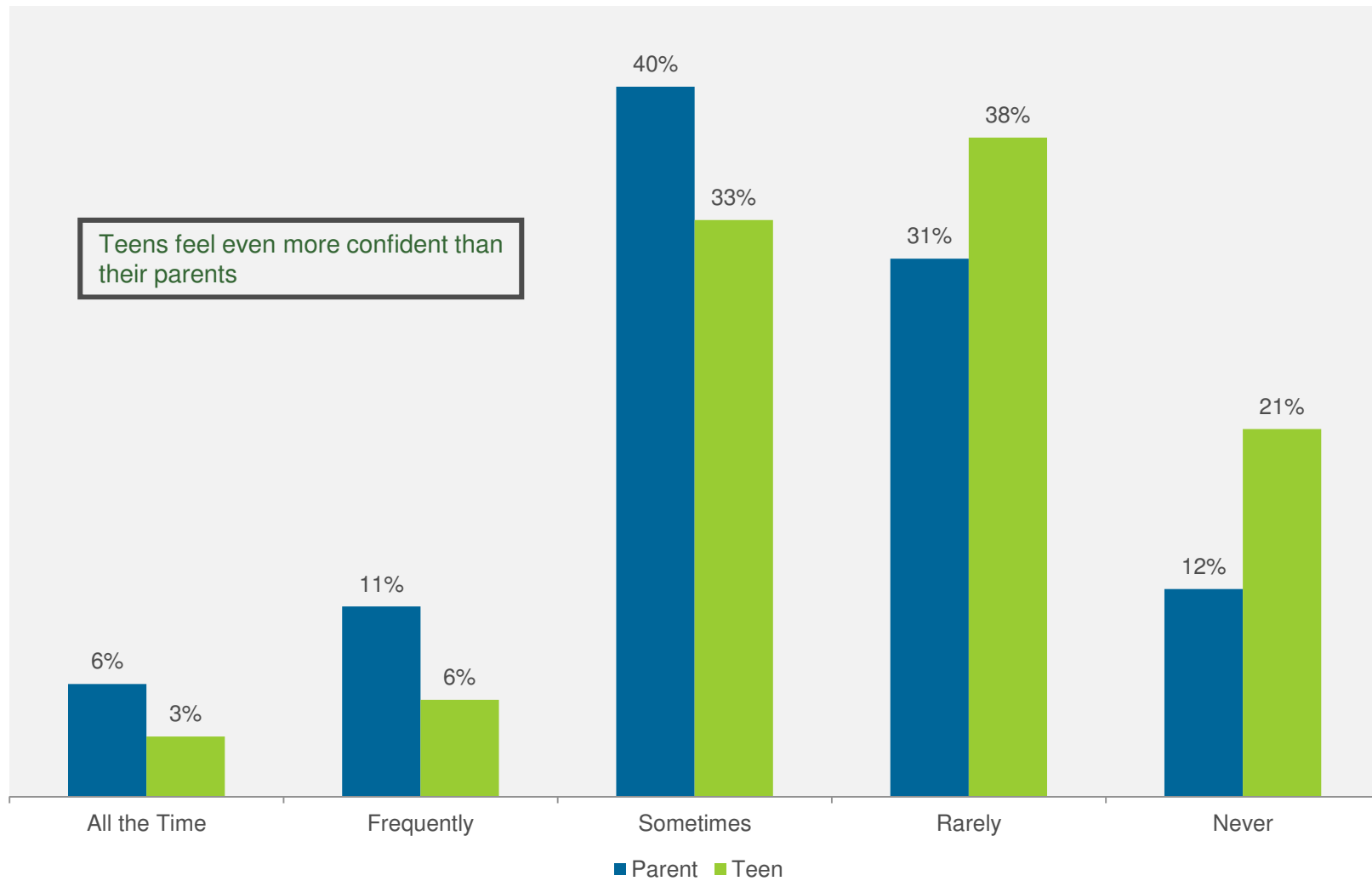
Parent Question: I understand how to protect my privacy on Facebook. (N=783)

Teen Question: I understand how to protect my privacy on Facebook. (N=933)

Parent Question : The privacy settings on Facebook are clear and easy-to-use. (N=783)

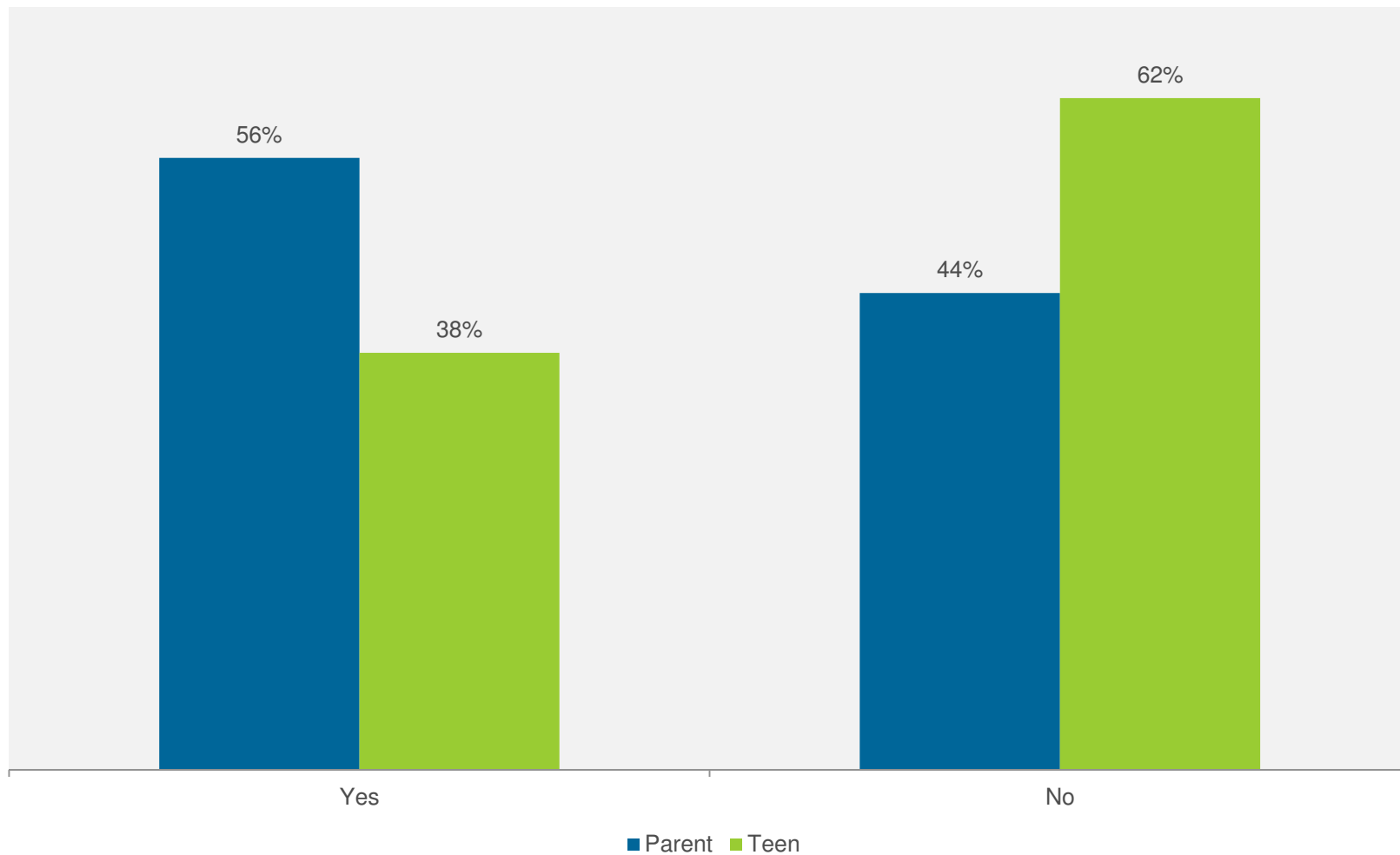
Teen Question : The privacy settings on Facebook are clear and easy-to-use. (N=933)

Furthermore, the majority are not worried about their privacy on Facebook



Parent Question: How often do you worry about your privacy when using Facebook? (N=783)
Teen Question : How often do you worry about your privacy when using Facebook? N=933

Most parents and many teens have adjusted their privacy settings in the last 6 months



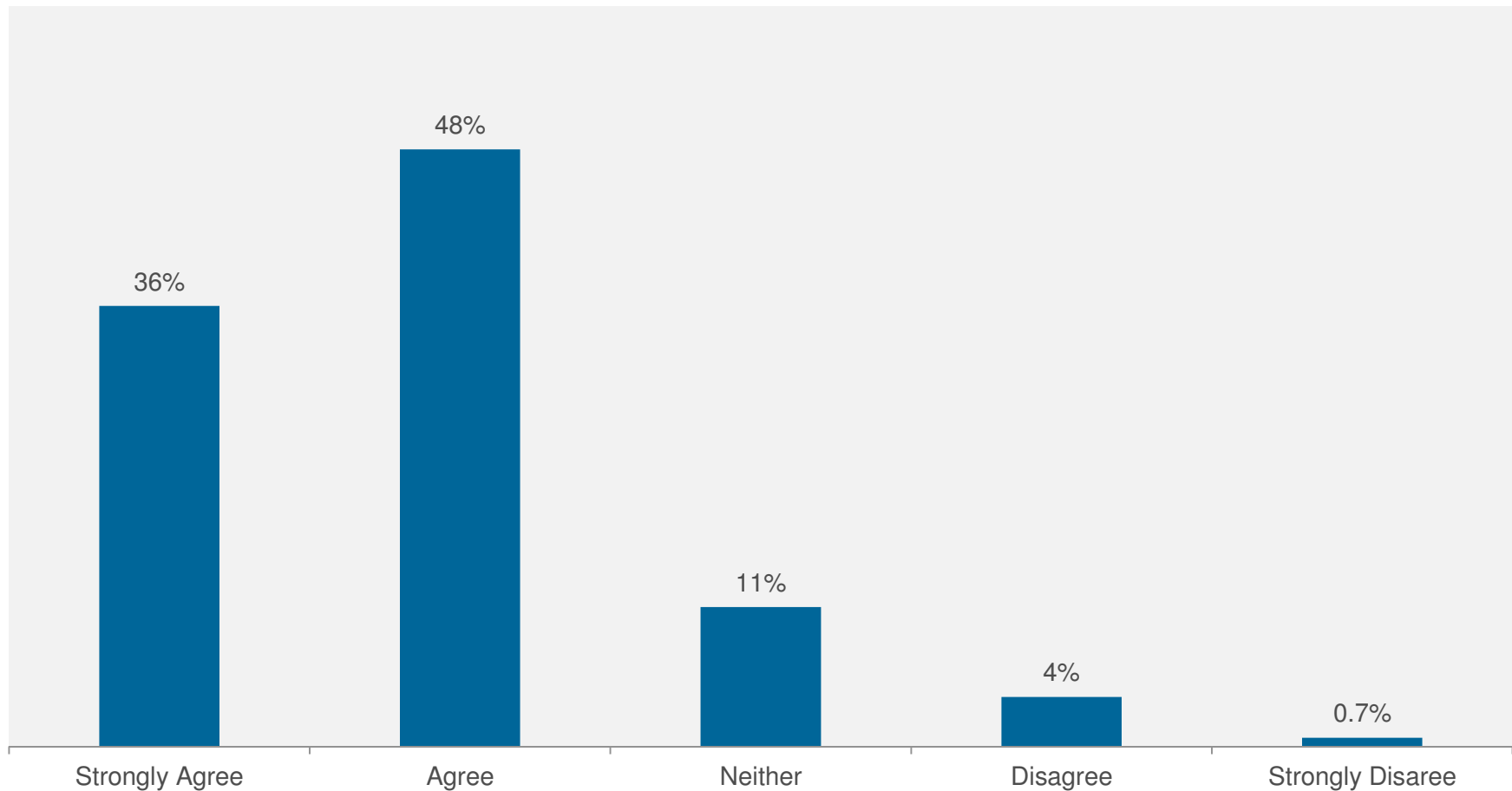
Parent Question: Have you adjusted your Facebook privacy settings in the past 6 months to hide the visibility of information you consider personal? (N=783)
Teen Question : Have you adjusted your Facebook privacy settings in the past 6 months to hide the visibility of information you consider personal? N=933)



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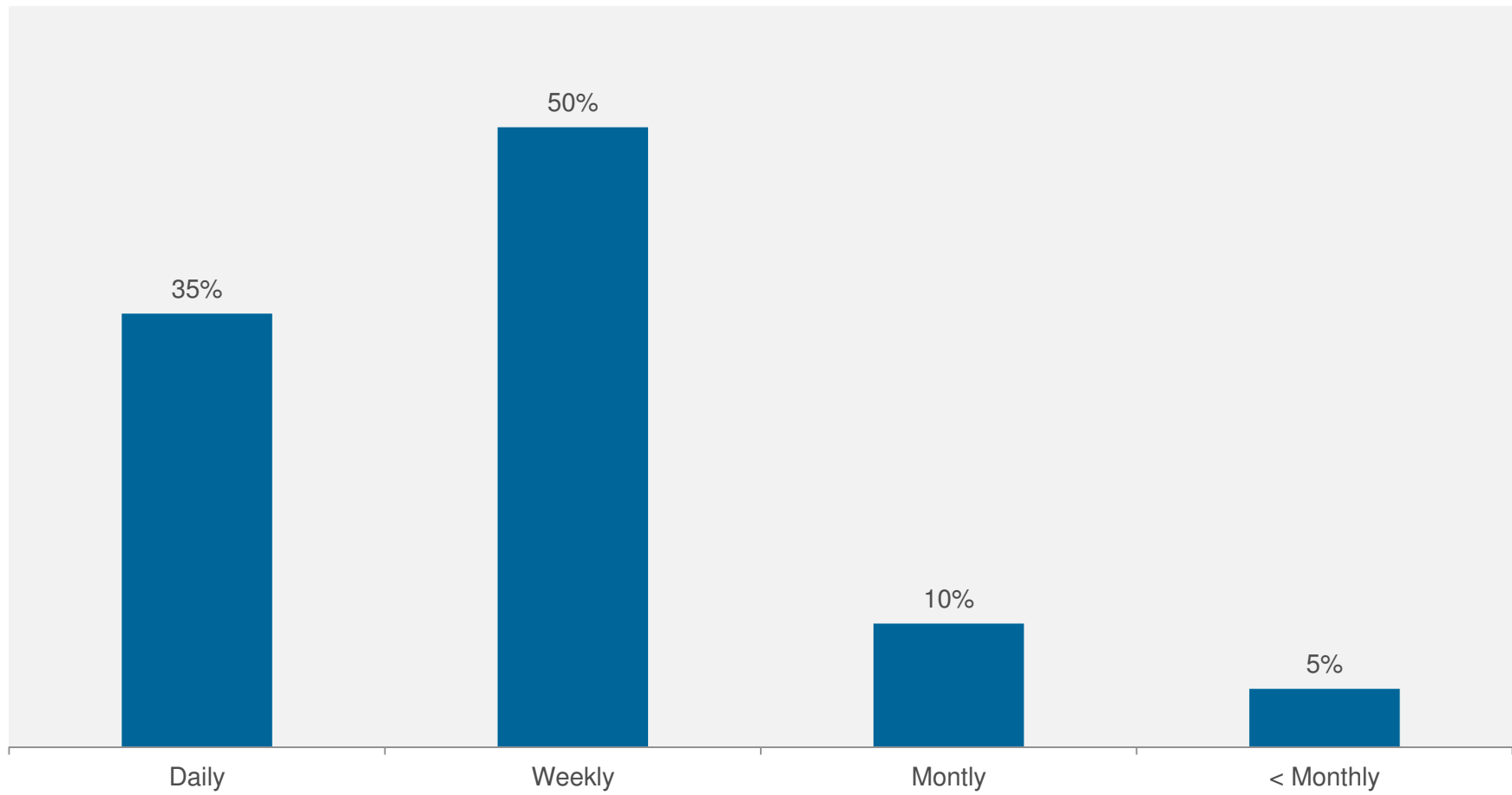
Parents are monitoring

Parents are confident that their teens are responsible with personal information



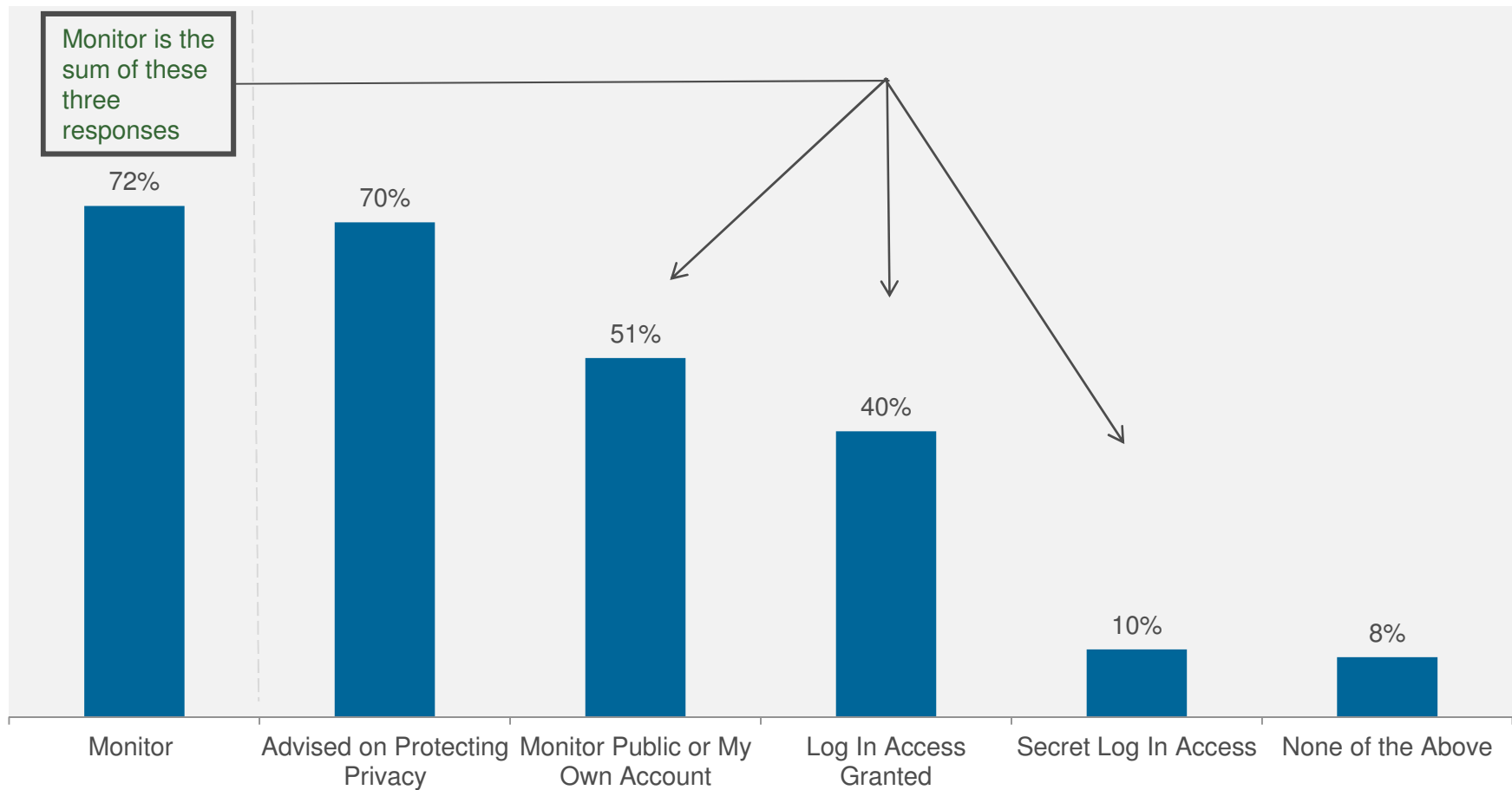
Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statement: My teen is responsible when sharing their personal information on a social networking website. (N=1037)

However, 72% of parents monitor their teen's social networking account, most at least weekly



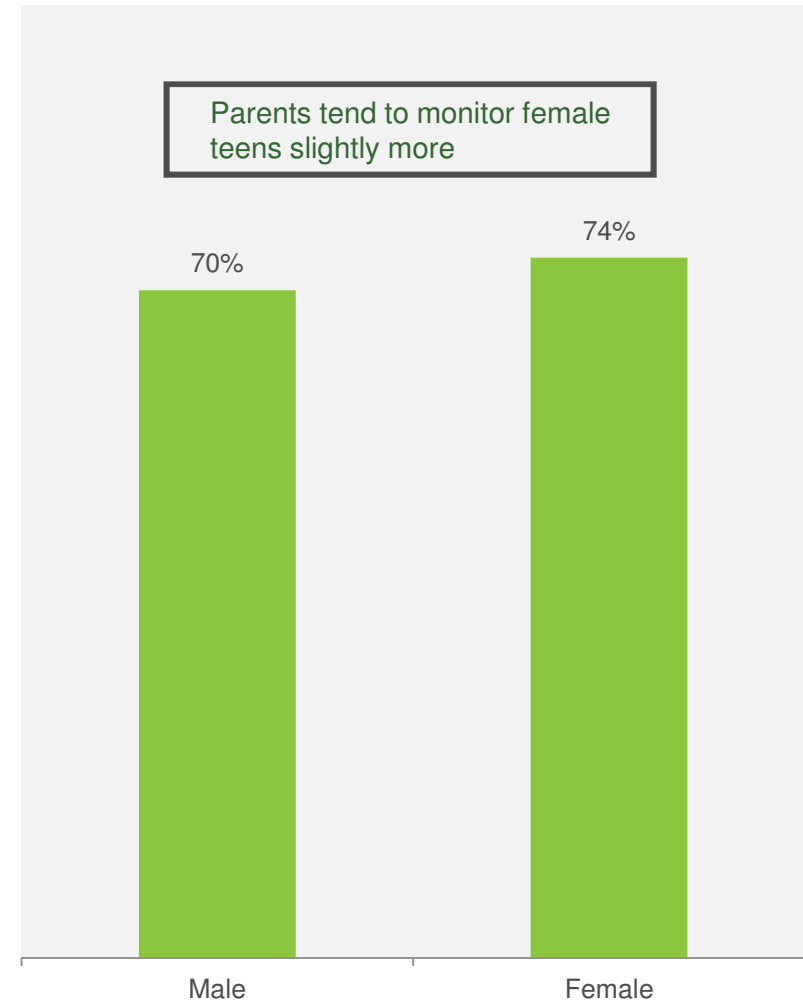
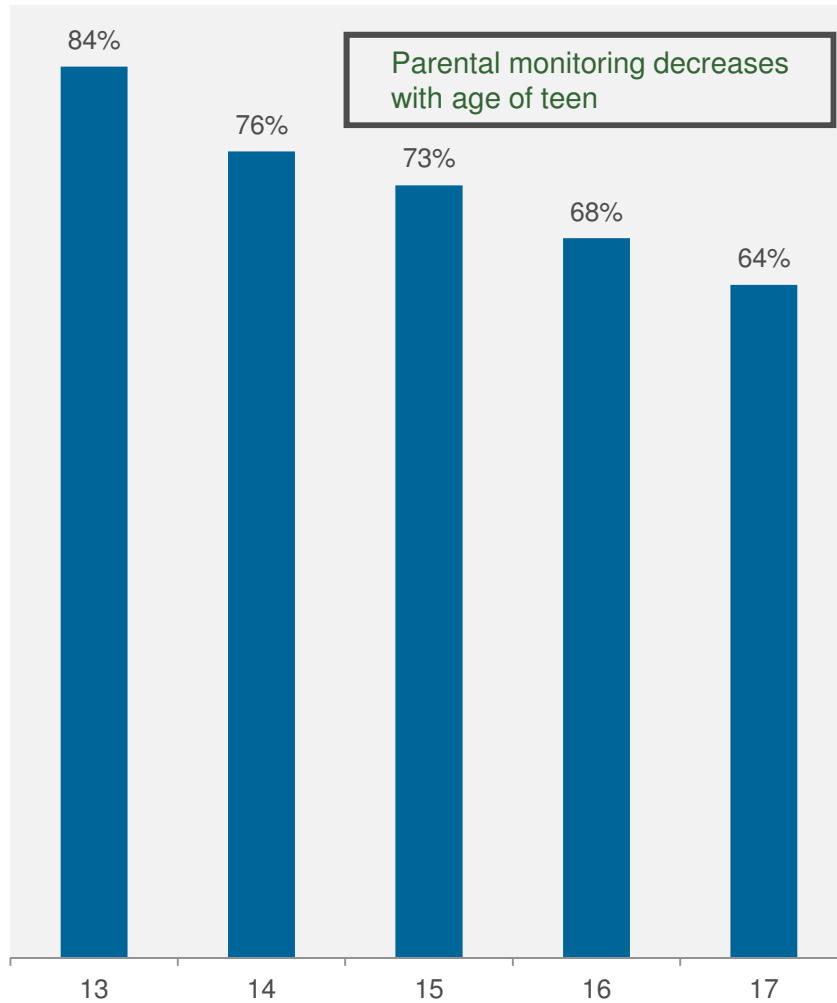
Parent Question: How often do you monitor their social networking account? (N=746)

Parents use multiple methods to track their teens use of social networking websites



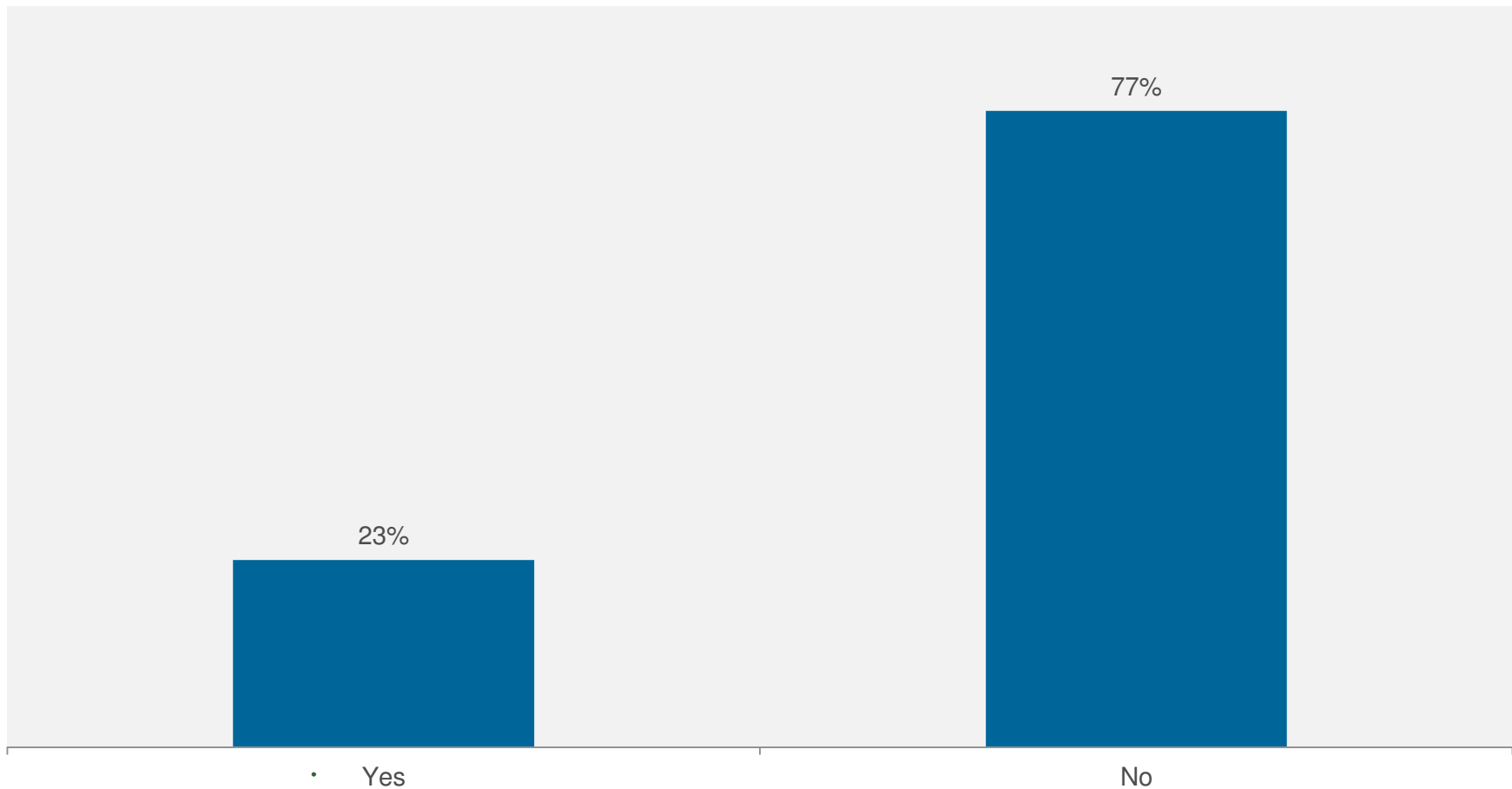
Parent Question: What privacy precautions do you take with your teen's social networking account? (N=1037)

And are more likely to use these precautions with younger teens and female teens



Parent Question: What privacy precautions do you take with your teen's social networking account? (N=1037)

More than one out of five parents have previously blocked or restricted their teen's use of social networks over privacy concerns



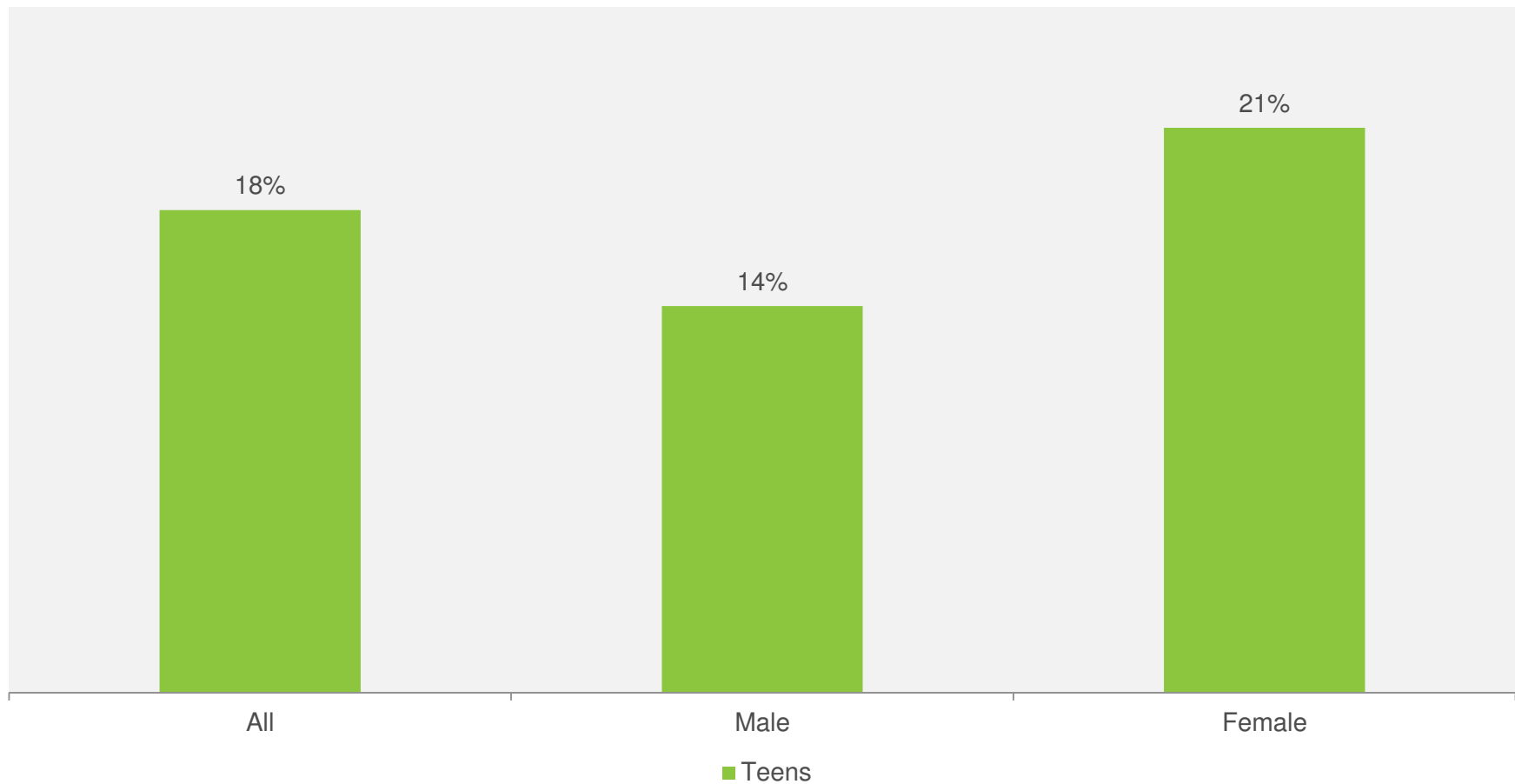
Parent Question: Have you ever blocked or restricted your teen's access to a social networking website because of privacy concerns?
(N=1037)



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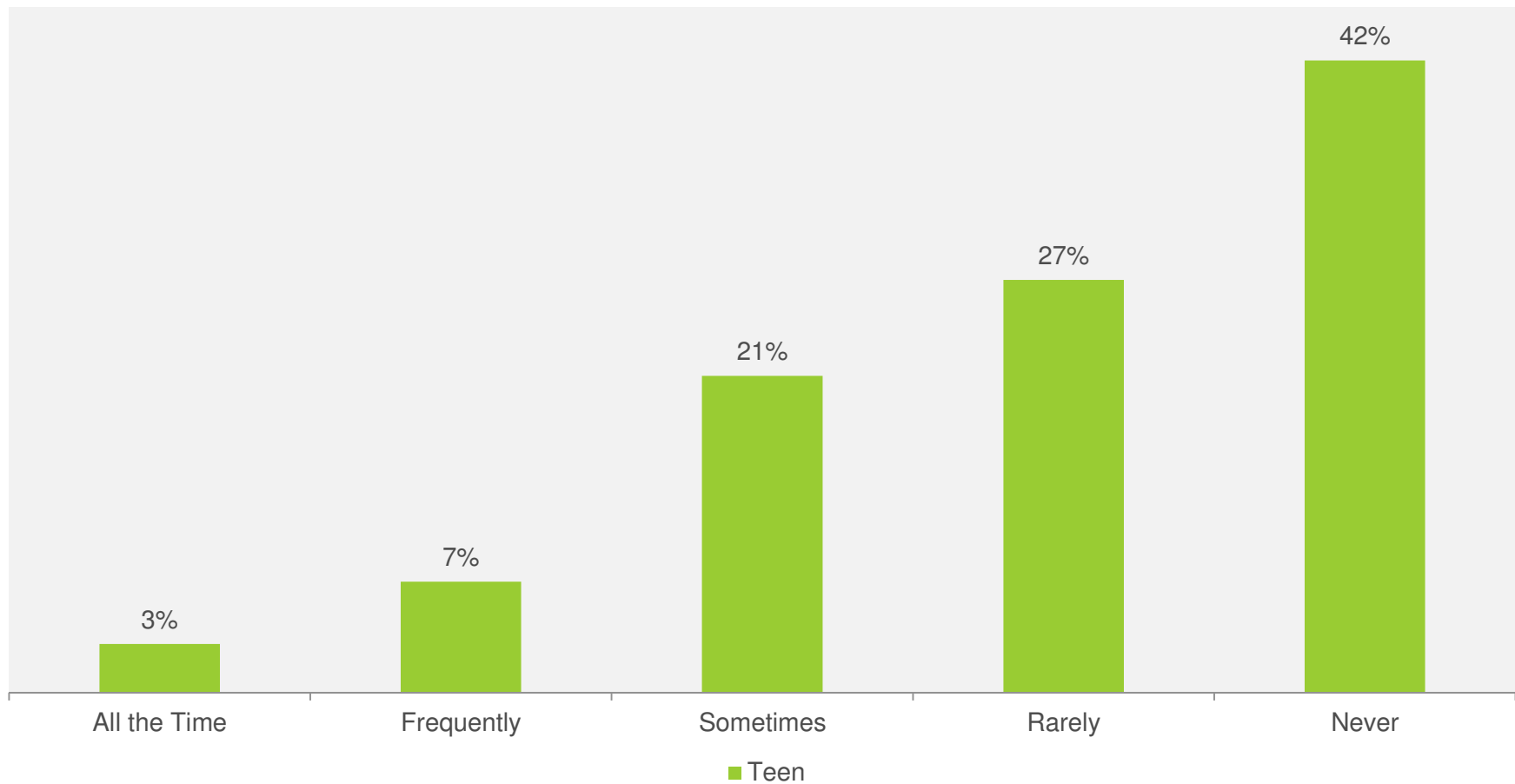
Some Areas for Parental Concern

Despite substantial parental monitoring, many teens report that they have either been embarrassed or disciplined as a result of a posting on a social network



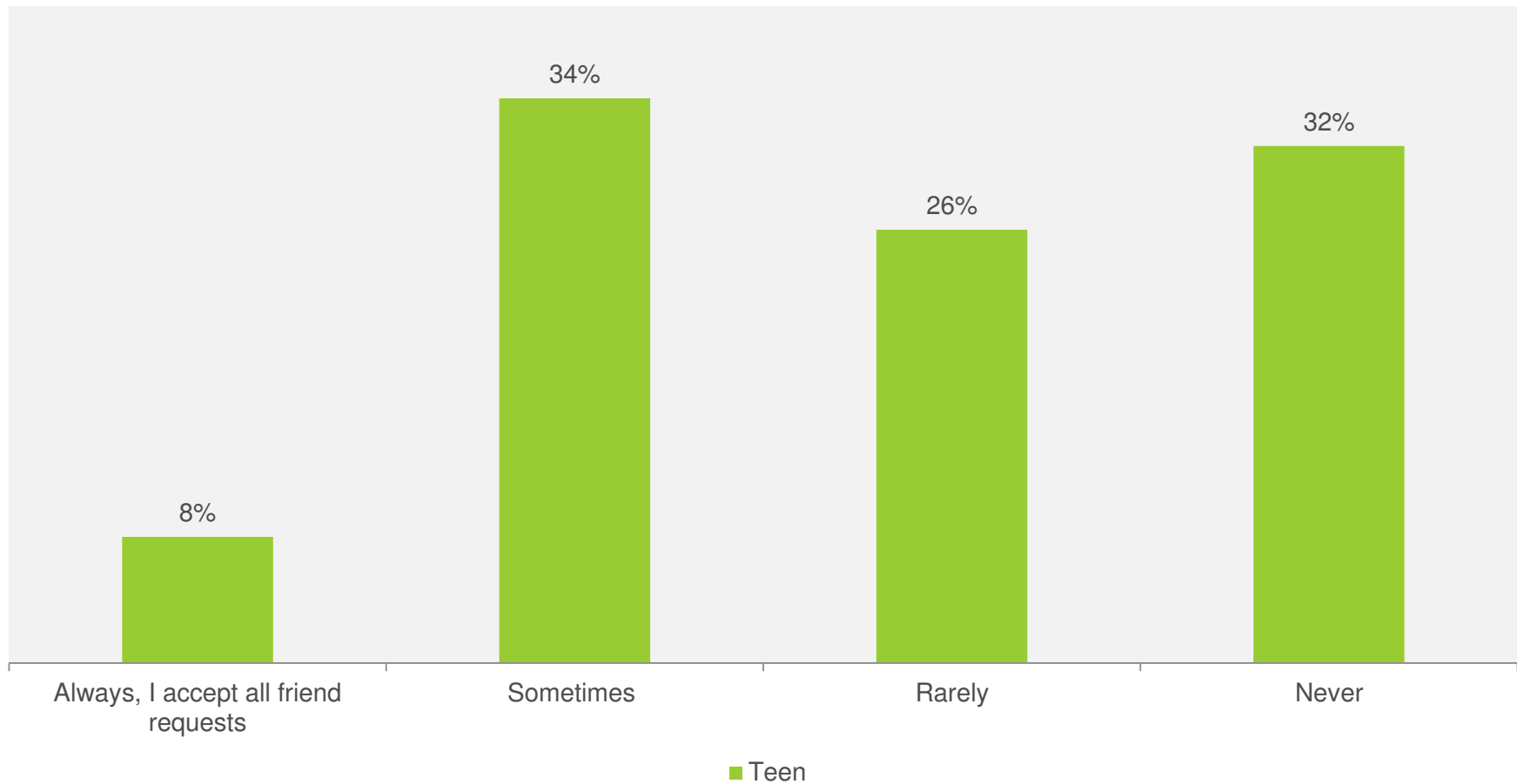
Teen Question: Have you ever been embarrassed or disciplined for something you posted on a social networking website? (N=1037)

And some teens are posting things that they do not want their parents or teachers to see



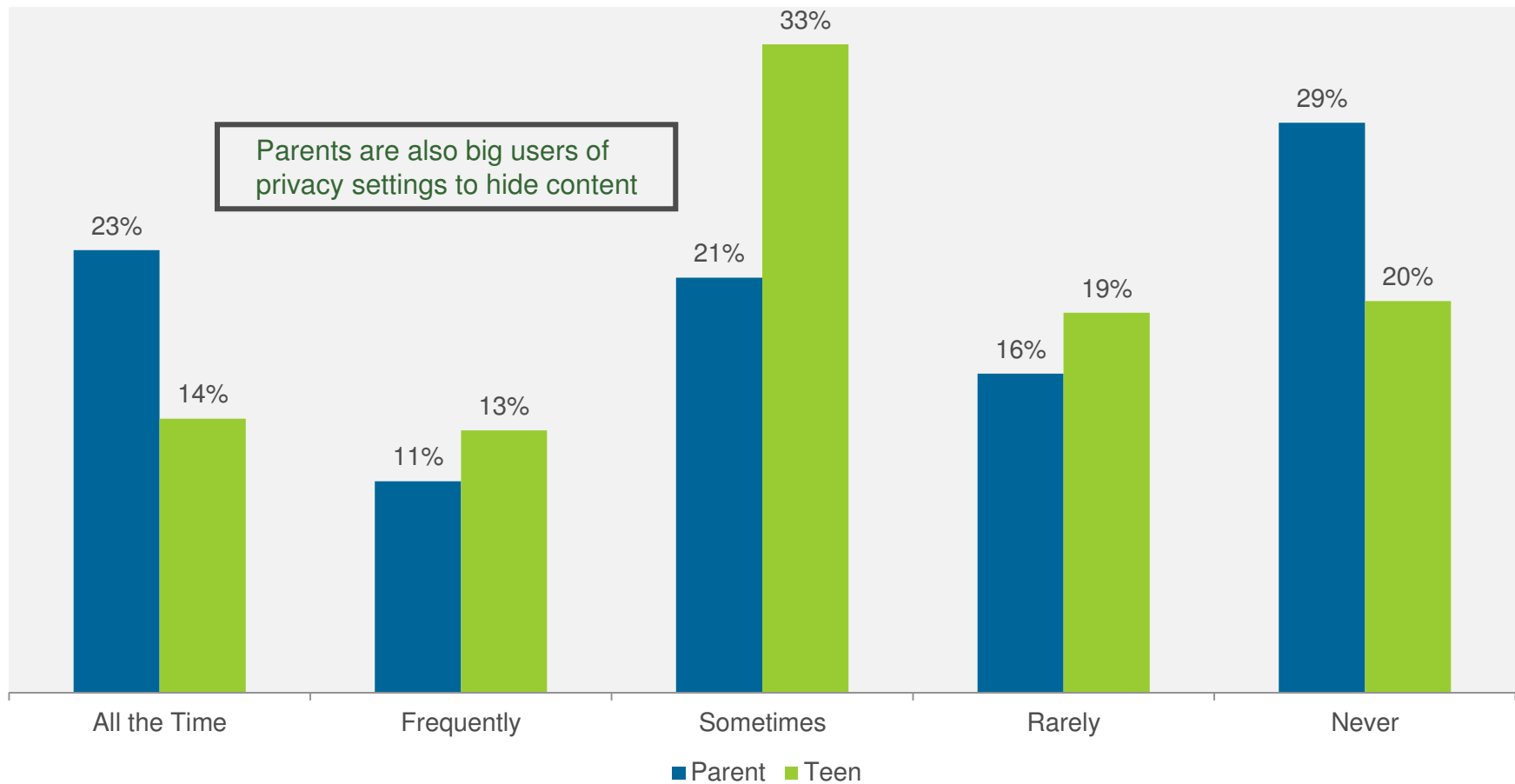
Teen Question: How often do you put things up on a social networking website that you would not want your teachers or family to see?
(N=1037)

And a startling number of teens will accept friend invites from people they don't know personally



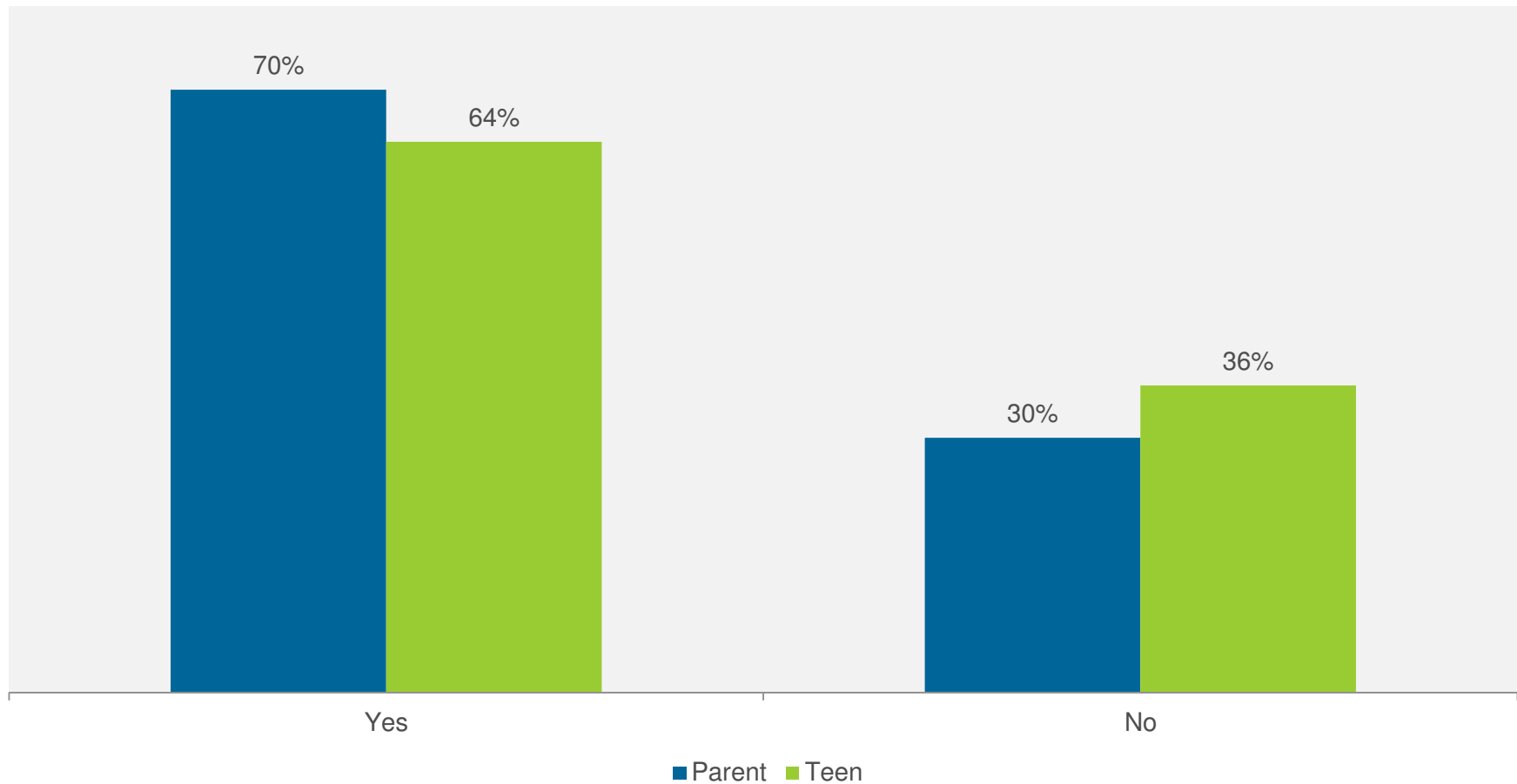
Teen Question: How often will you accept a friend request from someone you do not know personally? (N=825)

Parents need to be aware that teens do use privacy settings to hide content from some friends, most likely including parents



Parent Question: How often do you use privacy controls to share something on a social networking website with some friends and not others? (N=825)
Teen Question: How often do you use privacy controls to share something on a social networking website with some friends and not others? (N=1037)

And most teens are hiding parts of their profiles



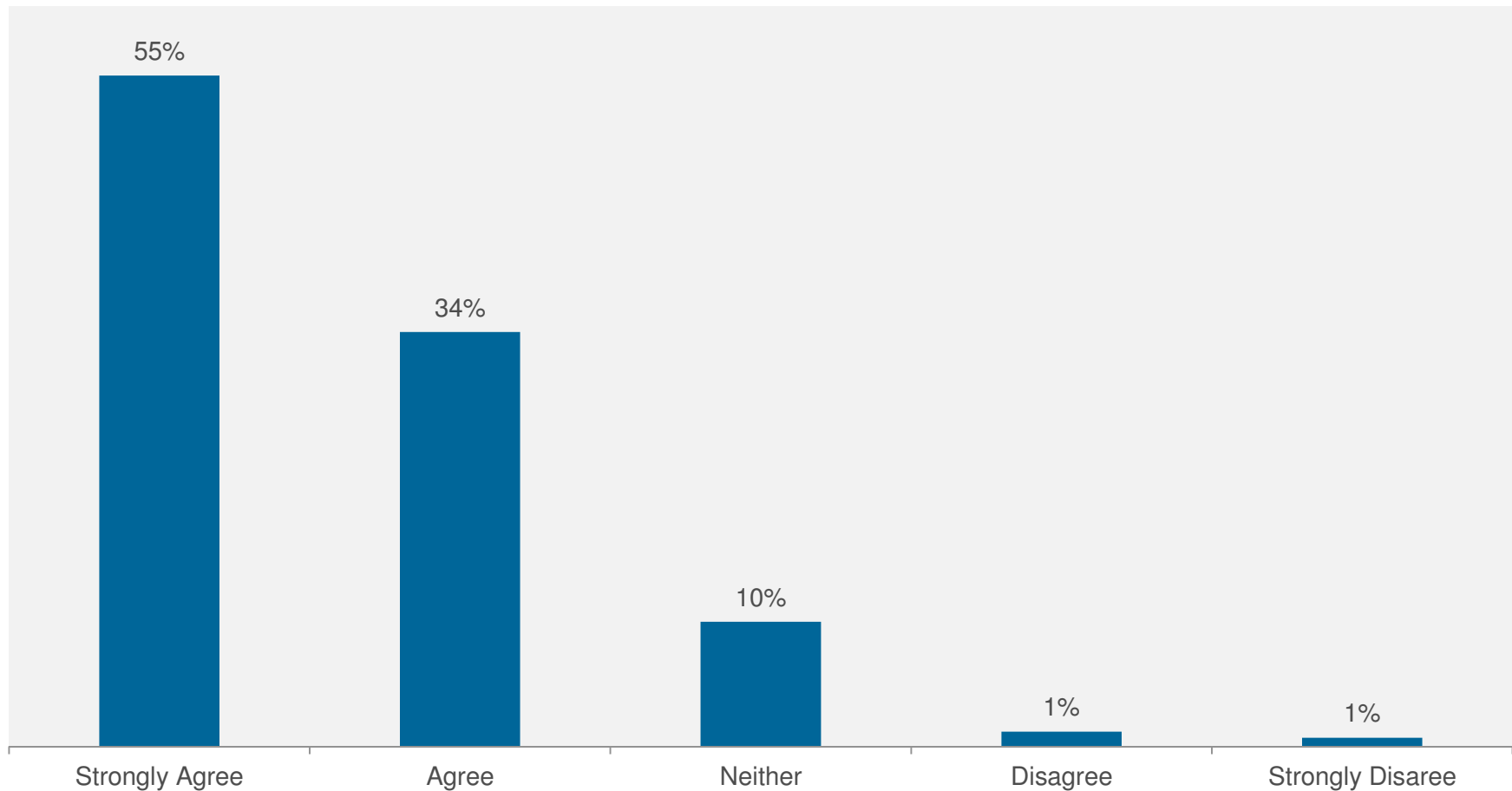
Parent Question: Do you currently use privacy controls on social networking websites to hide your profile or certain parts of it from other people? (N=825)
 Teen Question: Do you currently use privacy controls on social networking websites to hide your profile or certain parts of it from other people? (N=1037)



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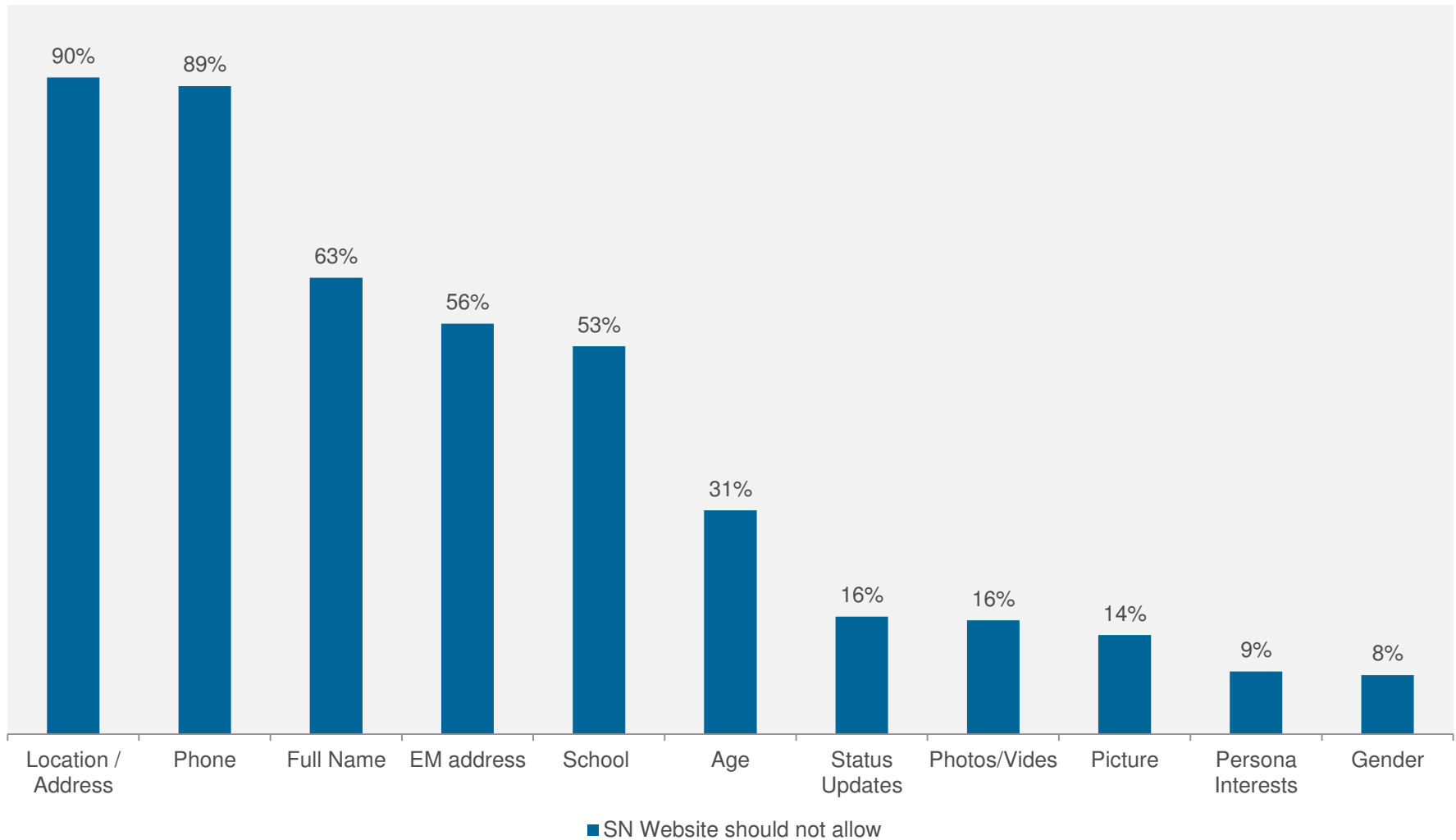
Social Networking Websites' Privacy Policies

Parents want default privacy settings that limit profile access for their teens' social networking accounts



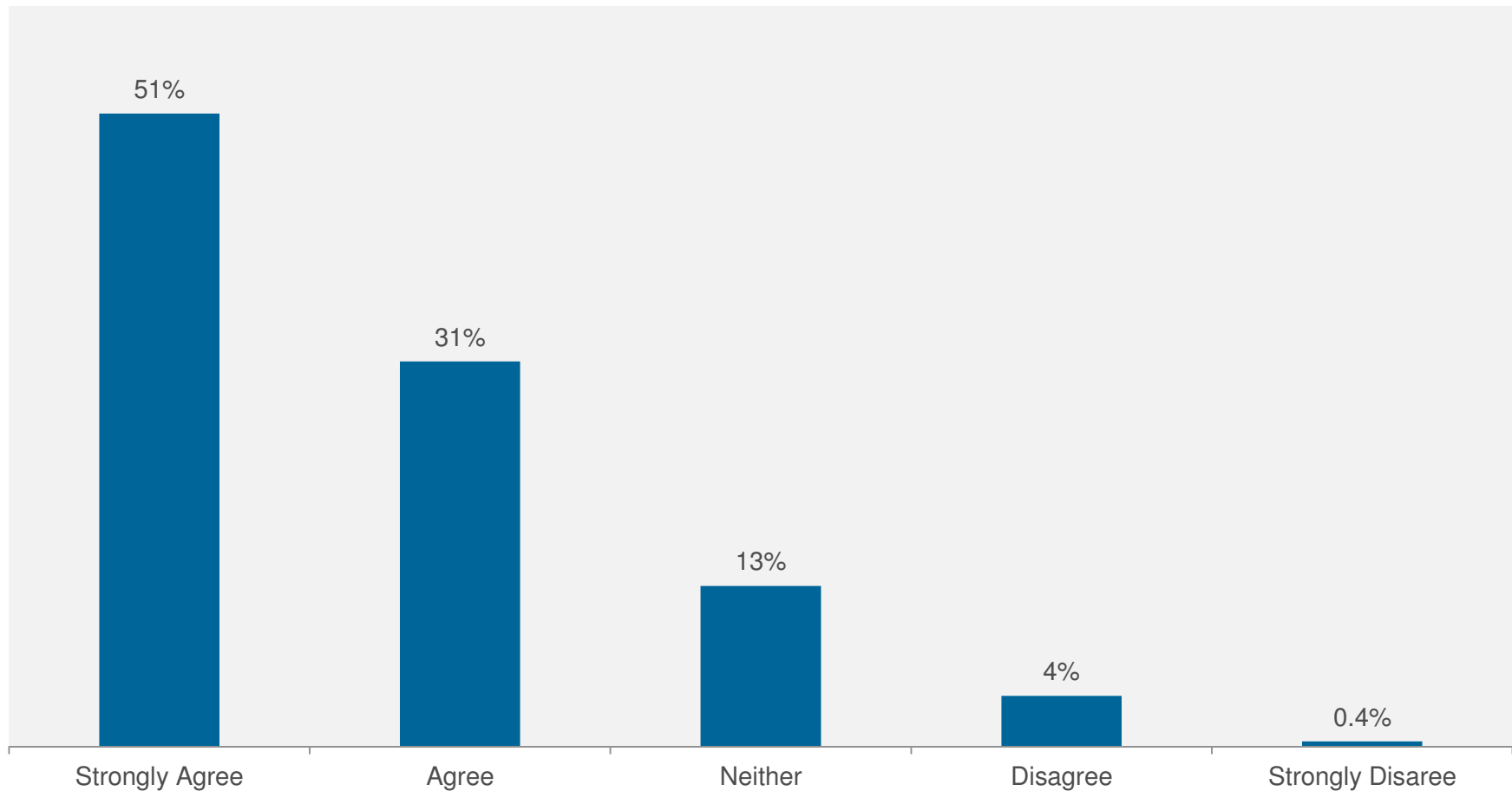
Parent Question: Social networking websites should have default privacy settings for users between 13 and 17 years of age that limit their profile access. (N=1037)

Parents feel strongly that certain types of teen personal information should not be able to be made public by social networks



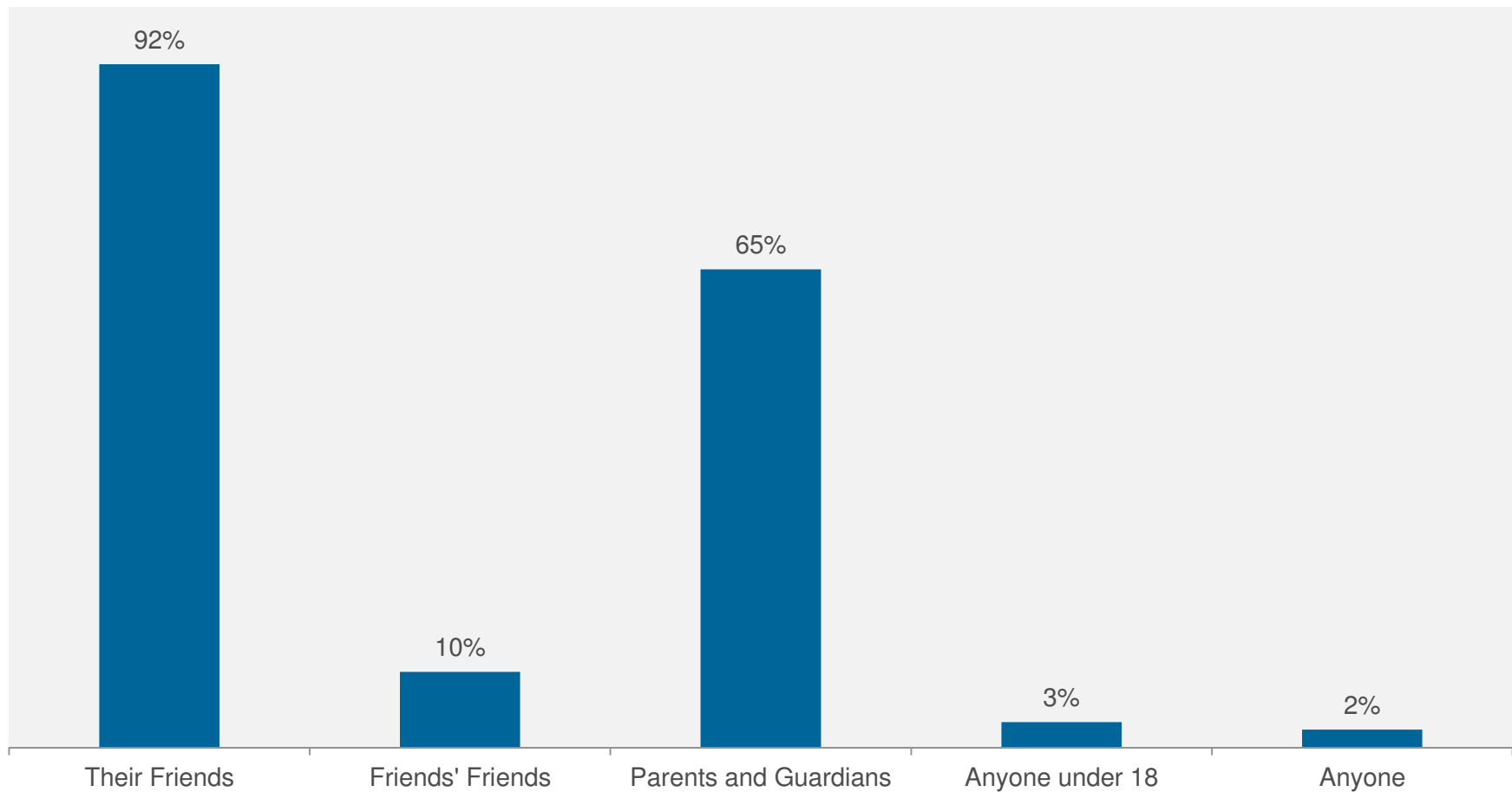
Parent Question: What information about your teen do you think a social networking website should not be allowed to make publicly available? (N=1037)

Parents want to be able to access and delete content from their teen's account by contacting the social networking company directly



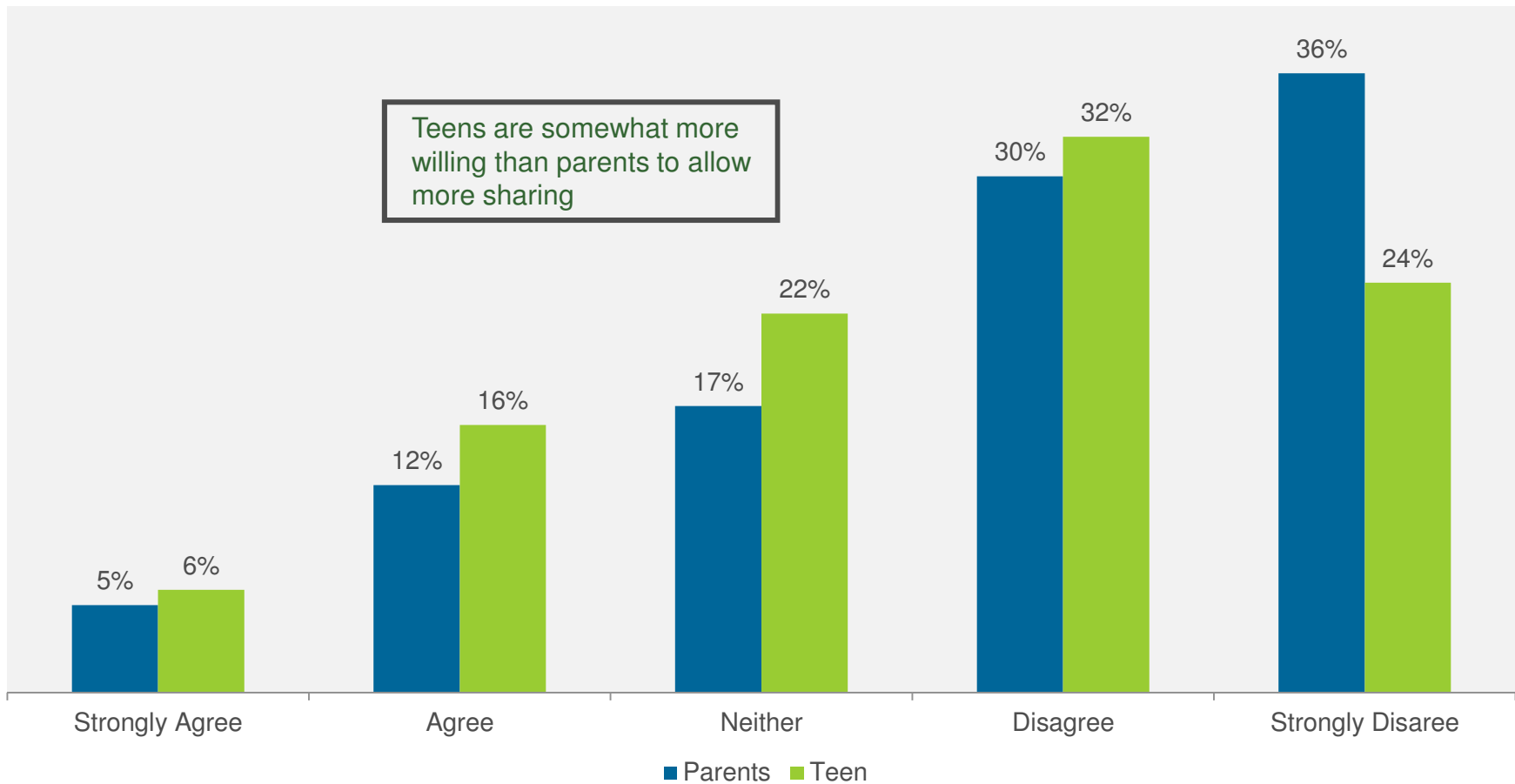
Parent Question: Parents should be able to access and delete content on their teen's social networking account by contacting the social networking website. (N=1037)

Few parents support teen profile accessibility beyond their friends and parents.



Parent Question: Who do you think should be able to see your teen's profile on social networking website? (N=1037)

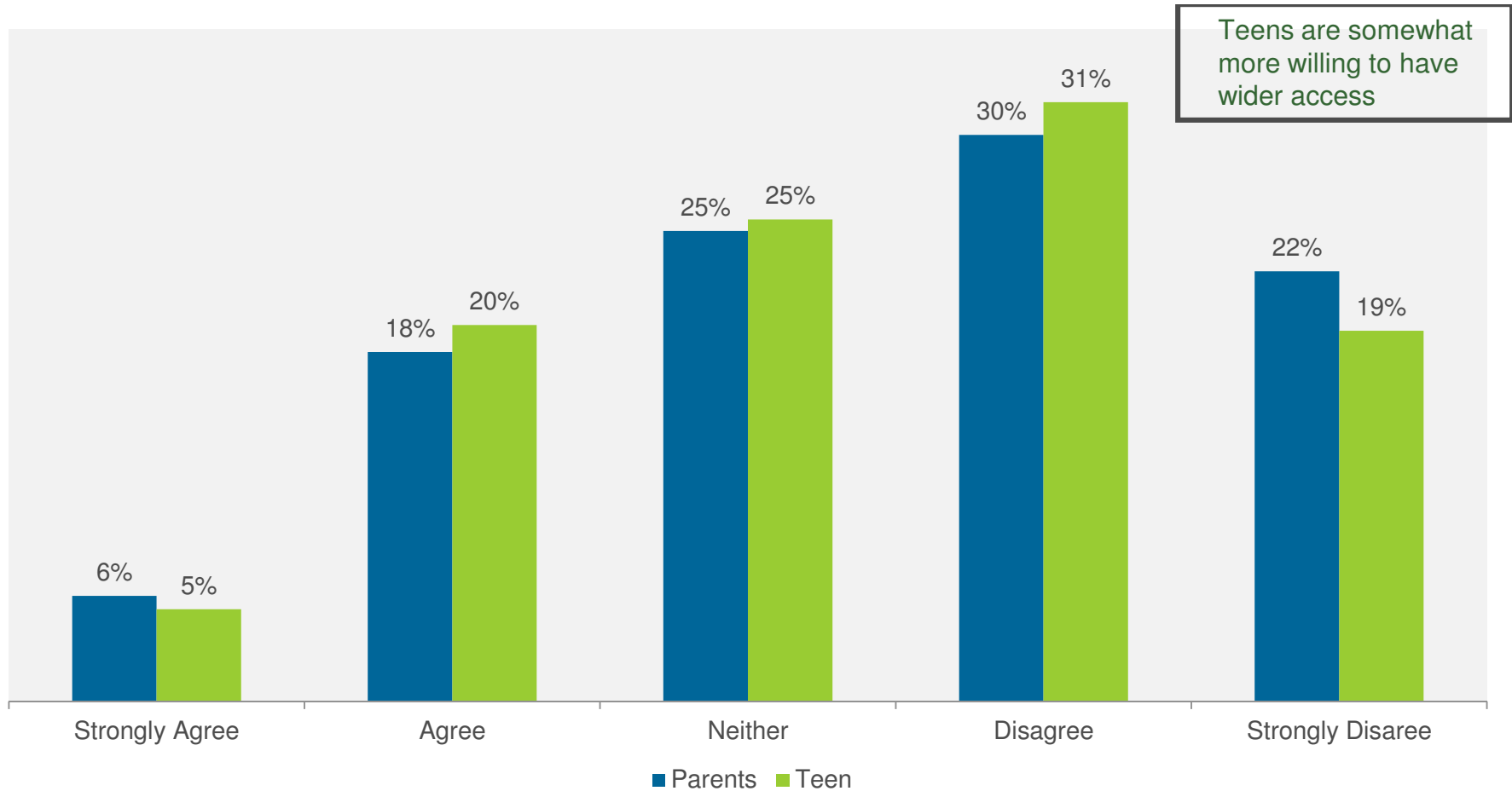
Most parents and teens do not think their social network friends should be able to share their personal information with 3rd parties



Parent and Teen Question:

Your friends on social networking websites should be able to share your information with other people or applications they use

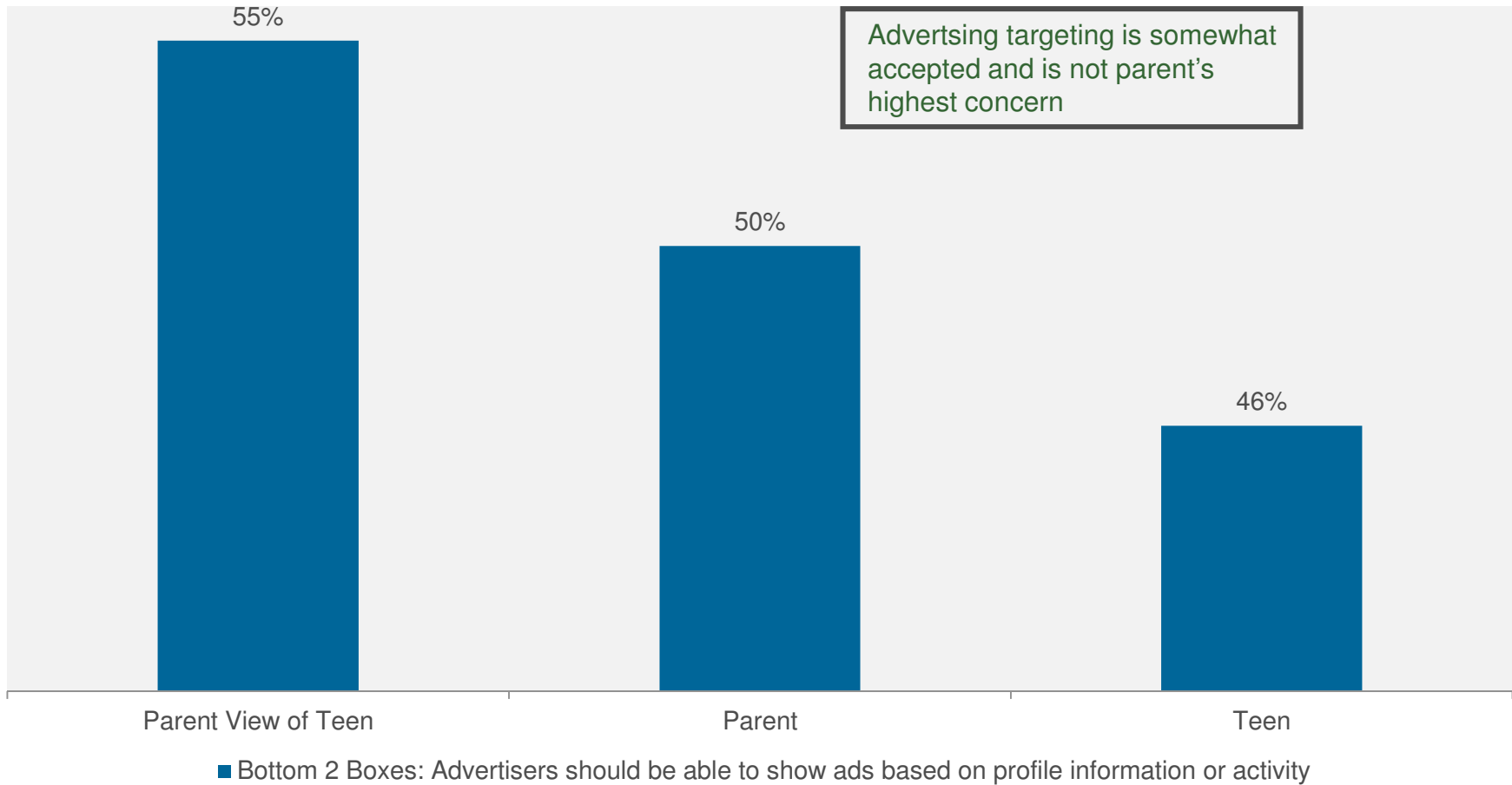
Half of teens and parents do not want basic Facebook profile info made publicly available



Parent and Teen Question:

On Facebook my name, profile picture, gender, friends, networks and the pages I've connected to (become a fan of) is information that should be visible to everyone. (Parent N=783 Teen N=933)

Half of parents don't want behavioral advertising on their teens' social networks



Parent Question: Advertisers should be able to serve my teen targeted advertisements based on the information and activity on their social networking profile (N=1037)

Parent and Teen Question:

Advertisers on social networking websites should be able to show you ads based on your profile information or activity (Parent N= 825 Teen N=1037)

Find more information on our website including:

- **A social media privacy guide for parents**
- **A social media privacy guide for teens**
- **An executive summary deck**
- **Videos, including man-on-the-street interviews of parents + teens**
- **A press release**
- **www.truste.com/2010-survey/**