

# OVER HALF OF US PARENTS BACK SOCIAL MEDIA BAN FOR UNDER-16s – BUT MOST CHILDREN OPPOSE IT

*Family First unveils preliminary findings from world's first global intergenerational study of a social media ban for under-16s in 15 countries*

NEW YORK, NY, UNITED KINGDOM, April 22, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Following Australia's first-of-its-kind ban on social media for under-16s, and with more than two dozen countries around the world proposing similar bans, new global research from Family First, a [Varkey Foundation](#) initiative, shows that 51% of US parents support such measures. However, their views are in opposition to their children's, with just 28% of 9- to 18-year-olds backing a ban. Strikingly, a majority of Gen Z respondents worldwide (51%) support banning social media for under-16s – particularly noteworthy given they are the first generation to have grown up with social media from childhood. In the US, support among Gen Z falls to 44%.



Sunny Varkey, Founder of Family First and the Varkey Foundation

The findings come from the world's first global intergenerational study of family bonding, surveying children, parents, Gen Z and grandparents, with the full results published in June by Family First. This will feature the world's first Family Bonding Index, which assigns countries a score based on the strength of family connections. The initial results, launched today, highlight differences between generations in their views on banning social media for under-16s in their respective countries.

Family First is a global movement launched by the Varkey Foundation to strengthen intergenerational bonds between children, parents and grandparents, with the aim of building stronger communities across generations. Launched by Sunny Varkey, founder of GEMS Education, the movement reflects a longstanding commitment to fostering strong family values and encouraging greater support between children and parents, contributing to healthier and

longer lives. It is rooted in the belief that education goes far beyond academic achievement – it shapes values and develops not only students, but future parents, future leaders, and stronger societies.

Sunny Varkey, Founder of Family First and the Varkey Foundation, said:

“This research highlights a growing tension many families are experiencing in the digital age. Parents throughout the world are increasingly concerned about the impact social media may be having on their children. Our aim with Family First is not simply to debate bans, but to start a broader conversation about how technology is shaping family relationships and the values young people grow up with. If we want stronger families tomorrow, we must help children develop healthy relationships with technology today.”

Among the countries surveyed, support is highest in Malaysia (77%), India (75%), and France (74%). Japan records the lowest level of support at 38%, followed by Nigeria (39%) and the US.

The data reveals a divide between parents and children throughout the world. In the US, there is a 23-point gap between children and their parents when it comes to support for banning social media for under-16s. Australia has the widest generational gap globally (34 points), followed by Sweden (33 points) and Canada (32 points).

Globally, only 37% of children support a ban on social media for under-16s. Support among young people is highest in Malaysia (62%), India (62%), and China (50%). It is lowest in Japan (20%), Argentina, and Sweden (both 26%).

The research also showed that 44% of Gen Z in the US support a social media ban for under-16s. This compares to 51% globally. Support for the ban is highest in India (73%), UAE (67%), and Malaysia (65%) and lowest in Japan (28%), UK and Canada (both 40%).

#### About the research

Family First commissioned research agency We Are Family to conduct the survey. We Are Family interviewed 6,002 parents, 6,011 of their children aged 9-18, 3,000 grandparents of children aged 9-18 and 3,000 Gen Z participants in January and February 2026. The countries included in the research are Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, India, Japan, Kenya, Malaysia, Nigeria, Sweden, UAE, UK, and US.

#### About the Varkey Foundation

The Varkey Foundation believes every child deserves a vibrant, stimulating learning environment that awakens and supports their full potential. The foundation believes nothing is more important to achieving this than the passion and quality of teachers. They support global teaching capacity and seed excellence and innovation in the next generation of educators. They

also founded the GEMS Education Global Teacher Prize to shine a spotlight on the incredible work teachers do all over the world.

Family First

Varkey Foundation

[email us here](#)

---

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/907140529>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2026 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.