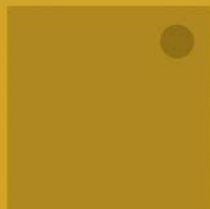


A PARENT'S GUIDE TO

# INSTAGRAM



Connecting Parents, Teens & Jesus  
in a Disconnected World

# **AXIS PARENT'S GUIDES SERIES**

A Parent's Guide to Teen FOMO

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# **A PARENT'S GUIDE TO INSTAGRAM**



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# INSTAGRAM

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*A Parent's Guide to Instagram*

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We need to teach children how to cope with all aspects of social media—good and bad—to prepare them for an increasingly digitized world. There is real danger in blaming the medium for the message.

**SIR SIMON WESSELY,  
FORMER PRESIDENT, ROYAL COLLEGE  
OF PSYCHIATRISTS**



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# A LETTER FROM AXIS

*Dear Reader,*

We're Axis, and since 2007, we've been creating resources to help connect parents, teens, and Jesus in a disconnected world. We're a group of gospel-minded researchers, speakers, and content creators, and we're excited to bring you the best of what we've learned about making meaningful connections with the teens in your life.

This parent's guide is designed to help start a conversation. Our goal is to give you enough knowledge that you're able to ask your teen informed questions about their world. For each guide, we spend weeks reading, researching, and interviewing parents and teens in order to distill everything you need to know about the topic at hand. We encourage you to read the whole thing and then to use the questions we include to get the conversation going with your teen—and then to follow the conversation wherever it leads.

As Douglas Stone, Bruce Patton, and Sheila Heen point out in their book *Difficult Conversations*, “Changes in attitudes and behavior rarely come about because of arguments, facts, and attempts to persuade. How often do *you* change your values and beliefs—or whom you love or what you want in life—based on something someone tells you? And how likely are you to do so when the person who is trying to change you doesn’t seem fully aware of the reasons you see things differently in the first place?”<sup>1</sup> For whatever reason, when we believe that others are trying to understand *our* point of view, our defenses usually go down, and we’re more willing to listen to *their* point of view. The rising generation is no exception.

So we encourage you to ask questions, to listen, and then to share your heart with your teen. As we often say at Axis, discipleship happens where conversation happens.

Sincerely,  
Your friends at Axis

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<sup>1</sup> Douglas Stone, Bruce Patton, and Sheila Heen, *Difficult Conversations: How to Discuss What Matters Most*, rev. ed. (New York: Penguin Books, 2010), 137.

**INSTANT  
GRATIFICATION OR  
A NEVER-ENDING  
SEARCH FOR  
VALIDATION?**

**THOUGH MUCH YOUNGER** than its predecessors, Instagram has become a social media behemoth through its simplicity, ease of use, and focus on imagery. Along with Snapchat, it's considered by many teens as a nonnegotiable in their arsenal of online profiles. So what's the good, bad, and ugly of the app? Let's look at how the app is changing us, both for better and worse.

**WHAT IS  
INSTAGRAM?**

**INSTAGRAM IS A FREE** photo-sharing mobile app that was launched in 2010 to inspire creativity through visual storytelling. It quickly gained traction and now has over one billion monthly active users,<sup>1</sup> ranging from celebrities to “influencers” (those with large social media followings) to brands to your average person. Since Facebook bought the company in 2012 for \$1 billion, Instagram’s growth rate has exponentially increased<sup>2</sup> and about half of its users get on the app daily.<sup>3</sup> Instagram’s Stories feature, adapted from Snapchat, now has approximately 500 million daily active users, outpacing the app it was adapted from.<sup>4</sup>



**HOW POPULAR  
IS IT?**

**INSTAGRAM IS MOST POPULAR** among people younger than twenty-five, and those users spend on average more than thirty-two minutes a day on the app. In addition, “statistics show that 20% of all Internet users are on Instagram [, and the] Pew Research Center found that 52% of teens say that Instagram is their favorite social networking site.”<sup>5</sup>

“52% of teens say that  
Instagram is their favorite  
social networking site.”

—PEW RESEARCH CENTER