

A PARENT'S GUIDE TO

# YOUTUBE



Connecting Parents, Teens & Jesus  
in a Disconnected World

# **AXIS PARENT'S GUIDES SERIES**

A Parent's Guide to Teen FOMO

A Parent's Guide to Influencers

A Parent's Guide to Instagram

A Parent's Guide to TikTok

A Parent's Guide to YouTube



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



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axis



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*A Parent's Guide to YouTube*

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YouTube is the new TV.

**JOHN LYNCH, *BUSINESS INSIDER***



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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.



**IT'S NOT JUST  
FOR WATCHING  
SILLY VIDEOS  
NOW AND THEN.  
GEN Z "CAN'T  
LIVE WITHOUT"  
YOUTUBE.<sup>1</sup>**

**EVER HEARD OF MRBEAST'S** real life *Squid Game* challenge?<sup>2</sup> Seen random celebrities eat really spicy wings?<sup>3</sup> What about this YouTuber named Jake Paul who keeps getting all the headlines with his boxing career?<sup>4</sup>

These are all what we might call “cultural events” that occurred on or because of YouTube, a social video sharing platform. At over 2 billion, the number of YouTube users is second only to those on Facebook (2.9 billion monthly)<sup>5</sup>, and YouTube receives more than 122 million visitors per day.<sup>6</sup> To look at it another way, people around the globe are collectively watching more than a billion hours of content on YouTube each day.<sup>7</sup>

The days when you used to wait till Saturday night to watch your favorite show are long gone. This might be old

news to you—after all, Netflix has grown pretty popular. But when asked which online service they couldn't "live without," 67% of users ages 13–24 named YouTube, with 85% saying it was something they regularly watch.<sup>8</sup> YouTube easily surpassed Netflix, traditional TV, and other social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram. So what's the appeal? What are they watching that they can't live without? What are all the different subscriptions now associated with the platform? How do we talk to them about it all? And most importantly, how do we teach our children to set healthy boundaries around *all* of their media usage, including YouTube?



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