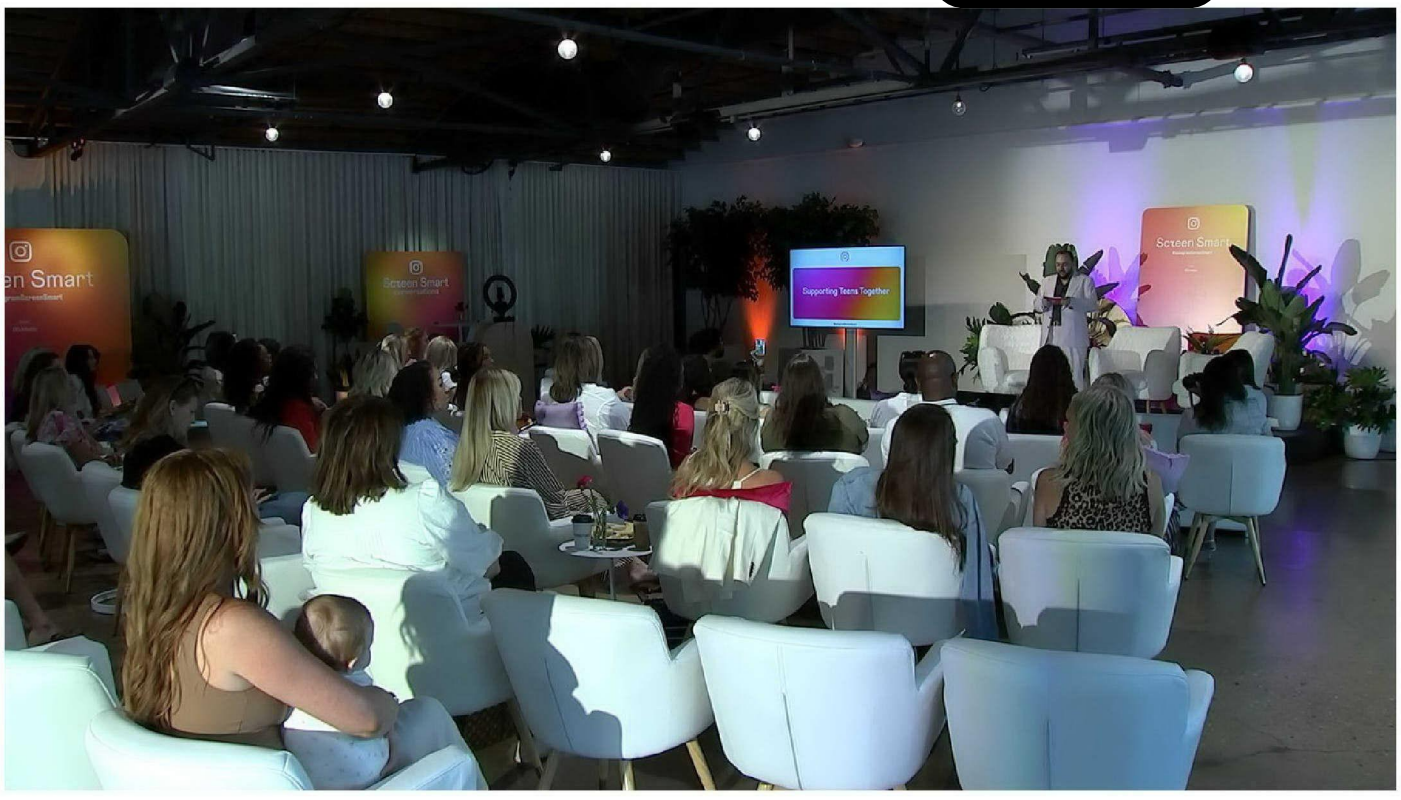
Meta holds Screen Smart event in Nashville to help parents navigate kids' social media use

Tennessee v. Meta
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DX0001

wkrn.com/news/local-news/nashville/meta-holds-screen-smart-event-in-nashville

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NASHVILLE, Tenn. (WKRN) — The National PTA and Meta, parent company of Facebook and Instagram, are helping empower and educate parents about teens using social media safely. Meta hosted a Screen Smart event in Nashville Wednesday with interactive sessions offering parents time to share their challenges and ask questions about social media safeguards, screen time and cyberbullying.

Instagram introduced Teen Accounts last year, which has built-in privacy and safety settings for younger users.

Kira Wong O'Connor, head of policy engagement for Meta's Youth Safety Policy team, explained how anyone under 18 who creates an Instagram account gets set up on the first day with extra safeguards.

"With Instagram Teen Accounts you're automatically putting your teens into what we call the sensitive content control," Wong O'Connor said. "This means they're going to be put into the strictest default, so the content they see is age-appropriate. So what does sensitive content control mean? That means things like potentially sexually-suggestive content is not going to be served into your explore feeds, and you're not gonna be seeing it when you're scrolling."

During a panel discussion at the event, Yvonne Johnson, president of the National PTA stressed the importance of parents' having an open dialogue with their kids about tough topics, including cyberbullying.

"It's never easy to talk to your child, regardless of how old they are, about these things, but it's important that you persevere, because you want to make sure these conversations are happening. This is what we encourage at PTA," Johnson said.

Pediatrician and best selling author Dr. Cara Natterson also shared her insights about how children's brains respond when using technology. She said even educational apps can be overstimulating and should be used in moderation. She recommends parents always keep an open dialogue about their teens' social media use by showing curiosity about their online interests.

The National PTA has a free resource called The Smart Talk to help families set digital safety rules together. It's available at https://thesmarttalk.org/

Learn more about Instagram Teen Accounts here:
https://about.instagram.com/blog/announcements/instagram-teen-accounts

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