

## Facebook's lure the same for young and old

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(HealthDay)—Older adults are joining Facebook in large numbers for the same reasons as kids and younger adults—to develop social connections, a new survey finds.

"Earlier studies suggest a positive relationship between bonding and bridging [social capital](#) and Facebook use among college students," said researcher Eun Hwa Jung, a [doctoral candidate](#) in mass communications at Penn State University.

"Our study extends this finding to senior citizens," Jung said in a university news release.

The online poll of 352 Americans aged 60 to 86 found their main reasons for joining Facebook were to stay connected to relatives and keep in touch with old friends, followed closely by wanting to find and communicate with like-minded people.

Curiosity was another strong motivator for [older adults](#), who are the largest growing group on Facebook, according to the researchers.

Older adults also use Facebook for social surveillance, the study found.

"Surveillance is the idea that you're checking out what people are up to. This is something that many older adults do. They want to see how their kids are doing and, especially, what their grandkids are doing," study co-author S. Shyam Sundar. Sundar is professor of communications and co-director of the Media Effects Research Laboratory at Penn State.

However, requests by family and friends for older adults to join Facebook don't usually succeed, according to the study.

"When [senior citizens](#) respond to requests to join Facebook, that tends to be a negative predictor of use," Sundar said. "In other words, they are not intrinsically motivated to participate when someone else requests that they join."

More than one-third of adults 65 and older belong to a social network,

according to background notes in the study.

The study findings appeared online in advance of print publication in the August issue of the journal *Computers in Human Behavior*.

**More information:** The American Psychological Association has more on [social networks](#).

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