

# The Kids Are All Right: Investigating the Susceptibility of Teens and Adults to YouTube Giveaway Scams

Elijah Bouma-Sims, Lily Klucinec, Mandy Lanyon, Lorrie Faith Cranor, Julie Downs  
Presenter Contact: [eboumasi@andrew.cmu.edu](mailto:eboumasi@andrew.cmu.edu)

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Created by AmruID  
from Noun Project

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- Prior work has speculated that some “giveaway scams” may target minors
- Minors may give away sensitive personal information to scammers



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Q free spotify premium|





free spotify premium



The Truth about FREE Spotify Premium ✓(No BS, No Trial) EA...  
Ask Veasna • 150k views • 2 months ago

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\*SECRET\* How to get FREE Spotify Premium in 2023 | 6 m...  
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**Spotify Premium Coupon Code**

**SPOTIFY PREMIUM**

Coupons Left: 692

**1 Month**  
Spotify Premium Coupon Code  
Verified 1 Day Ago | 2.6k uses today  
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**About**  
Spotify Premium is a digital music service that gives you access to millions of songs without ads. Get 3 months free

**Tips**  
1 Month Premium Coupon Code for Free Spotify Premium  
★★★★★ 2379 Ratings

**Boujee Coupons** 🤔

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Download and install this app then win 25 games to unlock this content. [FREE](#)

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Install, Open, and Install 2 Games to unlock this content. Must be 18+ to complete! [FREE](#)

**iHeartRadio**  
Install this app, register and play a radio station to [FREE](#)



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2. Do teens and adults interact differently with YouTube giveaway scams?
  - If so, are teens more vulnerable?



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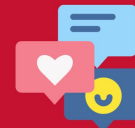
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- Demographic + behavioral questions before/after task

# Recruitment + Analysis

## Calling all parents of teens!

Carnegie Mellon University is investigating how teens interact with posts on YouTube and needs your help!



### Your teen is eligible if

- they are between the ages of 13 and 17
- they use YouTube
- they are located in the United States and are fluent in English

### Your teen will

- Fill out a 20-minute survey about how they interact with social media
- Receive a \$5 Amazon gift card as compensation

### You will be required to

- Give consent for you and your teen to participate
- Answer questions about your household and child

Parents: visit [tinyurl.com/cmuteens](https://tinyurl.com/cmuteens) to consent for your teen to participate

Questions? Contact Elijah Bouma-Sims at [eboumnasi@andrew.cmu.edu](mailto:eboumnasi@andrew.cmu.edu)

This research will be used to better understand how teens interact with YouTube posts and may ultimately lead to better online safety measures for teens on the internet.

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- Statistical testing to test effect of age, other variables
  - E.g., use of Roblox/Spotify, income, experience with scams,...

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# Results





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- 48% of users recommended exiting the scam
- Teens did not perform significantly better or worse



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- Teens had greater interest in Roblox
  - 77% vs. 27% of adults had played Roblox at least once
- No difference in rate of searching for “free Spotify Premium” or something similar



When searching, many participants encountered scams similar to those in the survey

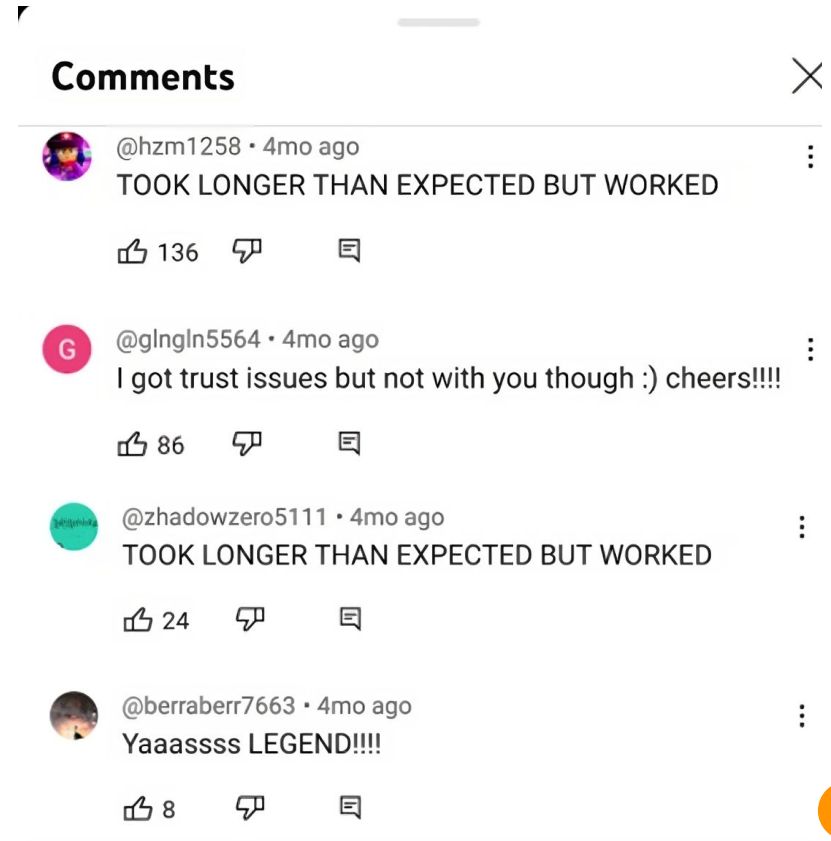
*“...[searching for free Spotify Premium] showed me a bunch of websites that contained verification steps which never worked in giving me access.”*

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- Teens suggested they wanted to help protect others
  - *“They should [report the video] to help others from making bad decisions...”*
- Few commented on why they didn’t report
- May suggest disenchantment
  - *“...I wouldn't bother reporting it because I feel actions like that are fighting an uphill battle that have little or no effect.”*





How did participants reason about video scams?



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- Some expected they would get nothing
- Others pointed to specific security and privacy risks

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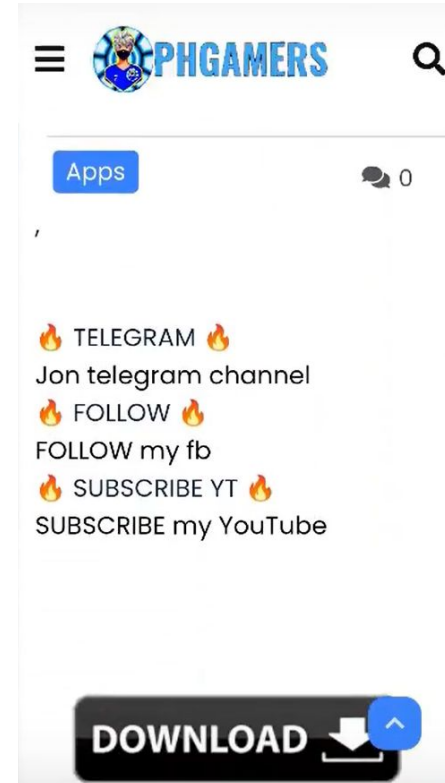
*“Because it says ‘Download apps’ it's obviously a scam. Everyone with slight common sense should know that downloading random apps and opening links can give you a virus.”*

Participants who disengaged did not necessarily recognize that the video was a scam

*“...it is too much hassle for what little bit you get. I'm sure they're getting plenty from you for signing up. Not worth it.”*

Participants sometimes based decisions on aesthetic qualities of video/website

*“...Looks suspiciously like the Nigerian Prince (scam) was here. The website looks old and clunky. Quite frankly at this point, I would give my friend \$5 so they could buy their Robux.”*





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- Most users are resistant to giveaway scams, but may rely on unreliable heuristics
- It may be possible to motivate higher rates of reporting through design of YouTube
- Teens are not necessarily more vulnerable, but may be more likely to encounter some scams due to their interests
- The best solution is to crack down on scammers' ability to post on platforms like YouTube