



# **Growing Up Amish (Young Center Books in Anabaptist and Pietist Studies)**

*Richard A. Stevick*

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On the surface, it appears that little has changed for Amish youth in the past decade: children learn to work hard early in life, they complete school by age fourteen or fifteen, and a year or two later they begin Rumspringa—that brief period during which they are free to date and explore the outside world before choosing whether to embrace a lifetime of Amish faith and culture.

But the Internet and social media may be having a profound influence on significant numbers of the Youngie, according to Richard A. Stevick, who says that Amish teenagers are now exposed to a world that did not exist for them only a few years ago. Once hidden in physical mailboxes, announcements of weekend parties are now posted on Facebook. Today, thousands of Youngie in large Amish settlements are dedicated smartphone and Internet users, forcing them to navigate carefully between technology and religion. Updated photographs throughout this edition of *Growing Up Amish* include a screenshot from an Amish teenager's Facebook page.

In the second edition of *Growing Up Amish*, Stevick draws on decades of experience working with and studying Amish adolescents across the United States to produce this well-rounded, definitive, and realistic view of contemporary Amish youth. Besides discussing the impact of smartphones and social media usage, he carefully examines work and leisure, rites of passage, the rise of supervised youth groups, courtship rituals, weddings, and the remarkable Amish retention rate. Finally, Stevick contemplates the potential of electronic media to significantly alter traditional Amish practices, culture, and staying power.

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