2025

The Common Sense Census:

Media Use by Kids Zero to Eight

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COMMON SENSE IS GRATEFUL FOR THE GENEROUS SUPPORT AND
UNDERWRITING THAT FUNDED THIS RESEARCH REPORT

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A Letter from Our Founder

James P. Steyer
Founder and CEO

Dear Friends,

As technology continues to reshape every aspect of our society, it is more crucial than ever to understand its influence on our youngest generation. We are excited to share the latest edition of the **Common Sense Census: Zero to Eight**, which provides the first comprehensive look since the pandemic at how children from birth to age 8 are engaging with media and technology.

We see both challenge and opportunity in our latest findings. While 75% to 80% of parents express concerns about screen media's impact, three-quarters also recognize the potential for learning and connection. This tension—balancing technology's risks with its benefits—defines the modern parenting experience. Parents of young children face the dual challenge of navigating screen media use and preserving fundamental childhood experiences like daily reading, which has declined from 64% to 52% among 5- to 8-year-olds since 2017, even as overall screen time remains steady.

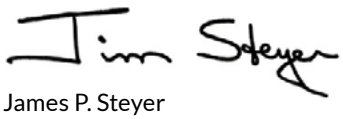
The report highlights the convergence of early childhood and technology. Screen time is no longer just a mainstay of children's entertainment and education—it's now an integral part of daily activities for many families. We found that 1 in 5 families now use mobile devices to help manage their child's bedtime routines, mealtimes, and emotional regulation.

From the data, several critical themes have emerged:

- Children are acquiring screens at a younger age. By age 2, 4 in 10 children have their own tablet (40%). By age 4, more than half (58%) of children have their own tablet. By age 8, nearly 1 in 4 children have their own cellphone. Overall, 51% of children age 8 and younger have their own mobile device (such as a tablet or cellphone).
- Parent supervision varies significantly by platform, with 62% of parents watching YouTube occasionally alongside their children, but only 17% co-viewing TikTok content.
- AI is making inroads into early childhood, with nearly one-third of parents reporting their child has used AI for school-related learning.
- Children from lower-income households are spending nearly twice as much time with screens compared to those from higher-income households (3:48 vs. 1:52 hours daily).

Our report aims to help you understand these shifts and navigate them thoughtfully. How we respond to these changes today will shape not just our children's relationship with technology, but their development, learning, and well-being for years to come.

We invite you to explore the full report and our corresponding Parents' Ultimate Guides that give practical "device advice" for kids of all ages. Together, we can build a healthier digital future for our children.



James P. Steyer
Founder and CEO
Common Sense Media

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The report authors and project team express their gratitude to the parents who gave their time to take the survey. We also wish to acknowledge the work of Vicky Rideout for her contributions to the development of the Common Sense Census reports over the past waves of data collection. Additionally, we thank the following individuals for their time and expertise reviewing the survey and providing feedback: Claire Bessant, Jessica Blacksten, Lin Ong, and Kalia Vogelman-Natan.

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Key Findings

1. Children age 8 and younger spend about two and a half hours (2:27) a day with screen media.

FIGURE A. Average daily screen use, by age, 2024
Among 0- to 8-year-olds, average daily amount of screen media (hours:minutes)

In 2024, caregivers reported that children age 8 and younger spent roughly the same amount of time with screen media as they did in 2020 (2:27 vs. 2:24 daily). Screen time varies significantly by age: Children under 2 years old average one hour and three minutes daily, and 2- to 4-year-olds spend two hours and eight minutes. Those age 5 to 8 use screens for about three and a half hours daily (3:28).

Boys spend over 30 minutes more on screen media each day than girls (2:38 vs. 2:07). This includes more time watching television and videos (1:36 vs. 1:19) and playing video games (:45 vs. :29).

Screen use also differs by income and ethnicity. Children from households earning less than $50,000 per year spend twice as much time with screen media as those from households earning $100,000 or more per year (3:48 vs. 1:52).

FIGURE B. Screen use, by activity, 2024
Among 0- to 8-year-olds, percentage of average daily screen time devoted to ...

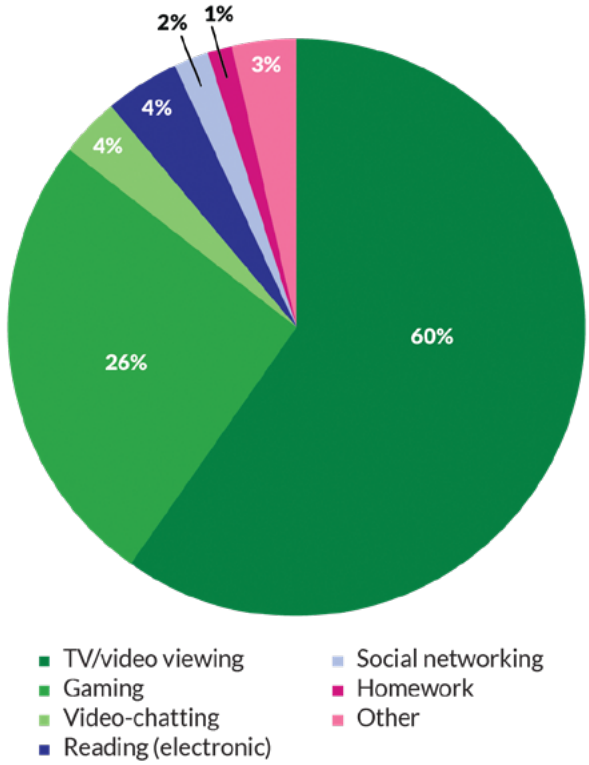
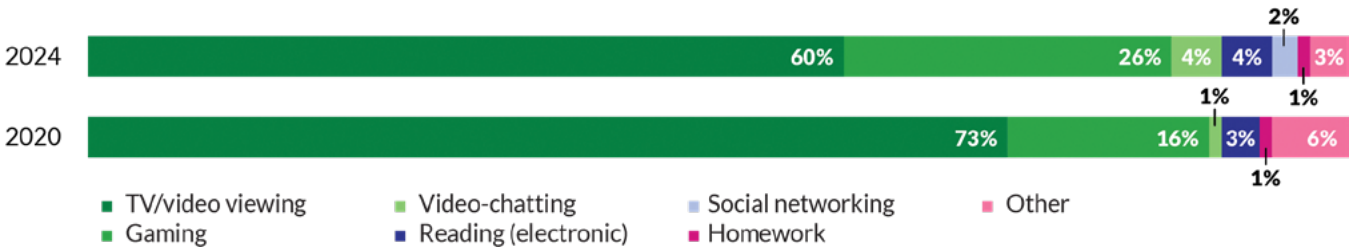


FIGURE C. Screen use, by activity, 2020 vs. 2024

Among 0- to 8-year-olds, percentage of average daily screen time devoted to ...



Consistent with 2020 and 2017, watching television and videos dominated the majority of 0- to 8-year-olds' screen time in 2024, followed by about a quarter (26%) of screen time spent gaming.

Despite overall screen time remaining relatively stable since early 2020, how children use screen media has changed since our last Zero to Eight Census. Children are watching less live television and cable, and are spending more time watching short videos on apps like TikTok, Instagram Reels, or YouTube Shorts, with an average daily use of 14 minutes compared to one minute in early 2020. Average time spent gaming is up from 23 minutes to 38 minutes, and video-chatting increased from 1% daily use in 2020 and 2017 to 4% in 2024.

2. Gaming time jumps 65% in four years.

Total time spent playing games has increased noticeably since our last Zero to Eight Census survey in early 2020, moving from 23 minutes of total time per day spent by children playing video games across all devices (consoles, handhelds, computers, and smartphones or tablets) to 38 minutes in 2024. This represents a 65% increase in average time spent gaming.

TABLE A. Time spent gaming per day, 2011 to 2024

	2011	2013	2017	2020	2024
Console games	*:14*	*:10*	:05	:07	:13
Console games	*:10*	*:06*	:05*	n/a	:08
Handheld games	*:04*	*:04*	:01*	n/a	:05
Computer games	*:08*	*:05*	:03	:03	:04
Smartphone or tablet games	*:03*	*:08*	:16	:13*	:21
Total gaming	***:25***	***:23***	**:25***	**:23***	**:38**

Note: An asterisk indicates the item differs significantly ($p < .05$) from 2024. The years 2011 and 2013 are presented for historical reference only and were not tested against 2024 totals.

While total gaming time has increased for all age groups of children since 2020, children age 4 and under show relatively modest jumps. Those under age 2 went from two to three minutes of total video game play per day. Also, 2- to 4-year-olds saw an increase in total video game play from 16 minutes to 21 minutes, and we found a large (24-minute) jump from 40 minutes to an hour and four minutes of video game play for 5- to 8-year-olds. This age difference is especially notable for smartphone or tablet gaming, where 2- to 4-year-olds play for about 14 minutes on a typical day, while 5- to 8-year-olds play for more than twice as long, with 34 minutes of daily game play on smartphones or tablets.

Households with handheld video game systems (e.g., Nintendo Switch) also increased 18% since 2017, with 31% of homes owning a handheld video game system in 2017 and 49% owning one in 2024.

TABLE B. Time spent gaming per day, by age, 2024

	0- to 2-year-olds	2- to 4-year-olds	5- to 8-year-olds
Console games	:02[a]	:02[a]	:16[b]
Handheld games	:00[a]	:03[a]	:08[b]
Computer games	:00[a]	:02	:06[b]
Smartphone or tablet games	:01[a]	:14[b]	:34[c]
Total gaming	**:03**	**:21**	**1:04**

Note: Items with different superscripts differ significantly ($p < .05$).

3. Nearly 1 in 3 kids use AI for learning.

Almost one-third of parents report that their child has used artificial intelligence (AI) to learn about school-related material (29%). One in four say their child is learning critical thinking skills from using AI (26%). For older children (age 5 to 8), 39% of parents report that their child has used an app or device with AI features to learn about school-related material, and 33% report that they use AI tools to learn critical thinking skills, while 24% report that their child uses AI tools to create creative content like short stories or art.

Among those parents who report that their child (age 0 to 8) has used AI tools, nearly one-quarter feel that the impact of these tools on their child's understanding of school material has been mostly positive (23%). However, a majority of parents (55%) say it has no impact. Similarly, 1 in 5 of these parents indicate that use of AI tools has been mostly positive for fostering creativity (20%), but half of these same parents (50%) say it has had no impact.

4. By 2 years old, 4 in 10 children have their own tablet (40%), and by 4 years old, more than half of children (58%) do.

Overall, 47% of children age 8 and younger have their own tablet device, about the same as in 2020 (44%). Three in five (58%) children age 5 to 8 have their own tablet compared to 45% of children age 2 to 4.

In the majority of U.S. households, there is at least one mobile device, with 96% having a smartphone that connects to the internet, and 75% having a tablet, such as an iPad, Galaxy Tab, Microsoft Surface, or Kindle Fire. Tablets have the highest proportion of ownership among children compared to any other mobile device.

FIGURE E. Tablet ownership by age, 2024

Among 0- to 8-year-olds, percentage who own a tablet

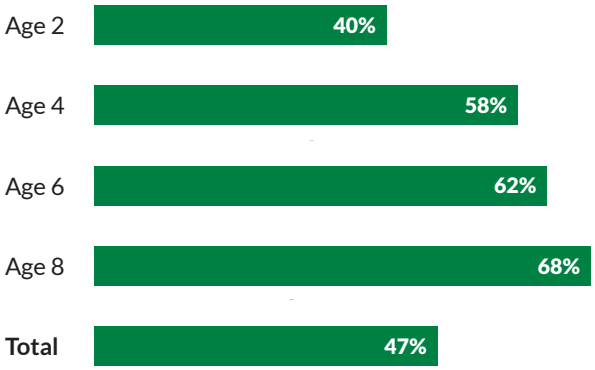
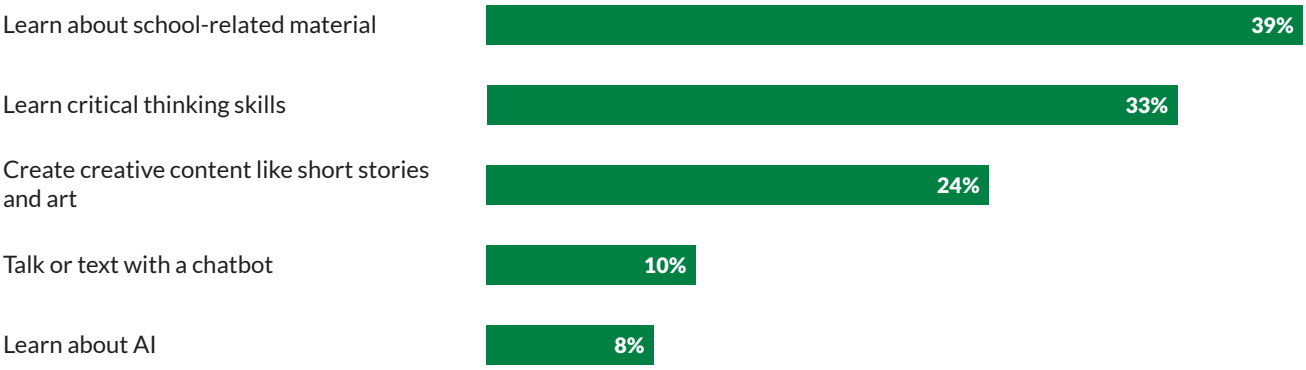


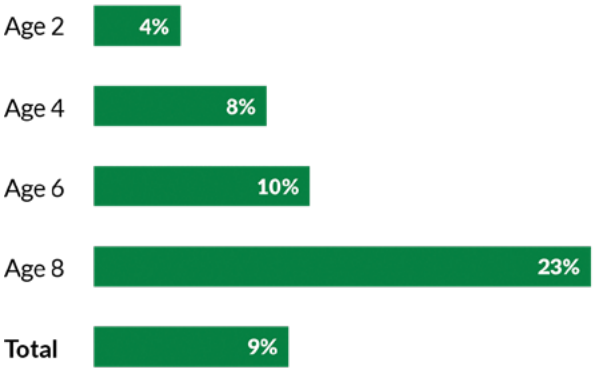
FIGURE D. AI use activities among 5- to 8-year-olds

Among 5- to 8-year-olds, percentage who ever used an app or device that uses AI to do any of the following activities



5. By 8 years old, nearly 1 in 4 kids have their own cellphone.

FIGURE F. Cellphone ownership, by age, 2024
Among 0- to 8-year-olds, percentage who own a cellphone

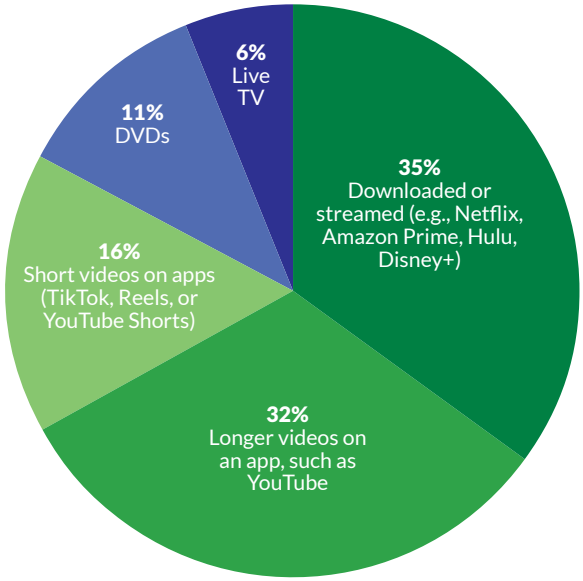


Overall, 9% of children age 8 or younger have their own cellphone, echoing similar findings in 2020 (8%). Among children who have their own phone, 79% have a smartphone that can go online, use apps, and/or play videos, while 19% have a smartphone that has limited or no apps or internet access, such as a Pinwheel, Gabb, Troomi, or Bark phone. Very few children with phones (3%) have a simple feature phone that does not have a touch screen, go online, or have apps at all.[1]

6. Short-form video platforms are becoming a new source of video viewing for young children.

Nearly half (48%) of children age 0 to 8 have watched short videos on platforms like TikTok, YouTube Shorts, or Instagram Reels, with 16% engaging in this activity daily. On average, they spend 14 minutes per day watching short-form video platforms that are not designed for children and that focus on quick, bite-size videos. This is distinct from videos watched on general video hosting platforms like YouTube, which can contain a mix of short- and long-form content. Among parents who report that their children watch these short-form videos, the average time that children under age 2 spend watching shorter videos is four minutes per day. For children age 2 to 4, that time is 10 minutes per day, and for kids age 5 to 8, the average is 22 minutes per day.

FIGURE G. Daily television/video viewing, by type, 2024
Among 0- to 8-year-olds, proportion of daily total TV/video viewing that occurred through ...



[1] Total amounts may not sum to 100% from the reported subtotals due to rounding and nonresponse.

7. A large majority of parents have widespread concerns about screen media.

Among parents, 75% to 80% express consistent concerns about screen media, including worries about excessive use, effects on mental health, and the amount of inappropriate content.

FIGURE H. Concerns of parents of 0- to 8-year-olds about screen media
Percent of parents of 0- to 8-year-olds who were at least somewhat concerned about the following

8. Parents see screen media as a tool for learning and connection as well as a source for positive content.

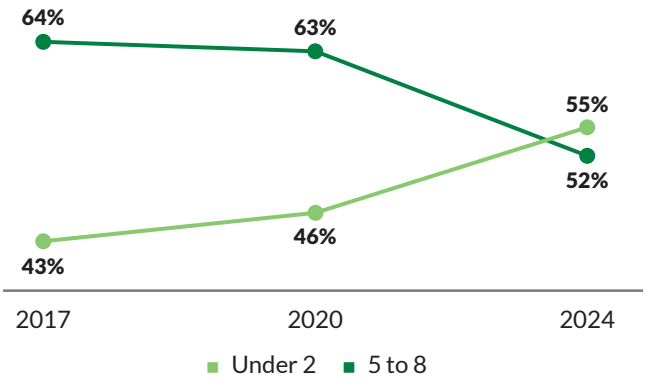
About 3 in 4 parents cited their enthusiasm for screen media as a tool for children to learn new things or explore new interests, as well as connect with friends and family. Parents were also excited about screen media being a source for positive content, such as content that role-models helping behaviors or kindness.

FIGURE I. Enthusiasm of parents of 0- to 8-year-olds about screen media
Percent of parents of 0- to 8-year-olds who were at least somewhat enthusiastic about the following

9. Daily reading decreases for 5- to 8-year-olds, but increases for children under 2.

The percentage of parents who report that their child reads or is read to daily has increased by nearly 10 percentage points for parents of children younger than 2 years old, but has also decreased by the same proportion for older children age 5 to 8. In 2024, more than half (55%) of parents of children younger than 2 reported that they read to their child daily. This is up from 46% in 2020 and 43% in 2017. For older children (age 5 to 8), 52% of parents reported that their child reads or is read to daily. This is down from 63% in 2020 and 64% in 2017.

FIGURE J. Reading, by age, 2017 to 2024
Percentage of children who read or are read to daily



10. About 1 in 5 children use devices for comfort, at mealtime, or to fall asleep.

Devices can play a role in emotional regulation, with 17% of parents reporting that their child sometimes or often uses a mobile device to calm down when feeling angry, sad, or upset. About 23% of children age 0 to 8 sometimes or often use a mobile device while eating at home, and 22% do so while dining out at a restaurant. Screens are a bedtime companion for some children, with 20% of kids age 8 and under watching or playing on a device every night or most nights to fall asleep.

Parents indicated many reasons or situations for when they may let a child use screens. Two-thirds (66%) of parents use screen media at least sometimes to occupy their child in order to get things done or take time for themselves, 57% use it to help their child learn or experience something new, 56% use it to bond with or relax together with their child, 47% use it to reward good behavior, 44% use it to keep their child occupied when in public (e.g., doctor's office, grocery store, restaurant), and a quarter of parents use screen media of any kind (not just mobile devices) to help their child calm down when they are angry or upset (25%)

Introduction

This report represents the fifth wave in a long-running series that tracks the media habits of children age 0 to 8. Since its inception in 2011, this research has documented how digital and traditional media use has evolved among young children across diverse demographics in the United States. By examining trends across a span of more than a decade, the report highlights shifts in media consumption, providing insights into the role that technology plays in childhood. The last iteration of this survey was conducted in early 2020, just before shutdowns brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. This report is uniquely positioned as a post-pandemic examination of media use, and comparisons to the 2020 report shed light on changes in children's media habits over this time period.

To capture a view of the current landscape, we included questions about young children's use of artificial intelligence (AI). While there has been a recent push to understand the role of generative AI in the lives of adolescents (see Madden et al., "The Dawn of the AI Era," 2024), there is a lack of research on young children's use of generative AI and the perceived impact of AI in their lives. This report identifies how very young children may be exposed to AI, and the perceived impact that AI has on critical thinking, creativity, and well-being.

This report considers how children use a variety of media, including time spent with different devices, type of content viewed, and the social context of their viewing. Additionally, we consider the role of parents and parent perceptions of children's media use. To explore differences in use among different children and households, we have segmented the findings by age, gender, household income, and race/ethnicity, where noteworthy. The report covers a broad range of topics, including:

- The frequency of children's use of different types of media (e.g., devices like smartphones, computers, etc.) and the time they spend engaging in different media activities (e.g., the style of content, from short-form videos to live broadcasts).
- The types of media content they view (i.e., genres of online videos).
- Personal technology ownership, like mobile phones and tablets, as well as technology in the home or social environment, like smart speakers.
- Parents' perceptions of how media use affects their children, including the impact of educational media on learning and the use of media for social and emotional regulation.
- Parental co-use of technology with their child.
- Children's interactions with generative AI, as well as parent perception of AI use to support different outcomes, such as creativity.

With screen media's prominence in children's lives, it's necessary to examine how children use screen media recreationally, and the types of content they are engaging with, in order to understand how parents, caregivers, and educators can help children manage their exposure. Media is central in children's lives—they use it for homework, entertainment, social connection, and play. The context of their media use is also very broad, with children often using screens by themselves and also with others. As media and technology become ever more central in children's lives, this report serves as a vital resource for policymakers, educators, and caregivers navigating a rapidly changing landscape.

KEY TABLE A. Time spent with media, by activity, 2011 to 2024

Among 0- to 8-year-olds, average amount of time spent in a typical day …	2011	2013	2017	2020	2024
Watching television/videos	***1:44***	***1:27***	**1:40***	**1:45***	**1:28**
Live TV	*N/A*	*:39*	:27*	:18*	:05
Recorded/on demand	*N/A*	*N/A*	:10	:06	N/A
Downloaded or streamed, such as through Netflix, Amazon Prime, Hulu, or Disney+	*N/A*	*N/A*	:27	:30	:31
Watching longer videos on an app, such as YouTube	*N/A*	*N/A*	:19*	:39*	:28
Watching short videos on apps like TikTok, Reels, or YouTube Shorts	*N/A*	*N/A*	N/A	N/A	:14
DVDs	*:31*	*:22*	:17*	:12	:10
Reading/being read to	***:29***	***:28***	**:29**	**:32**	**:32**
Print	*:29*	*:28*	:26	:28	:26
Electronic	*N/A*	*N/A*	:03	:04	:06
Playing video games	***:25***	***:23***	**:25***	**:23***	**:38**
Console games	*:14*	*:10*	:05*	:07	:08
Handheld games	*:04*	*:04*	:01*	N/A	:05
Smartphone or tablet games	*:08*	*:05*	:03	:03	:04
Mobile games	*:03*	*:08*	:16	:13*	:21
Listening to audio	***:29***	***:20***	**:18***	**:27***	**:37**
Music	*:29*	*:20*	:18*	:25*	:33
Podcasts and Audiobooks	*N/A*	*N/A*	N/A	:02	:04
AI	***N/A***	***N/A***	**N/A**	**N/A**	**0**
Chatting with an AI chatbot	*N/A*	*N/A*	N/A	N/A	†
AI image, video, or audio generator	*N/A*	*N/A*	N/A	N/A	†
Other	***:07***	***:05***	**:10**	**:11**	**:17**
Video-chatting	*N/A*	*N/A*	:01*	:01*	:05
Virtual assistant or smart speaker	*N/A*	*N/A*	N/A	N/A	:02
Taking or making pictures or videos	*N/A*	*N/A*	N/A	N/A	:01
Social networking sites (e.g., Instagram, Snapchat)	*N/A*	*N/A*	N/A	N/A	:03
Looking things up	*N/A*	*N/A*	N/A	N/A	:04
Homework (on a digital device like a computer or tablet)	*:05*	*:03*	:02	:02	:02
Virtual reality	*N/A*	*N/A*	†	†	†
Anything else	*:02*	*:02*	:08	:09	N/A
Total screen time	***2:16***	***1:55***	**2:19**	**2:24**	**2:27**
Total media	***3:14***	***2:43***	**3:06***	**3:19**	**3:47**

Note: An asterisk indicates the item differs significantly ($p < .05$) from 2024. The years 2011 and 2013 are presented for historical reference only and were not tested against 2024 totals.
† Greater than zero but less than 0.5%.

KEY TABLE B. Time spent with media, by activity and age, 2024

Among 0- to 8-year-olds, average amount of time spent in a typical day ...	Under 2	2 to 4	5 to 8
Watching television/videos	**:46**	**1:34**	**1:44**
Live TV	:03	:04	:06
Recorded/on demand	N/A	N/A	N/A
Downloaded or streamed, such as through Netflix, Amazon Prime, Hulu, or Disney+	:17[a]	:41[b]	:31[c]
Watching longer videos on an app, such as YouTube	:17[a]	:29[b]	:32[b]
Watching short videos on apps like TikTok, Reels, or YouTube Shorts	:04[a]	:10[b]	:22[c]
DVDs	:05	:10	:13
Reading/being read to	**:33**	**:30**	**:34**
Print	:25	:26	:27
Electronic	:08	:04	:07
Playing video games	**:03**	**:21**	**1:04**
Console games	:02	:02	:16
Handheld games	:00	:03	:08
Computer games	:00	:02	:06
Smartphone or tablet games	:01	:14	:34
Listening to audio	**:36**	**:34**	**:40**
Music	:33	:31	:35
Podcasts	:02	:00	:01
Audiobooks	:01	:03	:04
AI	**:00**	**:00**	**:00**
Chatting with an AI chatbot	:00	:00	:00
AI image, video, or audio generator	:00	:00	:00
Other			
Video-chatting	:03	:05	:05
Virtual assistant or smart speaker	:00	:03	:02
Taking or making pictures or videos	:00	:00	:01
Social networking sites (e.g., Instagram, Snapchat)	:00	:01	:06
Looking things up	:03[ab]	:02[a]	:06[b]
Homework (on a digital device like a computer or tablet)	:00[a]	:01[a]	:04[b]
Virtual reality	:00	:00	:00
Total screen time	**1:03[a]**	**2:08[b]**	**3:28[c]**
Total media	**2:04[a]**	**3:11[b]**	**4:26[c]**

Note: Items with different superscripts differ significantly ($p < .05$). Items with no superscript, and those with the same superscript, do not differ significantly. Significance should be read across rows.

KEY TABLE C. Media in the home, 2011 to 2024

Among 0- to 8-year-olds, percent who live in homes with …	2011	2013	2017	2020	2024
Television					
TV set	98%	96%	98%	97%	97%
Smart TV	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	91%
Internet-connected television	N/A	30%	75%	84%	91%
Subscription service (e.g., Netflix, Amazon Prime)	N/A	N/A	72%*	87%*	92%
Cable/satellite	68%	70%	65%*	45%*	22%
Computer/Internet Access					
Computer (laptop or desktop)	72%	76%	91%*	88%*	85%
High-speed internet access (cable, wireless, or DSL)	68%	69%	90%*	89%*	93%
Any mobile device	52%	75%	98%	98%	98%
Smartphone	41%	63%	95%	97%	96%
Tablet	8%	40%	78%	75%	75%
Smartwatch	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	48%
Video Game Player					
Console video game player	67%	64%	69%	67%	66%
Hand-held video game player	44%	35%	31%*	N/A	49%
Other					
E-reader	9%	21%	29%	31%*	26%
Smart speaker or "virtual assistant"	N/A	N/A	9%*	41%*	49%
Virtual reality headset	N/A	N/A	11%*	11%*	14%
Screen-free audio player (e.g., Toniebox, Yoto Player)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	8%
Fitness tracker (e.g., Fitbit)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	19%
Child's Own Device					
Any mobile device	3%	12%	45%*	48%	51%
Tablet	†	7%	42%*	44%	47%
Smartphone	†	†	4%*	8%	9%
Laptop or desktop computer	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	5%
Educational game device	29%	26%	33%*	25%*	17%
Educational robot	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1%
Handheld video game player	24%	21%	14%*	N/A	17%
Smart toy that connects to the internet	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	2%
E-reader	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	3%
Smartwatch	N/A	N/A	N/A	5%*	3%
Fitness tracker (e.g., Fitbit)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1%
Smart speaker or "virtual assistant"	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	9%
Screen-free audio player (e.g., Toniebox, Yoto Player)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	5%

Note: An asterisk indicates the item differs significantly ($p < .05$) from 2024. The years 2011 and 2013 are presented for historical reference only and were not tested against 2024 totals.
† Greater than zero but less than 0.5%.

KEY TABLE D. Daily media use, by activity, 2011 to 2024

Among 0- to 8-year-olds, the percent who engage in each activity at least once or more per day	2011	2013	2017	2020	2024
Read/are read to	*58%*	*60%*	57%	59%*	54%
Any television/videos	*67%*	*61%*	60%*	60%*	47%
Watch TV shows or movies, including streaming sites like Netflix, Hulu, or Disney+	*N/A*	*N/A*	N/A	N/A	40%
Watch online videos (e.g., YouTube)	*N/A*	*N/A*	24%*	34%	36%
Watch short videos (e.g., TikTok, YouTube Shorts)	*N/A*	*N/A*	N/A	N/A	18%
Watch DVDs/videotapes	*25%*	*18%*	11%*	N/A	4%
Use mobile device (like a smartphone or tablet) to play games, watch videos, go online, or use apps	*8%*	*17%*	28%	30%	26%
Use a computer or laptop	*14%*	*14%*	11%*	9%*	5%
Handheld video game	*N/A*	*7%*	4%	N/A	N/A
Console video game	*9%*	*6%*	6%	7%	N/A
Video game (on computer, console, or handheld player)	*N/A*	*N/A*	N/A	N/A	8%
Listen to music	*N/A*	*N/A*	N/A	N/A	39%
Listen to podcasts	*N/A*	*N/A*	N/A	N/A	2%
Listen to audiobooks	*N/A*	*N/A*	N/A	N/A	5%
Listen to podcasts, stories, or audiobooks	*N/A*	*N/A*	N/A	5%*	6%
Use a smart toy	*N/A*	*N/A*	N/A	N/A	1%
Use social media	*N/A*	*N/A*	N/A	N/A	2%
Use AI chatbot	*N/A*	*N/A*	N/A	N/A	1%
Use AI image generator	*N/A*	*N/A*	N/A	N/A	1%

Note: An asterisk indicates the item differs significantly ($p < .05$) from 2024.
The years 2011 and 2013 are presented for historical reference only and were not tested against 2024 totals.

Overall Screen Media Use

Total media use among children age 8 and younger is up by 13 minutes from 2020, with an average media use of three hours and 47 minutes. This includes a screen media use[2] average of two hours and 27 minutes, and an additional hour and 20 minutes of non-screen-related media activities, such as reading print books and listening to music or podcasts (see Key Table A).

While the overall time that young children spend with media has continued to trend upward over the last decade (see Key Table A for historical trends), there is a great deal of variation in time spent using screen media overall, as well as differences in age groups. On a given day, more than one-quarter (27%) of children don't use any screen media, while 1 in 5 children use screen media for four or more hours.

Overall, patterns of screen media use have remained fairly consistent for children age 8 and younger, with a majority of screen time spent watching television and videos (60%) and gaming (26%) (see Figure 1). However, these numbers have shifted significantly from 2020, with a 17-minute decrease in time spent watching television and videos (down from 73% of total screen media use in 2020) and a 15-minute increase in time spent gaming (up from 16% of total screen media use in 2020) (see Figure 2). Electronic reading, video-chatting, and homework account for a relatively small proportion of daily screen-time activity (4%, 4%, and 1%, respectively).

FIGURE 1. Screen use, by activity, 2024
Among 0- to 8-year-olds, percentage of average daily screen time devoted to ...

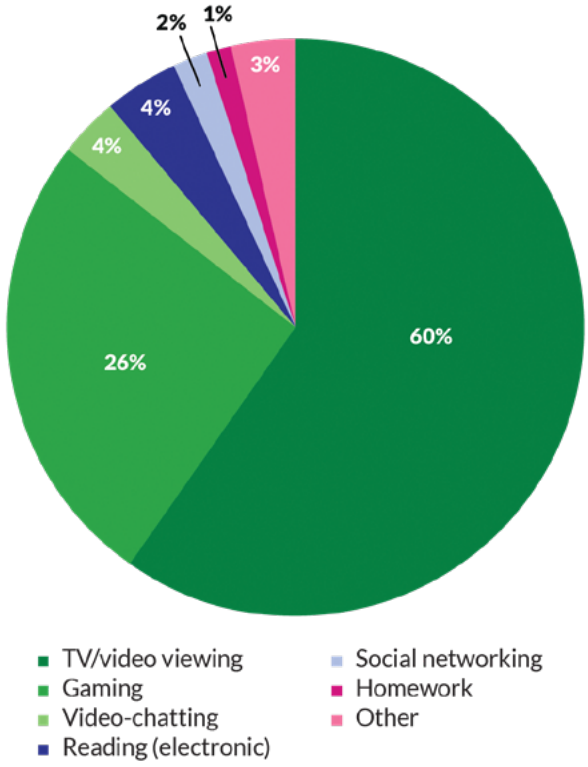
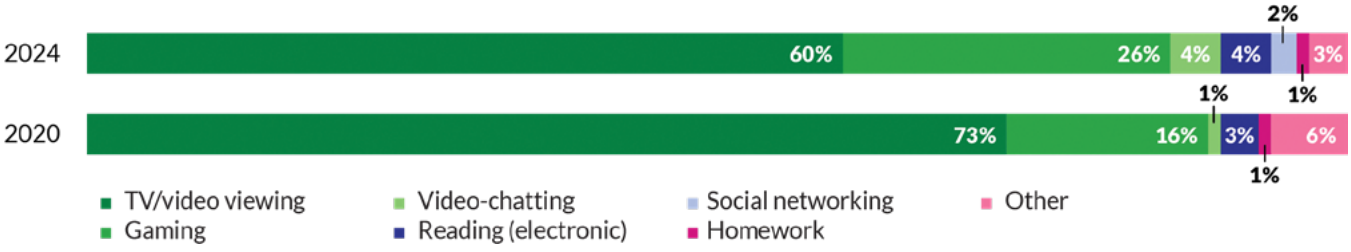


FIGURE 2. Screen use, by activity, 2020 vs. 2024
Among 0- to 8-year-olds, percentage of average daily screen time devoted to ...



[2] Screen media includes watching videos on a TV set, smartphone, tablet, or computer; playing games on a console, handheld player, computer, or mobile device; video-chatting; using AI either through a chat or an image, video, or audio generator; taking or making photos or videos; using social media; looking things up; doing homework; and using a virtual reality headset.

Use of screen media varies between age groups, with children under age 2 spending an average of one hour and three minutes on screens per day, while 2- to 4-year-olds average nearly two hours (2:08), and 5- to 8-year-olds average around three and a half hours per day (3:28) (see Figure 3). On average, boys use screen media for over 30 minutes longer than girls on a given day (2:38 vs. 2:07) (see Figure 4).

FIGURE 3. Average daily screen use, by age, 2024
Among 0- to 8-year-olds, average daily amount of screen media (hours:minutes)

FIGURE 4. Average daily screen use, by gender, 2024
Among 0- to 8-year-olds, average daily amount of screen media by gender

Differences by demographics

When considering the differences in screen use for children from homes with different household incomes, there are some stark differences in the amount of time that children spend watching screen media. On average, children from homes with household incomes less than $50,000 per year are watching twice the amount of screen media than children from homes with a household income of $100,000 or more per year (3:48 vs. 1:52).

TABLE 1. Screen media use within demographic groups over time, 2011 to 2024

Among 0- to 8-year-olds, average screen media use per day	2011	2013	2017	2020	2024
Race/Ethnicity					
Black	*3:07*	*2:26*	2:51	4:09	3:38
Hispanic/Latino	*2:35*	*1:57*	2:36	3:03	3:05
White	*1:55*	*1:58*	2:11	1:52	2:08
Income					
Lower (<$50K)	*2:32*	*2:17*	3:29	3:48	3:48
Middle ($50K–<$100K)	*2:18*	*2:01*	2:25	2:43	2:31
Higher ($100K+)	*1:52*	*1:48*	1:50	1:52	1:52
Parent Education					
High school or less	*2:39*	*2:14*	2:50	3:12	3:06
Some college	*2:18*	*2:11*	2:37	2:34	2:51
College degree	*1:33*	*1:31*	1:37	1:38	1:43

Note: The years 2011 and 2013 are presented for historical reference only and were not tested against 2024 totals. See methodology section for income categories prior to 2024.

Daily screen use also varies by race/ethnicity, with Black children spending more time watching TV shows or videos through streaming services, such as Netflix, Amazon Prime, or Disney+, compared to White children (44 minutes vs. 30 minutes). Black and Latino children are more likely to spend more time watching videos on platforms like YouTube, Instagram Reels, and TikTok compared with White children (one hour and nine minutes for Black children and 53 minutes for Latino children vs. 33 minutes for White children).

Non-screen media

Non-screen media is up 10 minutes since 2020, with children age 0 to 8 spending an average of one hour and five minutes reading in print, listening to music, podcasts, and audiobooks, and using a smart speaker (compared to 55 minutes in 2020).

Mobile Media

The presence of mobile devices, such as cellphones and tablets, in the household has remained relatively unchanged since 2017. The majority of U.S. households own at least one mobile device, with 96% having a smartphone that connects to the internet, and 75% having a tablet, like an iPad, Galaxy Tab, Microsoft Surface, or Kindle Fire. In regard to wearable technology, almost half of households (48%) own a smartwatch, like a Samsung Galaxy or Apple Watch, and nearly 1 in 5 (19%) own a fitness tracker, like a Fitbit, Oura Ring, or Whoop.

Half (51%) of children age 0 to 8 have their own mobile device, either a smartphone or a tablet, with 44% of children owning one mobile device, and 5% owning both a cellphone and a tablet.

Tablets have the highest proportion of ownership among children compared to any other mobile device, with 47% of children age 0 to 8 having their own tablet (see Table 2). Nearly three in five (58%) children age 5 to 8 have their own tablet, compared to 45% of children age 2 to 4. By 2 years old, 4 in 10 children have their own tablet (40%), and by 4 years old, more than half (58%) of children do.

The proportion of children age 0 to 8 who have their own cellphone has remained stable. Compared to 8% of children in 2020 who had their own phone, as of 2024, 9% have their own phone. Among these children, 79% have a smartphone (they can go online, use apps, and/or watch videos on it), 19% have a smartphone that has limited or no apps or internet access (like a Pinwheel, Gabb, Troomi, or Bark phone), and 3% have a simple feature phone that does not have a touch screen, go online, or have any apps. Among children age 5 to 8, 13% have their own cellphone, compared to 5% of children age 2 to 4. By 8 years old, nearly 1 in 4 children have their own phone (23%).

TABLE 2. Child's own media devices, by age, 2024

Among 0- to 8-year-olds who have their own …	All	<2	2 to 4	5 to 8
Tablet	47%	6%[a]	45%[b]	58%[c]
Cellphone	9%	1%[a]	5%[b]	13%[c]
Smartwatch	3%	†	1%[a]	4%[b]
Fitness tracker	1%	0%[a]	1%[ab]	2%[b]

Note: Items with different superscripts differ significantly ($p < .05$).
† Greater than zero but less than one-half percent (< .05%).

TABLE 3. Child's own media devices, 2011 to 2024

Among 0- to 8-year-olds, percent who have their own …	2011	2013	2017	2020	2024
Any mobile device	*3%*	*12%*	45%*	48%	51%
Tablet	*†*	*7%*	42%*	44%	47%
Cellphone	*†*	*†*	4%*	8%	9%
Smartwatch	*N/A*	*N/A*	N/A	5%*	3%
Fitness tracker (e.g., Fitbit)	*N/A*	*N/A*	N/A	N/A	1%

Note: An asterisk indicates the item differs significantly from 2024 ($p < .05$).
†Greater than zero but less than one-half percent (< .05%).
Mobile device ownership in 2017 and 2020 was calculated by whether a child owned at least one of the following: a smartphone, a tablet, or an iPod Touch or similar. The years 2011 and 2013 are presented for historical reference only and were not tested against 2024 totals.

FIGURE 5. Tablet ownership, by age, 2024
Among 0- to 8-year-olds, percentage who own a tablet

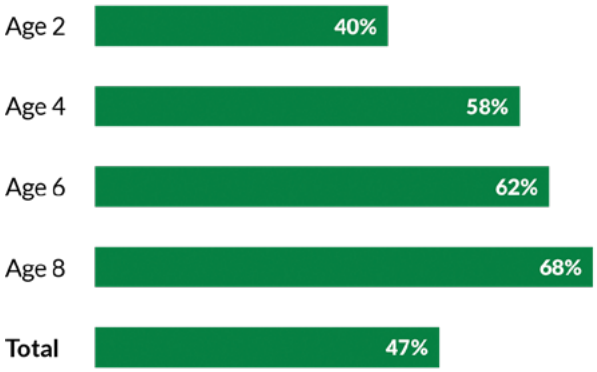
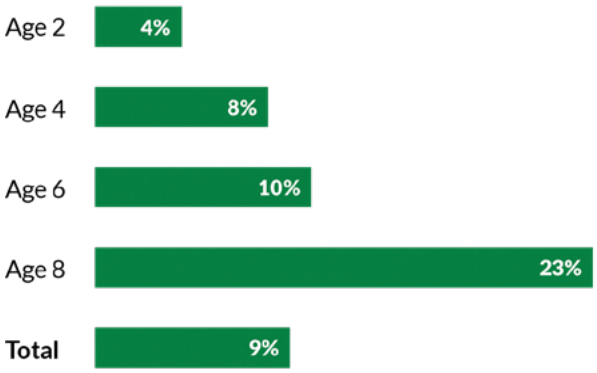


FIGURE 6. Cellphone ownership, by age, 2024
Among 0- to 8-year-olds, percentage who own a cellphone



We also asked about wearable devices, including smartwatches and fitness trackers. For smartwatches, 3% of children age 8 and younger have their own smartwatch, compared to 5% in 2020. Four percent of children age 5 to 8 have their own smartwatch, and 1% of children age 2 to 4 own a smartwatch. Among children who have their own smartwatch, 80% of them have a smartwatch that allows for phone calling or location finding. In terms of fitness trackers, 1% of 2- to 4-year-olds have their own fitness tracker, like a Fitbit, Oura Ring, or Whoop. For children age 5 to 8, 2% have a fitness tracker.

Among children age 0 to 8, a little over two-thirds (68%) have used a smartphone or tablet to play games, watch videos, go online, or use apps. About a quarter (26%) use a mobile device daily, and 23% use one weekly. Use varies by age group. For children age 2 and younger, 27% have ever used a mobile device, with 8% using one daily and 9% weekly. Among 2- to 4-year-olds, 74% have used a mobile device, with 31% using one daily and 22% weekly. For 5- to 8-year-olds, 84% have used a mobile device, with 32% using one daily and 30% weekly.

One-third (35%) of children age 0 to 8 watch videos, movies, or TV shows on mobile devices like a smartphone or tablet. On average, these children spend 34 minutes daily watching videos on a mobile device. Time spent watching videos on mobile technology increases with age: Children age 5 to 8 spend an average of 46 minutes daily, compared to 35 minutes for children age 2 to 4, and eight minutes for children age 2 and younger.

Patterns of video watching on mobile devices vary by demographic factors. On average, Black and Latino children spend more time watching videos on mobile devices than White children, with Black youth averaging 53 minutes, Latino youth 48 minutes, and White youth 27 minutes daily. Children from lower-income households (household income less than $50,000 per year) spend more time on average watching videos on mobile devices than those from middle- and higher-income households. On average, children from lower-income families spend 55 minutes daily, compared to 37 minutes for middle-income families (household income between $50,000 and $99,999 per year) and 25 minutes for higher-income families (household income of $100,000 or more per year).

TABLE 4. Time spent with mobile media, 2011 to 2024

Among 0- to 8-year-olds, average daily time spent using a mobile device …	2011	2013	2017	2020	2024
Watching videos (such as YouTube or TikTok), movies, or TV shows on a mobile device like a smartphone or tablet	*:01*	*:05*	:21*	:28	:34
Playing games on a smartphone or tablet	*:03*	*:08*	:16	13*	:21
Video-chatting via apps like Zoom or FaceTime	*N/A*	*N/A*	:01*	:01*	:05
Reading or being read to on a tablet, phone, or e-reader	*N/A*	*N/A*	:03	:04	:06
Doing homework on a digital device like a computer or tablet	*N/A*	*N/A*	N/A	:01	:02
Taking or making pictures or videos	*N/A*	*N/A*	N/A	N/A	:01
Anything else	*:01*	*:02*	:07	:08	N/A
Total mobile media use	***:05***	***:15***	**:48***	**:55***	**1:09**

Note: An asterisk indicates the item differs significantly ($p < .05$) from 2024.
The years 2011 and 2013 are presented for historical reference only and were not tested against 2024 totals.

TABLE 5. Mobile media use within demographic groups over time, 2011 to 2024

Among 0- to 8-year-olds, average time spent with mobile per day	2011	2013	2017	2020	2024
Race/Ethnicity					
Black	*:08*	*:19*	1:06*	1:44	1:54
Hispanic/Latino	*:05*	*:14*	1:06*	1:19	1:42
White	*:04*	*:16*	1:06	:37*	:51
Income					
Lower (<$50K)	*:03*	*:13*	1:13*	1:43	1:58
Middle ($50K–<$100K)	*:04*	*:18*	:50	:59	1:10
Higher ($100K+)	*:07*	*:18*	:37	:40	:48
Parent Education					
High school or less	*:05*	*:14*	1:01*	1:19	1:30
Some college	*:05*	*:24*	:52*	:58*	1:26
College degree	*:06*	*:13*	:32	:35	:42

Note: An asterisk indicates the item differs significantly ($p < .05$) from 2024.
The years 2011 and 2013 are presented for historical reference only and were not tested against 2024 totals. See methodology section for income categories prior to 2024.

SCHOOL DEVICES IN THE HOME

School-provided devices in the home technology and media ecosystem of very young children.

School-provided devices play a growing role in the media environment of young children, particularly as the early elementary grades see a closer 1-to-1 match between each child and a corresponding device, post-pandemic. Of the families that report a child has and/or uses a tablet or laptop, 13% say the device is provided by the school. Among kids age 5 to 8, the percent using a school-provided device for home tablet or laptop use rises to nearly 1 in 5 (19%). School-provided devices may be shaping the home media environment in a number of ways: by providing a device for families that lack one; by providing one for a specific child, rather than having devices shared by siblings or family members; and by inserting devices into households that may have been reluctant to offer their child ownership.

Television, Streaming, and Online Videos

Television viewing among children age 0 to 8 has changed over the years, transitioning from traditional TV to online platforms. Despite these changes, watching videos remains the most common screen-media activity among children age 8 and younger since 2011, accounting for 64% of their daily screen time.

However, time spent watching television and video has dropped since early 2020. In 2020, children spent an average of one hour and 45 minutes watching TV and video, but this time has since dropped to one hour and 28 minutes in 2024.

TABLE 6. Television/video viewing, by type, 2011 to 2024

Among 0- to 8-year-olds, average daily time spent watching ...	2017	2020	2024
Live TV	:27*	:18*	:05
Recorded/on demand	:10	:06	N/A
Subscription service (e.g., Netflix, Hulu)	:27	:30	N/A
Downloaded or streamed, such as through Netflix, Amazon Prime, Hulu, or Disney+	N/A	N/A	:31
Watching longer videos on an app, such as YouTube	:19*	:39*	:28
Watching short videos on apps like TikTok, Reels, or YouTube Shorts	N/A	N/A	:14
DVDs	:17*	:12	:10
Total television/video	**1:40***	**1:45***	**1:28**

Note: An asterisk indicates the item differs significantly ($p < .05$) from 2024. The years 2011 and 2013 are presented for historical reference only and were not tested against 2024 totals.

Television environment in the home

Most households are equipped with smart TVs or internet-connected TVs and subscription services (e.g., Amazon Prime, Hulu, Netflix) for streaming TV shows and movies. As of 2024, 97% of households have a working TV, with 91% having a smart TV or internet-connected TV, and 92% subscribing to streaming services. Use of cable and satellite TV services has dropped significantly over the years, from 65% in 2017 to just 22% in 2024. Even among lower-income households, 86% own a smart TV, and 84% have a streaming subscription.

Children use a range of devices to consume video content, with TVs and smart TVs being the most popular. Looking at time spent watching videos (such as those on YouTube or TikTok), movies, or TV shows *by device*, on average, children age 8 and younger spend 51 minutes daily watching videos on TVs or smart TVs, 34 minutes on mobile devices such as smartphones or tablets, and nine minutes on computers.

TABLE 7. TV/video equipment in the home, 2011 to 2024

Among 0- to 8-year-olds, percent who live in homes with ...	2011	2013	2017	2020	2024
Television	*98%*	*96%*	98%	97%	97%
Internet-connected TV	*N/A*	*30%*	75%*	84%*	91%
Subscription service	*N/A*	*N/A*	72%*	87%*	92%
Cable or satellite TV	*68%*	*70%*	65%*	45%*	22%

Note: An asterisk indicates the item differs significantly ($p < .05$) from 2024. The years 2011 and 2013 are presented for historical reference only and were not tested against 2024 totals.

TABLE 8. TV/video equipment in the home, by income, 2024

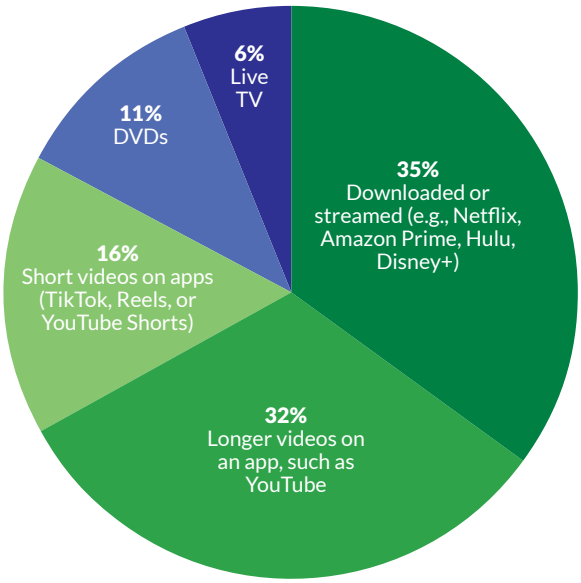
Among 0- to 8-year-olds, percent who live in homes with ...	Lower	Middle	Higher
Television	96%	99%	97%
Internet-connected TV	86%[a]	91%[b]	94%[b]
Subscription service	84%[a]	94%[b]	94%[b]
Cable or satellite TV	22%	20%	23%

Note: An asterisk indicates the item differs significantly ($p < .05$) from 2024. The years 2011 and 2013 are presented for historical reference only and were not tested against 2024 totals.

Streaming subscription platforms

The top way that children watch video is downloaded or streamed from platforms like Netflix, Hulu, and Disney+. Children in this age group spend an average of half an hour daily (:31) watching television and video by download or streaming. Four in 10 children (40%) watch TV shows or movies through streaming platforms daily. However, daily use of streaming platforms varies by age: 45% of children age 5 to 8 and 43% of children age 2 to 4 watch daily, compared to 22% of children under 2.

FIGURE 7. Television and video viewing, by type, 2024
Among 0- to 8-year-olds, proportion of total TV/video viewing that occurred through ...



Online video

YouTube

Online video consumption, on platforms like YouTube, has become commonplace for children age 0 to 8. On average, children spend 28 minutes each day watching longer online videos on YouTube. Older children (age 5 to 8) spend more time watching online videos (32 minutes) than younger children (29 minutes for those age 2 to 4, and 17 minutes for those under 2).

The percentage of children who watch YouTube daily has increased significantly since 2017, from 24% in 2017 to 36% in 2024. YouTube consumption does vary by age group, gender, race/ethnicity, and income level. One in five (20%) children younger than 2 watch online YouTube videos daily, compared to 36% of those age 2 to 4, and 43% of those age 5 to 8. A higher percentage of boys watches YouTube daily than girls (40% vs. 32%). Latino children are more likely to watch YouTube daily than White youth, and Black youth are more likely to watch online videos than Latino and White youth (51% Black vs. 39% Latino and 31% White). Half of children (50%) from lower-income households watch YouTube daily compared to 29% of children from higher-income families.

YouTube account ownership

Given that YouTube offers the option for parents to create a YouTube Kids profile that allows parents to set content settings, we were curious how many children watch YouTube videos through a YouTube Kids account. Based on parent reports, almost half (49%) of children who watch online videos on YouTube primarily access YouTube from their parent's account, 24% watch without logging into an account, 15% watch from their own account, and 8% from both their parent's account and their own account. For parents who indicate their child uses their own account, most are using a YouTube Kids account. Among children who access YouTube through their own account, 88% of parents indicated that the account was a YouTube Kids account, and 11% of parents said it was not. Children who come from lower-income (21%) and middle-income (17%) households are more likely to access YouTube from their own accounts compared to children from higher-income households (11%), who are more likely to watch videos without logging into an account (28% higher income vs. 17% lower income and 20% middle income).

TABLE 9. Daily YouTube use, by age, 2017 to 2024

Percent of 0- to 8-year-olds who watch online videos "every day"	2017	2020	2024
All	24%*	34%	36%
Under 2	8%*	17%	20%
2 to 4	27%*	39%	36%
5 to 8	30%*	39%	43%

Note: An asterisk indicates the item differs significantly ($p < .05$) from 2024.

Short-form video

Short videos on platforms like TikTok, YouTube Shorts, and Instagram Reels are gaining in popularity among children. Nearly half (48%) of children age 0 to 8 have watched short videos on these platforms. On average, children age 8 and younger spend 14 minutes watching short-form videos daily, with usage highest among older children (22 minutes for those age 5 to 8) compared to younger ones (10 minutes

per day for children age 2 to 4 and four minutes for those under 2).

Almost 1 in 5 children (18%) age 8 and younger watch short videos every day, 16% weekly, 13% less than once a week, and 53% have never watched short videos. A quarter (27%) of children age 5 to 8 watch short videos every day, compared with 13% of those age 2 to 4 and 8% of those under 2.

Socioeconomic differences emerged, with children from lower-income families spending 24 minutes daily on short videos compared to seven minutes among children from higher-income households. Three in 10 children (30%) from lower-income families watch short videos daily compared with less than 1 in 10 children from higher-income households (8%).

Types of online video content

Among children who watch online videos, about 65% of children watch learning videos (videos that teach specific concepts like numbers or shapes). Of these, 59% reported watching animal-related content, 57% educational videos (shows and programs that aim to teach a variety of educational concepts and stories, like *Sesame Street*), and 55% nursery rhymes or children's music.

Viewing habits differ across demographics. Younger children (age 2 to 4) are more likely to watch nursery rhymes, children's music, learning videos, and educational programs, such as *Sesame Street*. Among children age 5 to 8, more than half (56%) watch "how to" or DIY videos at least sometimes, compared to 30% of children age 2 to 4. Boys are more likely to watch gaming videos (42%) and stunt challenges (35%) than girls (27% and 26%, respectively). Black children are more likely to watch educational programs like *Sesame Street* (74% Black vs. 51% Latino and 49% White) and nursery rhymes (69% Black vs. 57% Latino and 50% White) compared to Latino or White children.

TABLE 10. Online videos watched by type, age, gender, race/ethnicity, and income, 2024

	Age				Gender		Race/Ethnicity		
Percent of 0- to 8-year-olds who watch the following types of online videos "often or sometimes"	All	Under 2	2 to 4	5 to 8	Boys	Girls	Black	Latino	White
Learning videos (e.g., alphabet, numbers, colors, shapes, feelings)	65%	74%	79%	53%	65%	65%	79%[a]	66%[b]	60%[b]
Animal videos	59%	44%[a]	61%[b]	62%[b]	61%	57%	56%	64%	60%
Educational videos online, like through YouTube, PBS, or Khan Academy	57%	51%[a]	65%[b]	54%[a]	56%	59%	75%[a]	56%[b]	52%[b]
Nursery rhymes or children's music	55%	71%[a]	77%[a]	37%[b]	53%	58%	69%[a]	57%[b]	50%[b]
Educational TV programs such as *Sesame Street*, *Dora the Explorer*, etc., often to sometimes	54%	60%[a]	68%[a]	42%[b]	51%	57%	74%[a]	51%[b]	49%[b]
"How to" or DIY videos (e.g., how to draw, cook, dance, make crafts, make things with Legos or PlayDoh, skateboard)	40%	10%[a]	30%[b]	56%[c]	30%	32%	43%[ab]	49%[a]	36%[b]
People playing video games	35%	5%[a]	22%[b]	52%[c]	42%[a]	27%[b]	43%[ab]	42%[a]	31%[b]
Music videos	34%	29%[a]	27%[a]	40%[b]	32%	36%	44%[a]	43%[a]	29%[b]
"Unboxing" videos (e.g., video of someone opening a new toy), or product demonstrations (e.g., showing off toys, makeup, clothes, etc.)	31%	7%[a]	27%[b]	41%[c]	30%	32%	39%[a]	40%[a]	27%[b]
Challenges/stunts/prank videos	31%	7%[a]	19%[b]	46%[c]	35%[a]	26%[b]	37%[a]	41%[a]	26%[b]
Family video blogs or vlogs, sometimes to often	31%	10%[a]	28%[b]	39%[c]	31%	31%	38%[a]	36%[ab]	28%[b]
Fitness or movement videos	21%	14%[a]	19%[ab]	25%[b]	19%	23%	23%[ab]	33%[a]	17%[b]
Celebrity/behind-the scenes videos	6%	2%[a]	3%[a]	9%[b]	6%	5%	9%[a]	8%[ab]	4%[b]

Note: Items with different superscripts differ significantly ($p < .05$). Items with no superscript, and those with the same superscript, do not differ significantly. Significance should be read across rows within demographic groups (age, gender, race/ethnicity).

Video Games and Virtual Reality

Overall, about 2 in 5 (42%) children age 0 to 8 play video games, with almost three-quarters (72%) of the oldest group (age 5 to 8) playing video games. One in five children (22%) age 2 to 4 play video games.

Many families own game-specific devices. Fully two-thirds (66%) of families with young children have a console video game player, like an Xbox or PlayStation, at home. Another half (49%) of families with young kids have a handheld video game player like a Nintendo Switch or Steam Deck in the home. However, few families have invested in virtual reality (VR) headsets (e.g., Meta Quest) or mixed reality headsets (e.g., Apple Vision Pro, Microsoft HoloLens). Only 14% say they have such a device at home. Even among families with a VR headset, they are not used all that frequently by young children—just one family surveyed had a child who had played with it on the target day.

How much time do children spend playing video games?

Total time spent playing games has increased noticeably since our last Census survey in early 2020, moving from 23 minutes of total time spent by all children playing video games across the main devices—consoles, handhelds, computers, and smartphones or tablets—to 38 minutes in 2024. While time has increased on all gaming devices, the largest jump was time spent playing games on smartphones and tablets, which increased eight additional minutes on average from 2020.

TABLE 11. Time spent gaming per day, 2011 to 2024

	2011	2013	2017	2020	2024
Console games	*:14*	*:10*	:05	:07	:13
Console games	*:10*	*:06*	:05*	N/A	:08
Handheld games	*:04*	*:04*	:01*	N/A	:05
Computer games	*:08*	*:05*	:03	:03	:04
Smartphone or tablet games	*:03*	*:08*	:16	:13*	:21
Total gaming	***:25***	***:23***	**:25***	**:23***	**:38**

Note: An asterisk indicates the item differs significantly ($p < .05$) from 2024. The years 2011 and 2013 are presented for historical reference only and were not tested against 2024 totals.

Age remains an important differentiator in time spent playing video games. While total gaming time has increased for all groups of children since 2020, children age 4 and under show relatively modest jumps, from two to three minutes total video game play for those under age 2, and from 16 to 21 minutes for those age 2 to 4. Parents of older children (age 5 to 8) indicated a significant 23-minute jump in video game play, from 41 minutes in 2020 to one hour and four minutes in 2024. This difference in gaming by age is especially notable for smartphone or tablet gaming, where 2- to 4-year-olds play for 14 minutes on a typical day, while 5- to 8-year-olds play for 20 minutes more, topping out at 34 minutes per day of game play on smartphones or tablets. Such differences are unsurprising given the motor and cognitive development changes in this age span.

TABLE 12. Time spent gaming per day, by age, 2024

	0- to 2-year-olds	2- to 4-year-olds	5- to 8-year-olds
Console games	:02[a]	:02[a]	:16[b]
Handheld games	:00[a]	:03[a]	:08[b]
Computer games	:00[a]	:02	:06[b]
Smartphone or tablet games	:01[a]	:14[b]	:34[c]
Total gaming	**:03**	**:21**	**1:04**

Note: Items with different superscripts differ significantly ($p < .05$). Items with no superscript, and those with the same superscript, do not differ significantly. Significance should be read across rows.

Similar patterns of use by demographic appeared here as well, with White children and children from higher-income families spending less time playing video games than Latino or especially Black children. These differences have grown more pronounced, as time spent gaming has grown over the last four years, with Black children age 0 to 8 spending 59 minutes per day playing video games, compared with 44 minutes for Latino children and 33 minutes for White children. These patterns continue to play out by income, with children from families in lower-income brackets playing video games for 54 minutes on a typical day, compared with 39 minutes for middle-income families and 30 minutes per day for higher-income families.

TABLE 13. Time spent gaming per day, by demographic group, 2024

	Console gaming	Handheld gaming	Computer gaming	Mobile gaming	Total gaming
Gender					
Boys	:12[a]	:06	:04	:23	**:45**
Girls	:04[b]	:04	:03	:18	**:29**
Race/Ethnicity					
Black	:09	:06	:07	:37[a]	**:59**
Latino	:06	:02	:04	:32[a]	**:44**
White	:10	:06	:03	:14[b]	**:33**
Income					
Lower	:13[a]	:05	:04	:32[a]	**:54**
Middle	:09[ab]	:06	:03	:21[b]	**:39**
Higher	:06[b]	:04	:04	:16[b]	**:30**
Parent Education					
High school or less	:14[a]	:08[a]	:04	:28[a]	**:54**
Some college	:09[a]	:03[ab]	:04	:23[a]	**:39**
College degree	:04[b]	:03[b]	:03	:14[b]	**:24**

Note: Items with different superscripts differ significantly ($p < .05$). Items with no superscript, and those with the same superscript, do not differ significantly. Significance should be read within columns.

When it comes to gaming systems, boys and girls spend roughly the same amount of time playing smartphone, computer, or handheld games, but boys are more likely to spend more time on console gaming than girls (12 minutes on a typical day for boys vs. four minutes for girls). Overall, boys spend more time gaming, with an average of 45 minutes per day playing all types of video games, compared with 29 minutes for girls age 0 to 8.

Games can be played many different ways: alone, with family and friends, in person and online, and with people you've never met. Social gaming with others can be a way to connect with caregivers, peers, and siblings, but playing games online with strangers can also spark concern. About one-quarter (24%) of children age 0 to 8 play a game online by themselves often or sometimes, while 14% of children often or sometimes play a social game online with other people they know, and 9% often or sometimes play a social game online with people they don't know.

Most of the children playing games in our sample were 5- to 8-year-olds. Almost no infants and toddlers played games online with others or by themselves. Among the youngest children, age 0 to 2, 3% play video games sometimes or often online by themselves, while 11% of 2- to 4-year-olds and 42% of 5- to 8-year-olds play online games on their own. Children age 5 to 8 were also more likely to play "social" games online, both with people they know (26% vs. 3% of 2- to 4-year-olds and 1% of 0- to 2-year-olds) and with other people they *don't* know (17% vs. 3% of 2- to 4- year-olds and 1% of 0- to 2-year-olds).

Reading

Children age 0 to 8 spend an average of half an hour (32 minutes) reading or being read to each day. Time spent reading matches the time spent reading in 2020, which was also 32 minutes.

TABLE 14. Time spent reading or being read to, 2011 to 2024

Among 0- to 8-year-olds, average time spent reading per day	2011	2013	2017	2020	2024
Print	*:29*	*:28*	:26	:28	:26
E-reading	*N/A*	*N/A*	:03	:04	:06
Total reading (or being read to)	***:29***	***:28***	**:29**	**:32**	**:32**

Note: The years 2011 and 2013 are presented for historical reference only and were not tested against 2024 totals. No significant differences in overall reading totals for 2017 or 2020 and 2024.

However, interesting patterns emerge in children's daily reading. In 2024, almost half (54%) of children read or were read to every day, a decline from 59% of children in 2020.

The decrease in proportion of daily reading may be attributed to changes in reading behaviors across different age groups. Among parents of children under age 2, the percentage reporting daily reading has increased significantly, rising from 43% in 2017 to 46% in 2020, and reaching 55% in 2024. However, the opposite trend is observed for older children age 5 to 8: In 2024, only 52% of parents reported daily reading for this age group, down from 63% in 2020 and 64% in 2017.

TABLE 15. Daily reading, by demographic, 2017 to 2024

Among 0- to 8-year-olds, average time spent reading per day	2017	2020	2024
All	**57%**	**59%**	**54%**
Age			
Under 2	43%*	46%*	55%
2 to 4	56%	63%	57%
5 to 8	64%*	63%*	52%
Gender			
Boys	53%	57%*	50%
Girls	61%	62%	59%
Race/Ethnicity			
Black	41%	53%	45%
Hispanic/Latino	42%	49%*	37%
White	65%	64%	61%
Income			
Lower	40%	50%	41%
Middle	54%	53%	51%
Higher	65%	65%	61%
Parent Education			
High school or less	44%	50%*	38%
Some college	60%	59%	53%
College degree	67%	67%	67%

Note: An asterisk indicates the item differs significantly ($p < .05$) from 2024.

Daily reading varies by age and gender. Among children under age 2, 55% are read to daily, and 35% are read to weekly. For children age 2 to 4, 57% are read to daily, and 26% weekly. Among children age 5 to 8, daily reading drops to 52%, and 37% read or are read to weekly. Gender differences also emerge, with girls (59%) more likely to read or be read to daily than boys (50%).

Differences in daily reading are present across racial and socioeconomic groups. White children are more likely to read or be read to daily (61%) compared to Black children (45%) and Latino children (37%). Children from higher-income households are more likely to read or be read to daily (61%) than those from middle-income (51%) and lower-income households (41%). Parental education levels also differ in reading frequency, with children whose parent holds a bachelor's degree or higher (67%) more likely to read daily than children whose parents have some college (53%) or a high school education (38%).

Within lower-income households, there are notable differences in daily reading among racial and ethnic groups. In these households, White children (54%) and Black children (44%) are more likely to read or be read to daily than Latino children (24%). Among higher-income households, White children (62%) continue to read or be read to more frequently than Black (45%) and Latino children (43%).

E-reading vs. print reading

Even with a wider range of ways to read—including on phones, tablets, and e-readers—parents and children still predominantly turn to print books. On average, children age 8 and younger spend 26 minutes per day reading or being read to from print books. Children with parents who have attended some college (27%) or earned a bachelor's degree or higher (31%) are more likely to engage with print books compared to children whose parents did not attend college (19%).

Parents and children are less likely to turn to a phone, tablet, or e-reader to read. On average, children spend six minutes per day reading or being read to on a phone, tablet, or e-reader. Black children are more likely than White children to read or be read to on these digital devices (12% vs. 3%).

Households that own an e-reader have declined since 2020, with 26% of households in 2024 having a Kindle, Nook, or other e-reader, which is down from 31% in 2020. E-reader ownership is highest among higher-income households (37%), compared to middle-income (17%) and lower-income families (also 17%). Among children, only 3% have their own e-reader.

TABLE 16. Time spent reading per day, by demographic group, 2017 to 2024

Average time spent reading per day among 0- to 8-year-olds	2017			2020			2024		
Race/Ethnicity	**Print**	**E-reading**	**Total**	**Print**	**E-reading**	**Total**	**Print**	**E-reading**	**Total**
Black	:20	:08	:28	:33	:15	:48	:31	:12	:43
White	:28	:02	:30	:29	:03	:32	:27	:3	:30
Hispanic/Latino	:21	:04	:25	:25	:05	:30	:20	:10	:30
Income									
Lower	:21	:05	:26	:33	:10	:43	:23	:14	:37
Middle	:22	:03	:25	:25	:04	:29	:25	:5	:30
Higher	:30	:03	:33	:29	:03	:32	:27	:2	:29
Parent Education									
High school or less	:19	:03	:22	:24	:05	:29	:19	:9	:28
Some college	:29	:05	:34	:27	:05	:32	:27	:6	:33
College degree	:30	:03	:33	:32	:04	:36	:30	:3	:33

Note: There were no significant differences between 2017 and 2024 or 2020 and 2024 for print, e-reading, or total reading.

Non-Screen Media

In an era when parents are concerned about screen time, audio media is presented as an alternative that may allow for more movement or creative and expressive play and thought. Among all listening activities, listening to music was by far the most common and universal, with 39% of children listening to music daily and another 40% listening weekly.

Music

Parents surveyed report that children spend an average of 33 minutes per day listening to music. Music is one of the more universal activities, with little variation by gender, race/ethnicity, or family income. Even with age, where we often see variation in media use for developmental reasons, listening to music is consistent from infants to 8-year-olds, with the youngest children (those under 2) listening on average for 33 minutes per day, similar to the 31 minutes per day for 2- to 4-year-olds and 35 minutes per day for 5- to 8-year-olds. Among children whose parents indicated they had listened to music the day prior, 42% of children listened for one to two hours, and 8% listened for two hours or more.

Audiobooks

About one-third (34%) of young children listen to an audiobook or audio story at least occasionally. Daily listening of audiobooks is less common, with just 5% of young children listening daily. Another 11% listen weekly, and 18% listen to audiobooks less than once a week. Parents of children who listened to audiobooks the day prior to data collection reported an average of 44 minutes of listening. Among those who listen to audiobooks, 65% of parents listen to the audiobooks with their children at least some of the time.

Podcasts

Among children age 0 to 8, the least common listening activity was listening to podcasts. Very few children listen to podcasts regularly, with only about 1 in 10 children (11%) having ever listened to a podcast. Two percent of parents report that their child listens daily, and 4% report that they listen weekly. For parents who report that their child does listen to podcasts at least occasionally, these children are listening to podcasts for nearly an hour per day (59 minutes) on average. And parents co-listen at a similar rate to audiobooks, with 61% of parents listening to podcasts along with their children at least some of the time.

Smart speakers and virtual assistants

Smart speakers and virtual assistants like Amazon Echo or Google Home have become a common feature in many homes, even among families with young children. Today, 49% of households own a smart speaker—an increase of 8 percentage points since 2020, when 41% reported having one. While these devices are typically family-owned, 11% of children age 0 to 8 now have their very own smart speaker.

Children are also active users of these devices. Among kids 8 and under, 21% sometimes or often ask questions using voice-activated assistants, such as Alexa or Google Assistant. However, this marks a slight decrease from 2020, when 25% engaged with these technologies in this way.

For most children in households with a smart speaker, usage is brief. Two-thirds (66%) spend 15 minutes or less interacting with these devices daily, while 21% use them for 15 to 30 minutes. A small percentage (4%) use smart speakers for more than four hours each day. In these cases, families may be leveraging the device for extended activities like playing music or, for devices with screens, watching videos.

Parents' Experiences with Children's Media Use

Co-use with children

Parents are more likely to watch media with their child than to play games or use apps together. Most parents report co-watching their child's TV shows (74%) or YouTube videos (62%) at least some of the time. In comparison, fewer parents engage in co-using apps or games on a smartphone or tablet (42%) or playing console video games with their child (27%). While 62% of parents occasionally join their children in watching YouTube, 20% say they hardly ever or never do. Engagement with TikTok is notably lower, with only 17% of parents watching TikTok videos with their child.

Media use outside the home

Children often turn to mobile devices like smartphones or tablets in specific situations. About 23% of children age 0 to 8 sometimes or often use a device while eating at home, and 22% do so while dining out at a restaurant. Usage in transit is higher, with 37% using a device in the car or on public transportation.

FIGURE 8. Media use outside the home, 2024
Percentage of parents of 0- to 8-year-olds who indicate their child often or sometimes

Media use for sleep and emotional regulation

Screen media use is a bedtime activity for some children, with 20% of kids age 8 and under watching or playing on a device every night or most nights to fall asleep. An additional 16% use screens for this purpose on some nights. Older children are more likely to rely on screens, with 26% of those age 5 to 8 doing so, compared to just 6% of children younger than 2. Screen use at bedtime also varies by demographic, with Black (19%) and Latino (10%) children using screens for this purpose more often than White children (6%). Similarly, children from lower-income (29%) and middle-income households (24%) are more likely to use screens at night than those from higher-income families (14%).

Parents indicated many reasons or situations for when they may let a child use screens. Two-thirds (66%) of parents use screen media at least sometimes to keep their child occupied when the parent needs to get things done or needs time for themselves, 57% use it to help their child learn or experience something new, 56% use it to bond with or relax together with their child, 47% use it to reward good behavior, 44% use it to keep their child occupied when in public (e.g., doctor's office, grocery store, restaurant), and a quarter of parents (25%) use screen media of any kind (not just mobile devices) to help their child calm down when they are angry or upset. Devices seem to play a role in emotional regulation, with 17% of parents reporting that their child sometimes or often uses a mobile device to calm down when feeling angry, sad, or upset.

Discussions with pediatricians

Despite the growing presence of media in children's lives, conversations about media use between parents and pediatricians are rare. Only 23% of parents report that a pediatrician or family physician has ever discussed their child's media use, and 77% have had no pediatrician guidance on this topic.

Media management

Many parents take a hands-off approach to managing their child's screen time. Three-quarters (75%) of parents whose children use screen media do not use any tools or settings to limit screen time, and 51% do not restrict the types of content their children consume. Parents of older children (age 5 to 8) are more likely to use tools to manage screen use than those with very young children (younger than 2). For example, 30% of parents of older children use software to limit screen time, compared to just 4% of parents with younger children. Similarly, 56% of parents of older children restrict content, compared to 20% of parents of very young children.

Parents' Perceptions of Children's Media Use

Social-emotional impact of media

Parents hold mixed views about how media affects their children's social and emotional well-being. Four in 10 (40%) believe media's impact is mostly negative, while 34% see it as mostly positive, and 25% feel it is generally neutral or has no significant effect.

When considering specific aspects, parents often believe media use "makes no difference" to their child's social skills (44%), ability to focus (40%), behavior (42%), and mental/emotional health (51%). However, parents are more likely to see media as beneficial for fostering learning (67%), creativity (55%), and media literacy/technology skills (62%). Parents of Black and Latino children were significantly more likely to report that media helps social skills (49% and 40% of parents of Black and Latino children respectively vs. 28% of parents of White children), ability to focus (36% and 31% of parents of Black and Latino children vs. 18% of parents of White children), and physical activity (28% of parents of Black and Latino children vs. 13% of parents of White children). Conversely, 42% of parents feel that media use negatively impacts their child's physical behavior. Parents of White children were more likely to report that media use hurts physical activity (43%) compared to parents of Black (29%) and Latino (37%) children.

Parent concerns

Parents express significant concerns about various negative effects of media use:

- **Screen time and attention spans:** 80% worry about excessive screen time, and 79% about screen time's impact on attention spans.
- **Content issues:** Around three-quarters are concerned about exposure to content that is sexual (76%) or violent (75%), social media's effect on mental health (75%), and cyberbullying (74%).
- **Privacy and materialism**: 73% are worried about data collection by companies, and 72% about advertising and materialism in screen media.
- **Body image and stereotypes:** Concerns include media's impact on body image (69%), depictions of drugs and alcohol (65%), racial and ethnic stereotypes (58%), and gender stereotypes (55%).

"Concerned" includes parents who indicated they were "very concerned" or "somewhat concerned."

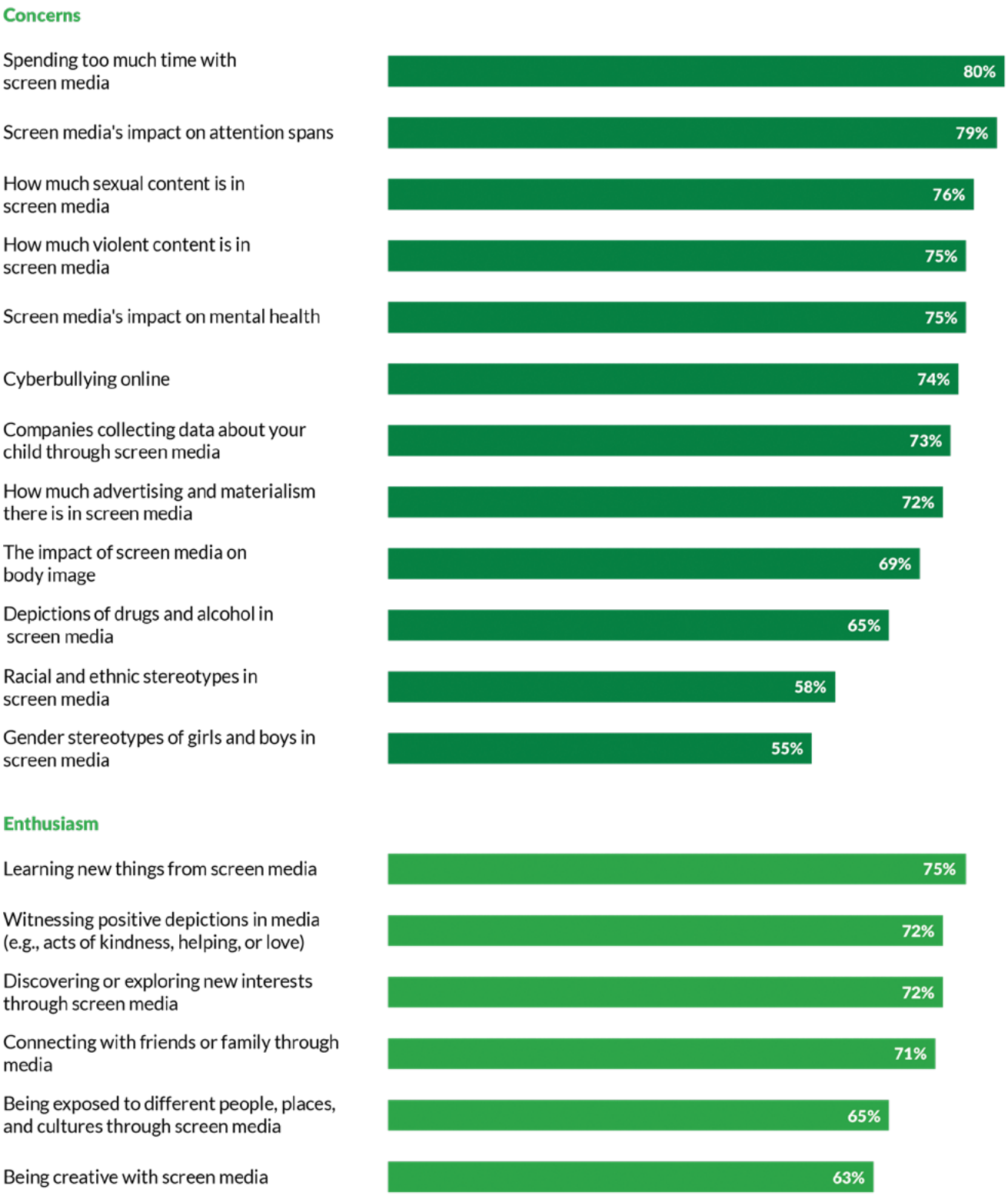
Parents who reported mostly negative perceptions of media's impact on social and emotional health were more likely to report high levels of concern about negative media effects (45%) than parents who report mostly positive perceptions of media impact (34%).

Parent enthusiasm

Despite their concerns, many parents are enthusiastic about the positive potential of media:

- **Learning**: 75% are excited about their child learning new things.
- **Positive messages:** 72% value positive media (e.g., showcases kindness, helping, or love).
- **Exploration**: 72% appreciate opportunities for their child to discover new interests.
- **Connection:** 71% value media that helps their child connect with friends or family.
- **Exposure to diversity:** 65% are enthusiastic about their child being exposed to different people, places, and cultures.
- **Creativity:** 63% enjoy seeing their child use media creatively.
- **Friendship:** 21% are optimistic about their child making new friends through media.

FIGURE 9. Parent concerns and enthusiasm for screen media, 2024
% of parents of 0- to 8-year-olds who indicated they were very/somewhat concerned (dark green bars) and very/somewhat enthusiastic (light green bars)



Perceptions of children's screen time and screen parenting

When evaluating screen time, 35% of parents feel that their child spends too much time with media, while 59% believe it is just the right amount.

Parents who say they personally experience high or medium levels of media distraction are more likely to feel that their child spends too much time with screens (45% and 38%, respectively) compared to parents with low distraction levels (26%). By contrast, a large majority of parents who indicate low levels of media distraction themselves indicate that their child spends the right amount of time with screen media (68%), compared to parents with medium and high levels of media distraction (55% and 51%, respectively).

Despite these challenges, most parents feel confident in their media-related parenting. Three-quarters (75%) rate their parenting as good or excellent, though this confidence varies by the age of the child. Parents of younger children were more likely to rate their parenting positively compared to parents of older children.

TABLE 17. Parent media management rating, 2024

Overall, how would you rate your parenting of your child's media use?	Under 2 years	2–4 years	5–8 years
Excellent/Good	88%	77%	68%
Fair/Poor	12%	22%	32%

Note: An asterisk indicates the item differs significantly ($p < .05$) from 2024.

Generative AI

Over one-quarter of parents report that their child has used AI to learn about school-related material (29%) or learn critical thinking skills (26%). A smaller percentage of parents report that their child has used AI to learn about AI (5%) or has engaged in conversation with an AI chatbot (6%), while 16% of parents report that their child has used AI to create creative content, like stories and art. Generative AI is a growing tool in the lives of young children, and parent perception of these AI tools remains modestly positive.

Among parents who report that their child has used AI tools, nearly one-quarter feel that the impact of these tools on their child's understanding of school material has been mostly positive (23%). Similarly, 1 in 5 (20%) of these parents indicate that use of AI tools has been mostly positive for fostering creativity. Fewer but still meaningful proportions of parents who report their child has used generative AI feel that this use has had a mostly positive impact on their understanding of AI (18%), well-being (17%), and critical thinking skills (17%). Compared to those who cite a mostly positive impact of AI, a very small proportion of parents cite a mostly negative impact of AI on these same outcomes. The largest proportion (half or more) of parents state that AI use has "no impact" on each domain (see Table 18 for all percentages).

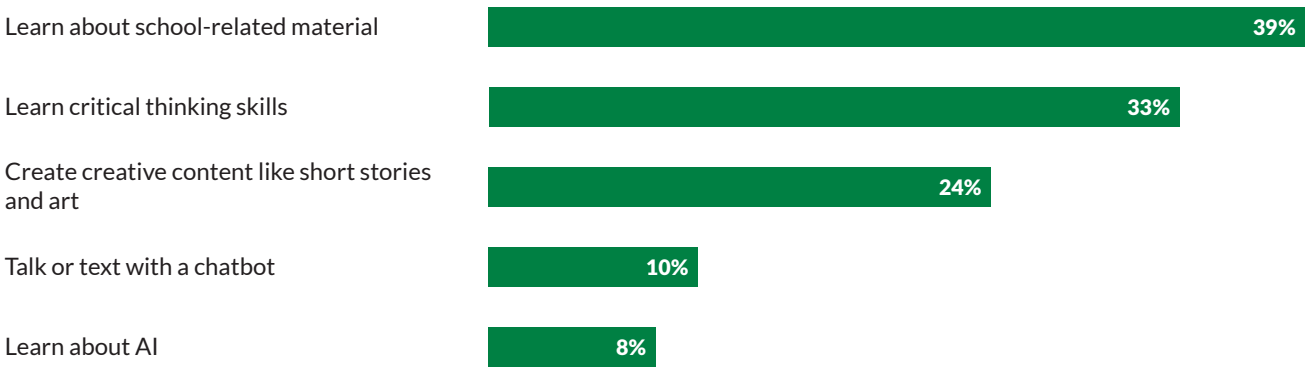
TABLE 18. Parent reports of how AI has impacted their child

Among parents who report their child has used AI, their perception of AI's impact on ...	Mostly Positive	Mostly Negative	Both Positive and Negative	No Impact
Understanding of school-related material	23%	5%	16%	55%
Critical thinking skills	17%	7%	16%	61%
Understanding of AI	18%	8%	24%	50%
Creativity	20%	8%	21%	50%
Well-being	17%	6%	16%	60%

Note: Q: "What impact, if any, do you think the use of AI has had on [CHILD]'s ...?"

FIGURE 10. AI use activities among 5- to 8-year-olds

Among 5- to 8-year-olds, percentage who ever used an app or device that uses AI to do any of the following activities



Conclusion

This report reflects over a decade of research into the media habits of young children, offering a snapshot of how technology is shaping their lives at critical developmental stages. The findings highlight both continuity and change—while children continue to rely on screen media for entertainment, education, and connection, new technologies, such as AI, are beginning to reshape the digital landscape for even the youngest users. Though the COVID-19 pandemic changed many aspects of family life, including the ways in which families need and use technology, children are not using tech appreciably more than they were pre-pandemic. Rather, *how* children consume media is evolving.

Results suggest some notable shifts in the types of screen media that young children are using. While overall screen media totals remained roughly the same from the 2020 report, there was a notable decrease in the time spent watching television and videos, and an increase in time spent gaming. While watching television and videos (including downloaded and live TV as well as videos via platforms like YouTube or TikTok) still remains the most popular media activity for children under 8, gaming (including games played on smartphones, tablets, computers, and consoles) has increased in popularity overall, and is especially common among certain demographic groups.

In addition to noting trends and changes in media use, we asked parents about new technology and its impact on their child's media landscape. In this year's report, we asked parents about their child's use of AI and the parent's perception of AI's effect on creativity, well-being, and other aspects of child development. Over one-quarter of parents report that their child has used AI to learn about school-related material or learn critical thinking skills, with fewer reporting their child has used AI to bolster creativity.

Among parents who report that their child has used AI, the perceived impact of AI on outcomes like creativity and well-being is mostly mixed. Most parents reported that these technologies have had no impact or mixed impact on their child. Given that these technologies are newly emerging and sure to become more commonplace even among very young children, we hope these findings can provide benchmarks for change as we continue to examine the role of AI for children and families.

Over time and through multiple waves of data collection, we have been able to shed light on changes in how children use media and technology both at home and on the go. As we stand at the dawn of an AI revolution, it is more important than ever to understand how these tools integrate into family life and what this means for children's development. We hope the data presented in this report will inform the work of educators, researchers, policymakers, and content creators as they consider the prominent role that media has in the lives of even our youngest citizens.

Methodology

This report presents the results of a nationally representative, probability-based online survey of 1,578 parents of children age 8 or younger, conducted from August 5 to August 29, 2024. The survey is the fifth in a series of cross-sectional tracking surveys conducted by Common Sense. Previous surveys were conducted in 2011, 2013, 2017, and 2020.

The survey was designed by Common Sense and fielded in English and Spanish by the research firm Ipsos, using their probability-based web panel KnowledgePanel©. The project was directed by Dr. Supreet Mann, director of research at Common Sense, and Amanda Lenhart, former head of research at Common Sense.

Text of the survey. To the extent possible, the 2024 survey instrument duplicated the questions asked in previous years, though some items were updated to reflect newer trends. In cases where the question wording or structure has changed,those changes are noted where relevant. The full text of the questionnaire is available at commonsense.org/2025census.

Survey sample. KnowledgePanel is the first and largest online research panel that is representative of the entire U.S. population. As such, it is the largest national sampling frame from which fully representative samples can be generated to produce statistically valid inferences for study populations. Panel members are randomly recruited through probability-based sampling, and households are provided with access to the internet and hardware if needed. Ipsos recruits panel members using address-based sampling methods. Once household members are recruited for the panel and assigned to a study sample, they are notified by email for survey taking, or panelists can visit their online member page to take the survey. The use of a probability sample means the results are substantially more generalizable to the U.S. population than results based on "convenience" or "opt-in" samples. Convenience and opt-in samples include only respondents who are already online and/or who volunteer through word of mouth or advertising to participate in surveys.

Oversamples. Oversamples of Black (*n* = 249) respondents, as well as Hispanic and Latino (*n* = 333) respondents, were included in the survey. Those samples were then weighted back to their representative level when analyzing the survey results as a whole.

Margin of error. The margin of error for the full sample at a 95% confidence level is +/- 2.9%.

Respondent compensation. Respondents received a cash equivalent of $1 (1,000 points). Panel members could redeem points for things such as cash, merchandise, gift cards, or game entries. Most panelists chose to redeem their points for cash.

Weighting. The use of probability-based recruitment methods for the KnowledgePanel is designed to ensure that the resulting sample properly represents the population of the United States geographically, demographically (i.e., age, gender, race/ethnicity, and income), and in terms of home internet access. Study-specific post-stratification weights were applied once the data was finalized, to adjust for any survey nonresponse and to ensure the proper distributions for the specific target population (in this case, parents of children age 0 to 8). Geodemographic distributions for this population were obtained from March 2023 supplemental data from the U.S. Census Bureau's Current Population Survey. The following table indicates how the unweighted and weighted samples compare to the benchmarks, using Census Bureau categories.

Demographics of survey sample

Among U.S. parents of children age 0 to 8	Unweighted *n*	Unweighted percentage	Benchmark percentage*	Weighted percentage
Race/Ethnicity				
White, non-Hispanic	849	54%	56%	57%
Hispanic	333	21%	22%	22%
Black, non-Hispanic	249	16%	12%	11%
Other, non-Hispanic	89	6%	9%	9%
2+ races, non-Hispanic	58	4%	2%	2%
Language				
Hispanic, bilingual (English and Spanish)	289	18%	18%	17%
Hispanic, Spanish dominant	44	3%	4%	4%
Parent Gender				
Male	671	37%	45%	45%
Female	907	63%	55%	55%
Region				
Northeast	238	15%	16%	16%
Midwest	372	24%	22%	23%
South	599	38%	39%	39%
West	369	23%	22%	23%
Parent Education				
Less than high school	115	7%	8%	8%
High school diploma	293	19%	25%	25%
Some college	358	23%	24%	24%
College degree or higher	812	51%	43%	43%
Household Income				
<$25,000	217	14%	7%	7%
$25,000 to $49,999	220	14%	13%	13%
$50,000 to $74,999	208	13%	16%	15%
$75,000 to $99,999	181	11%	14%	14%
$100,000 to $149,999	309	20%	21%	21%
$150,000+	443	28%	30%	30%

Source: March 2023 CPS Supplement Data; ACS Language Benchmarks 2022.

Demographic definitions

Age. When appropriate, findings are presented for the full survey sample of children age 0 to 8, and for three subgroups based on age and stage of child development. The subgroups are from birth to 23 months (babies and toddlers age 0 to 2); from age 2 through 4 (preschool-age children); and from age 5 through 8 (school-age children).

Gender. As part of the screener for the survey, parents were asked whether their child was male, female, or other/nonbinary. Findings are presented for the full survey sample, and where relevant for male and female children. (The sample size for the "other/nonbinary" category was not sufficient to present those findings separately.)

Household income. For the purposes of this report, "lower-income" is defined as families earning less than $50,000 per year. "Middle-income" includes those earning from $50,000 to $99,999 per year, and "higher-income" is families earning $100,000 or more per year. In past iterations of this report, income was defined differently. In 2020 and 2017, "lower-income" was defined as families earning less than $30,000 per year. "Middle-income" included those earning between $30,000 and $75,000 per year, and "higher-income" included families earning more than $75,000 per year. We have made notes when comparing these income categories across time to recognize these different definitions.

Parent education. Levels of parent education are collapsed into three categories for this report, using the parent who attained the highest level of education: high school diploma or less (includes those who did not finish high school, those with a GED, and high school graduates); some college (includes an associate degree or an incomplete bachelor's degree); and college degree or higher (includes those with a bachelor's or graduate degree).

Race/ethnicity. The term "Black" in the report refers to any respondents who self-identify as "Black or African American" only. The term "White" refers to any respondents who self-identify as "White or Caucasian" only. The term "Latino" refers to any respondents who self-identify as "Hispanic or Latino"; respondents who identified in this way are categorized as Latino, even if they identify with an additional race/ethnicity. All respondents, including those who are not part of these three major categories, are included in results based on the total sample. This includes individuals who self-identify as another race/ethnicity (for example, Asian American, Pacific Islander, or Native American), or as two or more races/ethnicities, none of which is Hispanic. Where findings are broken out by race/ethnicity, results are presented for White, Black, and Hispanic/Latino children. The sample sizes for the other racial and ethnic groups were not large enough to examine individually.

Notation of hours and minutes. Throughout the report, time spent with media is periodically presented in hours:minutes. For example, two hours and 10 minutes is presented as 2:10.

Percentages. Totals will not always add up to 100 due to rounding, multiple response options, or because totals do not include respondents who marked "don't know" or did not respond to that particular question.

Statistical significance. Where relevant, differences over time or between demographic groups have been tested for statistical significance. Unless otherwise noted, findings are described in the text in a comparative manner (e.g., "more than," "less than") only if the differences are statistically significant at the level of $p < .05$. In tables where statistical significance has been tested, superscripts (using letters such as *a*, *b*, or *c*) are used to indicate whether results differ at a statistically significant level within a set of columns or rows (e.g., parent race/ethnicity, or 2020 vs. 2024). Data points that share the same superscript, and data points that have no superscript at all, are not significantly different from each other.

Estimating time spent with media. Findings that concern the amount of time that children spend engaged in various media activities are based on parents' responses to questions about their child's activities the previous day. Parents were asked about a specific, randomly selected focal child in their household. No parent's estimate of their child's media use is likely to be exact. But by asking parents to focus on a specific day in their child's life (the day prior to taking the survey), we hope to elicit more precise estimates of children's media use than by asking about a "typical day." Surveying was spread out over the seven days of the week to avoid any bias toward either weekdays or weekends. Unless otherwise noted, the results presented in this report are the mean time among all respondents, reflecting both the proportion of children who engage in an activity and the amount of time they spend doing so. On occasion we also report time spent "among users," which is the average (mean) time spent among those who engaged in that activity the previous day. When times for various activities are summed, the sums do not account for the possibility that children may have been engaging in more than one media activity at a time (e.g., playing a mobile game while watching television). There is no objective, passive way to measure the time that children spend engaging in the full range of media activities covered in this report, or to measure the amount of their media time that may have been spent engaging in more than one media activity.

Media definitions

AI. The terms "AI" and "generative AI" are used interchangeably in the report. This includes chatbots and video/image generators (e.g., ChatGPT, DALL-E).

Console gaming. Includes games played on console players (e.g., PlayStation, Wii, Xbox).

E-reading. Reading on a tablet, phone, or e-reader (e.g., Kindle). Includes time the child spends reading or being read to by someone else.

Fitness trackers. Includes devices that track health-related metrics like sleep quality or step count (e.g., Fitbit, Oura Ring, Whoop).

Handheld game player. Includes games played on handheld devices as well as devices that connect to a TV set (e.g., Nintendo Switch, PlayStation Portal, Steam Deck).

Internet access. Any internet access other than dial-up, such as cable, wireless, or DSL. Participants without internet access have dial-up access or no access.

Live television. Content watched on a TV set on a broadcast or cable station as it was aired (i.e., not time-shifted).

Mobile media. "Any mobile device" and "mobile media use" includes smartphones, tablets, and other devices (e.g., iPod Touch) that can connect to the internet, display videos, and download apps.

Online videos. Includes watching videos on platforms like YouTube or TikTok.

Screen media. Refers to all visually based screen activities, including watching television, DVDs/videotapes, online videos, or programming through a subscription service (e.g., Amazon Prime, Hulu, Netflix); playing video games (including console, computer, or mobile); electronic reading on a device (e.g., a smartphone, tablet, or e-reader); using a virtual reality headset; video-chatting (e.g., on FaceTime or Skype); doing homework or schoolwork on a computer or tablet; and doing anything else visual on a smartphone, tablet, iPod Touch, or similar device, such as taking or viewing pictures or videos, looking things up, using social media, or using other types of apps not already covered in the previous activities. Does not include listening to music or other audio (e.g., podcasts or audiobooks) or using a smart speaker/virtual assistant (e.g., Amazon Echo, Google Home, Siri).

Smart speaker/virtual assistant. A device that can respond to verbal commands, play music, and answer questions (e.g., Amazon Echo, Dot, Google Home, Siri).

Smart TV. A TV set that is connected to the internet, whether directly or through an add-on device (e.g., Apple TV, Roku) to download or stream TV shows or movies onto the TV set.

Smartwatch. A watch that can make phone calls, track the wearer, and display games and text messages.

Social gaming. Online gaming in which the player can play and interact with other users.

Streaming. Watching TV shows or movies through a subscription service (e.g., Amazon Prime, Disney+, Netflix, Vudu) or through a network's website. Content may be watched on a TV set, computer, or mobile device.

Subscription service. A service that enables users to stream or download TV shows or movies (e.g., Amazon Prime, Disney+, Hulu, Netflix).

Tablet. An iPad or similar device (e.g., a Galaxy Tab or other Android tablet, Kindle Fire, Microsoft Surface). Does not include devices designed exclusively as e-readers.

Television. Refers to TV shows or movies watched on a TV set, including "live TV" or content recorded earlier on a DVR, or watched through video on demand.

Video games. Includes gaming on a console video game player or other device that connects to a TV set (e.g., Nintendo Switch, PlayStation, Wii, Xbox), a handheld player (e.g., Nintendo DS, Steam Deck), a computer, or a mobile device (e.g., a smartphone or tablet).

Virtual reality. Games or movies that are viewed through a special headset (e.g., Apple Vision Pro, HTC Vive, Meta Quest), in which the user is immersed in a multidimensional media environment that responds to their movements.

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