

Press release

Lockdown and childhood 2021

New report offers unique insight into kids' lives during lockdown – and the impact it's having on them

A new independent report from CHILDWISE reveals exactly what children have been doing under lockdown and how it's affecting their lives - including how gaming and social media is helping them cope, how many hours they really spend online and how they are suffering financially.

The CHILDWISE Monitor Report 2021 is a comprehensive annual report looking at five to 16-year-olds' media consumption, purchasing and social habits as well as key behaviour.

'We interviewed almost 2000 children and have detailed and independent data on children and their experience of the lockdown,' says Simon Leggett, research director at CHILDWISE.

The amount of time children spend online has increased and is now an average of 3.8 hours a day up from 3.4 last year. TikTok is dominating children's social networking, helping them to cope with lockdown.

'Social media and gaming have helped children deal with a tough year, creating a sense of togetherness when they are often online alone in their room and helping them stay in touch with friends,' says Simon.

'TikTok use increased among children under lockdown. Perhaps scrolling the app showed children how others were dealing with the challenges of 2020, providing light relief with memes and musicals and dance challenges creating a sense of togetherness with everybody learning and performing the exact same choreography,' he adds.

Children are spending more time watching video content¹ and gaming² with Roblox especially popular. Among Us, a multiplayer social deduction game, also enters the favourites chart.

The report also looked at health and wellbeing. It revealed a spike in the number of 7-16-year olds reporting that they feel the need to be perfect, up to two in three (64%) from half of children (54%) last year, with older girls most likely to feel this way.

¹ 3.3hours compared to 2.9 last year.

² 3.1 up from 2.7

‘While we found that the majority of children say they are happy most of the time, we have also found the pressure they feel to achieve perfection has ramped up this year too – especially among older teenagers and girls,’ he adds.

‘For every concern listed, such as stress about schoolwork and feeling anxious, there has been an increase in the number of children experiencing them,’ says Simon.

Children have also suffered financially too – with average weekly income dropping to £9.10 from £11.50.

‘It’s not just adults’ incomes that have been hit – older children have also suffered. Their paid income has plummeted as job opportunities for older children, such as retail, hospitality and part-time babysitting, have disappeared,’ says Simon.

CHILDWISE is an independent market research agency specialising in children and young people. CHILDWISE has a programme of published independent research and also conducts research for government agencies, charities, broadcasters, publishers and brands
www.childwise.co.uk

The Monitor Report 2021 covers... Technology, Websites and Apps, YouTube, Gaming, Viewing Habits, Services and Content, Mobile Phones, Music, Reading, Equipment, Money, Purchasing, Sport and Activities, Health and Wellbeing, Lockdown.

This report looks at children’s media consumption and purchasing behaviour, and at aspects of their wider life, presenting data from a sample of around 2000 children aged 5–16 years across the United Kingdom.

This is the 27th year that the survey has been conducted, following its introduction in 1994. The report interviewed 1976 children and young people aged between 5 and 16 years.

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