

Press release

For immediate release

Childhood 2019 -new independent report

Children spending increasing time online - but Generation Scroll feel more lonely and want to unplug while most still enjoy playing traditional board games, reveals new report.

The average time children spend online has increased to three hours per day with a rise in the proportion accessing the internet out and about¹, according to the latest 2019 CHILDWISE Monitor Report.

This year has also seen an increase in the number of children who feel lonely, as well as an increase in the number of 9-16 year olds who wish they could spend more time unplugged from their connected devices².

Despite being the most connected generation ever with endless digital entertainment at their fingertips, three quarters of children are still keen on playing the old favourites like Snap, Monopoly and Snakes and Ladders.

“Children today may have a vast array of electronic gadgets to keep them entertained, and access to any games, music, video and information they want at the click of a button. But when it comes to having fun, traditional board and card games are still a popular pastime³,” says Simon Leggett, research director at CHILDWISE.

“So perhaps one could surmise that, thanks to children’s continued delight in traditional games, they could be tempted off their connected devices to play a game of Monopoly, Cluedo or Top Trumps, with family and friends.”

“It looks as if this is something children may be happy to do, since the research shows that two in three say they are using their connected devices to stop them feeling bored, with children increasingly feeling alone and isolated.”

The 2019 CHILDWISE Monitor is a comprehensive annual report looking at 5 to 16-year-olds media consumption, purchasing and social habits as well as key behaviour. More than 2000 children in schools across the United Kingdom completed in-depth online surveys for the report, which is now in its 25th year.

As children age they are more likely to say they want to unplug, with three in ten 15-16 years olds saying they would like to spend more time disconnected from the internet and social media.

¹ 36% go online when out and about compared to 33% last year

² 26% would like to spend more time away from their connected devices, up from 22% last year

³ Children were asked about traditional games for the first time this year

Meanwhile, children are increasingly using their connected devices this year, and there has also been an increase in the number of kids who would spend all day on their connected devices they could.⁴

Around three in ten children say they have missed sleep and felt tired because they have spent too long on their connected devices.⁵

Findings of the report also include...

- Mobile phones back in favour with an increase in the number using them for internet access and on-demand content.
- Children watch an average of 2.8 hours of video content each day – the majority use devices other than a traditional television set to watch this.
- One in four children live in a household with a voice-activated virtual assistant, such as Alexa. Two in three ever say please and thank you when using these.
- By far the most mentioned game is Monopoly, with one in five children saying this is their favourite.
- Fewer children are able to name favourite programmes, vloggers and comics thanks in part to a glut of choice and the transient nature of content.
- Friends, a series approaching its 25th anniversary, is children's favourite despite almost infinite choice of programmes available to them.
- University is challenged, with secondary-aged children far less likely than in previous years to feel university is the golden ticket to a great future.
- YouTube is the top website/app. Snapchat maintains second position but is chosen by fewer children than last year. Number of children naming Facebook as their favourite halves again this year. Netflix has grown in popularity.

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 2019 covers... Computers and the internet; websites and applications; gaming, YouTube; mobile phones; TV viewing; music; reading ; children's equipment; money; purchasing; sports & activities; health & wellbeing and education & employment.

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⁴ 29% of 9-16s would spend all day on their connected devices if they could, up from 22% a year ago

⁵ 29% have missed out on sleep, up from 24% last year