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New report into preschoolers and books in 2018

New CHILDWISE report finds average spend on books has recovered after a dip – boosted by parents of under-twos

The average spend on books for preschoolers has recovered this year following a dip in 2017, with parents now paying out £7 a month on books to read with their toddlers. This is up from £6 last year.

The Gruffalo is preschoolers top favourite book, following a new research question this year, asking parents which children's titles their preschoolers enjoy most. The report also finds that children are making more regular trips to the library.

Latest figures from the independent CHILDWISE Monitor Preschool Report 2018 also show that most parents say they spend money on books each month for their preschoolers (72%), largely unchanged since last year.

“Spending on books has been boosted by parents of under-twos with the average spend among this group increasing by a pound to £7. Spending peaks early before dropping back for all other age categories¹,” says CHILDWISE research manager Jenny Ehren.

“Two out of five parents continue to spend less than £10 a month while around a third pay out more than this on books. More than a quarter of parents do not spend any money on books at all in an average month period.”

“Last year parents spent more on books for boys than they did for girls. However, the gender gap has flattened this year with spending on girls increasing,” says Jenny.

Based on research conducted for The Monitor Preschool Report in 2015, more than one in four children under five exert their influence over the books that are purchased for them.

The 2018 study also shows the top books for under-fives. Girls tended to have a longer list than boys. Julia Donaldson tops the list of favourite preschool authors, whilst Eric Carle, author of the children's classic, *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* is also held in high regard. Other favourite books include anything Peppa Pig related; Disney-branded books; *We're Going on a Bear Hunt* by Michael Rosen, and Reverend Awdry's *Thomas the Tank Engine* series.

¹ £7 at age one; dropping back to £6 for all other age categories.

Research shows that around three quarters of preschool children read bedtime stories regularly, or even all the time, with their parents. Increasing numbers are also listening to stories or audio books using a tablet device – a quarter of pre-schoolers now do this. The number of children going to the library frequently has also risen this year to one in three.²

CHILDWISE is a leading, independent research specialist in children and young people. This latest report provides a comprehensive understanding of what the youngest children are currently interested in, their media behaviour, spending and wider skills.

Editorial notes: For more information or to interview Jenny Ehren please contact Liz Hollis 07889 680302 liz@lzhollis.co.uk

The annual CHILDWISE Preschool Report talks to more than 1000 parents of 0-4 year olds, asking about their children's media use and parents' spending habits
<http://www.CHILDWISE.co.uk/reports.html#preschoolreport>

Independent research company CHILDWISE www.CHILDWISE.co.uk has a programme of published research, including the Preschool Report. In addition, CHILDWISE conducts research for government agencies, charities, broadcasters, publishers and brands.

² 36% up from 29% last year.