Children’s Media Lives

# Details

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2021

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English

## Authors

Ofcom

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London

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## Sample

18 children and their parents

## Implications For Parents About

Parental practices / parental mediation

# Abstract

One year of lockdowns and a global pandemic has resulted in everyone spending a lot more time at home and on their devices. This impact has been felt by all - and particularly by children who have now had several months of at-home learning. In this context, media activities have become an even more important part of children’s lives; allowing them to connect with peers, explore their interests, learn about the world and stay entertained from the confines of their homes. This is the seventh wave of the Children’s Media Lives study. This longitudinal study of children’s digital media
use started in 2014. Since then, each year we’ve tracked the online behaviours and experiences of 18 children aged between eight and 18. Interviewing these children annually has allowed us to gain insight into how different factors affect children’s media use, including age, family, social life and society as a whole.

# Outcome

"Most children lacked routine and structure, and as a result were spending long periods of time online. Social circles were shrinking, and online friendships were more normalised than in previous waves. Some children in the study were watching content online in continuous ‘binges’. For most of the children, ‘how you look’ was central to creating their online identity. Across the sample, children of all ages were continuing to seek opportunities for self-promotion online and were increasingly aware that this could be monetised. Children remained disengaged from major news sources, and most were passively consuming news via social media. Many children felt that living life online was a poor substitute for offline activities, and reported lower wellbeing during lockdown than previously." (Ofcom, 2021: 5-6).