



## FACT SHEET

### Parental attitudes and behaviours towards screen time during COVID-19

During COVID, we asked Australian parents of school-aged children (5-12 years old) about family attitudes and behaviours around screen time.

#### Key findings from the Life Education Trend Micro Report

- 84% of Australian children have their own devices.
- Many children were exceeding the National Guidelines of no more than two hours of screen time per day.
  - 19% spent 4+ hours per day on screens
  - 27% spent 3-4 hours per day on screens
  - 36% spent 1-2 hours per day on screens
  - 18% spent less than 1 hour per day on screens
- Schoolwork, watching Youtube, and gaming were the most popular online activities.
- The majority of parents (69%) acknowledged their children were spending too much time online, however 77% of parents found it challenging through COVID to support their child to have a healthy online and offline balance.
- While 53% of parents said they 'tried hard' to enforce limits on screen time, 30% said they 'gave up because it wasn't worth the stress'.
- 37% of parents said they were less strict when it came to screen time limits during COVID, however, 14% enforced more rules.

- Most popular rules included time restrictions on devices and parental controls. 89% of parents also talked to their children about cybersafety.
- According to parents, negative outcomes of children spending too much time on devices were: less time spent outdoors (57%), behavioural changes (40%), less family time (33%).
- Positive outcomes of children spending time on devices were: social interaction with peers (50%), connectedness during lockdown (51%), and encourages curiosity (50%).
- One-quarter of parents surveyed said they didn't feel equipped with the knowledge to protect their children online.
- Parents said they needed support with monitoring screen time, safety around online strangers and inappropriate content, and educating their children about keeping personal information safe online.

Note: Of the more than 1000 parents surveyed, around half (54%) of families were in lock down, and half (46%) weren't.



The survey was conducted in September, 2021