

# Zero to Eight

Children's Media Use in America



A Common Sense Media Research Study

FALL 2011



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# Introduction

Today—20 years after the birth of the World Wide Web, 13 years after the launch of Google Search, eight years after the start of the first social networking site, six years after the first YouTube video, four years after the introduction of the first touch-screen smartphone, three years after the opening of the first “app” store, and a little over a year after the first iPad sale—the media world that children are growing up in is changing at lightning speed. Nine-month-olds spend nearly an hour a day watching television or DVDs, 5-year-olds are begging to play with their parents’ iPhones, and 7-year-olds are sitting down in front of a computer several times a week to play games, do homework, or check out how their avatars are doing in their favorite virtual worlds. Television is still as popular as ever, but reading may be beginning to trend downward.

Having an accurate understanding of the role of media in children’s lives is essential for all of those concerned about promoting healthy child development: parents, educators, pediatricians, public health advocates, and policymakers, to name just a few. The purpose of this study is to provide publicly accessible, reliable data about media use among children ages 0 to 8, to help inform the efforts of all of those who are working to improve children’s lives.

This report continues and expands upon a series of studies originated by the Kaiser Family Foundation in 2003 and conducted again in 2005. The original studies focused on children ages 0 to 6; at the request of content providers and others, the current study has been expanded to cover ages 0 to 8. Because the ages and the methodology have changed, it is not possible to directly compare most findings, but in some cases (for example, media use among children under 2), we have provided relevant data from the earlier study. (See the Methodology and

Appendix sections for a further discussion of comparisons with the earlier studies.) The current study will be repeated every few years, and will serve as a baseline for documenting future trends.

## Among the questions we try to answer are:

- » How much time do children spend with television, music, computers, video games, and apps?
- » How many children have access to the newest mobile media platforms, such as smartphones and iPads? What do they do with them, and how often do they use them?
- » At what age do children usually start using each medium?
- » Which educational media platforms are most popular among children, especially those from lower-income families?
- » Are there differences in children’s media use habits by gender, race, or socio-economic status?
- » Is TV viewing among babies and toddlers going up or down? What about reading?
- » What is the media environment in children’s homes and bedrooms?

At Common Sense Media, we believe that every debate about kids and media should be grounded in data: whether it’s about babies and toddlers using screen media, the value of educational media for preschoolers, the nature of gender or ethnic role depictions, the impact of multi-tasking, or the amount of food advertising to children. We offer these data as a contribution to those important discussions and to help inform the work of all of those who are creating quality entertainment and educational media for children.





# Key Findings

## 1.

### Even very young children are frequent digital media users.

**TOTAL DIGITAL MEDIA USE.** Today a substantial proportion of the time that young children spend with screen media is spent with digital media—including computers, handheld and console video game players, and other interactive mobile devices such as cell phones, video iPods, and iPad-style tablet devices. Among 0- to 8-year-olds as a whole, a quarter (27%) of all screen time is spent with these digital devices.

**MOBILE MEDIA.** Half (52%) of all children now have access to one of the newer mobile devices at home: either a smartphone (41%), a video iPod (21%), or an iPad or other tablet device (8%).

More than a quarter (29%) of all parents have downloaded “apps” (applications used on mobile devices) for their children to use. And more than a third (38%) of children have ever used one of these newer mobile devices, including 10% of 0- to 1-year-olds, 39% of 2- to 4-year-olds, and 52% of 5- to 8-year-olds.

In a typical day, 11% of all 0- to 8-year olds use a cell phone, iPod, iPad, or similar device for media consumption, and those who do spend an average of :43 doing so.

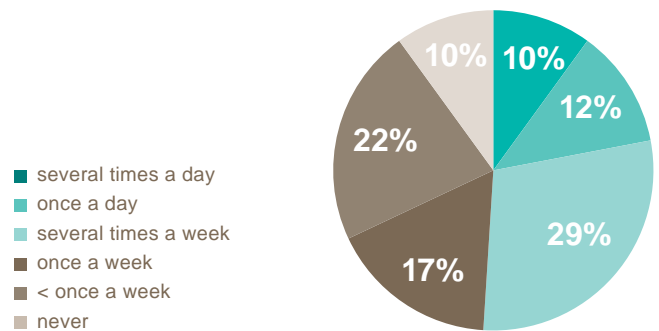
**COMPUTERS.** Computer use is pervasive among very young children, with half (53%) of all 2- to 4-year-olds having ever used a computer, and nine out of ten (90%) 5- to 8-year-olds having done so. For many of these children, computer use is a regular occurrence: 22% of 5- to 8-year-olds use a computer at least once a day, and another 46% use it at least once a week. Even among 2- to 4-year-olds, 12% use a computer every day, with another 24% doing so at least once a week. Among all children who have

used a computer, the average age at first use was just 3 ½ years old.

**VIDEO GAMES.** Playing console video games is also popular among these young children: Half (51%) of all 0- to 8-year-olds have ever played a console video game, including 44% of 2- to 4-year-olds and 81% of 5- to 8-year-olds. Among those who have played console video games, the average age at first use was just under 4 years old (3 years and 11 months). Among 5- to 8-year-olds, 17% play console video games at least once a day, and another 36% play them at least once a week.

#### Computer Use Among 5-8 Year-Olds

Among 5-8 year-olds, percent who use a computer:



#### Mobile Media Use

Percent of children who have ever used a smartphone, video iPod, iPad, or similar device to play games, watch videos, or use other apps:



## 2.

### There continues to be a substantial digital divide, including both computers and mobile devices.

**HOME COMPUTER ACCESS.** There is a large digital divide in home computer access among young children. Nearly three out of four (72%) 0- to 8-year-olds have a computer at home, but access ranges from 48% among those from low-income families (less than \$30,000 a year) to 91% among higher-income families (more than \$75,000 a year).

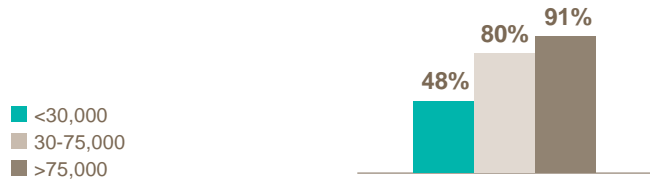
**THE NEW “APP GAP.”** In addition to the traditional digital divide, a new “app gap” has developed among young children. Among lower-income children, 27% have a parent with a smartphone, compared to 57% for higher-income children. One in 10 (10%) lower-income children has a video iPod or similar device in the home, compared to one in three (34%) upper-income children. And just 2% of lower-income children have a tablet device such as an iPad at home, compared to 17% of higher-income children.

Thirty-eight percent of lower-income parents say they don't even know what an app is, compared to just 3% of higher-income parents. Only 14% of lower-income parents have ever downloaded apps for their children to use, compared to 47% of higher-income parents.

This disparity in access has led to a disparity in use: while 55% of children from higher-income families have used a cell phone, iPod, iPad, or similar device for playing games, watching videos, or using apps, just 22% from lower-income families have done so.

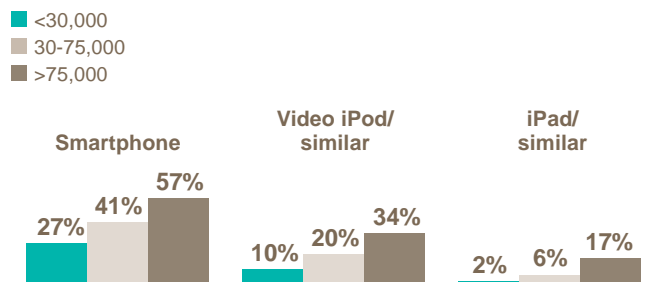
#### Home Computer Access, by Income

Among children ages 0-8, percent with a laptop or desktop computer at home:



#### Mobile Media Access, by Income

Among children ages 0-8, percent with mobile media devices in their household:



#### Downloading Apps, by Income

Among children ages 0-8, percent whose parents have downloaded any apps for their children to use:



#### Using New Mobile Media, by Income

Among children ages 0-8, percent who have ever used a cell phone, iPod, iPad, or similar device for playing games, watching videos, or using apps:



# 3.

## Children under 2 spend twice as much time watching TV and videos as they do reading books.

In a typical day, 47% of babies and toddlers ages 0 through 1 watch TV or DVDs, and those who do watch spend an average of nearly two hours (1:54) doing so. This is an average of :53 among all children in this age group, compared to an average of :23 a day reading or being read to. Nearly one in three (30%) has a TV in their bedroom. In 2005, among children ages 6-23 months, 19% had a TV in their bedroom. Looking just at 6- to 23-month-olds in the current study, 29% have a TV in their bedroom.

### Bedroom TV, by Age

Among 0-8 year-olds, percent with a TV in their bedroom:



# 4.

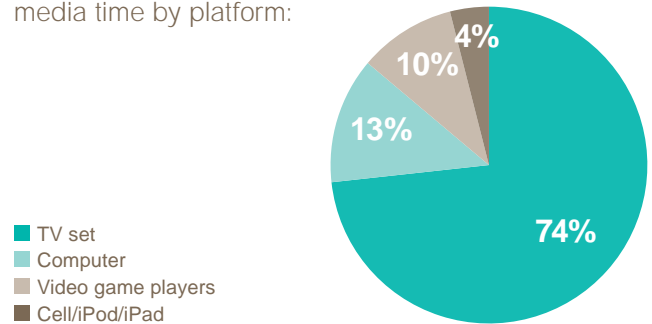
## TV continues to dominate children's media use.

Two-thirds (65%) of 0- to 8-year-olds watch TV at least once every day (ranging from 37% of 0-1 year-olds, to 73% of 2- to 4-year-olds and 72% of 5- to 8-year-olds). Forty-two percent have a TV in their bedroom, and 39% live in a home where the TV is left on all (10%) or most (29%) of the time, whether anyone is watching it or not. Children this age spend an average of 1:44 watching TV or videos in a typical day, compared to :29 reading, :29 listening to music, and :25 playing computer or video games.

Time spent with new mobile media, while gaining, lags far behind larger screen media among this age group. Children 0-8 spend a total of just five minutes a day using cell phones, iPods, iPads, or similar devices to play games, watch videos, or use other "apps."

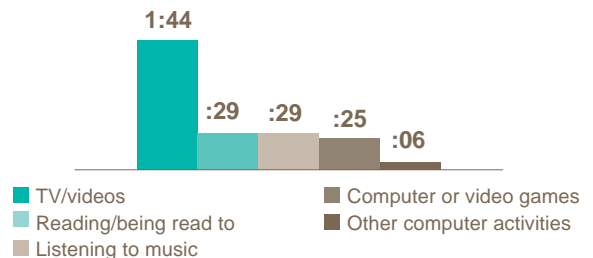
### Screen Media Diet

Among 0- to 8-year-olds, percent of total screen media time by platform:



### Time Spent with Media

Among 0- to 8-year-olds, time spent in each activity in a typical day:



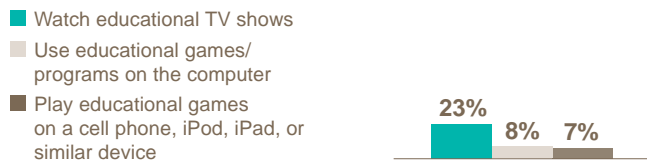
# 5.

## Broadcast television is the most accessible and widely used platform for educational content among lower-income children.

Among lower-income children, 26% “often” watch educational TV shows, compared to 5% who often use educational computer games or software and 2% who often use educational games or apps on a cell phone, iPod, iPad, or similar device. Almost all (98%) lower-income children have a TV, but far fewer (just 53%) have access to cable or satellite programming. Educational TV is the one type of educational content that lower-income children are more likely to consume than higher-income children are (26% often watch vs. 17% among higher-income families).

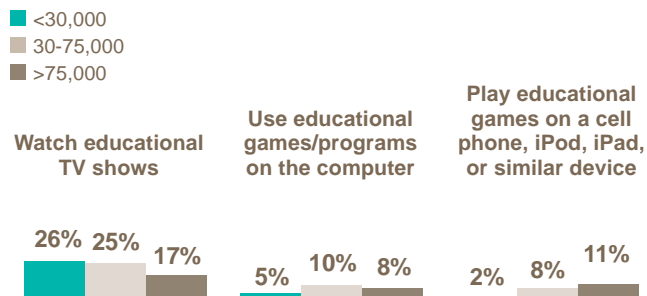
### Use of Educational Media

Among 0- to 8-year-olds, percent who often:



### Use of Educational Media, by Income

Among 0- to 8-year-olds, the percent who “often”:



# 6.

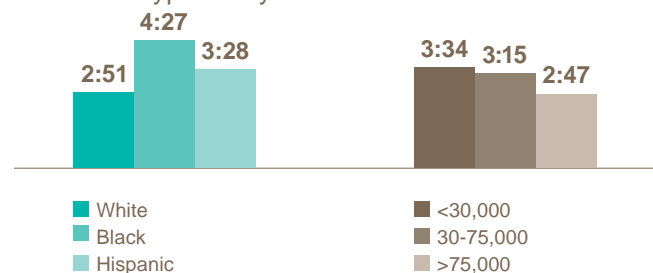
## Media use varies significantly by race and socio-economic status, but not much by gender.

**RACE AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS.** African-American children spend an average of 4:27 a day with media (including music, reading, and screen media), compared to 2:51 among white children and 3:28 among Hispanics. Children from higher-income families or with more highly educated parents spend less time with media than other children do (for example, 2:47 a day among higher-income children vs. 3:34 among lower-income youth). Twenty percent of children in upper income homes have a TV in their bedroom, compared to 64% of those from lower-income homes.

**GENDER.** The only substantial difference between boys’ and girls’ media use is in console video games. Boys are more likely to have ever played a console video game than girls are (56% vs. 46%), to have a video game player in their bedroom (14% vs. 7%), and to play console video games every day (14% vs. 5%). Boys average :16 a day playing console games, compared to an average of :04 a day for girls.

### Media Use by Race and Income

Among 0- to 8-year-olds, average time spent with all media in a typical day:



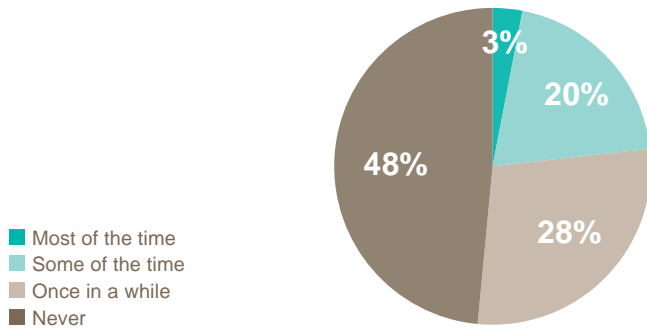
# 7.

## Even some young children are media multi-taskers.

Overall, 16% of 0- to 8-year-olds use more than one media “most” or “some” of the time; among 5- to 8-year-olds, 23% do. Among the 79% of 5- to 8-year-olds who have homework, 21% “usually” or “sometimes” have the TV on while they do it.

### Media Multitasking Among 5- to 8-Year-Olds

Percent of 5- to 8-year-olds who like to use more than one medium at a time:





# Methodology

**This report is based on a survey of 1,384 parents of children ages 0 to 8 years old, including an over-sample of African-American and Hispanic parents. The survey was conducted for Common Sense Media by Knowledge Networks from May 27-June 15, 2011.**

Knowledge Networks uses a probability-based online panel designed to be representative of the United States. Panel members were randomly recruited using address-based sampling and random-digit-dial telephone surveys. Households that did not have computers or Internet access were given a notebook computer and dial-up Internet access for the purpose of completing their online surveys. For this survey, questions about computer ownership asked respondents about computers other than the one they were provided by Knowledge Networks.

Unlike Internet “convenience” panels that include only individuals with Internet access who volunteer to be part of research, the Knowledge Networks methodology uses dual sampling frames that include both listed and unlisted telephone numbers, cellphone-only households, telephone and non-telephone households, and households with and without Internet access.

The survey was offered in both English and Spanish. Parents were asked about a particular child in their household. The margin of error for the full sample is +/- 2.6 percentage points. The completion rate for the survey was 59%.

Unless otherwise noted, all findings refer to the full sample of 0- to 8-year-olds. Many findings are broken

out by age, among 0- to 8-year-olds, 2- to 4-year-olds, and 5- to 8-year-olds. In addition, findings are presented by race, gender, and socio-economic status. In tables where statistical significance has been calculated, the results are noted through a series of superscripts (a, b, or c). Items that share a common superscript do not differ significantly ( $p < .05$ ).

This study builds on the Kaiser Family Foundation’s studies of media use among 0- to 6-year-olds. However, because of changes in methodology (the Kaiser studies were conducted by phone), comparisons over time should be made cautiously. In addition, since the current study explores media use among children from birth up to age 8, most findings can’t be directly compared to the Kaiser data, which included children from six months up to age 6. For a more complete discussion of the methodological differences and a side-by-side presentation of the results for children ages 6 and under, please see the Appendix to this report.

For this report, the term “digital media” is used to refer to console video games, computers, cell phones, handheld video game players, video iPods, and iPads or other tablet devices. “Mobile media” includes cell phones, video iPods, and iPads or other tablet devices. All questions concerning iPods or iPads referred to those items “or similar-type devices.”





## Amount and Frequency of Media Use

Children age 8 and under spend an average of about three hours (3:14) a day with media, including screen media, reading, and music. Most of that time is spent with screen media: an average of 2:16 a day. Music and reading occupy an average of about a half-hour a day each (:29 for reading, :29 for music).

Time spent with screen media ranges from under an hour a day (:53) among children under two to 2:18 among 2- to 4-year-olds and close to three hours (2:50) among children 5-8.

Even with all of the new media options at their disposal, it is television that children continue to spend the most time with. Two-thirds (65%) of children ages 8 and under watch TV at least once a day or more often (58% read or are read to at least once a day). Children this age spend an average of 1:40 a day watching TV and DVDs. The average amount of time spent playing video, computer, or handheld games combined is :25 a day.

TV viewing starts young (66% of children under two have watched), and among the 89% of the total sample who have watched TV, the average age of first viewing was 9 months. Other media activities start later, such as playing video games on either a handheld or console game player and using a computer. Close to half of all 2- to 4-year-olds have engaged in each of those activities (43% for handheld games, 44% for console games, and 53% for computers). By the time they are in the 5- to 8-year-old group, 60% have used handheld games, 81% have played console games, and 90% have used a computer.

**Table 1: Time Spent With Media**

Among 0- to 8-year-olds, average amount of time spent in a typical day:

	Average among all	Percent who used	Average among those who used
<b>Watching TV, DVDs, or videos</b>			
TV on a TV set	1:09	70%	1:52
DVDs	:31	38%	1:35
TV/Videos on a computer	:03	10%	:56
TV/Videos on a cell, iPod or iPad	:01	7%	:40
<b>Reading/being read to</b>	:29	69%	:47
<b>Listening to music</b>	:29	51%	1:12
<b>Playing media games</b>			
Console video games	:10	17%	1:15
Computer games	:08	17%	:57
Handheld game player	:04	10%	:59
Cell/iPod/iPad games	:03	12%	:30
<b>Other computer activities</b>			
Educational software	:03	10%	1:01
Homework	:02	6%	1:20
Anything else	:01	9%	:38
<b>Other apps on cell, iPod, or iPad</b>	:01	7%	:30
<b>Using any screen media</b>	<b>2:16</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>2:58</b>
<b>Using a cell phone, iPod, iPad for any media activity</b>	<b>:05</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>:43</b>

**Table 2: Time Spent With Media, by Age**

Among 0- to 8-year-olds, average amount of time spent in a typical day:

	Total	0-1	2-4	5-8
<b>Watching TV, DVDs, or videos</b>	1:44	:53	1:53 <sup>b</sup>	2:02 <sup>b</sup>
TV on a TV set	1:09	:37	1:11 <sup>b</sup>	1:23 <sup>b</sup>
DVDs	:31	:16 <sup>a</sup>	:36 <sup>b</sup>	:34 <sup>b</sup>
TV/videos on a computer	:03	*	:04	:04
TV/videos on a cell, iPod or iPad	:01	*	:02 <sup>a</sup>	:01 <sup>b</sup>
<b>Reading/being read to</b>	:29	:23 <sup>a</sup>	:28 <sup>ab</sup>	:33 <sup>b</sup>
<b>Listening to music</b>	:29	:39 <sup>a</sup>	:30 <sup>a</sup>	:23 <sup>b</sup>
<b>Playing media games</b>	:25	NA	:17 <sup>a</sup>	:40 <sup>b</sup>
Console video games	:10	*	:05 <sup>a</sup>	:18 <sup>b</sup>
Computer games	:08	*	:06 <sup>a</sup>	:13 <sup>b</sup>
Handheld game player	:04	*	:03 <sup>a</sup>	:06 <sup>b</sup>
Cell/iPod/iPad games	:03	*	:03	:03
<b>Other computer activities</b>	:06	NA	:06	:07
Educational software	:03	*	:04	:03
Homework	:02	*	:01	:02
Anything else	:01	*	:01	:02
<b>Other apps on cell, iPod, or iPad</b>	:01	*	:02	:01
<b>Total media time</b>	<b>3:14</b>	<b>1:55<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>3:16<sup>b</sup></b>	<b>3:46<sup>b</sup></b>

Note: Statistical significance at the level of  $p < .05$  is denoted in this table through a series of superscripts. Significance should be read across rows. Items that share a common superscript or that do not have superscripts do not differ significantly.

**Table 3: Daily Media Activities, by Age**

Among 0-8 year-olds, percent who do each media activity every day or several times a day:

	Total	0-1	2-4	5-8
Watch TV	65%	37%	73%	72%
Read/be read to	58%	44%	60%	64%
Watch DVDs	25%	16%	36%	20%
Use a computer	14%	1%	12%	22%
Play console video games	9%	*	6%	17%
Use handheld game player, cell, iPod, or iPad for games, apps, or video	8%	1%	9%	11%

**Table 4: Screen Media Use by Platform, by Age**

Among 0- to 8-year-olds, average amount of time spent in a typical day using:

	Total	0-1	2-4	5-8
<b>A TV set</b> (watching TV or DVDs/videos)	1:40	:53 <sup>a</sup>	1:47 <sup>b</sup>	1:57 <sup>b</sup>
<b>A computer</b> (playing games, doing homework, watching videos/TV, using educational software, other activities)	:17	:00 <sup>a</sup>	:16 <sup>b</sup>	:24 <sup>b</sup>
<b>A video game player</b> (playing games on a console or handheld player)	:14	:00 <sup>a</sup>	:08 <sup>b</sup>	:24 <sup>c</sup>
<b>A cell phone, iPod, or iPad</b> (playing games, watching video, using apps)	:05	:00 <sup>a</sup>	:07 <sup>b</sup>	:05 <sup>b</sup>
<b>Total screen media time</b>	<b>2:16</b>	<b>:53<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>2:18<sup>b</sup></b>	<b>2:50<sup>c</sup></b>

Note: Statistical significance at the level of  $p < .05$  is denoted in this table through a series of superscripts. Significance should be read across rows. Items that share a common superscript or that do not have superscripts do not differ significantly.

**Table 5: Media Activities Ever Engaged In, by Age**

Among 0- to 8-year-olds, percent who have ever done each activity, and average age at first use:

	Total	0-1	2-4	5-8	Average age*
<b>Watched TV</b>	89%	66%	96%	96%	9 mos
<b>Used a computer</b>	59%	4%	53%	90%	3.5 yrs
<b>Played console video games</b>	51%	3%	44%	81%	3 yrs 11 mos
<b>Used handheld game player, cell, iPod, iPad for games, apps or video</b>	44%	10%	43%	60%	
Handheld games					3 yrs 11 mos
Games/videos					4 yrs 2 mos
Other apps					4 yrs 5 mos
<b>Read/been read to</b>	90%	76%	91%	96%	5 mos
<b>Watched DVDs</b>	85%	52%	92%	97%	11 mos

\*Among those who have done each activity

## Media in the Home

Almost all children (98%) have at least one TV set at home, 72% have a computer, and two-thirds (67%) have a video game player. Less than a majority have handheld game players (44%) or parents who own a smartphone (41%). Much smaller percentages have new media devices such as a video iPod or similar device (21%), and to date, very few have the newest platforms such as an iPad or other tablet device (8%).

Forty-two percent of children 8 and under have a TV in their bedroom, a rate that ranges from 30% of 0- to 1-year-olds, up to 47% of 5- to 8-year-olds (44% of 2- to 4-year-olds).

More than a third (39%) of children 8 and under live in homes where the television is left on all (10%) or most (29%) of the time, whether or not anyone is watching it. Not surprisingly, children who live in these “heavy TV households” tend to spend more time watching TV and are more likely to be media multi-taskers than other children their age. In fact, on average, these children watch almost twice as much TV as other kids do (2:11 per day vs. 1:19), and are twice as likely to spend “most” or “some” of their time using more than one medium at a time (23% vs. 11%).

**Table 6: Media in the Home**

Among all children 0-8, percent with each item in the home:

TV	98%
Cable	68%
DVD player	80%
DVR	35%
Computer	72%
High-speed Internet	68%
Video game console	67%
Handheld video game player	44%
Smartphone	41%
Video iPod or similar device	21%
Kindle, Nook or similar e-Reader	9%
iPad or similar tablet device	8%

**Table 7: Bedroom Media**

Percent of children ages 0-8 who have each item in their bedroom:

TV	42%
DVD/VCR player	29%
Video game console player	11%
Computer	4%

**Table 8: Parents and Cell Phones**

Among parents of children ages 0-8, percent who have:

A smartphone	41%
A regular cell phone	49%
No cell phone	10%

**Table 9: Personal Media Ownership**

Percent of children ages 0-8 who have their own:

Educational gaming device	29%
Handheld gaming device	24%
iPod (non video)	7%
Video iPod or similar device	3%
Cell phone	2%
iPad or similar tablet device	*

# Computer Access and Use

## OVERVIEW

As mentioned above, 72% of all 0- to 8-year-olds have a computer in the home, and 59% have ever used one. Computer use starts young: About half (53%) of all 2- to 4-year-olds have used a computer, and by the time they are in the 5- to 8-year-old range, nine out of 10 (90%) children have used a computer at some point. Among those who have ever used a computer, the average age at which they first did so was 3½ years old.

In a typical day, 0- to 8-year-olds average 17 minutes using a computer (:16 for 2- to 4-year-olds and :24 for 5- to 8-year-olds; computer use among 0- to 1-year-olds is virtually non-existent). Not surprisingly, playing games is the most popular computer activity. Of the 17 minutes spent on a computer each day, 8 are spent playing games, 3 watching videos, 3 using educational programs, 2 doing homework, and 1 minute doing other computer activities. In terms of specific computer activities, 59% have ever used educational games or software programs on a computer, 13% have ever gone to child-oriented virtual worlds or social networking sites such as Club Penguin or Togetherville (21% among 5- to 8-year-olds), and 5% have ever gone to mainstream social networking sites such as MySpace or Facebook (7% among 5- to 8-year-olds).

Using the computer isn't something that happens every day for most children this age. Overall, only 14% of children age 8 and under use the computer every day (compared to 65% who watch TV at least once a day); 17% use it several times a week, and 11% about once a week. However, among 5- to 8-year-olds, 22% are daily computer users, and another 46% use the computer at least once a week.

## THE DIGITAL DIVIDE

There is still a substantial "divide" in home computer access among young children. In fact, the majority of lower-income children, children from less well-educated families, and Hispanic children do not have a computer at home.

To the extent that early learning on computers is important for children's later success in school, this divide could be important. It is also informative to those who are trying to reach young people with educational content, especially children who may be most in need of support for learning.

**Table 10: Computers and Internet Access at Home**  
Among families with children ages 0-8, percent who have:

	<b>A home computer</b>	<b>High-speed Internet access</b>
All	72%	68%
<30,000	48% <sup>a</sup>	42% <sup>a</sup>
30-75,000	80% <sup>b</sup>	73% <sup>b</sup>
>75,000	91% <sup>c</sup>	92% <sup>c</sup>
White	83% <sup>a</sup>	80% <sup>a</sup>
Black	70% <sup>b</sup>	53% <sup>b</sup>
Hispanic	48% <sup>c</sup>	44% <sup>b</sup>
High school or less	48% <sup>a</sup>	42% <sup>a</sup>
Some college	75% <sup>b</sup>	70% <sup>b</sup>
College degree or more	90% <sup>c</sup>	88% <sup>c</sup>

Note: Statistical significance at the level of  $p < .05$  is denoted in this table through a series of superscripts. Significance should be read vertically, within sections. Items that share a common superscript or that do not have superscripts do not differ significantly.

# Mobile Media Access and Use

## OVERVIEW

Some young children have begun using newer mobile media such as smartphones, video iPods, and iPads or similar devices. But the time children spend with these devices is still very small compared to other media.

About half (52%) of all children ages 0-8 live in homes where there is access to some type of new media device: In most cases it is a smartphone (41% of all 0- to 8-year-olds); about one in five have access to a video iPod or similar device (21%); and fewer than one in 10 have an iPad or similar tablet device at home (8%).

More than a third (38%) of all children between the ages of 0-8 have ever used a cell phone, iPod, iPad, or similar device to play games, use apps, or watch videos, TV shows, or movies; but by the time they're in the 5- to 8-year-old age range, half (52%) have done so at one point or another.

Overall, children ages 0-8 spend an average of just five minutes a day using a cell phone, video iPod, iPad, or similar device to play games, watch videos, or use any other type of app. In a typical day, 11% of all 0- to 8-year-olds use a cell phone, iPod, iPad, or similar device for media consumption, and those who do spend an average of :43 doing so.

Most parents (64%) of kids this age say they know what an app is, but a third (36%) either don't know (18%) or say they have an idea what one is but aren't totally sure (18%). About one in four (29%) parents of 0- to 8-year-olds say they have ever downloaded any apps for their children, a rate that doesn't vary much by the age of the child.

## THE "APP GAP"

At this point, there is a large new "app gap" between higher- and lower-income children, in terms of their access to and use of newer mobile devices.

For example, smartphone access (41% among all 0- to 8-year-olds) ranges from 27% of lower-income children to 57% of those from families earning \$75,000 a year or more. And when it comes to the newest tablet devices such as iPads, access is even more limited, with just 2% of lower-income children having one in their home, compared to 17% of those in the higher-income group. This disparity is echoed in parents' knowledge of and use of apps for their children. More than a third (38%) of lower-income parents don't have any idea what an "app" is, compared to just 3% of higher-income parents. And just 14% of lower-income parents have ever downloaded any apps for their children to use, compared to 47% among the higher-income families. All of these disparities come together to contribute to a large gap in use of new mobile media devices: 22% of children from lower-income families have ever used a cell phone, iPod, iPad, or similar device for playing games, watching video or using apps, compared to 55% of children from higher-income families.

**Table 11: Mobile Media Ownership**

Among families with children ages 0-8, percent who own:

A smartphone	41%
A video iPod or similar device	21%
An iPad or similar tablet device	8%
<b>Any of the above</b>	<b>52%</b>

**Table 12: Use of Mobile Media**

Among 0- to 8-year-olds, percent who have ever used a cell phone, iPod, iPad, or similar device to:

	Among all	0-1	2-4	5-8
Play games	33%	5%	31%	49%
Watch videos	20%	5%	20%	27%
Use apps	16%	4%	16%	23%
Watch TV shows/movies	11%	4%	15%	11%
Read books	4%	2%	3%	5%
<b>Any of the above</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>52%</b>

**Table 13: Time Spent with Mobile Media**

Among 0- to 8-year-olds, average time spent in a typical day using cell phones, iPods, iPads, or similar devices to:

	Among all	0-1	2-4	5-8
Play games	:03	*	:03	:03
Use other types of apps	:01	*	:02	:01
Watch videos or TV shows	:01	*	:02	:01
<b>Total</b>	<b>:05</b>	<b>:00</b>	<b>:07</b>	<b>:05</b>

Note: An asterisk (\*) indicates a value of < 30 seconds.

**Table 14: The App Gap: Access to Mobile Media, by Income**

Among 0- to 8-year-olds, the percent:

	Among all	<30,000	30-75,000	>75,000
<b>Who have new media devices in their home</b>				
Smartphone	41%	27% <sup>a</sup>	41% <sup>b</sup>	57% <sup>c</sup>
Video iPod/similar device	21%	10% <sup>a</sup>	20% <sup>b</sup>	34% <sup>c</sup>
Kindle, Nook, other eReader	9%	3% <sup>a</sup>	9% <sup>b</sup>	15% <sup>c</sup>
iPad/similar device	8%	2% <sup>a</sup>	6% <sup>b</sup>	17% <sup>c</sup>
<b>Whose parents say they don't know what an "app" is</b>	18%	38% <sup>a</sup>	12% <sup>b</sup>	3% <sup>b</sup>
<b>Whose parents have downloaded any apps for their children</b>	29%	14% <sup>a</sup>	28% <sup>b</sup>	47% <sup>c</sup>
<b>Who have ever used a cell, iPod, or iPad for games, videos, or apps</b>	38%	22% <sup>a</sup>	40% <sup>b</sup>	55% <sup>c</sup>

Note: Statistical significance at the level of  $p < .05$  is denoted in this table through a series of superscripts. Significance should be read across rows. Items that share a common superscript or that do not have superscripts do not differ significantly.

## Educational Content and Platforms

Many educators and philanthropists have been devoting a great deal of time and energy to developing educational content for new mobile media platforms. This study indicates that, as of this point, there are many more privileged than lower-income children using educational content on these platforms and that there is still much work to be done to put the platforms for this content in the hands of those most in need. (See the "Mobile Media Access and Use" section for relevant data.)

Among all children ages 0 to 8, about one in four (28%) has ever used educational gaming apps (such as puzzles, memory games, math, or reading programs) on a cell phone, iPod, iPad, or similar device. This includes 7% who use apps like that "often," 15% who do so "sometimes," and 6% who use them "hardly ever." But there is a big difference when looked at by family income. For example, 41% of children from families that earn more than \$75,000 a year have used educational apps, compared to just 16% of children from families earning under \$30,000 a year.

For those trying to reach children in need with educational content today, traditional media platforms are still the best bet: Television is the most popular platform for educational content among all children, especially those from lower-income families.

Access to broadcast television is nearly universal, whatever income group children are in (98-99%). Access to DVD players, although lower, is also widespread (72-85%). But only about half of lower-income families (53%) have cable TV; for the other half, the only way their children are going to receive educational content on TV is from public television or the commercial broadcast networks. At this point, most of these families are not able to pick and choose programming from across the TV landscape, recording it for future viewing on their TiVo: Only 12% of lower-income families have a digital video recorder

(either through their cable company or a TiVo-like device), compared to 59% of higher-income families.

About one in four (23%) children in the 0-8 age range “often” watches educational shows on TV, compared to 8% who often use a computer to play educational games or use educational software, and 7% who often use educational games or apps on a cell phone, iPod, iPad, or similar device. Adding in the proportion who “sometimes” do these activities, the difference is still pronounced: 62% often or sometimes watch educational TV, 33% often or sometimes use educational games or software on a computer, and 22% often or sometimes use educational games or apps on a cell phone, iPod, iPad, or similar device.

But among children from lower-income families, the difference is even starker: While 26% of children in families that earn less than \$30,000 a year “often” watch educational TV shows, only 5% often use educational games or programs on the computer, and just 2% often play educational games or apps on a cell phone, iPod, iPad, or similar device.

**Table 15: Television Platforms in the Home, by Income**

Among families with 0- to 8-year-olds, percent who have each media platform at home:

	Among all	<30,000	30-75,000	>75,000
TV	98%	98% <sup>a</sup>	98% <sup>a</sup>	99% <sup>a</sup>
Cable TV	68%	53% <sup>a</sup>	71% <sup>b</sup>	80% <sup>c</sup>
DVR	35%	12% <sup>a</sup>	37% <sup>b</sup>	59% <sup>c</sup>
DVD player	80%	72% <sup>a</sup>	85% <sup>b</sup>	84% <sup>b</sup>

Note: Statistical significance at the level of  $p < .05$  is denoted in this table through a series of superscripts. Significance should be read across rows. Items that share a common superscript or that do not have superscripts do not differ significantly.

**Table 16: The App Gap Continued: Use of Educational Apps, by Income**

Among 0- 8-year-olds, the percent:

	Among all	<30,000	30-75,000	>75,000
<b>Who have ever</b>				
Used educational game apps on a cell phone, iPod, iPad, or similar device	28%	16% <sup>a</sup>	29% <sup>b</sup>	41% <sup>c</sup>
<b>Who often</b>				
Watch educational TV shows	23%	26% <sup>a</sup>	25% <sup>a</sup>	17% <sup>b</sup>
Use educational games/programs on the computer	8%	5% <sup>a</sup>	10% <sup>b</sup>	8% <sup>ab</sup>
Use educational game apps on a cell phone, iPod, iPad or similar device	7%	2% <sup>a</sup>	8% <sup>a</sup>	11% <sup>b</sup>

Note: Statistical significance at the level of  $p < .05$  is denoted in this table through a series of superscripts. Significance should be read across rows. Items that share a common superscript or that do not have superscripts do not differ significantly.

## Children Under 2

For children under age 2, it’s all about TV, DVDs, music, and books. In a typical day, 47% of babies and toddlers ages 0 through 1 watch TV or DVDs, and those who do watch spend an average of nearly two hours (1:54) doing so. Among all children this age, that’s an average of :53 a day watching TV and DVDs (:37 TV, :16 DVDs), :39 a day listening to music, and :23 being read to.

Two-thirds (66%) of children under 2 have ever watched TV, and slightly fewer (52%) have ever watched DVDs. Just over a third (37%) watch TV at least once a day, and 16% watch DVDs every day (40% watch either TV or DVDs at least once a day; a similar number (44%) are read to at least once a day).

Nearly one in three (30%) children under 2 has a TV in his or her bedroom.

There are important methodological differences between this study and the 2005 Kaiser Family Foundation survey, primarily that the Kaiser study was conducted over the phone and the current study was conducted online. However, the two surveys are similar enough that it is interesting to look at them side by side, being cautious not to draw hard and fast conclusions. The Kaiser survey was among children ages 6-23 months old, whereas the current study also includes children from birth to 5 months old. So, for the following analyses, results from the current study were tabulated among 6- to 23-month-olds only, leaving out the 1- to 5-month-olds.

Comparing the two studies on this basis, it appears that the amount of time spent watching TV and DVDs by infants and toddlers may have increased slightly (e.g., :34 for TV in 2005, and :42 in 2011). The percent who watch TV every day has remained the same (43%), while the percent who read or are read to on a daily basis today is 11 points below what was found in 2005 (58% in 2005, and 47% in 2011). Average time spent reading or being read to also appears to have gone down somewhat (from :33 to :25 a day).

Other apparent differences seem to be that those who do watch TV spend more time doing so (about an hour a day in 2005, vs. an hour and a half in 2011), and that more children this age have a TV set in their bedroom (19% in 2005, 29% in 2011).

**Table 17: Media Use Among 6- to 23-Month-Olds, Over Time**

	2005+	2011
<b>Percent who</b>		
Have ever watched TV	79%	75%
Have ever watched DVDs/videos	65%	62%
Have a TV in their bedroom	19%	29%
Watch TV at least once a day	43%	43%
Watch TV a few times a week	17%	15%
Watch DVDs at least once a day	18%	18%
Watch DVDs a few times a week	26%	15%
Are read to at least once a day	58%	47%
Are read to a few times a week	25%	22%
<b>Average time spent in a typical day</b>		
Watching TV per day (among all)	:34	:42
Watching DVD/videos (among all)	:13	:19
Watching TV (among those who watched)	1:02	1:30
Watching DVDs/videos (among those who watched)	++	1:16
Reading or being read to (among all)	:33	:25
Reading or being read to (among those who read)	:44	:47

+ 2005 data are from the Kaiser Family Foundation's report *The Media Family*, published in 2006.

++ Sample size too small for reliable results.

Note: See Appendix for a discussion of important methodological differences between the two studies.



## Gender, Race, and Socio-Economic Status

There are very few differences in media use between boys and girls at these early ages, but there are substantial differences based on race, income, and parent education.

The one medium that shows noticeable differences between boys and girls, even at young ages, is console video games. Boys are more likely to have ever played a console video game than girls are (56% vs. 46%), to have a video game player in their bedroom (14% vs. 7%), and to play console video games every day (14% vs. 5%). Boys average :16 a day playing console games, compared to an average of :04 a day for girls.

African-American children ages 0-8 spend about an hour and a half more with media each day than white children do (4:27, compared to 2:51 among whites), and about an hour more than Hispanic youth (3:28). Children from higher-educated, upper-income families spend less time with media than other children do (for example, 2:47 a day among children from families earning at least \$75,000 a year, compared to 3:34 among those earning under \$30,000 a year). The biggest difference is in time spent watching TV, with African-American children averaging about 30 minutes a day more than white children. African-American children also spend more time reading each day: about 13 minutes more per day than whites.

Similarly, children from minority or lower SES homes are much more likely to have a TV in their bedroom than other children are. For example, 20% of children in upper income homes (over \$75,000 a year) have a TV in their room, compared to 64% of those from lower-income homes (under \$30,000 a year).

**Table 18: Time Spent With Media, by Race**

Among 0- to 8-year-olds, average time spent with media in a typical day:

	White	Black	Hispanic
<b>Watching TV, DVDs, or videos</b>	1:31 <sup>a</sup>	2:11 <sup>b</sup>	2:00 <sup>b</sup>
TV on a TV set	:57 <sup>a</sup>	1:30 <sup>b</sup>	1:22 <sup>b</sup>
DVDs	:31	:33	:32
TV/videos on a computer	:02	:05	:04
TV/videos on a cell, iPod, or iPad	:01	:03	:02
<b>Reading/being read to</b>	:28 <sup>b</sup>	:41 <sup>a</sup>	:25 <sup>b</sup>
<b>Listening to music</b>	:28	:39	:28
<b>Playing media games</b>	:20 <sup>a</sup>	:44 <sup>b</sup>	:24
Console video games	:09 <sup>a</sup>	:21 <sup>b</sup>	:09
Computer games	:06	:12	:08
Handheld game player	:03	:07	:05
Cell/iPod/iPad games	:02	:04	:02
<b>Other computer activities</b>	:03 <sup>a</sup>	:11 <sup>b</sup>	:10
Educational software	:01 <sup>a</sup>	:06 <sup>b</sup>	:05
Homework	:01	:03	:03
Anything else	:01	:02	:02
<b>Other apps on cell, iPod, or iPad</b>	:01	:01	:01
<b>Total media time</b>	2:51 <sup>a</sup>	4:27 <sup>b</sup>	3:28 <sup>c</sup>

Note: Statistical significance at the level of  $p < .05$  is denoted in this table through a series of superscripts. Significance should be read across rows. Items that share a common superscript or that do not have superscripts do not differ significantly.

**Table 19: Time Spent with Media, by Income**

Among 0- to 8-year-olds, average time spent with media in a typical day:

	<30,000	30-75,000	>75,000
<b>Watching TV, DVDs, or videos</b>	2:01 <sup>a</sup>	1:47 <sup>a</sup>	1:20 <sup>b</sup>
TV on a TV set	1:17 <sup>a</sup>	1:12 <sup>a</sup>	:56 <sup>b</sup>
DVDs	:40 <sup>a</sup>	:31 <sup>a</sup>	:19 <sup>b</sup>
TV/videos on a computer	:03	:03	:04
TV/videos on a cell, iPod, or iPad	:01	:03	:02
<b>Reading/being read to</b>	:27	:29	:32
<b>Listening to music</b>	:35 <sup>a</sup>	:28	:23 <sup>b</sup>
<b>Playing media games</b>	:25	:22	:26
Console video games	:13	:08	:09
Computer games	:08	:07	:08
Handheld game player	:03	:05	:04
Cell/iPod/iPad games	:01 <sup>a</sup>	:02 <sup>a</sup>	:05 <sup>b</sup>
<b>Other computer activities</b>	:05	:08	:05
Educational software	:02	:04	:02
Homework	:01	:03	:01
Anything else	:02	:01	:02
<b>Other apps on cell, iPod, or iPad</b>	:01	:01	:01
<b>Total media time</b>	3:34 <sup>a</sup>	3:15 <sup>a</sup>	2:47 <sup>b</sup>

Note: Statistical significance at the level of  $p < .05$  is denoted in this table through a series of superscripts. Significance should be read across rows. Items that share a common superscript or that do not have superscripts do not differ significantly.

**Table 20: Time Spent With Media, by Parent Education**

Among 0- to 8-year-olds, average time spent with media in a typical day:

	High school or less	Some college	College degree or more
<b>Watching TV, DVDs, or videos</b>	2:14 <sup>a</sup>	1:52 <sup>a</sup>	1:15 <sup>b</sup>
TV on a TV set	1:30 <sup>a</sup>	1:15 <sup>a</sup>	:48 <sup>b</sup>
DVDs	:38 <sup>a</sup>	:33 <sup>a</sup>	:23 <sup>b</sup>
TV/videos on a computer	:04	:03	:03
TV/videos on a cell, iPod, or iPad	:02	:01	:01
<b>Reading/being read to</b>	:28	:28	:32
<b>Listening to music</b>	:32	:31	:24
<b>Playing media games</b>	:27	:30 <sup>a</sup>	:18 <sup>b</sup>
Console video games	:13 <sup>a</sup>	:13 <sup>a</sup>	:05 <sup>b</sup>
Computer games	:08	:10 <sup>a</sup>	:06 <sup>b</sup>
Handheld game player	:04	:05	:03
Cell/iPod/iPad games	:02 <sup>a</sup>	:02 <sup>a</sup>	:04 <sup>b</sup>
<b>Other computer activities</b>	:06	:08 <sup>a</sup>	:03 <sup>b</sup>
Educational software	:02	:05 <sup>a</sup>	:01 <sup>b</sup>
Homework	:03	:01	:01
Anything else	:01	:02	:01
<b>Other apps on cell, iPod, or iPad</b>	:01	:01	:01
<b>Total media time</b>	3:48 <sup>a</sup>	3:30 <sup>a</sup>	2:33 <sup>b</sup>

Note: Statistical significance at the level of  $p < .05$  is denoted in this table through a series of superscripts. Significance should be read across rows. Items that share a common superscript or that do not have superscripts do not differ significantly.

**Table 21: Bedroom Television, by Race and Socio-Economic Status**

Among 0- to 8-year-olds, percent with a TV in their bedroom:

<b>Race</b>	
White	28% <sup>a</sup>
Black	69% <sup>b</sup>
Hispanic	66% <sup>b</sup>
<b>Income</b>	
<30,000	64% <sup>a</sup>
30-75,000	20% <sup>b</sup>
>75,000	20% <sup>c</sup>
<b>Parent Education</b>	
High school or less	67% <sup>a</sup>
Some college	48% <sup>b</sup>
College degree or more	18% <sup>c</sup>

Note: Statistical significance at the level of  $p < .05$  is denoted in this table through a series of superscripts. Significance should be read vertically within sections. Items that share a common superscript or that do not have superscripts do not differ significantly.

## Media Multitasking

Even at these young ages, some children have begun multitasking with their media. Among 0- to 8-year-olds, 16% use more than one medium “most” or “some” of the time they are using media (far less than the 58% of 7th-12th graders that previous studies indicate multitask “most” of the time with at least one medium). African-American and Hispanic children are more likely to multi-task than White children are: 22% of African-American and 21% of Hispanic 0- to 8-year-olds use more than one medium most or some of the time, compared to 11% of white children this age.

By the time they are in the 5- to 8-year-old age range, almost a quarter (23%) of all children engage in media multitasking most (3%) or some (20%) of the time they use media. Among the 79% of 5- to 8-year-olds who have homework, 21% have the TV on “usually” or “some of the time” they are doing their homework.

## Media as a Babysitter

Most parents say they don’t often use media as a babysitter. Fifteen percent of parents say they “often” use media to keep their child occupied while they do chores (42% say they “sometimes” do that). Only 6% say they often let their child use their handheld video game player while they are out running errands (11% say “sometimes”), and 5% say they often give their child their cell phone, iPod, iPad, or similar device to keep them occupied while they are out running errands (16% say “sometimes”). Some parents use media to occupy *themselves* when they are supposed to be out playing with their kids: 4% say they “often” do that, and 15% say they “sometimes” do.

**Table 22: Media as a Babysitter**

Among parents of children ages 0-8, percent who say they often or sometimes:

	<b>Often</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>
Use media to keep their child occupied while they do chores	15%	42%
Let their child play with a handheld game player while they are out doing errands	6%	11%
Give their child their cell phone, iPod, iPad, or similar device to keep them occupied when they are out running errands	5%	16%
Put headphones on their child to watch a video while they attend a meeting or class	2%	8%
Use media to occupy themselves while they are out with their child playing	4%	15%



# Conclusion

**Media—even very new media—are a critical and growing presence in young children’s lives. Just three years after the development of the first digital “app,” nearly three out of 10 parents have downloaded apps for their kids to use, and one in four children have used educational gaming apps on a mobile device. Media use starts young and grows quickly.**

**We hope the data in this report will serve to put a spotlight on the role of media in children’s lives and will help inform the many important discussions that are taking place about children and media today, including:**

## **BABY VIDEOS**

» For parents, pediatricians, and child development experts concerned about screen media use among children under 2, this report indicates that a substantial number of infants and toddlers are watching TV and DVDs on a regular basis. Understanding the impact of early screen media use on infants’ developing minds and clarifying expert guidance for parents are critically important tasks.

## **BEDROOM TV**

» For children’s advocates who are concerned about the negative effects of young children having a TV in their bedroom (including on obesity, school grades, and time spent watching TV), these data are a wake-up call: Despite calls for parents to refrain from putting TVs in their children’s rooms, 42% of all 0- to 8-year-olds have a bedroom TV, including nearly one in three (30%) children under age 2.

## **EDUCATIONAL MEDIA**

» For educators, funders, and content creators who are eager to use media to deliver educational programming to children, this study indicates that educational TV is still the most popular platform, far outstripping use of educational content on other platforms, including computers and newer mobile devices.

## **HEALTH PROMOTION**

» For those who are trying to reach children in low-income families, whether with educational content, public health messages, or on behalf of other pro-social causes, this report provides much-needed guidance about the enduring and substantial digital divide, in computers and in newer mobile devices such as smartphones and iPads.

## DIGITAL DIVIDE

- » For those who are excited about the potential of interactive media as an educational tool—because of the ability to pace and personalize the content and engage the child in active response—this study makes it clear that there must be ongoing work to address both the digital divide and the newer “app gap” to ensure that the benefits of this exciting new educational content reaches those most in need.

## QUALITY ENTERTAINMENT

- » For content providers striving to make high-quality entertainment media for young people, and for advocates concerned about the negative impact of content such as advertising, violence, or gender roles, paying attention to the messages on TV is still perhaps the most important challenge of all, as it continues to consume the largest share of children's media diets.

## READING

- » For teachers, parents, and literacy experts who are convinced of the importance of reading, the study may provide encouraging news in documenting an average of nearly a half-hour of reading a day; it may also raise alarms in indicating a possible drop-off in reading compared to earlier studies.

## MULTITASKING

- » For neuroscientists and others concerned about the impact of media multitasking on developing minds, it will be interesting to see the very beginnings of these multitasking habits in the (relatively) small group of very young children who use more than one medium at a time, or who tend to do their homework with the TV on.

**As a nation, we need to continue to think about, research, and debate the impact of media on young children. Media occupy such a substantial place in children's lives that we ignore it—or take it for granted—at our peril.**







## Zero to Eight: Children's Media Use in America

Fieldwork conducted by Knowledge Networks

N = 1,384 parents of children ages 0-8 years old

Margin of error: Plus or minus 2.6 percentage points

Interview dates: May 27-June 15, 2011

Notes:

Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding, refused/don't know responses, or because multiple responses were allowed. An asterisk (\*) indicates a value of less than .5%.

---

### Q.1 Which of the following, if any, do you have in your household?

a. A TV set	98
b. A regular DVD player	80
c. A laptop or desktop computer	72
(Please do NOT count the notebook computer you were given by Knowledge Networks for taking these surveys)	
d. Cable or satellite TV	68
e. High-speed Internet access (cable, wireless, or DSL)	68
f. A video game player like an Xbox, PlayStation, or Wii	67
g. A handheld video game player like a GameBoy, PSP, or Nintendo DS	44
h. A portable DVD player	39
i. A digital video recorder like TiVo or through your cable company	35
j. An iTouch or other type of video iPod	21
k. A Kindle, Nook or other e-reader	9
l. An iPad or similar tablet device	8
m. None of these	1

### Q.2 What type of cell phone, if any, do you have:

a. A "smartphone"	41
(in other words, you can send email, watch videos, or access the Internet on it)	
b. A regular cell phone (just for talking or texting)	49
c. I don't have a cell phone	10

### Q.2A One thing people talk about when it comes to cell phones and iPods is "apps."

How confident are you that you know what an "app" is?

a. I know what an app is.	64
b. I have an idea what an app is, but I'm not totally sure.	18
c. I don't know what an app is.	18

**Q.2B Approximately how many apps, if any, have you downloaded onto your cell phone, iPod, or iPad type of device?**

	Among all	Among those who know what an “app” is
a. None	60	38
b. Fewer than 5	7	11
c. 5-10	10	15
d. 10-20	10	16
e. 20-30	5	8
f. More than 30	7	11

**Q.2C Approximately how many of the apps that you’ve downloaded were for your [child/children] to use?**

*Among those who have downloaded any apps onto cell phone, iPad, or iPod*

a. Most of them	10
b. About half of them	19
c. Less than half of them	14
d. Only a few	30
e. None	27

*Among all parents*

Percent who have downloaded any apps for their children (Combo Q.2A-C) 29

**Q.3 Do you ever use your CELL PHONE for the following:**

*Among those who have a smartphone or regular cell phone*

	Yes
a. Texting	87
b. Listening to music	41
c. Playing games	4
d. Sending or receiving email	47
e. Using apps	40
f. Watching videos, such as YouTube videos	30
g. Watching TV shows	11
h. Using Facebook	39
i. Accessing the Internet for something other than email, Facebook, apps, or videos	46
j. Taking photos	85

**Q.4 When someone is at home in your household, how often is the TV on, even if no one is actually watching it?**

a. Always	10
b. Most of the time	29
c. Some of the time	40
d. Hardly ever	16
e. Never	4

For this next set of questions, please think about your [\_\_\_\_year/month-old] [boy/girl] [INSERT CHILD'S NAME]. Some of these questions may be about things [CHILD] is too young to do. If that's the case, just mark the correct response and move on.

**Q.5 Which of the following items, if any, does [CHILD] have in [his/her] bedroom:**

a. A television set	42
b. A DVD player or VCR	29
c. A video game player like Xbox, PlayStation, or Wii	16
d. A computer	6
e. Internet access	5
f. None of these	56

**Q.6 Which of the following items does [CHILD] have, if any? His/Her own:**

a. Educational game device like a Leapster Explorer or a V-Smile	29
b. Handheld video game player like a GameBoy, PSP, or Nintendo DS	24
c. Non-video iPod or other MP3 player	7
d. iTouch or other video iPod	3
e. Cell phone	2
f. iPad or similar tablet device	•
g. Kindle, Nook or other e-reader	•
h. None of these	56

**Q.7 Is [CHILD]'s cell phone a "smartphone" or not? (In other words, can he/she go online, use apps or watch videos on it, or not?)**

*Note: Number of respondents whose child has a cell phone (n=32) was not sufficient for reliable results.*

**Q.8 We're interested in whether [CHILD] has ever used a cell phone, iPod, iPad, or similar device to do any of the following activities. Please mark any of the activities [CHILD] has ever done:**

- a. Watch videos on a phone, iPod, or iPad 20
  - b. Watch TV shows or movies on a phone, iPod, or iPad 11
  - c. Play games on a phone, iPod, or iPad 33
  - d. Use apps on a phone, iPod, or iPad 16
  - e. Read books on a phone, iPod, or iPad 4
  - f. None of these 61
- Percent who have done ANY of these activities* 38

**Q.9 We're interested in how often [CHILD] does various activities or whether [he/she] has never done these activities. How often does [CHILD]:**

	Several times a day	Once a day	Several times a week	Once a week	Less often than once a week	Has never done this
Read or be read to	30	29	22	4	6	9
Watch DVDs or videotapes	9	16	27	15	18	14
Watch TV	41	23	16	3	6	9
Use the computer	6	8	17	11	17	40
Read books on a Kindle, Nook, or similar e-reader	1	1	2	2	4	89
Play video games on a console player like an X-Box, PlayStation, or Wii	5	5	13	9	20	48
Play games, use apps, or watch videos on a cell phone, iPod, iPad, or handheld gaming device	3	5	11	9	16	56

**Q.10 We're interested in how old [CHILD] was when [he/she] first did various activities. How old was [CHILD] when [he/she] first:**

	Age	Percent who have ever done this
a. Was read to— <i>Among those whose child reads or was read to</i>	5 months	90%
b. Watched DVDs or videotapes— <i>Among those whose child has watched DVDs or videotapes</i>	11 months	85%
c. Watched TV— <i>Among those whose child has watched TV</i>	9 months	89%
d. Used a computer— <i>Among those whose child has used a computer</i>	3 yrs, 6 months	59%
e. Played video games on a console game player like an X-Box, Playstation or Wii. — <i>Among those whose child has played video games on a console player</i>	3 yrs, 11 months	51%
f. Played games on a handheld gaming device like a GameBoy, PSP or Nintendo DS— <i>Among those whose child has played handheld games</i>	3 yrs, 11 months	44%
g. Used a cell phone, iPod, or iPad-type device to play games or watch videos	+	+
h. Used apps on a cell phone, iPod, iPad, or similar device	+	+

+ Sample too small for reliable results

**Q.11 We're interested in how much time your [CHILD] spent doing various activities yesterday. Some of these may be things [CHILD] is too young to do. If that's the case, just mark the correct response and move on. Thinking just about YESTERDAY, about how much TIME, if any, did [CHILD] spend...:**

	Time (hours:min)
a. Watching TV on a TV set (do NOT include time spent watching videos or DVDs)	1:09
b. Watching DVDs or videotapes	0:31
c. Listening to music	0:29
d. Reading or being read to	0:29
e. Playing games on a console video game player like an Xbox, PlayStation, or Wii	0:10
f. Playing games on a computer (laptop or desktop)	0:08
g. Playing games on a handheld game player like a GameBoy, PSP, or Nintendo DS	0:04
h. Playing games on a cell phone, iPod, or iPad	0:03
i. Watching videos or TV shows on a computer (NOT on a DVD player)	0:03
j. Using educational software on a computer (not games)	0:03
k. Doing homework on a computer	0:02
l. Watching videos or TV shows on a handheld device like a cell phone, iPod, or iPad	0:01
m. Doing anything else on a computer (photos, graphics, social networking, other activities)	0:01
n. Using other types of apps on a cell phone, iPod, or iPad	0:01

**Q.12 We're also interested in how much time YOU PERSONALLY spent doing some activities yesterday. Thinking just about yesterday, about how much time did you spend...:**

	Time (hours:min)
a. Using a computer	1:49
b. Watching your own shows on TV	1:24
c. Reading books, magazines, or newspapers for pleasure, including electronically	0:32
d. Using apps other than games	0:07
e. Playing games or watching video on a cell phone, iPod, iPad, or similar device	0:07
f. Playing video games on a console player	0:06

**Q.13 How often, if ever, do you do any of the following:**

	Often	Sometimes	Hardly ever	Never
a. Let [CHILD] play with [his/her] GameBoy, PSP, or Nintendo DS when you are out running errands together				
<i>Among all</i>	6	11	3	79
<i>Among those who have a handheld video game player in the household</i>	24	48	14	14
b. Give [CHILD] your cell phone, iPod, or iPad to play with when you are out running errands together				
<i>Among all</i>	5	16	10	69
<i>Among those who own a smartphone, iPod, or iPad</i>	9	31	19	40
c. Give [CHILD] headphones and a video to watch when [HE/SHE] has to go with you to a meeting, class, or other activity				
<i>Among all</i>	2	8	9	80
<i>Among those who own a portable DVD, laptop or desktop, iTouch, iPod, or iPad</i>	2	10	12	75
d. Use media to keep [CHILD] occupied while you do chores around the house	15	42	18	24
e. Use media to keep YOURSELF occupied while you're out playing with [CHILD] (for example, use a cell phone, iPod, or iPad while you're at the park or playground)				
<i>Among all</i>	4	15	15	66
<i>Among those who own a smartphone, iPod, or iPad</i>	7	29	30	34
f. Record TV shows for [CHILD] to watch on TV later				
<i>Among all</i>	10	14	4	72
<i>Among those who own a digital video recorder</i>	28	40	12	20
g. Buy TV shows online for [CHILD]				
<i>Among all</i>	*	2	5	92
<i>Among those who have high-speed Internet access in their household</i>	1	3	7	88

**Q.13A How often, if ever, do you do any of the following:**

	Often	Sometimes	Hardly ever	Never	We don't have a car
Put DVDs on in the car when you go somewhere with [CHILD]	7	19	16	51	7

**Q.14 How often, if ever, does [CHILD] use the following kinds of apps on a cell phone, iPod, iPad, or similar device:**

	Often	Sometimes	Hardly ever	Never
a. Educational games, like puzzles, memory games, math, or reading				
<i>Among all</i>	7	15	6	72
<i>Among those who own a smartphone, iPod, or iPad</i>	13	29	11	46
b. Games that are just for fun				
<i>Among all</i>	7	17	6	70
<i>Among those who own a smartphone, iPod, or iPad</i>	13	33	12	41
c. Creative apps for things like drawing, making music, or creating videos				
<i>Among all</i>	3	11	6	80
<i>Among those who own a smartphone, iPod, or iPad</i>	6	22	11	60
d. Apps based on a character [he/she] knows from a TV show				
<i>Among all</i>	2	8	8	82
<i>Among those who own a smartphone, iPod, or iPad</i>	4	15	15	64
e. Other types of apps				
<i>Among all</i>	1	7	10	82
<i>Among those who own a smartphone, iPod, or iPad</i>	2	14	19	64
Percent who use ANY of the above (among all)	11	18	5	66

**Q.15 What are the names of the other types of apps that [CHILD] uses?  
[open-end]**

**Q.16 How often, if ever, does [CHILD] do any of the following:**

	Often	Sometimes	Hardly ever	Never
a. Watch educational shows on TV, like <i>Electric Company</i> or <i>Animal Planet</i>	23	39	16	22
b. Watch kids' entertainment shows on TV, like <i>SpongeBob</i> or <i>iCarly</i>	34	30	14	23
c. Watch general audience shows like <i>American Idol</i> or <i>Modern Family</i>	4	16	21	60
d. Watch adult TV shows like <i>CSI</i> or <i>Grey's Anatomy</i>	3	7	11	80
e. Use the DVR or VCR [himself/herself] to record [his/her] own shows and watch them later				
<i>Among all</i>	3	5	3	90
<i>Among those who own a digital video recorder</i>	8	13	8	70
f. Use educational games or programs on the computer				
<i>Among all</i>	8	26	11	56
<i>Among those who have a laptop or desktop in the household</i>	11	36	14	39

**Q.17 Does [CHILD] ever have homework from school or not?**

*Among those parents who have a child 5 years of age or older:*

Yes	79
No	12
Child is not in school	9

**Q.18 When [CHILD] does [his/her] homework, how often, if ever, is the TV on in the background:**

*Among those whose child has homework*

Usually	8
Some of the time	13
Only once in a while	25
Never	54

**Q.19 How often, if ever, does [CHILD] like to use more than one type of media at a time, for example, play a handheld game while [he/she] is watching TV or listen to music while [he/she] is using the computer?**

Most of the time	2
Some of the time	14
Only once in a while	21
Never	63

**Q.20 Has your child's pediatrician ever talked to you about your child's media use?**

Yes	14
No	85



## DEMOGRAPHICS

### D1. Thinking about all the children under age 18 who live with you, is [CHILD] the youngest child, the oldest child, or a middle child?

Youngest	56
Middle	8
Oldest	14
Only child	23

### D2. Household employment status

One parent working	45
Two parents working	40
No parent working	14

### D3. Highest parent education

No formal education	*
Grades 1-4	1
Grades 5-6	1
Grades 7-8	1
Grade 9	2
Grade 10	2
Grade 11	1
Grade 12 – no diploma	2
High school graduate (grade 12 or GED certificate)	22
Some college, no degree	20
Associate's degree	9
Bachelor's degree	20
Master's degree	14
Professional or doctorate degree	5

### D4. Language spoken in the household

Language other than English	31
English only	69

### D5. Respondent's race/ethnicity

White	48
Hispanic	26
Black	19
Other	6

### D6. Respondent's gender

Male	44
Female	56

### D7. Annual household income

Less than \$30,000	34
\$30,000 to \$75,000	36
More than \$75,000	30

### D8. Number of parents in the household

Two-parent household	87
Single-parent household	13



# Appendix

Data presented in the Appendix compare findings from the current study with results from the Kaiser Family Foundation study *The Media Family: Electronic Media Use in the Lives of Infants, Toddlers, Preschoolers and Their Parents*, conducted in the fall of 2005 and released in May 2006. The Foundation's study concerned media use among children ages 6 months to 6 years old, while the current study covers media use among children ages 0 to 8. In this Appendix, results from the current study are presented for 6-month-old to 6-year-olds only for purposes of comparison with the earlier findings. However, due to significant changes in methodology, comparisons should be made with extreme caution. The changes in methodology and question wording make it impossible to calculate the statistical significance of any changes over time.

The 2005 Kaiser Family Foundation study was a telephone survey of parents conducted through random-digit-dial sampling. The current study is an online survey, using a probability-based panel that was randomly recruited using address-based sampling and random-digit-dial telephone surveys, with non-computer and non-Internet households provided with a laptop and dial-up Internet access for the purpose of completing their online surveys. The different methodologies may yield slightly different samples, and the different formats – seeing a question on the screen, as opposed to hearing it read over the telephone – may also affect results in unknown ways.

In general, the current study uses identical or very similar question wording to the previous study wherever possible. However, in one instance, a change in question wording may have affected the outcome: In the 2005 survey, the question about music asked parents how much time their child spent listening to music the previous day, “including while riding in the

car.” The 2011 survey omitted that last phrase. Since the results for music differ substantially between the two surveys, it is possible that this omission changed the results.

Finally, changes in the types of media available to children over the past six years make direct comparisons challenging even if the methodologies had been identical. For example, the current survey includes questions about media activities that were either not available or rarely used in 2006, including use of social networking sites and iPads.

Nonetheless, we are presenting the data for 6-month-old to 6-year-olds here because we believe the many important similarities between the two studies make these comparisons useful in a broad sense, to note the presence or absence of any large trends in media use among children this age.

**Table A: Time Spent With Media Among Children Ages 6 Months to 6 Years Old, Over Time**

Among 6-month to 6-year-olds, average amount of time spent in a typical day:

	2003	2005	2011
<b>Watching TV, DVDs, or videos</b>	1:43	1:23	1:41
TV on a TV set	1:05	:59	1:07
DVDs	:38	:24	:31
TV/videos on a computer	+	+	:03
TV/videos on a cell, iPod, or iPad	+	+	:02
<b>Reading/being read to</b>	:39	:40	:29
<b>Listening to music</b>	:59	:48	:30
<b>Playing media games</b>	:12	:09	:18
Console video games	:04	:03	:06
Computer games	:07	:05	:06
Handheld game player	:01	:01	:03
Cell/iPod/iPad games	+	+	:03
<b>Other computer activities</b>	:02	:02	:06
Educational software	+	+	:03
Homework	+	+	:01
Anything else	:02	:02	:01
Other apps on cell, iPod, or iPad	+	+	:01
<b>Total media time</b>	3:35	3:04	3:05

+ Question not asked.

**Table B: Screen Media Use by Platform Among Children Ages 6 Months to 6 Years Old, Over Time**

Among 6-month to 6-year-olds, average amount of time spent in a typical day using:

	2003	2005	2011
<b>A TV set</b> (watching TV or DVDs/videos)	1:43	1:23	1:38
<b>A computer</b> (playing games, doing homework, watching videos/TV, using educational software, other activities)	:09	:07	:15
<b>A video game player</b> (playing games on a console or handheld player)	:05	:06	:09
<b>A cell phone, iPod, or iPad</b> (playing games, watching video, using apps)	NA	NA	:06
<b>Total screen media time</b>	1:57	1:36	2:08

**Table C: Bedroom Media Among Children Ages 6 Months to 6 Years Old, Over Time**

Among 6-month to 6-year-olds, percent with each item in their bedroom:

	2003	2005	2011
TV	36	33	42
DVD/VCR	27	23	22
Video game player	10	10	8
Computer	7	5	3
Internet access	3	2	4





# Zero to Eight: Children's Media Use in America

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# Common Sense Media's *Program for the Study of Children and Media*

The mission of Common Sense Media's *Program for the Study of Children and Media* is to provide parents, educators, health organizations, and policymakers with reliable, independent data on children's use of media and technology, and the impact it has on their physical, emotional, social, and intellectual development. For more information about the program, and to read reports on these studies, visit [www.commonsense.org/research](http://www.commonsense.org/research).

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