

Summary – Kids & Media 2012/13

Facts about young children's use and experience of the media, ages 0–8

Foreword

New media – is it really so new? No, not really. ARPANET, which developed into the Internet, was launched in 1969, more than 40 years ago. The commercial Internet had its breakthrough among the general public in the early 1990s, two decades ago. The first successful video game console, Pong, came out in 1975. In 2014 Facebook, the undisputed king of social media, turns 10.

What we call “new media” is, for many today, a completely integrated part of daily life. This applies especially to children and young people who grew up with it, and who take it more or less for granted. Being online is becoming a normal condition, and a lack of Internet access is more of an irritating exception.

An ever greater number of children and young people also spend an ever greater amount of time with various on-line activities and – above all – the users are getting younger and younger. The average age for first-time Internet use – that is, the age at which more than 50 % of children use the Internet, was nine in 2005. Today, it's three. As recently as 2010, only 12 % of 15-year-olds used their mobile phones to access the Internet. Now 94 % do. Today's eight-year-olds surf on their mobile phones to the same extent that 15-year-olds did in 2010.

What do children and young people actually do on the Internet, how often, and for how long? What happens when nine out of ten young people have the Internet in their pocket and can be online around the clock? What do children and young people perceive as unpleasant online, in film, or on TV? Does increasing media usage lead to increased Internet bullying and conflicts within the family? These issues are answered, at least partially, in this report.

Kids & Media is now being carried out for the fifth time since 2005. This report is the result of a survey of media habits among children between the ages of 0 and 18, and attitudes about the media. The results are being published in two reports: Little kids & Media, about children ages 0–8, and Kids & Media, about children and young people ages 9–18. The purpose is to provide a knowledge bank and source of facts that are easily accessible for parents, teachers, and others who work with or are interested in children and young people and their daily media lives. Both reports are available for downloading at www.statensmedierad.se/ungarochmedier

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Introduction, background, method and reading instructions

Kids & Media is an account of the results from the survey of media habits and attitudes towards the media among children ages 9–18. The results are reported thoroughly and divided into three age groups, which are mentioned only by numbers in the running text: 9–12 (years), 13–16 (years) and 17–18 (years). Kids & Media was carried out previously in 2005, 2006, 2008 and 2010 by the Media Council committee, which came to an end on 31 December 2010, when the Swedish Media Council was formed. Earlier studies, however, only went up to the age of 16, which is why the results for the 17–18 age group cannot be compared with the results of the previous surveys. The media landscape is changing quickly, and new questions arise while others lose their relevance. The 2012/13 survey has also been designed in collaboration with the Norwegian Media Authority and the Department for Media Education and Audiovisual Media, Norway's and Finland's counterparts to the Swedish Media Council, for the purpose of generating a joint Nordic report with comparable data. This has meant reformulating certain questions and changing response alternatives, which makes it so that direct comparisons cannot always be made over time. The 2005, 2006, and 2008 surveys differ so greatly from the present study that they were not used as material for comparison. In the cases where there is comparable data from the 2010 survey, this is reported in the running text and tables. Kids & Media 2012/13, where parents of children ages 0–8 were asked about their children's media habits and their own attitudes toward the media, is also being published in parallel with this report.

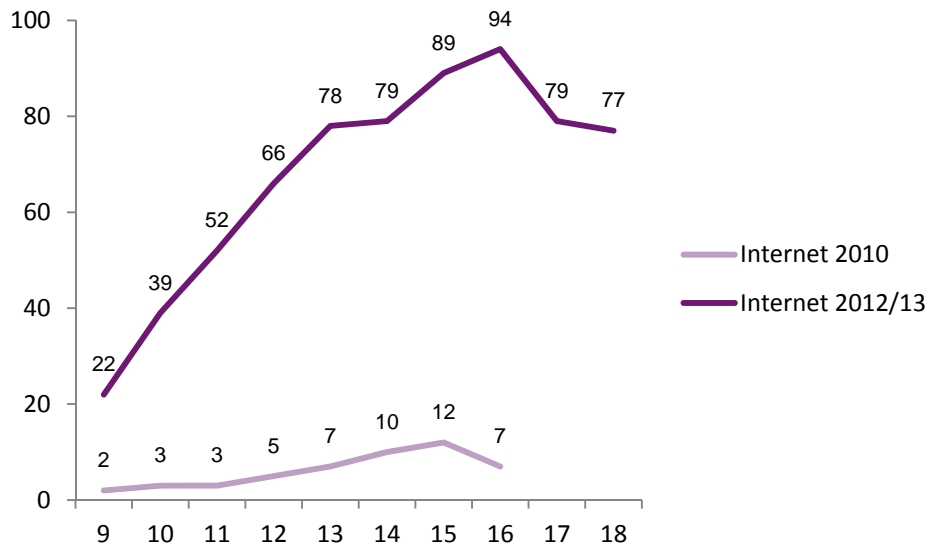
The basis for this report consists of two different postal surveys, which were sent out to 1 000 children ages 9–12 and 1 000 children ages 13–18. In order to compare with earlier studies, the latter age range has been divided into two age groups in the analysis: 13–16 and 17–18. Statistics Sweden carried out the collection of data. The selection of respondents was independent and random. The data collection ran from 26 October 2012 to 16 January 2013. The frequency of response was 42.1 % for ages 9–12 and 40.3 % for ages 13–18. This is relatively low compared with earlier Kids & Media surveys. The decreasing frequency is nothing unique for Kids & Media, or even for surveys of media habits; it is something that has been observed for a long time in various types of surveys with random selection, both in Sweden and internationally. The causes for this have not been made completely clear, but a reasonable assumption would be that a generally increasing number of surveys – both academic and market surveys – has led to an unwillingness in more and more people to respond to surveys. The future will show us whether it is possible to continue with surveys that use independent and random selection, or if alternative methods for data collection may be used.

Summary

This section summarises the results where the differences are greatest between different groups, or where there has been a substantial development compared to Kids & Media 2010. The survey shows that mobile phone ownership among children and young people is increasing primarily among the younger ages. In the 13–16 age range, ownership since 2010 has been close to one hundred percent (96 % in 2010, 99 % in 2012/13). Among 9–12-year-olds, the share that owns their own mobile phones increased from 81 % to 86 % in 2012/13. Earlier surveys lack questions on whether the respondents have a smart mobile phone with a touch screen, or a traditional mobile phone. In 2012/13, it turned

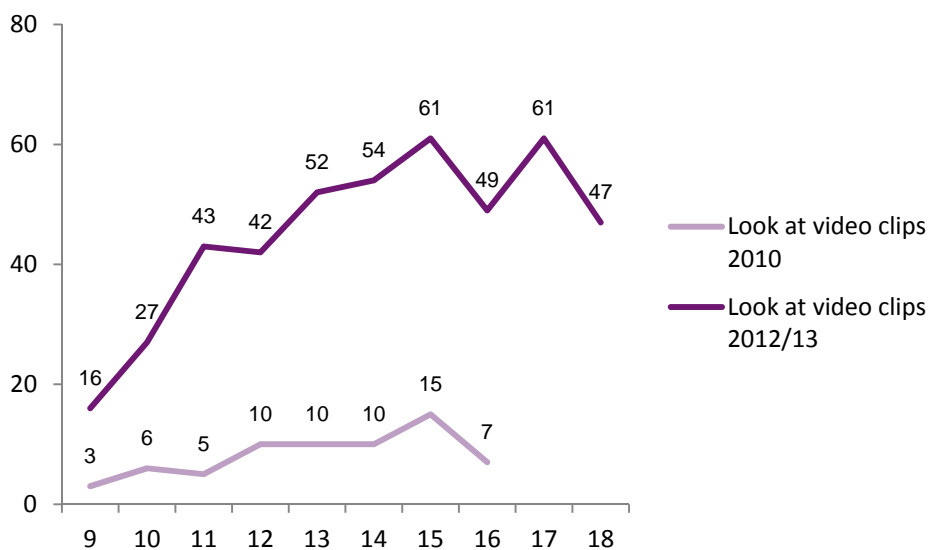
out that smart phones dominate: 62 % of children aged 9–12 own one, 89 % of those aged 13–16, and 84 % of those aged 17–18. Despite the lack of information on mobile phone ownership in earlier Kids & Media, it may be inferred that this was significantly lower, based on how the respondents indicate that they use their mobile phones. For example, both use of the Internet on mobile phones and looking at video clips has increased substantially.

What do you usually use your mobile phone for? Internet, 2010 and 2012/13 (%)



As shown in the diagram above, the differences between 2010 and 2012/13 are greater, the older the respondents are. This can be explained, on the one hand, by the fact that the older groups have smart phones – which are better suited for Internet use than traditional mobile phones – to a greater degree, and on the other hand by the fact that Internet subscriptions for mobile phones, despite the price reductions in 2010, is still an issue of cost, and as a rule the older groups have more money to use.

What do you usually use your mobile phone for? Look at film or video clips, 2010 and 2012/13 (%)



Looking at film and video clips on mobile phones is also an activity that increases with the respondents' age, and which has increased substantially since 2010. It is certainly possible to watch films or clips that have been saved to the mobile phone, but only a handful of individuals have indicated that they watch clips without using the Internet. Watching films or video clips on a mobile phone can also be seen to a great extent as a part of using mobile Internet. A smart phone is significantly more suited for these activities than traditional mobile phones. The same applies, if to a lesser extent, to mobile phone activities such as gaming, photography, and filming videos. These areas of use have also increased since 2010.

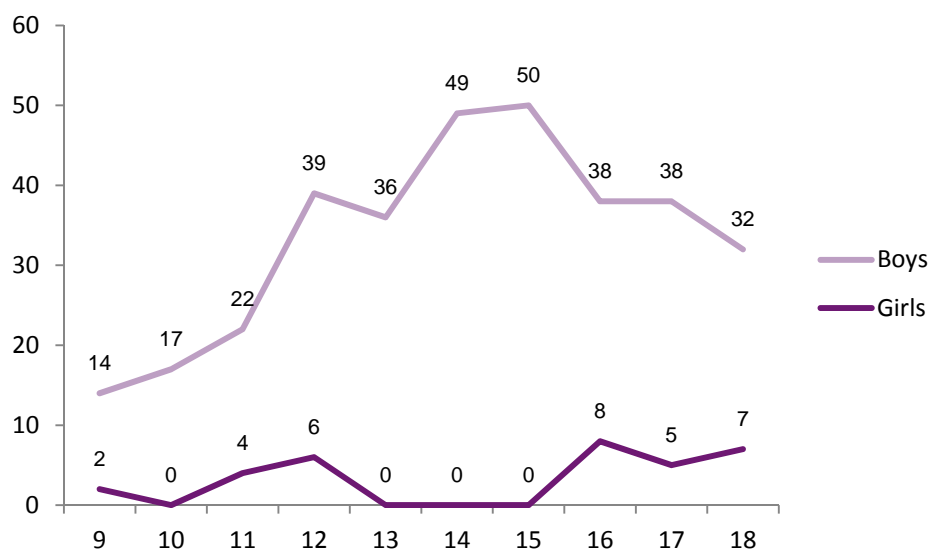
The use of mobile phones – regardless of what they are used for – has increased substantially among the youngest users; in 2010 39 % of children 9–12 used a mobile phone daily; in 2012/13 it was 53 %. Daily mobile phone use is also increasing among young people 13–16, but to a lesser extent: from 80 % in 2010 to 88 % in 2012/13. Using the Internet on a daily basis, regardless of whether it is through a mobile phone, a computer, or other technology, is also significantly more common today than previously. Daily internet use has increased since 2010 from 32 % to 55 % (9–12) and from 62 % to 93 % (13–16). A reasonable assumption would be that this increase is linked to the increased access to smart phones and mobile Internet. Not so long ago, Internet use was synonymous with sitting in front of a stationary computer system linked to the Internet via cables; today, more and more people are connected pretty much anywhere, at any time.

In earlier surveys, the category of “high consumer” was defined as individuals who spend more than three hours per day on a medium. The dramatic increase of internet and mobile use has led to the concept beginning to lose its meaning as a differentiator. Today, a majority of everyone over the age of 14 is a high consumer of Internet, and around half of all mobile phone users belong to the same group. Yesterday's high consumer is thus in the process of being transformed into today's average user. As regards watching films or TV programmes, as well as computer and video games, the

increase in the proportion of high consumers is significantly more modest. At certain ages, high consumers of films and TV programmes are even fewer in 2012/13 than in 2010.

Even if high consumers of computer and video games have increased a bit, in general there are neither more nor fewer people playing games today compared with 2010. It is, however, the area of media where the differences between boys and girls are greatest of all, in regards to both how much they play and what they play. 9–12 is the age range where most play (87 % in total, divided amongst 98 % of boys and 76 % of girls). The gender differences increase later, primarily dependent upon the fact that girls stop playing to a greater extent than boys. The differences among high consumers are the greatest.

High consumers (more than 3 hrs/day) computer games/video games, divided by gender (%)



It is worth noting that while half of the boys aged 14–15 play at least 3 hours a day, 0 % of the girls do the same.

The gender differences regarding which games they prefer are also extensive. While boys prefer action and sports games, they are less popular among girls. The only games that both boys and girls mention as the most popular are Minecraft and the generic category of “Internet games” (games played directly in a Web browser, which are normally less complex and time-consuming). Otherwise, they play different titles.

Social media has also become a major hit. Among the two oldest age groups, participation on social sites is the most common activity on the Internet: 71 % of children aged 13–16, and 78 % of those aged 17–18 do so daily. Among children aged 9–12, 61 % are members of at least one social site, compared with 86 % of those aged 13–16, and 91 % of those aged 17–18. Facebook is the pre-eminently most popular site: of those who use social media, 68 % of children aged 9–12, 96 % of those aged 13–16, and 93 % of those aged 17–18 are members there.

Girls generally use social media to a greater extent than boys, something that reaches its culmination at the age of 17. At that point, 42 % of girls spend more than 3 hours per day on social sites, compared with 15 % of boys.

This year’s survey indicates an increased interest in the news for all age groups. The consumption of news has increased since 2010 as regards TV, Internet and – above all – via mobile phones. In 2010, 4 % of children aged 9–12, and 11 % of those aged 13–16 got their news via mobile phones. The corresponding figures for 2012/13 are 31 % and 70 % (and 72 % for 17–18). Reading newspapers, however, has declined compared to earlier studies.

One question concerns how people make use of their time; the response alternatives were whether they think they spend too much, not enough, or just enough time on different activities. As with 2010, it turns out that the respondents often think they spend too little time on “beneficial” activities such as studying lessons or exercising, and too much time on media use. Compared with 2010, the proportion who thinks that they

spend too much time on the Internet and mobile phones has markedly increased; the explanation lies in that actual use of these two has also markedly increased. The gender differences are significant. Girls, regardless of age group, are dissatisfied to a significantly greater extent both with their own media consumption and with most other activities. The only exceptions are the response alternatives “Books and newspapers” and “Family”, where girls responded “enough time” to a greater extent than boys. Girls also spend more time on these activities than boys. This data can be interpreted to mean that girls generally feel greater demands on themselves than boys – that awareness of having to “be good” is greater among girls.

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