

# ***SUPER AWESOME***

A day in the life of a  
kid during Covid-19:  
meet **Generation C**

How the pandemic is restructuring day parts  
for 6-16yr olds and creating an entirely new  
generation.



Covid-19 has **reshaped a normal day for kids**, dramatically increased their **sense of responsibility** and is creating a new cohort: **Generation C.**

## The Summary

Although relatively short in duration, Covid-19's impact will shape a generation of kids.

This report examines how Covid-19 has altered the day for 6-16yr olds, from the moment they wake up until the time they go to sleep. Although we were expecting to see some pattern disruption, the data indicates a surprisingly high level of lasting behavioral change. For this age band (6-16), this pandemic and its effects will define their generation, jolting them into a new way of thinking, acting, playing and socializing. Some of these behaviors are an acceleration of trends which were already in motion but others are completely new.

All disasters tend to make that generation of kids grow up faster, and the data shows exactly those trends. However, the other changes are more subtle and every brand should pay attention: Generation C has influence and feels empowered. Like Covid-19 itself, we are just beginning to understand their impact.

## Our **methodology**

We conducted an online survey with a nationally representative sample of 350 kids aged 6 - 16 years old as well as 350 parents of children aged 6 -16 in the US to understand how their activity during the day had been changed by the impact of Covid-19.

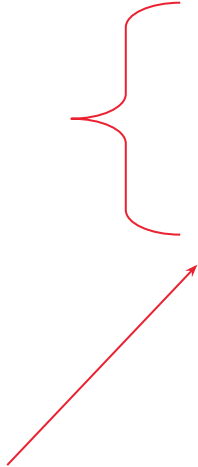
The research took place between 24- 27th April 2020.



# How to read this report

It's worth going through all the day parts to understand the different impacts we're seeing.

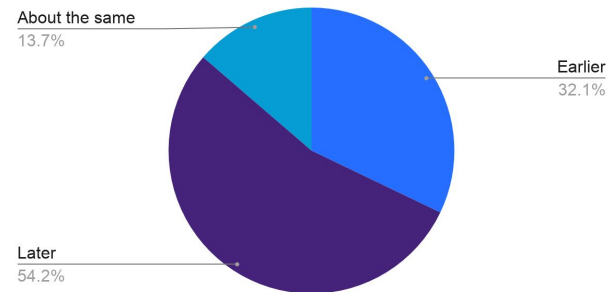
But if you'd prefer to skip to the impacts and trends, we suggest you start here.

- 
1. What's changed: Morning day part
  2. What's changed: Lunch & afternoon day parts
  3. What's changed: Evening day part
  4. Trends which will last
  5. Predictions
  6. Meet Generation C
  7. How should you be reacting?



# How morning routines have changed

Are you now waking up earlier or later than you would on a school day?



What time is your child waking up at the moment?

	Total	6-9yrs	10-12yrs	13-16yrs	Boys	Girls
Before 6am	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%
Between 6-7am	5%	3%	8%	4%	4%	6%
Between 7-8am	14%	15%	17%	12%	12%	16%
Between 8-9am	21%	23%	20%	21%	19%	25%
Between 9-10am	17%	18%	17%	18%	17%	18%
Between 10-11am	16%	17%	11%	19%	16%	17%
Between 11-12am	14%	12%	14%	15%	18%	9%
Between 12-1pm	8%	6%	7%	9%	9%	6%
After 1pm	4%	5%	4%	3%	3%	4%

## Natural wake-times have **shifted the day** to a later start for kids at home

Lockdown means no more commuting, and this is translating into a time-shifted day for many kids in the US. Over half of US kids are starting their day later than pre-lockdown, with parents echoing similar patterns. It's not an insignificant amount of time, either: 1 in 4 parents say their kids are sleeping past 11 on weekdays. This is a pattern that's more likely to affect teens and preteens; younger kids are still early risers.

## Breakfast is slower, more considered, and **the food has changed**

The first meal of the day has changed. Breakfast is a much more cooperative meal than ever before. Families are starting the day together more, without the stresses of commute times. Breakfast seems more like dinner, with more time taken both to prepare and to eat.

There is anecdotal shift away from traditional breakfast goods to home-cooked items. Cereal is redefined as an exciting treat, rather than the daily regular go-to.

I am helping to prepare meals more and help cleaning up

# 65%

Of kids said they are doing breakfast differently in lockdown

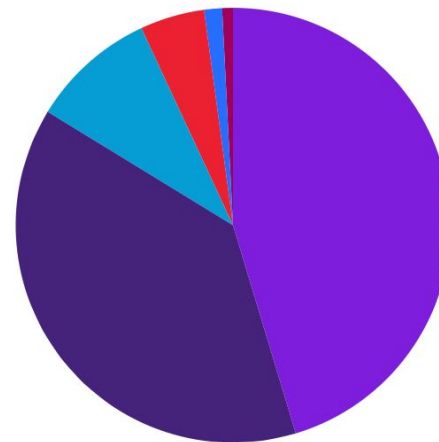
I am eating more breakfasts that are cooked and that take time to make where before I always had just cereal or a breakfast bar

getting up later eating a better more nutritious breakfast

## Without school timetables, kids are **shaping their own learning patterns**

School timetables have been replaced by a day plan which is cooperative between kids and parents. This places some control back into the hands of kids, enabling them to become more self-directed in their learning.

Over half of US parents stated that they give their kids lots of help throughout the day, but it's still not replicating the classroom.



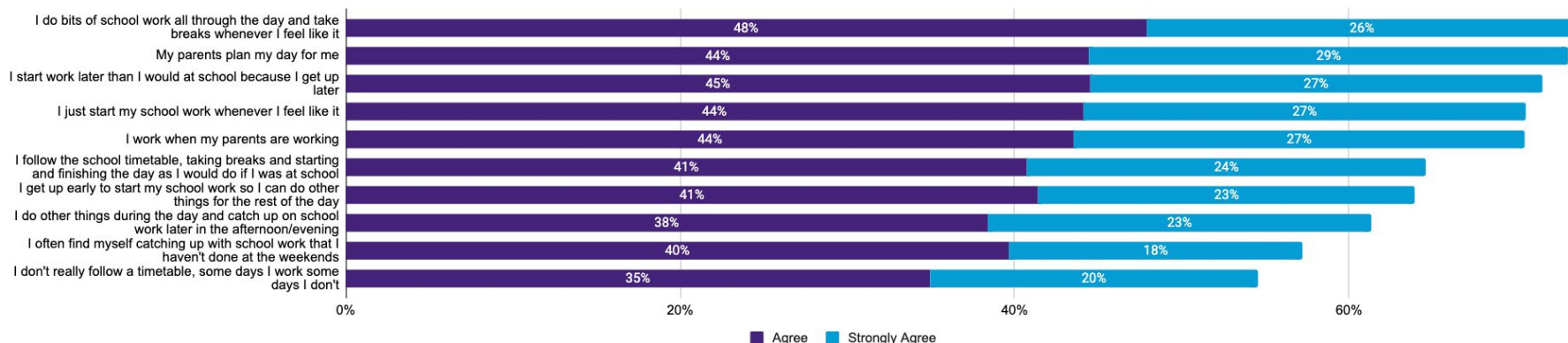
- I give lots of help and support throughout the day
- They usually complete most of it by themselves and I just check in occasionally/ end of the day
- They need proper teaching support all day
- I just leave them to get on with it
- I don't have time to be constantly teaching them so they have to do most of their school work alone
- Other, please specify

# Kids are taking **more breaks** and squeezing in **more activities** and **micro-play patterns**

In pre-quarantine schooling, breaks were limited to recess and lunch times, now the majority of kids are taking breaks when they feel like it, taking time to play, watch TV and talk to friends. This new pattern of breaking frequently takes kids further away from their school habits and into patterns of work and play better suited to their natural rhythms.

The structure of the school day has been called into question before, and lockdown suggests that there may be better ways to balance work and play.

Now you are doing your school work at home, how much do you agree or disagree with these statements about how you decide to plan your day?



Afternoon

## Lunch has been transformed into a fully empowered meal for kids

Pre-Covid, lunch was pre-packed with limited interaction from kids (usually prepared by parents).

Now, almost 40% of kids are in charge of preparing their own lunch every day. Lockdown has ensured that this isn't merely a weekend novelty; it's occurring regularly, driving new levels of domesticity and responsibility for what goes on in the kitchen.

What best describes how you choose what to eat at each mealtime?

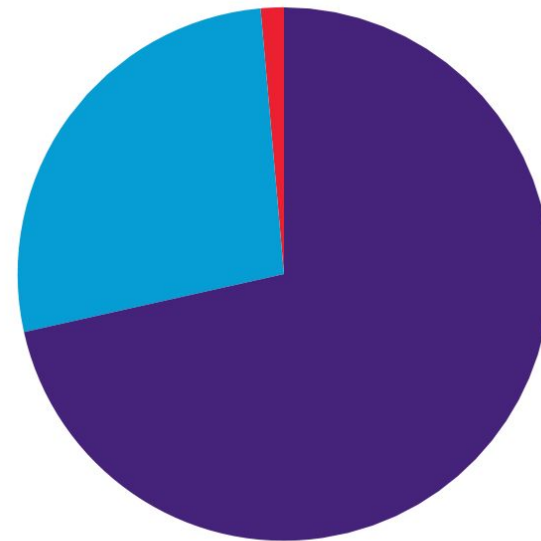
	I just eat what my parents prepare for me	I just help myself to anything I want	I tell my parents what I want them to get for mealtimes and I make it myself	My parents ask me what I want and they make it for me	Other, please specify
Breakfast	51%	24%	10%	14%	2%
Lunch	35%	39%	11%	15%	1%
Dinner	47%	20%	18%	13%	1%

## More time, more flexibility, and access to their own kitchen means **kids are eating more**, too

With no physical access to friends, limited access to the external world and limited structure (not to mention easy access to well-stocked food cupboards), it's not a huge surprise to see that kids are snacking more during this time.

To some degree we feel this eating is lockdown-related. But it also reflects new habits that might be hard to change. Either way, it's leading to increased food shopping requirements for Mom and Dad.

Would you say you are eating more or less than before lockdown?



● More than before    ● About the same as before    ● Less than before

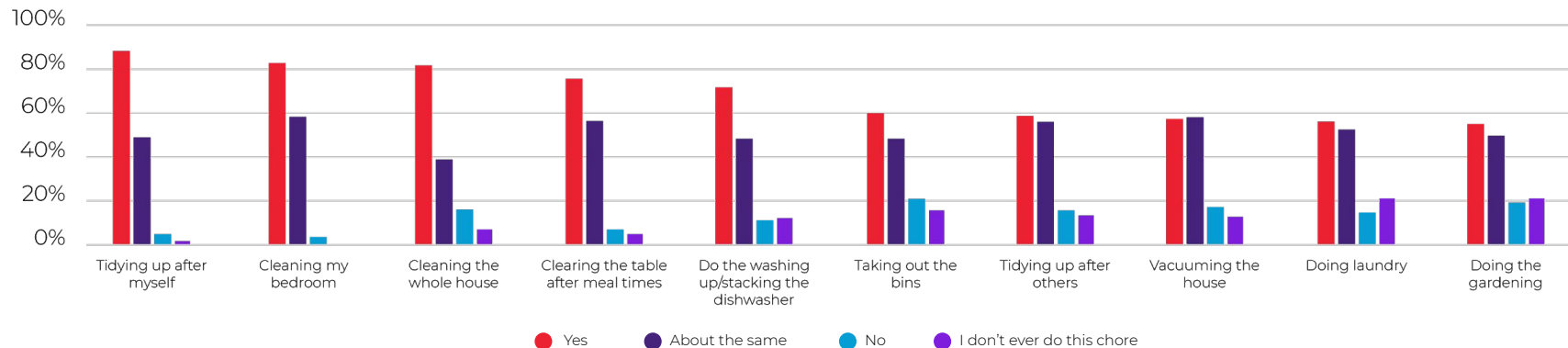


## Kids are **willingly taking on new responsibility** at home

It doesn't matter what the chore is (cleaning the house, cleaning their bedroom, tidying up after themselves, doing the dishes); uniformly, kids are doing more to help out around the house.

In normal times, chores for kids are incentivized by their weekly allowance - but with Covid-19 restrictions, there's the sense of the household as a 'team', and less of a driver for individual reward.

Are you helping to do any of these household chores more or less during the day now we are in lockdown?



## Games are the new playground (but not just for gaming)

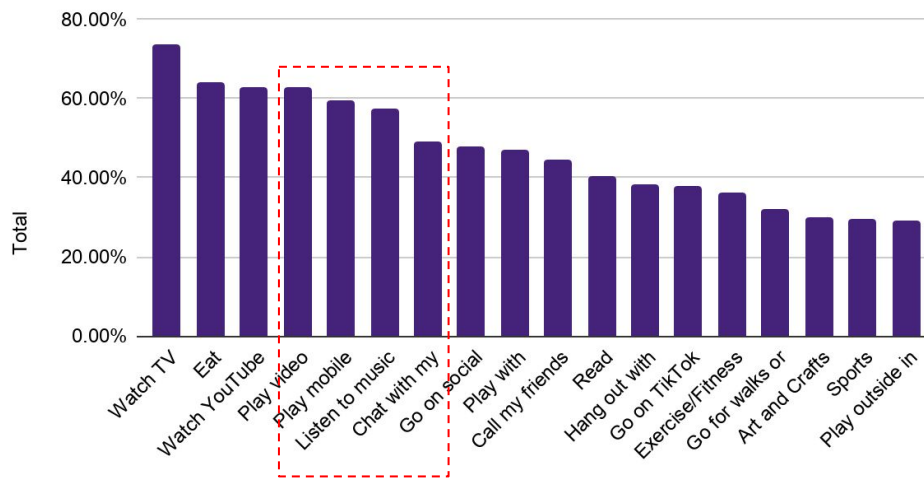
Replacing lessons and packed lunches is one thing; it's quite another to figure out how kids are going to adapt to the absence of conversation in the classroom, and the loss of playground chatter. The combination of a lack of in-person social network combined with the flexibility of homeschooling has led to a large pattern of digital substitutes.

Masked by an increase to overall screen-time, the most interesting trend is kids and teens using games not just for entertainment but also as an environment for social interaction.

“Teens and pre-teens are in Roblox playing games but also just hanging out and doing things together”

**Tami Bhamuik, VP Digital Civility Roblox**

(Source: #Kidtech podcast 5/21/20)

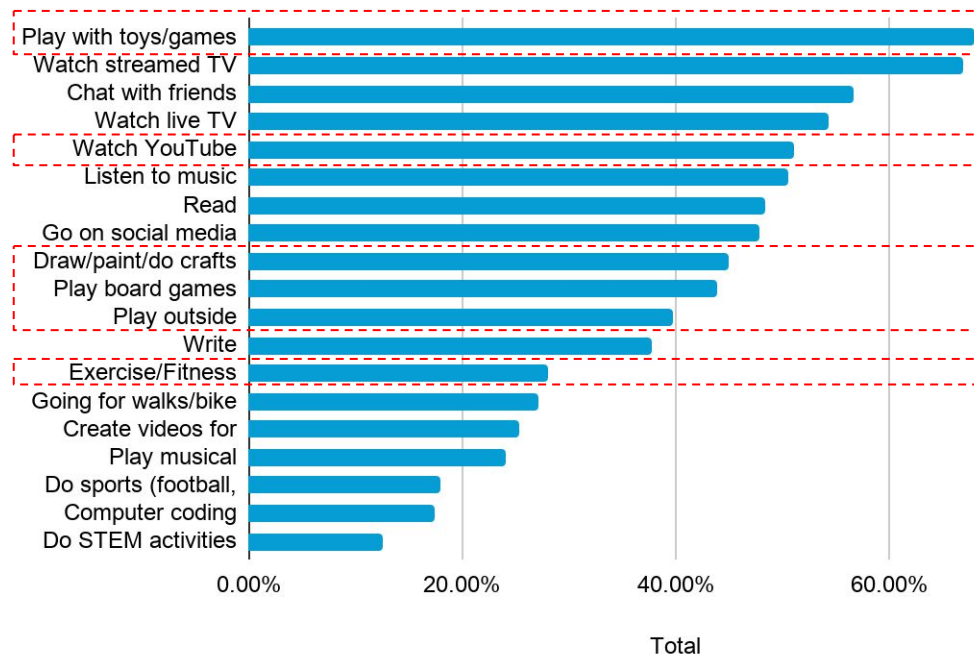


## Play and exercise are an important part of the daily schedule

Whereas before Covid lockdown, exercise would find itself into a kids' routine naturally, whether during after-school activities, or as part of an active lunchtime, now kids and parents are scheduling exercise together.

This has become more of a shared activity, either because kids need their parents with them to go for a walk, or because a shared YouTube exercise routine is a fun addition to the day. Influencers are quickly tapping into this trend with content for kids and parents alike.

Play and exercise opportunities are almost 50% of activities during their breaks



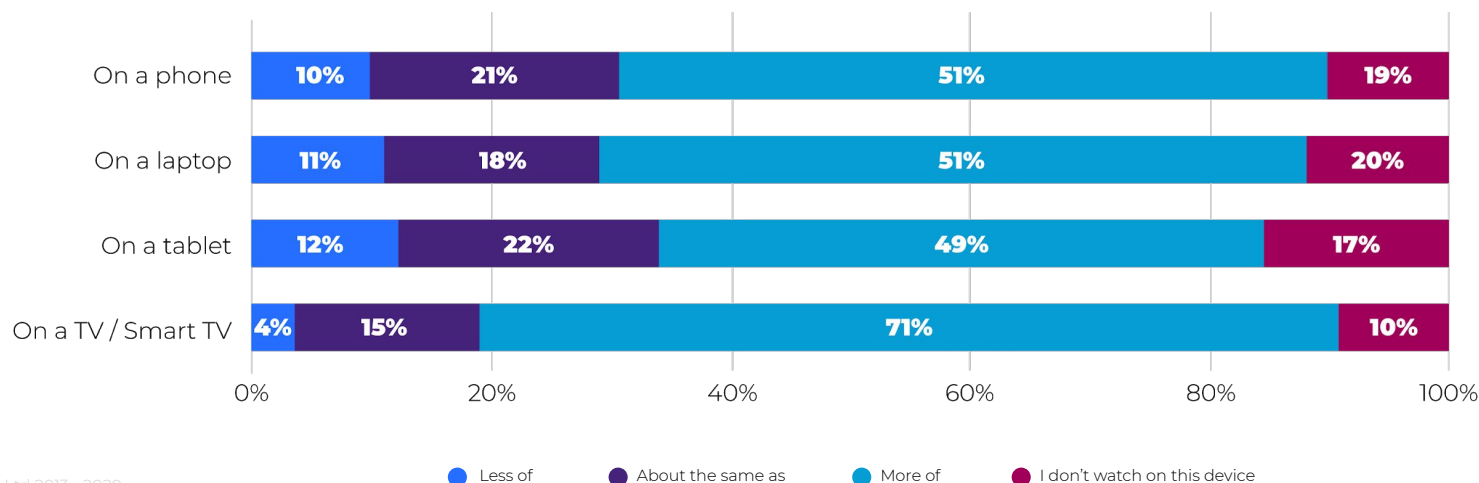
Evening

## The TV has become the **central entertainment hub** once more

Before Covid-19, families had begun to move away from a central viewing experience, with all family members likely having access to their own devices to pick their own entertainment.

Now, with families spending more time together as a unit, the screen seeing the greatest increase in usage is the TV. However, we feel this will be shortlived...

When you watch a movie or TV series during lockdown, are you watching it more or less on the following screens:



## Meals have **become a tradition** (again)

Daily meal-times have begun to take on the kind of significance reserved for special occasions. The entire family is now more involved in preparation, and kids are more readily cleaning up afterwards.

Post-lockdown, there will be plenty of bad memories - but this new way of doing dinner won't be one of them. Making room for both bonding and discovery, the slowed-down mealtime is likely to be a new tradition that stays.

**PARENT:** "Eating together and more relaxed because we don't have to start getting ready for morning"

# 52%

Of kids said their dinner experience is different during lockdown

"We all sit together and help cook and eat more varieties"

"Eating with everyone and don't have to hurry up"

**PARENT:** "Preparing healthier meals allowing the kids to get involved and eating as a family. It just worked out better that way and it's fun."

# 40%

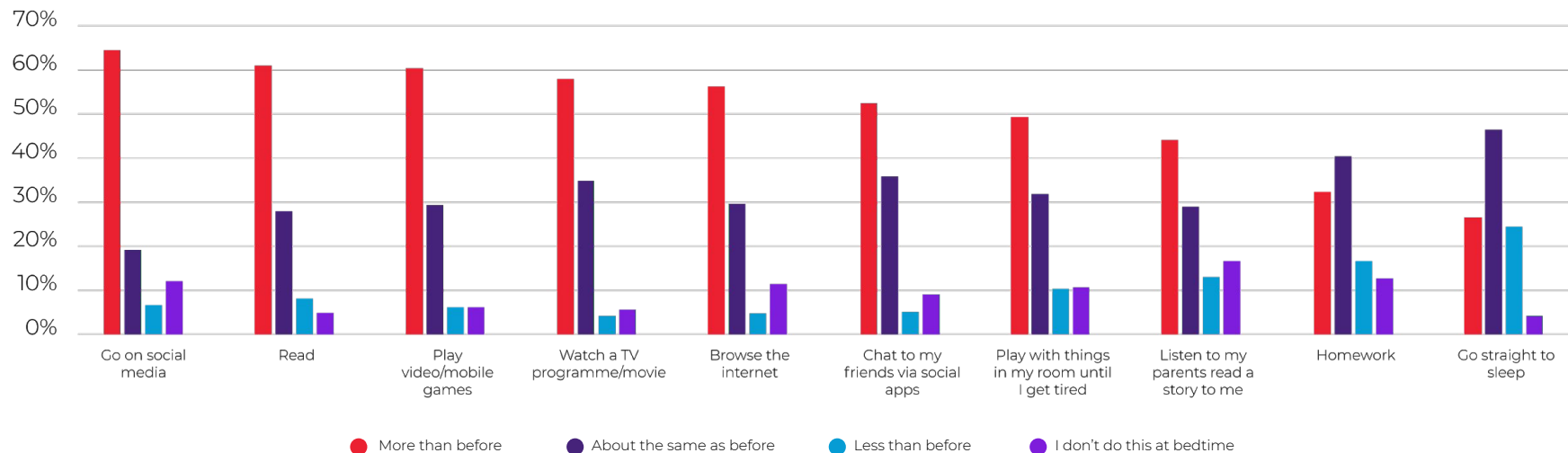
Of parents said they are doing dinner differently in lockdown

"We eat later - my father still goes out to work so we wait until 7 or 7:30 to eat dinner. It doesn't matter as I have time to do my homework now before dinner"

## Kids are spending **more time on their screens** before bed

It's common wisdom that too much time spent on screens before bed affects the quality of sleep - but in periods of lockdown, the rules relax. Kids are filling the hours before bedtime by spending time with their devices on a broad range of activities.

What do you do more or less of now we are in lockdown when you go to your room to bed?



Covid trends which will  
remain for the long term



## Kids have more responsibility for the home environment

Kids are being treated with more maturity and independence by parents.

Kids have become more helpful: their involvement is not just limited to food preparation but all household chores. Unsurprisingly, parents are hopeful that these habits remain post lockdown - but kids are expressing an interest in this too.

A new generation of kids are now learning life skills. This applies to hobbies (like sewing, crafting and knitting) as well as chores.

## The family meal has become more important

Mealtimes are a focal point for lockdown life. Kids and parents alike have realised that spending more time over the preparation and consumption of meals makes for powerful family bonding moments.

More than this, kids are taking a renewed interest in the things they eat, and the time it takes to prepare meals.

Brands should take advantage of this shift by making family mealtimes both an event and a source of entertainment. This isn't just about nutrition - it's about bonding.

## A bias to ecommerce and delivery

The necessary switch to e-commerce is empowering kids to make decisions for the household.

Their influence is greater from over the shoulder than it is in a physical store, and in many cases they're responsible for making the shopping choices from vendors such as Amazon.

For many kids, Covid lockdown is the first time they will have seen the person delivering the products they had ordered. They might not fully understand it, but they're developing brand loyalties. At this time, the brand opportunity for logistics companies is wide open.

## More involvement in their learning schedule

As school timetables have been replaced by a combination of distance learning, home schooling and self-directed working, we feel this will have a lasting impact on the older quadrant in particular.

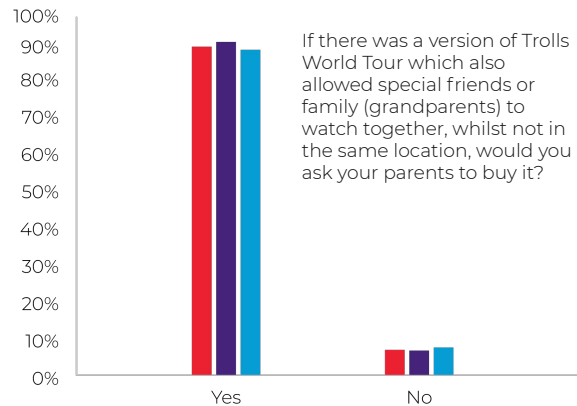
Independence in education for the child has always been a controversial topic. Although it is clear that education needs structure, engagement, and professionals, the global school shutdown has triggered the biggest experiment we've seen in injecting some student independence into this equation.

We feel that self-directed learning will continue as a conversation, fueled by the traction of edtech startups who have exploded in the last few months.

## Shared content experiences

Social sharing has been around for decades in various forms. Covid's restrictions on physical mobility have accelerated the acceptance and active search for co-consumption experiences.

Kids want ways to consume content experiences together, either as a family or with their friends (or both). Co-op interaction has been a function of gaming for decades. Games like Fortnite are now allowing huge groups of people to experience media (e.g. movie trailers, concerts) together. This is just the beginning of the digital co-consumption trend.



Although short in duration,  
Covid-19's impact will shape a  
generation of kids.

**Meet Generation C.**

## Generation C are a cohort (6-16) defined by both **traditional** and **progressive** signals

- **Hygiene:** an awareness of germs and virus management will permeate every aspect of their lives
- **Family-oriented:** forced into a close proximity scenario with family, this time will become a common life-long memory for all of Generation C
- **Ecommerce (and delivery) by default:** the cohort whose first shopping experiences are ecommerce by necessity
- **Responsibility:** more involvement with household chores, trusted by parents, cemented by the reality of Covid-19
- **Metaversification:** increasingly comfortable socializing within game environments



**5 ways** every brand  
should be connecting  
with **Generation C**

Generation C has become 'more equal' in the home. They're more responsible and more influential.  
**Engage with them on those terms.**

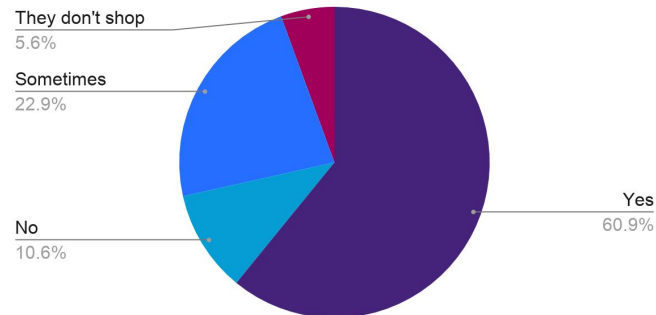
Kids' influence is at an all-time high. Generation C has taken ownership of the home purchase decisions that affect their world. Engage kids as co-equal decision makers.

Generation C is increasingly empowered in areas that have historically been controlled by parents (e.g. online grocery shopping), while their exposure to IRL marketing - in the grocery aisle, OOH etc - has waned.

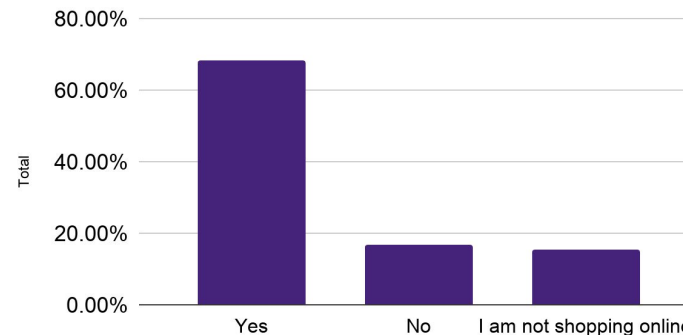
Brands need to shift towards increased digital engagement to capture mindshare with the kid consumer before a parent clicks-to-buy. We see significantly increased influence across the following:

- Online grocery shopping
- Meal planning
- Communications tools across the family
- Family entertainment activities (games, content)
- Smart/Connected TV navigation and recommendations

Do you help pick or chose what groceries or food your parents buy online during lockdown?



If you are shopping online for groceries, do you involve your child in the decisions you make about what to buy?



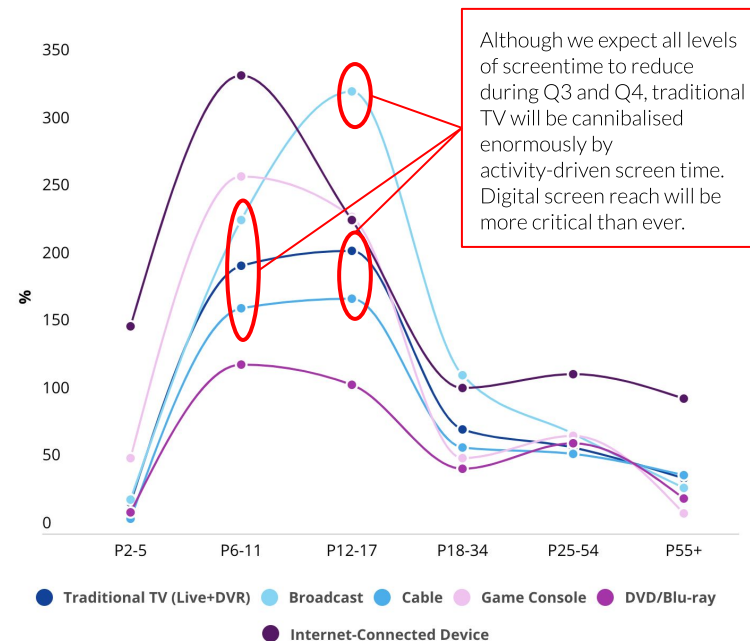
Return to school will create more screen fragmentation than ever. **Don't rely on current screen trends for your Q3/4 activity.**

Generation C's digital behaviors will continue to evolve at speed. Don't rely on current screen trends for future activity.

Although kids linear TV has seen a small jump, this will likely see a crash as kids return to school (possibly precipitating an even larger fall than might have happened without Covid).

Through Q3 and Q4, we'll continue to see an evolution of how schools, parents, and kids approach this changed world, but one thing is certain: increased physical mobility will lead to more screen fragmentation than ever.

Deep, insights-led planning and omni-platform strategy will be essential to driving an effective digital media mix.



Source: Nielsen Local TV View, LPM Market Weighted Average, Weekday Daytime (MF 9:00AM-4:00PM), Ratings Difference (Percent) by Demographic and Source, Comparing Week of 3/16/20-4/12/20 vs. Week of 3/18/19-4/14/19.

## Experience-sharing is now essential: focus on enabling **co-consuming experiences** for kids and family

Isolation hasn't been a lonely time for the family unit; instead, it has enabled shared experiences that would never have been possible under other circumstances. At the same time, shelter in place (and social distancing) has all but eliminated in-person experiences with friends

Overwhelmingly, families are making decisions and taking part in activities together - and kids and parents alike love this shift. The family unit is now more important than ever.

Whether for family or friends, Generation C now wants co-consumed experiences to create a connection.

Brands need to think beyond awareness to create an co-consumed engagement - be it a Watch Party, Back-to-School fashion show, Physical Education Challenge. Make your products experiences.

26. Would you buy a co-viewing experience? By this we mean one where you could watch the same movie/TV show at the same time as friends/family remotely and interact in real time?

	Total	6-9yrs	10-12yrs	13-16yrs	Boys	Girls
Yes	69%	72%	70%	66%	74%	62%
No	31%	28%	30%	34%	26%	38%



Back-to-school will be a huge party. **Get involved** and help celebrate with kids, families, parents and teachers.

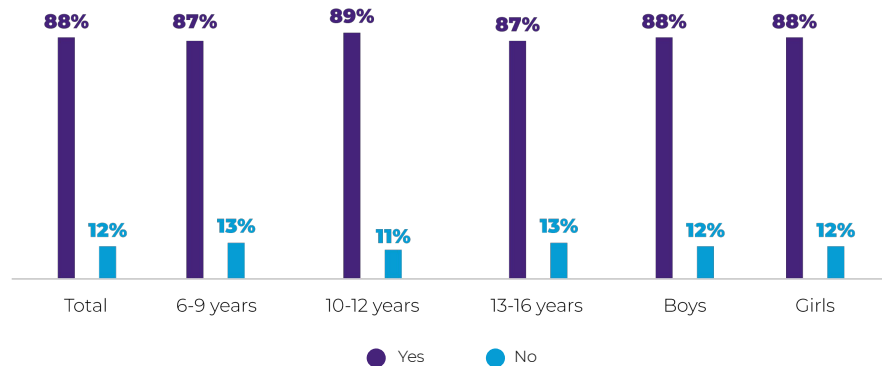
Brands should be treating this back-to-school season as a massive celebration for kids (and parents!). With families 'unpacking', friends reacquainting and a general return to normality, all brands should get involved to help celebrate with kids, families, parents, and teachers.

Generation C has a huge amount of pent-up enthusiasm to return to school, and will be treating it like a party event. Parents, teachers, families and kids will want to create an extra special moment for kids during Back-to-School.

Brands have a unique opportunity to join in the revelry, and can pursue various paths:

- Celebrating cherished friendship with physical gifting
- Help families prepare their digital toolkits for their new reality
- Make kids feel special with new outfits and skills they learned while in quarantine
- School celebrations as the community reunites

Are you looking forward to going back to school?



Because I want to see my friends and my teacher

Being with my friends learning together. My after school activities. I don't get to graduate with my class. Have our locker clean out and getting our plans made for the summer.

I miss your friends and teachers. I miss playing outside for recess. I miss playing my violin. I miss gym. I miss art and music.

I miss being in classes with my teachers and friends. I miss art class, chorus, and band. I think I learn better in a classroom with other people.

## Become **the positive brand memory** that Generation C associates with this unique family time

For many families, this period of shelter-in-place will be the longest proximity they spend together in their lives. It will become a defining memory for many, it will define a generation, it will be the subject of holiday conversations and mealtime reminiscing for years to come.

This is a unique opportunity to reach kids and become part of those family stories. Become a positive, powerful brand memory that Generation C associates with this unique family event.

Will you be involved? What role will your brand have? This is a unique opportunity to reach kids and become part of those family stories. **Step one is making a deliberate decision to do so.**

### How does a brand relate during Covid-19?

#### Provide value ✓

Parents need you to engage with content and value. They are trying to balance the education and entertainment of their children, not to mention finding the time to work.

#### Provide relief 🐱

It's a serious, scary, anxious time. Kids need to be reassured by your messaging. Be calm, be funny, be mindful.

#### Provide trust 👍

Be one less thing for parents to worry about. Keep your content safe and compliant. Stay dependable.

# A few **predictions**

**1**

## Families will plan for a second lockdown event

The likelihood of a second wave of infections appears to be quite high in most countries, beginning in November. We feel that parents and families will be well-prepared for this period and will begin planning over the summer. This almost certainly points to an incredibly digitally-driven holiday season.

**2**

## “Normally-scheduled” school will be hard for kids

While the overwhelming majority of kids actively miss school, and are looking forward to returning, a return to normal timetables and activities won't be straightforward.

Self-directed learning will be impacted by children's ability and attitudes, as well as the tools available to them. Education is likely to be an area of accelerated change, both in the classroom and at home.

**3**

## Cooking becomes a huge new kids content creator scene

Kids become more of a factor in online grocery shopping.

Kids will have an increased role in both meal choice and shopping, meaning that they must be considered when planning advertising investment.

This lockdown increase in cooking and helping with meal preparation will continue, meaning that kids influence will remain high.

**4**

## Parents will spend more time at home

At the moment, many parents are working from home as a response to lockdown protocols. In the future, when these restrictions are lifted, they will have a choice to make.

It's likely that many parents will make the choice to remain working from home, as this period has afforded them more time to spend with their children.

**5**

## A national conversation about kids' sleep is triggered

Our data clearly shows that many kids, particularly in older age brackets, are sleeping later and working later during this time.

It's been recognized for years that kids and teens need more sleep, and that sleep cycles often change during this time. Schools will begin to recognize that.

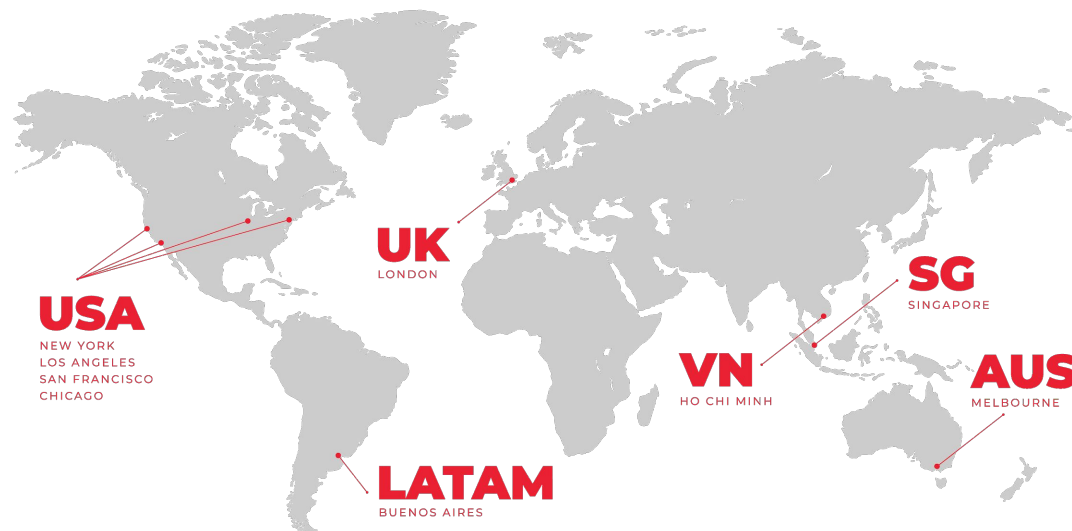
## How can we help?

SuperAwesome powers kid-safe digital engagement for hundreds of companies around the world. Every month our kidtech enables over 12 billion transactions (kid-safe advertising, community and parental consent) across thousands of kids/family/educational apps and digital services.

We are the largest kidtech team in the world dedicated to building a safer internet for the next generation.

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## Our Global Offices



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