

# Survey of Media Use by Children and Parents II

## Summary

The effect media is having on children's lives

How are parents arranging  
their children's media use environment?

This study compares data from  
4 years ago

2013  
↔ 2017

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2017, October

## About this survey

The range of available new media devices has widened considerably in recent years and some are becoming necessities in daily lives. Nowadays, what kinds of media devices are part of children's lives and to what extent? What do parents think about media use by children and how do they incorporate them into daily lives?

Benesse Educational Research and Development Institute conducted two questionnaire surveys targeted at parents with children aged between 6 months and 6 years old (preschool) to bring to light the current situation of media use and parents' awareness. The change over the years can be observed by comparing the first (2013) and the second (2017) surveys. By revealing the current situation of children's media use and parents' awareness and involvement with children through this survey, we hope to provide some tips for parents and children on how to utilise media better. We also wish to think about a sound environment for children to grow and ways of supporting childrearing.



## Survey overview

**Theme:** The current situation of media use by parents and children, the parents' awareness regarding children's media use and their involvement, and how parents themselves interact with media.

**Method:** First survey: Mail (Self-administered questionnaires were distributed and collected by mail)  
Second survey: Internet

**Period:** First survey: March, 2013  
Second survey: March, 2017

**Subjects:** First survey: 3,234 mothers with firstborn children aged 6 months to 6 years living in Tokyo metropolitan area (Tokyo, Kanagawa, Chiba, and Saitama). (Mailed to 10,010; effective response rate: 32.3%)  
Second survey: 3,400 mothers with firstborn children aged 6 months to 6 years living in the Tokyo metropolitan area (Tokyo, Kanagawa, Chiba, and Saitama).

**Survey items:** Media household ownership; frequency of weekly media use by child; amount of time and time of day of daily media use; status of application or software use; family rules on media use; parents' awareness of media use or application and software; parents' media use; parenting awareness, etc.

### Number of samples:

	6-12 month-olds	1 year-olds	2 year-olds	3 year-olds	4 year-olds	5 year-olds	6 year-olds	Total
First survey (2013)	569	521	436	448	438	421	401	3,234
Second survey (2017)	388	515	515	515	515	515	437	3,400

\*N.B.

- The percentages in this report have been calculated with respondents applicable to the questions within the valid responses as the parameter and have been rounded off to the first decimal place. As a result, the sum of numbers of each section may not exactly match the number of totals.

- The first and second surveys were conducted differently; therefore, the N/A value in 2013 has been excluded when showing the comparison by years (except for the basic attribute).

## Highlights of survey results

The survey results were summarised focusing on the comparison with the first survey (2013) and results to the newly added questionnaire items.



# 2013 ↔ 2017

Main events in 2013

Information and communications

Smartphone penetration rate in the country **54.7%**<sup>\*4</sup>

The percentage of internet users **82.8%**<sup>\*5</sup>

Financial outlay for internet use (monthly average per household) **¥5,801**<sup>\*6</sup>

Registered users of LINE exceed one hundred million

Childrearing/Education

Junior high school students born in the 21st century have emerged

Takeo city in Saga Prefecture decided to distribute tablet devices to all elementary and junior high school students (FY2014-)

"JMOOC" launched to aim for free online university courses

Main events in 2017

Information and communications

Smartphone penetration rate in the country **69.7%**<sup>\*4</sup>

The percentage of internet users **83.5%**<sup>\*5</sup>

Financial outlay for internet use (monthly average per household) **¥9,838**<sup>\*6</sup>

Social media providers introduced live video broadcasting services

Childrearing/Education

Revised Child Care and Family Care Leave Law enforced

Target to accomplish no children on the waiting list for daycare enrolment postponed to the end of FY 2020

POINT 1

### In comparison to 4 years ago, children now have more opportunities to come into contact with smartphones

Percentage of smartphone ownership of mothers with children aged between 6 months and 6 years old

60.5% ↔ 92.4% →p.4

Percentage of children aged between 6 months and 6 years old who come into contact with smartphones "almost every day" <sup>\*1</sup>

11.6% ↔ 21.2% →p.5

Percentage of mothers who let children use smartphones

When busy with housework	When s/he is busy	
7.7% ↔ 15.2%	17.0% ↔ 23.5%	→p.9

What they let them do using mobile phones and smartphones<sup>\*2</sup> (2017)

Show pictures **84.4%** Show videos taken by mother or children **76.2%** →p.7

POINT 2

### Concerned about children's excessive use of media, mothers let children use media with certain rules and considerations

Mothers who have "a feeling of reluctance" to let children see (use) smartphones<sup>\*3</sup>

73.6% ↔ 76.4% →p.10

Opinions on showing TV programs, internet videos/images, apps and software (2017)

Pros	1. Can enjoy singing and dancing	2. Can enrich their knowledge	
Cons	1. Damage to eyesight and health	2. Addiction	→p.10

Main considerations when mothers let children use smartphones (Top 4 items taken from free comment responses, 2017)

"Don't let them use for long time" "Create an environment unable to use it" "Use together with mother" "Limit functions the child can use" →p.11

The percentage of mothers who talk with their children about the content of media (2017)

TV program: 74.3% DVD, Blu-ray: 68.5% smartphones, Tablet devices: 49.2% →p.9

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2013 ↔ 2017

<sup>\*1</sup> Only answered by those with a family member owning smartphones. 2013 excludes NA  
<sup>\*2</sup> The total of "Frequently" and "Sometimes"  
<sup>\*3</sup> The total of "Very reluctant" and "Rather reluctant"  
<sup>\*4</sup> The Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications "Consumer Confidence Survey" March 2014, March 2017  
<sup>\*5</sup> The Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications "Communication Usage Trend Survey" conducted in January - March 2014 and November - December 2016  
<sup>\*6</sup> The Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications "Family Income and Expenditure Survey" Two-or-more-person Households, average in 2013, average in April - June 2017