

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

- 2 About this survey/Survey overview
- 3 Highlights of survey results
- 4 **1** Current Situation of Media Use by Children
- 7 **2** Parental Involvement
- 13 **Focus** How do children and mothers use smartphones?
- 14 From a specialist's viewpoint/Looking back at the survey
- 15 Basic attributes

Benesse Educational Research and Development Institute

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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

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" *1

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*2 (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*3

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

3

Survey of Media Use by Children and Parents II
2013 ↔ 2017

Main events in
2013

Information and
communications

Smartphone penetration
rate in the country
54.7%*4

The percentage of
internet users
82.8%*5

Financial outlay for
internet use
(monthly average per
household)
¥5,801*6

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%*4

The percentage of
internet users
83.5%*5

Financial outlay for
internet use
(monthly average per
household)
¥9,838*6

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

*1 Only answered by those with a family member owning smartphones. 2013 excludes NA
*2 The total of "Frequently" and "Sometimes"
*3 The total of "Very reluctant" and "Rather reluctant"
*4 The Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications "Consumer Confidence Survey" March 2014, March 2017
*5 The Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications "Communication Usage Trend Survey" conducted in January - March 2014 and November - December 2016
*6 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

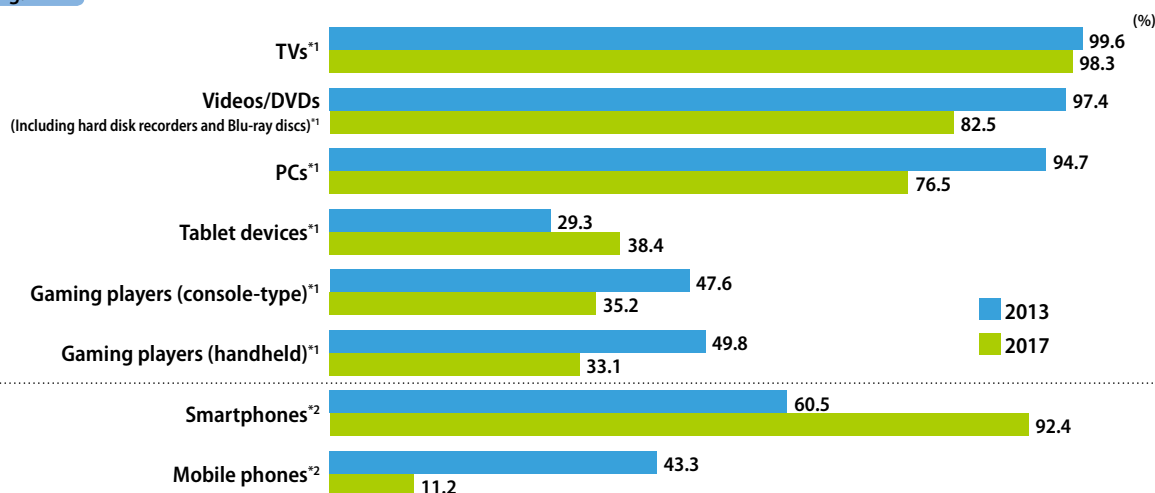
Current Situation of Media Use by Children

Media ownership rate of households

Mothers' smartphone ownership rate exceeds 90%, with an increase of around 30 percentage points compared to 4 years ago.

Q. Do you own the following in your household? secular comparison

Fig. 1-1



* Multiple answers

*1 The percentage of households with a family member owning the media

*2 The percentage of households where the mother uses the media

By mothers' age group

2017

Table 1-1

	29 years old and under	30-34 years old	35-39 years old	40 years old and above
TVs ^{*1}	98.1	98.7	98.3	97.4
Videos/DVDs (Including hard disk recorders and Blu-ray discs) ^{*1}	78.4	83.0	83.1	85.5
PCs ^{*1}	61.8	75.9	82.8	86.1
Tablet devices ^{*1}	34.2	37.2	40.5	43.4
Gaming players (console-type) ^{*1}	36.1	37.2	35.6	28.1
Gaming players (handheld) ^{*1}	34.8	33.4	33.9	28.3
Smartphones ^{*2}	95.6	93.5	90.9	88.3
Mobile phones ^{*2}	6.6	9.2	14.3	16.8

* Multiple answers

*1 The percentage of households with a family member owning the media

*2 The percentage of households where the mother uses the media

Looking at digital media in households with children, "TVs," "Videos/DVDs," "PCs," and "Smartphones" are present in the majority of households (Fig. 1-1). In particular, "Smartphones" has increased from 60.5% to 92.4% compared to 4 years ago, becoming common for many households. On the other hand, ownerships of media devices other than "Smartphones" and "Tablet devices" have decreased.

Ownerships of "Smartphones" and "Gaming players (console-type/handheld)" are higher among younger mothers and that of "Videos/DVDs," "PCs," and "Tablet devices" are higher among older mothers (Table 1-1).

Current Situation of Media Use by Children

Frequency of weekly media use by child

Frequency of coming into contact with smartphones has greatly increased compared to 4 years ago; more than 20% come into contact “almost every day.”

Q. How frequently does your child watch or use the following in your household per week? secular comparison

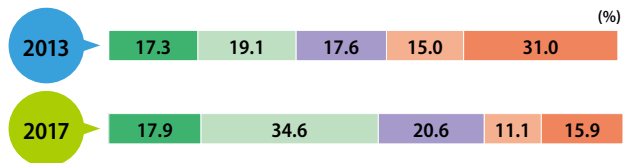
Fig. 1-2

■ Not at all (does not use)
 ■ Very rarely
 ■ 1 or 2 days per week
 ■ 3 or 4 days per week
 ■ Almost every day

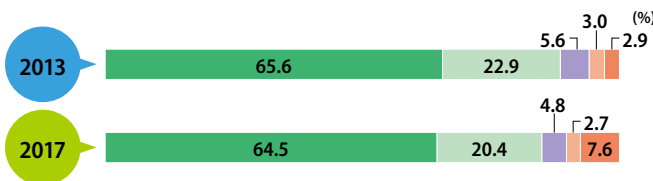
TV programs (excluding recorded programs)



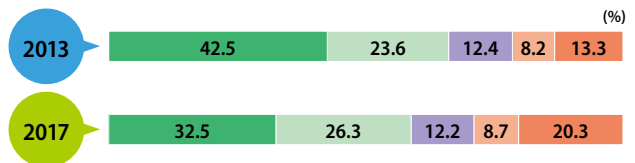
Videos/DVDs



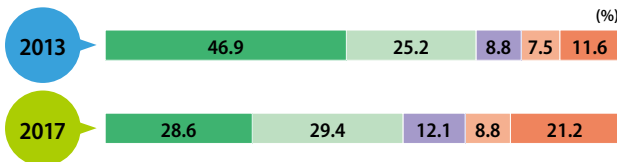
PCs



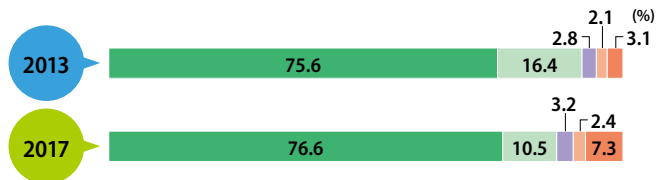
Tablet devices



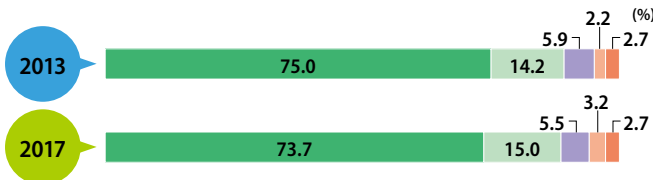
Smartphones



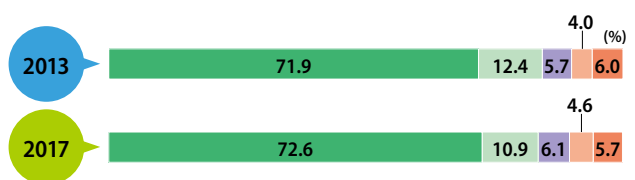
Mobile phones



Gaming players (console-type)



Gaming players (handheld)



* Only answered by those with a family owning the media
 * N/A responses excluded for 2013.

“TV programs (excluding recorded programs)” marked the highest frequency and 80.1% watch them “Almost every day.” While also recording a high frequency (“almost every day”: 15.9%), “Videos/DVDs” decreased compared to 4 years ago. On the other hand, the frequency of use for “Tablet devices” and “Smartphones” increased. In particular, smartphone ownership in households has also increased (Fig. 1-1), indicating that they have rapidly become familiar items in children’s lives over the past 4 years.

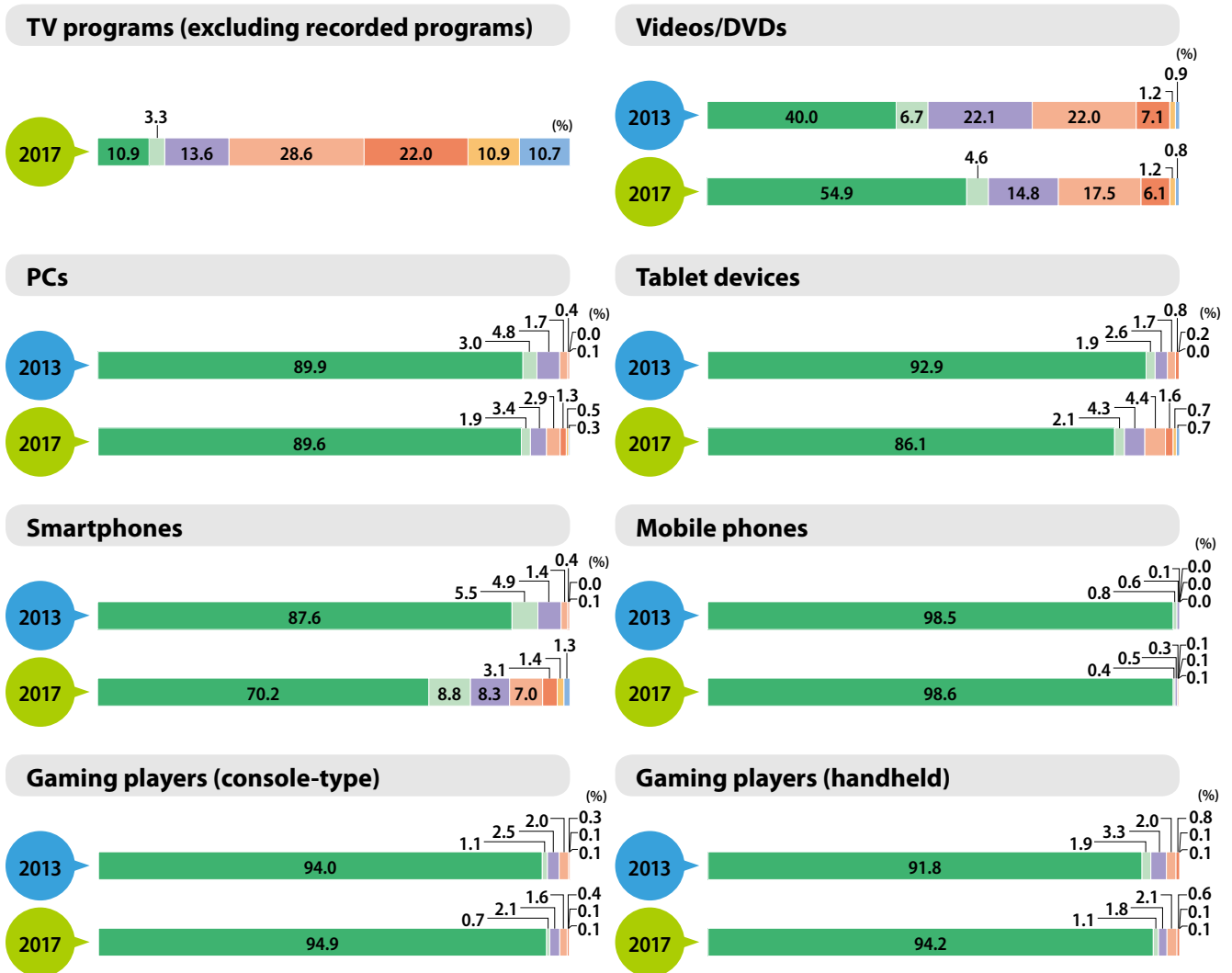
Current Situation of Media Use by Children

Daily time-length of media use

Over the past 4 years, the daily time-length of use for “Videos/DVDs” has decreased and that of “Tablet devices” and “Smartphones” have increased.

Q. How long does your child watch and use the following at your household per weekday? secular comparison

Fig. 1-3 ■ Less than 15 minutes ■ about 15 minutes ■ about 30 minutes ■ about 1 hour ■ about 2 hours ■ about 3 hours ■ More than 4 hours



* “Less than 15 minutes” includes cases where the device is “not owned in the household” or “not used”
 * N/A responses excluded for 2013.

For viewing time of “TV programs (excluding recorded programs),” 27.8% selected less than “about 30 minutes,” 28.6% selected “about 1 hour,” and 43.6% selected more than “about 2 hours.” In both the frequency per week (Fig. 1-2) and the time-length per day, it marks the longest time of exposure among the media devices covered in the survey. TV is the most familiar media for children, the same as it was 4 years ago.

Looking at changes over the years in other media devices, “Videos/DVDs” have decreased, “Tablet devices” and “Smartphones” have increased, and “PCs” have not changed much. These show the same trend as the frequency of use per week (Fig. 1-2).

Parental Involvement

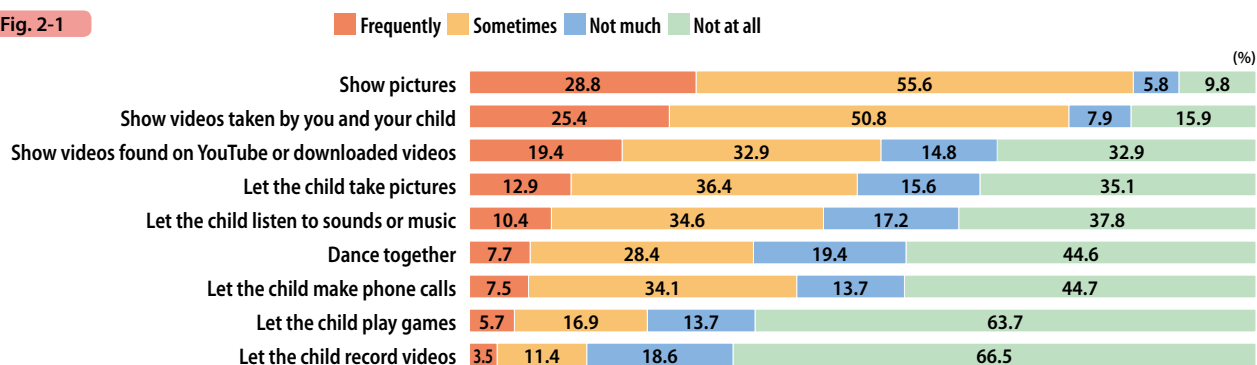
What they let them do with mobile phones, smartphones, tablet devices, and PCs

The percentage of showing pictures and videos is high, with 84.4%* of mothers saying they “Show pictures.”

* The total of “Frequently” and “Sometimes”

Q. Do you let your child do the following using mobile phones/smartphones, tablet devices, and PCs? 2017

Fig. 2-1

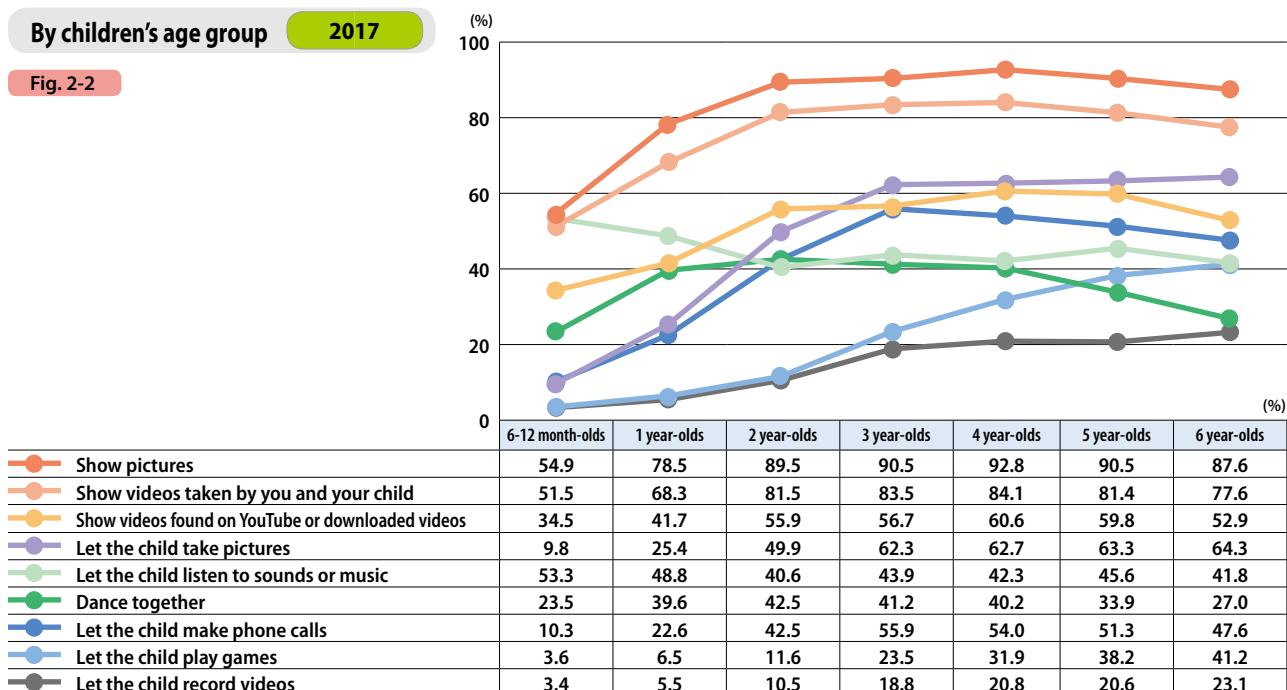


* Responses include cases where the device is “not owned in the household” or “not used” (Answered by all)

By children’s age group

2017

Fig. 2-2



* Responses include cases where the device is “not owned in the household” or “not used” (Answered by all)

* Percentage is the sum of “frequently” and “sometimes.”

What do they let children do with mobile phones/smartphones, tablet devices, and PCs? In descending order, they are “Show pictures” (The total of “Frequently” and “Sometimes” is 84.4%), “Show videos taken by you and your child” (Total of “Frequently” and “Sometimes” 76.2%), and “Show videos found on YouTube or downloaded videos” (Total of “Frequently” and “Sometimes” 52.3%). Items which increase along with children’s age are “Let the child take pictures” (1 year-olds 25.4%, 6 year-olds 64.3%), “Let the child play games” (1 year-olds 6.5%, 6 year-olds 41.2%), and so on; the older the children, the higher the percentage of children’s use.

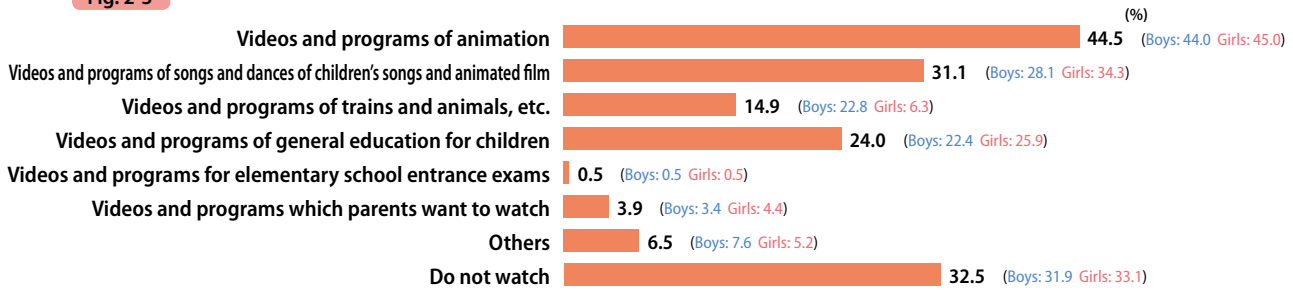
Parental Involvement

Content watched on video apps and software

“Videos and programs of animation” are watched regardless of gender and age. The percentage of those who “Do not watch” video apps and software is around 30% with the highest in 6-12 month-olds with 51.0% and the lowest in 4 year-olds with 23.9%.

Q. What kind of contents does your child watch on video apps and software? 2017

Fig. 2-3



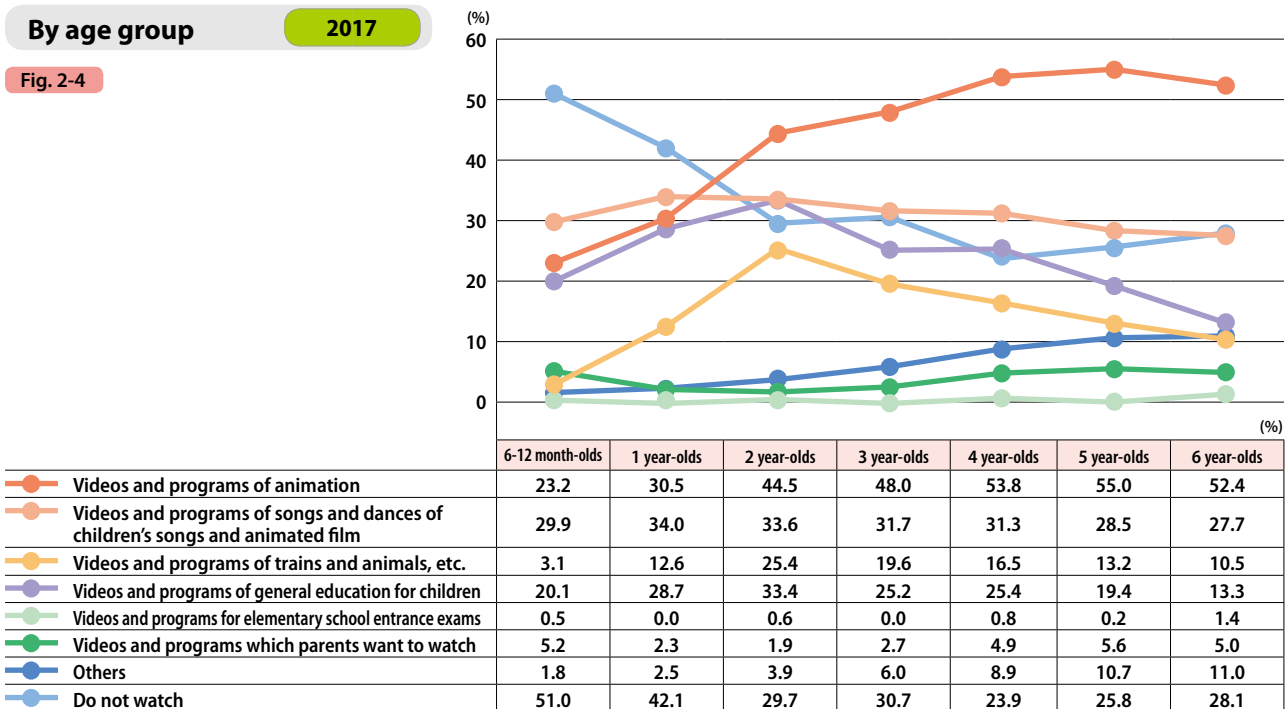
* Responses include cases where the device is “not owned in the household” or “not used” (Answered by all)

* Multiple answers

By age group

2017

Fig. 2-4



* Responses include cases where the device is “not owned in the household” or “not used” (Answered by all)

* Multiple answers

The most watched content on video apps and software is “Videos and programs of animation” with 44.5% followed by “Videos and programs of songs and dances of children’s songs and animation” with 31.1% and “Videos and programs of general education for children” with 24.0%. By gender, “Videos and programs of songs and dances of children’s songs and animation” is the highest for girls (boys 28.1%, girls 34.3%) and “Videos and programs of trains and animals etc.” is the highest for boys (boys 22.8%, girls 6.3%). By age, “Do not watch” is the highest in 6-12 month-olds and 1 year-olds (6-12 month-olds 51.0%, 1 year-olds 42.1%) and “Videos and programs of animation” is the highest in 2 to 6 year-olds dominating 40% to 50%.

Parental Involvement

Situations of media use

The most common situation of media use is “TV programs” “When busy with housework” which is 64.0%.

Q. Does your child use digital media devices in the following situations? secular comparison

Table 2-1

2013
2017
(%)

■ Items with a disparity larger than 5 points between 2013 and 2017

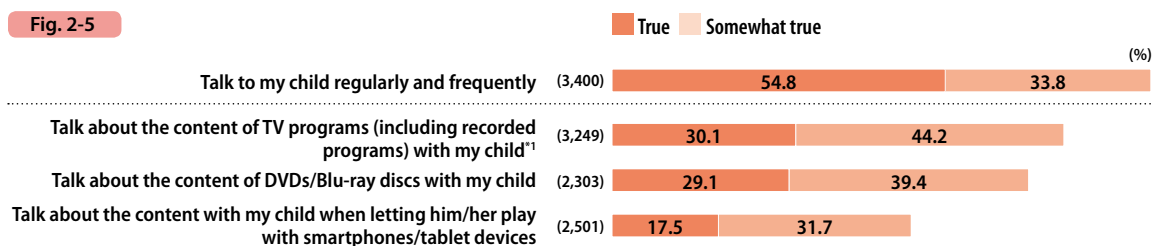
Situation	Device	2013 (%)	2017 (%)
When busy with housework	TV programs (includes recorded programs)	72.2	64.0
	Videos/DVDs	46.1	35.8
	Smartphones	7.7	15.2
	Tablet devices	16.8	23.9
When s/he is fussy	TV programs (includes recorded programs)	26.9	27.5
	Videos/DVDs	21.8	17.5
	Smartphones	17.0	23.5
	Tablet devices	15.1	16.7
When your child wants to use it	TV programs (includes recorded programs)	32.3	26.1
	Videos/DVDs	30.8	19.6
	Smartphones	28.3	29.7
	Tablet devices	28.5	28.3
While travelling in a car or on the train	TV programs (includes recorded programs)	7.3	5.5
	Videos/DVDs	17.3	13.5
	Smartphones	21.2	21.6
	Tablet devices	10.9	10.0
While waiting when you are out	TV programs (includes recorded programs)	1.0	0.9
	Videos/DVDs	1.8	1.1
	Smartphones	30.5	33.7
	Tablet devices	13.4	10.1

* Multiple answers

* Only answered when the household owns the device

Q. How do you approach childrearing? 2017

Fig. 2-5



* The parameter of responses for items regarding media are those whose children use each form of media “Almost every day,” “3-4 days per week,” “1-2 days per week,” and “Very rarely” within a week.

*1 The parameter of responses consists of those who use either “TV programs excluding recorded programs” or “Recorded TV programs,” “Almost every day,” “3-4 days per week,” “1-2 days per week,” or “Very rarely” within a week.

Regarding the situations of media use, viewing of TV programs (including recorded programs) is high when “Busy with housework” and “When s/he is fussy.” Smartphones are highest “When your child wants to use it,” “While travelling in a car or on a train,” and “While waiting when you are out.” Among parents and children using the 3 media devices: TV programs (including recorded programs), DVDs/Blu-ray discs, and smartphones/tablet devices, the percentage of those who talk about the content of each media is 74.3% for TV programs, 68.5% for DVDs/Blu-ray discs, and 49.2% for smartphones/tablet devices.

Parental Involvement

Awareness and reluctance about media use

Regarding TV programs (including recorded programs), internet videos/images, and apps/software, many parents select “Can enjoy singing and dancing” and “Can enrich their knowledge” as pros and “Damage to eyesight and health” and “Addiction” as cons.

Q. What do you think about letting children watch (use) TV programs (including recorded programs), internet videos/images (YouTube etc.), and apps/software?

2017

Table 2-2

(%)

		TV programs (including recorded programs)	Internet videos/images	Apps/software ^{*1}
Pros	1	93.1 Can enjoy singing and dancing	78.1 Can enjoy singing and dancing	66.0 Can enjoy singing and dancing
	2	79.3 Can enrich their knowledge	44.4 Can enrich their knowledge	58.3 Can enrich their knowledge
	3	63.2 Can learn social etiquette and manners	38.4 Can develop self-expression through craft and drawing	56.0 Can develop self-expression through craft and drawing
	4	59.1 Can develop self-expression through craft and drawing	29.9 Increases parent-child communication	37.6 Beneficial for school lessons
	5	56.9 Cultivates kindness and compassion	24.9 Beneficial for school lessons	37.5 Acquire concentration
	6	52.7 Increased parent-child communication	24.6 Acquire concentration	36.5 Increases parent-child communication
Cons	1	84.3 Damage to eyesight and health	84.8 Damage to eyesight and health	84.5 Damage to eyesight and health
	2	75.7 Addiction	80.7 Addiction	77.0 Addiction
	3	72.0 Continuous long term use	75.2 Continuous long term use	73.8 Continuous long term use
	4	57.9 Difficulty in shifting attention from one task to another	71.3 Access to charged websites or dangerous websites	68.1 Access to charged websites or dangerous websites
	5	54.2 Later addiction to digital media	68.3 Later addiction to digital media	64.9 Difficulty in shifting attention from one task to another
	6	52.1 Become passive	67.3 Difficulty in shifting attention from one task to another	64.7 Later addiction to digital media

* Figures are the sum of “very true” and “somewhat true”

* Sample size is 3,400 respondents

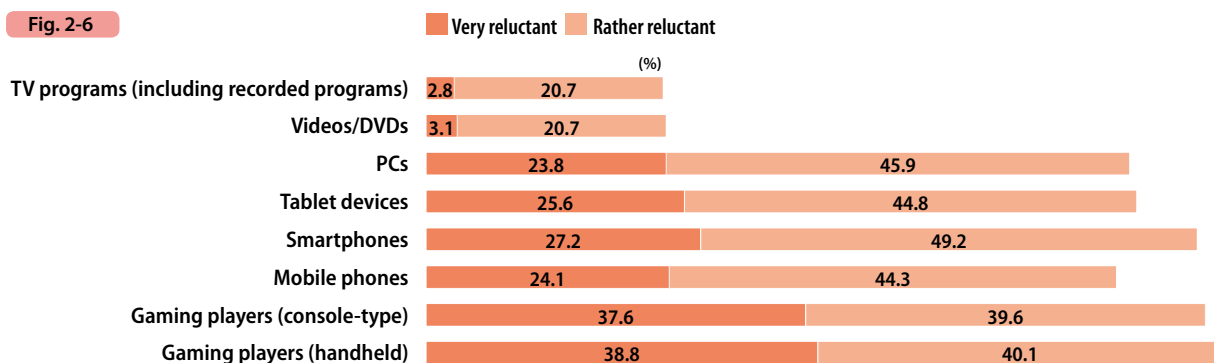
* Displaying 6 out of 10 items for each media (displaying the top 6 out of 11 items for internet videos/images and apps/software)

*1 Smartphones/tablet devices/PC apps/software (picture books/English/drawing/games etc.)

Q. How reluctant do you feel about letting your child see (use) the following items?

2017

Fig. 2-6



* Answered in cases where there is no use (Answered by all)

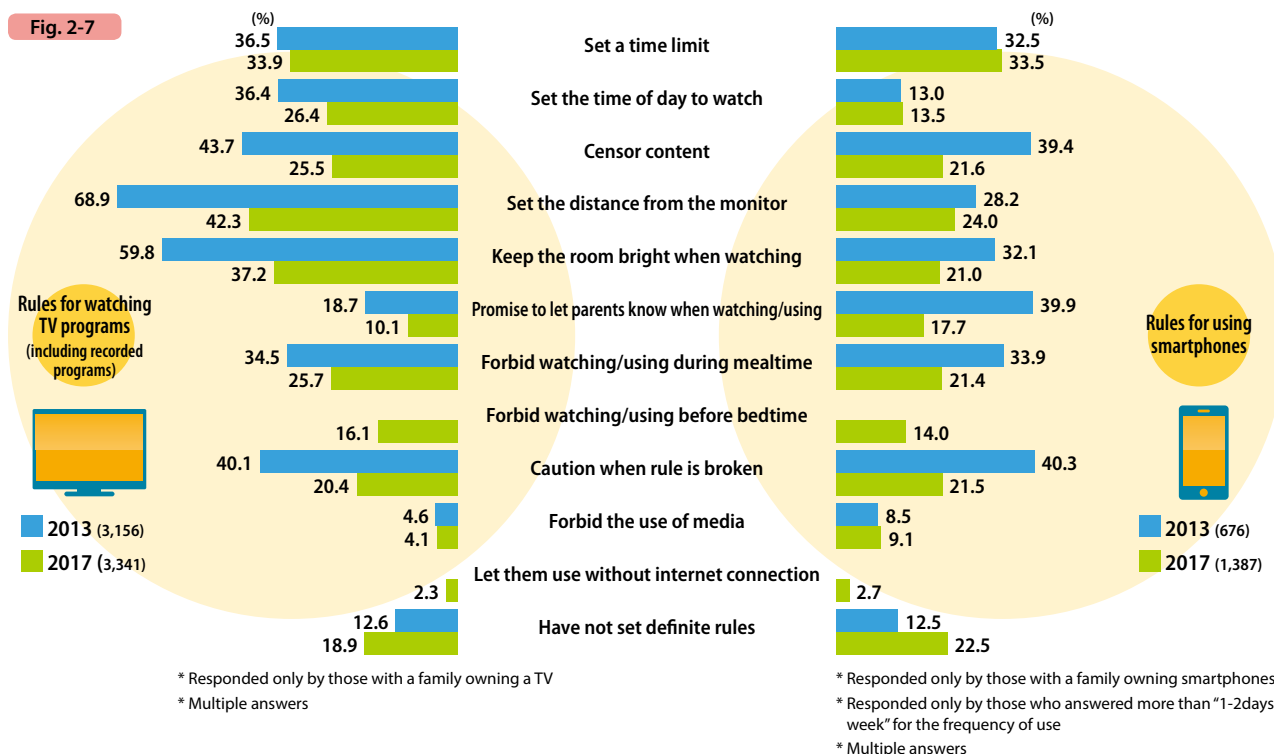
Looking at awareness regarding TV programs (including recorded programs), internet videos/images, and apps/software, “Can enjoy singing and dancing” comes 1st and “Can enrich their knowledge” comes 2nd as common choices. For TV programs (including recorded programs), “Can learn social etiquette and manners” is 3rd. For internet videos/images and apps/software, “Can develop self-expression through craft and drawing” is 3rd. On the other hand, cons are the same across all with “Damage to eyesight and health” as 1st, “Addiction” as 2nd, and “Continuous long term use” as 3rd. Parents are aware of potential advantages yet have concerns at the same time.

Parental Involvement

Family rules of media use

Regarding rules of media use, “Do not set definite rules” has increased.

Q. Do you set rules when your child watches or uses digital media devices? secular comparison

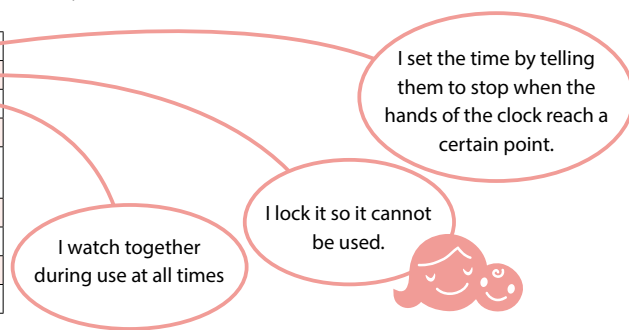


Q. Please write down any considerations you give when your child uses smartphones. 2017

Table 2-3

Do not allow use for a long period of time	526
Create an environment which prevents use	431
Use together with parents	301
Restrict functions to be used	154
Be careful about the viewing environment such as sound and brightness	124
Restrict when to use	62
Set rules and make them morally aware	34
Make sure to avoid problems for parents' use	17
Others	27

Number of responses: 1,676



Regarding rules for watching (using) TV programs (including recorded programs) and smartphones, most items have decreased in percentage since 4 years ago. As for smartphones, “Have not set definite rules” has increased by 10 points. For considerations given when using smartphones (free comment), the following were common in descending order: “Do not allow use for a long period of time” (526 responses), “Create an environment which prevents use” (431 responses), “Use together with parents” (301 responses). For creating an environment which prevents use, many say they lock the device or set it to airplane mode. Although it is not indicated in the figure, the percentage of those who filter the media device is very small with only 3 to 7%. They seem to use device functionalities rather than filters.

Parental Involvement

Parent-child conversations about the content of media


Parents who talk with their child about the content of media have high involvement with them outside the use of media as well with a positive attitude towards childrearing.

Involvement with children, positive attitude towards childrearing

(divided into groups with frequent/less conversations with children about the content of media)

2017

Table 2-4



		TV programs (including recorded programs)		DVDs/Blu-ray discs		Smartphones/ Tablet devices	
		Less conversation	Frequent conversation	Less conversation	Frequent conversation	Less conversation	Frequent conversation
Involvement with children	Play word games with child (word-chain game, puns, etc.)	42.2	68.7	55.8	71.6	57.6	71.6
	Play with blocks and building blocks with child	59.9	80.8	64.8	82.9	68.2	83.3
	Draw pictures together or play with clay and origami with child	40.3	75.9	57.9	79.8	60.9	79.5
	Read books to child	65.5	78.5	67.6	79.7	70.0	79.5
Positive attitude towards childrearing	Feel your own growth through childrearing	63.5	74.6	67.6	75.6	66.8	76.5
	Feel that childrearing is a fun and happy thing	75.6	85.4	77.1	85.8	78.7	87.1
	Feel that playing with your child is very interesting	72.1	82.6	69.2	84.0	74.4	84.8
	Feel that your child is extremely adorable	89.3	93.5	90.9	94.1	90.2	94.3
Rules of media use	Set a time limit when your child watches (uses) the smartphone	11.6	26.6	21.1	27.5	22.4	34.1
	Censor content when your child watches (uses) the smartphone	9.0	16.4	14.6	17.7	13.1	23.3
	Set a distance from the screen when your child watches (uses) the smartphone	10.9	17.7	14.3	20.8	14.0	25.9

* Percentage of "Involvement with children" and "Positive attitude towards childrearing" are totals of "Frequently" and "Sometimes." The value of "Rules of media use" is the percentage of those who answered that they have set rules.

* Regarding "Talk about the content of TV programs (including recorded programs) with children," "Talk about the content of DVDs/Blu-ray discs with children," and "Talk about the content when letting them play with smartphones/tablet devices," among those who use the media more than "Very Rarely" per week, those who answered "True" and "Somewhat true" were classified as the "Frequent conversation" group, and those who answered "Cannot say yes or no," "Not so true," and "Not true" have been classified as the "Less conversation" group.

The table above shows the summary of characteristics of parents who talk with children about the contents when children watch and use TV programs (including recorded programs), DVDs/Blu-ray discs, and smartphones/tablet devices. The group which talks with children about the content of media has high parent-child involvement outside the use of media as well and this relates to having a more positive attitude towards childrearing. The percentage of those who set rules for media use tends to be higher as well. Such parents seem to utilize media devices as a new tool to communicate with children rather than an alternative means to interact with children.

Focus

How do children and mothers use Smartphones?



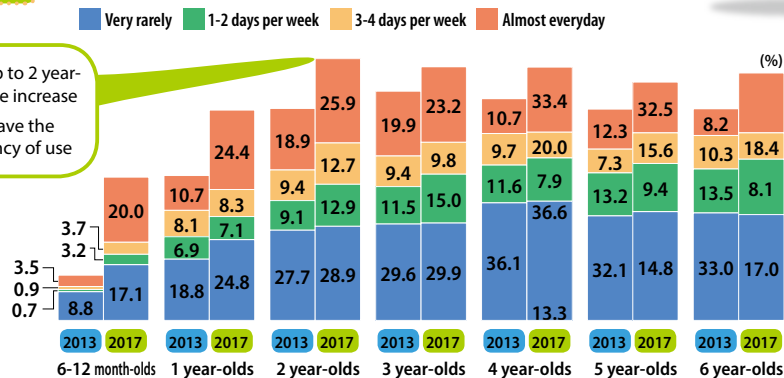
The main focus of this survey, the involvement of smartphones with children/mothers, has been summarized.

How frequently is it used per week?

Frequency of use

(per week, secular comparison)

6 months and up to 2 year-olds show a large increase
2 year-olds have the highest frequency of use



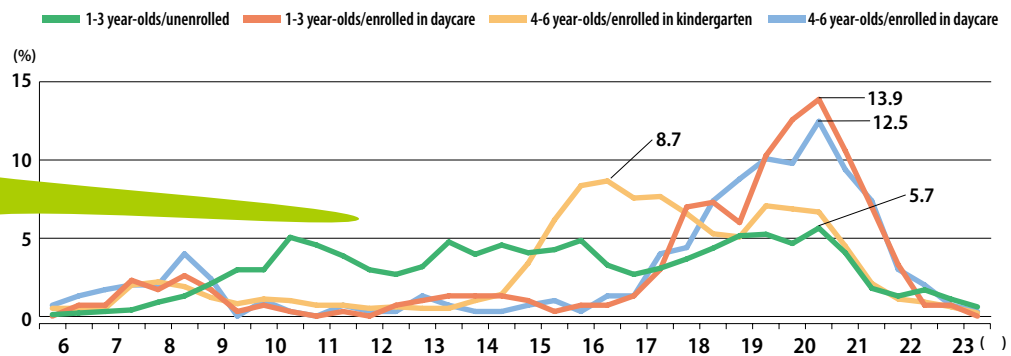
* Responded only by those with a family owning smartphones
* N/A responses excluded for 2013.

What time of the day is it used frequently?

Time of use

(per week day, 2017)

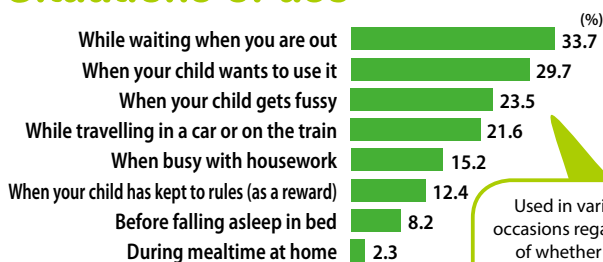
Children before entering preschool are exposed to smartphones for a relatively long time during the day, kindergarteners before dinner, and children in daycare after dinner.



* Answered by all.

When do you show it?

Situations of use (2017)

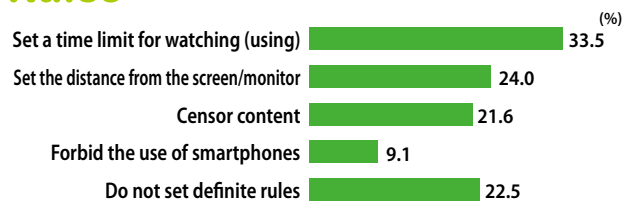


Used in various occasions regardless of whether it is indoors or outdoors

* Only answered by families owning smartphones
* Multiple answers

What do mothers care about?

Rules (2017)

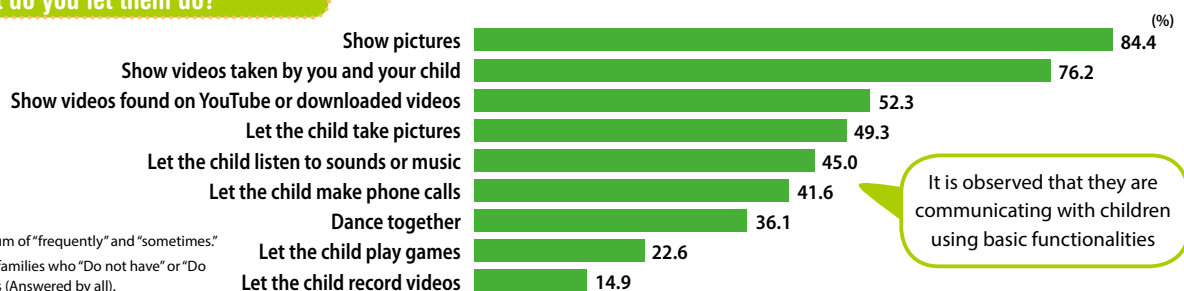


* Only answered by families owning smartphones
* Only answered by those whose frequency of use per week is more than "1-2 days per week"
* Multiple answers

Looking at it by age groups, under 1 year-olds: 46.1%
1-3 year-olds: 24.1%
4-6 year-olds: 16.4%

What do you let them do?

Usage (2017)



It is observed that they are communicating with children using basic functionalities

* Percentage is the sum of "frequently" and "sometimes."
* Responses include families who "Do not have" or "Do not use" the devices (Answered by all).

From a specialist's viewpoint

Enjoy conversations between parents and children through the use of new media

Toshiyuki Shiomi

(President of Shiraume Gakuen University, Professor Emeritus at The University of Tokyo)
Special field: Pedagogy, educational anthropology, pedology

The result of this survey has shown that smartphones have become common in households with children in a short period of time above expectations. We have carried out careful research as to whether smartphones have deeply penetrated into children's lives causing symptoms of addiction as feared by the public. However, results have proven otherwise; only few households let their children use it for a long period of time, while the time for outdoor play or reading picture books has not decreased indicating that parents are paying attention to incorporating media into daily lives in a balanced way. Most households care about the contents seen and rules of viewing as well; an outcome indicating that the public need not to be excessively concerned regarding children's media use.

In this survey, it has been observed that children mostly make use of videos and music but in the future, we hope it brings about an even richer parent-child relationship where they can spend more time to enjoy conversations by looking at potentials and issues of new media carefully and exploring ways to make good use of them within each household. Meanwhile, I must emphasize that without saying, firsthand experience is important as well as gaining information indirectly through the media. It is crucial to feel things in reality using one's senses to truly understand the knowledge gained through media. Linking secondhand information from videos, picture books, and so on to affluent firsthand experience in the mind engraves knowledge into the body which then allows children to acquire intelligence, a pathway to wisdom.

Utilising media as an act of parenting

Masumi Sugawara

(Professor, Ochanomizu University, Faculty of Core Research, Human Science Division; Director of Ochanomizu University Institute for Education and Human Development)
Special field: Developmental psychology, developmental psychopathology)

It has become clear from preceding studies that just as reading picture books, when utilising digital media contents with children, having conversations by asking questions such as "Why is...happy?" and "Where was it?" helps learning more words and understanding better stories. This survey result shows that mothers who are involved and talk with children regularly and frequently have conversations with children about the content of media as well. It is no longer a realistic option to exclude smartphones from children's lives completely. From now on, literacy to make good use of various media including digital media devices as tools for children's play, learning, and parent-child communication will become essential.

It is interesting that children's use of digital media mainly consists of watching pictures and videos recorded by a family member or by children. Children who take photos by themselves were not unusual either. These results revealed the current situation different from the public concern in general of passive viewing. Now that we can see the world that children are attracted to through their eyes, by looking at the photos they have taken, sharing it within the family may lead to deeper communication between parents and children. Further research may be essential to study how children's expressive activities using digital media affect their developmental growth.

From TV to "Smartphones"

Yoichi Sakakihara

(Professor Emeritus of Ochanomizu University, Director of Child Research Net)
Special field: Pediatrics, pediatric neurology, developmental neurology

Just four years from the first survey conducted in 2013, a great ongoing change among the situation of media use in childrearing households seems to be taking place; this was the first impression I got when I looked at this survey result. The household ownership of smartphones has increased by 1.5 times from 60% 4 years ago to around 93% now. This is almost closing in on the household ownership of TVs at 98.3%. Children's exposure to smartphones has also surged from 50% to 70%.

These changes might appear as a big threat for those who are worried about the use of smartphones in a childrearing environment. However, it seems to be a needless fear when you see how they are being used. When looking at the usage, smartphones and tablets are mainly used in situations where parents and children are together such as "Show pictures," "Show videos," "Let them take pictures," and "Dance together." Respondents who let their child use it alone such as "Play games" are minorities.

The American Academy of Pediatrics also acknowledges the advantages of using digital media as a tool to communicate with others. In Japanese households, smartphones are used as a tool to communicate between parents and children.

The only concern in the result of this survey is that the ownership and use of tablet devices are relatively low compared to smartphones. I worry because tablets have more potential than smartphones in terms of screen size and usability, for viewing digital picture books for example.

Proposing parent-child smartphone use based on media features

Tomomi Sato

(Associate Professor, Aichi Shukutoku University)
Special field: Educational technology, educational environmental design

From this survey, the spread of smartphones is remarkable, and as parents use smartphones for a long time, children's use of smartphones at a younger age, frequency of use, and time spent are increasing. On the other hand, it was observed that children were balancing their activities with real experiences in their daily lives. There were also cases where family dialogue was expected, such as children taking and showing photos and videos.

Smartphones have multi-functional media features, such as video viewing, application use, photography, videophone, etc., and they can be used anytime and anywhere. In addition, the screen is small and it is easy for the child to own one. In the future, instead of determining whether it is good or bad to use a smartphone, you will need to check in detail the risk or benefit of using a smartphone.

In addition, in this survey, the percentage of parents who set viewing rules for smartphones decreased. The following can be considered as the reason: Smartphones used by children are well-controlled as they are parent-owned. Apps are equipped with alarm functions. However, restricting the use of smartphones from early infancy, and giving parental guidance will be useful for children in the future.

Children in early childhood targeted in this survey learn a lot from observing their parents. It is thought that the way parents use smartphones has a great influence on their children. I hope parents and children will take full advantage of the features of smartphones and other digital media so they can benefit from them.

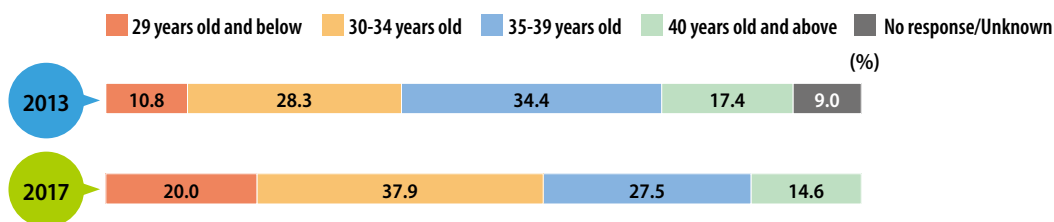
Looking back at the survey

The survey result has shown that smartphones are used in various situation of childrearing of children aged between 6 months and 6 years old. This trend has become stronger compared to the first survey in 2013 indicating how smartphones have become familiar items in addition to TVs to bridge the interaction between parents and children in their spare time. Parents seem to care for the duration of usage and the environment when children come into contact with various media devices.

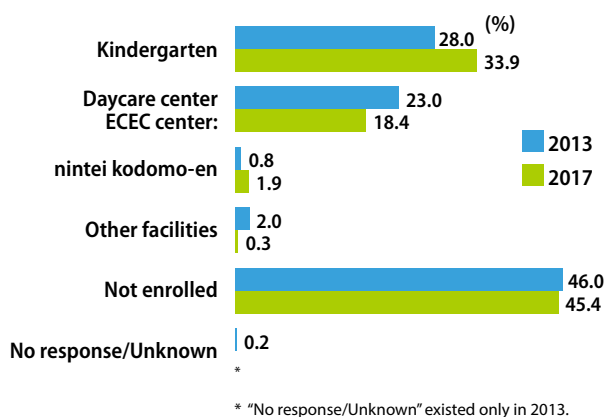
In the future, by establishing certain rules and keeping manners in mind, it may be inevitable to consider how to incorporate media as a tool to deepen parent-child communication.

Basic Attributes

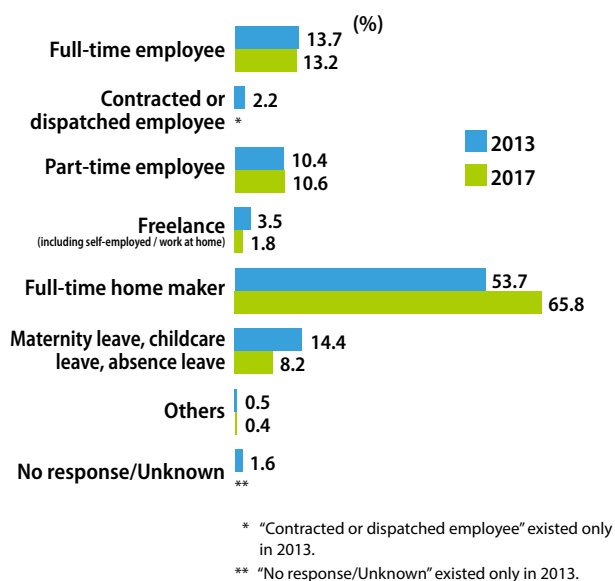
Mothers' age



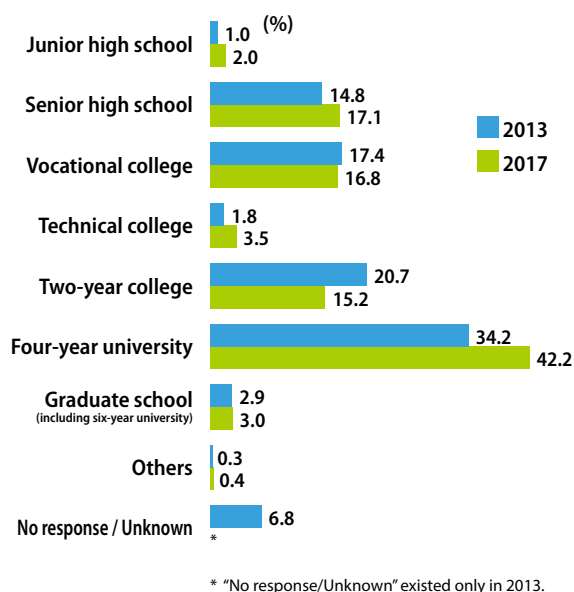
Preschool enrollment



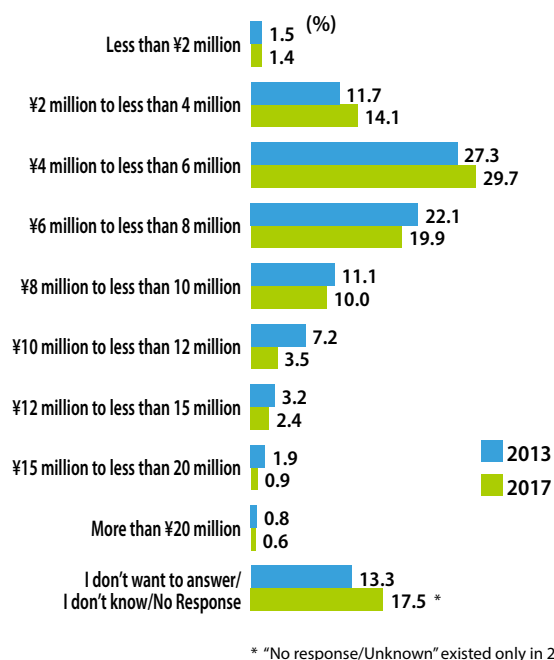
Mothers' employment status



Mothers' academic background



Household income



Survey of Media Use by Children and Parents II Survey Planners / Analyzers

*Affiliations and titles are current as of the time of research and analysis.

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