

The Common Sense Census: Media Use by Tweens and Teens, 2021

Media Use by Children in Lower-Income Households

Before the coronavirus pandemic, **children age 8 to 12 in lower-income households (household income < \$35,000)** spent an average of 5 hours and 49 minutes with media every day.

In 2021, this increased by 1 hour 43 minutes to **7 hours and 32 minutes.**

Before the coronavirus pandemic, **children age 13 to 18 in lower-income households** spent an average of 8 hours and 32 minutes with media every day.

In 2021, this increased by 47 minutes to **9 hours and 19 minutes.**

Average time spent with each media activity among children age 8 to 18 from lower-income households:



Watching TV/DVDs on a TV, computer, tablet, or smartphone

Lower income: **1 hour and 56 minutes**

Higher income: **1 hour and 22 minutes**



Watching online videos

Lower income: **1 hour and 23 minutes**

Higher income: **1 hour and 2 minutes**



Gaming on a mobile device, computer, or console

Lower income: **1 hour and 46 minutes**

Higher income: **1 hour and 19 minutes**



On social media

Lower income: **1 hour and 25 minutes**

Higher income: **1 hour and 14 minutes**



Reading

Lower income: **42 minutes**

Higher income: **34 minutes**

Entertainment screen use differences, 2021

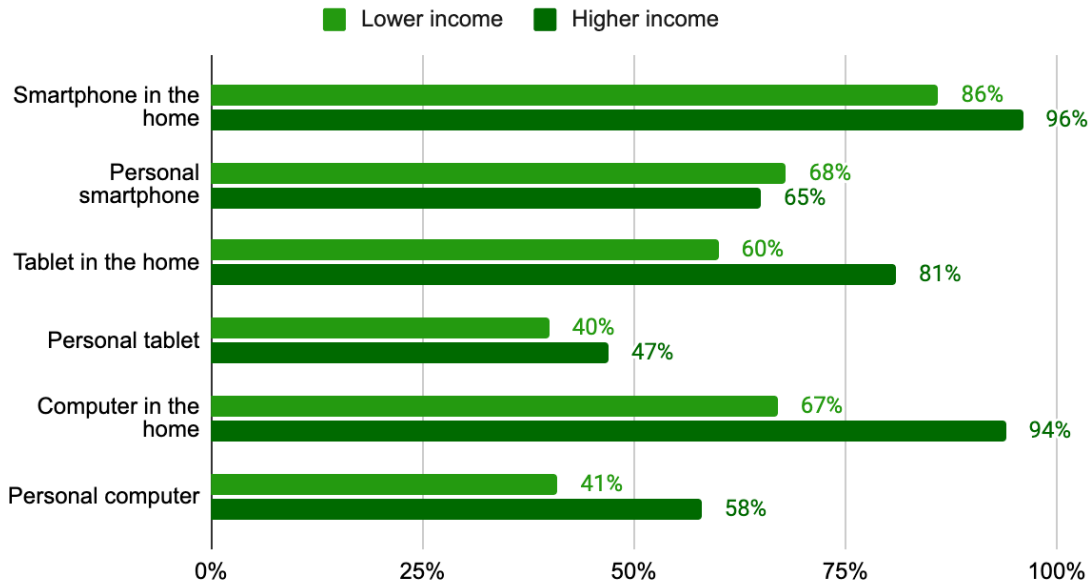
Entertainment screen use is significantly higher in lower-income households than higher-income households.

	Among all	Lower income	Middle income	Higher income
Tweens (8- to 12-year-olds)	5:33	7:32 ^a	5:47 ^b	4:21 ^c
Teens (13- to 18-year-olds)	8:39	9:19 ^a	9:34 ^a	7:16 ^b

Note: "Lower income" is < \$35,000; "middle" is \$35,000-99,999; and "higher" is \$100,000 or more. "Tweens" refers to 8- to 12-year-olds; "teens" refers to 13- to 18-year-olds. Superscripts (a,b,c) are used to denote whether differences between groups are statistically significant (p<.05).

Children in lower-income households own fewer **personal devices** and have less access to these devices in their home compared to children in higher-income households (one exception is smartphone access and ownership, which is nearly the same).

Device access



* "lower income" is < \$35,000 and "higher income" is \$100,000 or more

* "in the home" refers to household device ownership

* "personal" refers to devices that are the child's own

Device use and enjoyment: For many screen activities, there is a significant gap between frequency of use and enjoyment:

78% of kids in lower-income households report **watching online videos** "every day," but only **65%** enjoy watching online videos "a lot."

62% of kids in lower-income households report **watching TV** "every day," but only **36%** enjoy watching TV "a lot."

46% of kids in lower-income households report **using social media** "every day," but only **37%** enjoy using social media "a lot."

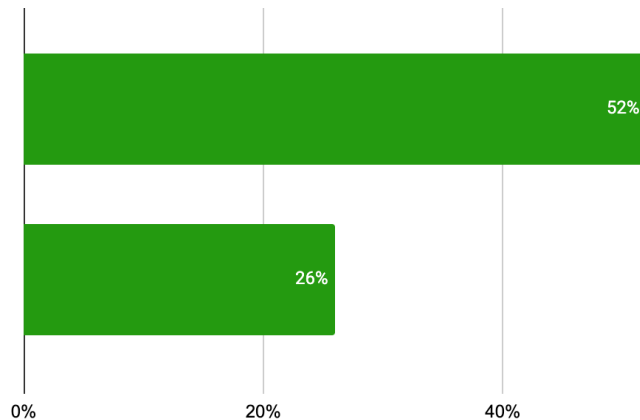
48% of kids in lower-income households report **playing video games on a mobile device** "every day," but **41%** enjoy **playing video games on a mobile device** "a lot."

31% of kids in lower-income households report **playing video games on a console or computer** "every day," and **45%** enjoy **playing video games on a console** "a lot."

When looking at **reading** among kids in lower-income households ...

21% report reading for pleasure "every day."

35% report reading for pleasure less than monthly.



52% say they enjoy reading a lot/somewhat.

26% say they enjoy reading only a little or not at all.