

Children reading more under lockdown

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Latest data from Kids Insights shows that British children are reading more, and spending more on books, since the start of lockdown



During October-December 2020, the Insights People monitored a small increase in the amount of time children spent reading compared to the same period in 2019, showing that reading remains a consistent part of kids' lives despite an increasingly fragmented ecosystem.

As reported in the latest *Kids Insights UK Recreation* report, children under 13 in the UK are now spending around an hour a day reading, a few minutes more than they were during October-December 2019.

The report also reveals a significant increase in the average monthly spend on books for and by 3-12 year olds, up from £2.89 to £4.16, a whopping +44% increase. This increase equates to an annual increase of £10.3m, meaning UK kids now account for book purchases worth £33.7m a year.

As spending on books continues to rise, it is vital for brands to pay attention to which groups are most engaged. In the UK, Kids Insights data indicates that 16-18 year old girls are the most avid readers (reading is their second most favourite hobby), with younger teen boys the least likely to enjoy reading. Despite this, reading has become much more popular among boys aged 13-15, with interest in this activity growing by +390% since July 2020.

Fantasy (14%) and comedy (13%) rank as the most enjoyed genres overall. Paperbacks (32%) continue to be the most popular format for preschoolers, while 6-9 year olds are integrating digital forms of reading into their repertoire, with a significant increase (+28%) of children in this age group saying they had engaged with ebooks in the past 3 months.

Kids who read ebooks also have multiple devices, with growth in ownership of tablets (+10%), mobiles (+29%), and laptops (+41%) suggesting that increased tech access is decreasing the demand for physical books. Publishers need to ensure they make a wide range of digital reading material available for children as this audience continues to move from physical to digital formats.

Tweens and teens (10-18 year olds) in the UK are, however, still purchasing physical books, with online the most used channel (39%) but with brick-and-mortar bookstores a close second (used by 37%).

Interesting facts

Tweens and teens are now reportedly only sleeping 5 hours 49 minutes per night, some 7 minutes less than in the same period in 2019. With less time spent sleeping, Kids Insights data indicates that these 10-18s are spending the time on digital leisure, such as social media and playing video games.



Their attachment to devices is such that they are ready to spend as much free time as possible reading, playing, chatting, or watching videos online, with the most popular content read or watched on gadgets being Harry Potter, named as their favourite character by 5.2% of UK kids. This can be a huge opportunity for publishers and brands looking for new ways to engage with their audience and new places for media planning.

Kids today have more influence and decision-making power within the home than in any previous generation. This may have always been true for categories such as toys & games, or more recently streaming platforms, but increasingly kids' influence appears to be growing for other categories such as the purchase of a new car. It is therefore more important than ever before to reach and engage with kids.

The Insights People aim to show the power of each media type for specific audiences, in February launching their first real-time media tool The Media Mix Compass. This provides an independent account of kids' media consumption to help improve brands' decision making in an increasingly fragmented ecosystem. With a 360° view of kids, tweens, and teens ecosystems, brands can segment the data on a global, country, regional, gender or age view, or by their specific attitudes, behaviors, and consumptions.

The Insights People surveys more than 5,000 children every week aged 3-18 in 13 countries across five continents and in total surveys more than 340,000 kids a year. Their latest *Kids Insights UK Recreation* report, based on the results of surveying 5,755 children between October and December 2020, explores how British kids' attitudes, behaviours and consumption are changing as a result of lockdown.

To learn more about The Kids Insights' Media Mix Compass, and to receive complimentary access to the tool plus a copy of an example report, please visit: www.kidsinsights.com/mediamix

To learn more about the attitudes, behaviour and consumption patterns of kids, parents and families, and to get freemium access to the Insights People real-time data portal, please visit: <http://kidsinsights.com/bookbrunch/>

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