# [DE] KIM Study 2024 sheds light on children's Internet use

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On 3 June 2025, the *Medienpädagogische Forschungsverbund Südwest* (mpfs), a research body acting on behalf of the *Landesanstalt für Kommunikation Baden-Württemberg* (Baden-Württemberg state media authority), the *Medienanstalt Rheinland-Pfalz* (Rhineland-Palatinate state media authority) and Südwestrundfunk (SWR), published its 15th study on childhood, Internet and media (KIM Study 2024). In a parent-child survey conducted as part of the study, 1,225 children aged between 6 and 13 were asked about their own and their family's media usage, leisure activities and interests. The results show that Internet use is a natural part of everyday life for many children and that more than half of the children who are online use the Internet on a daily basis. Compared with the KIM Study 2022, the report shows that the prevalence of Internet-enabled devices continues to increase, while the number of devices that can only be used offline is declining. Televisions, Internet access and smartphones are available in virtually all the households surveyed. Around 70% of families use streaming services and smart TVs. Around 60% own tablets, computers or home video game consoles. A third use digital voice assistants or special children's music boxes (e.g. Toniebox). As far as children's own media devices are concerned, the smartphone is the most widespread at 46%, with ownership increasing significantly with age. For example, 80% of 12- to 13-year-olds have their own smartphone. A third of children have their own television and Internet access, 25% own a handheld game console and 22% own a home gaming console. Children's music boxes are used by 20% of children, 13% of them have a laptop and 11% can access streaming services in their own room. As with smartphones, the number of personal devices increases with age. The KIM study shows that children regularly engage in both analogue and digital leisure activities, with a clear trend towards increasing media use as they get older. Meeting up with friends and watching TV are among the most common leisure activities (94% each), with TV remaining the most common media leisure activity and 67% of children watching TV every day. In addition to linear TV channels, a huge range of other video offerings are available. These include media libraries, YouTube, streaming services and social media. Overall, online video consumption is continuing to increase, while reading and listening to the radio are still declining. Socialising with friends is the most popular leisure activity, playing outdoors is in second place and digital gaming in third, equal with playing sport. Children are increasingly using media, especially digital games, mostly alone.

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While 59% of them surf the Internet alone, around half watch streaming content, research online for school or play alone on the computer. When it comes to joint activities with parents, listening to the radio dominates (57%), followed by school research (38%) and watching DVDs/Blu-rays (33%). Watching DVDs/Blu-rays or playing on game consoles are the most common activities with peers and siblings. The KIM study also looks at actual smartphone and Internet use, which also increases with age. The most popular Internet applications are WhatsApp and online videos/streaming. According to parents, the duration of daily media use is 62 minutes for television and 40 minutes for streaming services, while only 19 minutes are spent reading books.

The KIM study clearly shows that children today are growing up in a highly mediatised world; digital devices, especially interactive whiteboards and tablets, are also being used more in schools. However, this high level of media consumption also comes with risks. For example, children report seeing content that they were too young for, as well as anxiety-inducing or unpleasant content, with the frequency of such experiences also increasing with age. As a result, the study shows a shift towards more digital leisure activities and more individualised use of on-demand rather than linear offerings. In this context, the study recognises the growing importance of YouTube as particularly relevant. On this platform, age-appropriate and non-age-appropriate content can be found side by side, with children barely able to distinguish between them. The study criticises the fact that technical child protection systems are not yet being used consistently enough. Social media platforms are also being used on a daily basis by children under the official minimum age. In view of the risks and challenges associated with increased media use, the KIM study particularly emphasises the responsibility of parents to actively support their children as they enter the digital world, as well as the duty of platform providers to make their services child-friendly and safe.

### *KIM-Studie 2024*

https://medienanstalt-rlp.de/fileadmin/materialien/KIM-Studie_2024.pdf

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