

77% of Parents Say Their Kids Talk to Them In Person More Than Before Phones, Study Finds

Gabb research finds 77% of parents say their kids talk to them in person more than before phones, while 43% scale back monitoring to give kids independence.

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- Today's kids are connected to the internet earlier and more constantly than any generation before them, and for most families texting has become the default thread that keeps everyone in touch. A [new parent survey from Gabb](#) finds that 93% of parents text their child every day to stay connected, and 80% say that digital visibility — texts, calls, and location sharing — is helping build trust with their kids.



80% of parents say texts, calls, and location sharing help build trust with their children, while 59% say connected technology gives them peace of mind.

The survey of 1,000 U.S. parents of children ages 6–17 who use digital tools to stay connected examined daily communication habits, the use of monitoring and tracking tools, and how constant connection shapes family relationships.

The findings suggest parents aren't simply piling on oversight. Many are actively deciding when connection helps, when it creates friction, and how to pull back without letting go — even as the same tools that bring peace of mind can quietly heighten anxiety.

Key Takeaways

- 93% text their child daily, making text the leading way parents stay in touch outside the home
- 85% contact their child multiple times a day, and nearly 1 in 5 (19%) do so multiple times within a single hour
- 85% use GPS or location sharing to track their child; 9% do so without their child knowing
- 92% monitor or limit the apps, messages, and content their children are exposed to
- 80% say digital visibility — texts, calls, location sharing — is helping build trust with their

children

- 51% say their child relies more on digital check-ins, even when they're together in person
- 54% support banning phone use during the school day, though a third still want emergency access
- 43% have scaled back monitoring to give their child more independence

The Daily Check-In Has Become the Default

For many families, staying in touch is now an all-day rhythm rather than an occasional call. A majority of parents (85%) contact their child multiple times a day, and nearly 1 in 5 (19%) check in multiple times within a single hour.

- 93% text their child daily, 78% call, and 58% use video calls
- 45% of parents say they usually start the conversation
- 43% require a text or call when their child arrives somewhere; 30% expect it within a set time

Parents are also drawing lines around all that contact. Almost half (47%) only reach out during the school day if it's urgent, 45% have set windows for contact, and a third each ban texts after a certain hour (33%) or during dinner and family time (33%). The findings suggest parents are treating phones as tools for connection rather than replacements for it.

A Digital Eye: Location Tracking and Content Monitoring

Beyond check-ins, most parents are watching both where their kids go and what they do online. Among parents who use location tracking, 65% do so with their child's full knowledge, 12% only when their child is away from home, and 9% without their child knowing; 15% don't track location at all. Of those who track, 52% check multiple times a day, 20% once a day, and 21% a few times a week.

Content oversight is nearly universal. The vast majority (92%) monitor or limit the apps, messages, and content their children see — most often by reviewing texts and calls (47%), tracking app and browser usage (46%), or setting screen-time limits (46%). Only 8% don't monitor at all. The findings point to a fine line between reassurance and surveillance.

Relief for Most, Anxiety for Some

The emotional payoff of all this visibility is mostly positive — but not universally. Asked how the technology makes them feel, 59% of parents said they were relieved, 39% more confident and in control, and 34% said it strengthened their emotional connection with their child.

A minority feel the strain instead: 10% are conflicted, calling the tools helpful but intrusive, 9% find themselves more anxious and checking in more than they otherwise would, and smaller shares feel overwhelmed (4%), disconnected (4%), or ashamed (2%). The findings suggest peace

of mind wins out for most parents, even as the same tools fuel vigilance for some.

Pulling Back to Build Independence

As kids mature, many parents are deliberately loosening their grip. The most common reason for scaling back monitoring was to give children more independence (43%), followed by feeling too controlling (20%) and wanting to reward growing responsibility (20%). A combined 80% agree that digital visibility helped build trust with their children.

Kids' reactions are mixed. More than a third of parents (37%) say their child is fine with the monitoring, and 19% say they believe their child feels safer because of it. Among kids who disliked it, parents most often cited that it was embarrassing around friends (18%), made them feel anxious or surveilled (14%), distrusted (12%), or more secretive (12%), or caused more arguments (8%). Some kids pushed back directly: 9% tried to turn off tracking features and 9% stopped using their phones to avoid being monitored. The findings suggest oversight can build trust or breed resentment, depending on how it's handled.

When Parents Start to Worry — and the School-Phone Debate

Parents differ sharply on how long is too long to wait for a reply. The largest share (23%) only worry after an hour, while 19% start after 30 minutes, 17% after 10 minutes, and 15% expect an immediate reply no matter what; on the other end, 14% only worry after several hours and 10% aren't concerned about response time at all.

That tension carries into the classroom. Just over half of parents (54%) support a school-day phone ban — 21% fully, and 33% as long as they can still reach their child reliably. Another 23% are against it, with 14% saying they feel safer able to contact their child directly and 8% saying the school shouldn't decide; 10% tell their child to follow the rules but check their phone anyway. The findings suggest most parents back limits at school, but few want to give up access entirely.

Constant Connection Is Reshaping Time Together

The tools meant to bridge distance are also changing how families interact in the same room. More than three-quarters of parents (77%) say their children talk to them in person more than they did before phones, and 80% say their children are more emotionally open since using their devices.

But the same connection has a cost: 51% say their child leans on digital check-ins even when they're together in person, and 38% say their child seems less present and more distracted since getting a phone or smartwatch. The findings suggest digital tools can deepen connection while introducing new distractions.

For today's families, the question is no longer whether to stay connected, but how much connection is healthy. The data points to a gradual shift away from reflexive oversight and toward what many parents describe as careful trust — staying informed without hovering, and giving kids room to grow.

View the full study here:

<https://gabb.com/blog/connected-family-tech-communication-trends/>

About

[Gabb](#) is a technology company focused on helping parents protect every childhood with safer tech for kids. Through phones, watches, music streaming, and other tools designed to reduce digital distraction while preserving essential communication, Gabb supports families navigating the balance between connection, independence, and peace of mind in the digital age.

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