

# THE NEW NORMAL: PARENTS, TEENS, AND MOBILE DEVICES IN MEXICO

## Credits

Authors: Michael B. Robb, *senior director of research, Common Sense Media*  
Willow Bay, *dean, Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism, University of Southern California*  
Tina Vennegaard, *director, strategic initiatives and partnerships, Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism, University of Southern California*

Acknowledgments: Angela McCracken, director of the University of Southern California's Mexico City office, for her guidance and support throughout the development and execution of this study, and to Dr. Manuel Alejandro Guerrero, director of communication at the Universidad Iberoamericana, Mexico City, Dra. Fidele Ablavi Vlavo, and Mtra. Claudia Arruñada Sala for their input and suggestions about the survey.

Data collection: GfK Market Research, Mexico City

Research associate: Paulina Lanz, Ph.D. candidate, Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism, University of Southern California

Copy editor: Jenny Pritchett

Designers: Emely Vertiz and Dana Herrick

Public relations: Loop, Mexico City

Photography: Sergio Negrete and Olivia Mowry

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**Half of teens say they  
“feel addicted” to their  
mobile devices.**

# PERSPECTIVES

## Youth and Social Media: Navigating the Digital Sea

By Dr. Manuel Alejandro Guerrero

Director of communication, Universidad Iberoamericana, Mexico City

Mexico is rapidly becoming one of the most active social media markets in the world, since according to the latest data, this country ranks between fourth and eighth in social media platforms.<sup>1</sup>

According to the *Internet Users' Habits Study (15° Estudio sobre los Hábitos de los Usuarios de Internet en México 2018)*, 67% of the population regularly uses the internet, and this figure is higher, almost 86%, among users under 30.<sup>2</sup> In this regard, we need better understanding on this unavoidable relation between youth and social media, especially in a constantly changing landscape as the digital world.

New sites and new platforms appear with all sorts of contents, from entertainment to information. This trend has created greater chances to give voice to groups and topics previously excluded and marginalized by mainstream media, like minority rights, climate change, and others. However, on the other hand, it also brings to the front topics and agendas of groups that are not committed to respect basic freedoms, rights, and tolerance. It is true that mainstream media in no few times served as interested gatekeepers narrowing the scope of topics one could find in their spaces, but one cannot forget that the most prestigious outlets also served as fact-checkers and as documented guides for public opinion. Today, the decrease in entrance costs due to technology has brought the mushrooming of new sites that compete in an economy of attention for clicks and visits with attractive blending of entertainment and soft news, with the consequent decrease in relevance of traditional information spaces.

At the same time, social media is key for keeping the youth in touch with friends and family, for consuming entertainment, and for approaching the labor markets. Thus, what we must understand not only in the case of Mexican youth, but in general of younger users in the world, is that they are no longer “connecting” to the internet and to social media but are “experiencing” life through digital platforms. Moreover, in the large majority of cases, the division between virtual and real has blurred, since they keep track of all their significant relations and of all their areas of interest through the digital space.

This is the digital sea that youth navigate daily, full of waves of posts, selfies, memes, fake news, trending topics, hashtags, and likes, where the currents change abruptly and where they must sort them on their own. This is why works like USC Annenberg and Common Sense's *The New Normal: Parents, Teens, and Mobile Devices in Mexico* are key to understand better the way technology is used and its relevance to daily life practices. The data collected through these sort of studies will enable us to think about better media and multimedia literacy strategies for our youth that take into account the role other stakeholders play here, like parents and school. The challenge is to provide our youth with better skills and knowledge not only to navigate in an increasingly complex sea of contents, but to make sense of it and contribute with contents oriented by values based on tolerance, rights, pluralism, and freedoms in order to strengthen open societies in which we all have our rightful place.



**Dr. Manuel Guerrero** directs the Communication Department of the Universidad Iberoamericana. He is a member of the National System of Researchers, vice president of the Executive Committee of the chairs of UNESCO in Communication, an academic advisor to the Electoral Professional Service of the National Electoral Institute of Mexico, and a regular academic at the International Seminar on Media Literacy in Salzburg, Austria. He holds a Ph.D. in political science from the European University Institute of Florence, Italy, and a master's degree in Latin American studies from the University of Cambridge. His research areas are political communication; media relations-political regime; socio-digital networks and civic participation; and media content and political attitudes. In these subjects he has several books, chapters, articles, and lectures.

1. We Are Social. (2019, January). *Digital in 2019*. Retrieved from <https://wearesocial.com/global-digital-report-2019>

2. Asociación de Internet.MX, *15° Estudio sobre los Hábitos de los Usuarios de Internet en México 2018*. Retrieved from <https://www.asociaciondeinternet.mx/es/component/remository/Habitos-de-Internet/13-Estudio-sobre-los-Habitos-de->



# A (Mostly Analog) Father Confesses

By León Krauze

Journalist and news anchor, Univision KMEX, Los Angeles

## A confession:

I am the father of three “digital natives” and I still do not know what to think about life online. Every day I witness the relationship—intimate, powerful, excessive—my children have with their electronic devices. I try to understand what excites them about the instant virtual interaction that begins once they turn on their Xbox. I would love to figure out what happens in their sponge-like brains when they make their way unto that modern maze that is YouTube. I would also like to know what path their friendships follow, now that they’d much rather communicate by text message rather than just face each other. And yet, I must acknowledge I have no answers. And it worries me. At the same time, though, I cannot help but be astonished by the exponential leap that having the world there, fully within reach, means for this generation of children.

## For us, their parents, childhood was completely different.

I grew up in Mexico, in the ‘80s. I was already a teenager when I got my first video game console, an old secondhand Atari. I communicated with my friends and my family (and my first girlfriends, too) on the phone. Today, what I still hold in my memory is the phone number of my grandparents’ house, not some girl’s cellphone. There was no texting, sexting, or FaceTiming. We only had the voice, with all its modulations. I tried to tell my children that in those times, the only photographs came from a camera that had to be loaded with a roll of film that then had to be developed at a specialized store. It took one or two days to have the pictures in hand. My kids look at me like I’m a martian! I don’t blame them: In more ways than one, my childhood is from another century.

Above all, it is different because of the way I learned what I know today. My generation believed in books. And in encyclopedias. My “Google” was the gigantic library at my parents’ house, shelf after shelf of books, especially my beloved Encyclopedia Britannica, its brown spine resting, like a wall unto itself, above my father’s desk. I learned about history, geography, and philosophy in its numerous and fragile pages. I read about great men and great battles, my fingers flying from A to Z.

## For my children, knowledge is different.

A few days ago, while I was reading, I heard 7-year-old Santiago sing a martial melody at the top of his lungs. Intrigued, I asked him what he was singing. “It’s the national anthem of the Soviet Union,” he told me, without hesitation. I asked him how he had found what was, to put it mildly, the most unexpected of the songs. It turns out, he explained, that a SpongeBob meme about World War II used the Soviet anthem. My son thought it was charming ... and learned it all. How did he get to a World War II meme? Because his older brother, a history buff from an early age, had left YouTube open on his latest find: a six-minute video of Joseph Stalin’s biography. That night, at dinner, while listening to one of my children recount, with real and fully informed outrage, of Stalinist atrocities and the other sing the

anthem of a country that no longer exists, I had to celebrate that fast and hypnotic madness that is knowledge online.

## But I’m not naive.

I know very well that the iPad’s black screen can also be a rabbit hole from which there is no easy way out, an addictive trap that potentially isolates whoever is in front of it and threatens to show young people things they are not even remotely prepared to digest. I am terrified, for example, by graphic adult content in the digital age. There, after a quick search, are images that can forever upset the mental health of a boy or a girl—images that, in other times, were, if not forbidden, certainly hidden, very far from a minor’s reach. Not any longer. In this day and age, evil (and that’s the correct word) is very close. And the consequences can be very serious.

What can parents do to help their children take advantage of the best version of this knowledge revolution and avoid the worst? I confess: I do not know for sure. *The New Normal: Parents, Teens, and Digital Devices in Mexico* from the Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism at the University of Southern California and Common Sense, offers an important snapshot of the ways Mexican families engage with mobile devices and content. The study is also a road map to better understand how to navigate a universe of audiovisual, digitally delivered content the likes of which the world has never seen. And, because the biggest challenge lies not only in the inexhaustible audiovisual stimuli that’s there, at the ready, available in every electronic device, the challenge lies in the human relationships that our children are creating on the phone, through Instagram photos or messages on Facebook. How to help them fall in love and fall out of love with health and integrity? To know the answer, you first have to know their world, which is different from ours. A glimpse into that world is here, inside. Enjoy, dear reader.



*León Krauze, an award-winning Mexican journalist, began his career as a sports journalist before covering foreign affairs and writing, researching, and reporting on migration patterns in the U.S. He served as the Wallis Annenberg Chair in Journalism at the Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism from 2016 to 2018 and has taught courses such as “La Casa: A Multidisciplinary Portrait of Family Life in Los Angeles.” He is also a contributing columnist for Global Opinions at the Washington Post and anchors the KMEX Channel 34 evening newscasts in Los Angeles.*

# Reflections on My Mobile Device Use

By Sofia Nagy

15-year-old student from Arcadia High School, Los Angeles, California

My mobile device forms a crucial part of my daily life. My school is very large, so without my phone I wouldn't be aware of the many things occurring among my peers. I have Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter because of my internship with the Arcadia Unified School District. I use them more and more now as I see a utility in all of them: Facebook to reach parents, Twitter to be aware of everything going on worldwide, and LinkedIn to start preparing for the working world early. However, the app I use the most by far is Instagram. I use it mainly for direct messages and stories; I don't post very often because my feed is about poetry, an art that takes time! That's unusual because my peers typically post either about their daily lives (group pictures, selfies, etc.) or sometimes they just post compulsively about everything and anything that comes to mind.

When I'm at home, I have a time limit set up on my phone so that I can't use it from 10:30 p.m. to 7 a.m. because it blocks my access. I don't mind that much since I treasure my sleep very dearly because I'm a student with a busier-than-average schedule.

After reviewing the survey answers of my peers, I was surprised to see that, contrary to what I initially thought, there are actually quite a number of us who are conscious of how much time we are spending on our phones and who are trying to regulate ourselves.

Since moving to the U.S. three years ago, I have noticed differences in the ways teens use their phones. In Mexico, one app that is very widely used is WhatsApp (one of the reasons being because it's instant messaging for free). In my experience, dads in Mexico tend to use their phones mostly for work, but moms use WhatsApp a lot. Like, allow me to emphasize, A LOT. They usually make this insane amount of little group chats in which they spill all of the "chisme" (aka "tea" in local slang or, simply, "gossip"). Perhaps teens follow their mothers' example and do the same because everybody knows everybody, which is why the word spreads fast.

I believe my friends in Mexico City could be considered "addicted" as well as my friends in Los Angeles because it is somewhat of a metropolis—a big city with lots of things going on and lots of things to keep up with. For the survey results, I don't expect to see a big difference regarding feelings of addiction, but I definitely expect to see a difference regarding manners. Using phones during meals, social gatherings, and other events when you're with your parents in Mexico City is viewed as very, very rude.

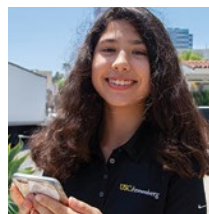
My family life revolves around technology, honestly. However, my parents taught me and still reinforce that technology comes with responsibility. For them, the fact that I have a smartphone is like giving me a privilege instead of a necessity. But over time, it has increasingly become a necessity for me because of all the

extracurricular things I'm involved in. Also, I'm fairly responsible with my phone usage so my parents trust me.

Mobile devices in my family are a way to be connected rather than to isolate each other. My mom and my dad both follow me on my social media, and I'm fine with that. We interact a lot and tag each other in posts. I'm not ashamed if my peers see that. I even text my mom with GIFs and a tiny bit of slang on a regular basis, and she replies to and mentions me on Instagram stories. I believe that this healthy way of using mobile devices is a combination of the cultures of Mexico City and Los Angeles. My family and I are sort of a hybrid of the two cultures.

Even though my parents use their phones regularly, they don't use them unnecessarily. Meaning that they use them for communication, work, and for being updated with what's going on. Also, at the dinner table, my mom usually plays interesting videos she finds on Facebook for my family (my dad, my 12-year-old sister, and myself) to comment on and spark a conversation. It's used as a tool to encourage interaction and togetherness more than anything. One could say it's even a healthy use.

The use of mobile devices is something that I find very interesting. Taking this survey made me realize that I am not as dependent on my mobile device as I thought I was. I believe that this study is a wonderful idea and that it will start a good conversation between families in Mexico and the U.S.



**Sofia Nagy**, a 15-year-old student at Arcadia High School, moved to Los Angeles from Mexico City when she was 12 years old. In the summer of 2019, she participated in USC Annenberg's annual Annenberg Youth Academy, a month-long educational program for local high school students. We invited participating students to take the survey that forms the basis for this report and asked Sofia to reflect on her experience.

# INTRODUCTION

By Willow Bay and James P. Steyer

Mobile devices, and the content we consume on them, have become a powerful presence in our lives. They are altering patterns of daily life and rewiring our most personal relationships, including interactions between parents and kids. We believe this is happening in many countries around the world. To truly understand the impact of technology on our relationships and the new ways we engage with our devices and each other, we need to dig deeper into the global media habits and attitudes of parents and their children.

Together, Common Sense and the University of Southern California's Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism have embarked upon a global mapping project designed to advance a cross-cultural exploration of family digital media engagement. Our work together is unique in that it focuses specifically on parents and teens, the ways in which they are adopting and adapting to mobile devices in their lives, and how they see each other's device use. This is the first generation of teens to grow up with a mobile device in their hands—and the first generation of parents to face unprecedented challenges in managing digital media in their own lives and in the lives of their children.

Today's teenagers, part of the post-millennial generation called Gen Z, are emerging as the most connected, plugged-in, and socially conscious generation the world has seen. Their journey from childhood to adulthood is quite literally tied to the mobile devices in their hands, their emotional and social development inextricably linked to the rapid advances and deep penetration of technology in their lives. Their always-on culture comes with significant advantages but also has left many of them sleep-deprived, overly dependent on their devices, and distracted. Documenting and understanding the impact of these massive technological changes on the development of teens is of vital importance.

*The New Normal: Parents, Teens, and Mobile Devices in Mexico* is the fourth in the New Normal series that captures parents' and teens' mobile device habits, attitudes, and opinions. The first U.S. studies on this topic were published by Common Sense in 2016, and findings were presented in the Common Sense reports *Technology Addiction: Concerns, Controversy, and Finding Balance* and *The Common Sense Census: Plugged-In Parents of Tweens and Teens*. Those reports on American parents and teens revealed a new family dynamic driven by tech and shaped by its benefits and drawbacks.

Using the 2016 reports as benchmarks for comparison, we began our cross-cultural exploration in September 2017, when USC Annenberg and Common Sense released our first study on the digital media habits and attitudes of Japanese parents and teens, *The New Normal: Parents, Teens, and Digital Devices in Japan*. We co-published new findings about mobile device use and digital media engagement among parents and teens in the United Kingdom in 2018 with *The New Normal: Parents, Teens, and Mobile Devices in the United Kingdom*. Common Sense's 2019 report, *The New Normal: Parents, Teens, Screens, and Sleep in the United States*, provided updated findings and new discoveries. This comparative, cross-cultural analysis is provided in Part 2 of this report.

We are excited to share our latest effort, *The New Normal: Parents, Teens, and Mobile Devices in Mexico*, the first study of its kind in Mexico. Mexicans have rapidly embraced mobile phone technology and, along with it, social media. Today, 72% of the population age 16 and older uses a smartphone.<sup>3</sup> In terms of social media use, the region ranks fifth in the world,<sup>4</sup> with roughly 78 million Mexicans accessing social media through mobile devices.<sup>5</sup> This study offers a closer look at the digital media habits of Mexican parents and teens and serves both as a snapshot of life in Mexican families and as an important point of comparison in our global mapping project.

In our look at Mexican families, we included questions about feelings of addiction, distraction, and conflict that have emerged as common themes in our global studies. With this Mexico study, we also added some new questions, asking parents and teens to describe the primary benefits of their device use, the ways in which teens use devices, and the ways in which parents and teens are trying to cut back on their device use. And after Common Sense's most recent report revealed the extent to which mobile devices are interrupting sleep, we asked Mexican parents and teens if they're waking up at night to check their phones for something other than the time.

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3. We Are Social. (2018, January 29). *Digital in 2018 in Mexico*. Retrieved from <https://www.slideshare.net/wearesocial/digital-in-2018-in-mexico-86862825>

4. Statista. (2019, January). *Global social network penetration rate as of January 2019, by region*. Retrieved from <https://www.statista.com/statistics/269615/social-network-penetration-by-region/>

5. We Are Social. (2018, January 29). *Digital in 2018 in Mexico*. Retrieved from <https://www.slideshare.net/wearesocial/digital-in-2018-in-mexico-86862825>



What did we discover? Mobile devices are reshaping daily life for Mexican parents and teens:

- Parents and teens are on their mobile phones early and often.
- The vast majority of parents and teens are distracted daily by their mobile devices.
- In many families, mobile devices are interrupting sleep.
- Most parents and teens feel that teens' use of mobile devices interferes with family activities.
- Parents are concerned about the amount of time teens spend on their devices, yet most families agree on the benefits, such as acquiring important tech skills, staying in touch with extended family, and keeping up with current events. Most parents and teens do not feel their device use is hurting family relationships.

Media and technology are clearly at the center of life for Mexican families just as they are for families in the U.S., the U.K., and Japan. When we examine the data across the four countries we've studied, it's clear that families are adapting to the ways in which devices are reshaping daily life and family activities. Some common, cross-cultural themes emerge: Most parents feel that their teens spend too much time on their devices and express concern about their own feelings of addiction and that of their teens.

As we have in all our global studies, we identified regional academic, market research, and public relations partners. In Mexico, we collaborated with faculty from Universidad Iberoamericana (IBERO), GfK Market Research, Loop Public Relations, the Common Sense Latino Program, and the USC Mexico City Office. We are deeply grateful for their collaboration, partnership, and insights.

At this extraordinary moment in history, with the ubiquity of mobile devices and the 24/7 access to content they offer, we hope to offer timely, relevant data that will encourage further interest, research, and conversations, locally and globally. Most importantly, we hope this research offers parents and teens insights to help them integrate technology into their lives in thoughtful and productive ways.



**Willow Bay**

*Dean, Annenberg School for  
Communication and Journalism,  
University of Southern California*



**James P. Steyer**

*Founder and CEO,  
Common Sense*



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**Two-thirds of teens say  
one of their favorite ways  
to communicate with  
friends is by text.**



# METHODOLOGY

This report is based on a representative online survey of 1,226 parents and teens consisting of pairs of parents ( $n=613$ ) and teens ( $n=613$ ) age 13 to 17 across Mexico. The survey was designed by USC Annenberg and Common Sense and administered online by GfK Market Research using its ISO 26362-certified Netquest Panel from May 15, 2019, through June 19, 2019. The full text of the questionnaire and corresponding data can be found at [annenberg.usc.edu/new-normal](http://annenberg.usc.edu/new-normal) and [commonsense.org/the-new-normal](http://commonsense.org/the-new-normal).

## Survey Sample

**Recruiting survey participants.** For this study, the sample was recruited from a non-probability-based online panel. Members of GfK's Netquest Panel, a closed, invitation-only panel of more than 300,000 people who reside in Mexico, were recruited using address-based sampling (ABS) methods. Once household members were recruited for this panel and assigned to this study sample, they were invited via email to take the survey.

**Participant screening and parent-teen matching.** Parents and teens in the same household each filled out a questionnaire separately. In prior reports in the New Normal series, families completed the survey together, which may have had an effect on how they responded to some questions. The new system was implemented to improve participation rates and encourage unbiased answers among parents and teens. GfK verified that respondents were parent-teen pairs living in the same household using codes embedded in each questionnaire.

To begin, GfK identified study participants from its Netquest Panel, who each received a personalized and unique code that contained a link to the questionnaire for parents (phase 1). This included a screening to confirm that the respondent was the parent of a teenager age 13 to 17 (13=20%, 14=19%, 15=21%, 16=21%, and 17=19%), as well as to meet preset quotas by

gender, geographical location, and income (see "Weighting," below). If the respondent met all the criteria and quality standards, they received the second personalized and unique link with the questionnaire for teens (phase 2). This allowed GfK to verify that the 613 teens who responded to the second survey link were the children of the 1,025 parent respondents who responded to the first survey link.

GfK enforced ongoing quality controls during the field study, including an audit that reviewed the data in detail to verify that there were no inconsistencies in the information provided by the respondent, such as, for example, selecting the same answer option for each question. In addition, GfK's survey platform contains a time-monitoring mechanism designed to identify responses that fell well below the established time range of the questionnaire. This quality control process was carried out both for the parents' and for the teens' surveys. If inconsistencies were found, the data was deleted and new respondents were identified. The incidence of teens' responses for the 1,025 surveyed parents was 60%, which resulted in a final sample of 613 total parent-teen pair responses.

**Participant compensation.** GfK operates an ongoing modest incentive program to encourage Netquest Panel participation. The incentive program includes special raffles and sweepstakes with both rewards and other prizes to be won.

**Weighting.** The use of probability-based recruitment methods for the Netquest Panel is designed to ensure that the resulting sample properly represents the Mexico population geographically and demographically. Study-specific post-stratification weights were applied once the data was finalized to adjust for any survey nonresponse and to ensure the proper distributions for the specific target population. This study sample was closely matched to the most recently available Mexico census data: ENDUTIH 2017,<sup>6</sup> Population Census 2010,<sup>7</sup> and Household Indicator AMAI 2018.<sup>8</sup> In doing so, we ensured that this study

6. INEGI. (2017). *Encuesta Nacional sobre Disponibilidad y Uso de las Tecnologías de la Información en los Hogares (ENDUTIH)*. Retrieved from <https://www.inegi.org.mx/programas/dutih/2017/>

7. Netquest. (n.d.) *El Panel Book de Netquest*. Retrieved from <https://www.netquest.com/es/descarga-netquest-panel-book>

8. Mexican Association of Marketing Research and Public Opinion Agencies (n.d.). *Niveles Socio Económicos*. Retrieved from <http://nse.amai.org>



was representative in terms of gender, age, and socioeconomic levels in the geographic regions that were surveyed, which included urban areas but not rural areas. (See tables below outlining demographics of survey sample by gender, region, and socioeconomic level [SEL].)

**Margin of error, design effect, and response rate.** The margin of error for the full sample at a 95% confidence level is  $\pm 2.83\%$ . The overall design effect for the survey is 1.40.

Gender	Actual quota		Population structure
	Number	Percentage	
Men	264	43%	49%
Women	338	55%	51%
Prefer not to indicate	11	2%	N/A
<b>Total</b>	<b>613</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Region	Respondents		Population	
	Number	Percentage	Structure	Density
Northwest	72	12%	12%	25 people/km <sup>2</sup>
North	119	19%	19%	25 people/km <sup>2</sup>
West	99	16%	16%	106 people/km <sup>2</sup>
Center	81	13%	13%	197 people/km <sup>2</sup>
Mexico City	146	24%	24%	5,964 people/km <sup>2</sup>
Southeast	96	16%	16%	56 people/km <sup>2</sup>
<b>Total</b>	<b>613</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	

Note: Mexico City includes the metropolitan area.

SEL	Actual quota		Population structure	Soft quota
	Number	Percentage		
A/B C+	207	34%	25%	150
C C-	190	31%	29%	174
D+ D E	216	35%	45%	200
<b>Total</b>	<b>613</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>524</b>

## Analyses and Presentation of Data in the Text

**Analyses.** In addition to providing descriptive findings for parents and teens in Mexico, the data was also analyzed by demographic group, including gender, SEL, and geographical location. Definitions of the income groupings are provided below.

**SEL categories.** In Mexico, households are classified into seven levels according to their capacity to satisfy the needs of their members. This classification is obtained by applying the AMAI rule for the SEL.<sup>9</sup>

To facilitate analysis, respondents were grouped into three SEL categories: “lower level” (households matching D+ D E SELs), “middle level” (households matching C C- SELs), and “higher level” (households matching A/B C+ SELs).

**Educational categories.** Educational category is often used as an SEL indicator. The questionnaire included a screening question asking parents to indicate the highest educational level completed. For purposes of data analysis, respondents were grouped into four categories:

- *Limited education level*, defined as those who completed primary school only (1%).
- *Moderate education level*, defined as those who completed middle or high school or baccalaureate (38%).
- *Normal/technical/professional education level* (57%).
- *High education level*, defined as those who completed a master’s degree or doctorate (4%).

**Geographical locations.** For the purposes of this study, GfK grouped respondents from across the 32 Mexican states into six geographical regions: Northwest, North, West, Center, Mexico City and Metropolitan Area, and Southeast.

The study includes respondents from each of the 32 states of the Mexican Republic belonging to urban areas only. The official (census) definition of “urban” in Mexico is an area with more than 2,500 people. Internet penetration in rural areas (less than 2,500 people) is rare or nonexistent and the main reason why the sample covers urban areas only.

9. Mexican Association of Marketing Research and Public Opinion Agencies (n.d.). *Distribución de los hogares del país según Nivel Socioeconómico*. Retrieved from <http://nse.amai.org/data/>.

**Percentages.** Percentages will not always add up to 100 due to rounding or multiple response options or because those who marked “don’t know” or did not respond are not included. “Nets,” such as the total agreeing with a statement either “strongly” or “somewhat,” may not reflect the totals of subitems due to rounding.

## Key Definitions

**Mobile devices.** For the purposes of this study, we define mobile devices as smartphones and tablets—portable devices that are internet-enabled.

**“Addiction.”** Across the New Normal global mapping study series, we asked parents and teens if they “feel addicted” to their mobile devices. We do not use the term “addiction” as a clinical diagnosis but rather to get at a perception about the presence of mobile devices in their lives and their impact on everyday family life.

**Cross-cultural comparisons.** This report includes a country-specific survey unique to Mexico and comparisons with past data collected in the U.S. (2019), the U.K. (2018), and Japan (2017). Each survey is based entirely on self-reports. Each of these studies was conducted among 600 or more separate, parent-teen pairs. While we have presented cultural comparisons among families in each country, we do so cautiously as there may be cohort differences resulting from when the surveys were conducted, including the evolving nature of the cultural conversation about technology use, changes in penetration rates, or wireless access.

Also, due to minor changes in methodology and question wording, as well as possible differences resulting from translation, comparisons are made with caution, and calculations for statistically significant differences among countries have not been completed.

## Survey Design and Development Across the Global Mapping Series

For certain topics, the current survey relies on a consistent set of questions initiated in the 2016 Common Sense reports,<sup>10</sup> which served as our initial benchmark. Guided in part by our regional partners, we adapt survey questions to reflect our growing understanding of the impact of these new technologies and add new ones as we expose additional lines of inquiry.

In particular we solicited input on the addition of new questions to reflect issues of cultural relevance in Mexico and capture with a more nuanced perspective the ways in which families engage with mobile devices.

We welcome further analysis and study of this data, which we hope serves to encourage further inquiry and discussion.

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10. Felt, L. J., & Robb, M. B. (2016). *Technology addiction: Concern, controversy, and finding balance*. San Francisco, CA: Common Sense Media. Retrieved from [https://www.commonsensemedia.org/sites/default/files/uploads/research/csm\\_2016\\_technology\\_addiction\\_research\\_brief\\_0.pdf](https://www.commonsensemedia.org/sites/default/files/uploads/research/csm_2016_technology_addiction_research_brief_0.pdf); and Lauricella, A. R., Cingel, D. P., Beaudoin-Ryan, L., Robb, M. B., Saphir, M., & Wartella, E. A. (2016). *The Common Sense census: Plugged-in parents of tweens and teens*. San Francisco, CA: Common Sense Media. Retrieved from [https://www.commonsensemedia.org/sites/default/files/uploads/research/common-sense-parent-census\\_whitepaper\\_new-for-web.pdf](https://www.commonsensemedia.org/sites/default/files/uploads/research/common-sense-parent-census_whitepaper_new-for-web.pdf)

# KEY FINDINGS

## 1. Mobile devices are rewiring daily life for teens and their parents.

Two-thirds of parents (71%) and teens (67%) in Mexico say they use their mobile device almost all the time. Close to half of teens (47%) and parents (46%) check their device several times an hour.

## 2. Most parents and teens are on their device early and often.

Thirty-two percent of teens check their device within five minutes of waking up in the morning, and seven in 10 teens (67%) check it within 30 minutes of waking up. Parents are not far behind: Almost one in four parents (24%) check their mobile device within five minutes of waking up, and more than half (57%) check it within a half hour.

## 3. Mobile devices are interrupting sleep for parents and teens alike.

During the night, more than a third of teens (35%) and parents (34%) wake up to check their device at least once for something other than the time: text messages, email, or social media.

## 4. Most teens and parents admit that their phones are a daily source of distraction.

Three in four teens (77%) and parents (75%) say they feel distracted by their mobile device at least once a day. The vast majority of parents (82%) say their teen is distracted daily, including more than two-thirds (69%) who say their teen is distracted several times a day. Over half of teens (56%) say their parents are distracted by their device daily.

## 5. Parents in Mexico are concerned about their teens' mobile device use.

Almost two-thirds of parents (64%) feel their teen spends too much time on their mobile device and believe they are “addicted” to their device (62%). Almost a third of teens (31%) think that their parent is “addicted” to their device.

## 6. There are many households where everyone “feels addicted” to their device.

Half of teens (50%) and almost half of parents (45%) say they “feel addicted” to their mobile device. Almost three-quarters (73%) of parents who “feel addicted” to their device have a child that “feels addicted,” too.



## **7. More teens prefer to communicate with friends via text.**

Two-thirds (67%) of teens say one of their favorite ways to communicate with friends is by text. Only half of teens (50%) say one of their favorite ways to communicate with friends is in person, through social media (49%), or by talking on the phone (40%).

## **8. The majority of parents and teens don't think device use is hurting their family relationships, but they admit there are negative effects on certain family activities.**

Most teens (71%) say that mobile devices have made no difference in their relationships with their parents, and 58% of parents agree. Still, most parents feel that their teen's use of mobile devices negatively affects family activities such as conversations (60%), quality time (64%), meals (63%), and activities (59%). More than half of teens also say that their use of devices has negatively affected the same family activities.

## **9. Still, most Mexican families agree on the benefits of mobile devices.**

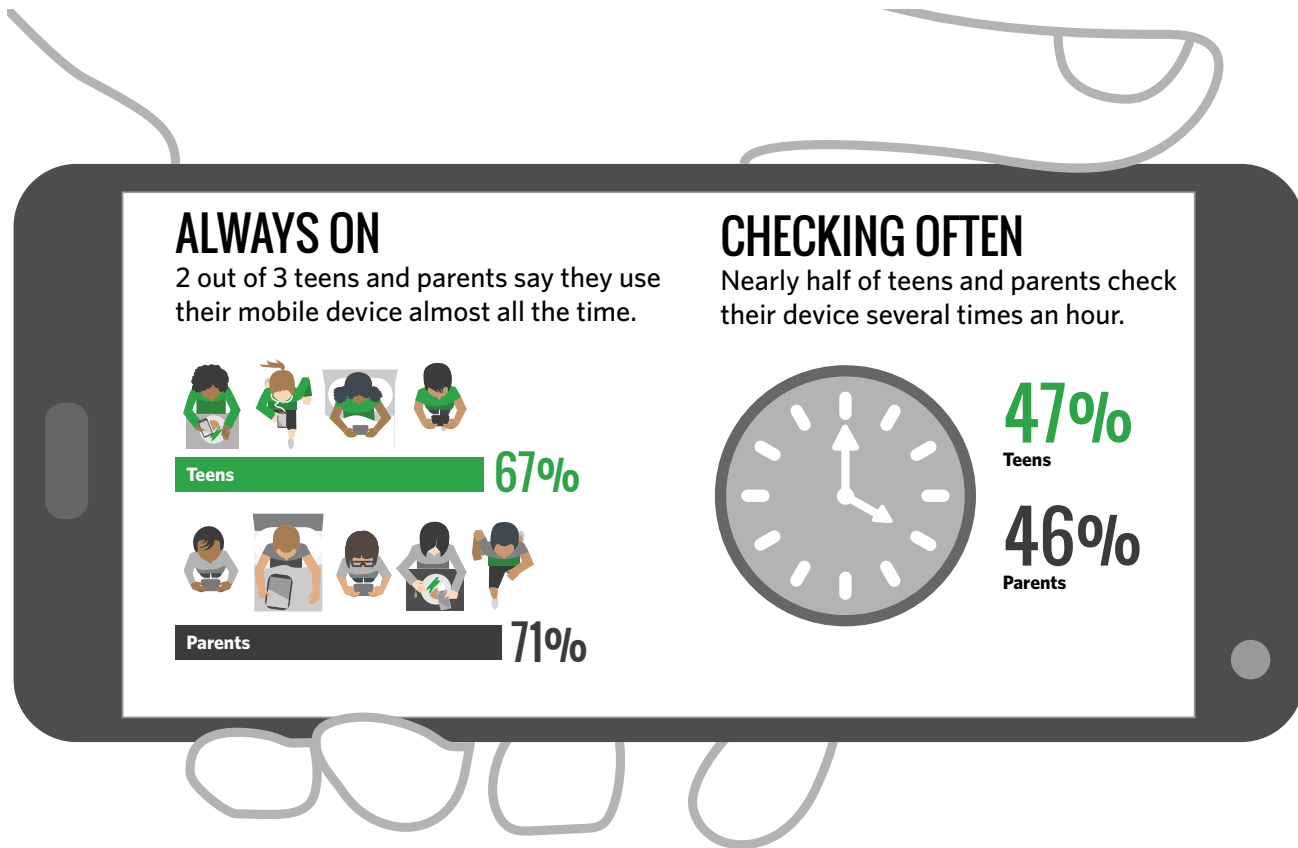
Most parents and teens in Mexico believe mobile devices help teens acquire important tech skills (83% and 91%, respectively), acquire skills that benefit teens at school (83% for both), prepare teens for work (65% and 74%, respectively), and allow teens to be well-informed about current events (78% and 84%, respectively).

Most parents and teens also agree that mobile devices help teens develop friendships (53% and 69%, respectively), allow teens to express themselves creatively (57% and 66%, respectively), and help teens pursue their hobbies and interests (59% and 73%, respectively).

In addition, most Mexican parents and teens consider ease of communication (70% and 78%, respectively) and staying in touch with extended family (62% and 61%, respectively) to be among the primary benefits of teens' mobile device use.

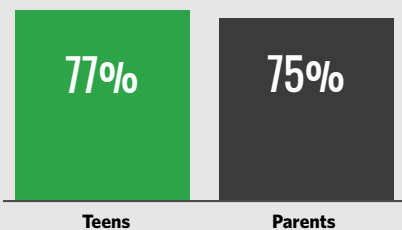
# THE NEW NORMAL **IN MEXICO**

**Rewiring daily life for teens and their parents**



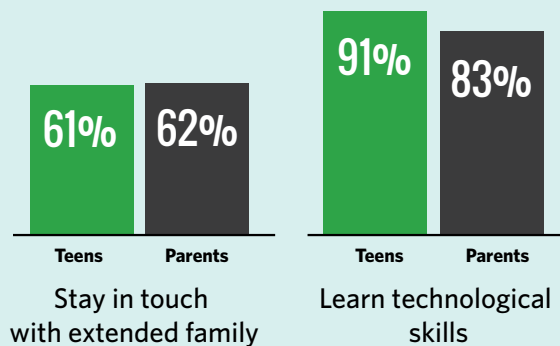
## DISTRACTED DAILY

"I feel distracted by my mobile device at least once a day."



## BENEFITS

Families agree that mobile devices help teens ...

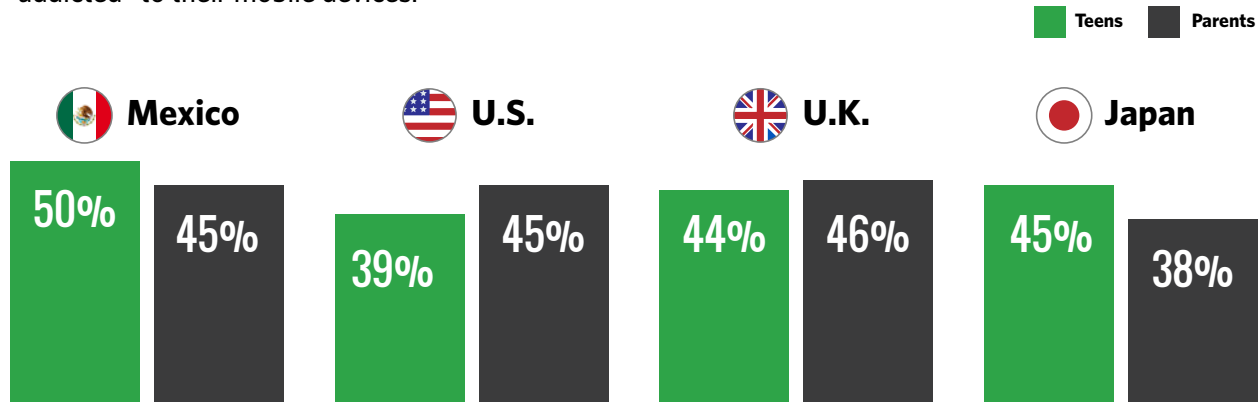


# THE NEW NORMAL **AROUND THE WORLD**

## Common themes across countries

### FEELING ADDICTED

Nearly half of teens and parents in all four countries report feeling “addicted” to their mobile devices.



### TIME SPENT

“My teen spends too much time on their mobile device.”



**64%**  
Mexico

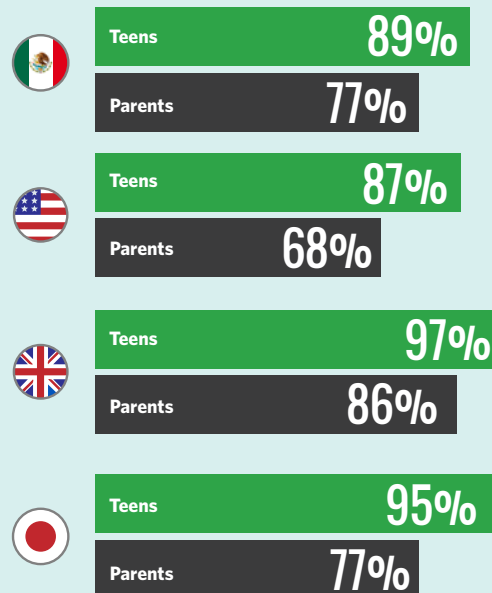
**68%**  
U.S.

**65%**  
U.K.

**52%**  
Japan

### RELATIONSHIPS

More than three quarters of parents and teens believe mobile devices have mainly helped or made no difference in their relationships.







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**If they had to go a day without their mobile device, almost two-thirds of teens say they would feel at least somewhat bored or anxious.**

# PART 1: THE NEW NORMAL IN MEXICO

## Rewiring Daily Life and Daily Routines

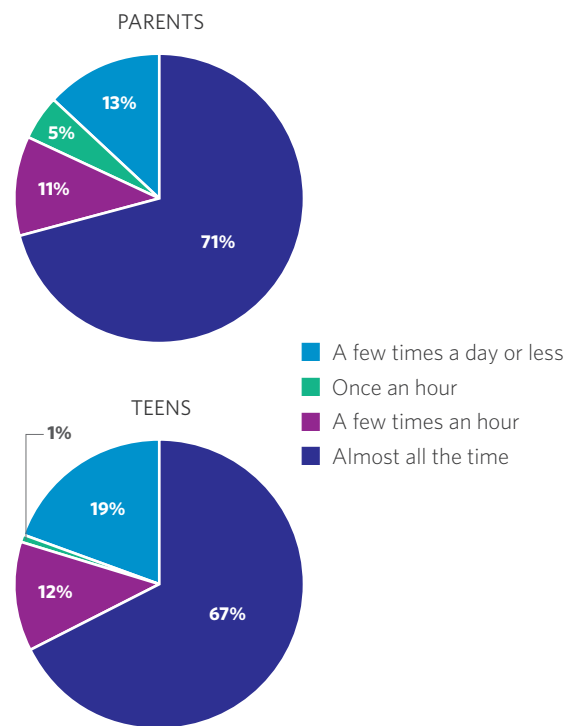
### Use and Purpose

- When asked how frequently they use their mobile device, two-thirds of parents (71%) and teens (67%) in Mexico said they use their mobile device “almost all the time” (see Figure 1).
- Close to half of teens (47%) and parents (46%) check their device several times an hour for texts, emails, and updates.

### Daily Routines

- When asked how frequently they feel the need to respond immediately to texts, social networking messages, or other notifications, more than half of teens (53%) and almost half of parents (48%) said “very often” or “always.” Only 2% of teens and parents said they *never* feel the need to respond immediately.
- Many families use their devices first thing in the morning. Thirty-two percent of teens check their device within five minutes of waking up, and seven in 10 teens (67%) check it within 30 minutes of waking up. Parents are not far behind: Almost one in four parents (24%) check their mobile device within five minutes of waking up, and more than half (57%) check it within a half hour (see Table 1).

FIGURE 1. How often parents and teens use their mobile device during a regular weekday



Note: Segments may not add to 100% due to rounding.

TABLE 1. Parents and teens who use a mobile device after waking up

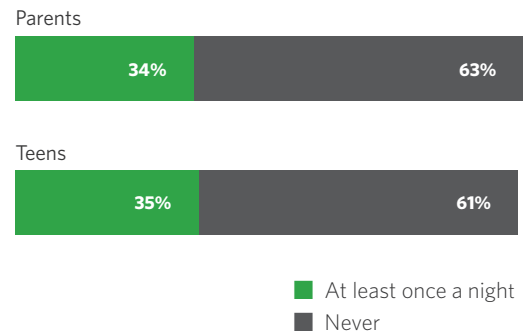
Percentage who use a device ... after waking up	Within 5 mins.	Within 30 mins.	Over 30 mins.
Parents	24%	57%	42%
Teens	32%	67%	33%

- Even at night, more than a third of teens (35%) and parents (34%) wake up to check their device at least once for something other than the time: text messages, email, or social media. Most teens (61%) and parents (63%), however, said that they sleep through the night without checking (see Figure 2).
- Most parents said they use their mobile device for social media (80%), making phone calls (76%), and chatting on messaging apps (73%). Only 65% said they use it for work purposes. Most teens said they use their device mostly for social media (76%), listening to music (70%), or chatting on messaging apps (69%). Only about a third (38%) said they use it for study purposes.

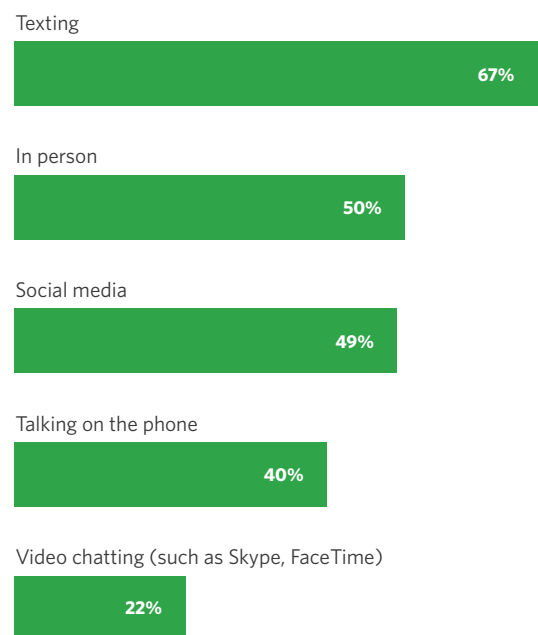
## Relationships

- When asked about the role of mobile devices in their social lives, more than a third of teens said mobile devices are “very” or “extremely” important to them for keeping up with friends on a daily basis (38%) and having meaningful conversations with them (45%). Expressing themselves creatively is “very” or “extremely” important to them, too (27%).
- Two-thirds (67%) of teens said one of their favorite ways to communicate with friends is by text. Only half of teens said one of their favorite ways to communicate with friends is in person (50%), through social media (49%), or by talking on the phone (40%) (see Figure 3).

**FIGURE 2. Parents and teens who wake up to check their mobile device after falling asleep for something other than the time**



**FIGURE 3. Teens who say ... is a favorite way to communicate with friends**



## Source of Distraction

- Most teens and parents reported that their mobile device is a significant source of distraction. Three in four teens (77%) and parents (75%) said they feel distracted by their mobile device at least once a day, including 61% of teens and 57% of parents who feel distracted multiple times a day (see Tables 2 and 3).
- When asked about their teens, the vast majority of parents (82%) said their teen is distracted daily, including more than two-thirds (69%) who said their teen is distracted several times a day. Over half (56%) of teens said their parents are distracted by their device daily.

**“We’re a new generation, right?  
We adapt to what we have, and it  
isn’t a bad thing. On the contrary,  
if it can help us not to get lost, to  
have fun, distract ourselves, and  
know what is going on, it doesn’t  
have to be a bad thing, right? To  
be looking at it constantly?”**

—Gabriela Almanza Caballero,  
Mexican student

**TABLE 2. Parents who feel distracted by their mobile device, by frequency and demographic**

Times per day	Total	Gender		Region						Socioeconomic level		
		Fathers	Mothers	NW	North	West	Center	Mexico City	SE	A/B C+	C C-	D+ D E
Multiple	<b>57%</b>	56%	58%	61%	62%	51%	60%	51%	59%	55%	60%	56%
Once or more	<b>75%</b>	73%	77%	75%	76%	71%	80%	72%	77%	75%	77%	73%
Less than once	<b>26%</b>	27%	22%	25%	23%	29%	20%	28%	22%	24%	23%	27%

**TABLE 3. Teens who feel distracted by their mobile device, by frequency and demographic**

Times per day	Total	Gender		Region						Socioeconomic level		
		Boys	Girls	NW	North	West	Center	Mexico City	SE	A/B C+	C C-	D+ D E
Multiple	<b>61%</b>	59%	63%	69%	65%	49%	60%	65%	58%	63%	65%	56%
Once or more	<b>77%</b>	73%	80%	79%	79%	71%	79%	77%	77%	79%	78%	73%
Less than once	<b>23%</b>	26%	20%	21%	21%	28%	20%	23%	23%	20%	22%	27%

Note: Mexico City includes the metropolitan area.

# Feeling “Addicted”

We asked teens and parents if they feel “addicted” to their mobile device. Note that we do not use the term “addiction” as a clinical diagnosis but rather to get at a perception about the presence of mobile devices in their lives and their impact on everyday family life.

- Half of teens (50%) and almost half of parents (45%) said they feel “addicted” (see Tables 4 and 5).
- Sixty-two percent of parents said they feel their teen is “addicted” to their mobile device, but significantly fewer teens (31%) said the same about their parents.

- Almost three-quarters (73%) of parents who said they feel “addicted” to their device have a child that feels “addicted,” too, creating households where the entire family is more likely to feel “addicted” to their mobile devices (see Table 6).

TABLE 6. Parents who feel “addicted” to their mobile device, by child’s feelings of addiction

Has child who ...	Yes	No
Feels “addicted” to mobile device	73%	27%
Does not feel “addicted” to mobile device	17%	83%

TABLE 4. Parents who feel “addicted” to their mobile device, by demographic

	Total	Gender		Region						Socioeconomic level		
		Fathers	Mothers	NW	North	West	Center	Mexico City	SE	A/B C+	C C-	D+ D E
Yes	45%	45%	44%	35%	48%	32%	47%	50%	50%	48%	46%	40%
No	55%	55%	56%	65%	52%	68%	53%	50%	50%	52%	54%	60%

TABLE 5. Teens who feel “addicted” to their mobile device, by demographic

	Total	Gender		Region						Socioeconomic level		
		Boys	Girls	NW	North	West	Center	Mexico City	SE	A/B C+	C C-	D+ D E
Yes	50%	48%	51%	50%	50%	39%	49%	57%	49%	56%	47%	46%
No	50%	52%	49%	50%	50%	61%	51%	43%	51%	44%	53%	54%

Note: Mexico City includes the metropolitan area.



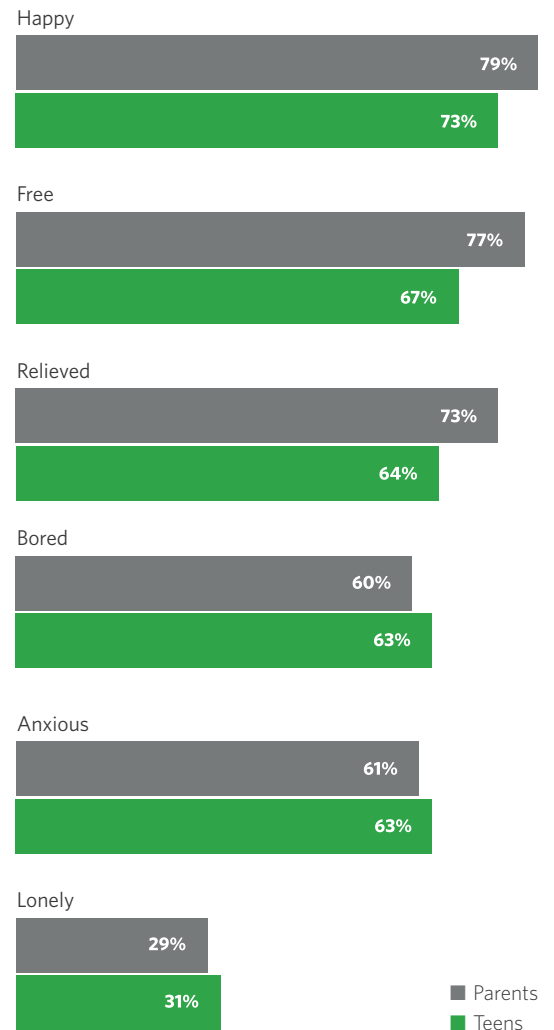
## A Day Without Devices

- If they had to go a day without their mobile device, almost two-thirds of teens said they would feel at least somewhat bored (63%), or anxious (63%), or lonely (31%). More than two-thirds of teens said they would feel at least somewhat happy (73%), free (67%), or relieved (64%) as well (see Figure 4).
- Sixty-one percent of parents said they might feel at least somewhat anxious, but more parents said they would feel at least somewhat happy (79%), free (77%), or relieved (73%) (see Figure 4).
- More than two-thirds of parents and teens said they would “not at all” feel lonely (67% and 66%, respectively).

**“We know we are addicted to this because you can watch TV, you can watch videos, you get informed. It’s absolutely a whole new world.”**

—Gabriela Almanza Caballero,  
Mexican student

**FIGURE 4. Parents and teens who would feel ... if they had to go a day without their mobile device**





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**A vast majority of parents  
in Mexico report being  
actively engaged in  
mediating their teen's  
mobile device use.**

# Family Life: Adopting and Adapting

## Time on Mobile Devices

- When asked to reflect on a regular weekday, almost half of parents (44%) and teens (45%) said they feel they spend “too much time” on their mobile device. Yet, almost the same number of respondents (47% and 49%, respectively) said they feel they spend the “right amount of time” on their mobile device (see Tables 7 and 8).
- Parents from the higher socioeconomic level were 14 points more likely to say they spend too much time on mobile devices than parents from the lower socioeconomic level (50% vs. 36%).
- A large majority of teens (74%) and parents (68%) who said they feel they spend “too much time” on their mobile device were more likely to feel the need to immediately respond to text messages, social networking messages, or other notifications on mobile devices (see Table 9). By comparison, only 40% of teens and 37% of parents who said they feel they spend the “right amount of time” on their devices also said they feel the need to respond immediately to such alerts on their devices.

**TABLE 9. Parents and teens who feel the need to immediately respond, by how much time they feel they spend on their devices**

Spend ... on their mobile device	Parents	Teens
Too much time	68%	74%
Right amount of time	37%	40%
Too little time	15%	3%

- Ninety-five percent of teens and 90% of parents who said they feel they spend too much time on their devices also feel distracted at least once a day (see Table 10).

**TABLE 10. Parents and teens who feel distracted daily, by how much time they feel they spend on their devices**

Spend ... on their mobile device	Parents	Teens
Too much time	90%	95%
Right amount of time	65%	67%
Too little time	55%	47%

**TABLE 7. Parents who think they spend too much, too little, or the right amount of time on their devices**

Amount of time	Total	Gender		Region						Socioeconomic level		
		Fathers	Mothers	NW	North	West	Center	Mexico City	SE	A/B C+	C C-	D+ D E
Too much	<b>44%</b>	44%	44%	43%	47%	42%	46%	44%	40%	50%	46%	36%
Right amount	<b>47%</b>	49%	45%	46%	50%	49%	40%	48%	49%	47%	48%	47%
Too little	<b>9%</b>	7%	11%	11%	3%	8%	15%	8%	11%	3%	6%	17%

**TABLE 8. Teens who think they spend too much, too little, or the right amount of time on their devices**

Amount of time	Total	Gender		Region						Socioeconomic level		
		Boys	Girls	NW	North	West	Center	Mexico City	SE	A/B C+	C C-	D+ D E
Too much	<b>45%</b>	43%	47%	49%	48%	43%	40%	48%	42%	51%	44%	40%
Right amount	<b>49%</b>	51%	47%	46%	46%	47%	49%	49%	54%	46%	51%	49%
Too little	<b>6%</b>	6%	6%	6%	6%	9%	11%	3%	4%	2%	5%	11%

Note: Mexico City includes the metropolitan area.



## Cutting Back

- Two in five parents (42%) said they “very often” or “always” try to cut back on mobile device use, although slightly more say just “occasionally” (44%) (see Table 11). A similar number of teens said they try to cut back “very often” or “always” (39%) or “occasionally” (42%). One in five teens (20%) said they “rarely” or “never” try to cut back.
- Parents and teens use a variety of measures to try to cut back on their use of mobile devices; the most popular strategy for parents and teens is to put away their device (46%), followed by technological solutions such as turning off notifications (34%); activating Do Not Disturb, airplane, or silent mode (22% and 21%, respectively); limiting the apps on their home screen (14% and 15%, respectively); or using a screen time tracking app (5%). Almost one in four said they charge their device outside the bedroom (23% and 24%, respectively).

**TABLE 11. Parents and teens who try to cut back on the amount of time spent on mobile devices**

	Always/ Very often	Occasionally	Rarely/ Never
Parents	42%	44%	14%
Teens	39%	42%	20%

## Concerns About Device Use

- Parents are concerned about their teen’s mobile device use. Almost two-thirds (64%) said they feel their teen spends “too much time” on their device (see Table 12), and 42% said their teen uses their device “almost all the time.”
- When asked about their parent’s use, less than one-third (28%) of teens said they feel their parent spends “too much time” on their device (see Table 13).
- A majority of teens (60%) said parents would be a lot more worried if they knew what actually happens on social media. Only 40% of teens said parents worry too much about their social media use.

**TABLE 12. Parents who think their teen spends too much, too little, or the right amount of time on their mobile device**

Time spent	Total	Gender		Region						Socioeconomic level		
		Fathers	Mothers	NW	North	West	Center	Mexico City	SE	A/B C+	C C-	D+ D E
Too much	<b>64%</b>	67%	61%	65%	62%	62%	69%	64%	60%	66%	65%	60%
Right amount	<b>30%</b>	30%	31%	31%	29%	32%	22%	32%	35%	30%	29%	32%
Too little	<b>6%</b>	3%	8%	4%	9%	6%	9%	4%	4%	4%	6%	8%

**TABLE 13. Teens who think their parent spends too much, too little, or the right amount of time on their mobile device**

Time spent	Total	Gender		Region						Socioeconomic level		
		Boys	Girls	NW	North	West	Center	Mexico City	SE	A/B C+	C C-	D+ D E
Too much	<b>28%</b>	22%	32%	29%	24%	22%	28%	35%	27%	29%	27%	27%
Right amount	<b>45%</b>	48%	42%	42%	48%	45%	41%	42%	50%	48%	50%	37%
Too little	<b>27%</b>	30%	25%	29%	29%	32%	31%	23%	23%	23%	23%	36%

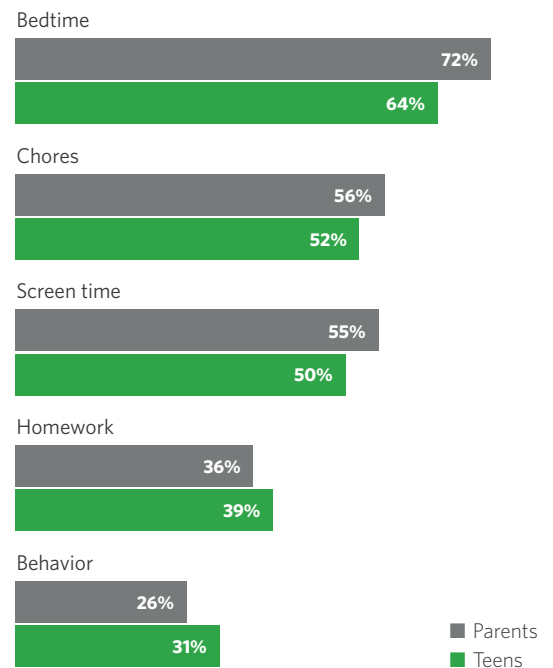
Note: Mexico City includes the metropolitan area.



## Source of Conflict

- Mobile devices are a source of conflict for some families. Almost one-third of parents (30%) said they argue once a day or more with their teen about their use of their mobile device. An additional 40% said they argue once a week or more. Only 6% of parents said they never argue about device use.
- Fewer teens reported arguing with their parents about mobile devices. Only 19% said they argue with their parents about their use of their mobile device once a day or more. Thirty percent of teens said they argue once a week or more. Twenty-eight percent of teens said they never argue with their parents about their mobile device.
- Parents who said they believe their teen is “addicted” to their mobile device were more likely than those who said they didn’t feel their teen is “addicted” to argue with their child once a day or more (36% vs. 20%).
- When asked what leads to regular conflicts in the home, parents said they mostly argue with their teens over bedtime (72%) and chores (56%), but the amount of screen time ranks third (55%) before homework (36%) (see Figure 5).
- When we asked teens the same question, they agreed, ranking the sources of conflict as follows: bedtime (64%) and chores (52%), then screen time (50%) and homework (39%) (see Figure 5).

**FIGURE 5. Causes of regular difficulties or conflicts between parents and teens**



**“My parents are very concerned about this. They are all the time telling us, ‘Oh, don’t use the phone while we are eating together. Hey, we are on vacation. Don’t use the phone, please’ and I agree. I think there are priorities and we have to be intelligent to know when and where to use our phones.”**

—Guadalupe Mireya Espinosa Cortés,  
Mexican student

Managing Device Use

- A vast majority of parents in Mexico reported being actively engaged in mediating their teen’s mobile device use (see Figure 6). Three in four parents (76%) and almost two-thirds of teens (66%) said they have family rules regarding the use of mobile devices.
- Three in four parents (76%) said they “sometimes,” “often,” or “very often” remove their teen’s mobile device as punishment for bad behavior, impose restrictions on their teen’s use of their mobile device (74%), check which friends or contacts they add (72%), or follow them on social networks (71%). Many said they “sometimes,” “often,” or “very often” use devices to monitor their teen’s location (56%), review their teen’s messages (55%), or use parental controls (47%). More than half (55%) said they “sometimes,” “often,” or “very often” incentivize their teen by promising device use as a reward for good behavior, and 78% said they suggest websites or apps they think would be good for their teen (see Figure 6).
- When asked about their parents, fewer teens said their parent “sometimes,” “often,” or “very often” impose restrictions on their mobile device use (60%). Sixty-seven percent said their parent “sometimes,” “often,” or “very often” follows them on social networks, and 61% said their parent “sometimes,” “often,” or “very often” remove their device as punishment for bad behavior. Fewer teens said their parent “sometimes” or “often” uses parental controls (32%) or monitors their location (49%). Over half of teens said their parents “sometimes,” “often,” or “very often” suggest websites or apps (61%) or promise device use as a reward for good behavior (50%).

Impact on Family Relationships

- The majority of parents and teens said they don’t think device use is hurting their family relationships but report that there are negative effects on certain family activities. Most teens (71%) said that mobile devices have had no impact on their relationship with their parents, and 58% of parents agree (see Table 14).
- Nearly one-fourth of parents (23%) and 11% of teens said mobile devices have hurt their relationship with each other, but almost as many parents and teens (19% and 18%, respectively) said they feel they have helped.
- Still, most parents said they feel their teen’s use of their mobile device negatively affects family activities such as

FIGURE 6. Parents who do the following to manage their teens’ device use

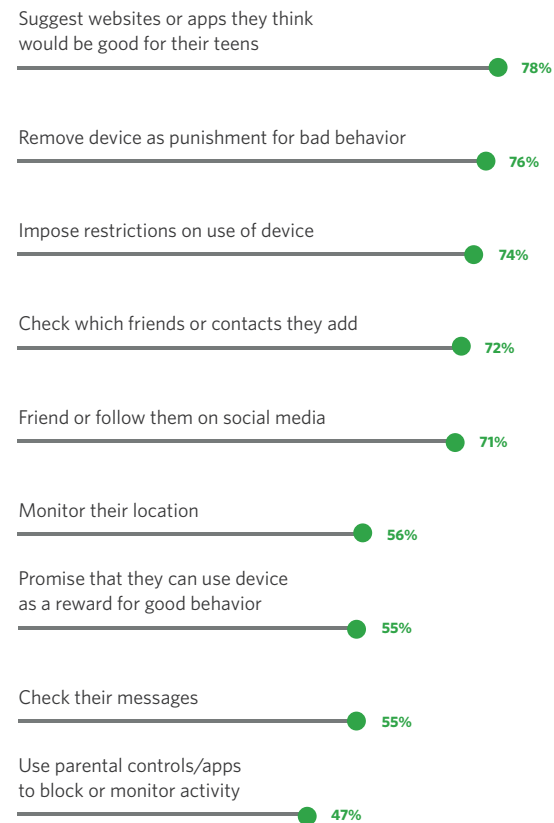


TABLE 14. Parents and teens who believe the other’s mobile device use has helped or hurt their relationship

	Parents	Teens
Mainly helped	19%	18%
Made no difference	58%	71%
Mainly hurt	23%	11%

conversations (60%), quality time (64%), meals (63%), and activities (59%).

- More than half of teens also said that their own use of their device negatively affects family conversations (52%), quality time (60%), meals (58%), and activities (52%).
- When asked about their parent's use of their mobile device, many teens said they feel it negatively affects family conversation (42%), quality time (47%), meals (42%), and activities (41%).

## Benefits of Mobile Device Use

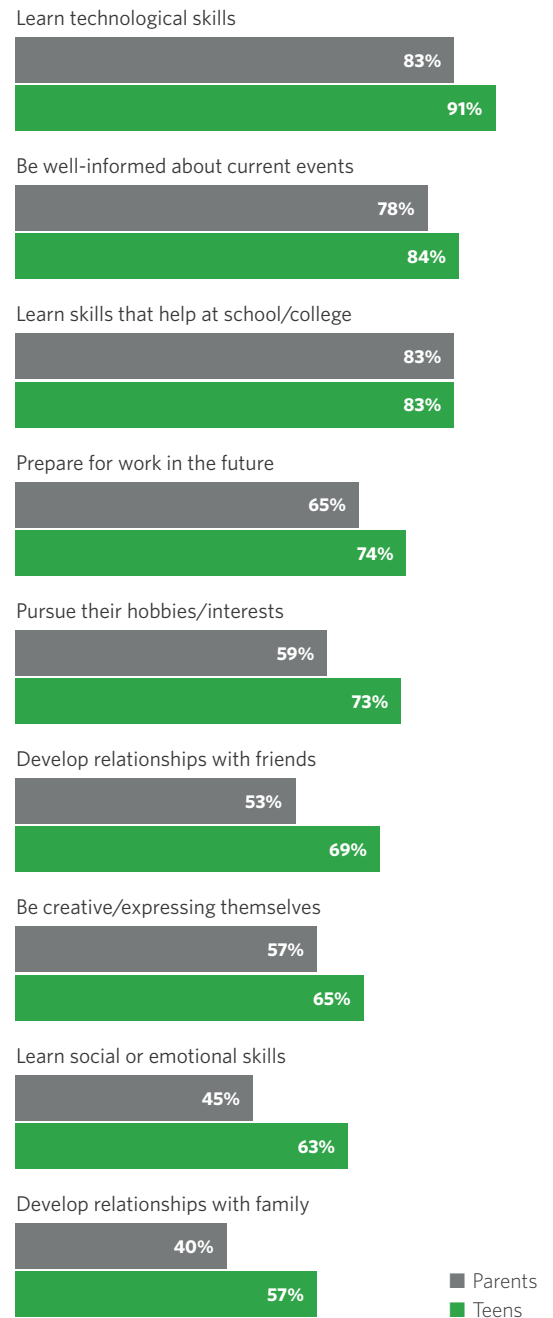
The vast majority of Mexican families agree on the benefits of mobile devices.

- Most parents and teens in Mexico said they believe mobile devices help teens acquire important tech skills (83% and 91%, respectively), acquire skills that benefit teens at school (83% for both), allow teens to be well-informed about current events (78% and 84%, respectively), and prepare teens for work (65% and 74%, respectively) (see Figure 7).
- Most parents and teens also said that mobile devices help teens pursue their hobbies and interests (59% and 73%, respectively), help teens develop friendships (53% and 69%, respectively), and allow teens to express themselves creatively (57% and 65%, respectively) (see Figure 7).
- In addition, most Mexican parents and teens said they consider ease of communication (70% and 78%, respectively) and staying in touch with extended family (62% and 61%, respectively) to be among the primary benefits of teens' mobile device use (see Table 15).

**TABLE 15. Parents' and teens' perceptions of mobile device use benefits**

	Parents	Teens
Communicating easily	70%	78%
Staying in touch with extended family	62%	61%
Learning	49%	30%
Having something fun to do	37%	41%
Staying connected	32%	40%
Finding their way using GPS/maps	26%	36%
Feeling independent	12%	7%
Safety	10%	7%
Other	2%	1%

**FIGURE 7. Parents and teens who believe that teens' mobile device use has helped ...**



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**Almost three-quarters of parents who say they “feel addicted” to their device have a child that “feels addicted”, too, creating households where the entire family is more likely to “feel addicted” to their mobile devices.**





# PART 2: THE NEW NORMAL AROUND THE WORLD

## Cross-Cultural Comparison

### Mexico Insights, as Compared to the United States, the United Kingdom, and Japan\*

When we compare data across the four countries, the habits and attitudes of Mexican families are distinct in the following ways:

- More Mexican teens said they spend too much time on their mobile device and “feel addicted” to it (see Figure 8).
- More Mexican parents and teens said they feel distracted at least once a day by their own mobile device (see Figure 9).
- More Mexican parents also feel their teen is distracted by their use of their mobile device daily (see Figure 10).

FIGURE 8. Teens’ feelings about their mobile devices

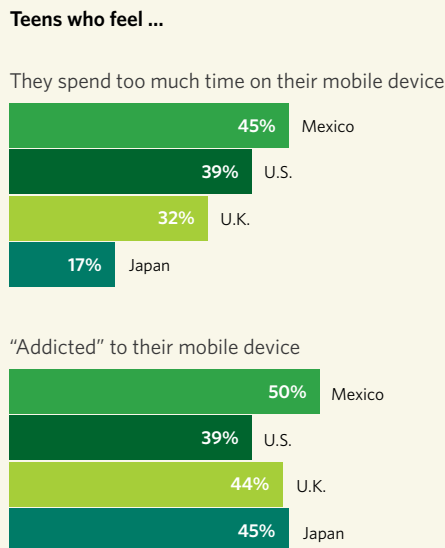


FIGURE 9. Parents and teens who feel distracted daily by their own mobile device

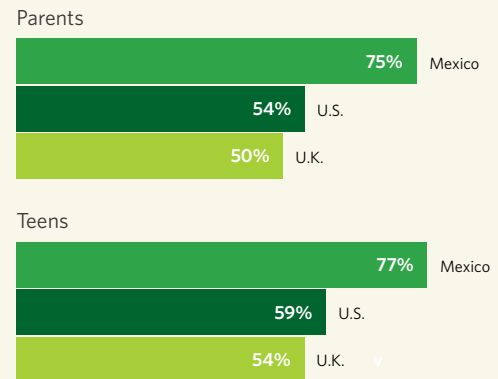
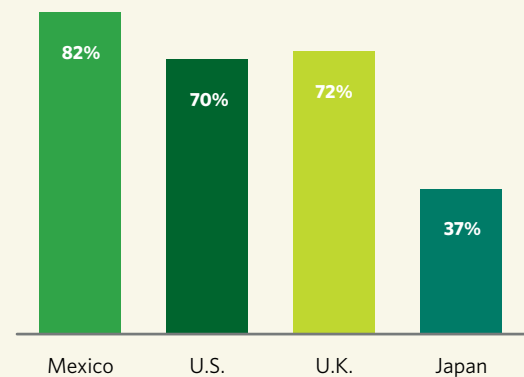


FIGURE 10. Parents who feel their teen is distracted by their mobile device at least once a day



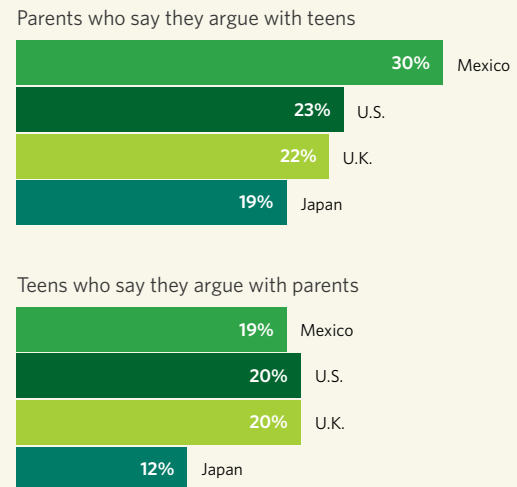
\*Mexico and U.S. data is from 2019 surveys. The U.K. survey was conducted in 2018 and Japan's in 2017. Some questions were not asked in the Japan survey and so are not presented.

- More Mexican parents and teens said they “very often” try to cut back the amount of time they spend on their mobile device (Parents: 33% in Mexico vs. 12% in the U.S., 16% in the U.K., and 4% in Japan; Teens: 29% in Mexico vs. 7% in the U.S., 8% in the U.K., and 3% in Japan).
- More Mexican parents said they argue with their teen at least once a day about their use of their mobile device (see Figure 11).
- More Mexican parents and teens said they have family rules regarding the use of mobile devices (see Table 16).
- When compared to parents in the U.K., more Mexican parents said their teen’s use of mobile devices has negatively affected family meals, conversations, activities, and trips (see Figure 12).

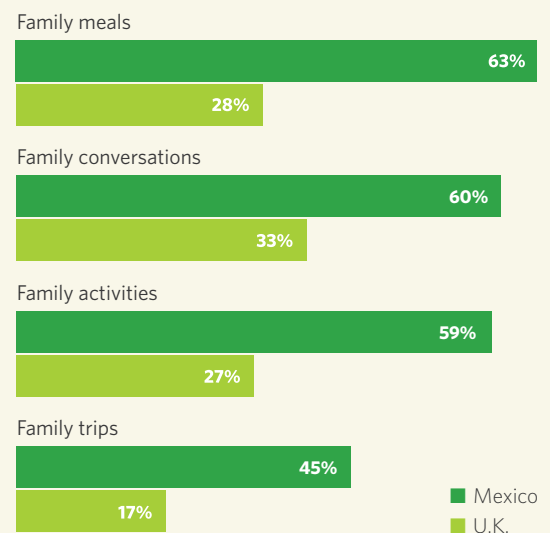
**TABLE 16. Parents and teens who say they have family rules regarding mobile device use**

	Mexico	U.S.	U.K.	Japan
Parents	76%	68%	66%	58%
Teens	66%	61%	62%	54%

**FIGURE 11. Parents and teens who say they argue with the other daily about mobile device use**



**FIGURE 12. Parents who say their teen’s mobile device use has hurt “a little” or “a lot” during ...**



## Common Themes Across Mexico, the United States, the United Kingdom, and Japan\*

When we compare data across the four countries, some common themes emerge:

- Close to two-thirds of teens in Mexico, the U.S., and the U.K. said they use their devices within 30 minutes of waking up. A third or more of teens in all three countries said they use them within five minutes of waking up (see Table 17).
- Parents are not far behind. On average, well over half of parents in Mexico, the U.S., and the U.K. said they use their device within 30 minutes of waking up. Approximately one in four parents in these three countries said they use their device within five minutes of waking up (see Table 17).
- Across all four countries, the majority of parents and the vast majority of teens said that mobile devices have made no difference to their family relationships (see Table 18).
- Most parents in the four participating countries said they feel their teen spends too much time on their mobile device (64% in Mexico, 68% in the U.S., 65% in the U.K., and 53% in Japan). Most teens disagreed, saying they feel they spend the “right amount of time” or “too little time” on them (55% in Mexico, 58% in the U.S., 68% in the U.K., and 70% in Japan).
- More than 60% of parents in Mexico (62%), the U.S. (61%), and the U.K. (63%), and Japan (61%) said they feel their teen is “addicted” to their device. Many parents said they “feel addicted” themselves: Mexico (45%), the U.S. (45%), the U.K. (46%), and Japan (38%). About a third of teens in the four participating countries said they feel their parent is “addicted” to their mobile device: Mexico (31%), the U.S. (38%), the U.K. (35%), and Japan (27%).
- More than half of teens in Mexico, the U.S., and the U.K. “very often” or “always” feel the need to respond immediately to texts, social networking messages, or other notifications (see Figure 13).

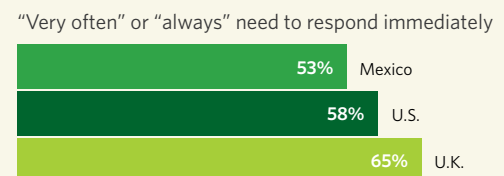
**TABLE 17. Parents and teens who use a mobile device within ... of waking up**

	Mexico	U.S.	U.K.
<b>Parents</b>			
• 5 minutes	24%	23%	27%
• 30 minutes	57%	62%	72%
<b>Teens</b>			
• 5 minutes	32%	32%	48%
• 30 minutes	67%	64%	79%

**TABLE 18. How parents and teens feel the other’s use of their mobile device has affected their relationship**


	Mexico	U.S.	U.K.	Japan
<b>Parents</b>				
• Mainly helped	19%	13%	15%	13%
• Made no difference	58%	55%	71%	64%
• Mainly hurt	23%	28%	15%	23%
<b>Teens</b>				
• Mainly helped	18%	15%	14%	15%
• Made no difference	71%	72%	83%	80%
• Mainly hurt	11%	9%	3%	6%

**FIGURE 13. Teens’ need to respond immediately to texts, social networking messages, or other notifications**



\*Mexico and U.S. data is from 2019 surveys. The U.K. survey was conducted in 2018 and Japan's in 2017. Some questions were not asked in the Japan survey and so are not presented.



A photograph of a middle-aged man with a grey beard and a young woman with long dark hair looking at a smartphone together. The man is on the left, wearing a green shirt, and the woman is on the right, wearing a blue polka-dot top. They are standing in front of a light blue building with arched doorways. The woman is holding the phone, and the man is pointing at the screen.

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**Most parents and teens say they agree that mobile devices help teens pursue their hobbies and interests, help teens develop friendships, and allow teens to express themselves creatively.**



# CONCLUSION

The ubiquity of mobile devices and the rising power of digital and social media are changing the way we engage, not only with the world around us, but also with the people who are closest to us. These shifts are happening faster and more dramatically than any change in recent history.

At this extraordinary time, when parents are facing unprecedented challenges in terms of navigating both their children's and their own mobile device use, we are pleased to present this snapshot of Mexican parents' and teens' mobile device habits, attitudes, and opinions set in a cross-cultural context.

A few limitations must be noted:

**Internet access.** While this survey could be answered from any computer, smartphone, or tablet and is supported by any operating system, only 66% of the population in Mexico has internet access.<sup>11</sup> Therefore, this study is not indicative of the attitudes of the total population of Mexico.

**Geographical locations.** We did not have any respondents from rural areas because of rare or nonexistent internet penetration in those areas.

**Translation.** As was the case with our Japan study in 2017, elements of this study were translated twice. First the Mexico questionnaire was translated from English to Spanish by GfK and audited by Universidad Iberoamericana, USC Annenberg, and USC Mexico City. The final Mexico report was initially translated from English to Spanish by Maria Lorena Cerón, and then it was copy-edited and revised by the Common Sense Latino Program with the same quality control measures in place. Despite this thorough process, we recognize that certain language nuances may have been lost in translation and possibly affected the interpretation of question and answer options.

**Updated methodology.** As a result of the improved methodology, both parent and teen participants had the opportunity to complete the survey at any time of the day, regardless of whether or not their child/parent was at home. This increased flexibility often leads to increased survey response and completion rates.

By separating out the teen questionnaire, we sought to avoid the bias that could potentially exist if a teen were to answer questions about their parents in front of them and vice versa. While it may have affected answers somewhat, we hope this led respondents to provide more honest answers about their personal attitudes toward mobile devices, as well as their perceptions of their family member's habits.

**Country-specific questions.** In preparation for each study, we sought the input of regional academic and market research experts who helped us ensure that while a core set of survey questions remained intact, we included country-specific questions that would help us unpack culturally relevant nuances regarding mobile device use among family members. Not all questions in the surveys allow for cross-cultural comparisons (see "Cross-cultural comparison," below). Also, it is likely that the regional news environment and country-specific cultural conversations about technology adoption and use provide a distinct context for each study, which may affect how the study is perceived.

**Cross-cultural comparison.** This study draws on data collected in Mexico (2019), the United States (2019), the United Kingdom (2018), and Japan (2017). Previous studies in the New Normal series used U.S. data published by Common Sense Media in 2016. While we have presented cultural comparisons among families in each country, we do so cautiously as there may be cohort differences resulting from when the surveys were conducted. We also recognize that the global conversation about "technology addiction" has evolved from the time we began publishing these reports in 2016 and may reflect different understandings of the term.

As we continue to advance our global mapping project to other countries and regions, our goal remains to spark interest, research, and cross-cultural dialogue. Ultimately, we hope to help guide families around the world toward healthy use and balance in today's interconnected communities.

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11. INEGI; Instituto Federal de Telecomunicaciones de México. (2019, April). *Encuesta Nacional sobre Disponibilidad y Uso de Tecnologías de la Información en los Hogares (ENDUTIH)*. Retrieved from [https://www.inegi.org.mx/contenidos/saladeprensa/boletines/2019/OtrTemEcon/ENDUTIH\\_2018.pdf](https://www.inegi.org.mx/contenidos/saladeprensa/boletines/2019/OtrTemEcon/ENDUTIH_2018.pdf)

**San Francisco Headquarters**

650 Townsend Street, Suite 435  
San Francisco, CA 94103  
(415) 863-0600

**Washington, D.C. Office**

2200 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
4th Floor East  
Washington, D.C. 20037  
(202) 350-9992

**New York Office**

575 Madison Avenue  
New York, NY 10022  
(212) 315-2138

**Los Angeles Office**

1100 Glendon Avenue, 17th Floor  
Los Angeles, CA 90024  
(310) 689-7535

**Arizona Office**

2201 E. Camelback Road, Suite 403B  
Phoenix, AZ 85016

**London Office**

Exmouth House  
3/11 Pine Street  
Farringdon, London EC1R 0JH  
United Kingdom

[www.commonsense.org](http://www.commonsense.org)

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**USC**  
**Annenberg**  
School for Communication  
and Journalism

3630 Watt Way  
Los Angeles, CA 90089  
(213) 740-6180

[annenberg.usc.edu](http://annenberg.usc.edu)

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