



DID YOU KNOW?

About Children Aged 7-14

10 Insights into Children's Viewing of Films and TV Series

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Did You Know? About Children Aged 7-14 is the Danish Film Institute's first study of Danish children's consumption of films and TV series. The study aims to provide insight into children's viewing habits, attitudes and expectations when it comes to fiction, as compared with gaming, social media and the like. The study also provides insight into what motivates children aged 7-14 to go to the cinema or watch films and series at home, and what expectations they have for the different formats and for Danish fiction in general.

The study is based on more than 1,600 questionnaire interviews conducted online (CAWI) with an approximately representative cross-section of children aged 7-14. The data are weighted, so that there is a comparable distribution of responses from boys and girls in each age group. Because of the target group's age, the interviews were partly parent-assisted.

The survey was conducted in the period from 17 March to 12 April 2020. Since the data collection coincided with the lockdown of Denmark in connection with Covid-19, the respondents in the questionnaire were asked to base their responses on their "normal" behaviour before the lockdown.

The 10 key insights of the study are presented here:

#1 Children watch films at least as often as adults do, similar to young adults.

Across cinema viewing and home viewing, 14% of 7-14-year-olds indicate that they watch films daily or almost daily, a rate that rises to 58% for weekly viewing and 84% for monthly viewing. The levels mirror the figures from a corresponding study from 2019 of adult audiences (+15). In other words, children's film viewing resembles that of adults, especially that of young adults aged 15-25.

#2 Cinemagoing is a high priority. Almost half of the children go to the cinema at least once every quarter.

When asked what they would rather spend time on when they have time to spare, the 7-14-year-olds name going to the cinema as their top priority (27%), closely followed by gaming (26%). The responses show a big difference between genders, with 32% of girls giving the highest priority to cinemagoing, while the figure is 22% for boys, whose top priority is gaming. Almost half of the children (47%) go to the movies every quarter, roughly equivalent to 15-25-year-olds (51%), though a bit higher than for adult audiences overall (35%). Over the course of a year, practically all children go to the cinema (92%), which is substantially higher than for adults overall (67%). There are no significant differences nationwide in terms of cinemagoing, though children in big cities tend to go to the movies more often.

#3 Children are big consumers of fiction TV series, watching them much more often than adults do.

Almost half (47%) of all children aged 7-14 watch TV series daily or almost daily. That is substantially higher than for adult audiences, since a corresponding study for adults (15+) from 2019 shows that every fifth respondent (19%) watches series daily or

almost daily. In particular, girls aged 10-14 are ultra-frequent viewers of series, with 57% responding that they watch series daily or almost daily. A decline in viewing is observed among boys in the same age group, however. The rate of boys who watch series daily or almost daily drops from 47% for 7-9-year-olds to 35% for 10-14-year-olds, which may be related to the increase in daily gaming among boys in that age range.

#4 Children use the same streaming services as adults.

Children's undisputed favourites among streaming services are 1) Netflix, 2) Viaplay and 3) DR TV, the same three services adults use most, though Viaplay and DR TV switch places for adult audiences. While 10-14-year-olds use Netflix and Viaplay to watch films slightly more than series, it is the other way around when it comes to DR TV, where series viewing slightly outscores film viewing. This mirrors the fact that more series than feature film are available on DR TV.

#5 Children watch films with others, but tend to watch series by themselves.

When children watch films, they often watch them together with their parents or siblings, while they more often watch series alone. Grandparents and grownups in general constitute a very small share across formats and viewing situations. Around the age of 9-10, children start watching films and series by themselves more. Girls more often watch series alone than boys do. Over time, parents and siblings tend to be replaced by friends when it comes to both cinema trips and home viewing. In the case of cinemagoing, the trend begins at age 12-14, and a bit earlier for girls than boys.

#6 Children most often use a TV screen to watch films and series, but as they grow older and acquire more devices, they spread out their viewing.

For 7-14-year-olds across gender and age, TV is the most frequently used screen, ahead of tablet, computer and smartphone. There is no substantial difference between the screens that the target group uses to watch films and series, respectively. On the other hand, the survey shows that as children grow older and acquire more devices, they spread their viewing out among several screens: practically all children (98%) have at least one device of their own when they reach age 10, and 58% of 10-year-olds have at least three different devices or more. In particular, the survey shows that because of the prevalence of smartphones from age 9, and personal laptops from around age 10-11, the consumption of films and series increases on these two types of screens. However, the usage of smartphones and laptops to watch films and series does not increase at a rate equal to their prevalence. While kids spread their viewing out among several screens as they grow older, the TV remains the most frequently used screen.

#7 Children are mainly driven by entertainment and less so by fiction that invites reflection.

Children want to be entertained! Choosing from a list of eight drivers of film and series viewing, the 10-14-year-old respondents say the most important thing is that films and series entertain and amuse. These are the top-rated responses across formats, whether kids are watching films or series. Recommendations from friends tend to be more important in the case of films than series (30% and 23%, respectively). It is less important whether the respondent is already familiar with the universe or the actors, though that carries a bit more weight with ultra-frequent and highly frequent users.

The statement "Should give me something to think about" scores low in terms of both films and series, indicating that entertainment is given priority over contemplation when choosing fiction films and series.

#8 Children orient themselves broadly at several genres, and their attitude to Danish fiction changes as they grow older.

The favourite genre among respondents aged 10-14 is comedy, followed by family films and animation. The picture becomes more nuanced when diving deeper into the data across gender and age. Family films and animation decline with age, as children start orienting themselves more broadly at several genres. There are discernible differences across gender. Across the age spectrum, girls rank family films, comedies and animation the highest, while their interest in adventure/fantasy, romance and drama increases with age. Where boys are concerned, comedies, superhero movies and action share the top spot, followed by adventure/fantasy, animation and family films. Boys, too, have a clear interest in sci-fi, while they rank dramas and romantic films the lowest. Alongside the orientation towards several genres there is a corresponding trend away from a preference for Danish fiction to a preference for international fiction. This change happens around age 9-10, as children learn to read subtitles.

#9 YouTube is huge with children, but they don't use it to watch fiction films and series.

YouTube is the undisputed social-media favourite across gender and age. Three quarters of boys and slightly fewer girls (69%) are on YouTube at least weekly. Girls' social-media consumption is more spread out on several different platforms, as they use SnapChat, TikTok and Instagram more than boys do. In our survey, we examine the target group in relation to different categories of YouTube content to get an impression of what they are watching. Predominant among boys are 'gaming videos' (74%), 'YouTubers/influencers' (56%) and 'pranks/challenges/funny fails' (50%), while the girls' favourites are 'YouTubers/influencers' (58%), 'music videos' (43%), 'pranks/challenges/funny fails' (36%) and 'DIY videos' (36%). Regardless of gender and age, the categories of 'entire series' (7%) and 'entire films' (5%) are way down on the list and do not significantly figure in the target group's YouTube consumption.

#10 For one quarter of the children, it's not either/or: they are ultra-frequent users of films and series as well as gaming.

The study identifies one quarter of the children as ultra-frequent users of films and series as well as gaming. For these ultra-frequent users, it's not a question of either/or, e.g., that those who game a lot don't watch films and series that often. Instead, it's both/and, as frequent consumption in one category goes hand in hand with frequent consumption in the other two categories. In other words, this quarter of 7-14-year-olds games daily or almost daily, watches series daily or almost daily and watches films at least once a week.

The full survey is available on dfi.dk/english.

Martin Kofoed Hansen
Survey Consultant
martinkh@dfi.dk

Lena Juhl Seidelin
Marketing Consultant
lenaj@dfi.dk

Louise Haugstrup Jensen
Marketing Consultant
louisehj@dfi.dk