

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

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UNSTARRED QUESTION NO 1919
TO BE ANSWERED ON 07.08.2024

INCREASE IN SCREEN TIME AMONG CHILDREN

1919. SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA:

Will the Minister of Women and Child Development be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has taken cognisance of the increase in the overall screen time among children in the country, especially post the COVID induced lockdowns;
- (b) if so, the details of measures being taken to reduce the same to healthier levels;
- (c) the progress made in this respect;
- (d) the concerns arising out of the same so far; and
- (e) the proposed measures to be taken in this regard?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT
(SHRIMATI ANNPURNA DEVI)

(a) to (e) No such information is available. However, in the year 2021, the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) had conducted a study on ‘Effects (Physical, Behavioural and Psychosocial) of use of mobile phones & Other devices with Internet Accessibility by school children’ with a sample size of 5000(including school children, parents and teachers).

Major findings of the study are given below:

1. Purpose of using smartphones and internet devices by children- Major activity for which children used smart phones/internet devices in COVID times was ‘Online learning and classes’;

94.8% of all valid respondents were of this opinion. Other purposes include messaging applications, referring to study materials, music and for games.

2. Features liked by the Children- 52.9% children enjoyed using smart phones/internet for chatting purposes (using instant messaging apps like WhatsApp/ Facebook/ Instagram/Snapchat) and only 10.1% of children liked to use smart phones for online learning and education.

3. Duration of time spent by children on using smartphones for recreation-As per the data collected in this limited study, 78.90% of children said that they spent 0-2 hours on smartphones for using the internet, playing games, listening to music, and chatting etc.

National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development, an autonomous body working under the aegis of Ministry of Women and Child Development, is responsible for training of all field functionaries of the Ministry. Digital literacy and online safety is an essential component of the training provided to the thousands of functionaries for child protection, parents and school counsellors. The sessions cover guidelines for supervised exposure of children to use of gadgets, maintaining personal safety online and mechanisms of seeking support in case of any online difficulties or emotional distress experienced during online interactions.
