

Aussie parents spend over 14 years on screens outside of work - with children not far behind

Yoto launches first National Switch Off to help families reset

- Parents are spending more time than their children on screens, averaging four hours a day on personal screens, compared to their children averaging three hours a day.
- Nearly two thirds (63%) of Aussie parents feel guilty about their screen use and a near eight in ten (78%) acknowledge that their own screen habits shape their children's relationship with their devices.
- Gen Z parents are leading the way in using devices as a calming tool, with nearly half (46%) admitting to offering screens to settle tantrums, compared to a near third (29%) of millennials.
- To encourage families to reset, screen-free audio platform Yoto is launching Australia's first National Switch Off on Friday, 12 September 2025, giving households the chance to unplug – 24 hours off screens, 24 hours on imagination, to rediscover balance and embrace the benefits of audio.

Sydney Australia, Monday 8 September 2025 – As debates around kids' screen time reaches a boiling point across the country, new research from screen-free audio platform, Yoto reveals a surprising truth - parents' own screen time is influencing their children's habits. The report, conducted by YouGov, found Australian parents spend nearly four hours a day on personal screens - the equivalent of more than 14 years of their lives outside of work over an average lifespan. Children are not far behind, averaging three hours a day, which adds up to nearly two full years (712 days) spent glued to their screens by the time they turn 18.

Surprisingly, most parents are aware of their digital impact, with a close to eight in ten (78%) acknowledging that their own screen habits shape their children's relationship with devices. In fact, over half of Aussie parents (63%) say they feel guilty about how their screen use

affects their children, yet nearly nine in ten (87%) admit to being on their phones during playtime or while spending time with their children.

Gen Z, millennials and Gen X parents lead the charge with the highest daily screen time (four hours), followed by Baby Boomers trailing shortly behind (three hours). Parents with preschoolers (ages 4 - 5) and early primary schoolers (ages 6 - 7) also spend the most time on screens, averaging 4 hours per day.

On average, Aussie parents implement a screen time limit of one hour per day for their children, but with the average screen use for children sitting at three hours per day, it's clear that parents are struggling to find strategies to help them stick to it.

Screens have even evolved to become multi-purpose items in the family home. One of the ways that screens are now commonly used is as a coping tool, with one in five parents (20%) admitting they hand devices to calm tantrums. Gen Z parents are at the forefront of this trend, with a near half (46%) doing so, compared to 29% of Millennials and just 6% of Gen X. More than a third (34%) say they give in to tantrums because it's hard to see their child upset, while almost one in five (18%) cite being too time-poor to resist.

When asked about the situations where screens are most useful for keeping their children occupied, Aussie parents pointed to being in transit - whether in the car or on public transport (41%) as the top occasion, followed closely by quiet time at home (40%) and during appointments (38%). Some also admitted to using screens as a bargaining tool or reward (17%).

Switch Off: Australia's First National Screen-Free Day

To help families reset and find a healthier balance for grown ups and little ones alike, screen-free audio platform Yoto is launching **Australia's first "The Big Switch Off" on Friday, 12 September 2025**. For 24 hours, Yoto's Australian website and social channels will go dark, inviting families across the country to pause screens, reconnect, and rediscover balance.

Sharina Simnett, AU Country Manager at Yoto says: “We know screens are part of modern family life, and this isn’t about judging parents or asking for drastic changes. It’s about making small shifts that can have a big impact. That’s why we’re launching The Big Switch Off this Friday 12th September – 24 hours off screens, 24 hours on imagination, to give families the chance to reflect on their screen habits and discover the benefits of audio as a way to spark creativity, connection and balance.”

Parenting expert Deirdre Brandner comments: “Parents know that their own screen time is impacting family life, but many feel powerless to change. There are many ways that parents can take back the power that screens have on them by creating new routines and genuine alternatives to screen entertainment that encourage connection and imagination as a family. That’s why I’m proud to be partnering with Yoto this September – a screen-free alternative to help bring storytime, imagination and play to life, giving families a simple way to switch off and reconnect.”

Sign up and join the movement via the Yoto campaign page [here](#). Parents committed to joining the Switch Off movement will have access to a downloadable parent resource, with discounted Yoto audio content, offline activities, and practical tips from paediatric psychologist and author, Deirdre Brandner, on how to prepare and implement your switch off day.

Yoto’s goal is to empower parents to reset their habits - without guilt, while experiencing the power of audio and inspire independent listening, learning and play.

Notes to Editors

Top 8 occasions when Aussie parents find screens most valuable:

- In transit - in the car or on public transport (41%)
- Quiet time (40%)
- At appointments and waiting rooms (38%)
- Play time (30%)
- Outside the home - e.g. restaurants, cafes, visiting others (23%)

- As a bargaining tool or reward (17%)
- At the park (11%)
- Mealtimes (10%)

Parenting expert, Deirdre Brandner's practical tips for screen-free parenting and building connections with children:

- Embrace parallel play: Children playing while you complete necessary tasks creates valuable proximity
- Phone free zones: Consider creating consistent "phone-free zones", even if just for 20 minutes daily
- Low-stimulation environments: Like park walks or shared kitchen preparation naturally facilitate connection without the pressure of entertainment.
- Reframe "quiet time": As an opportunity to practise independent play or shared downtime (e.g., puzzles, quiet drawing, listening to music)
- Games during transit: During transit, try simple games like "I spy," story-making, or music playlists; these are connection moments in disguise
- Come prepared: In cafes or waiting rooms, bring books, drawing pads, or toys, yes, it takes more prep, but it builds long-term capacity
- Use transitions to narrate expectations: "We're going to sit and wait for a little bit. I brought something we can do together."
- Practice narrating your choices: "I'm putting my phone away so I can listen properly"
- Presence over performance: Remember that your presence, not your performance, is what matters most

About The Research

Research was conducted by YouGov with 1,017 participants taking part. Participants consisted of Australians aged 18 years and older, with children under 13 years old, referred to as 'Aussie parents'. The study was conducted online between 16th - 21st May 2025.

About Yoto

Yoto is a screen-free, ad-free, mic-free kids audio player and content platform that has recently launched in Australia. Yoto's mission is to let kids lead the way. Its innovative design allows kids to play independently, unlocking their creativity and imagination through the world of audio.

Yoto's platform features both award-winning original content and audio that has been licensed or co-created with partners. These partners include Penguin Random House, Universal Music Group, Macmillan, Sony Music, Disney, Roald Dahl Story Company, HarperCollins, Hachette, Viacom, Bonnier and Scholastic.

Inspired by Montessori principles, Ben Drury and Filip Denker founded Yoto in 2017. The very first Yoto Player launched on Kickstarter, then promptly sold out in 2019. The brand's portfolio continued to grow with subsequent product launches, including the portable Yoto Mini in 2021 and with the new third generation Yoto Player in 2023. With major markets in the UK, North America, Canada and France, Yoto launched in Australia in July 2024. TIME Magazine named Yoto Player one of the Best Inventions of 2020, and Yoto Mini and Yoto Player (3rd Generation) have both been awarded prestigious D&AD Pencils.

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