

Ericsson launches report 'Bringing Families Closer Together'

Ericsson ConsumerLab has launched a report 'Bringing Families Closer Together' that looks at how families communicate among themselves, whether in person or using various technologies, and asks how family life has been transformed by technology.

There is more communication, but less talk and more text, and your kids want more face-to-face time with you.

The report provides a snapshot of the impact of communication technology on families in the US. The data has been gathered from family-based focus groups and during at-home interviews with parents in the San Francisco area, and supported by online studies with a further 1005 families across the US.

To the busy family, stressed by work schedules, commuting and multiple after-school activities, the mobile phone seems like the perfect tool to knit the family together during the day. The majority of families claim they communicate more using such technology, know each other better and find that it makes practicalities and logistics much easier during the week.



Image via [123RF](#)

Mobile communication means - in theory at least - that children and their parents can contact each other at any time when apart.

Family meals and time spent ferrying children to school or activities are felt to be valuable face-to-face occasions. However, the use of voice in mobile communications between family members has been surpassed by text, and has been

increasing over the past year, according to Ann-Charlotte Kornblad, Senior Advisor Consumer Insights at Ericsson ConsumerLab. Text ensures that messages can be passed easily and quickly to all family members.

Some families use more recent services, such as WhatsApp and Kik, to communicate. Figures show that parents with these services communicate five times more with each other, and eight times more with their children. However, children are also adept at using communication platforms such as Instagram and SnapChat specifically for communicating with friends.

Not surprisingly, new communication services have created new worries for parents. The report shows that parents now set more rules and practice more active device management for their children. Of the families interviewed, 72% said that use of mobile phones was restricted as a punishment.

However, even if communication technology has an overall positive impact on families, there are still some drawbacks. Kornblad, says, "The study shows that we should be aware that our obsession with our phones and our tablets is eating into our valuable family time. Children want more face-to-face communication with their parents during the week, and communication technology will not solve this."

[Read the Bringing Families Closer report here](#)

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