In support of its Digital Parenthood Initiative, which aims to jumpstart a national conversation on family online safety, Aura collaborated with Gallup to ask parents in the United States about their knowledge of and worries about their children's technology use. Gallup carried out a web survey with 5,926 parents of children ages 8 through 18 from May 1st - 14th of 2024. In this report, we examine parents' perspectives on their kids' internet usage– the benefits that they see resulting from kids' connectivity, the visibility they currently have into their kids' online lives and their concerns for their kids' online safety.

Introduction

Gallup: Parent Survey Results

Aura Data: Adolescent Insights

Key Findings & Tips

Appendix
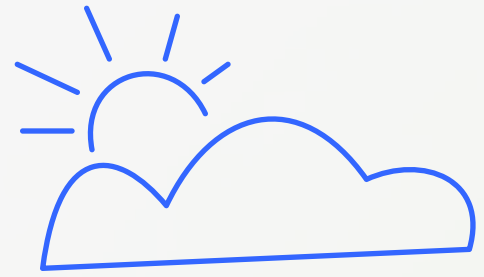
Introduction

05 Founder & CEO Welcome

Today, being digitally connected is an undeniable part of existence, particularly for kids.

In the past decade, technology use has skyrocketed among adolescents. In fact, Aura's user data shows that adolescents spend, on average, **6 hours a day in front of a screen. That's three months of the year.** At the same time, we see expanding instances of sleep deprivation, reductions in physical activity and growing signs of mental health issues in children. Pew Research Center reports that nearly half of U.S. teens (46%) have been subjected to cyberbullying or harassment online.

As a father of four who has spent my career in tech, I still struggle to keep up with the changing tides of my kids' online interests, and I had a feeling my concerns would be mirrored by others trying to wrap their arms around digital parenthood.

That's why Aura commissioned Gallup research into the State of the Youth: Raising a Connected Generation– to better understand the digital concerns keeping parents up at night. Through this study, we aimed to help identify the gaps in available resources that lead parents to question how effectively they are supporting their kids as they grow up in a digital world. Through this survey, we found:

Parents are Concerned The majority of parents (84%) are at least moderately concerned about their childrens' online safety. Concern for childrens' online safety peaks among parents of middle-school aged students, with 90% reporting they are at least moderately concerned for their kids' online safety.

Parents Struggle with the Risk vs. Reward of Technology About half of parents (54%) say that electronic devices have an equally positive and negative impact on their children's overall mood and well-being.

Many Are Looking for More Guidance Roughly 1 in 3 parents (32%) report they wish they had access to more resources about keeping children safe online.

I started Aura 7 years ago with a simple goal––to make the internet safer. Since launching, we've made strides in our mission by introducing one of the fastest-growing all-in-one online safety solutions for individuals and families.
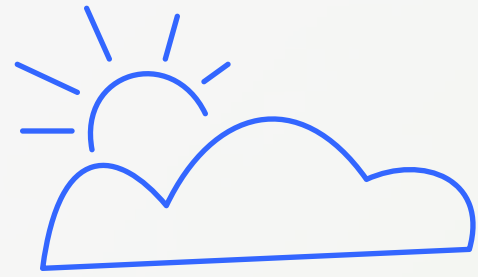
We've rolled out tools to help protect kids online, like the ability to filter out content and apps that kids can engage with and introducing alerts to keep them safe from online predators, scams and cyberbullying.

And we're embarking on our next phase of innovation in family online safety, leading the industry in development of tools that can provide parents peace of mind as they raise children who can confidently and safely navigate the online world. This June, we introduced Aura's Digital Parenthood Initiative, convening the brightest minds in research, medicine, child psychology, education and advocacy for the youth experience to jumpstart the next phase of innovation in family online safety.

The time is now to examine the content consumed, discuss the social pressures our kids are facing and to support parents as we all navigate the exceedingly complex risks associated with raising connected kids.

Finding a solution for these issues will take a village. Join us in our mission.

Hari Ravichandran, Aura Founder & CEO

Survey Results

Aura collaborated with Gallup to survey parents in the United States about their knowledge of and worries about their children's technology use. The results are weighted to match the demographics of U.S. parents with children ages 8 to 18 from the American Community Survey.

⚠ Concern & Conversation About Online Safety

Most parents express concern about their children's online safety.

86% of parents express some concern about their child's online safety

24% of those surveyed above are extremely concerned about their child's online safety

26% of parents are very concerned about their child's online safety

36% of parents are moderately concerned about their child's online safety

37% of parents report talking with their children about online safety at least a few times per month

📱 Parents who are highly confident they know what apps their children download and use report talking more frequently to their children.

⌨ Parents on Transparency of Kids' Digital Lives

Parents of older children are less confident than parents of younger children they know what kids do on their devices.

46% of parents say they are highly confident they know what apps their children download and use:

Ages 8-11

61% of parents of a child who is in elementary school say they are highly confident.

Ages 12-14

46% of parents of a child who is in middle school say they are highly confident.

Ages 15-17

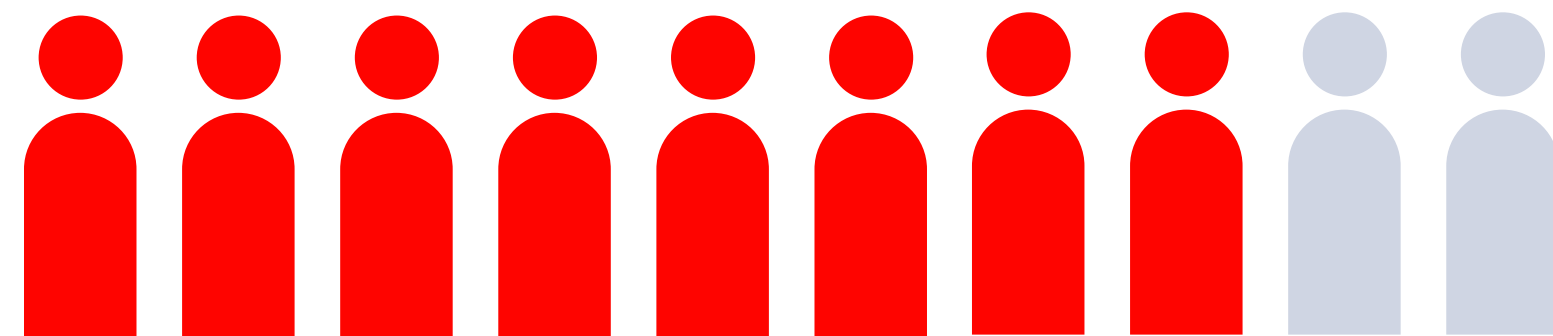24% of parents of a child who is in high school say they are highly confident.

App Usage Among Parents & Their Kids

Apart from YouTube and Instagram, parents and kids don't really use the same apps.
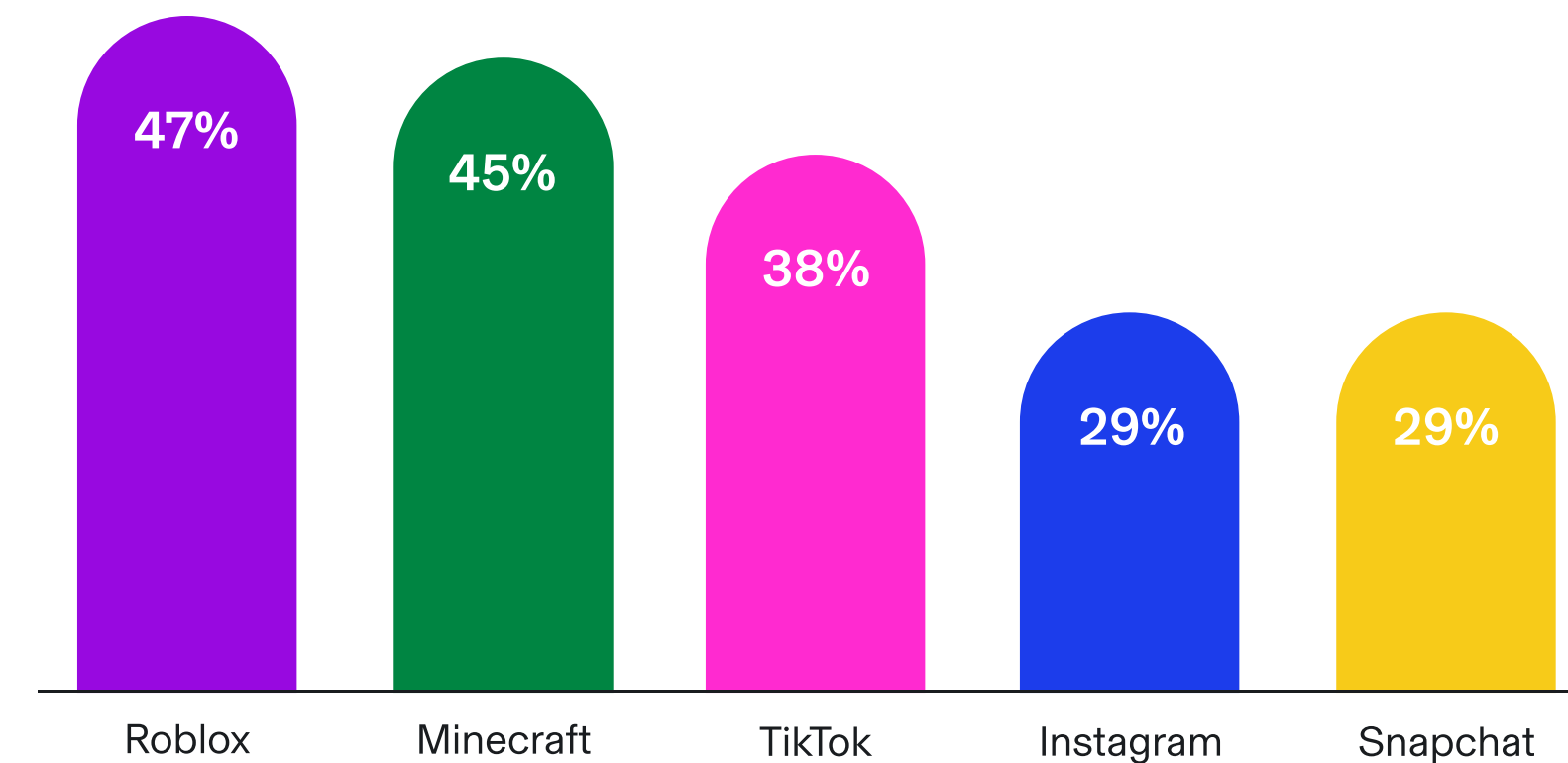
Top apps parents report their kids use:

Eight in 10 parents say their children use YouTube, far more than say this about other popular websites or apps asked about in the survey.

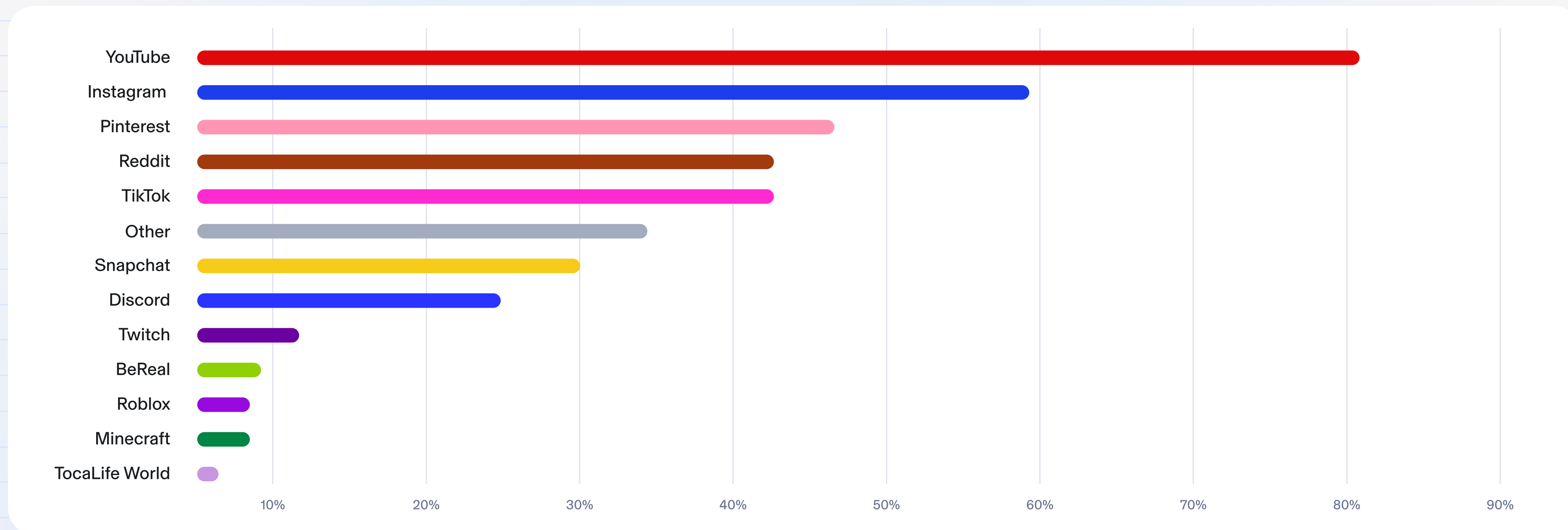Roblox, Minecraft, TikTok, Instagram and Snapchat are the most used apps parents reported after YouTube.

Roblox	Minecraft	TikTok	Instagram	Snapchat
47%	45%	38%	29%	29%

App Usage Among Parents & Their Kids

YouTube usage among parents nearly equals that of kids.

Most parents whose child use YouTube also use it (81%). A majority of parents of child Instagram users also personally use it (59%). But parent usage of most other apps their children use is far lower. This is especially the case for Twitch, BeReal, Roblox, Minecraft and TocaLife World — fewer than one in 10 parents of child users of these apps also use them.

App	Usage
YouTube	
Instagram	
Pinterest	
Reddit	
TikTok	
Other	
Snapchat	
Discord	
Twitch	
BeReal	
Roblox	
Minecraft	
TocaLife World	

10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90%

Child Technology Usage & Impact on Wellbeing

Parents are split on whether device usage positively or negatively impacts their kids' mood and wellbeing.

21%
of parents say it has a positive effect

24%
of parents say it has a negative effect

54%
of parents say it is equally positive and negative

*"There certainly has been a lot of discussion of the downsides for people related to the use of the internet on their electronic devices, particularly some of the harmful effects of social media usage on teens. However, **parents' views are decidedly mixed**, with a majority of (54%) saying their children's usage of electronic devices has equally positive and negative effects on their children's overall mood and wellbeing. Moreover, the balance of parents split about evenly between saying it has mostly positive (21%) versus mostly negative (24%) effects. Notably, parents of younger and older children, and boys versus girls, hold similar views on this question."*

– Jeff Jones, Ph.D, Senior Editor, Gallup

Setting Examples for Healthy Behaviors

Parents believe they are setting positive examples for their kids online.

In a recently released Pew Research Center survey on Screen Time, researchers found that **"about four-in-ten parents and teens report regularly arguing with one another about time spent on their phone."**
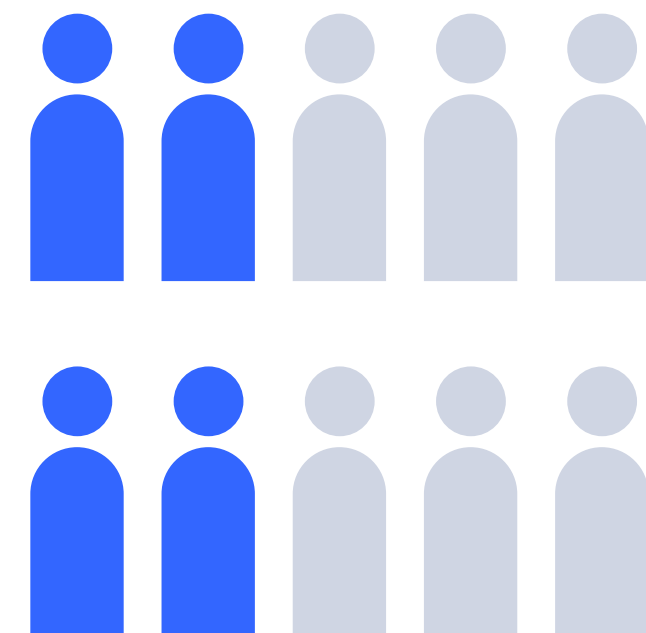
Additionally, the Pew Research survey noted that "nearly half of teens (46%) say their parent is at least sometimes distracted by their phone when they're trying to talk to them."

40%
of parents say they make a **great deal** of effort to set a good example for their children about safe and appropriate use of electronic devices

48%
of parents say they make a **fair amount** of effort to set a good example for their children about safe and appropriate use of electronic devices

36%
of parents who make such efforts say those efforts are **helping a lot** with having a positive impact on their children's usage of electronic devices
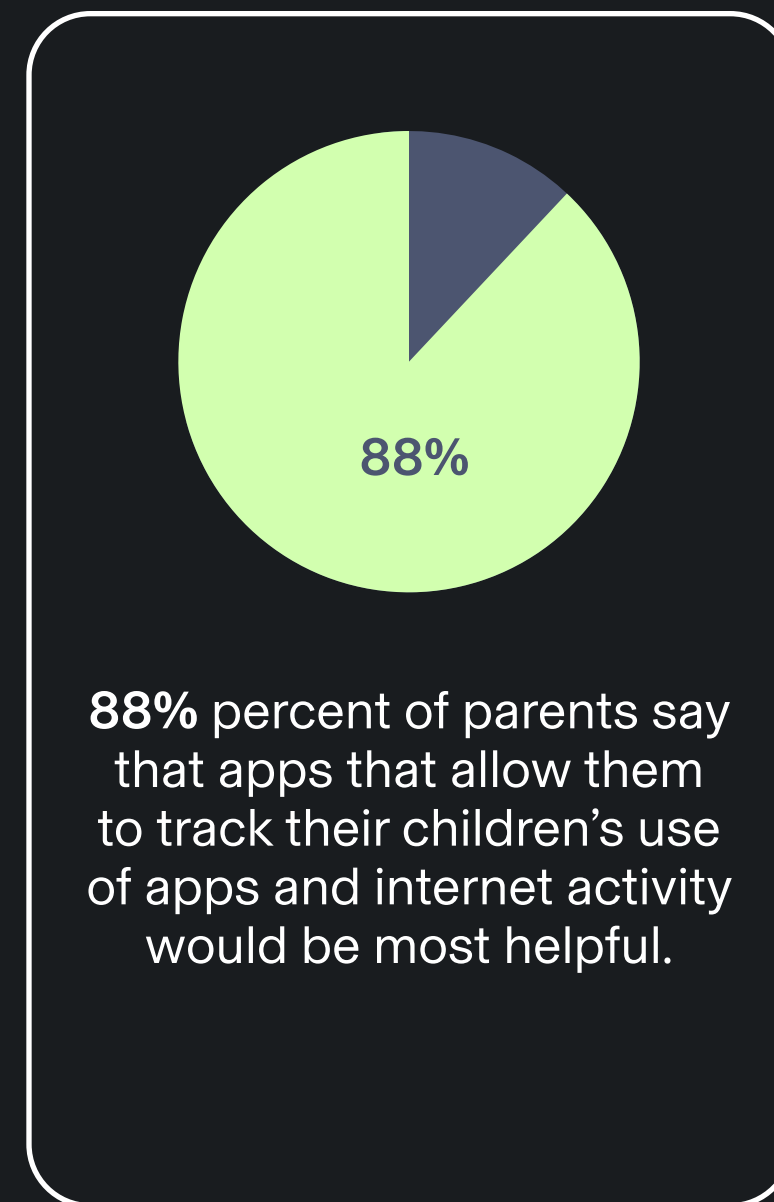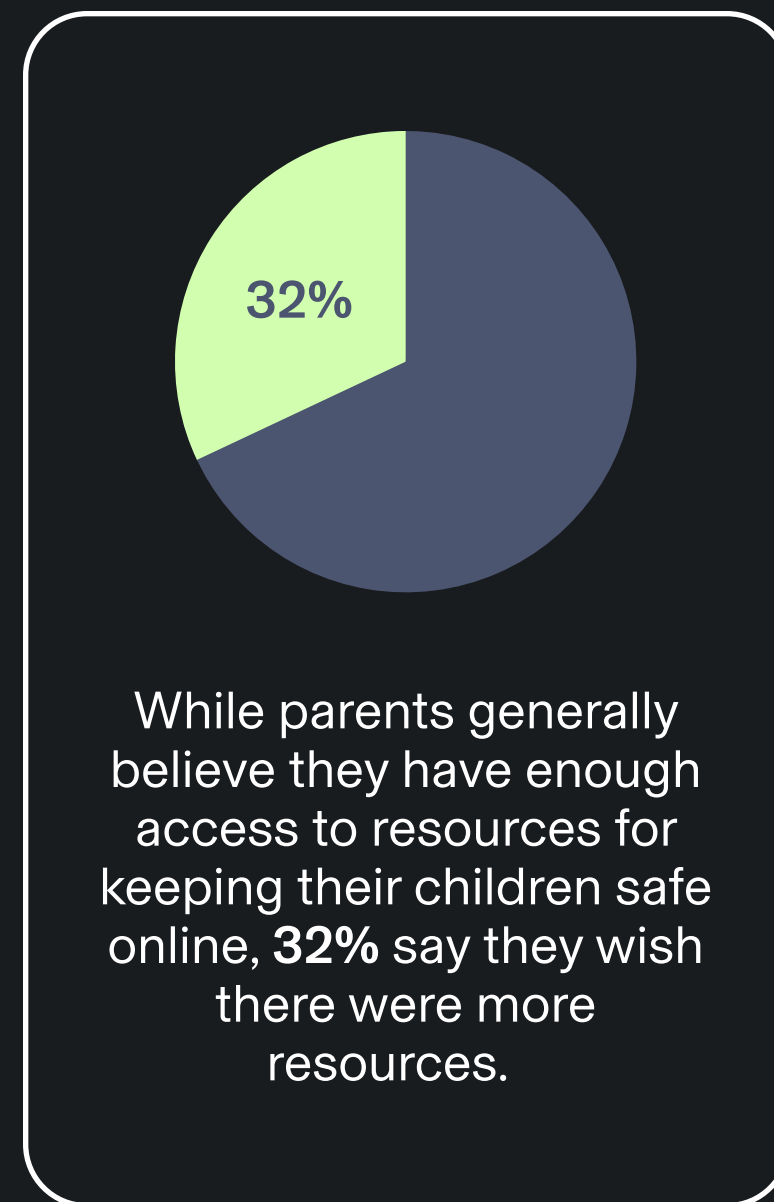
54%
of parents who make such efforts say those efforts are **helping a little** having a positive impact on their children's usage of electronic devices
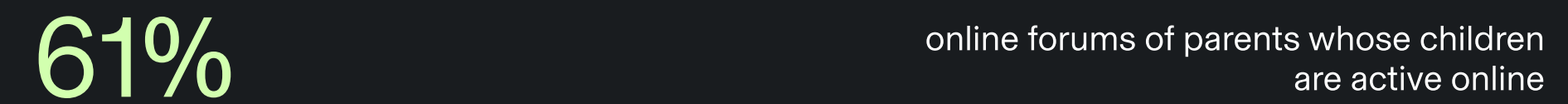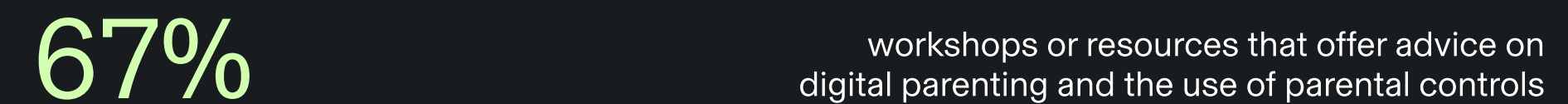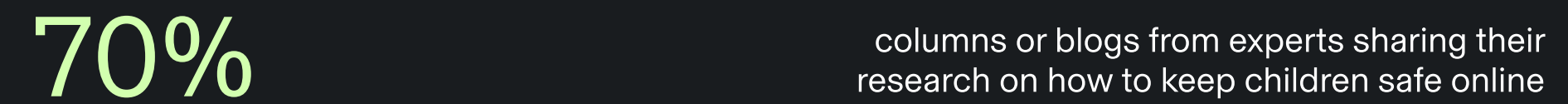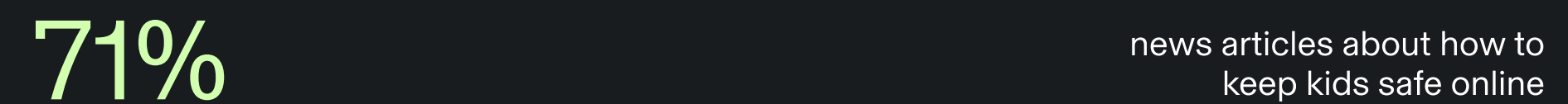
8%
of parents who make such efforts say those efforts are **not having** a positive impact on their children's usage of electronic devices
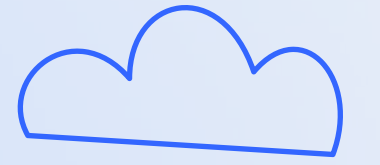
⑦ Accessibility of Digital Parenthood Resources

Roughly 1 in 3 parents wish they had access to more resources to help them as they parent their connected kids.

32%

While parents generally believe they have enough access to resources for keeping their children safe online, **32%** say they wish there were more resources.

88%

88% percent of parents say that apps that allow them to track their children's use of apps and internet activity would be most helpful.

At least **6 in 10** say the following other resources would be helpful:

71% — news articles about how to keep kids safe online

70% — columns or blogs from experts sharing their research on how to keep children safe online

67% — workshops or resources that offer advice on digital parenting and the use of parental controls

61% — online forums of parents whose children are active online

Adolescent Insights
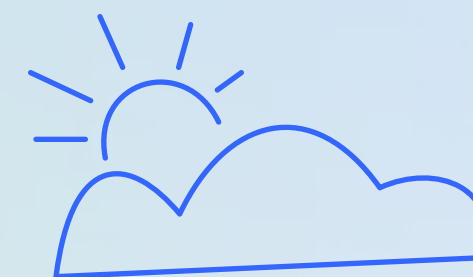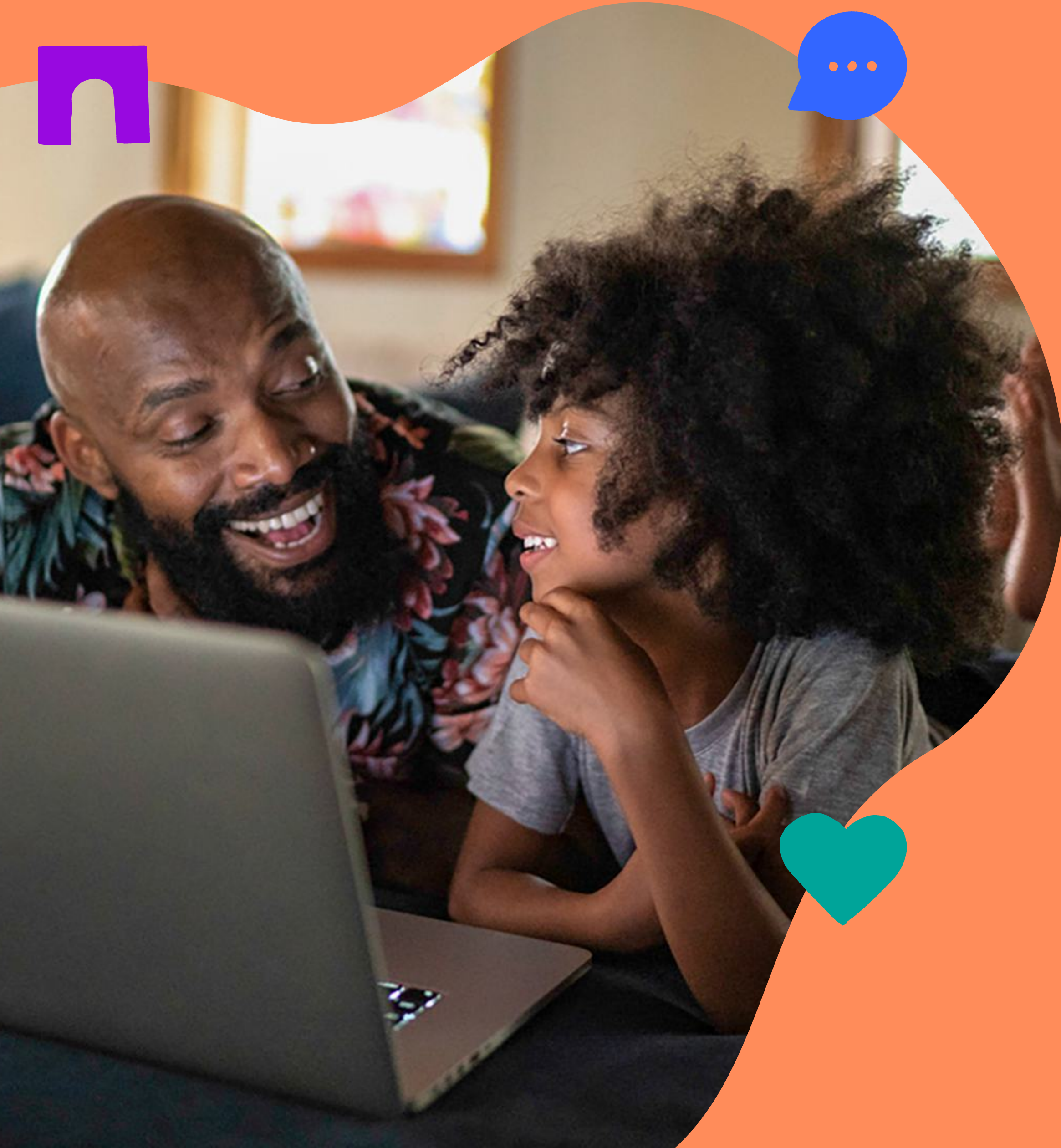
To evaluate whether parent-reported insights align to actual child behaviors, Aura analyzed data from more than 31,000 kids using devices with Aura & Circle Parental Controls activated. The following data reflects aggregated average behaviors derived from devices with Aura's Parental Controls activated.

This data reflects behaviors of children within Aura's user base and is not a statistical representation of the total U.S. population.

Parental Control Usage by Age

The way parents use Parental Controls depends on their kids' relationship with the device itself.

Ages 0-5

The kids are in "family iPad" stage and are less likely to have their own device, rather they're using a tablet or a shared iPad that other family members also use.

In this case, parents are using Parental Controls to set simple boundaries for young kids to ensure they're only watching a few hours of Bluey on YouTube and aren't able to access other content or apps.

Ages 6-11

These kids are typically in the "first phone" stage and are receiving their first phone which is the biggest catalyst for parents to purchase a Parental Controls solution. They're more likely to only have access to their phone during certain times of the day and possibly taken away at night.

Parents are using more advanced Parental Controls to ensure their kids are learning healthy digital habits with their first personal device.

Ages 12-17

This is the largest cohort of kids with Parental Controls who have their own personal cell phone (which is typically always with them.) Additionally, this age group is where concerns around use of social media are most prevalent.

Parents are still using advanced Parental Controls but are less focused on controlling how much time they spend online and are more concerned about the type of content their kid is engaging with and who they're talking to that may affect their wellbeing.

Connected Kids' Time Spent Online

On average, kids spend an aggregated 3 months of the year online.

Starting Young

2 Years
earliest age parents start setting
Parental Controls for their kids

13 Years
average age parents start setting
Parental Controls for their kids

The **most common ages of kids with Parental Controls is 12-17** which make up more than 55% of kids reflected in Aura's user data.

Screen Time Surges

6 Hours
average amount of time a kid spends online per day, which equates to 3 months per year

+2 Hours
kids spend an extra 2 hours online on weekends (Friday through Sunday)

Kids are **most active online between 3pm-8pm** which does include some usage of the internet for homework, but a large portion of this time is being spent on YouTube, Tiktok and Snapchat.

Connected Kids' Time Spent Online

Average Screen Time

Check it out!

Weekdays

274 Min

across all users
(~4.5 hours)

Weekends
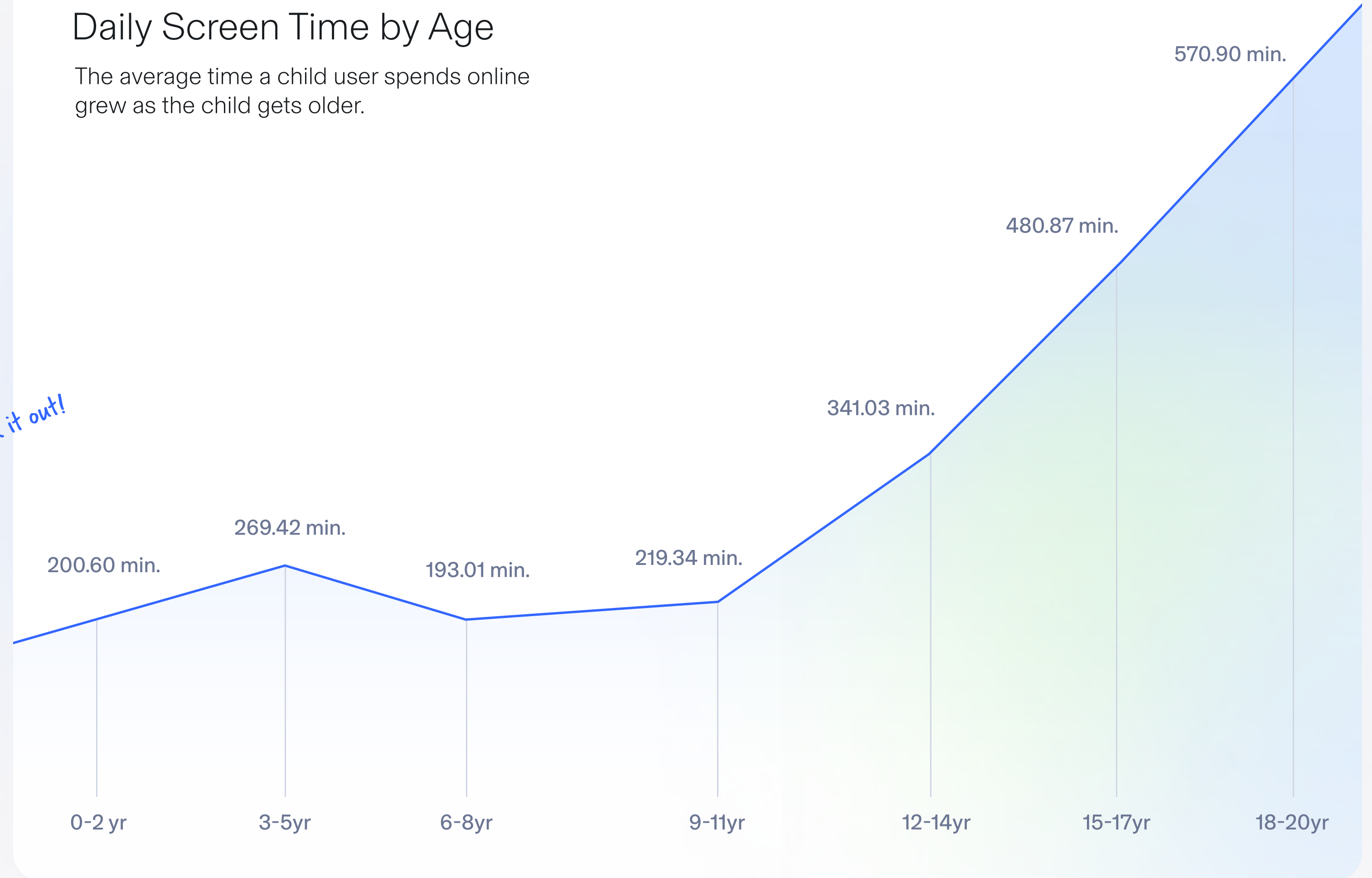
387 Min

across all users
(~6.45 hours)

Daily Screen Time by Age

The average time a child user spends online grew as the child gets older.

570.90 min.

480.87 min.

341.03 min.

269.42 min.

219.34 min.

200.60 min.

193.01 min.

| 0-2 yr | 3-5yr | 6-8yr | 9-11yr | 12-14yr | 15-17yr | 18-20yr |

📱 Connected Kids' App Usage Insights

Top Apps Kids Are Using

37.10 mins

31.40 mins.

26.78 mins.

22.52 mins.

13.42 mins.

Disney+   Instagram   YouTube   TikTok   Snapchat
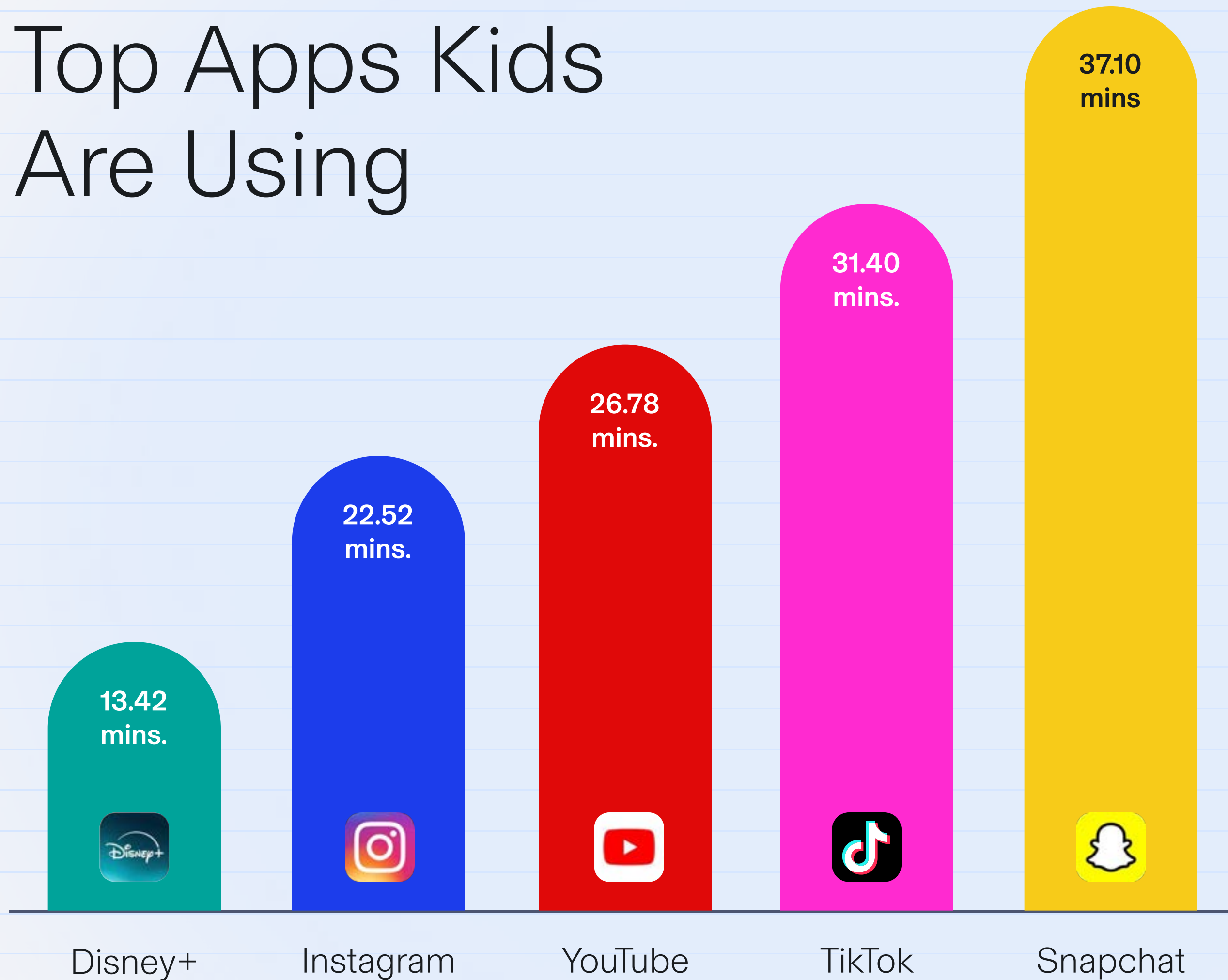
Average Daily Screen Time by Time of Day

4am
least active time of day for child screen time

4pm
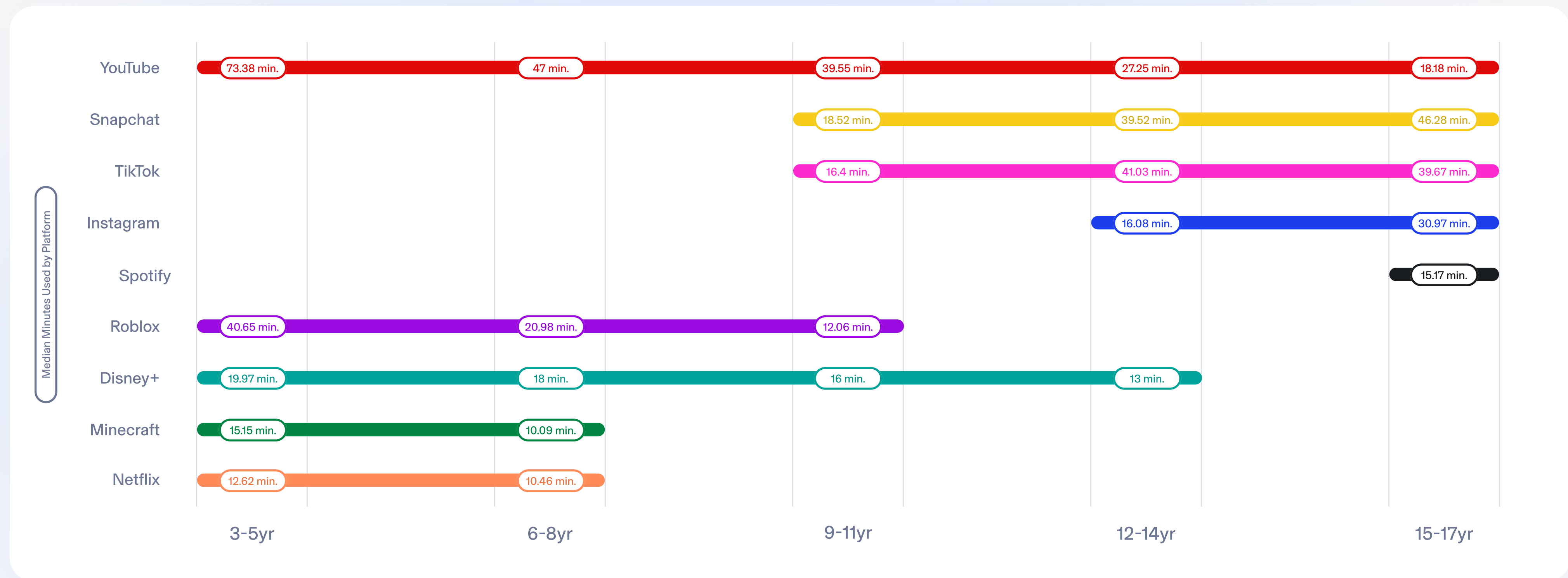**most** active time of day for child screen time

On average kids spend the most amount of time on screens from 3pm - 9pm.

📱 Connected Kids' App Usage Insights

Top Platforms by Age

Median Minutes Used by Platform

	3-5yr	6-8yr	9-11yr	12-14yr	15-17yr
YouTube	73.38 min.	47 min.	39.55 min.	27.25 min.	18.18 min.
Snapchat			18.52 min.	39.52 min.	46.28 min.
TikTok			16.4 min.	41.03 min.	39.67 min.
Instagram				16.08 min.	30.97 min.
Spotify					15.17 min.
Roblox	40.65 min.	20.98 min.	12.06 min.		
Disney+	19.97 min.	18 min.	16 min.	13 min.	
Minecraft	15.15 min.	10.09 min.			
Netflix	12.62 min.	10.46 min.			

Parental Controls at Work

Time Limits, Alerts and Blocked Apps

210 Minutes

median time limit for a child user per day

464 mins.

326 mins.

with time limits

without time limits
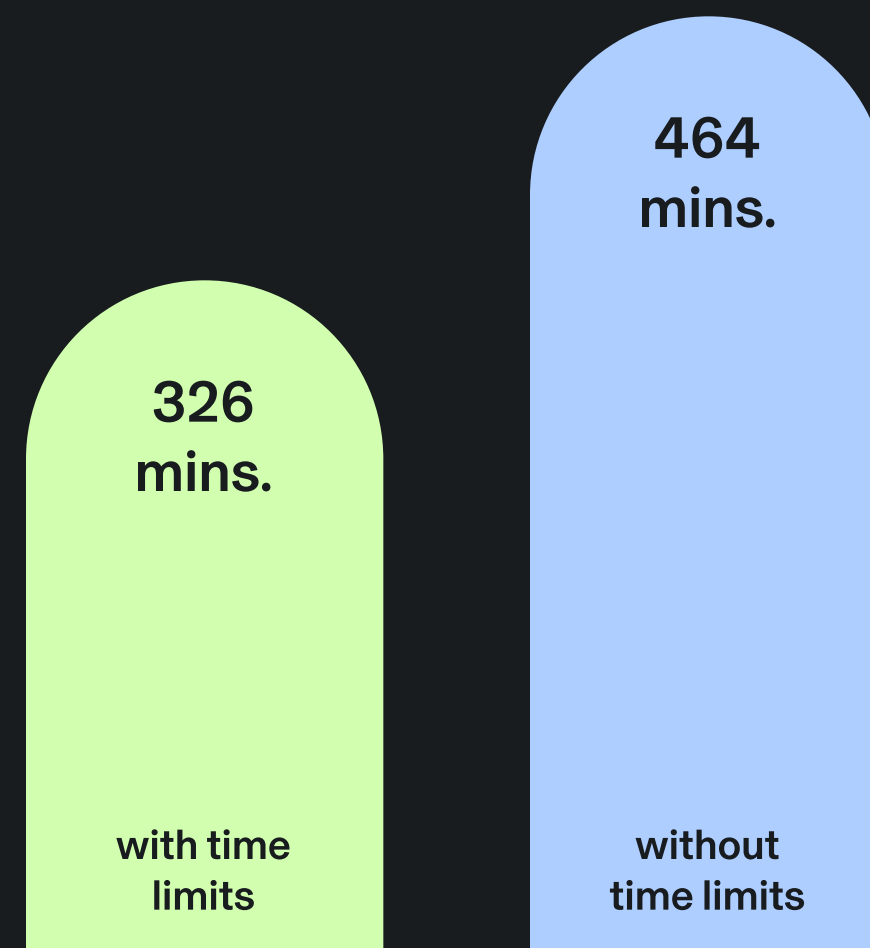
Children with time limits have a median daily screen time of 326 minutes versus 464 minutes for children that do not have time limits set on their devices

Alerts

On average over the last week, **over a population of ~5000 kids**, we are sending alerts to the parents of 94 kids a day (1.9%).

94

average number of alerts notifying parents that their kid was seen on a new platform or website

Some alerts are for a single new platform and sometimes those alerts are for multiple new platforms in the same day. But each day we're notifying 94 parents that their kid was seen on a new platform or website.

Blocked Apps

TikTok is the top blocked app via parents utilizing Aura. The top 5 most blocked apps are:

1 TikTok   4 Tumblr
2 Snapchat   5 Facebook
3 Twitter (X)
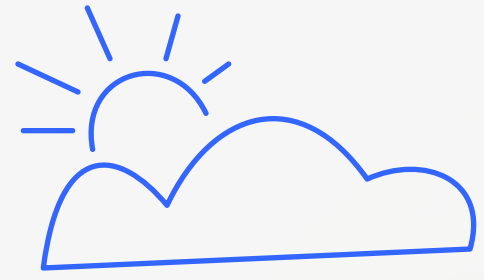
Key Findings & Tips

Perception vs. Reality: Aura vs. Gallup Data

Perceived child behavioral trends parents reported in the Gallup study do not align with behaviors seen in Aura user data.

Acknowledging that the data sets from Gallup's data reflects the U.S. population and Aura's data is limited to its existing user base, and therefore the findings are not directly comparable, looking at the two data sets still spotlights some potential misconceptions. Aura user data suggests that children are spending their time on their devices using different apps than their parents think that they're using. In particular, Aura data suggests kids are using Snapchat with far greater frequency than parents realize.

Gallup

Top 5 Platforms Parents Believe Kids (Ages 8-18) are Using

1 YouTube   4 TikTok
2 Roblox   5 Instagram
3 Minecraft

Aura

Top 5 Platforms Used By Kids with Aura Parental Controls Active

1 Snapchat   4 Instagram
2 TikTok   5 Google Chat
3 YouTube

By Age Breakout

Child Age	Parent Perception (Gallup)	Actual Child Usage (Aura Users)
9 - 11 Years	1 YouTube 2 Roblox 3 Minecraft	1 YouTube 2 Snapchat 3 Disney+
12 - 14 Years	1 YouTube 2 Roblox 3 TikTok	1 Snapchat 2 TikTok 3 YouTube
15 - 17 Years	1 YouTube 2 TikTok 3 Instagram	1 Snapchat 2 TikTok 3 Instagram

Digital Parenthood Resources

Despite an overall sense of confidence in managing their children's digital activities, 32% of parents express a need for additional support in the Gallup survey.

Further, survey respondents shared that they overwhelmingly seek tools to monitor and track their children's online activities, with 88% viewing such apps as moderately helpful. Leveraging such applications could help bring parental perceptions of what their child is spending their time doing on their devices closer in line to the trends that Aura's actual usage data show.

Parents feel they lack comprehensive guidance on app usage and online safety, as well as peer and expert support. Addressing these gaps can better equip parents to navigate digital parenting challenges and create a safer online environment for children.

**88%** of parents find tracking apps moderately helpful

71% of parents highlight the need for add'l resources like news articles

70% of parents highlight the need for add'l resources like expert columns

67% of parents highlight the need for add'l resources like workshops

61% of parents highlight the need for add'l resources like online forums

Expanded access to educational content could help fill knowledge gaps for parents who do not spend time on the same apps that their kids use.
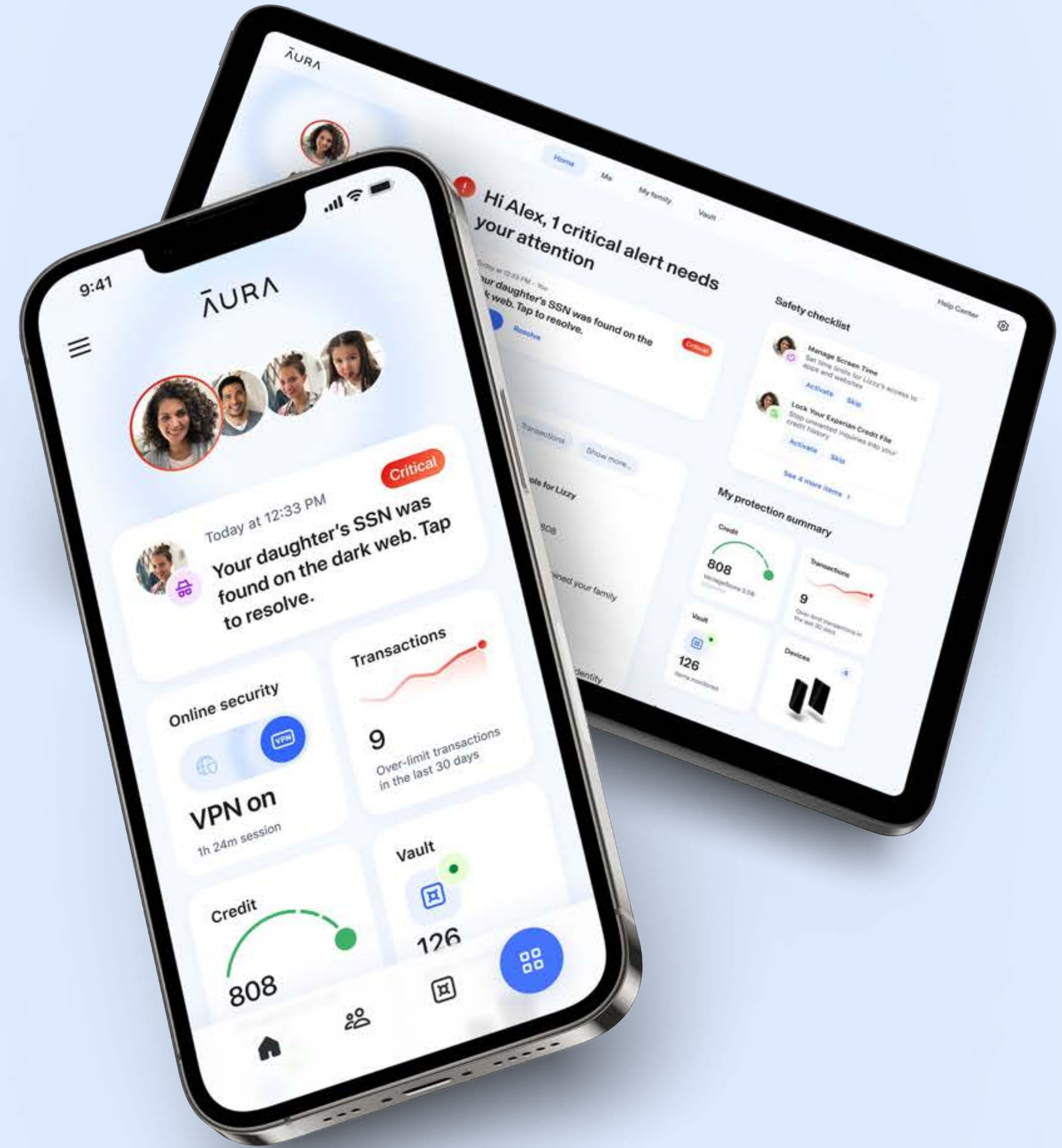
Tips to supercharge Digital Parenthood

Bridging the gap between parent and child perspectives on online safety requires a multifaceted approach that fosters open communication, enhances parental awareness, and promotes responsible behavior online. Here are some recommendations based on the insights gleaned from the survey:

Encourage Open Communication

Foster an environment where parents and children feel comfortable discussing online safety concerns openly and regularly. Encourage parents to initiate conversations about online risks, appropriate behavior and digital literacy, taking into account the age and maturity level of their children.

Empower Parental Involvement

Encourage parents to actively monitor and engage with their children's online activities. Promote the use of tracking apps and parental control features to help parents stay informed about their children's app usage, internet activity and potential exposure to inappropriate content.

Model Positive Behavior

Encourage parents to model positive digital behaviors by demonstrating responsible screen time habits, respectful online communication and critical thinking skills. Emphasize the importance of setting limits, managing distractions and prioritizing offline activities to promote a healthy balance between digital and real-world interactions.

Promote Digital Literacy

Equip both parents and children with the skills and knowledge needed to navigate the digital landscape safely and responsibly. Share resources that teach children how to protect their privacy, identify online threats and make informed decisions when using technology.

Create Supportive Communities

Foster peer support networks and online forums where parents can share experiences, exchange advice and seek guidance from fellow caregivers facing similar challenges. Encourage collaboration between parents, educators and community leaders to promote a culture of digital citizenship and mutual support.
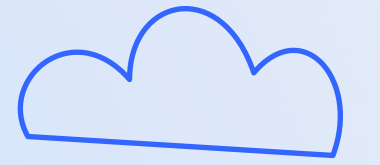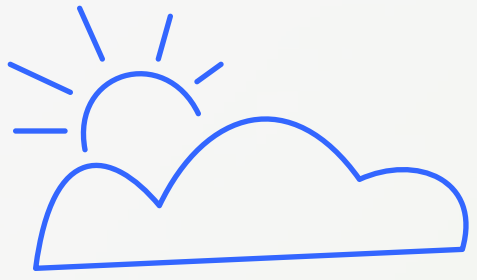
Appendix

27 Methodologies

Methodologies

Aura Data

Results are based on collecting child session data from Aura users in the age group ranging from 0 to 18. Approximately 31,000 child users who registered with Aura between December 2023 and April 2024 were included in the analysis.

The data was collected from users who activated the parental control features, resulting in around 17,000 parents with activated controls out of a potential user base of over 21,000 parents.

Gallup Data

Results are based on web interviews with 5,926 parents of children ages 8 through 18. All respondents are members of Gallup's probability-based panel.

The survey was conducted May 1-14. The results are weighted to match the demographics of U.S. parents with children ages 8 to 18 from the American Community Survey. The margin of sampling error for the total sample of parents, including the design effect from weighting, is ±2 percentage points at the 95% confidence level.