



# State of the Nation Parenting Survey 2019

Overview of Findings

**nib**  
health  
insurance

# STATE OF THE NATION PARENTING SURVEY 2019

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## INTRODUCTION

Leading health insurer, nib New Zealand (nib) recently undertook its inaugural State of the Nation Parenting Survey – canvassing the views of 1,200 parents throughout the country (including step-parents, guardians and caregivers with children 17 years or younger) on the major concerns and trends impacting them today.

The survey was carried out in partnership with global measurement and data analytics company, Nielsen.

This findings document provides a summary of the insights, with top-line data summarising the views and attitudes of participants relating to parenting, social pressures, health, education and technology.

### **Points to note:**

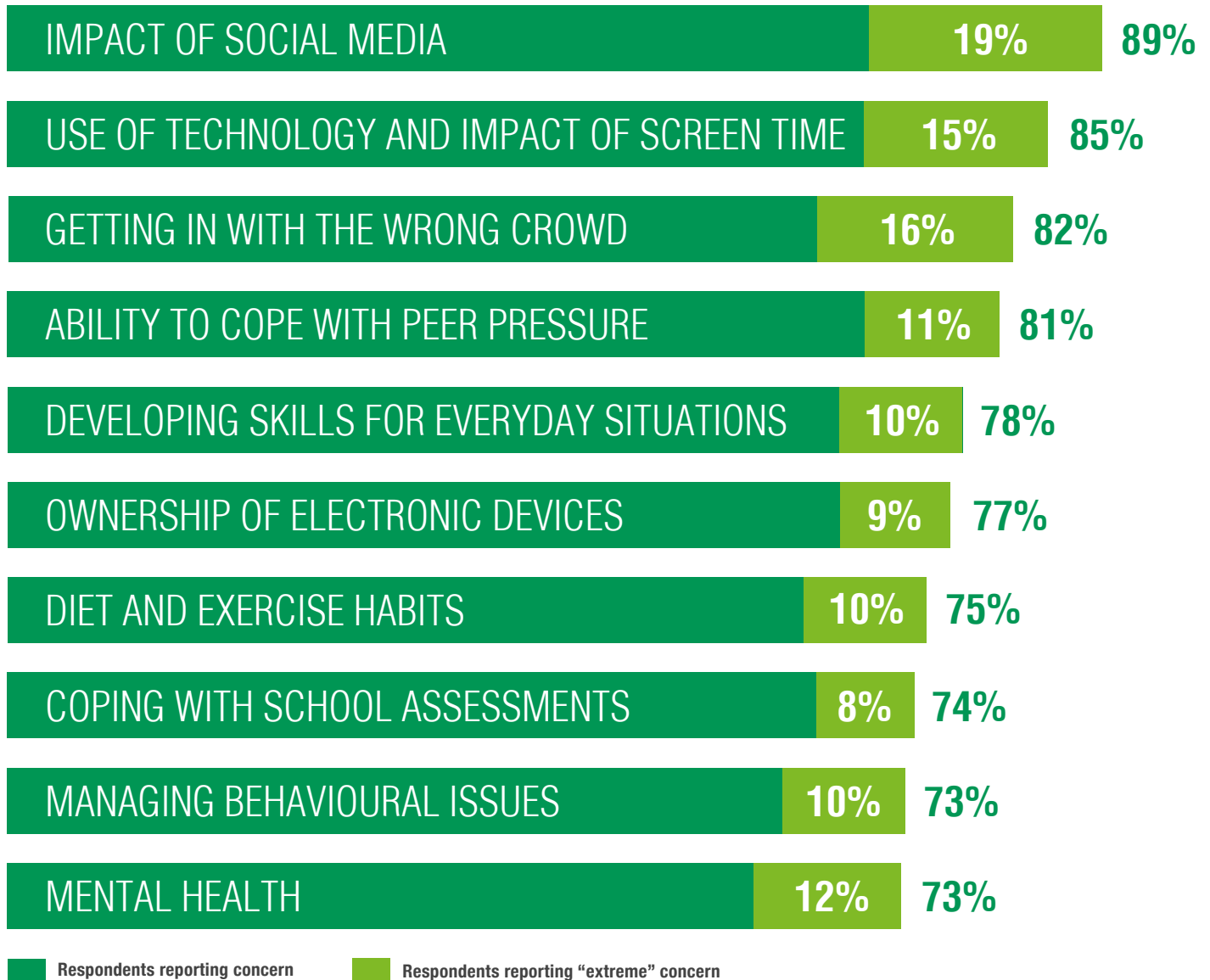
Footnotes included throughout this document indicate where statistics relate to a subset of the total survey base (n=1200). If no footnote is included, assume that the statistic relates to the total survey base.

Some results may not add up to 100% due to rounding, or multiple responses being allowed to questions or because only main reasons are portrayed in the charts.

# Parenting

## Top 10 parental concerns for their children

Parents worry most about the impact of social media and technology screen time on their children.



# Parenting

## Pressures of parenting

- **Over one in five<sup>1</sup> parents (22%) felt some degree of pressure from their extended family to raise their child in a certain way.**
- Just under two in five (38%) felt pressure to go back to work earlier than they wanted after having children – with 16% strongly agreeing with this statement.
  - This stat grew to 25% “strongly agree” among Māori parents.
- Birthday parties and holidays are the areas where parents feel the most pressure to keep up with other families – and two in five (45%) said they’d spent at least a bit more than they could afford in order to do so<sup>2</sup>.
  - Asian parents were more than twice as likely to report experiencing “a lot” of pressure to keep up with other families – at 11% compared to 5% overall.



## Family time

- **More than three quarters of parents (76%) worried to some degree about the amount of time they have available to spend with their children, with 13% experiencing “a lot” of concern.**
  - This statistic grew to 22% experiencing “a lot” of concern among Māori parents.
  - This statistic grew to 18% experiencing “a lot” of concern among Asian parents.
- However, on average families had done around four activities together in the last two weeks.
- Most popular activities include having dinner together, watching a movie, shopping and going to the park.



## Childcare

- **Among parents that have used early childcare education, play centres, or in-home<sup>4</sup> care, approximately two in five had felt pressure or judgement for doing so.**
- Two out of three parents (65%) reported having close family available to support their childcare needs.
  - This statistic grew to 73% among Māori parents.

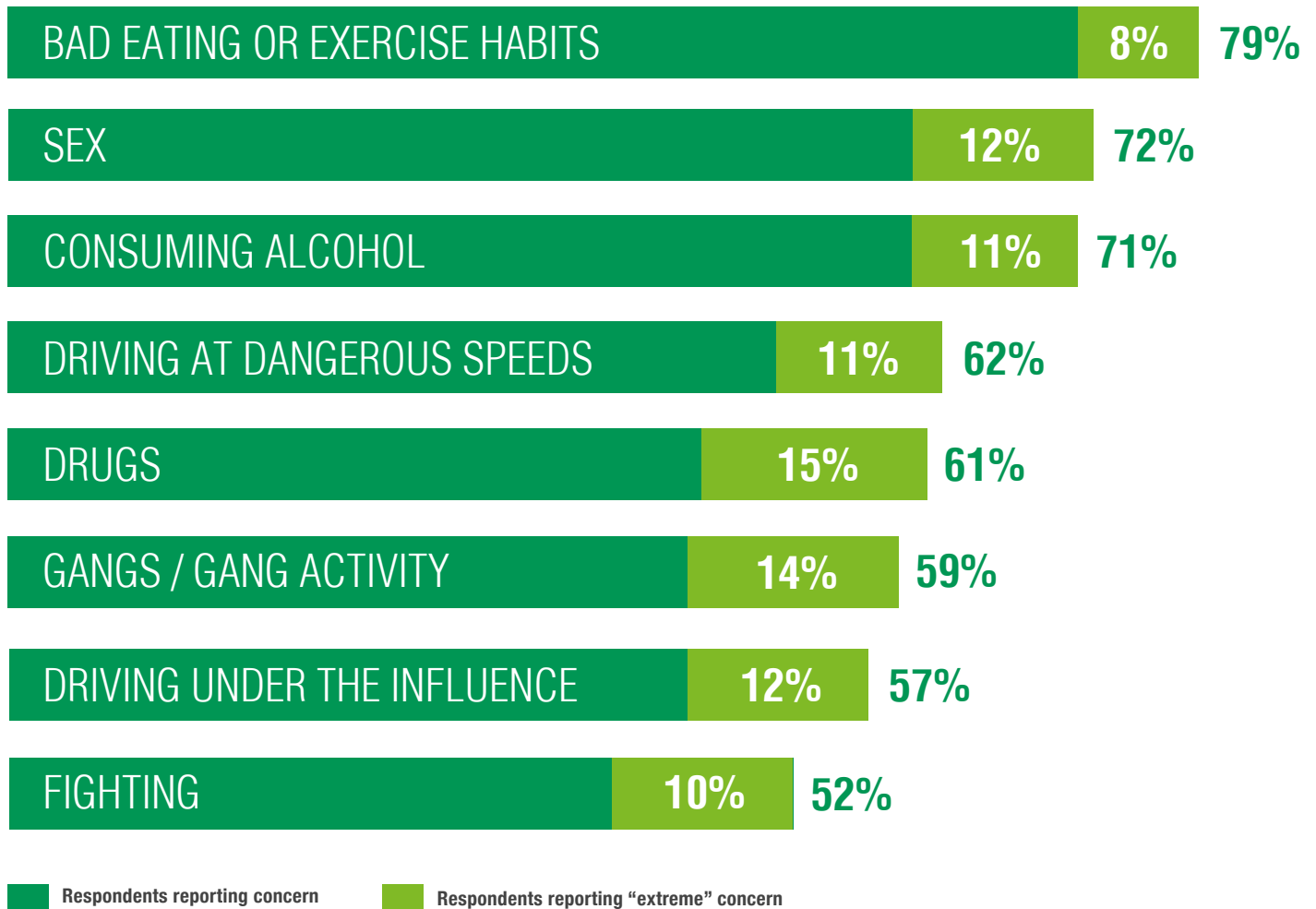


<sup>1</sup> All respondents excluding those who selected “N/A – I am a step-parent or guardian”, n=1144. | <sup>2</sup> Parents that have felt some degree of pressure to keep up with other families, n=654. | <sup>3</sup> Parents that have used ECE or play centres, n = 686. | <sup>4</sup> Parents that have used in-home group care, n = 115.

# Pressures & Other Milestones

## Top peer pressure concerns for parents<sup>5</sup>

The pressures most commonly causing concern among parents of children over five years of age relate to eating, exercise, sex and alcohol consumption.

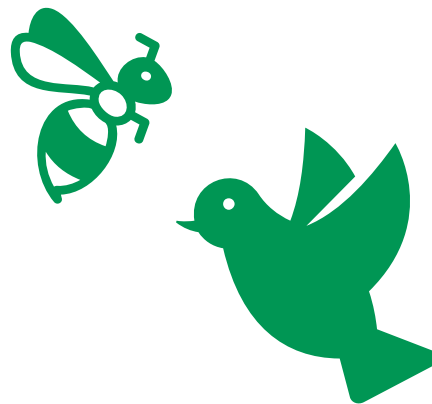


<sup>5</sup> Percentage of respondents with children aged five and older (n=913) reporting concern on these issues.

# Pressures & Other Milestones

## The birds and the bees

- **Just over two in five parents (44%) feel that it's appropriate to have conversations around sex with their children under 13.**
- Asian parents are more likely to say that it is appropriate to have these conversations when their child is 18 years or older (19%), and 12% don't feel it is appropriate to have these conversations.



## Life milestones

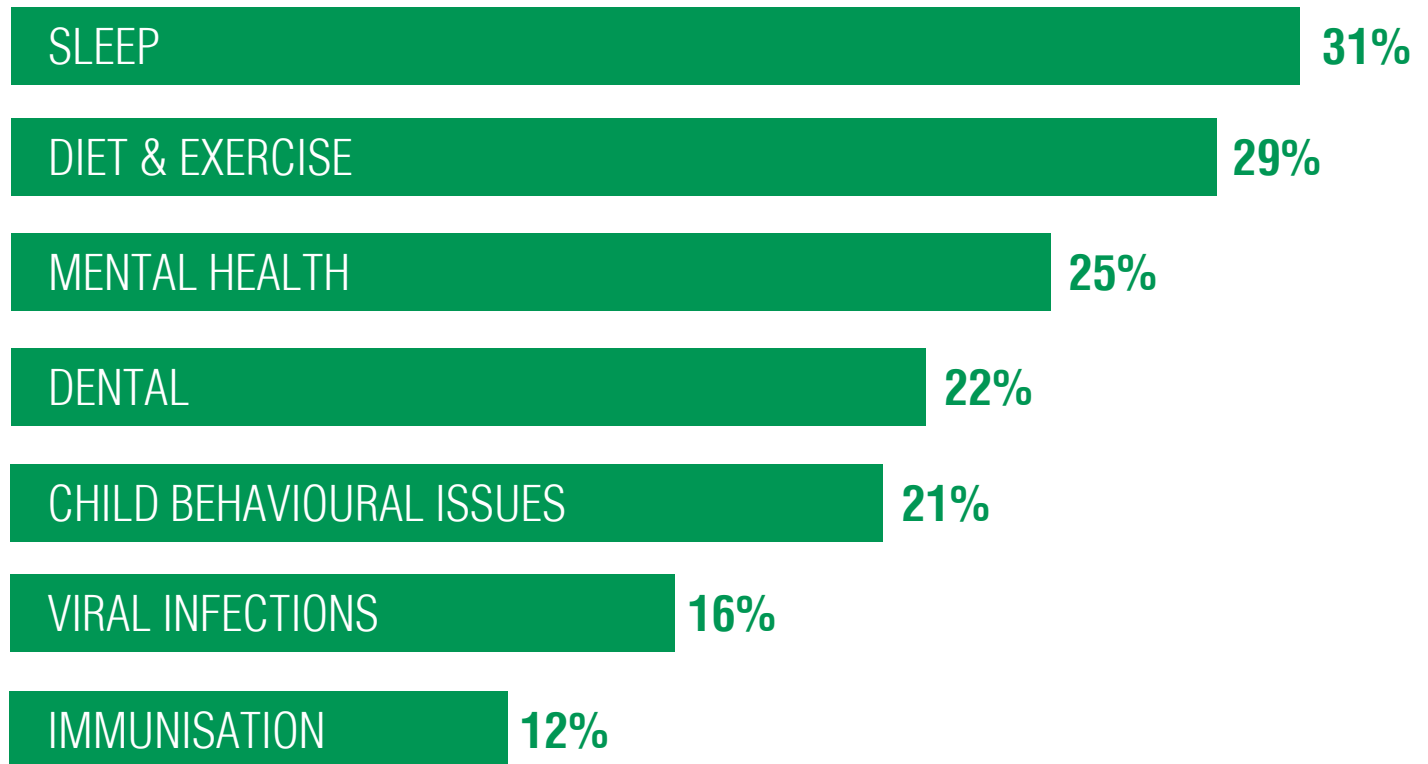
- **Around half of parents (49%) feel their children are mature enough to learn to drive at 16 years.**
- Just three in 10 parents (29%) think their children are mature enough to consume alcohol at 18 years.



# Health

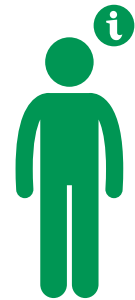
## Top parental concerns around health

Parents feel that sleep, diet and exercise and mental health are the three main health-related concerns that most impact their children.



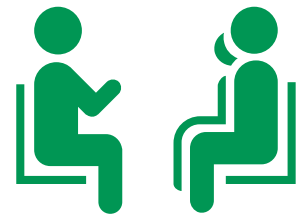
## Getting help<sup>6</sup>

- **Sleep, child behavioural issues and mental health are the areas of concern where parents most commonly reported experiencing a lack of support.**
  - This was either because they felt there is nothing available in their region, or they wouldn't know where to start.



## Attitudes to healthcare

- **Among parents with health insurance<sup>7</sup>, more than a quarter (26%) were motivated to take out their policy by not wanting to wait on the public health system and / or wanting to choose their specialist or doctor.**
  - Among those with health insurance<sup>8</sup>, Asian parents are more likely to have claimed for counselling services (12%) than respondents overall (6%).
- More than two in five parents (44%) place less priority on their health than they do on their children's health.
  - This statistic grew to 54% among Māori parents.
- The majority of respondents (65%) are comfortable with using a digital/online healthcare service.



## Proactive healthcare management

- **Among those proactively managing their health<sup>9</sup>, 41% do so by going for regular GP check-ups.**

Six Monthly  
GP Check-ups



41%

Annual Dentist  
Check-ups



26%

Annual Optical  
Check-ups



21%

Annual Skin/Mole  
Check-ups



9%

- The main reasons for not proactively managing health are: cost (i.e. too expensive) 56%, no time 26% and not a priority 25%.

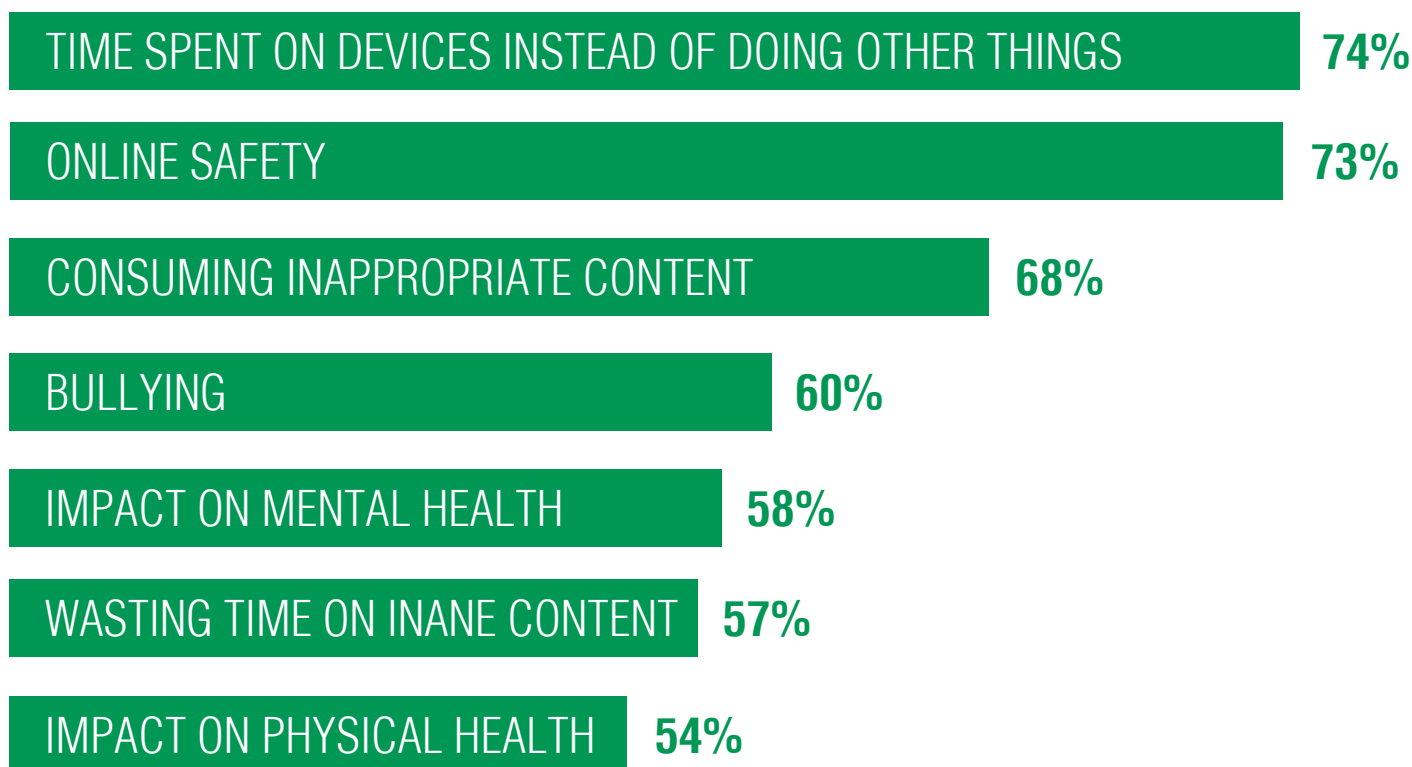
6 Parents with children who are impacted by health concerns, n=801. | 7 Parents with health insurance, n = 479. | 8 Parents who have health insurance, n=479.  
9 Parents who proactively manage their health, n = 714.



# Technology

## Top parental concerns around childrens' use of technology

Parents worry most about online safety and the time children spend on devices instead of doing other things.

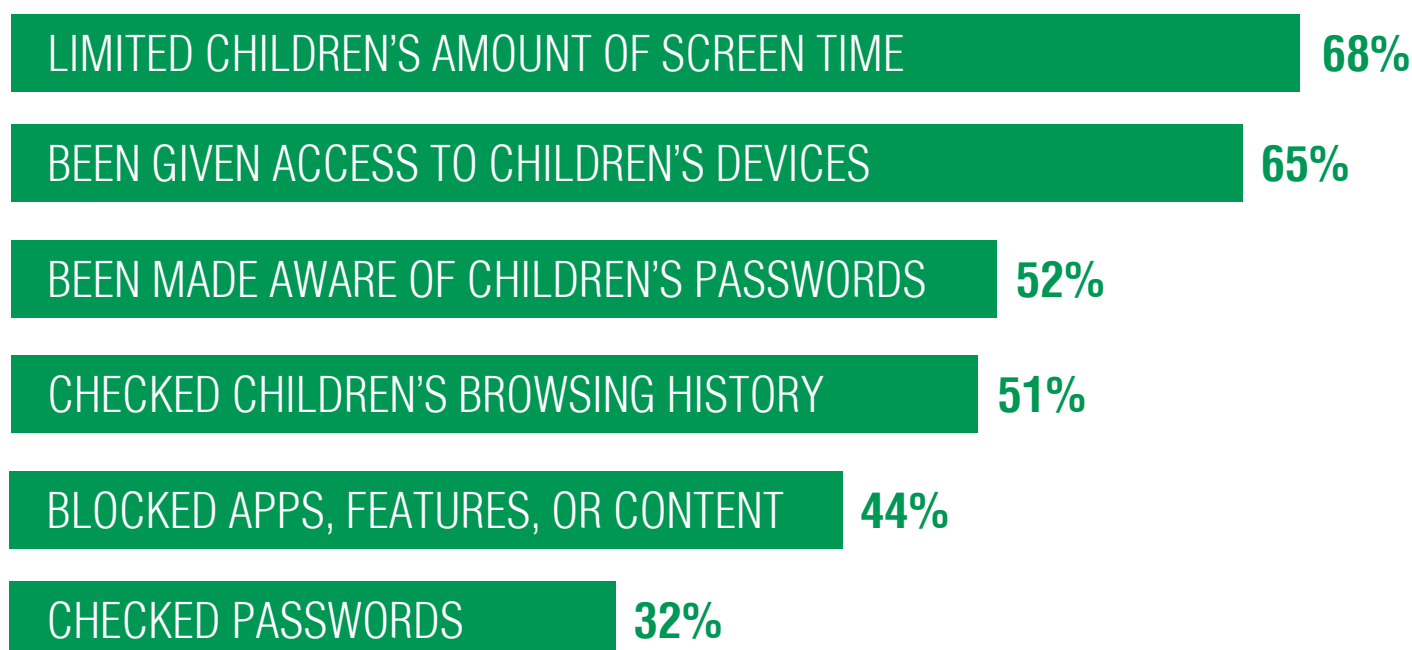


- Māori parents (48%) were more likely to be concerned about the risk of identity theft/fraud than survey respondents overall (39%).

# Technology

## Actions parents have taken in the last six months to manage device use<sup>10</sup>

Parents most commonly reported limiting their child's screen time – with one hour a day being the most popular limit.



## Device concerns and conflict

- **Four in ten parents reported having experienced conflict due to devices<sup>11</sup>.**
  - This was significantly higher among Asian and Māori parents, each at 52%.
- Among parents who have experienced conflict as a result of their children's electronic devices, 80% said the amount of time spent on devices was the main cause of the conflict.



<sup>10</sup> Those with children who own electronic devices, excluding those who answered "Not applicable due to age of child".  
<sup>11</sup> Parent who have experienced family conflict in the last six months, due to device use, n=366.

# Education

## New Zealand school system

- Nearly seven in 10 parents (68%) agree that they are able to give input on their child's education.
- Three in five (60%) of parents agree that their children receive appropriate levels of discipline at school.
- Just over half (52%) agree that they have the opportunity to build strong relationships with their children's teachers.

## School curriculum

- Parents would like to see the following subjects become compulsory in schools:

Swimming /  
Water Safety



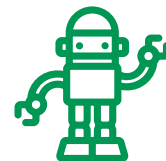
79%

Financial  
Literacy



72%

Coding /  
Robotics



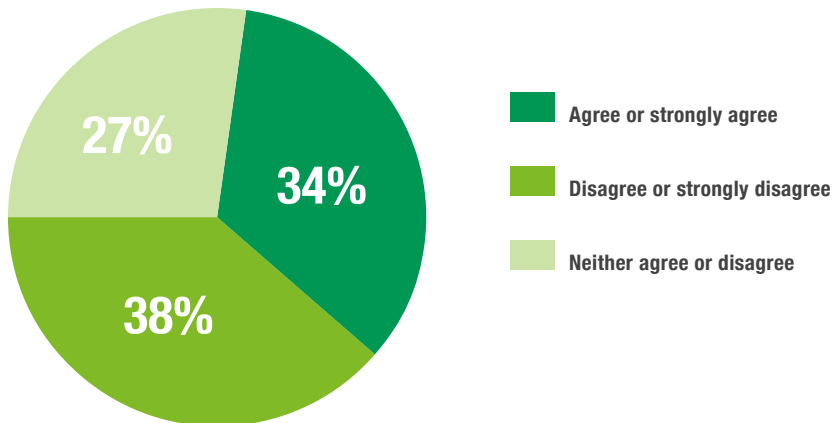
43%

- Asian parents were almost three times as likely to strongly agree that the current school curriculum fosters all relevant / important skills (15%) and that the assessment systems in schools are a fair assessment of children's intelligence and skills (16%) – compared to 6% and 5% respectively for all respondents.

# Education

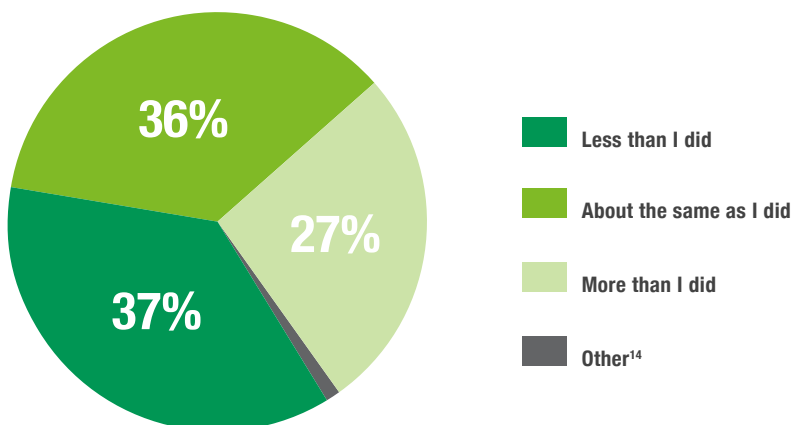
## Should te reo Māori be compulsory in schools?

Among those who disagreed or strongly disagreed<sup>12</sup> that te reo should be compulsory, 39% of respondents felt that it should be an optional school subject.



## Are children participating in as much sport as their parents did?

More than three in five (63%) parents claim their children are doing more or the same amount of sports/outdoor physical education than they did when they were growing up<sup>13</sup>.



- Pacific Island (48%) and Asian parents (40%) were both more likely to report their children playing more sport than they did when they were growing up.
- Māori parents (46%) were more likely to report their children playing less sport than they did.

<sup>12</sup> Parents who disagree or strongly disagree that te reo Māori should be compulsory from year 1 to 12, n=437. | <sup>13</sup> Those with children ages five years and older, n=913.  
<sup>14</sup> Due to medical/physical conditions my child is unable to participate in physical activity, 1%.