



HAL
open science

**KIDS DIGITAL LIVES IN COVID-19 TIMES -
NATIONAL REPORT - FRANCE THE DIGITAL
PRACTICES, SAFETY AND WELL-BEING OF
6-12-YEAR-OLD CHILDREN: A qualitative study –
Spring 2020**

Marlène Loicq, Isabelle Féroc Dumez

► **To cite this version:**

Marlène Loicq, Isabelle Féroc Dumez. KIDS DIGITAL LIVES IN COVID-19 TIMES - NATIONAL REPORT - FRANCE THE DIGITAL PRACTICES, SAFETY AND WELL-BEING OF 6-12-YEAR-OLD CHILDREN: A qualitative study – Spring 2020. Université Paris Est Créteil; Université Poitiers; Joint research Center, Commission Européenne. 2021. halshs-03920176

HAL Id: halshs-03920176

<https://shs.hal.science/halshs-03920176>

Submitted on 14 Feb 2023

HAL is a multi-disciplinary open access archive for the deposit and dissemination of scientific research documents, whether they are published or not. The documents may come from teaching and research institutions in France or abroad, or from public or private research centers.

L'archive ouverte pluridisciplinaire **HAL**, est destinée au dépôt et à la diffusion de documents scientifiques de niveau recherche, publiés ou non, émanant des établissements d'enseignement et de recherche français ou étrangers, des laboratoires publics ou privés.

KIDS DIGITAL LIVES IN COVID-19 TIMES - NATIONAL REPORT - FRANCE

*THE DIGITAL PRACTICES, SAFETY AND WELL-BEING
OF 6-12-YEAR-OLD CHILDREN:*

A qualitative study – Spring 2020

Loicq Marlène

Université Paris-Est Créteil

Laboratoire Céditec

Centre d'études sur les jeunes et les médias

marlene.loicq@u-pec.fr

Féroc Dumez Isabelle

Université de Poitiers

Laboratoire Techné

Centre d'études sur les jeunes et les médias

isabelle.feroc.dumez@univ-poitiers.fr



April 2021

THE DIGITAL PRACTICES, SAFETY AND WELL-BEING OF 6-12-YEAR-OLD CHILDREN and THEIR PARENTS

A qualitative study – Spring 2020

Project Kids Digital Lives in CoVID-19 Times – KiDicoTi

<https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/en/science-update/kidicoti-kids-digital-lives-covid-19-times>

STUDY REPORT – FRANCE

Marlène Loicq, UPEC - Céditec

Isabelle Féroc Dumez, Université de Poitiers - Techné

Copyrights

This creation is made available according to the Contract: “Attribution-No Commercial Use-No modification 3.0 France” available online : <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/fr/>



Table of contents

INTRODUCTION - KIDICOTI: A JRC-COORDINATED STUDY ON THE EFFECTS OF THE COVID-19 HEALTH CRISIS ON CHILDREN'S DIGITAL USES, ONLINE SAFETY AND WELL-BEING	5
1. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AT EUROPEAN LEVEL.....	6
2. FRENCH SURVEY METHODOLOGY	7
2.1. GENERAL PROCEDURE	7
2.2. THE SAMPLING PROCEDURE OF THE FRENCH FAMILIES INTERVIEWED.....	7
2.3. DESCRIPTION OF THE POPULATION INTERVIEWED.....	8
2.4. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROTOCOL OF OBSERVATIONS.....	10
2.5. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROTOCOL ANALYSIS.....	10
2.6. METHODOLOGICAL DISCUSSION	10
3. PORTRAIT OF THE COUNTRY DURING PERIODS OF COVID-19.....	11
4. SUMMARY OF MAIN TRENDS.....	13
4.1. THE GENERAL WELL-BEING OF FAMILIES	13
4.2. GENERAL ACCESS TO DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES AND TIME SPENT ON DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES	13
4.3. THE USES OF DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES	13
4.4. CHILDREN'S AUTONOMY.....	14
4.5. THE OUTLOOK FOR THE FUTURE "AFTER COVID-19"	14
5. A PORTRAIT GALLERY OF FRENCH FAMILIES.....	14
FAMILY 1 - FR01Fg8	15
FAMILY 2 - FR02Mg12	17
FAMILY 3 - FR03Fb7	18
FAMILY 4 - FR04Mb9.....	19
FAMILY 5 - FR05Mg8.....	21
FAMILY 6 - FR06Mb8.....	24
FAMILY 7 - FR07Mg9.....	25
FAMILY 8 - FR08Mg6.....	27
FAMILY 9, FR09Fb11.....	29
FAMILY 10 - FR10Mg8.....	31
6. TRENDS OBSERVED.....	34
6.1. THE DIGITAL PRACTICES DURING THE LOCKDOWN OF CHILDREN INTERVIEWED: THE USES OF DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES BY THE CHILDREN INTERVIEWED (6-12 YEARS OLD)	34
6.1.1. The most popular technological devices: the most used equipment and services	34
6.1.2. Most-viewed content.....	35
6.1.3. Controlling the time spent on screens: from continuity to sharp increases - the lockdown challenge to family rules.....	37
6.1.4 Parental control procedures for accessing screens.....	40
6.1.5. How digital technologies are used (gains in autonomy or assistance)	40
6.2. THE LOCKDOWN AND THE CHANGING BEHAVIOUR (ACTIONS) AND DIGITAL PRACTICES OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES	44

6.2.1. <i>Redefining social bonds: technology for keeping in touch</i>	44
6.2.2. <i>New ways of schooling children: the benefits and pressures of homeschooling</i>	45
6.2.3. <i>The reconfiguration of family leisure: relaxing and keeping busy, with or without screens</i> ...	49
6.2.4. <i>A new family life balance: occupying children as parents were teleworking, and reconsidering parental mediation</i>	51
6.3. <i>ATTITUDES AND PERCEPTIONS OF DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES DURING LOCKDOWN</i>	54
6.3.1. <i>Digital technologies to preserve social relations with family and friends</i>	54
6.3.2. <i>Digital technologies to continue working: the pressures of teleworking on family life</i>	55
6.3.3. <i>Digital devices to ensure entertainment</i>	56
6.3.4. <i>Digital devices to ensure the educational continuity of the school</i>	56
6.3.5. <i>The feelings of confidence or fear (caused by facts or emotions) expressed by the parents interviewed concerned about the benefits and risks (physiological, social, psychological and cognitive) that screens had for their children</i>	57
6.3.6. <i>The upheaval of representations under pressure from changes in habits</i>	57
6.4. <i>CHANGING ATTITUDES TO DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES DUE TO LOCKDOWN: PARENTS’ PERCEPTIONS OF DIGITAL RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES: THE NEW AWARENESS OF PARENTS’ RELATIONSHIP TO DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES</i>	58
6.4.1. <i>Increasing or decreasing perceptions (personal feelings) of the risks (real or imagined) incurred in relation to technologies</i>	58
6.4.2. <i>The perception of new opportunities provided by digital technology</i>	59
6.5. <i>FUTURE IMPACTS PROJECTED FOR “THE WORLD AFTER COVID”</i>	60
6.5.1. <i>The continued use of digital technologies in learning and schooling: (we hope so – we think so – we want to)</i>	60
6.5.2. <i>For leisure: more/less activities and content – doing better by doing things differently; from “doing alone” to “doing together”, or vice versa</i>	61
6.5.3. <i>Technological devices and practices: getting more equipment and spending more (or less) time online</i>	61
6.5.4. <i>Online social life: continued remote communication and work: advantages and disadvantages, and the reality principle</i>	61
7. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	62
7.1. <i>REGARDING SCHOOL</i>	62
7.2. <i>REGARDING SOCIAL RELATIONS</i>	63
7.3. <i>REGARDING ENTERTAINMENT</i>	63
OTHER REPORTS PUBLISHED RELATED TO THIS STUDY	64

Introduction - KiDiCoTi: a JRC-coordinated study on the effects of the COVID-19 health crisis on children’s digital uses, online safety and well-being

In these times of unprecedented crisis, most of the children in Europe (and beyond) have experienced a lockdown at home. For them, schooling, leisure time, social contacts, have taken place at home and via digital media. Children have, therefore, become more than ever consumers of digital media and content. However, previous research has noted that “[i]ncreased time spent online is likely to increase negative experiences – but also offers opportunities”. It is to be expected indeed that the more children spend time online, the more online risks increase (encountering inappropriate content, overuse, commercial pressure, unwanted contact, cyberbullying, physical and mental health consequences, etc.). But the situation also opens up new opportunities to them.

To identify possible dangers of increased online use in the home context, and to mitigate risks while supporting the positive consequences of this unexpected crisis, it seems essential to gather quickly comparable cross-national data. The ultimate goal of this study is to inform stakeholders of the current trends and possible impacts of the Covid-19 crisis on children’s use of digital technology, online safety, privacy and well-being in the home.

As of April 2020, the JRC in collaboration with selected European research teams developed a research protocol to gather, as quickly as possible, data about the impacts of COVID-19 crisis on the use of digital technology by children across Europe. This analysis maps the evolution of children’s digital engagement during the Covid-19 crisis (and maybe afterwards, leading possibly to a longitudinal study with a broader sample). Particular attention is paid to children’s online safety, privacy and well-being.

A cross-European research network has facilitated this effort. At the time of writing, 26 research centres in 17 European countries and the research office of UNICEF have been collaborating on this new study. It has also benefited from the synergies established with JRC.B.4 (JRC.B.4 - Human Capital and Employment) and the interest and support of DG CNECT (CNECT.DDG2.G.3.001; Data > Accessibility, Multilingualism and Safer Internet > Safer Internet).

Research questions

1. How did children aged 6-12 years old engage with digital technologies during this specific time in the families interviewed?
2. How did the lockdown disrupt or change children’s and family’s behaviour and activities related to technologies?
3. What were children and parents’ attitudes towards digital technology use and online activities during the lockdown?
4. How did the lockdown disrupt or change children’s and families’ attitudes towards digital technology and online activities? How did parents perceive the associated risks and opportunities?
5. What are the impacts for the future?

1. Research Methodology at European level

Kids' Digital Lives During COVID-19 Times (KiDiCoTi) is a research project that examines how children and parents have engaged with digital technologies during the lockdown period in Europe in spring 2020. A qualitative interview survey and a quantitative study were conducted to investigate how children and their parents used digital media in the context of remote schooling, leisure time and management of (distant) social contacts. The project has also aimed to understand whether and how these experiences have impacted family well-being and online safety for children. The European Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC) coordinated this research project, which was conducted in 13 countries (Austria, Croatia, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Norway, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Spain and Switzerland) and with additional support from researchers in Belgium and Lithuania. The international team carefully developed the research instruments (the interview guide for children and parents, a pre-interview questionnaire for parents, and time capsules for children).

In this report, we present the results of the qualitative study conducted in France. Wherever findings from the qualitative study are addressed, the focus in this particular report is on the French sub-study. In France, 10 families with children aged 6 to 11 were interviewed online via video conferencing, from the middle of June to the middle of July 2020.

The families received the following documentation by post or email: informed consent forms for both parents and children, an activity book in which the children could draw and write, and a link to a pre-interview questionnaire with general questions about the family's technological inventory and use. The activity book served as an icebreaker during the interviews, and the questionnaire formed the basis for the conversation between the researcher and the family. The interview protocol was translated from English into French. The research team discussed thoroughly the guide to ensure a common understanding and approach. The average duration of each interview was just over one hour. All interviews included a child and one of the child's parents. All the names have been modified for the interviewed to remain anonymous.

After anonymization, the information was analyzed and compiled in this report. During the entire study, all personal data collected were stored with appropriate security and protective measures were taken. Each family's members were coded as follows: country code – two letters (FR); family number – 1 → 19; member of the family (f/m/b/g) f: father, m: mother, b: boy, g: girl; and age (* = age unknown). For example, FR04b7 refers to a Boy aged 7, from family 4 in the French sample.

Interview structure: during the first five minutes, the children and parents were given additional information about the project, the interview and their personal data protection. We also emphasized their right to withdraw from the research project at any time without any negative consequences for them. The interview with the child (which lasted between 15 and 30 minutes) started with a conversation about the activity booklet (about five minutes), then shifted to a conversation about their use of technology, remote schooling, leisure activities, parental mediation, well-being and perceptions of the lockdown (between 10 and 25 minutes). The parents were present or in the background while the children were interviewed. When the conversation with the child was over, the interview continued with the parent. Most children preferred to leave the room, but some remained while the parent was interviewed. The conversation with the parent focused on the use of technology, remote schooling, leisure activities, parental mediation, online security, well-being and perceptions about the lockdown (between 20 and 35 minutes). Finally, the families were given the opportunity to ask questions before being thanked for their participation (five minutes).

2. French Survey Methodology

2.1. General procedure

This section discusses the implementation of the study in France. For a general overview of the protocol of observations and the protocol of analysis that were shared across participating research groups, we refer to these specific documents.

2.2. The sampling procedure of the French families interviewed

The family sampling procedure followed several common principles:

- Diverse geographic and demographic situations were targeted. We tried to contact families with different living environments, living in: houses, apartments, small towns, big cities and in the country. These geographic and demographic situations may be considered as variables in the analysis of the data collected.
- The sampling targeted various family situations. We also wanted to find families with different backgrounds: single children and large families. Family living conditions seemed to us to be particularly relevant during lockdowns, both from the point of view of social issues affecting the life between the members of the same family, but also in terms of the logistical organisation of lockdown that parents were able to implement;
- The sampling procedure strove for homogeneous coverage of the age group concerned by the study. We tried to cover the target age groups of the survey as widely as possible: from 6 to 12 years old, taking care of the mix, by interviewing 4 boys and 6 girls. The parents interviewed were between 34 and 43 years old, and we spoke to 4 fathers and 7 mothers.
- Lastly, diverse socio-economic and cultural profiles were targeted. We set out to interview parents with varied socio-economic and cultural profiles, based on several criteria such as the level of education, the languages spoken at home, the general standard of living (data which may also be correlated with participants' geographical location). Although we did not obtain the expected diversity mix (see detailed presentation of the method), we managed to cover various social and economic situations of lockdown: partial unemployment, no activity, full-time teleworking, hybrid situations with teleworking and face-to-face work time.

2.3. Description of the population interviewed

Family code	Family	Place of residence	Level of education	Occupation
FR01 fg8	<p>Jean, father, 41 years old (FR01f41) Margaux , mother, 39 years</p> <p>Alice, girl, 8 years (FR01g8) Inès, girl, 6 years Castille, girl, 4 years</p>	<p>Apartment with balcony Large city Paris</p>	<p>MAM/Sc MA/MSc Second grade Last year pre-school -</p>	<p>Engineer in a large company Communication manager</p>
FR02 mg12	<p>Julie, mother, 40 (FR02m40) Pascal, father, Suzanne, girl, 12 years (FR02g12) Gilone, girl, 9 years</p>	<p>Town house with garden Medium-sized town Paris suburb (far north-east)</p>	<p>MAM/Sc MAM/Sc 1st-year middle school Third grade</p>	<p>Bank executive Engineer</p>
FR03 fb7	<p>Frédéric, father, 43 years (FR03f43) Jaël, mother, 40 Amaury, boy, 7 (FR03b7)</p>	<p>Apartment with balcony Medium-sized town Paris suburb (far north-east)</p>	<p>MAM/Sc MAM/Sc First grade</p>	<p>Employee Without employment</p>
FR04 mb9	<p>Aurélia, mother, 38 (FR04m38) Mohammed, father Karim, boy, 9 (FR04b9) Lila, girl, 3</p>	<p>Apartment with a terrace and small garden Small town Paris suburb (far south-west)</p>	<p>MAM/Sc MAM/Sc Third grade -</p>	<p>Part-time leave (Employee) Computer technologist</p>

FR05 mg8	Ariane, mother, 39 (FR05m39) Saïd, father Marie, girl, 12 Charlotte, girl, 8 (FR05g8)	Apartment with small courtyard Medium-sized town Paris suburb (south-east)	MA/MSc Vocational training 1st-year middle school Second grade	High school teacher (part-time leave) Part-time leave (Pastry cook)
FR06 mb8	Sandra, mother, 37 (FR06m37) Julien, father, 38 Johan, boy, 10 years Rémi, boy, 8 (FR06b8) Benjamin, boy, 6 Charles, boy, 3	House with a garden Small town Paris suburb (far south-west)	MA/MSc MA/MSc Fourth grade Second grade Last year pre-school -	Vocational high school teacher (part-time leave) Engineer
FR07 mg9	Flavie, mother, 34 (FR07m34) Bruno, father Louise, 14 Eva, girl, 9 (FR07g9) Elona, girl, 5 years	House with a garden Medium-sized town Paris suburb (far north-east)	Xxx xxx Last year middle school Third grade Last year pre-school	On leave (employee) Part-time leave (employee)
FR08 mg6	Christel, mother, 39 (FR08m39) Oscar, father Luz, girl, 6 years (FR08g6)	House with a garden Medium-sized town Province (south-west)	MA/MSc High school diploma Last year pre-school	Primary school teacher Without employment
FR09 fb11	Victor, father, 39 (FR09f39) Madiha, mother,	House with a garden Small town/county	High school diploma High sch.	Part-time leave (employee) Without employment

	Djibril, boy, 11 (FR09b11) Joud, boy, 7 Nahil, boy, 3	Province (south-east)	Dip. Fifth grade First grade -	
FR10 mg8	Marie-France, mother, 43 (FR10m43) Alexandre, father, 42 years Morgane, girl, 11 Lucile, girl, 8 (FR10g8)	Apartment with balcony Medium-sized town Paris suburb (south)	PhD PhD Fifth grade Second grade	Part-time leave (employee) Employee

2.4. Implementation of the protocol of observations

The volunteer families contacted were asked to complete several documents including authorisations to store the data collected during the survey; a short questionnaire for the corresponding parent aimed at identifying the family’s IT equipment; the conditions of lockdown; sociological data about the parents. A child was also asked to complete a document called a “time capsule”, with the aim of collecting drawings concerning the composition of her or his family; a questionnaire on the child’s favourite activities during the lockdown; and information about the child’s daily schedule. Each family was interviewed remotely by videoconference or by telephone. Interviews were recorded and structured in two stages: first by an exchange with the designated child accompanied by the parent (s); and second by the volunteer parent(s) without the child. The interview was conducted by one of the project’s researchers (Isabelle Féroc Dumez or Marlène Loicq for France), following a common interview protocol and based on the responses collected with the questionnaire and the document completed beforehand by the parents and children interviewed. Each interview lasted between 40 minutes and 1:30 hours. Exchanges were later transcribed.

2.5. Implementation of the protocol analysis

In order to analyse the content of the interviews conducted with the children and their parents, we coded the questions/answers in relation to the research questions using a synoptic table. Certain data were contextualized by verbatim extracts when these seemed to us particularly emblematic. It was necessary to build additional indicators in order to align certain data (family equipment rate, for example). The data collected through the parent’s questionnaire and the child’s document specifying her/his activities, completed before the interview, were also codified and compared. They are used both to draw up portraits of each family and cross-analyse the 10 families.

2.6. Methodological discussion

We are aware that some biases in the selection of families remain which, in terms of heterogeneity, could not capture the whole cross-section of France’s population. Some families were under-equipped or unfamiliar with the digital practices required in the protocol implemented for data collection (in sending digital questionnaires, video Internet connections, etc.).

The constraints of the international research agenda and the evolution of families' personal/professional contexts were strongly linked to the evolution of countries' specific health contexts. This led us to review the selection procedure for families during the recruitment process. On the one hand, the lengthy work of joint formulation of a shared interview protocol (between all the research teams of the countries participating in the study) led to delayed recruitment of families in question (at the end of the lockdown). On the other hand, heterogeneous family situations when lockdowns ended (return to work, sending children to a separated parent, etc.) meant that several families were no longer able to participate in the survey, despite their initial agreement. Consequently, we interviewed some of these families rather late (up until the end of July, during the summer holidays), meaning that the social and demographic heterogeneity was less extensive than we had initially hoped. However, as shown previously, we were able to establish a set of socio-economic and cultural, demographic and geographic, social and family variables which are heterogeneous enough to be used in analysis of the results, even though they are not representative of the French population as a whole.

3. Portrait of the country during periods of CoVID-19

1st lockdown, 1st and 2nd phases in mainland France: 23 February and 29 February 2020

Faced with the coronavirus pandemic, France adopted its *Orsan plan (REB)* for epidemic and biological risks. It was triggered on 23 February 2020 by Olivier Véran, Minister of Solidarity and Health, and this plan has 4 phases. Phase 1 (23 February) tried to avoid the spread of the virus across the country. It ended with the transition to Phase 2 on 29 February, to curb the spread of the virus in France. Schools in the municipalities affected were closed and residents were invited to limit their movements. At the national level, people returning from “at risk” areas were quarantined. From 9 March, gatherings of more than 1,000 people were prohibited. On 11 March, visits to institutions for the elderly were prohibited. This is the day the WHO declared the coronavirus to be a pandemic. The next day, 12 March 2020, the President of the French Republic decreed the closure of nurseries, schools, middle schools, high schools and universities. This affected more than 62,000 establishments. About 12 million pupils, 1.6 million students and more than one million employees of France's National Education system were affected by these closures (source: Wikipedia and francetvinfo.fr). Teachers had to ensure pedagogical continuity, which took on very different forms depending on teaching levels, schools and teachers themselves. No specific material was made available to teaching staff. A few document exchange or visual communication platforms were proposed by the Ministry of National Education. Each teacher managed their relationship with their class and with student families. Educational continuity was therefore very disparate.

Employees were encouraged to telework when possible.

1st lockdown, 3rd phase: 17 March 2020, everyone was asked to stay at home

Phase 3 was triggered on 14 March, in an attempt to mitigate the consequences of the epidemic by regulating the flow of patients in hospitals and in particular in intensive care units.

Prime Minister Édouard Philippe decreed the closure of all non-essential public places. Thus, only essential stores remained open (the list being first drastically limited and then gradually extended). These included pharmacies, banks, food stores, newsagents and tobacco shops, petrol stations. Citizens were requested to limit their movements as much as possible.

Lockdown began on 17 March, with everyone being obliged to remain at home (for an initial period of 15 days), excluding: medical personnel, workers in essential stores, city services (the post office, refuse collection, etc.) etc. Companies had to organize teleworking; family reunions were prohibited; travel was reduced to what was strictly necessary. Schools had to start organizing pedagogical continuity in the days that followed. The Ministry of National Education and public television provide programs dedicated to educational resources, as part of the “Learning Nation” project: classes of all levels were broadcast every day on a public TV channel and available for free on the website: <https://www.lumni.fr/>

From 18 March, access to the French coasts was prohibited and on 20 March several municipalities established a curfew.

On 23 March, lockdown measures were tightened with the authorization to leave homes limited to only 1 hour per day, within a radius of 1 km (to run errands, to walk with children or pets).

On 27 March 27, France’s national lockdown was extended until 15 April.

From the beginning of April, some prefectures (i.e., localized central government offices) reinforced these measures by establishing schedules for sports outings (still limited to 1 hour and 1 km).

1st progressive lockdown easing 11 May 2020

On 11 May, France’s lockdown started to ease up. Firstly, the need to have an exit permit for movement was lifted; wearing a mask became compulsory in public transport; travel was limited to a 100 km radius. Schools received a very complex health protocol to begin gradually welcoming pupils (in addition to so-called “priority” pupils, whose parents were mobilized during the lockdown, and who were sometimes grouped together in schools during the entire lockdown). Primary schools were opened first from 11 May, then middle schools in France’s “green zone” (i.e., less-infected parts of the country) from 18 May, and on 2 June high schools in “green zone” were opened and other children allowed to return to school. To comply with the health protocol imposed on schools, school heads had to adapt the return to school according to their material and human resources. Thus, many establishments only welcomed children in half-classes, and/or sometimes part-time.

The health protocol was lightened on 22 June with most kindergartens and elementary schools, nurseries and middle schools resumed teaching “normally”, though being requested to respect protective measures, “as much as possible”. High schools and universities remained closed and educational continuity was continued.

Between 11 May, when the children gradually returned to school, and 22 June, when everyone was able to attend, educational continuity was more complicated. As teachers were then mobilized in the classes, they could not dedicate this time to following-up children who were still at home. The situation was specific for each teacher, some continued the same level of follow-up, others sent on homework done in class to students at home, and others still stopped communicating with families.

Second phase of the 1st lockdown easing: return to schools on 22 June

On 22 June, France began its second phase of lockdown easing: parks were again accessible everywhere (they had already been opened from mid-May, except in red zones), restaurants and museums are authorized to reopen (while respecting a sanitary protocol for cleaning, wearing masks and social distancing).

During the summer of 2020, some municipalities made mask wearing in streets and reinforced some measures such as curfews, the occasional closure of beaches and other measures encouraging social distancing.

At the start of the new school year in September 2020, a lighter protocol was implemented, which differed depending on class levels, but always respecting barrier gestures (hand-washing, coughing/sneezing into one's elbow, using disposable handkerchiefs, and no physical contact: Source: <https://www.service-public.fr/particuliers/actualites/A14221>). In kindergartens (3-6 years), no specific protocol was in place. In elementary schools (6-11 years) barrier gestures had to be respected “as much as possible” during school time, and the protocol for extracurricular time was only made available later (it had been lightened before the school summer). In middle school (11-15 years old) and high school (16-18 years old), physical distancing has been maintained “when possible”, wearing a mask is compulsory both in confined and outdoor spaces. It was the same in universities and higher education establishment, as well as in vocational institutions, although many were later closed on 30 October 2020.

4. Summary of Main Trends

4.1. The general **well-being** of families

Lockdown was experienced as a difficult time for most parents (7 out of 10 families) because of the multiplication of various tasks they had to do (household, professional, school, etc.). But it was rather well experienced by the children (7 out of 10) for whom only social relations (friends, family, teachers) really seemed to be missing. 4 children out of the 10 interviewed said that they had experienced “home schooling” well, just as 4 families said that they felt enough equipped and/or skilled to ensure “educational continuity”. All interviewees said they enjoyed spending time together and discovering new activities to do as a family (cooking, crafts, watching films, etc.).

4.2. General **access** to digital technologies and **time** spent on digital technologies

The families interviewed exercise fairly systematic control over access and screen time (in 9 out of 10 cases). In most cases, the children do not have their own screen. Lockdown has led to certain adjustments at this level, in connection with the reorganisation of the family agenda. Overall, digital practices increased during the lockdown, both in terms of time spent and diversity of activities. But this does not seem to have been experienced as a great disruption.

4.3. The **uses** of digital technologies

Digital technology had several functions, including maintaining social links (with family and friends) through the use of video calling and SNS (for 9 out of 10 families); managing educational continuity (with varying degrees of integration of digital technology in activities or communication between school and families); receiving school work (9 out of 10 families) and doing online work (4 out of 10 families); and providing entertainment spaces (alone or with family; for all families interviewed); essentially receiving school work (9 out of 10 families) and doing work online (4 out of 10 families);

or providing spaces for entertainment (alone or with the family; for all families interviewed) and continuing professional activity for parents who telework.

4.4. Children's **autonomy**

As the use of digital technology in daily life has increased in time and diversity, children and parents have noticed a gain in autonomy in these uses (in at least 4 cases out of 10). This autonomy was often requested by parents who had to manage schooling at home, at the same time as their own jobs. The children interviewed (8 out of 10) very quickly developed skills in this respect, both for access procedures, for the use of platforms and applications, and for research procedures, etc. But the so-called digital skills as such were not very well identified, and therefore not very well assessed (by parents and children).

4.5. **The outlook** for the future “after Covid-19”

At the time of the survey, parents and children were keen to return to their previous lives and thought of the changes due to lockdown as being a parenthesis. They had not considered too much what they might keep from these practices. On reflection, it would seem that practices related to maintaining social life are not likely to last (for 8 cases out of 10), followed by the intention to abandon digital practices related to schooling (7 cases out of 10), and finally those related to entertainment (6 out of 10).

5. A Portrait Gallery of French Families

The families questioned all have a two-parent structure. Work situations during the lockdown were heterogeneous, and underwent variations over time (teleworking, joblessness or outside work). The accommodation and locations of the families interviewed are diverse, ranging from small houses in small towns in the Greater Paris region, urban apartments, and houses in provincial towns or in the countryside. Of the parents interviewed, 7 were mothers and 4 were fathers. The children interviewed were between 6 and 12 years old (one 6-year-old, one 7-year-old, four 8-year-olds, two 9-year-olds, one 11-year-old and one 12-year-old). There were 6 girls and 4 boys. They were distributed differently between siblings, from an only child through to the second child in a family of four children, and also included eldest and youngest siblings. Households were poorly, moderately or very well equipped with digital devices. The conditions of homeschooling during the lockdown were also heterogeneous and variable over time, depending on families' IT equipment, the equipment of the educational teams, the possible absences of teachers, and the availability of accompanying parents which was related to parents' professional and personal situations.

Family 1 - FR01Fg8

Family with 2 parents teleworking, and 3 girls at home (4 years old, 6 and 8 – the interviewee), in a Parisian apartment, with a balcony and terrace. The family left for a beach house after 9 weeks of lockdown.

The interview took place via videoconference on 10 June 2020.

Family members

- **Jean**, the father, 41 years old (FR1f41)
- Margaux, the mother, 39 years old
- 3 girls: **Alice** 8 years (2012), Inès (2014), Castile (2016)

The context and important features of the family history during the CoVID-19 period

Employed in large companies, he is used to teleworking and he manages teams, she works in a large communications company. They had a lot of extra work during the first 2 weeks of lockdown. Both parents are well equipped (15 screens in the household) and educated (master's degrees), the father says he found the period very difficult. He says he wants to return to "normal" after lockdown, even though some discovered practices seem interesting to maintain, such as video capsules for learning certain concepts or calculation procedures. He also wants to offer his daughters the ability to look for information outside the home, but has a preference for printed encyclopaedias for this work, because he feels that on the Internet, "knowledge comes too quickly to the child."

The uses of digital technologies by children and the parental mediation

This family has controls over access to screens and tries to follow the "3-6-9-12" rule (Tisseron, 2016). Equipped with multiple TVs, tablets, computers, and smartphones, the parents leave their children free access only to their own toys (a digital secret diary – Kidisecret and digital camera – Kidizoom – including some simple games). During lockdown, access to digital technologies was increased for three major reasons:

1. To allow the older daughter (8 years) to attend school (homework + educational TV + educational video clips) and to interact with her teacher (a woman) about work to be done (she gained some autonomy to do her work on the computer and used *WhatsApp* to send work). She also used a printer to work on leaflets;
2. To keep up with friends and family via virtual meetings (*Zoom*, *Skype*, etc.), though with a feeling of wanting to return to in-person interactions, and quit using these communication technologies when "we will no longer need them";
3. To increase the amount of screen entertainment, whether it was shared family time (Saturday night films) or a time for children alone, to free up time for parents (films on Wednesdays and Sundays).

The girls have clear rules that they seem to respect (for time and content), and the father does not use parental controls because he thinks his daughter limits herself to permitted uses (looking for cartoons on YouTube or watching educational videos, and doing exercises sent by her teacher). He stressed that his daughter had developed a form of autonomy in these uses.

Alice is unaware of the new skills that she has had to develop and remembers above all watching films on Saturday as a family. She does not seem to want to use screens for anything other than what she is allowed to, nor spend much more time on them. She knows how to take the computer or tablet and do a Google search to access her cartoons on YouTube, and then navigate through recommendations to choose others. She knows how to ignore advertisements when possible, but looks at them if necessary, even if she “*doesn't like ads!*” Her father creates bookmark on educational video clips that she can also view alone. She knows how to use the phone timer she as an alarm clock to turn off “on time”, at bedtime or to brush her teeth. Her father states that he uses such technology for her to be “*autonomous and responsible.*” He also says that he has shown films so she “grows up and moves on from cartoons a little”.

She did not state having seen inappropriate content, and was only afraid of “monsters that are not pretty at all” which she had seen in cartoons. But her father noted that advertisements were not always targeted on YouTube. As his daughter simply searched for children’s content, he was not afraid that she came across inappropriate things. But he said that if he introduced her to other types of content, such as tutorials, then he would need to set up parental controls.

Well-being during lockdown

Alice said she felt rather happy during this period. What she missed most were social relations, with her friends, her class and her teacher. Her best memories were Saturdays with pizzas and a family film.

“Rules have certainly changed because they [the children] have had access to all these tools: tablets, computers, phone... with conditions, but they had no access at all to this before”.

Jean, father of 3 girls, aged 8, 6 and 4, (FR01FG8)

Family 2 - FR02Mg12

Family with 2 parents teleworking, and 2 girls at home (9 and 12 years – the interviewee), in a medium-sized town house in the Paris region, with a small garden.

The interview took place via videoconference on 16 June 2020.

Family members

- Julie, the mother, 40 years old, (FR2m40),
- Pascal, the father
- 2 girls: **Suzanne** 12 years (2008, 6th form (*Sixième*: 1st year of middle school in France), Gilone (2011 – 3rd-year primary school)

The context and important features of the family history during the CoVID-19 period

The mum is a bank employee and benefited from the “locked down children” scheme in the first 2 weeks when she established the new family organisation and work for girls. She enjoyed this period because she said it allowed her to be more with her daughters. Next, both parents were teleworking 100% and children were autonomous in managing their own work. The mother felt as if she were working even more at home, and had less time to spend with her family. The home was equipped but digital practices were limited. The parents are educated and found the period difficult, especially because of work overload (domestic, professional, and schooling) and the need to reorganize family time (especially the distribution of digital uses to manage the WiFi connection). The mother felt that she was “*mismanaging the lockdown*,” which she found very disagreeable.

The uses of digital technologies by children and the parental mediation

Family members were accustomed to remote relationships; digital technology was not introduced to foster family communications, but Suzanne was more social-media-friendly with her middle-school friends, encouraged by her mother, who feared her losing social ties. She tended to find that there were too many messages on applications such as WhatsApp or Snapchat. She ignored her phone all day and picked it up at 6:00 p.m. to see the news, for communication, and for entertainment (TikTok, games, etc.). Her little sister (9 years old) seemed much more interested in the discovery of tools and the Internet browsing than her big sister. The parents controlled screen time, but trusted their daughters’ personalities not to indulge in risky behaviour. The Internet was considered a source of knowledge and digital devices as a chance to keep up with friends and relatives. Her parents were concerned about the effects of the lockdown on their children’s social ties.

Television and films were very much appreciated for entertainment time. These were family moments, that also generated subjects for discussion at other family times. “*If we hadn’t had the TV, at times, the days would have been long*” (mother, 40). While family screen time increased, and working screen time for children along with digital social or entertainment practices did not seem to have been affected so much. Or at least Suzanne was not more interested in them than before lockdown. She said she had done more things on her phone, but also on the computer, and had made her phone her favourite screen. She said she found it “boring to always watch the tablet or the phone or TV”.

Homeschooling

School organisation was difficult at the beginning of the lockdown, and then very quickly the children became autonomous. This period was lived as a formative experience in terms of the personal organisation of the children's work, during which they learned to become autonomous. Suzanne used the home computer to work. She had done some video communications with teachers, but used the computer especially to do her work (either on worksheets or online). Her middle school uses various communication platforms. They took time to understand how each teacher operated, as teachers did not necessarily use the same platforms. Several mothers from Suzanne's class worked together to understand better where documents were, and the children helped each other with the homework. Suzanne's Mum was impressed by her daughters' dexterity with the computers, the skills they had and which they developed so quickly using IT. According to her, Suzanne was competent, particularly in searching for information.

Well-being during the lockdown

During the lockdown, the interviewee said that she felt strange and disappointed with the situation, but also happy about the time spent with her family. She missed school, her family and friends, and she wanted to return to her activities (theater and swimming). Suzanne does not seem to have any particular taste for digital tools, preferring books and direct relationships, and also experienced moments of stress when friends did not respond to her messages, or during educational moments while watching tutorials and other videos. She said she could forget her phone for several days, but when she then picked it up, she would spend "too much" time on it. There were family rules on uses, which were respected, although they were not necessarily clear to both parties during the lockdown. Digital activities were moments of entertainment as others, serving school activities without replacing them altogether, and allowing ties to be kept up with the family, scattered around the world.

"I manage the computer!" "The phone, I used to use it before, but not like I used it during the lockdown".

Suzanne, 12 years old, (FR02Mg12)

Family 3 - FR03Fb7

Family with 1 parent teleworking, and the other on leave. 1 child aged 7 at home, in an apartment in a large city of the Paris region, with a balcony/terrace.

The interview took place via videoconference on 24 June 2020.

Family members

- Frédéric, the father, 43, (FR3f43)
- Jaël, the mother
- 1 boy: **Amaury** 7 years (2013)

The context and important features of the family history during the CoVID-19 period

The home was fairly little-equipped (no TV or tablet, for example) and the educated parents paid attention to their child's screen time. The mother was on leave, and took care of classes for Amaury, who worked mainly from worksheets, taken from what his teacher (a woman) sent by email to the parents. He said he had some connection problems at certain times during video calls with his teacher and some of his classmates.

The uses of digital technologies by children and the parental mediation

This child works on a tablet at school, but did not own one at home. He seemed to prefer his father's computer and especially its big screen, on which he watched wildlife reports, films (two a week – there was no television in the home), and played games. The video games were introduced during the lockdown, and the child played with his father. Amaury would like to have been able to play "all the time". But screen time was limited in this family in which screen use by the children was limited and controlled. But playing multiplayer video games should remain after lockdown. The child also used digital technologies to interact with his two friends and family.

Homeschooling

Amaury's teacher hosted a few video conferences with groups of students in her class, during which she left some time for the children to talk to each other. She sent videos she had prepared herself to explain some concepts and then essentially work on a sheet. Amaury's Mum was not working and she so was the teacher at home and managed the technical/communication aspect of staying in touch with the school. The father had the impression that he had worked much more during this period. He did not take care of the school work at home.

The child could not identify his knowledge needs nor skills acquired in the use of digital tools. The mother was the technology operator (documentary search, for example; the child gave keywords and the mother carried out the procedure).

"In fact, we don't really like using the screen for children." Frédéric, father of Amaury, 7 years old (FR3f43)

Family 4 - FR04Mb9

Family with 1 parent teleworking, and 1 on leave for childcare, but working at the workplace as soon as schools were opened again, and 2 children at home (3 years old and 9 – interviewed). The family lives in an apartment, with a terrace and small garden, in a small town in the distant outskirts of the Paris region.

The interview took place by video conference on 10 July 2020.

Family members

- **Aurélia**, the mother, 38 years old (FR4m38),
- Mohammed, the father
- a boy: **Karim** 9 years old (2011) and a girl: Lila (2017)

The context and important features of the family history during the CoVID-19 period

The home is quite well equipped (a Switch console, a TV with subscriptions, a tablet, a virtual reality headset, laptops, phones, etc.). The father is a graphic designer and the mother is responsible for the extracurricular activities a kindergarten. The parents explain things a lot to their children. The lockdown was experienced rather well because the family was able to spend more time together and parents could “watch their children grow up”, take walks together (4 persons) and play board games. Karim claims to have acquired autonomy generally and in his work in particular. His parents noticed that he quickly managed to handle the links sent by his teacher (a woman). There were changes in digital practices at home during the lockdown, but for this family, “there is constant negotiation about screen use”.

Homeschooling

The teacher sent a set of instructions by email each evening for the next day and sometimes for several days in advance, which Karim followed strictly at the beginning. He then switched to working in the order he wanted, on the recommendation of his teacher, to be more involved in his work. The parents noticed that he was less productive afternoons, so they adapted the schedule. The teacher sent work sheets, but also flash codes with go-to activities, or links to sites with print sheets. The whole class was linked to a site for learning basic grammar and spelling (www.projet-voltaire.fr). Virtual classes were also planned from time to time. She then organised moments for the children to speak to each other, but they also used chat functions a lot to send messages and emoticons.

The uses of digital technologies by children and the parental mediation

During the lockdown, the rules had to become more flexible, either to let the parents work (so the TV helped with “childcare”), or to let Karim do his work (he took his mother’s computer and learned to use it).

Access to the media was controlled for the children, but Karim seemed to have a good theoretical knowledge of what the Internet is, and what it provides in terms of types of activities. He has a good knowledge of operating vocabulary and devices.

The mother worried about media use: “*We hear a lot that screens are harmful to children.*” The father suggested that “rather than limiting use, one must above all propose content which, on the contrary, is not mind-numbing”. They considered having given him a basic education, so that he could be

critical and “*detached from what he has in front of his eyes*”. Karim considers that television is dangerous, that it puts him in a bad mood, and that there is inappropriate content on the Internet. He has a very functional relationship with media content: he needs to learn something to make it interesting. But he would like the rules to be less strict, and to spend a little more time online, especially on video games and films (like *Jurassic Park*).

Access and content were controlled, but the parents began to leave him more freedom with all of these tools, not only because he needed to practice to work, but also because he said he felt being left alone from other children who all had access to these technologies. The mother said that sometimes Karim would say, “*I am a little left out by my friends because I know nothing*”. The parents strove to explain the existence and functioning of digital tools to their children, without the latter necessarily having the right to use them. Thus, Karim knew how the Internet works, RSNs, video editing, tutorials, etc. even though he did not practice using these devices.

Well-being during the lockdown

The mother appreciated the family time, the games, walkabouts, and even work with her child. Karim says it was really hard not to be able to see his grandmother for whom he was quite worried, and his friends, but the everyday life seemed also profitable.

“I have learnt to use the computer a bit better, do more stuff with it”.

“I can make the difference between what I can watch and what I cannot watch”. Karim, 9 years old (FR4b9)

Family 5 - FR05Mg8

Family with 1 parent teleworking and 1 parent temporarily laid off, and 2 children at home (12 years and 8 – interviewed), in an apartment, with a small courtyard, in the Paris region. One month before the return to classes, they left for the countryside in Normandy.

The interview took place by video conference on 27 July 2020.

Family members

- **Ariane**, the mother, 39 years old (FR05m39)
- The father
- 2 girls: **Charlotte**, 8 years old (2012) and Marie, (2008)

The context and important features of the family history during the CoVID-19 period

The father is a pastry chef, temporarily laid off during the whole of the lockdown. The mother is a teacher in a middle school, and so working remotely, although the pedagogical follow-up was difficult to implement for her. She says she experienced lockdown rather well even if was a bit long. The mother worked more with the older daughter, and the father with the smaller one, because “he is more patient”. They started going out a little at the end of the lockdown, but the big child was not bothered to have to stay in her room.

The uses of digital technologies by children and the parental mediation

The big sister was in 6th grade (*Sixième* in France, the first year of middle school) and had a laptop loaned by the regional government, a mobile phone and tablet, and Charlotte (the girl interviewed) was in the second year of elementary school (CE1 in France). She has problems paying attention and writing (for which she was diagnosed and treated). Her profile made her mother worry about a tendency to addiction, especially to screens. There was a real fear of media use, including a fear that her daughters would not learn to do “anything else,” be too inactive and possibly isolate themselves. There was much talk about controlling screen time. Her parents, and especially the mother, were fairly strict on rules for screen use. Yet Charlotte seemed to seek to circumvent these rules to spend more time on the tablet, for example, and said she would like to use screens more. This was an activity that she shared with her 12-year-old sister. She said she “dreams of making videos on the Internet (ex: Slime)”. During the lockdown, she started using *WhatsApp*. But her mother had to apply limits, because her girlfriend was calling her several times a day. “*Charlotte, she has a very addictive side to many things, and indeed, it is true that with the screens... She’s actually discovered screens, something she did not have the time to do...*”. The rules were restrictive about the time spent on screens. The mother was worried about the screens: “it works me up. And in fact, we shouldn’t kid ourselves, as screen time sometimes suits us, in fact, that they are on their screens because... there. And then, we say to ourselves that they can do so many other things”.

Charlotte played two games on her sister’s tablet, which she was able to use alone, and which she also used to watch Tik Tok and YouTube, in particular videos of teenagers (tutorials) that she looked for using keywords. In contrast, she did not have too much theoretical knowledge about the subject, because she could not say what Internet or Netflix are, etc. Typically, her uses focussed on the tablet, which was used primarily during travel. But during the lockdown, the purchase of a laptop, a code for Disney Chanel, and the extra time dedicated to screens her changed practices. The rules were not re-discussed during the lockdown, but simply relaxed.

Homeschooling

Charlotte returned to school as soon as it was possible, one day a week, in a half-class. During the lockdown, her teacher (a man) sent her work to do every day. The child checked the computer or the telephone and did her work on paper. Sometimes she had to send work produced by email. It was new for her to type on the keyboard. The teacher once sent maths videos. She would like to continue because she liked to use digital tools. Her attraction to computers was also related to her ability to watch audio-visual content on Netflix and Disney Channel, which she could search for on her own. As she had attention difficulties as well as problems with her writing skills, her parents sometimes adapted the work a little (for example, sticking to oral work). Charlotte was very eager to return to school and see her teacher. She experienced homeschooling as if it were homework. The family did not use the public television channel dedicated to teaching during the lockdown (*Lumni*) because the girls already had too much work.

Online security

The mother did not seem to be concerned about content. She even found that there are good things on the Internet. Instead, she worried about the time spent on the screens, which was for her a time of inactivity and which tends to isolate people. Parental control was active on all children's devices to block some sites, although not the time spent in front of the screen because the rules seem to have been respected.

Well-being during lockdown

The mother found this period very difficult and felt disarmed because she could not offer outdoor entertainment to her girls, but also to have to deal with homeschooling for a child with special needs.

“She had much more access to digital devices, that’s for sure. So, she took bad habits to hide because she knows she is not allowed, like hiding in the toilets to watch something on the tablet and so on.

“But yes, we did discover a lot of stuff. That’s what the educational system wants, to use all those devices, but me, as a sports teacher, I don’t want to. Because I want them to free themselves from these tools, and not... They want us to do stuff, to invest in tablets, and so on. They have feedbacks but we can see some behaviours with those devices and in fact, I don’t want to give this to my students.”

Ariane, mother of Charlotte, 8 years old, (FR5mg8)

Family 6 - FR06Mb8

This is a family of 6 people. The 2 parents were employed (he is an engineer, she is a teacher) and were teleworking during the lockdown, the 4 children remained at home. All returned to work and school at the end of the lockdown. The family lives in a house with a garden, in a small town on the outskirts of Paris.

The interview took place via videoconference on 30 June 2020.

Family members

- **Sandra**, the mother, 37 years old, FR06m37,
- Julie, the father,
- 4 boys: **Rémi**, 8 years old FR06b8 (CE1), Johan (10 years old), Benjamin (6 years old) and Charles (3 years old).

There are two children per bedroom.

The context and important features of the family history during the CoVID-19 period

The mother is a professional high school teacher: she did not hold virtual classes with her students because of her own children, present at home. She prepared her classes during the weekend when her husband was not busy with work. During the week, she took care of the 4 children all day. The father was teleworking and did not look after the children, nor the school work at home. While the children and the father had a fairly good experience of the lockdown, the mother stated that it was difficult for her to take care of the children all day and manage all the household chores that were more important than usual. The family's organisation was planned according to the parents' schedule. The mother was relieved when the lockdown ended and hoped that it would not resume. In general, children's bedtimes did not change much during the lockdown; parents were keen to maintain the habits and rules of family life at all times.

The uses of digital technologies by children and the parental mediation

The parents believed they have a good level of proficiency in using digital technologies. No child had its own screen. There was a family tablet shared by the entire household. The children had very controlled access to technological objects. The tablet was used by the eldest autonomously, to check emails from the school, to watch videos recommended by his teacher, and to play alone sometimes, mainly on a specific educational application (with a paying subscription). Rémi used the tablet little, and always under the control of his mother who was at his side when he used it. The children had highly controlled access to television: only one hour a day, at the end of the day when homework or school work were completed. Only the oldest child has access to another application (*Harry Potter*) on his mother's phone, but for very short moments, when he was in his room, while his (younger) brothers watched cartoons. The other children had no access to the parents' phones, and did not know that their older brother was entitled to do so. The rules regarding the use of technologies were very clear and strict in this household, and were not really changed during the lockdown. Rémi, like his brothers, had the habit of playing games that did not require technological objects. He played alone or with his brothers and liked to read books. No one played video games in the house, only sometimes on an old gaming console which was in their holiday home. The children were then allowed to play for one hour a day but they are not really interested in doing so. Both parents exercised strong control over the digital tools in the home, with fully defined rules of use to ensure

their children's online safety. The children used only one application, which was especially secure with a profile dedicated to each child that gave them access to content adapted to their age. Streamed TV was not widely used, but most of the time with the Netflix platform which allowed access to programmes by profile with authorisation: the children watched mainly cartoons on it. The mother said that this was how they found to avoid advertising and inappropriate content. The family discovered the Zoom application during the lockdown, and Rémi used it once for an hour with six friends. Otherwise, he used simple phone calls to talk to a friend. They did not communicate via video conferencing with the family.

Homeschooling

It was the mother who managed all of the school work by providing strong school support to her three children at school. All the children's teachers sent work during the lockdown, by email. Rémi worked one hour a day, mainly on paper work sheets printed by his mother from the file attachments sent by his teacher (a woman), and exercises in textbooks (paper). School work took more time and was more difficult than usual for two of the children, but not really for Rémi. For example, he had help from his elder brother for more than two hours a day with digital activities, to be done every day. The homeschooling was organised mainly during the afternoon, but it also depended on the availability of the parents – of the mother. The oldest son was quite autonomous; Rémi could do much of his work alone, but his mother often helped him if needed. She also had to help enormously one of Rémi's younger brothers (the 6-year-old). She states that she was able to organise herself like this because the smallest took a nap in the afternoon. No teacher asked work to be sent back: they only sent corrections, which parents had to supervise. Teachers did not send video material, but some audio-visual resources were recommended to the oldest boy: for example, scientific outreach programmes. Rémi watched some of them, but some were too complicated to understand for him and he did not really like that. No virtual classes were offered to any of the children. Most often, the children had been rather disappointed, faced with the school work to be done. Rémi was surprised to have so much work to do, especially in French, a subject he dislikes. He also said that he was sorry to have such easy work to do in mathematics. The mother organised the school working time with a general strategy of trying to maintain motivation, so usually after one hour of work, she offered her children a break with a snack (like ice cream) before having them work again for half an hour (a dictation for Rémi who hated doing these, but who agreed to it because it was the last school task of the day).

Well-being during the lockdown

The children were happy to stay home with their parents, especially because they were able to spend time and play with them and their siblings, often board games or outdoor physical activities such as sports or DIY. The mother suffered from the "digital pressure" exerted by too many *WhatsApp* groups, either linked to her children's classes of children (parents) or linked to her own professional activity (fellow teachers in her institution). She also found that digital technologies, by abolishing the boundaries between professional and personal time, tended to increase working time (for example, teachers' meetings via video on Wednesday afternoons, a half-day when the mother normally did not work and took care for her children).

"It depends. I like to do (school work on a computer at home) from time to time, but I miss my teacher, and the other kids in my class."

Rémi, 8 years old (FR06b8)

Family 7 - FR07Mg9

This is a family of 5 people. The mother is employed at the Paris City Hall, which was shut down during the lockdown. She could not carry out her duties by teleworking. The father is employed, but on a part-time lay-off. The 3 children remained at home during the lockdown, and then did not return to school because one of the children has fragile health and parents were afraid of contamination. Parents resumed work at the end of the lockdown. The family lives in a house with a garden, in a large city on the outskirts of Paris.

The interview took place via videoconference on 8 July 2020.

Family members

- **Flavie**, the mother, 34 years old, FR07m34,
- Bruno, the father,
- 3 girls: **Eva**, (9 years old) FR07g9 (CE2), Elona (5 years old) and Louise (14 years old).

The context and important features of the family history during the CoVID-19 period

The use of technology throughout the family increased during the lockdown. From the mother's point of view, the family uses screens too much, those of smartphones but also especially the TV. Eva's sleep was disrupted: her bedtime changed a lot. She woke up very early in the morning, but then went back to sleep until 9.30a.m., but most often until 11.30a.m. The children went to bed too late, according to the mother. She stressed that it was difficult to live together 24 hours a day in a house, and stipulated that the screens were used as a solution to the children's boredom and the parents' difficulties. The mother said that she would have liked time before the lockdown to buy or prepare other types of activities for children such as creative activities, but she said that this had not been possible.

The uses of digital technologies by children and the parental mediation

Parents believe they have a basic understanding of digital technology. Children do not have personal screens, but since the household has several screens (3 TVs and several game consoles) they have free access to TV and video games until quite late in the evening. The family subscribed to *Disney +* during the lockdown, which enabled it to watch films together, and also took out a subscription to be able to play networked games as a family. Eva is allowed to watch videos on *YouTube*, between one and two hours a day on her mother's phone, and to connect to *Disney+*. The parents provide more or less controlled access to their smartphones. During the lockdown, the household made a lot of phone calls with distant family members and video calls with other close family members that they usually spoke with very often during the lockdown. It was very important for them to keep in touch. Eva once called a girlfriend by video, and it was the first time she did this. Otherwise, she also spoke by phone.

Online security

The mother is not particularly worried about her children's digital uses, even though she recognises that some content on YouTube is stupid, and she would prefer Eva to watch more intelligent content. But she insists that Eva only uses private profiles on her *Snapchat* and *TikTok* accounts, that Eva only

uses her mother's *Instagram* account, solely to communicate with family, not friends, because she is wary of "who's behind the screen".

Homeschooling

Parents help their children with schooling at home, especially the mother who appears to have been in charge of the youngest children during the lockdown. Children's teachers sent work on a digital platform provided by the school until early July, even when the school reopened, because many pupils did not return to school. Children in this household have not returned to school for family-related medical reasons. The mother said that the work sent after the lockdown remained important. Communication slots were organised for all students by Eva's teacher (a man) during the lockdown. But she did not use them, because most were programmed in the morning when Eva was still asleep (her mother says Eva is a big sleeper). Her teacher sent out work very routinely, every night, to be done for the next day (lessons to print and paste in a notebook, and exercises) and then at the end of the day he sent the correction of the exercises. Eva checked alone if she had made any mistakes or not. Her little sister's teacher (a woman) gave pupils several challenging tasks (cooking, fancy dress, etc.), which both daughters and the mother enjoyed a lot, and in which they always participated, because it was fun and motivating. This was "not the style" of Eva's teacher, she said.

Well-being during lockdown

The children were happy to play video games and watch TV more than usual. Eva was very pleased to be able to use her mother's phone much more than usual. However, despite all this, the children looked forward to every opportunity to go out, insisting on accompanying their mother to do the shopping. The family found the lockdown was too long and not seeing their family caused them sadness (several birthdays and holidays, like Easter, where celebrated only within the 5-person family). Eva still celebrated her birthday with a treasure hunt organised by her parents in the home and in the garden by her family. She said she loved it. She also loved cooking with her mother, especially dessert recipes, but she would have wanted to go out for shopping and school, or see her grandmother, whom she missed a lot.

"We don't have the pedagogy, we don't have the knowledge, I had to deal with 3 very different school levels... It's true that we had to be able to follow. The first weeks were very, very difficult... [...] ah it was hard! [...] we were drowning in homeworks..."

Flavie, 34 years old, mother of Eva 9 years old (FR07m34)

Family 8 - FR08Mg6

The family is composed of 3 people: the parents and Luz who is a single daughter. The father was teleworking and in part-time unemployment; the mother is a teacher who was teleworking. The parents returned to work and the child returned to school at the end of the lockdown. The family lives in a detached house in a rural village, in the provinces.

The interview took place online on 6 July 2020.

Family members

- **Christel**, the mother, 39 years old, FR08m39,
- Oscar, the father (Spanish speaker),
- **Luz**, girl, 6 years old - FR08g6, 2014 (bilingual)

The context and important features of the family history during the CoVID-19 period

Although the family seems to have been happy to have spent time together at home, the mother said she had been very anxious during this period, which her little girl could feel at her side. As the mother said: *“We have been impacted emotionally”*. The parents were not accustomed to spending time all together at home and they wondered if it would be good for them. They were delighted to see that things were going well, and finally they enjoyed the unexpected opportunity.

The uses of digital technologies by children and the parental mediation

Although screens had sometimes been used to watch a few films by three of them, the mother recognised that the screens sometimes tended to separate the family a little, because each person ended separately on a screen. She stated that it was sometimes difficult to stop her daughter watching screens, as she would often ask to watch another cartoon or a series episode. This did not necessarily generate real conflict, but rather nervousness. It was thus necessary to be strict with Luz, who would not agree to stop. The lockdown offered the opportunity to discover some new things like an application (on the phone) to learn English. But the mother said that in the end it was of little value. During the lockdown, the family tablet was loaned to the child’s grandmother for her to be able to communicate with Luz. In this household, the mother is mainly in charge of caring for Luz and while she said that she tried to spend a lot of time with her daughter, she also had to manage her own professional work, and so finally she had to “stick” Luz in front of a screen to occupy her because she was bored alone, and asked to be looked after, which was not always possible.

Online security

The household had multiple screens and digital devices, and most were used offline, or with secure accounts. There was no TV streaming for Luz, for example. Nor did she have a personal screen. She had controlled access to TV and sometimes to her mother’s or father’s smartphone, with the parent remaining next to her when she used it. In the evenings, while the parents were watching films, they were sometimes surprised by their daughter, who should have stayed in her room, trying to fall asleep. They believed that some TV content was somewhat inappropriate for their daughter’s age, and said, somewhat doing self-criticism, that they had to hide their child’s eyes when she appeared in the living room.

Homeschooling

Luz's teacher (a woman) sent a little work, but it occupied the child for less than an hour a day. It involved recognising letters. In the end, Luz did not work every day. The majority of the work requested involved oral skills and there was not much written work. No corrections were sent to parents who had to manage the corrections themselves. The teacher never asked to receive Luz's work for correction, but as the mother is a kindergarten teacher, she was supposed to be able to follow her daughter's schooling. It is not possible to know whether this has been the case for all children in the class, or only for Luz. The mother stated that the work was not always done peacefully, perhaps given her own demands, because she recognised that she is accustomed to more difficult tasks (as she teaches "bigger" children). She did not worry, however, because Luz did not have any problems at school, and she felt that there was a lot to learn in daily life, outside school work.

Well-being during lockdown

In the morning, Luz was happy to watch cartoons and TV shows, and then she was often quite disappointed in having to do school work afterwards, even if it never lasted a long time. At the end of the morning, she was bored a lot and was surprised to find nothing to do. In the afternoon she said that she felt a little strange and did not know what to do at all. In the evening, Luz went to bed late, and she could not fall asleep – because of the daylight, according to the mother. Luz was able to talk to her other family via video calling, but she specified that she preferred to see them physically, because she was not happy to be able just to talk to them. Her parents were quite anxious during the lockdown because they feared the disease, but they were rather happy to have been able to benefit from this "break" in their working lives, and they tried to make the most of it.

"I played with the phone, a lot. I played the games it had, and there are a lot! (music, drawing, etc.)"

Luz, 6 years old (FR08g6)

Family 9, FR09fb11

The family has 5 members. The father was temporarily laid off during the lockdown, and the mother was without a job. The father returned to work at the end of May, but the children remained at home after the lockdown, as the parents chose not to send them back to school immediately: the conditions for welcoming children at school did not seem satisfactory to them and the mother could keep them. They live in a house with a garden in a small town, in the countryside.

The interview took place online on 10 July 2020.

Family members

- **Victor**, the father, 39 years old, FR09f39,
- Madiha, the mother,
- **Djibril**, boy, 11 years old (2009) in his last year at primary school (CM2 in France), FR09b11, and two other boys aged 7 and 3.

The context and important features of the family history during the CoVID-19 period

According to the father, the children did not appear to have been disturbed by lockdown. However, Djibril would have liked to be able to see his friends and go cycling outside. He also missed his grandmother. The parents lived the situation less well, owing to work (part-time lay-off) and concern about the health risks that the children's grandmother could face. The parents felt that their children managed the school work well enough. In their view, this meant it was possible for the children not to return to school after the lockdown.

The uses of digital technologies by children and the parental mediation

Children had a fairly basic use of digital technologies. Djibril's access to his computer, which is in his room, is reasonably controlled, as was his access to TV, that works poorly with streaming. He no longer had access to video games, and had no access to his parents' smartphones. Djibril says he learned to use the computer more during the lockdown: he only had access to an old computer, which did not provide him with an optimal Internet connection. Djibril had previously been allowed to play a video game (*Fortnite*), but at the time of the interview (and a little before during the lockdown) he had been punished and was totally banned from online games. His father thought he had developed a real addiction in *Fortnite*, and wanted to end this. The mother, without a professional activity, usually cares for the children. But as the father was laid off during the lock, he also took care of Djibril's school work. He explained that at the start of the lockdown, he trusted his son and thought that he was doing his school work seriously, but the parents said they discovered that this was not always the case. So, they were more attentive to this issue, and in the afternoons began checking what Djibril was supposed to have done alone in the morning. Djibril and his brothers also used technology to learn something else: for example, watching videos on freestyle scootering or techniques for drawing comics, to deal with their boredom. The family regularly contacted other distant family members through *WhatsApp*.

Homeschooling

At the beginning of the lockdown, Djibril did not seem to have fully understood the nature of the work sent by his teacher. He thought it was "homework" and was very surprised to have so much work to do. The work was communicated by the school via a digital workspace that the father felt was not very intuitive, and which made it difficult to locate resources. The father stated that finally it

was necessary to “check” Djibril regularly, because he felt that his son needed to work within a clearly defined framework, as Djibril tended to seize any opportunity not to work seriously, or not to do what he had to do, and especially to have fun with anything else. The teacher (a man) sometimes asked pupils to return work done, but not often.

Well-being during lockdown

Djibril tried to do his school work as quickly as possible in the morning, and then do something more interesting. This had created real tensions within the family. When the weather was nice, the whole family did things in the garden. But when the weather was poor, the children were busy behind their screens most of the time, more often than usual. So, in the face of boredom, technology seemed to provide a source of recreation, but it also created tension among family members. The father preferred the children to do something else.

“For now, we want to preserve them from digital social networks [...] he misses Fortnite. What made us go backwards is the social network part of the game, and the addictive part of game sessions that last pretty long [...] the online part of it worries me for kids too young [...] I want him to grow up in a real life [...] I don’t want the digital social networks to be the norm for him.”

Victor, 39 years old, father of Djibril (11 years old), (FR09f39)

Family 10 - FR10mg8

The family is composed of 4 people. The employed parents were laid off part-time, and teleworking during the lockdown. At the end of the lockdown, the father resumed work on-site, the mother worked part-time, and the children did not immediately return to school. The family was waiting to know whether classes would start for the two girls, who were still in distance education. The family lives in an apartment with a balcony, in a small town in the Parisian suburbs.

The interview took place online on 16 June 2020.

Family members

- **Marie-France**, the mother, 43 years old, FR10m43,
- Alexandre, the father.
- **Lucile**, girl, 8 years old (2012), FR10g11, Morgane (11 years old).

The context and important features of the family history during the CoVID-19 period

Although the period was very intense for parents and life together in a small apartment was not very easy every day, the mother says she was happy to be at home with her children and husband. The children were happy during this period, because they could spend a lot of time with their parents at home, like being “on holiday”. There were happy moments, for example, in the ritual of playing board games with the “girls against the mother”, and when the family had aperitifs on Friday evenings on the balcony.

The uses of digital technologies by children and the parental mediation

Children did not have personal screens. They played as much with video games as with traditional games. Parents had digital devices such as tablets and computers. Lucile had very controlled access to these devices. She was not allowed to use her parents’ smartphone, and rules were set out regarding the use of the TV, a gaming console and a tablet. During the lockdown, Lucile learned to access certain content on the TV or tablet by herself, with the formal permission of her parents. It was the mother who mainly cared for the children during the period, as the father apparently had been busy enough with teleworking. But both parents were very attentive to most aspects of their children’s lives (bedtimes, leisure activities, digital uses, and school work).

Online security

Parents said they are always present when their children use connected devices, because they wanted to make sure that their daughters did not access inappropriate content. However, sometimes they used their screens autonomously, with their parents’ permission. The parents were concerned when there were security alerts about the Zoom application that they sometimes used. They were mainly concerned that their work data had been hacked. The parents did not allow their daughters to use a webcam, even to make videos for school, because they do not want people to see their home.

Homeschooling

Lucile spent time every morning managing her school work, almost every day. She gradually managed to work independently during the lockdown, by going to look for work by herself on the padlet sent by her teacher (a woman) to her mother's computer. The teacher regularly sent her links to see educational videos. Lucile said that she felt a little strange during this period, especially by not going to school. But she enjoyed working at home because she found the environment quieter than in class, and she was able to work at her own pace (because she is always the first in class to finish work, and she often waits for others, and said she gets bored: her mother said Lucile had dysorthographie). Her schedule during the lockdown was set in agreement with her parents, according to their professional constraints, while she got up and went to bed a little later than usual, but her "school" discipline was maintained.

Well-being during lockdown

If Lucile woke up early, she used to wait for her parents to get up, being allowed to play alone on the tablet in the living room, in order not to wake up her sister either. She did digital colouring. It was an activity that she usually did at the weekends. Early afternoons, she watched cartoons on TV and played alone, while in the late afternoon she played games or did some "physical" activities, or sometimes played video games on the console, or on the TV with her mother. She felt happy and a little tired. At night, she read and was often a little angry, she said because she did not always like to read. She missed school, and also going to the swimming pool. Her best memory during the lockdown was celebrating her birthday and that of her sister.

"She did a lot of Wii fitness exercises at the beginning of the lockdown, on video games, it's a sport thing [...] Very much during a month and a half, and then she was bored and didn't do it at all."

Marie-France, 43 years old, mother of Lucile (8 years old), (FR10m43.)

6. Trends Observed

6.1. *The digital practices during the lockdown of children interviewed*: the uses of digital technologies by the children interviewed (6-12 years old)

6.1.1. **The most popular technological devices: the most used equipment and services**

- Devices used: visual media (screens- desktop or portable computers, laptops, tablets, phones/smartphones, TVs, consoles, VR headsets)

The children interviewed had access to a variety of screens, but the majority of our sample did not own them themselves. Typically, there were household devices such as TVs and possibly a shared tablet, sometimes a game console; then children had access to their parents' devices such as smartphones and laptops. Television screens were used individually by parents (usually in the evening) and by children (more afternoons and at weekends). These could be substituted by a fixed or portable computer screen when households did not have a TV, or a child had to view something alone. In this case, tablets appeared to be used to connect to applications allowing access to video-on-demand (VOD) platforms such as *Netflix* or *Disney +*. Several parents reported that children usually used a tablet mainly during driving times, for example, or as a gaming screen. Several families had game consoles (at least 5 out of 10), but these were used unequally. For some families, their use was controlled, and for others, game consoles were kept in a cupboard most of the time (at Charlotte's home, 8 years old), or they were taken out from time to time, to play with autonomously or with the father (Lucile, 8 years old). Only one family had game consoles available for free use (Eva, 9).

- **The most popular services: free or subscription-based applications and platforms.**

The most popular phone applications were for digital social networking, and the most cited were *TikTok*, *WhatsApp*, and *Snapchat*. These were followed by applications like *Zoom* or *Skype* that seem to be more on a computer, and were sometimes used to communicate with friends, but most often with other family members. For subscriptions, we mainly discussed with the parents interviewed their VOD services such as *Netflix* and *Disney +*. They appeared to have had subscriptions to these before and during the lockdown, to give access to content without advertising, and employing user profiles set for their children.

- **For online and offline use**

Tablets were used both online to watch video content (especially on *YouTube*), but also offline via gaming applications for children. When used, parents or siblings' smartphones were operated as with tablets, in an online mode for video content and RSN (*Tik Tok*, *WhatsApp*, and *Snapchat*), and in an offline mode for particular game applications. Two families specified that they did not use streaming

on the family TV, having technical problems receiving TV channels on the set placed in the common family room.

- **Personal or shared devices (borrowing and loaning)**

Television remains a family screen, whether used for time together between parents and children, among siblings, or individually. All families said that television had allowed time to be spent individually or collectively, and had encouraged conversations. Tablets (or a tablet) usually belonged to the household and was used individually by almost all, especially by the older siblings, and in a fairly controlled manner. Computers (or a computer) were almost always the property of the parent (or older siblings), occasionally loaned to children during the lockdown, mostly to retrieve and print school work, and sometimes for video calling with friends. Only one child (Suzanne, 12) had her own smartphone. The others had to borrow phones, with permission, and often under strict control, from their parents (mainly from the mother) or a big sister (Charlotte (8) used that of his sister Marie (12)). Sharing the family computer for all the family's activities, and especially for the school work of all the children, was not always easy to manage.

Flavie (34) mother of Eva (9) commented on the sharing of the common computer: *“So we were on the family computer, yes... That's right, with the same device, so... No, it was quite a challenge!”* She explained how she shared her smartphone with her daughter: *“No, Eva doesn't have a phone, she does everything on my phone, so she downloaded the TikTok application, but she has a private account, it's out of the question for it to be public. She doesn't have Snapchat, but she has it through me. She takes my account. She has Instagram, but it's the same, it's private and it's through my phone, so I can control everything.”*

Game consoles were also shared screens. 7 out of 10 families reported spending more time video gaming (either playing themselves or watching a family member play). This was true for the majority of cases of our interviewees, and included family gaming: Lucile (8) played on the Wii, or played other games with her father and her big sister; Eva (9) played networked games with the family; Amaury (7) and Karim (9) played action games with their father. Only Djibril (11) used to play online alone on the computer in his room, but he was deprived of online games at the time of the interview.

6.1.2. Most-viewed content

- **Leisure content (cultural output: films, series, cartoons, video clips, and video games, etc.)**

For all the interviewed families, children primarily consumed/watched cartoons, then current affairs reports/documentaries, and finally films and series for the older persons in our sample. The parents interviewed were committed to ensuring that their children were exposed to content adapted to their age. Content watched came from VOD platforms such as *Netflix* or *Disney +*, apps, but also very much from *YouTube* where viewers searched for cartoons, tutorials and other videos of all kinds (*YouTube*), most of the time using the search bar.

Sandra (37) mother of Rémi (aged 9): *“It's more the cartoons than the games. Afterall, Bayam is Bayard Presse [a well-known Catholic publisher], which makes an application, so... it's true that we also*

checked what it was... so that there was no advertising, and that it was rather adapted to their age. [...] they just have the application, but they don't do it often. So Bayam, there, which is an application, so, for children, with each time a profile that is adapted to their age, and then afterwards, there is... We have Netflix, so, they watch cartoons on TV."

Flavie (37) mother of Eva (aged 9): *"So, if during the confinement, we subscribed to Disney +, so it allowed us to see some Walt Disney, well... it's a bit of a change."*

But by suggesting automatic recommendations, the VOD devices broadcast continuously if users do not intervene, and this may have caused some problems for parents.

Christel (39) mother of Luz (6): *"And quite often I was tricked into saying 'You finish the episode and it's over', and as I was busy with something else, she would start another one and carry on happily. And then I had to stop in the middle of the episode and say, 'No, no, you're done, full stop', but then it was a source of annoyance."*

- Contents related to school work (homework, lessons, exercises, educational video, messages from the teacher and/or classmates, etc.)

The use of screens was not at all integrated in school work before the lockdown, except for 1 child interviewed (Suzanne, 12), who had access to the digital workspace (DW, called ENT in French, or *espace numérique de travail*) of her middle school (she used her mother or her sister's computer for this), and this practice intensified during the lockdown. Although such DWs were already available to some (say, Djibril, 11), neither parents nor children were used to visiting them: teachers still used traditional materials (paper) for lessons to be learned and homework.

Victor (39), father of Djibril (11): *"In fact, the DW already existed before the confinement but we didn't use it at all, and then, of course, it was put there... I know that at the beginning of the year, we were given access to the DW, so I imagine that she [Djibril's teacher] was loading up content. So certainly not as complete but... maybe photos of activities, things like that. But in any case, we never went there."*

During the lockdown, 9 out of 10 families reported using digital devices to receive school work, but only 4 out of 10 specifically reported using it to do online school work.

- Communication content (peer-to-peer, family-friendly exchanges)

For some families (for example, Suzanne (12), Eva (9), or Luz (6)), communication mediated by applications like *Skype* was already common, when family members are located around the world. For others (such as the families of Alice (8) or Rémi (8)), this was a discovery. Most children used these tools for the first time, such as *Zoom*, for video calling with friends (Rémi (9) with 6 pals, Eva (9) with a friend she usually called by phone). This was an experience for many at the beginning of the lockdown, which they did not necessarily repeat throughout the period, even if they said they liked it. While 9 out of 10 children reported having tested video calling communication applications, only 3 out of 10 (older) children said they had also spent more time on digital social media.

Rémi (9): *“I used the computer to have a meeting with my friends, where we sent each other jokes. And I also called them with the video thing. With the computer, we did this with several friends, I think about six...With the computer, I did it once, but with the phone, I did it... at least four times...I liked it because we could see our friends, we talked to each other, we said a lot of things... about an hour each time.”*

Lucile (8): *“Oh yes! With my auntie, with my uncle, with my cousins, with my other uncle, with my grandpa and grandma, and with lots of people!... I think it’s great! ... at least you can find them on the computer”. But when asked why after a video call with a friend she did not do it, she replied: “well, we didn’t know what to say and then we forgot!”*

- **Media information and communication content (news, commercial communications, institutional communications, etc.)**

Children’s interviews did not allow this kind of media (informational) practice to be explored very precisely. Only the oldest children in the sample reported having informed themselves via a smartphone about such content, without giving more detail (about access modes or type of information). For the younger children, the information being publicised did not seem to be part of their digital or media practices, and information searches were strongly linked to specific school work request. On the other hand, almost all of the children interviewed appeared to have understood the principle of keyword research to access audio-visual content on *YouTube* or *Netflix*, for example. All children said they tried to avoid advertising while watching (some knew how to “ignore the ad”, others watch ads but found them “annoying”).

Alice (7): *“Well, then it puts a thing where you change it, if it’s too long the ad, then I click on it, that way it’s removed.”*

6.1.3. Controlling the time spent on screens: from continuity to sharp increases - the lockdown challenge to family rules

Regardless of the type, screens were used daily by all the families interviewed. Most families had established rules of use, which aim to regulate both temporalities of use (times, duration, and frequency), and content consulted.

- **The moments of the day and the places of screen use**

Access to screens was widely quite controlled, with parents remaining nearby and children seeking permission to use them. Use of screens usually occurred at weekends and outside school time, either on Wednesdays (a day off for primary school children in France) or early evenings during school days. During lockdown, most families seem to have tried to keep up a normal working week. Depending on the weather and time spent on homework, the use of afternoons or end-of-days was extended for homework.

Sandra (37) mother of Rémi (aged 9): *“No, I tried to stay on track! So sometimes, instead of 7.15p.m., it was maybe 7.30p.m... Afterwards, we might have started a bit earlier, but on the whole, we tried to respect it, because... Often, if you start saying ‘yes’ once in the morning, the next morning, you’re sure they’ll ask for more. So...”*

Parents said they preferred their children to use the various screens in common family rooms, which made use easier to control.

Marie-France (43), mother of Lucile (8): *“No, she doesn’t use it in her room, she uses it in the living room. But the tablet, overall, she is very often in the living room. And she uses it in the morning there, and before she used it... no, that’s right, there’s been no change in that. Except that before, she didn’t do it during the week, and now she does it during the week.”*

- The evolution of the time spent (cumulative duration) when known (estimation or measurement): frequency and regularity

In general, the time spent by the children interviewed using screens was monitored by the parents. We did not ask questions about time spent on screens before the lockdown. But through the investigation it certainly does not seem to have decreased: either screen time remained relatively stable in a third of the families surveyed, or it experienced a sharp increase, depending on the families and circumstances (telework, weather). This followed the switching to screens of all activities, according to modalities appropriate to each situation (for example, the use of the Wii for sports; screens for entertainment and for communicating with friends or family; technology for homeschooling).

Sandra (37): *“For example, I ended up saying to them ‘go ahead because otherwise I won’t have any peace and quiet’ [...] to take a breather, to prepare food, it’s easier, it’s calmer. I understand that children are put in front of the TV, it’s so much easier, eh... But I don’t want it to be a... And then, in addition, compared to the other children, they all talk about it in the playground, we mustn’t put them out of it either, but... But to have limits, that’s it... Even though I think the time was increased a little bit, that is, instead of 40 minutes, we were often closer to an hour, but they were, on the whole, the same rules.”*

Christel (39), mother of Luz (6): *“The only annoyance is that it’s difficult to stop using screens, in fact. So, as a result, it was often a source, not of conflict, but of irritation... there, we had to be firm.”*

Marie-France (43), mother of Lucile (8): *“In any case, we impose a time when there are no screens, everything is more or less regulated.”*

Flavie (34), mother of Eva (9): *“I think she was on the screens too much. And that bothered me a lot, but at the same time, what else could she do? She was locked in the house... We had the TV on all the time ourselves!... But if we could just avoid the phones...”*

Victor (39) father of Djibril (11): *“Yes, of course, he had to watch a bit more. The problem with the computer in the bedroom is that... he told you earlier that he went to bed later. So, we tried to get him to go to bed maybe not as early as when there was school, but when he had a DW to do the next day, we tried to get him to bed around ten o’clock. On the other hand, he did that to us a couple of times, we found him in his room, looking at stuff on the computer... Yes, I think he looked at it a bit too much,*

afterwards, it's easy too. That said, well, we like to play a bit with them, but I wouldn't do that all the time either..."

6.1.4 Parental control procedures for accessing screens

“Access to screens” here means a child may watch a TV or use a digital device. Such access arrangements varied from family to family, ranging from explicit requests for access, linked to explicit or tacit rules (“parental authorisation”) to “controlled freedom” conditioned by already-formulated rules. The constraints or freedoms of access concerned either the nature of the supports used (TVs, consoles, tablets, smartphones or computers), or time slots (schedules and duration), or even the contents consulted (cartoons, series, games, etc.). They were also subject to other constraints, possibly creating tensions, for example, when sharing devices that required loaning/borrowing (a parent or older sibling’s device), or involved trust (care in use, consultation of adapted content).

Marie-France (43), mother of Lucile (8): *“So more for the older child, for the moment more than for Lucile because she doesn’t use the Internet without us being next to her, and overall, she doesn’t use the Internet, so for Lucile I’m not too worried, for the older child I’m a bit more worried, but Dad has put filters everywhere, so um..., and they’ve been warned that we don’t type in anything”.*

Victor (39), father of Djibril (11): *“Controlling... and sometimes you don’t control, you think that... and... But, yes, I caught him two or three times at one o’clock in the morning when I went to bed... Seeing that he was still awake and then that the screen was on. But then... It could happen, but... No, we check it and then... Well, he’s still little, so his room is not... it’s always ajar. But sometimes he manages to slip through the cracks. And abuse a little bit. But it’s okay... it’s not...”*

6.1.5. How digital technologies are used (gains in autonomy or assistance)

Autonomy in the use of a device is defined by the skills of knowing how to/using it alone, without the assistance of a third party (adult or siblings). This autonomy could be developed at several levels (technical, semiotic) and over different temporalities/procedures for using devices, ranging from starting up the device, to its online connection, to ways of navigating between different features (applications, channels, levels, volume, sharing, etc.), until the device was disconnected and put on standby or turned off. The lockdown enabled more than half of the children surveyed to gain autonomy in their access to digital devices and their uses.

Lucile (8): *“No, I go on my own like a grown-up (laughs)... It’s better on TV and during the confinement I learnt to turn on the TV and to use a lot of stuff... that I didn’t know how to do... and like that when I say if I want to watch a cartoon, if they say ‘yes’, they don’t have to come and turn on everything, I do it”.*

Synoptic table: uses of the children interviewed in the 10 families

	Devices	Contents	Time	Access	Autonomy
FR 01 fg 7	laptop computer	school YouTube- cartoons, edutainment videos	morning for school 1h per day/afternoon	free	procedural help towards autonomy
	tablet	games	occasional	controlled	autonomy
	TV	films, Lumni	Saturday evening with family + morning	free	parental handling
	mobile phone parents	games and video conferences, WhatsApp school + friends	occasional daily 3 times	controlled	autonomy
FR 02 mg 12	laptop computer	school work (DW, video, video...) EcoleDirecte (collaborative space + agenda + msg)	free	free	accompanied at the beginning then autonomous
	personal mobile phone	RSN (TikTok for viewing; WhatsApp for group communication , Snapchat) video conferences	at the end of the day	encouraged	autonomous
	TV	series	family evening	controlled time	autonomous
	tablet	watch YouTube + make videos of “moments”	occasionally	free	autonomous

FR 03 fb 7	laptop computer	reports, films, games video conferences	several times a week	controlled	any handling managed by the adult
	games console	games			
FR 04 mb 9	laptop computer	school work YouTube (tutorials)	in the morning	controlled	procedural assistance towards autonomy
	parent's mobile phone	Video calling, games, games	occasional		
	games console	games	weekend	controlled+ self- controlled	
	TV	cartoons	afternoon		
	VR headset	games	occasional		
FR 05 mg 8	laptop computer	work YouTube (tuto) Disney Channel Netflix	occasional	controlled	handling by parent for school work autonomy for leisure activities
	sister/parent's phone	TikTok WhatsApp games	as soon as possible		
	tablet	YouTube (tuto)	twice a day		
	TV	Disney+, Netflix	as often as possible		
FRO 6mb 8	TV	cartoons Netflix	daily 1 hour in the late afternoon with his brothers	controlled	autonomy
	tablet	paid educational app	sometimes - a little - any time		autonomy but profile
		video calling	rarely		procedural assistance
		school (written homework)	daily in the afternoon		

FR 07 mg 9	TV	series - Cartoons - films - Netflix	daily anytime - evening until midnight	free	autonomy
	mother's smartphone	YouTube videos	daily - 1 to 2 in the afternoon daily/afternoon	semi- controlled	autonomy
	console	games	daily or every other day - afternoon	free	autonomy
	computer	school platform and padlet for written assignments		controlled	assistance then autonomy
		video calling	several times a week - family		accompanied
FR 08 mg 6	TV	series - cartoons - Netflix	daily	controlled	procedural assistance
	parents' smartphone	games - edu. app (English)	daily	controlled	procedural assistance
	parents' computer	school (written homework)	daily or twice a week	controlled	accompanied
		video calling	occasionally - family	controlled	
FR 09 fb 11	TV	cartoons	daily - afternoon	semi- controlled	autonomy
	personal computer (old)	video games - websites	daily	semi- controlled	autonomy
		school - YouTube videos	daily - morning	semi- controlled	autonomy
	loaned tablet (work)	YouTube videos	rarely	controlled	controlled

FR 10 mg 8	TV	cartoons	afternoon	controlled	procedural assistance and then autonomy
	family tablet	games	morning 30 min-1h	controlled	autonomy
	computer	school (written and video homework)	morning or afternoon - 30 min - 1h	controlled	procedural assistance and then autonomy
		video calling	occasionally	controlled	accompanied
	console	end of the day	30 min - 1 hour	controlled	accompanied or autonomy according to games

6.2. The lockdown and the changing behaviour (actions) and digital practices of children and families

6.2.1. Redefining social bonds: technology for keeping in touch.

- **The discovery or reappropriation of communication tools**

For the majority of families (9 out of 10), the use of communication devices took on a whole new dimension. From persons who did not use them to persons accustomed to digital devices, the lockdown transformed the use of these tools into an important means for keeping in touch with nearby or faraway friends and family.

Karim (9): *“Well, what made me the saddest was that I missed a lot of people. Even by video, it’s not the same thing.”*

The video calls with the family were perceived as “better than nothing” (for most of the children interviewed), but they did not replace physical meetings, especially with the grandparents, with whom long-distance communication seems to have been more difficult to establish and maintain (either because of difficulties in accessing or mastering the tools, or because of difficulties in using this method of exchange).

Applications such as *WhatsApp* were used by the children to communicate with their friends, family and sometimes also with the teacher.

Marie-France (43), mother of Lucile (8): *“We didn’t have any problems with the teachers, who provided work and support, who listened to us if we needed them, and with whom we were in contact quite a lot by email and even by phone with Morgane’s main teacher.”*

Platforms such as *Zoom* and *Skype* were also often used to communicate (especially with the family) or to bring together students in a class for a “course”, followed by exchanges between classmates. This was actually a very marginal practice in our sample, and was sometimes regretted by some parents who saw the benefits of such exchanges.

Flavie (34), mother of Eva (9), would have liked her daughter to participate in the virtual classes: *“Well, at least once a week, I think it would have been nice, even for the children, for them to be able to see each other, to know what is going on. Because it’s still a strange, exceptional situation that we’ve been through and that we’re still going through. And perhaps to know also if the friends are in good shape, even if in the families, everyone is fine...”*

6.2.2. New ways of schooling children: the benefits and pressures of homeschooling

- **Tools and types of school tasks: coaching opportunities or constraints for parents (availability, skills): children’s motivation**

While France’s Ministry of Education requested teachers to ensure that families could maintain the educational continuity of learning, many of the parents interviewed found the new modalities of homeschooling to be difficult, if not very difficult. This was either because they had to add this school coaching time to their own professional agenda, or because the relationship with their child/children was not easy to manage during times of supervision. In 6 out of 10 families, this burden fell exclusively on one parent (mostly the mother), while in 4 families it was shared (usually each parent was in charge of one of the children).

Christel (39), mother of Luz (6): *“That’s it. I’m a teacher of older children, so it’s too hard, what I was asking to my daughter! No, no, it was very, very complicated. And as we were a little bit locked in, so to enter into conflict all the time, it was very complicated for me, so I left her [to work alone]. Besides, she’s not behind in her learning, so... I didn’t want to be in conflict and not always through work. We did a tiny bit.”*

Access to online devices/services, such as digital workplaces (DWs) was not easy for all families, and pupils’ digital tools provided by schools seemed difficult for some parents to master, as for example, for the mother of Suzanne (12 years old), the father of Djibril (11), and the mother of Eva (9). For some, this was not a problem of their general digital skills, which they claimed to have, especially in connection with their own professional activities. Instead, it was a criticism of school’s DWs, or the rather disorganised/improvised management of the online resources provided by teachers. It was often difficult for parents to find their way around resources like the DWs, deemed as unintuitive or involving a multiplicity of media (attachments, hyperlinks, clouds, padlets, etc.), in order to find lessons, exercises, resources, etc. Some parents had taken time to master all of the features that DWs provided by schools, considering them as tools that were mastered primarily by educators. Sometimes parents gave up using DWs during the lockdown.

Flavie (34), mother of Eva (9): *“Yes, so... at the beginning, I didn’t know the DW at all, it’s true that it was very difficult to get used to it. And then after a week, we realized that we had forgotten a lot of little tabs that we had to open, so there was still a lot of work to do. So, in fact, we were drowning in homework... We never actually used the DW [...] she had her homework in the diary and we did the homework as we used to do it, in the old way. But it’s true that when the DW arrived, we were happy,*

but when we realized that there were lots of tabs to open other than 'Exercises', we quickly became disillusioned afterwards, when I saw all the other things that were waiting for us behind it."

Victor (39), father of Djibril (11), found it more difficult than his son to master all the features of the tool: *"It wasn't very well designed. So... yes, there was... don't get me confused, because there were two things, she was also using Classroom... The DW, I didn't find it very intuitive either. That is to say, I who am used to... well, used to... I'm not a great computer scientist, but I... well, I go on computers, I go on my... I have a smartphone; I use it a lot as a digital tool... Well, I'm quite used to applications, etc. The DW was really not intuitive, I found... It took a bit of getting used to, and... that's it! To go from one page to another, from one theme to another, there were several places to look for documents, it wasn't always... But he got used to it and it just takes a little time to get used to it... Yes, it wasn't always obvious, the... Well, since our printer is out of order, sometimes we have to go and print at my mother's, who doesn't have a very powerful computer, so sometimes it takes us ten minutes just to get to the right page."*

Julie (40) years old, mother of Suzanne (12): *"The school where she is working with ÉcoleDirecte so there is a collaborative space. There's an email system, there's a collaborative space and there's an agenda. So that was three, finally, accesses to transmit work to be found. And so, we adapted to the teacher as we went along."*

Several parents found that the work sent by teachers was often too much, and not doable for children working fully autonomously. So, some chose not to do all the work requested by teachers which required their supervision, to cut workloads (cuts were made by the subject, for example, or following particular attention paid to a specific child being homeschooled during the lockdown).

Victor (39), father of Djibril (11): *"... she gave the homework [...] No, no. We simply have three children, so... what we didn't think was essential, we didn't... we didn't do it... Because honestly, she made them work on everything, it's even rather us who sorted it out a bit, to prioritize perhaps what we thought was the most important."*

Sandra (37), mother of Rémi (9): *"And even in terms of time, that is to say that it was a rather special period, the older child had almost two and a half, three hours of work a day. Whereas the others, it was much less and I found that it was too much, because in addition most of the teachers gave work on Wednesdays, on public holidays... We had the impression that it was a bit of a race. So, I understand that it may be to keep a bit of a daily rhythm for the families, but... I thought it was too much. The big one, there were things, I told him, "No, it's okay, you're not doing it. 'If it had been more regular, these notions would have been better assimilated, because finally to see the conjugation of verbs, even in the present tense, it takes several weeks to be acquired, and there... In the same week, they had "a" without an accent and "a" with an accent, verbs in the present tense... That's it. I think it was a bit too much..."*

Some parents also justified their difficulties in view of the educational expertise they did not have when they themselves were not teachers.

Flavie (34), mother of Eva (9): *"Well, we don't have the pedagogy, we don't have the knowledge, well, I mean, there were three totally different school levels, so it's true that... You had to keep up. The first few weeks were very difficult... There was a lot of homework to do. There was a lot of homework to hand in, more than in normal times, so it was very complicated. Sometimes there were 3-4 assignments to hand in during the same day. Then there was Eva, who had to deal with homework, and the little one who also had homework to do. So, it's true that it was quite a challenge... I even sent an email to the teachers, asking them to slow down a bit on the homework, because... it wasn't possible. We were drowning in homework."*

Parents interviewed reported that during this time they had developed a different view of their children's school work, especially in terms of "saving time" and ways of working.

Marie-France (43), mother of Lucile (8): *"We didn't have the trauma of finding ourselves without help to go to school, that was already quite good. And then what we already knew: that it was a job that is not ours! (laughs) But that had the advantage of, anyway, doing in 2h - 2h30 time what she would have done in a day, or even 2 days. It also left time to confirm the difficulties she might have had in certain subjects... So, we had to set up... we have our sideboard which is covered with conjugations... It wasn't necessarily what we wanted as a decoration, but there you go, we had to set it up. So, she had not adapted classes but we had to adapt... and I would have liked that, obviously. The confinement, yes, brought another way of understanding the lessons and the courses. We also looked for additional exercises..."*

More than half of parents emphasised how their child (children) had become more autonomous during the lockdown, and how quickly they had appropriated digital tools.

Aurélia (38), mother of Karim (9): *"That's why after a week or two I had to show him, in fact. And afterwards (as if we learn quickly), very quickly, he knew how to go to the mailbox to look for the mail that corresponded to the timetable; and there he clicked on it, on the links that she sent, all by himself."*

Marie-France (43), mother of Lucile (8): *"[the teacher] used to do a bit of a Word table, so I was the one who printed it out, she did it on a sheet of paper, and Lucile only watched the Lumni videos, the educational videos, and I put them on. And since we changed teachers, with the padlet, we opened the padlet page for her, and she is the one who looks at what there is to do during the day, who looks at the documents, who looks for them in the documents that we have printed. She is much more autonomous with the padlet in fact... As far as autonomy is concerned, she has learnt a great deal in terms of autonomous work, whereas at the beginning we had to be with her all the time and give her the sheets as she went along. Now it's changed completely, she doesn't want us to be near her anymore unless she asks. For corrections or..."*

Throughout the weeks of lockdown, children's motivation was not always maintained, to such an extent that some parents developed new strategies (giving children ice cream at the end of each afternoon's work, in one family, for example).

Flavie (34), mother of Eva (9): *"The first few weeks were fine, but it's true that the further we got, the more discouraged we became. At a certain point, it became too long. "She had no motivation at all, so we had to motivate the group and then..."*

- **The levers and potentialities of digital technology for school work (a more personal and differentiated approach to schooling, the discovery of new teaching resources, the transformation of parental mediation, peer and sibling collaboration)**

The digital communication tools used, mainly email (which was used to receive content, according to statements by 9 out of 10 families), sometimes enabled families and teachers to develop a direct, sometimes differentiated relationship with pupils, that had hitherto been poor.

Marie-France (43), mother of Lucile (8): *"So we, with Lucile's teacher, yes, it reconciled us with Lucile's teacher (laughs) who we were not a fan of. That's because Lucile is dysorthographic and the teacher refused to consider that this was a problem that had to be taken into account. So, we had a few problems with that. And apart from that, as a result of the confinement, she sent a card to Lucile for her*

birthday... We found that she was making an effort with the work to be done, with the activities to be given to the children... So that rather reconciled us."

The resources suggested by teachers, particularly audio-visual ones, were generally much appreciated and considered very helpful, even if they only made up a minority of the work sent to families.

Marie-France (43), mother of Lucile (8): *"it was the same for everyone but, the fact of having access to videos is much more didactic than a classical lesson, it doesn't solve everything, of course, but there is a greater interest all the same... I didn't even know that videos existed, apparently, for a long time (laughs), it wasn't just the lessons on TV. So yeah, I would have liked to know that it existed before. And I think I'll go and see what's out there more easily for certain lessons."*

But only a few families (4 out of 10) reported using digital tools to do online school work (quizzes, etc.).

The issue of collaboration among siblings was not explicitly addressed in the interviews. But it does not seem to have taken place much, in particular because it requires a special pedagogical approach. For the older siblings, peer collaboration (among members of their class) appears to have been carried out by communication groups where information was exchanged on procedures for access to documents, lists of work concerned, etc. Otherwise, remote collaboration within members of a class does not seem to have been a pedagogical approach adopted by the teachers of the children interviewed, though it sometimes occurred among siblings. For example, Eva (9), whose little sister (in kindergarten), had received "challenges" on several occasions from her teacher, involving sending a photo of a DIY activity/production (fancy dress, decoration, cooking recipe), or for Lucile (8), whose sister received sports challenges from her teacher, which, alas, were little followed up. Parents thought such initiatives "pleasant", even though not all of them got involved, for various reasons (such as Lucile's mother, who said that her family did not want to show the inside of their home).

Flavie (34), mother of Eva (9): *"We did, thanks to Louise's teacher, who halfway through primary school, she made padlets and there were challenges every week... So, it's the same, with what we had at home, because it's a bit complicated to get the material... Some had sent their construction, but others didn't exchange at all during the lockdown... But the teacher's return, I think she was saying that there were a lot of them who didn't exchange... We did everything... Well, I thought it made the lockdown a bit more fun. Because we had to think, we had to find the material, so we tried to poke around a bit... And then a week goes by quickly, in the end. There was a goal, we had to hand in the work by such and such a date, so... so... No, I think it was nice."*

Marie-France (43), mother of Lucile (8): *"In fact, they were funny challenges that you had to do. He sent a video of himself disguised as a skier, so with his ski boots on he was doing push-ups on his balcony. So, he asked the children eventually to do that... We didn't, we didn't reply to him and I don't think anyone sent a video in the end to this poor man who found himself without any video for this challenge. Because I think that the kids there, in a school where there was a lot of dropping out, I think..."*

• **The reorganisation of schooling schedules**

Lockdown days were often filled with various tasks (domestic chores, shopping, meals, housekeeping; teleworking for some), and as parents had to organise homeschooling and at the same time do their work, it was necessary to reorganise time and space(s). For some, this included allocating responsibilities for the children (for example, Charlotte (8) and Djibril (11), even if this was due to pedagogical rather than organisational concerns). Most families had to assign time, as in the families of Karim (9), Charlotte (8), Alice (7) and Luz (6), so that mornings were dedicated to

schooling and afternoons were free. Or vice versa in the families of Lucile (8), Eva (9), or even Rémi (9), which had to take advantage of his little brother's nap so he could do his school work with his mother.

Sandra (37): *"Yes, an hour and a half, I would say. In fact, he did an hour, then we had a snack and then we did another half hour."*

While almost all children actually received work to do via email or a padlet, sent by their teacher, none had to send work back to the teacher for possible "assessment" or verification. While teachers often sent corrections for exercises children were requested to do, it was up to the parents to carry out checks on the work actually done by their children. Virtual classes were organised sometimes, although children did not necessarily participate in them (such as Eva (9) who generally slept late in the mornings). Some parents found that the work sent by the teachers was not always appropriate (for Lucile (8 years old)), that it was either insufficient in certain subjects (Rémi (9), Luz (6)), or too much in quantity or too complicated to retrieve from different media (Eva (9), Suzanne (12), or poorly distributed over the week (Karim, (9)). As a result, they selected work, deciding to "lighten" requested workloads, by stopping doing it on a daily basis, reorganising work throughout the week, or even stopping it altogether. Overall, parents yearned for their child (children) to become more autonomous, so that they would solicit parents less. Sometimes parents were indeed surprised about the ease of setting up new work schedules, as in Suzanne's family (12-years-old).

6.2.3. The reconfiguration of family leisure: relaxing and keeping busy, with or without screens.

- **Both individual and family practices**

Watching family films together was a discovery for several families (Alice (8) said she especially liked Saturday-pizza-TV). Individual viewings also occurred: Suzanne (12) said that in addition to the family gathering to watch the Glee TV series, she started watching films and series herself, which she did not do before the lockdown. But this period also gave rise to gatherings between parents and children for activities involving little or no screen use (board games, cooking, DIY and crafts).

Marie-France (43), mother of Lucile (8): *"We have a ritual of playing board games between girls, so we play the Yellow Dwarf quite a lot every day. There are simple card games, so that's more something she does with me... We have established a certain rhythm of life for the four of us that we have, a little bit anyway, during the holidays ... except that this was the daily routine. So we were, we had aperitifs on the terrace, on the balcony. That's it, that was our little pleasure, as we were stuck, so we had a small aperitif on the balcony on Friday evenings."*

Flavie (34), mother of Eva (9): *"Yes, we had parties... in fact, we took out a network subscription and so we could play online with the family."*

Christel (39), mother of Luz (6): *"Even if we watched a film or two together from time to time, we shared it, but it's quite rare."*

- **Discovering new content**

Out of boredom, some families installed new applications on phones or tablets to test most often games or playful, educational applications.

Marie-France (43), mother of Lucile (8): *"It's something, so I often show them old songs on YouTube (laughs), so that's what we used [Internet] for nursery rhymes to find or songs they were learning at school and so I didn't have any support at all, so to find the tunes of the songs, we used YouTube quite a lot for that, and we use it a bit for creative activities. Today, we use it to try something with paint that I had seen on the Internet, so at that point we will actually look for videos."*

Schools also gave parents the opportunity to discover certain content perceived as pedagogical (like documentaries on the Franco-German *Arte* TV channel) or presented as being educational (sometimes used by teachers during class time, such as the teaching videos of the *Canopé Network*, the Fundamentals in mathematics and French).

Some children also discovered content on their own, to occupy themselves (manual activities, sports practices, such as Djibril (11) who watched drawing and freestyle scooter videos).

Victor (39), father of Djibril (11): *"He has periods when he watches one [video], in particular, but this is a scooter. So, this is a bit more... That's it. He likes freestyle scooters, that's one of his interests, so... I've seen some of these videos, you can see the guy doing tricks, etc. Well, it's more... Well, it's more... At least it makes sense... And why not, he'll try it afterwards, he learns new names, well, it's not something that's useful for schooling, for example, but it's not on the same level as what I was describing to you just before, you know... Even YouTube, normally, on his computer, is more or less forbidden. So, he didn't talk too much about it but he uses it a little bit too... there were times when with his brother, he was looking at some kind of drawing methodologies, things like that, a little bit more interesting."*

- **The disruption of leisure/work time jobs**

Given the lockdown situation, with schools closed and telework encouraged, the schedules were more flexible. Several families have made some adjustments or even completely reorganised their family schedule (for example, at Suzanne's (12), the girls got the right to watch television at night, which was not the case at all before the lockdown). But one family clearly resisted this trend.

Sandra (37): *"So we did everything we could to prevent this from happening. We did... it was really in the afternoon, every day was the same, we respected the weekends as much as possible... But afterwards, it's true that I know a lot of people where the children were actually on the tablet a lot, where they actually worked with the children, did the homework at the weekend to be able to move on... I think that not all families were equal with regard to this."*

- **Forced activity substitution**

Many families had a negative attitude *a priori* towards children's digital leisure, and indicated that they prefer children to do something else.

Christel (39), mother of Luz (6): *"And then, those moments of emptiness, those moments when you don't really want to do something, but you feel obliged to do it because otherwise, well, she's on the screens... No, it was really those moments when we said to ourselves, 'Well, what do we do now?' Now we have to think about a new activity so that she doesn't get bored, to keep her occupied in an intelligent way so that she doesn't have to be on the screens, so that she doesn't put on 20 kilos, because she's already put on a few, because we've done a lot of baking, so..."*

Victor (39), father of Djibril (11): *"But there, during the confinement, it was all video games and for a long time, the three of them were... because, well, always the same, it was all there was! So... But we*

didn't want it to be too much. That led to arguments too, so... And then, otherwise, when the weather was good, we managed to keep them busy in the garden. On the other hand, there were periods when it rained quite a lot, and there, yes, there was more time in front of the screens than... normal."

For these parents, it was important that their children did things "in real life" first, to be better prepared when they were older to develop their social skills with online tools, notably social networks which generate concerns among parents about their elder children.

Sandra (37): *"In fact, what I say to myself, my best memories of my life as a child are when I was climbing trees, when I played with my friends... And I can't imagine that being able to do that with a screen. But beyond even the excitement... it's childhood memories and then... knowing how to play with a stick, with... Anyway. But these are my convictions!"*

Victor (39), father of Djibril (11): *"I want him to learn in real life so that the day he has access to all this and is interested in going there, he will be ready to see what is true and what is false, and to go and do research to check things out. I don't want social networks to be the norm for him. I want him to grow up, so it might not be easy, I don't know if I'll be able to do it, but for the moment that's the goal we've set ourselves, that he goes as late as possible, that like our generation, he grows up in real life, he forges himself in real life, and then once he's ready, he'll go... And then, to get the good things out of it, because it's true that there can be good things in SR too, but... For me, I see for the moment many more dangers than positives".*

In the face of the constraints (requests to leave home for one hour per day within a radius of one kilometre, closure of sports facilities), families had to offer their children other activities instead of swimming, cycling, etc. Weather permitting, parents "went out" with their children in their gardens (to play games, do trampoline, discover roller-skating for Suzanne (12), DIY for Rémi (7) and Djibril (11) – a strong trend among the older boys interviewed), or even going out on a balcony for families with no garden (Lucile, 8), or simply enjoying going food shopping. In the event poor weather, screens provided substitute activities, along with sports video games (on the Wii console for Lucile (8), for example). This did not replace all the recreational and leisure moments: shopping for example for Eva (9) was replaced by *YouTuber* beauty content on her mother's smartphone, to which she had much less access usually when her mother was at work. As going out to the restaurant was impossible, some families began to experiment more with cooking recipes in mother-daughter duos as Luz (6), Eva (9) and Solene (8), reflecting a strong trend among all the girls interviewed, younger and older, or even among the older girls, such as Suzanne (12), who did a lot of baking during the lockdown.

6.2.4. A new family life balance: occupying children as parents were teleworking, and reconsidering parental mediation

- **The necessary adaptation of the "pre-Covid" rules**

During the lockdown, screen time regulation changed somewhat overall. For some families, this period provided an opportunity to introduce screens into children's practices (such as in Jean's family (41 years old), which minimised screens and introduced many new practices during the lockdown). For others, the lockdown just led to opportunities to increase the time spent on screens, opportunities that were experienced as a major change like the families of Aurélia (38) and Flavie (34), who spent more time on screens, but also more time playing together, as did Christel's family (39). For other families, there were no major changes in their practices, as in the Sandra's family

(38), who said that they had not changed their practices – compared to the time when children were not in school). For some, lockdown was an opportunity to give children more autonomy in their uses of screens, by teaching them procedural gestures – turning the TV on and off by themselves, switching channels, searching for homework on a padlet, printing school work sheets, etc. This was not to be constantly solicited by children during their leisure activities (as for Luz (6), Alice (7), Lucile (8)), and then progressively even for school activities (for Lucile (8), Eva (9), Rémi (8) and Karim (9)).

Stanislas (41): *“I had to accompany her quite a lot and I tried to make her more and more independent because I had to work at the same time.”*

Christel (39), mother of Luz (6): *“So, she asks, that’s it. Then normally, it’s not when she wants, but I find that during the confinement, it was very often. We were... we thanked the screens. She doesn’t have a sister at home, Luz, so for us, it was very complicated because she was constantly asking for our help. I worked, so there you go. She had books and games that she could use whenever she wanted, but it’s true that there were a lot of phone calls, and I needed to work, and her father too, so...”*

Sandra (37): *“Yes, because before, he never had access to the tablet, alone, in fact. Now, as he had to go on the Internet to go to his class padlet, where he had his questionnaires online and things like that, well, he went on the Internet, he clicked on the links that took him to sites...”*

Some parents maintained “pre-Covid” rules, as for Rémi’s (8). Others relaxed rules somewhat (on-screen time, or bedtime for Lucile (8), and Djibril (11)), and even substantially, as for Luz (6) and Eva (9), because the children were not going to school, and so were less tired and had more difficulty falling asleep at night. The same was true for getting up in the mornings to commute to school or work, as these had stopped. Many parents themselves got up later, and let their children sleep more (as for Eva (9), Djibril (11) and Lucile (8)), even allowing them sometimes to use screens until parents too woke up, thus reproducing sleep patterns similar to weekends (as for Lucile (8) and Luz (6)). Some families therefore had to manage these double binds: struggling against screen use but giving in to it for lack of other leisure activities (sports, movies, shopping, visits to family or friends).

Stanislas (41): *“We can see that they have become used to these digital tools. And above all, we, who were very closed-minded on this... Now we have to open up to be able to connect... to the teachers, to the other children, to the family, to friends, and then to do the homework...”*

Synoptic table of digital uses according to intentionality

	Social link	Schooling	Family leisure	Family life
FR 01 fg 7	discovering aperitifs- video calling with friends + keeping the link with the family (Skype, WhatsApp, Zoom)	work on a worksheet sent by email some fun videos (Canopé) WhatsApp with the teacher to send back the work	initiation of the Saturday night film to relax and keep busy as an alternative to social life	keep children busy (tablet, computer, TV) encourage autonomy so that adults can work
FR 02 mg 12	used to video chat for long-distance relationships class group on WhatsApp and Snapchat but finds there are too many messages	DW and several different platforms for work WhatsApp class pupils and parents	initiation of a series in the evening to keep busy	encouraged to keep in touch with peers (telephone) develop autonomy so that adults can work
FR 03 fb 7	some video calling with the family and classmates including a time planned by the teacher	worksheet sent by email	initiation of a video game	Keeping the child busy with cartoons and animal reports (laptop)
FR 04 mb 9	video calling with the family a little with friends	worksheets and platform work	VR headset initiation and time for non- digital games	keep the child busy so that the adult can work
FR 05 mg 8	a little bit of video calling	work on worksheets and a little bit on platforms	sharing screen time between sisters to watch videos	keep the child busy so that the adult can work, and find time for him/her
FR 06 Mb 8	a little bit of once with friends	work on worksheets sent by email	TV (cartoons) with brothers	keep the child busy so that the adult can work, and breathe

FR 07 mg 9	frequent video calling with close family members	information on the school's platform and work on the teacher's padlet	sharing of TV and console screens among siblings cooking sites on the tablet with the mother (recipes)	keep the child busy so that the adult can breathe
FR 08 mg 6	a little bit of video calling	send by mail	one film on TV with parents	keep the child busy so that the adult can breathe
FR 09 fb 11	some exchanges with physically distant family members	send by mail	few digital leisure activities for the family	keep the child busy so that the adult can breathe
FR 10 mg 8	some video calling with the family and once with friends	work on worksheets sent by email and educative videos.	video games on TV console with sister and father	keep the child busy so that the adult can work and breathe

6.3. Attitudes and perceptions of digital technologies during lockdown

The perception of digital activities during the lockdown by the families interviewed: parents' feelings about the risks and opportunities associated with digital technologies

6.3.1. Digital technologies to preserve social relations with family and friends

- **The joys and limits of digital devices and practices**

View of the “world after Covid” and a return to normal

Some interviewees did not hesitate to state that they wanted to abandon these digital devices as soon as it was possible to resume offline social activities (as in Alice's family (8)), would gladly replace *Zoom* aperitifs with family outings to see friends; at Eva's (9), they said they would very quickly see other families in the vicinity, as was also the case for Luz's family (6). By contrast, other households had integrated these practices into their way of interacting with their entourage, and/or wished to continue certain practices to complement, but not substitute, physical encounters (for example, Suzanne (12), who felt that the *WhatsApp* group for her class allows better solidarity between

pupils). But the majority of children were eager to see their friends “for real”, to return to school and see their teacher, as well as go back to suspended sports activities: swimming for Rémi (9) and Lucile, (8); biking for Djibril (11).

Flavie (34): *“I think it brought us closer together unconsciously, because as a result, we heard from people much more than we would have before. That’s really my feeling, the fact that I called, well, I’m going to tell you something stupid, I called cousins that I never called especially and we called each other once a week, each in turn! Or even twice a week. These are things we would never have done before. But before, we used to get together a lot for birthdays. Every month, we have almost one, two or three birthdays, so we didn’t make the effort to call each other in between. And now, not being able to see each other and not being able to get together as a family has allowed us to call each other and to hear from people more.”*

While the lockdown constraints also opened opportunities to get in touch again with less close family members, screens also sometimes created distance within homes.

Flavie (34): *“Yes, because they unconsciously isolate themselves. We had the older one who was sometimes in her room, we had Eva who was in her room with my phone... well, sometimes we couldn’t see them for a whole afternoon. So, it’s a shame.”*

6.3.2. Digital technologies to continue working: the pressures of teleworking on family life

- **Opportunities and risks (demotivation, isolation, frustrations, mental overload, hyperconnectivity)**

Overall, the parents interviewed found lockdown quite difficult to cope with. Parents in teleworking had to manage their work tasks, which were disrupted or even extended out of “office” hours, along with childcare and homeschooling. Lockdown generated new domestic tasks, like making lunch.

Julie (40): *“Very complicated. I’m coming out of this period exhausted, in fact... So, what we did was that in the evening we prepared everything that had to be done... That’s how the organization was done. I found it very painful... It was painful, this confinement, very painful”.*

Sandra (37): *“Yes, but it’s with Zoom, so you can do it... I find that the boundary between professional and private is less palpable... I must admit that for me, having had to manage my lessons to prepare, homework, and then the children all day long, and, of course, the household chores which are also increasing, because there are all the people at home all the time... I must admit that if it would not happen again, I would be relieved!... The WhatsApp groups, there were groups everywhere, we were receiving messages and stuff every five minutes, all the time. Whatever... whether it was personal or professional, and for me it was very invasive.”*

Sometimes the parents interviewed were also obliged to leave children alone, such as for videoconference meetings, and so often had to trust children to adhere to established rules regarding digital usage, whether it was time spent or content viewed. They did not count on digital parental controls for this regulation. Yet, the ability to create child profiles on certain video applications or platforms (*Netflix*) prevented access to content deemed inappropriate for certain ages. These technical possibilities reassured these parents, who were able to focus on their work during their children’s on-screen leisure time.

6.3.3. Digital devices to ensure entertainment

- **The substitution of activities in view of double binds**

Overall, all families seem to have accepted the fact that digital technologies were important for “living well” during the lockdown.

It has given some people the opportunity to get together “in a different way”, as was the case for Julie (40): *“It was a bit like our family meeting place... it gives us a common topic and it also allows us to have conversations when we eat, etc. Without digital technology, frankly I don’t know how we would have managed it.”*

However, some families have had to accept some contradictions in their principles of digital use, as with Frédéric (43): *“Yeah, it’s true that during confinement, he was allowed to play video games. In fact, we’re not really in favour of screens for children...”* or Ariane (39): *“And it’s true that at the beginning we were full of good intentions, we organized a lot of things and then at a certain point, we didn’t have any more ideas, we just went round in circles.”*

The period was also unstable in terms of health, and changing in terms of government recommendations, which generated uncertainty, confusion and constant changes of direction for all the families, as Flavie (34) recounted: *“So, I’ll tell you, the first week was fun, ‘Oh, we’re not allowed to go out, usually we can’, it was like a game. The second week was fun, and then we quickly became disillusioned. So, yes, we quickly went round the house, eh! Once we’d tidied up a couple of cupboards, played three games, well... ‘what are we going to do?’ So, yes, we have a garden and we explained to [the children] that there are some who don’t have a garden, so we shouldn’t complain. They have done trampolining, but that’s fine for a day or two, then we wanted to change, to do something else. We wanted to ride our bikes. So... we went to fetch the bread by bike, except that after the next day, we were not allowed to ride a bike anymore! So, we explained to them, we made them listen to the news to make them understand that now we’re not allowed to ride a bike, whereas before we could. It was difficult. They would have liked to go out. No, it was complicated.”*

6.3.4. Digital devices to ensure the educational continuity of the school

- **The hopes and fears of having “managed” well**

As the lockdown took place during the last term of the school year, most parents did not express any real concerns about possible gaps in learning, even though some parents felt overwhelmed (not competent in terms of pedagogy) or submerged (not having the time to follow up all the work given to all of their children every day).

Sandra (37) was confident about her son’s schooling: *“Rémi, we have been following it well, so afterwards, I said to myself that it’s only three months and next year, the teachers will know too, and the others in the class, it’s the same thing, so... No, I don’t think there will be any falling behind. Even if there is a bit, for me it’s quite manageable for the future.”*

Julie (40) noted that the family was able to adapt to the situation: *“We’re the ones who got used to it because the teachers kept the same methodology from beginning to end. According to her, digital technology was the key to this adaptation, in addition to the support of the teaching staff: “And I think*

that the children benefited a lot from this period of confinement. And digital technology has been essential. For the link with the school, it was fantastic. We are also lucky to have teachers who have been very good, frankly."

At least two families chose not to send their children back to school following the end of the lockdown (Djibril (11), Eva (9)), for health reasons (worries, the tight-return-to-school protocol, reasons of family health). Others chose not to because they felt that their children were doing well enough at school in general not to be penalised by absences, even though most teachers stopped sending work for homeschooling when schools opened.

6.3.5. The feelings of confidence or fear (caused by facts or emotions) expressed by the parents interviewed concerned about the benefits and risks (physiological, social, psychological and cognitive) that screens had for their children

The issue of time spent on screens was a worry widely shared by all parents in our sample. While not always being fully aware of the reasons that led to their fears, all parents controlled or tried to control screen time and said that they preferred their child/children to do "something else". Screen use was thus assigned to a specific time, whether as a reward (for example, after finishing homework), or as children were waiting (for dinner, for example), or as a family practice (for playing or watching a film, for example). However, parents recognised that the circumstances of the lockdown had disrupted their control of screens and the choice of content being viewed.

Victor (39), father of Djibril (11): *"So, we control [scene use] in the sense... so, it's not fixed hours, but we try to... We try to... Well, if we find that it's been long enough, we tell him to stop. He talked to you about videos, so now we're trying YouTube videos, because we realized that it... He was glued to some of the uninteresting stuff, maybe even more uninteresting videos than a cartoon on Netflix, for example... And then things, really... As much as you can find a child who is entertained by watching a cartoon in which there is a story, a scenario, a humorous side, things like that, it's leisure but there is still an interest, but there are certain videos, he was watching stuff where you see a teenager playing a video game and you just see him playing and with no interest whatsoever, and I, who know video games in addition,... there can be interesting videos, whereas he was saying, they show a trick, or something like that... Here, it's not even that, there's a lot of content that's... it's just you see someone playing, and then reacting, 'Ah boom!'; that's why, we put a stop to it."*

Flavie (34), mother of Eva (9): *"No, it's with the family. I don't want her... I've forbidden her to... even with her friends, we don't know who's behind the screen. So, as a result, it's still the family... She's too young to... there are so many things going on, no matter how much we explain it to them... we're not safe, you know. It doesn't just happen to other people. So, I prefer to keep it in the family than... No, but to watch videos, things like that... videos that are sometimes useless. I mean, sometimes they watch videos on YouTube, subscribers, over and over again, but I find that infinitely stupid."*

6.3.6. The upheaval of representations under pressure from changes in habits

- **The paradox of impossible choices and a "necessary evil"**

For some families, digital technology was essential during this period, both to maintain social ties and to continue (professional or school) activities, as well as for entertainment, and to have family

activities. Julie (40), for example, stated that “digital technologies have been paramount”. They were “fantastic” to keep in touch with school, and she felt her children to be very competent with digital technology. She believed that during lockdown attitudes toward digitisation have changed.

Julie (40): *“Digital technology can be criticized, but it has enabled us to create links and maintain existing links. (...) and if we hadn’t had TV, there would have been times when the days would have been long.”*

6.4. Changing attitudes to digital technologies due to lockdown: parents’ perceptions of digital risks and opportunities: the new awareness of parents’ relationship to digital technologies

6.4.1. Increasing or decreasing perceptions (personal feelings) of the risks (real or imagined) incurred in relation to technologies.

- **Given increasing screen time (addiction), inadequate digital content, and cyber harassment/online insecurity**

In general, the issue of screen use was not seen as trivial in the households interviewed. Almost all parents (9/10) reported having rules regarding screen use by children. These were to ensure children were protected from what parents saw as the adverse consequences of digital technologies, especially in the case of time spent on the screens (which would be at the expense of time doing something else, a very strong concern for Ariane (39) and Victor (39)). Other adverse consequences included the quality of the viewing activity (which would bring children into contact with content from which they learn nothing, an important concern for Aurélia (38), Victor (39) and Flavie (34); and the quality of human relations (digital technology will not replace human warmth – a worry for Jean (41), etc.

Some parents remained vigilant, fearing their children would break rules or even develop some addiction to certain uses of digital devices. In 6 out of 10 families, the anxiety about increasing digital practices was mentioned spontaneously.

Flavie (34), mother of Eva (9): *“So she has the right... she takes the right to use all the games she wants, because we don’t often ask mum and dad when we take mum’s phone... But... yes, it happens, it happens a lot that she downloads games, applications like TikTok... things like that, and then afterwards, she spends her life on it, so we put the brakes on a bit, because otherwise, it’s every day, what.”*

Victor (39), father of Djibril (11): *“What he misses is something that we allowed him to do for a while and then removed, Fortnite, which has a social network aspect to it because they play online and he can meet up with his friends. And precisely, one of the things that made us back out [of this application] was this social network aspect, the addictive aspect... With friends and then with adult friends, yes, absolutely. But that, in the end, we could have, more or less, monitored him, but the... really, the addictive side... That is, it made him... even... how can I put it? He didn’t even want to play any other video game than this one... The games are long, it’s really special... For Fortnite, no, it was really the addictive side, too much time... Even one game, it takes a long time.”*

Several families (7 out of 10) expressed concerns about inappropriate content that their children might be exposed to, especially via social media, which seemed to crystallise the bulk of digital risks. Yet at the time of the interviews, this fear concerned mainly older children, who had recently entered middle school.

As Marie-France (43) explained: *“Well, [Lucile] knows what you can find on it, because her sister watches music videos on it, so... and then I tell you, we have cartoons, little sequences that I want to show her, but... I don't know what she'd go and look for, in fact, she's asked me to go on her own, and I don't know, but I don't think she'd know how to go on her own... And when asked if Marie-France is worried about surfing the Internet: “Yes, more so for the older child, for the moment, than for Lucile, because she doesn't use the Internet without us being there, and, generally speaking, she doesn't use the Internet, so for Lucile I'm not too worried...For the older child I'm a bit more worried, but the father has put filters on everything, so they're warned that we don't type in anything.”*

Victor (39) was concerned about possible access to inappropriate content via the SNS: *“We know it can happen, but no, it hasn't been the... So, yes, the fact that we don't want to give them access to social networks at the moment, that yes, that is one of the reasons, yes.”*

Sandra (37) discovered that her eldest child knew how to navigate outside the prescribed sites: *“On the other hand, the older one, I realized, he said to me... it's still nice, but: 'Ah, I went to see on Amazon, I saw that the book was going to come out in a fortnight. Can you buy it for me?', I said, 'But you went to Amazon? What for?', he said, 'Yes, but I saw that's where you buy books'... So, that means that, as a result, not being with him when he was on the tablet, he saw better how the Internet worked and so he could go to Amazon, look for the book... I admit that it scared me in the sense that I said to myself, “Well, that's it, in fact, he can start to look for anything on the Internet...” I told him, “Listen, Johan, if you go on a site, you tell me beforehand what you are doing”.*

While there was a general sense of fear among all the parents interviewed, it coexisted with some confidence – not in the medium – but in children choosing appropriate content (Jean (41) left Alice (8) to navigate *YouTube* alone, because he knew that she only watched cartoons), and that children were reasonable in screen uses (Aurélia (38) said that Karim (9) generally knew how to limit his time spent watching cartoons, because he knew that after a certain point it made him nervous). Only 3 out of 10 families had installed control software.

6.4.2. The perception of new opportunities provided by digital technology

- **The emergence of new or enhanced digital skills and the empowerment of children.**

Among the families surveyed, a third recognised that the digital uses which emerged during the lockdown (video calling with family or friends, remote school work, online gaming activities) had enabled their children to develop new digital skills. or reinforce those that were already present but hitherto little-used because they did not meet specific needs. Indeed, lockdown created new needs, and so “shifted the boundaries” both in the development of digital skills and the gradual acquisition of children's autonomy to do their school work using these tools.

Aurélia (38), mother of Karim (9): *“It's true that before the confinement, we limited the computer, etc. He didn't know anything in fact. That's it, he never went on it. And there, we had to... I had to say: 'Well, you don't have a choice anyway, so go on the computer'... So, there was no choice. It was a bit against me, what I wanted for him, but afterwards, as Mohammed said, and it's true, they also grow up in a*

society where, in any case, they're going to be around computers, they're going to work on them, so they need to know a bit about them in order to feel a bit..."

Marie-France (43), mother of Lucile (8): *"[the teacher] doesn't send [work] every day, she sends on Monday, Sunday for the whole week... And every day there is a list of things to do... so we have a rhythm, we have imposed a bit of a daily rhythm, so when we tell her 'well now it's time for homework', she goes to the padlet page, and she looks at what there is to do during the day and she starts."*

The increased use of these digital technologies, particularly on the Internet, has also enabled some children to develop a more critical attitude toward online uses, a skill that is not always noticed by parents.

Karim (9): *"They tell me not to look but I know the difference between what I shouldn't look at and what I can look at."*

Karim's father: *"So he has certainly gained autonomy, but I don't think there have been any other advantages, no."*

6.5. Future impacts projected for "the world after Covid"

The lockdown lasted several weeks, and so created a real break with the daily life. Changes were observed concerning digital practices that were not really breaks with the past, but which severely disrupted habits. While two families said they wanted to keep some of the practices developed during the lockdown, the other eight said they wanted to return to non-digital activities.

6.5.1. The continued use of digital technologies in learning and schooling: (we hope so – we think so – we want to)

While parents often recognised that their child/children had developed useful digital skills during those weeks when they were away from school, as part of homeschooling, the parents interviewed did not project themselves using distance learning, and/or homeschooling in a sustainable way, beyond the lockdown.

Sandra (37): *"With the 9 to 10-year-olds, I'm not sure it's the... Well, sometimes they printed out index cards, even if not everyone had printers either, it wasn't easy... but I think they need to write and read, and the tablet, finally, it... I suppose it's going to be the homework that's put on line, but I still hope that most of it will be on paper and given to them in class."*

The majority of families wanted a return to "normal," with school reopening, classroom learning, and the usual pedagogical supports, even though they recognised that some instructional videos may be useful for working at home (for homework).

Stanislas (41): *"Afterwards, if I have to find the right lesson every time, I have to spend time and well... So, in fact, I would have to see how I could ensure that it continues... These little videos are not bad. After that, once again, they're videos that make up for the lack of teaching. That is to say, as there is no teacher, that's it. Yes, I will ask myself if I continue with these things... I'm more in the mode where for the moment I'd like it to stay with using paper, everything that's a bit physical."*

While 4 out of 10 children said they wanted to continue using digital tools for "schooling", only 2 parents said so.

6.5.2. For leisure: more/less activities and content – doing better by doing things differently; from “doing alone” to “doing together”, or vice versa

Among families who experienced relatively large changes in their daily schedules, the return to normal, as school opened and work outside for some parents picked up (full-time or part-time) *de facto* forced them to go back to their routine, with the hourly constraints of getting up and going to bed linked to school and commuting, and striking the balance between leisure time and “homework” time for their children. Such resumption of previous habits led to a return to stricter access rules and screen time limits.

Ariane (39), when asked about the durability of the things done during the confinement: *“that will go away mostly, I think! (laughs) No, I’m thinking mainly of the reduction in screen time. That’s for sure.”*

6.5.3. Technological devices and practices: getting more equipment and spending more (or less) time online

The lockdown, nevertheless, changed both the habits and the representations of some parents who had previously been more reluctant about technology. For them, there was a new awareness of acquiring devices for their older children, and allowing them greater access to certain digital technologies for school work (especially if children were to enter middle school shortly afterwards), or for children’s leisure activities (communication, video games).

Sandra (37): *“Now, I’m not against it, even the console... They’re really starting to want one, I think that next year the older children will have one. It’s not that I want to ban it or... Even the telephone, I think my grown-up will have one, but I want him to know how to use it, there are rules associated with it... So, already, the phone, I’m a bit hesitant. I’d rather it was access to our devices, rather than saying, ‘it’s your device and you’re self managing’, ... I’d rather it was us lending him the phone or the tablet or the family computer... Anyway, I say to myself that he’s going to middle school next year, so he has to learn how to use it... It’s more like that, I said to myself, ‘I have to teach him things’ and protect him from what... from how to do things and what he can fall into, rather than telling him, ‘no, it’s forbidden’... Or to put on a parental control. Because if he has a phone or access to the library, I’m not going to control everything. So, it was more along those lines, that he learns to...”*

6.5.4. Online social life: continued remote communication and work: advantages and disadvantages, and the reality principle

While families using remote communication, devices recognised the usefulness of these tools, almost all said that they wanted to be able to visit close family again, especially grandparents, as soon as possible. Though contact through images and sounds was perceived “as better than nothing”, most of the children interviewed missed being hugged by Grandma and Grandpa.

Alice (7): about online communications with her grandparents: *“Well, we’ll stop. Because we can see them in real life.”*

7. Conclusion and Recommendations

The French qualitative survey for the Kidicoti project allowed us to meet 10 families at the end of the first lockdown of 2020. We had a long discussion with each family about their digital practices and were able to identify the set of trends presented above.

Digital technology has, of course, played an important role in the daily lives of these families, both in terms of keeping up with work and school, but also in terms of keeping up with social life and having fun. Generally speaking, all families agreed that digital technology has been a significant help in managing this situation. However, there is still an aversion to the use of screens, especially for the youngest children. Indeed, French families show great mistrust towards digital practices, sometimes not so much about the content that can be consumed, but about the time that these activities can take up in young people's daily lives. Almost all the families interviewed are watchful, even controlling, their children's screen time, and in particular about entertainment time. At the time of the survey, the families considered the increase in screen time as a parenthesis due to the particular situation of lockdown, and declared that they wanted to return to their usual practices: i.e., slightly less frequent, less long and less diversified screen use.

The strength of this project lies in the breadth of its international terrain, which allows a set of overall trends to be identified and national specificities to be highlighted. The international report will be available soon.

Obviously, this study does not present the full diversity of situations French families experienced during the lockdown in spring 2020, and our sample only represents a certain category of population. Unfortunately, we were not able to extend the survey to a larger number of families or to families with more disadvantaged social characteristics, for example. However, the work carried out has enabled us to identify some major trends and to propose the following recommendations.

7.1. Regarding school

It appears that in March 2020, at the time of the first French lockdown, which led to the sudden closure of all schools, teaching staff were not ready to transmit educational content at a distance: lack of personal equipment, inadequacy of digital school platforms in relation to the number of connections and the quantity and variety of educational resources to be made available to families, gaps in training in digital and pedagogical skills for teaching. The families themselves were not prepared for these arrangements, which required the availability of Internet connection equipment and paper printouts. Nor did parents have the educational means to ensure the pedagogical continuity ordered by the government.

Since then, schools have prepared their teaching staff more for the use of digital tools and the teachers themselves have for the most part (self-)trained in these tools, and have in fact developed certain skills concerning distance learning. If, in the future, other situations of lockdown involving the closure of schools (one-off or permanent; local or generalized) were to occur again, beyond the computer equipment of staff, it would be wise to integrate into initial and in-service teacher training actions enabling different types of teaching modalities to be considered, something that remains relatively absent from the professional training of teachers, designed for classical in-school teaching. Similarly, it would be important for schools to be able to hand out a "good practice" guide to advise parents, who could potentially be responsible for ensuring this continuity of school learning with the help of resources made available to them. Such support from schools would also make up for

families' lack of adequate material on an ad hoc basis, in collaboration with local and regional government (at various levels: municipal, departmental, regional and national).

7.2. Regarding social relations

The lockdown reduced social relationships to those mediated by digital devices. While the families interviewed all emphasized the importance of these devices and the value of the communication practices they allowed for, in order to maintain social links with people around them, they all stated that they would prefer to return to “in real life” (IRL) social relationships as soon as possible. The platforms that technically support these mediated communication devices have taken advantage of this opportunity to develop their services to offer an evermore advanced quality of contact. But everyone has realized that relationships via digital devices are no substitute for real relationships. Thus, it might be worth encouraging families to discuss these differences with their children to create a space for media and information literacy in the home.

7.3. Regarding entertainment

When entertainment activities were reduced to indoor activities in a very small social circle, screens took up the space left vacant by other activities. This was experienced as inevitable by most families who felt they had no choice but to offer their children a screen to keep them occupied and entertained. But alongside these practices, when parents had the possibility (in particular the freedom to take the time to do so), this entertainment time was an opportunity to (re)discover games or activities as a family. The range of entertainment media on offer is very diverse and extensive. It would be interesting to (re)develop and promote a set of media contents and devices that are no longer just aggregations of entertainment contents (or even streams), but can be cultural, artistic resources or interactive game devices that offer a wide range of digital entertainment activities of different kinds. These resources, contents and devices seem to be rather unknown and would deserve a more prominent place in the most used media stream. For example, streaming television could offer more concerts or shows at peak viewing times; the most popular content aggregators could include cultural and artistic information alongside news; communication devices could offer games, etc. This would be an extension of the most common entertainment on offer, namely narrative audiovisual content.

Other reports published related to this study

- **European-wide:**

Vuorikari, R., Velicu, A., Chaudron, S., Cachia, R. and Di Gioia, R., How families handled emergency remote schooling during the Covid-19 lockdown in spring 2020 - Summary of key findings from families with children in 11 European countries, EUR 30425 EN, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 2020, ISBN 978-92-76-24519-3, doi:10.2760/31977, JRC122303.

<https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/en/publication/eur-scientific-and-technical-research-reports/how-families-handled-emergency-remote-schooling-during-covid-19-lockdown-spring-2020>

Lobe, B., Velicu, A., Staksrud, E., Chaudron, S. and Di Gioia, R. (2020), How children (10-18) experienced online risks during the Covid-19 lockdown - Spring 2020, EUR 30584 EN, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 2021, ISBN 978-92-76-29763-5, doi:10.2760/562534, JRC12403:

https://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/bitstream/JRC124034/kidicoti_online_risks_tech_report_20210209_final_1.pdf

- **Austria:**

Trültzsch-Wijnen, S., & Trültzsch-Wijnen, C. (2020). REMOTE SCHOOLING DURING THE COVID-19 LOCKDOWN IN AUSTRIA (Spring 2020): KiDiCoTi National Report.

<https://doi.org/10.25598/KiDiCoTi-AT-2020-1>.

National report in English: <https://doi.org/10.25598/KiDiCoTi-AT-2020-1>

Trültzsch-Wijnen, S., & Trültzsch-Wijnen, C. (2020). KIDS DIGITAL DEVICES IN COVID-19 TIMES: DIGITAL PRACTICES, SAFETY AND WELL-BEING OF THE 6-12 YEARS OLD: A QUALITATIVE STUDY. NATIONAL REPORT AUSTRIA. (Englisch)

<https://doi.org/10.25598/KiDiCoTi-AT-2020-2n>

- **Germany:**

Claudia Lampert / Kira Thiel (2021): Mediennutzung und Schule zur Zeit des ersten Lockdowns während der Covid-19-Pandemie 2020. Ergebnisse einer Online-Befragung von 10- bis 18-jährigen in Deutschland. Unter Mitarbeit von Begüm Güngör. Hamburg: Verlag Hans-Bredow-Institut, Januar 2021 (Arbeitspapiere des Hans-Bredow-Instituts | Projektergebnisse Nr. 53)

https://www.hans-bredow-institut.de/uploads/media/default/cms/media/8dxmfjw_AP53_KiDiCoTi.pdf

- **Ireland:**

KiDiCoTi: Kids' Digital Lives in Covid-19 Times: A Comparative Mixed Methods Study on Digital Practices, Safety and Wellbeing - Key findings from Ireland

[https://antibullyingcentre.b-cdn.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Short-report Covid for-media.pdf](https://antibullyingcentre.b-cdn.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Short-report-Covid-for-media.pdf)

- **Italy:**

Mascheroni, G., Saeed, M., Valenza, M., Cino, D., Dreesen, T., Zaffaroni, L. G. and Kardefelt-Winther D. Learning at a Distance: Children's remote learning experiences in Italy during the COVID-19 pandemic. UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti, Florence, 2021

<https://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/learning-at-a-distance-childrens-remote-learning-experiences-in-italy-during-the-covid-19-pandemic.pdf>

- **Portugal:**

Dias, P., & Brito, R. (2021). A vida digital das crianças em tempos de Covid-19: Práticas digitais, segurança e bem-estar de crianças entre os 6 e os 18 anos [Report].

<https://doi.org/10.34632/9789895471928>

- **Romania:**

Velicu, A. (2020). Viețile digitale ale copiilor în timpul COVID-19 (KiDiCoTi). Un studiu comparativ cu metodologie mixtă asupra practicilor, siguranței și bunăstării digitale a copiilor

https://www.insoc.ro/institut/Raport_Scoala_KiDiCoTi%20_RO.pdf

Velicu, A. (2021). Viețile digitale ale copiilor în timpul COVID-19 (primăvara 2020). Riscuri și oportunități. Raport KiDiCoTi pentru România. București: Institutul de Sociologie. Disponibil la

https://www.insoc.ro/institut/Raport_kidicoti_final_RO.pdf

- **Norway:**

Letnes, M., Veelo, N., Stănicke, L., Ní, B., Rasmussen, I.(2021). Kids' Digital Lives During COVID-19 Times Digital practices, safety and well-being of 6- to 12-year-olds – a qualitative study

<https://www.duo.uio.no/handle/10852/82259>