



PARENTS SHUN TECH IN FAVOUR OF TRADITIONAL GAMES

Parents are increasingly turning their backs on technology when it comes to playtime, according to a new poll.

New research has revealed that parents are battling to make sure imaginative games, such as making dens and playing make believe, don't become a thing of the past as electronic toys become more and more popular.

A recent poll carried out by beloved toy manufacturer PLAYMOBIL revealed nearly three quarters of parents are worried that imaginary games are waning in popularity amongst their children as TVs, computer games and electronic devices take over play time.

The research, which targeted 1,500 parents of 5-11 year olds, found that eight in 10 parents wished their children used their imagination more. The survey also revealed that 93 percent of parents said they actively try to steer their children away from gadgets, but as a result the typical family has five arguments a week when parents remove gadgets from their youngsters.

Parents in the survey said playtime was now very different to their day, with a third of the parents wishing their children were more interested in things like playing in the woods, whilst three in 10 of the mums and dads wanted their youngsters to take it upon themselves to make things out of cardboard boxes or empty bottles.

However parents did confess that constraints on their own lives sometimes made it difficult to create an imaginative environment. Of those surveyed, four in 10 parents confessed to lacking the time to create an environment in the home where their children can be more imaginative, and 30 percent of mums and dads said they lack imagination themselves.

Jamie Dickinson, Marketing Manager at PLAYMOBIL, said: "Imagination is such an important part of childhood, and something that as parents we all want to nurture in our children.

"However with the rise of technology there are now more options than ever for children when it comes to choosing how to spend playtime. It is sometimes hard for parents to get children to spend



time away from the computer or TV screen and use their imagination to create their own world using toys like PLAYMOBIL, but it is a vital part of play.”

The study also showed that a quarter of parents said their sons or daughters can be reluctant to play on their own and instantly turn to technology like smartphones or tablets to entertain them.

Two thirds of parents said their children’s favourite thing to do was to watch YouTube videos on a phone or tablet. Over three quarters said it was hard to strike the right balance when it comes to gadgets, as they are keen for their children to be technologically savvy, but not spend too long glued to a screen.

Dr Claire Halsey, Clinical Psychologist and Child Development and Independent Parenting Expert, worked with PLAYMOBIL to investigate the results of the research and found them in line with her own experience.

“First and foremost, it’s important to remember that play is for fun. Play is the everyday ‘work’ of children and it is how they explore, learn and satisfy their own curiosity about their world. With so many positive areas of learning and development linked to play it’s no surprise that it’s important for parents to ensure their child experiences a wide variety of play.

“There is clear evidence over the past couple of generations that the balance has tipped away from traditional games and time spent being active outdoors towards more time indoors in electronic play. But striking the right balance is key for children’s development in a multitude of ways, and parents play the central role in making good decisions.”