

PRESS RELEASE



NOT FOR BROADCAST OR PUBLICATION BEFORE 00.01 HRS ON 13/06/2020

The true cost of homeschooling - kids cash in as parents pay for lockdown learning

- **61% of parents reward kids' good behaviour while working from home**
- **Over half (53%) have paid kids to do their school work**
- **A third of pocket money now paid directly into kids' accounts rather than cash**
- **Weekly pocket money stands at £7.55, down from £7.71 last year**

Parents have admitted to paying their kids to do their schoolwork during lockdown, the latest Halifax Pocket Money survey has found.

With the majority of kids now not returning to school until September at the earliest, nearly a third (29%) have already resorted to using money as an incentive to provide 'motivation' during lockdown. Of these, 61% of parents said they handed over cash to keep their kids quiet while they worked from home and over half (53%) paid kids to finish their school work. In a quarter of cases just a fiver has done the trick.

Whilst it may be comforting to some parents that others are experiencing the same struggles using pocket money in this way is not a new phenomenon. 15% of parents also admitted to using the tactic outside of lockdown to entice children away from screens. Getting the kids to do their homework (18%), go to bed on time (15%) and to get outside and exercise (7%) are also popular reasons to use money as an incentive.

In contrast, a quarter (26%) of children would be willing to sacrifice some of their pocket money, if it meant they were granted more luxuries, such as extended screen time.

Emma Abrahams, Head of Savings, said: *"Pocket money is a fantastic tool when it comes to teaching kids about money, even if the extra pennies are sometimes paid in a last ditch attempt to secure parent power.*

"Instead of just handing over the cash in situations like this, use it to kick-start conversations with your children about what they intend to do with the money. This will give you the opportunity to reinforce good habits, such as saving for the future and spending within your means."

Nearly two thirds (60%) of parents pay their offspring to pick up some of the chores even though 38% believe they shouldn't need a cash incentive. During lockdown, one in five (18%), have paid their children more for doing chores. Over two thirds (39%) of children have done general housework for the first time, 30% have taken their first steps into gardening, and 14% have been asked to look after siblings.

As well as paying kids for working hard, parents are more than willing to take it away to punish bad behaviour. Nearly half (41%) use pocket money in this way.



The lockdown legacy

Almost a third (31%) of parents said that they had changed the way they paid their kids during lockdown. This is reflected in the decrease in the number of children getting cash. In 2019, 83% of parents paid pocket money in cash this way, compared to 69% this year. Nearly a third (30%) now get pocket money directly into their personal bank accounts, compared to 24% a year earlier.

The difficulties many families have faced due to the pandemic, and its effects, has also impacted parents' ability to give their children pocket money. A quarter of parents (23%) have had to reduce or temporarily stop paying anything to their children. 65% said they're worried about money as a result of lockdown; not being able to pay bills is the main concern.

In most cases, children have been reacting positively to the changes to their 'earnings', with 31% of parents stating their kids were ok with it, and 26% understanding why it was necessary.

Emma Abrahams continued: *"Pocket Money has to be seen for what it is - a luxury that some parents are able to provide their children. For the many that have been impacted by the pandemic this may not be feasible.*

"Having an open and honest conversation with your children about why you can and can't afford to give them money is likely to improve their understanding and relationship with money in the future."

Underappreciated parents

This year, the average weekly pocket money children got was £7.55, down from the £7.71 reported by children in 2019.

This may come as a surprise to some parents who reported that they give their child a generous £15.50 a week on average.

- ENDS -

Editors' Notes:

This study was conducted in Great Britain via OnLineBus, an Internet omnibus survey.

A sample of 554 GB Parents of children aged 8-15 were interviewed.

Interviewing was conducted by online self-completion from 21/05/2020 - 01/06/2020 (W Week 22)

The sample has been weighted to represent the adult population of Great Britain 16+.