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This research forms part of the **Annual Halifax Pocket Money Survey**, a children's pocket money research series which has been conducted by Halifax since 1987. It examines the saving and spending habits of those aged 8-15, and the attitudes to money of their parents. The survey is compiled using independent market research carried out for Halifax, the UK's largest savings provider.

Teenage tantrums as kids demand mum and dad bankroll their digital lives

- One in five (19%) eight year-olds have their own smartphone
- Fewer than one in 10 kids (9%) pay their own phone bill, with 82% of parents footing the bill
- Rather than save up for expensive items, one in five (19%) kids use pester power until their parents give in
- Almost half of parents don't let their kids spend pocket money on digital downloads (44%) – mums twice as likely to say no as dads (57% vs 32%)

Despite two thirds of kids owning a smartphone (67% of those aged 8-15), fewer than one in 10 (9%) pay their own phone bill – according to findings from the latest Halifax Pocket Money Survey.

Instead, the responsibility falls to parents, with eight in ten (82%) admitting they foot the bill, often for kids as young as eight, with the research showing one in five (19%) eight year-olds have their own smartphone.

The costs don't end there – kids spend almost £500 (£487.24) of pocket money a year on digital downloads, with two in five (40%) saying they're allowed to download as many apps as they like.

Giles Martin, Head of Savings at Halifax, said: "With more and more games, apps and music offered on smartphones, digital downloads are naturally becoming increasingly popular for kids to spend pocket money on. Although each download may seem fairly cheap, the costs can add up over the course of the year and their lack of 'physical' presence can make spending less visible. Parents could use this opportunity to spell out to their children how small amounts add up."

If children really want something, almost half (45%) said they would ask for it as a birthday or Christmas present, with one in five (19%) saying they would simply nag their parents until they give in. A third (28%) said they'd save up enough pocket money until they could afford it.

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Giles Martin continued: “Parents have a significant influence over the saving habits of their children. Instead of relying on mum and dad to buy things for them, it’s reassuring that a third of children would save up if they want something. Parents can help nurture this habit by showing them the benefits of saving up.”

Out of those children who do save up, over a third (36%) buy computer games, just under a fifth (16%) choose music, and one in ten (11%) are saving for apps or smartphones. According to Ofcom¹, kids who do spend time listening to paid-for streaming services spend almost two hours a day doing so.

However, almost half of parents (44%) don’t let their kids spend pocket money on digital downloads. Mums are nearly twice as likely to say no as dads (57% vs 32%). Of those parents who don’t allow their children to spend on apps, more than one in four (26%) are worried about them overspending.

Inappropriate content is the main reason that a growing number of parents stop their kids from buying downloads – 41%, which is up from 36% in 2016 and 32% in 2015. According to Ofcom¹, more and more parents (15% in 2016) change smartphone settings to stop apps being downloaded, and almost all parents (96%) control their children’s internet use in some way including using software, supervising their kid or setting ground rules.

Halifax’s top three tips for encouraging kids to save

1. **Make saving fun:** use a piggy bank or a jar so they can see their savings add up
2. **Set a good example:** make sure you save up yourself and do it in a visible way by having your own piggy bank or savings jar
3. **Offer rewards for saving money:** match their contributions or provide a small reward or treat if they don’t spend their savings

ENDS

Notes to editors

The survey was conducted by TNS Omnibus between 17 and 28 February 2017. 1,203 children aged 8-15, and 606 parents with children up to the age of 15 were interviewed using an online self-completion methodology.

¹Ofcom data based on <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/research-and-data/media-literacy-research/childrens/children-parents-nov16>

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