

# Children's Reading Habits in a Digitized World

## & the Changing Role of the Public Library

### Main findings

#### Children are spending less time on reading in their spare time

The number of children reading several times per week is decreasing from 61% in 2010 to 56% in 2017.

The decline is greatest among girls (from 68% to 59%) and in the 5th grade.

#### Children read in school and not at home

Children perceive reading as a school activity.

The experience of reading in school has an impact on how much children are reading outside of school.

#### Reading is difficult

57% of the children read only because their parents tell them to.

Children find it difficult to read longer texts.

#### What do children read?

70% of all children read text messages every day on a digital device.

79% of all children never read an e-book.

28% read printed novels, and Fantasy is the top genre.

#### Who inspires children to read?

Children are inspired to read by their friends, movies and their mother.

The Public library gets the lowest rank as a source of inspiration.

#### Children are mostly spending time on screens

49% of the children in 7th grade use 1-3 hours/day on streaming services.

35% of the boys use minimum 4 hours/day on digital gaming.

19% of the girls use minimum 4 hours/day on social media.

### Strategic Recommendations

- 1 It's a shared task to ensure literate generations – both schools, libraries and parents must partake.
- 2 Children from 9-14 still need adults actively helping them with a good reading culture – even if they are good readers.
- 3 The school–library partnership is essential.
- 4 Public libraries must rethink their outreach effort – all children go to school, but not all children go to the library.
- 5 The lack of digital reading calls for action.

A study on children's media usage and reading habits

The study 'Children's Reading Habits 2017' is a mix of two data sets, quantitative and qualitative, ensuring exploration and analysis in the same study.

The quantitative analysis is based upon data from almost 9,000 children aged 7-14 studying children's media usage, reading and library habits. The quantitative study is supplemented by an in-depth qualitative analysis focusing on children in 6th grade, where the reading behavior is changing radically.