



Factum

School Might Be Out for Summer, But Reading Expected to Provide Summer Fun for Many Canadian Children

The Average Child Spends Most of Their Time Reading for Pleasure, Not School

Toronto, Ontario, July 26, 2019 — The findings of a recent Ipsos survey conducted on behalf of Indigo Books & Music reveal that many Canadian children plan to continue reading over summer, well after the final bell rings to end the 2018-19 calendar school year. While the average child is estimated to have read 52 books over the course of the past 12 months, Canadian parents expect their children to consume nearly 40 books this summer. Based on these numbers, it is reasonable to surmise that many Canadian children are doing the lion's share of their reading during the summer months. In fact, one in three (31%) would go as far as to say that their child will read *more in the summer than they did during the school year*. Further, over half indicate that their child's extracurricular reading has increased (51%) in the past 12 months and will *increase* further, over the next 12 (54%).

It must be caveated that as children grow and develop reading skills, they start reading longer and fewer books in a year. For example, the average child aged 2-5 is reported to have read (or been read aloud) 79 books over the past 12 months. Children between the ages of 6 and 8 are reportedly reading 74 books per year, while more advanced children aged 9 to 13 read just 29 books, on average.

Even though as many as one in three (31%) predict that their child will read *more* during the summer months, it must be acknowledged that a slightly greater proportion expect them to read *less* (35%) or about the *same* amount (35%) as they did during the school year. With that said, it must not be understated that a full two-thirds (65%) of Canadian parents expect their children to read as much (35%) or more (31%) during their summer than in the school year.

Perhaps the most enriching finding from this survey is that children appear to be reading because they want to, not because they have to. Indeed, the vast majority of time spent reading is for pleasure. This is evidenced by the fact that Canadian children reportedly spend 4.5 hours per week reading, of which 3.4 hours are spent reading for pleasure. Fifteen percent (15%) read in excess of 7 hours per week, on average.

Using a 10-point scale, parents were asked to characterize their child as a reader. Through this exercise, one in four (27%) children qualify as *enthusiastic readers* (9-10), while just three percent (3%) can be classified as *poor readers* (1-2). As might be expected, parents of enthusiastic readers are statistically more likely to hold the expectation that their child will capitalize on the free time afforded by summer by reading more than they did during the school year (45% vs. 25% moderate / poor). Children who read 7+ hours per week are also projected to read more during the summer months than they did in the school year (43% vs. 27% 7 hours or less).

Most Canadian parents (63%) are not concerned about their child's reading skills diminishing over summer. When asked why they feel this way, the most common response provided by two-thirds (66%) within this group is a belief that their child will continue reading throughout the summer. Conversely, more than one-third (37%) are concerned that their child's reading skills diminishing over summer. Those who fear their child's skills will diminish most frequently cite a belief that they will be frustrated when school starts (36%) followed by concerns about competitiveness (28%) and lost opportunities (29%) at school.

Address: 160 Bloor Street East, Suite 300
Toronto, ON M4W 1B9
Tel: +1 416 324-2900

Contact: **Sean Simpson**
Vice President, Ipsos Public Affairs
Email: sean.simpson@ipsos.com
Tel: +1 416 324-2002



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About the Study

These are some of the findings of an Ipsos survey conducted between May 21st and 29th, 2019 on behalf of Indigo Books & Music. For this survey, a random sample of 630 Canadian parents with children were interviewed online. Weighting was then employed to balance demographics to ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the target population according to Census data and to provide results intended to approximate the sample universe. The precision of Ipsos online surveys is measured using a credibility interval. In this case, the survey is accurate to within ± 6.5 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, had all Canadians 18+ with children been surveyed. The credibility interval will be wider among subsets of the population. All sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including, but not limited to coverage error, and measurement error.

For more information on this news release, please contact:

Sean Simpson
Vice President, Ipsos Public Affairs
+1 416 324 2002
Sean.Simpson@ipsos.com

Address: 160 Bloor Street East, Suite 300
Toronto, ON M4W 1B9
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www.ipsos.com

Address: 160 Bloor Street East, Suite 300
Toronto, ON M4W 1B9
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