

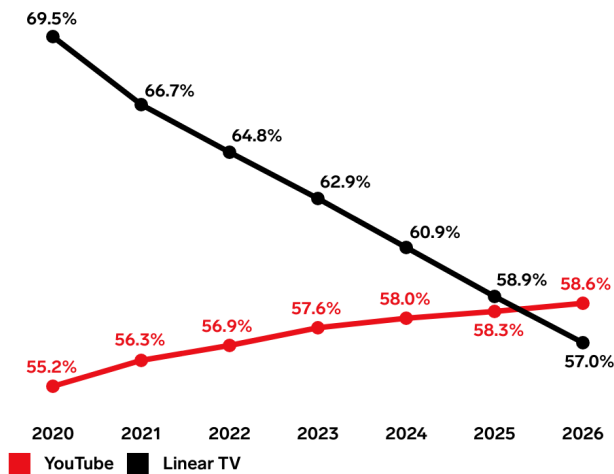
YouTube dominates Gen Alpha's programming

Article

Viewership of children's cable programming declined significantly in the past decade. Nickelodeon, Disney Channel, and Cartoon Network lost more than half of their total viewership between 2016 and 2023, according to Nielsen. While children still spend an average of a little over an hour (1:13) per day with linear TV in 2025, we expect that to continue declining into 2026, when YouTube will surpass linear TV, per our forecast. This is tied to cord-cutting as well as YouTube's availability and content diversity compared with traditional TV.

YouTube Will Overtake Linear TV in Viewership Among US Children by 2026

% of US children who watch YouTube and linear TV at least once a month, 2020-2026



Note: individuals ages 0-11 who watch live or recorded video on a TV set or watch YouTube via app or website at least once per month; TV excludes digital
Source: EMARKETER Forecast, Oct 2024

351946

EMARKETER

Children under 12 spend an average of 1:48 a day with YouTube, according to Giraffe Insights and Precise TV. This is followed by video-on-demand (VOD) (1:46) and broadcast TV (1:35). YouTube is free and easily accessible on mobile devices, and an ecosystem of children's content creators has emerged to dominate viewing time. The biggest trends among child viewers include:

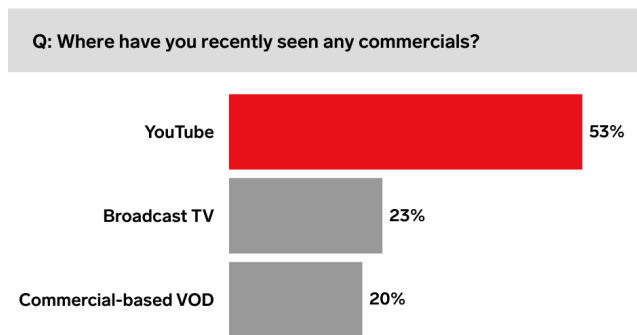
- **Traditional cartoon compilations:** Strung-together clips of traditionally produced children's shows, such as "Peppa Pig" and "Bluey," are popular among children. While many are unauthorized, this trend has prompted media networks to incorporate YouTube into their programming strategy.
- **Educational content:** YouTube channels such as Cocomelon and Ms. Rachel post songs, nursery rhymes, and educational videos for young children. An Argentinian educational channel, El Reino Infantil, is the most subscribed-to Spanish-language channel on YouTube.
- **Child influencers:** Ryan's World, a channel starring 12-year-old Ryan Kaji, is one of the highest-earning YouTube accounts, at \$35 million in 2024. Kaji is one of several wildly popular "kidfluencers" whose content centers around toy reviews, slice-of-life, and challenges. Targeted advertising toward children on Kaji's channel contributed to YouTube's \$170 million fine for violating COPPA in 2019.

- **Challenge and niche accounts:** Some of the most popular channels among Gen Alpha are not explicitly for children. MrBeast’s challenge videos have made him a YouTube juggernaut among adults and kids. YouTubers like Blocky have fewer followers but draw audiences through their focus on content inspired by popular children’s games.

Gen Alphas are more than twice as likely to remember ads on YouTube compared with other platforms. More than half of children under 12 (53%) remember seeing ads on YouTube compared with broadcast TV (23%), according to Giraffe Insights and Precise TV. This is unsurprising, as much of the content is repetitive, and roughly 80% of the generation watches YouTube.

Gen Alpha Is More Than Twice as Likely to Recall YouTube Ads Than Broadcast TV or VOD Ads

% of US children, May 2024



Note: n=3,000 ages 2-12 and their parents; only select responses shown
Source: Precise TV, "PARK: Precise Advertiser Report - Kids Summer 2024" in collaboration with Giraffe Insights, July 8, 2024

351971



Read the full report, [Gen Alpha Digital Habits 2025](#).

Report by Paola Flores-Marquez Jan 23, 2025

Gen Alpha Digital Habits 2025

