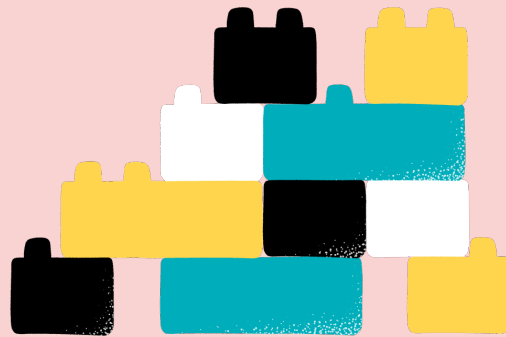


# Toy Reuse Parent Survey

**Published:** November 2024



# Background

As part of the BTHA's work to **understand the environmental impact of toys**, we have conducted a series of consumer surveys to understand the life of a toy. These surveys explored what parents do with toys when their children have finished playing with them or outgrown them, and the main influencing factors.

The first survey was completed in 2012 (both quantitative and qualitative) and then a follow up in 2019 (quantitative only). Both surveys were completed by **Illuminas**.

In 2024, the BTHA worked with **YouGov** to survey 2,026 parents of children aged six months to nine years old to see if there had been any change in consumer behaviour since the previous surveys. Fieldwork was undertaken between 30<sup>th</sup> August - 10<sup>th</sup> September 2024. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted.

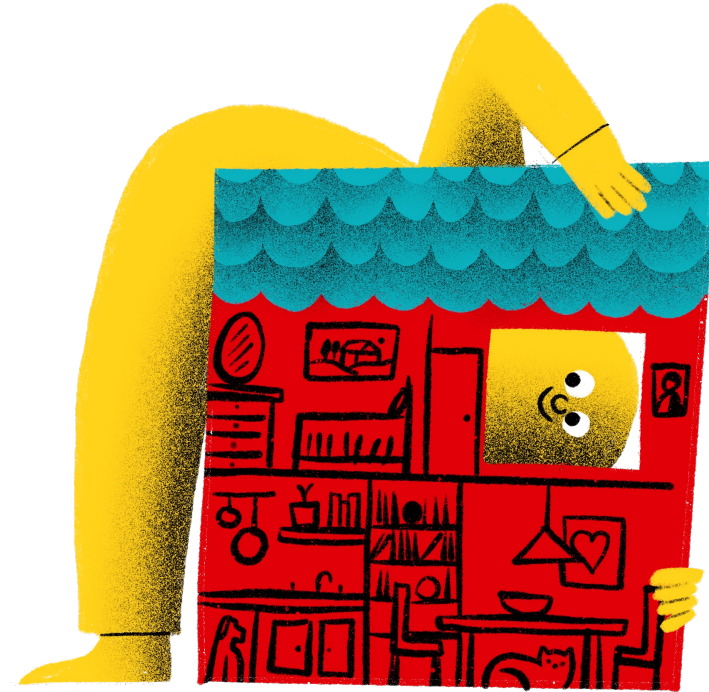
Source of previous research: [Illuminas Survey 2012, 2019](#)



# Audience

The target audience was the same as both the 2012 and 2019 surveys – parents with children aged 6 months to 9 years old living at home.

- Representative of parents in the UK demographically
- Parents with children aged 6 months to 9 years old living at home
- 52% female and 48% male
- Age of parents: 18-24 (11%), 25-34 (12%), 35-44 (24%), 45-54 (19%), 55+ (34%)
- 2,026 parents surveyed



# Headline findings

- Parents are most likely to pass their toys on to external groups or organisations with 64% of parents giving to charity, followed by 53% of parents passing them on to friends and family.
- The main reasons for passing on toys were for other children to enjoy (73%), to clear space (68%), because they are usually in great condition (59%), and to help out other people less fortunate than myself (55%). The ranking of reasonings mirrors the 2019 survey.
- The types of toys most likely to be passed on are games/puzzles (65%), pre-school toys for children under five years old (64%) and vehicles (62%).
- The age groups suitability of toys passed on were pre-school (67%), 5 to 9 years (57%), babies 0-2 years (50%). This mirrors our 2019 survey.
- The toys most likely to be passed on were of the value of £11-£25 (41%), £5-10 (37%), £26-£50 (27%).
- Throwing away toys is becoming less common with 14% of parents throwing away toys (down from 26% in 2012). The main reason is because they are broken (73%) and therefore cannot be passed on. Throwing away toys is more common with men, than women.

Source of previous research: [Illuminas Survey 2012, 2019](#)



# Headline findings (continued)

- Parents said they would pass on toys more regularly if there was easy access to facilities that accept used toys for reuse or recycling (52%), and more information on where and how to pass toys on (35%).
- Parents were most influenced to pass on toys by family and friends (48%), charity (39%), and schools/playgroups (30%). Celebrities and influencers were the least likely to influence parents (3%).
- A large proportion of children received second-hand toys with 79% of parents saying their children had received second-hand toys from others. For those that had received second-hand toys, 28% said their child had received second-hand toys more than five times in the previous 12 months.
- Children who received second-hand toys were most likely to receive them from family including siblings, grandparents, parents, and other family members (66%), friends (50%), and charity (28%). They were least likely to have received these toys from online rental platforms (2%) and toy libraries (3%).



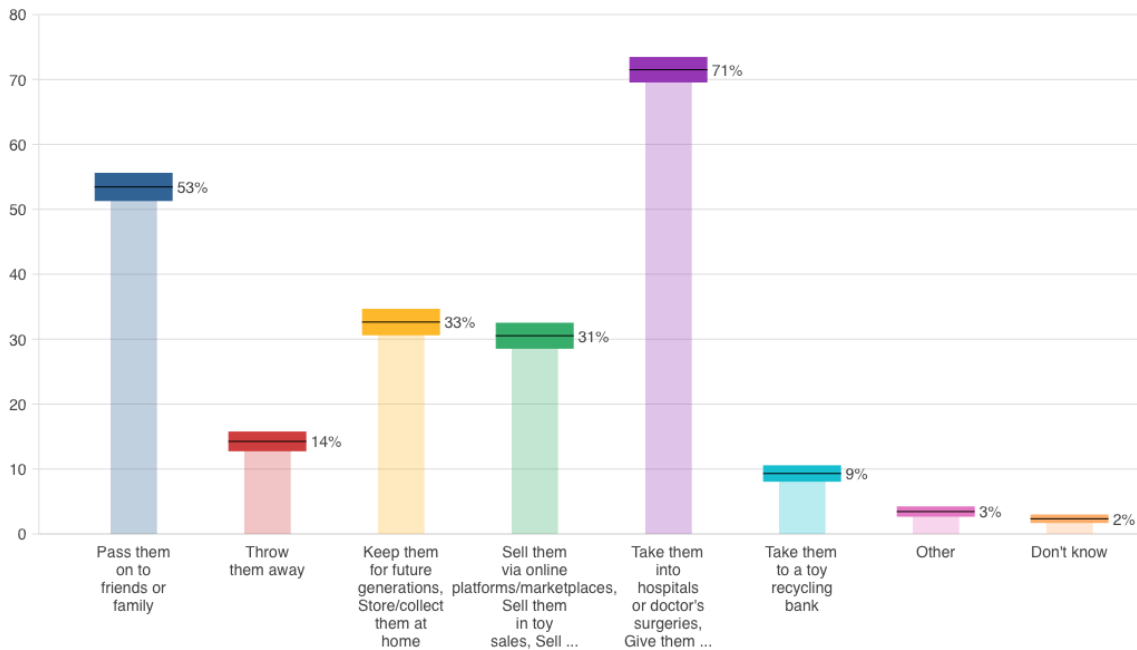
# Full results



# 1. Future of unwanted toys

## Choices for handling children's toys (combined grouping)

Which, if any, of the following do you normally do with your children's toys when he/she has finished playing with them/outgrown them? (Please select the option that best applies)



- Parents are most likely to give toys onto external groups and organisations including charities, school or playgroup, toy libraries, or hospitals and doctor's surgeries. This is followed by friends and family.
- Throwing away toys has become less common (14% down from 26% in 2012).
- 43% of parents aged 25-44 years old sell toys via online platforms/marketplaces, toy sales, and car boot sales, whereas only 7% of those 55+ do.

*All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc. Total sample size was 2026 adults. Fieldwork was undertaken between 30th August - 10th September 2024. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted.*

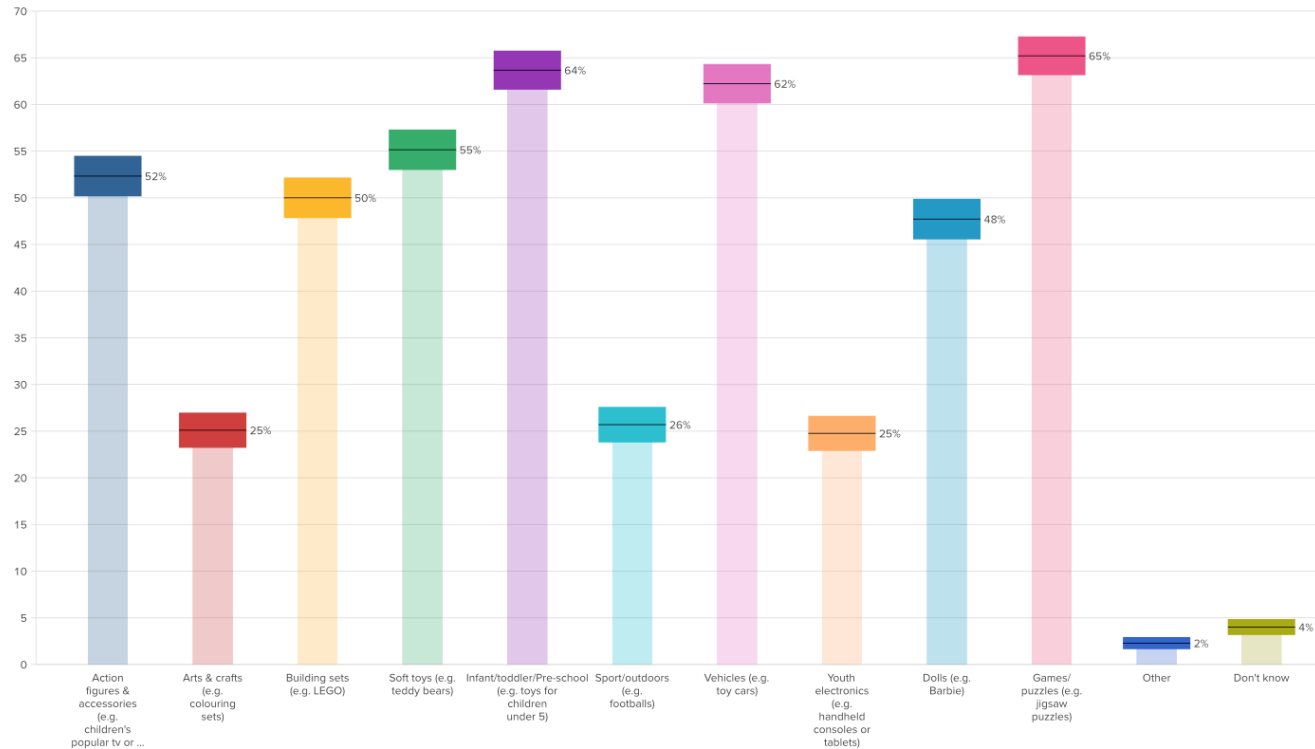
Source of previous research: [Illuminas Survey 2012, 2019](#)



## 2. Types of toys passed on

Types of toys passed on

Still imagining that you are passing your child's toys on to others.. Which, if any, of the following types of toys are you likely to pass on? (Please select all that apply)



- Games/puzzles (65%), pre-school toys for children under five years old, and vehicles (62%) are the toys most likely to be passed on.
- Arts and crafts (25%), sports and outdoor toys (26%), and youth electronics (26%) are least likely to be passed on.

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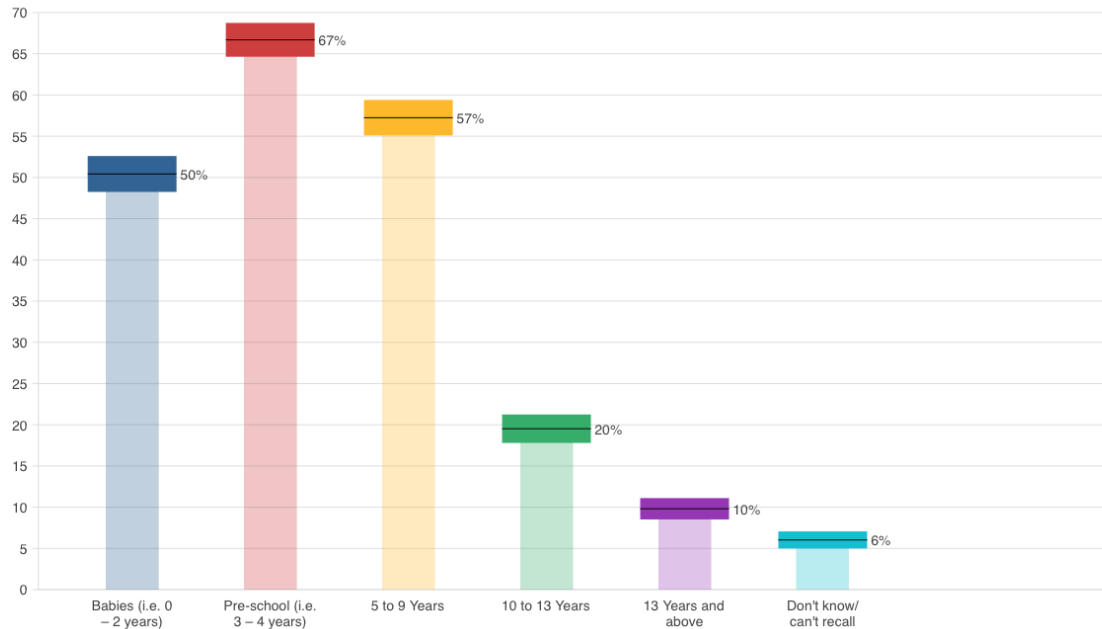
N 2,026



# 3. Age group of toys passed on

## Age groups of toys passed on

Which, if any, of the following age groups of toys are you likely to pass on? (Please select all that apply)



N 2,026

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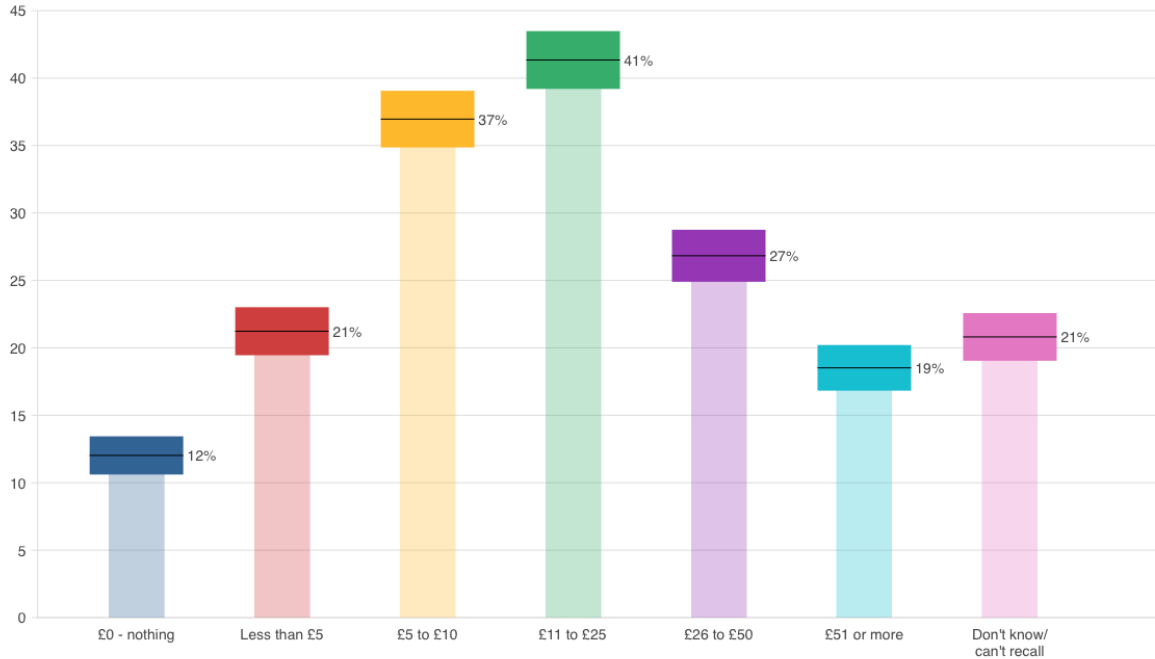
- Toys aimed at pre-school aged children (3 and 4 years old) **67%** are most likely to be passed on.



# 4. Estimated value of toys passed on

## Estimated value of toys passed on

As a reminder, please imagine that you are passing your child's toy(s) on to others... For the following question, we mean the value of the toy at the time it was first bought... Approximately, how much money, if any



- Toys originally priced £11 to £25 (41%) are most likely to be passed on, followed by those priced £5 to £10 (37%).

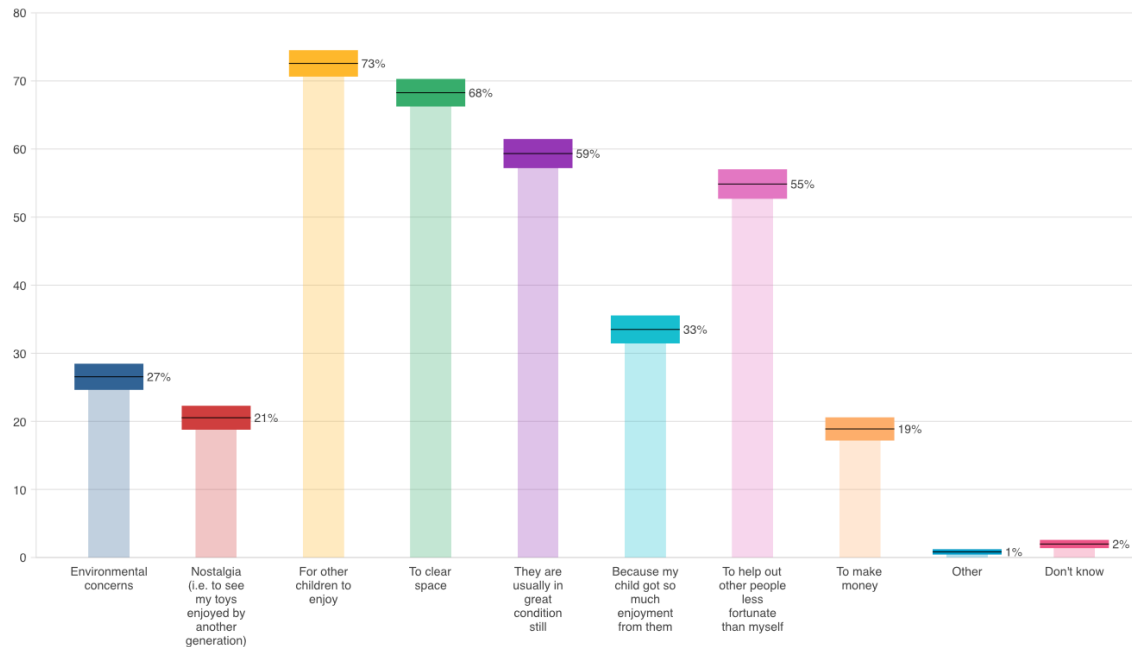
All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc. Total sample size was 2,026 adults. Fieldwork was undertaken between 30th August - 10th September 2024. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted.



# 5. Reasons for passing on toys

## Reasons for passing on toys

As a reminder, please imagine that you are passing your child's toys on to others... Which, if any, of the following are your reasons for passing on toys? (Please select all that apply)



N 2,026

All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc. Total sample size was 2026 adults. Fieldwork was undertaken between 30th August - 10th September 2024. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted.

Source of previous research: [Illuminas Survey 2012, 2019](#)

Weighted

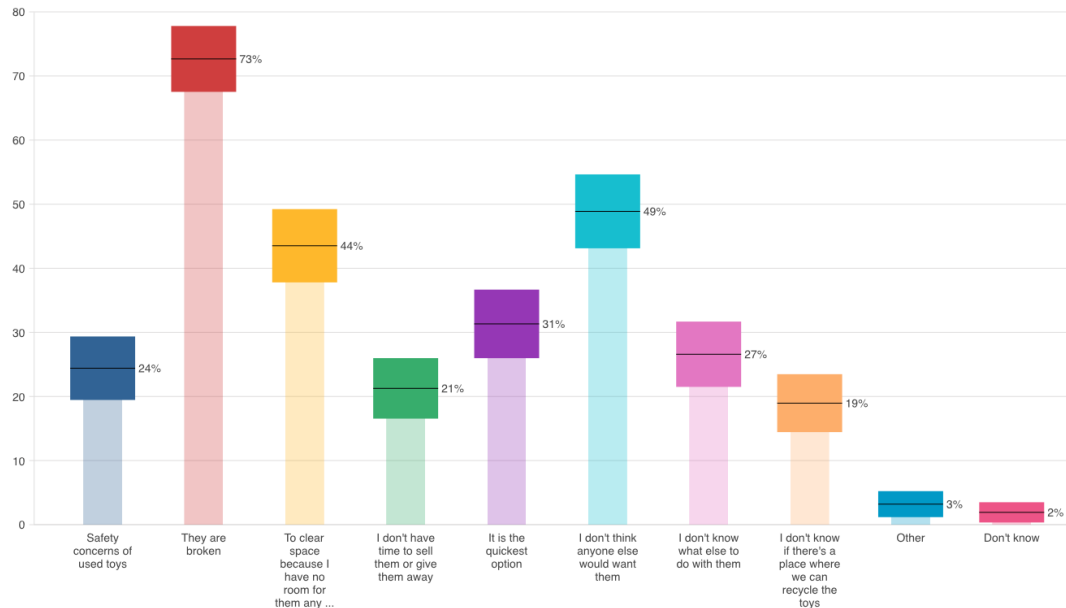
- The main reason for parents cite for passing on toys is for other children to enjoy. This ranking of reasons mirrors the order of reasons parents gave in both 2012 and 2019.
- Passing on toys due to environmental concerns has not increased in priority since 2012 despite increased awareness and information on environmental issues.



# 6. Reasons for throwing away toys

## Reasons for throwing away toys

You previously said that you've thrown away toys... Which, if any, of the following are reasons for doing so? (Please select all that apply)



Weighted

- 73% said that the most common reason for throwing away toys is because they are broken.

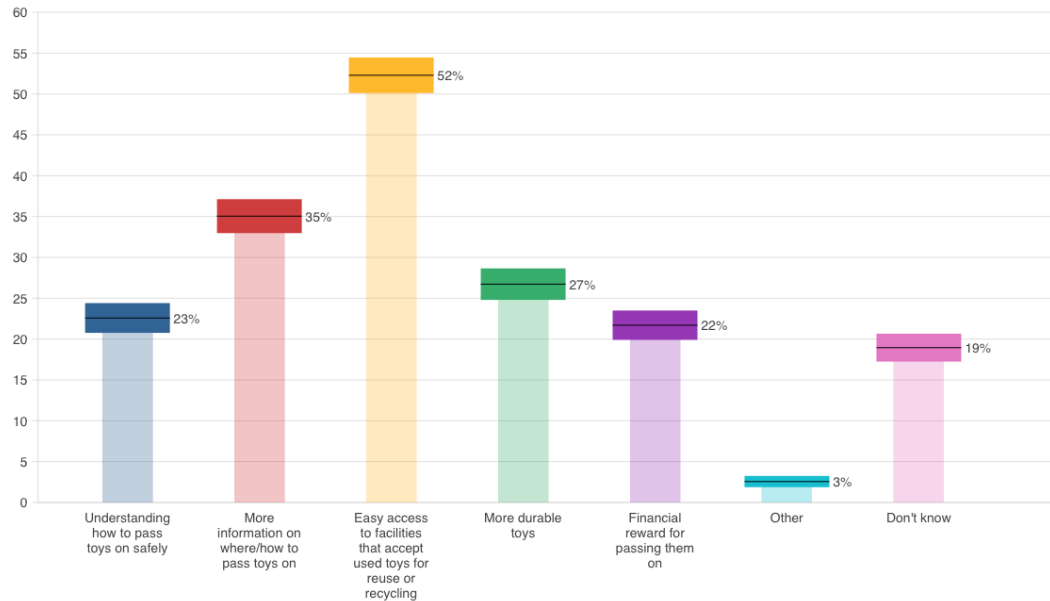
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# 7. Reasons the passing of toys more regularly

## Reasons for passing toys regularly

Which, if any, of the following reasons would encourage you to pass toys on more regularly?



N 2,026

Weighted

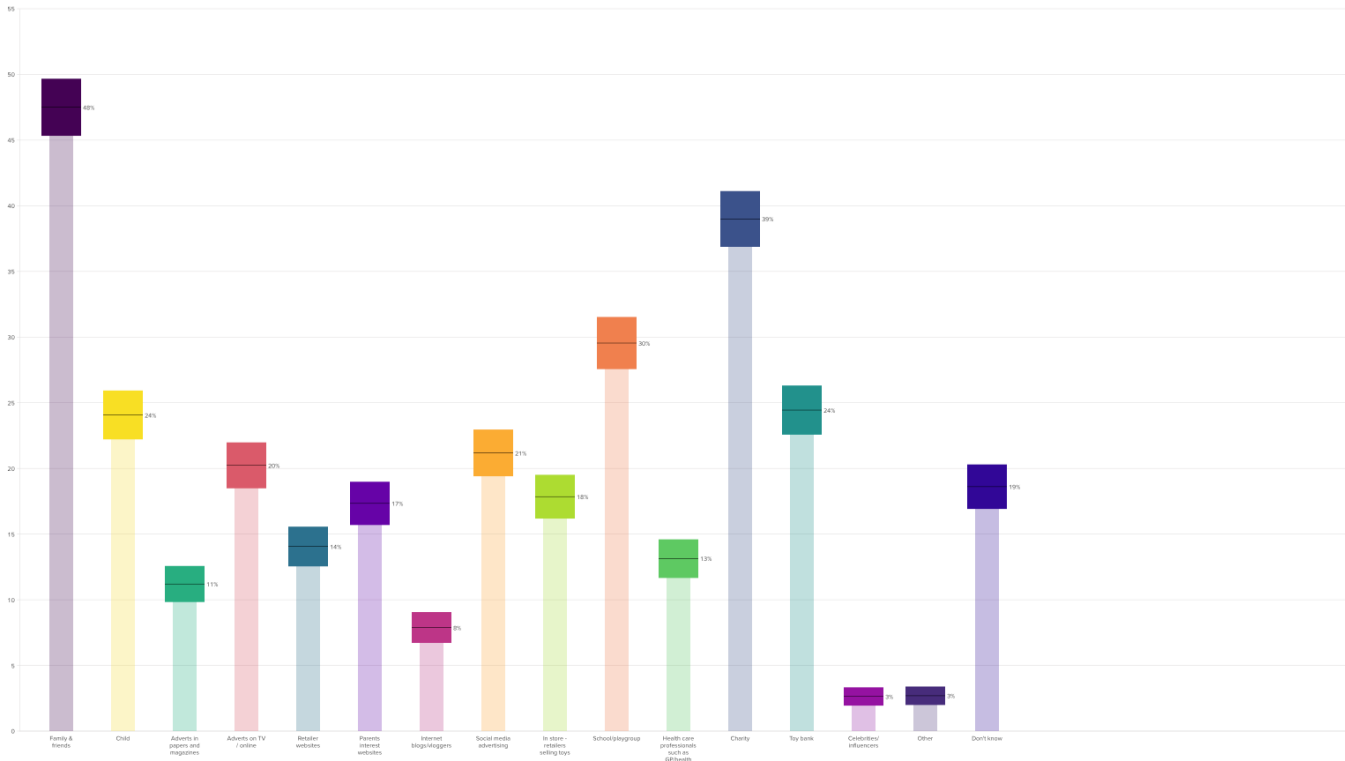
- 52% of the parents said that easy access to facilities that accept used toys for reuse or recycling would encourage them to pass on toys more regularly.
- 57% of the female parents would be more likely to pass on toys regularly if there were easy access to facilities that accepts used toys for reuse and recycling compared to only 48% of male parents.
- Male parents (26%) would be encouraged by understand how to pass on toys safely, compared to female parents (19%).

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# 8. Sources of influence for passing on toys

Sources encouraging regular toy passing  
Which, if any, of the following sources of information would encourage you to pass toys on more regularly?



- Parents were most influenced to pass on toys by family and friends (48%), charity (39%), and schools/playgroups (30%).
- Female parents are more likely to be encouraged by information from charities (43%) or toy banks (28%) to pass on toy than male parents.
- Parents 55+ are significantly less influenced by adverts (14%), retailer websites (10%), retail stores (12%), and social media (14%) which encourage passing on toys, compared to all other ages of parents.

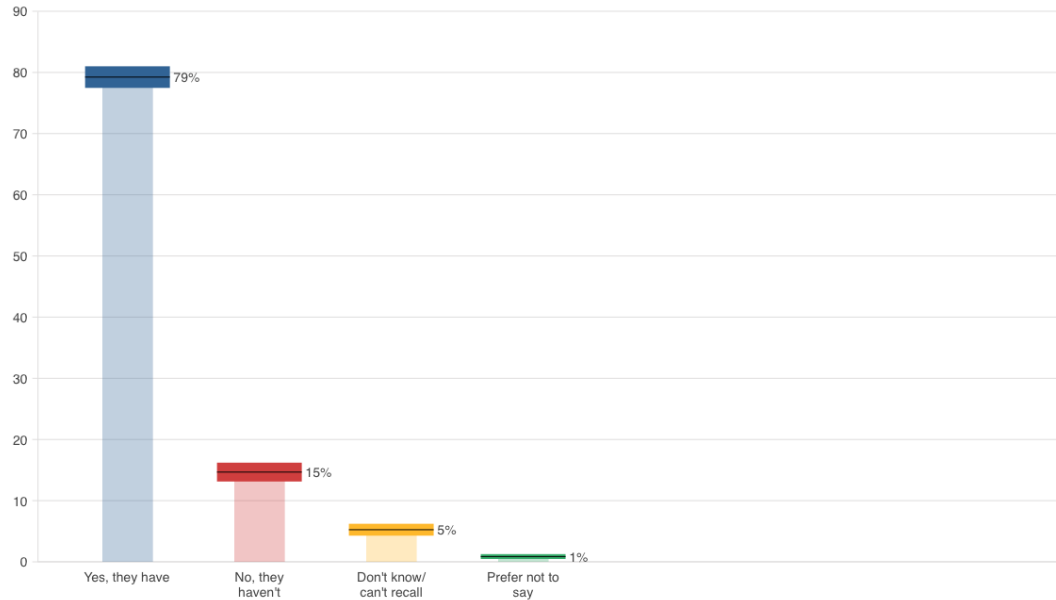
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# 9. Second-hand toys

## Child received toys from others

For the following question, by 'second-hand' we mean not new toys. For e.g. the toy was used previously by someone else. This includes toys that may have been 'handed down' from one person to another, often



N 2,026

- A large proportion of children received second-hand toys with 79% of parents saying their children had received second-hand toys from others.
- Children of parents aged 18-24 years old were significantly less likely (53%) to have received second-hand toys compared to all other age groups. These parents had children who are younger.

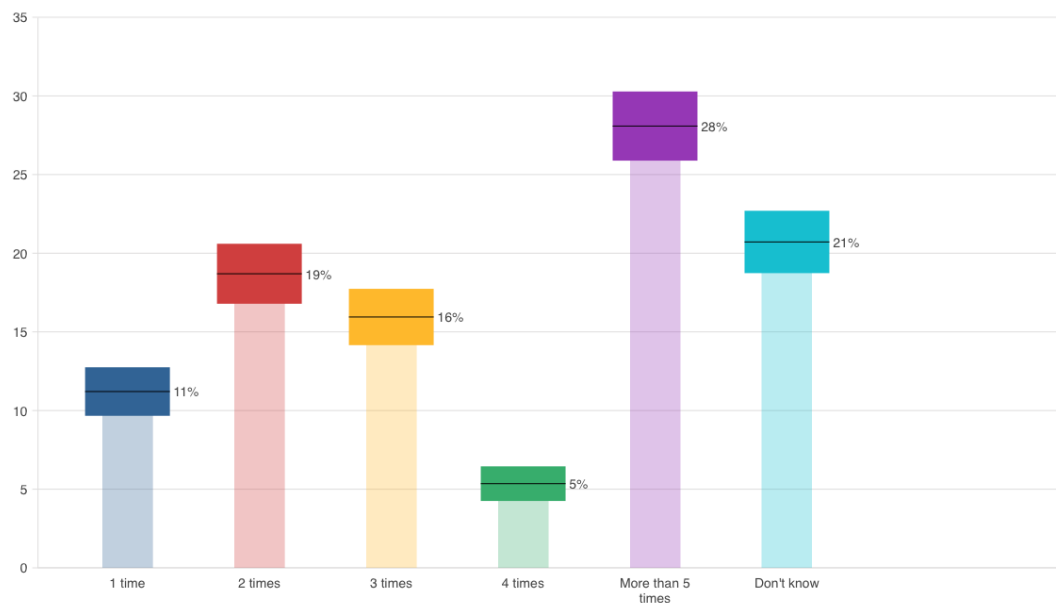
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# 10. Frequency of receiving second-hand toys

## Frequency of handed down toys

You previously mentioned that your child received second-hand toys... Approximately, how many times has your child received second-hand toys in the past year (i.e. since August 2023)?



Weighted

- Children who had received second-hand toys, received these more than five times (28%) in the previous 12-month period showing that children are playing with more second-hand toys compared to 2019 where it was 15%.

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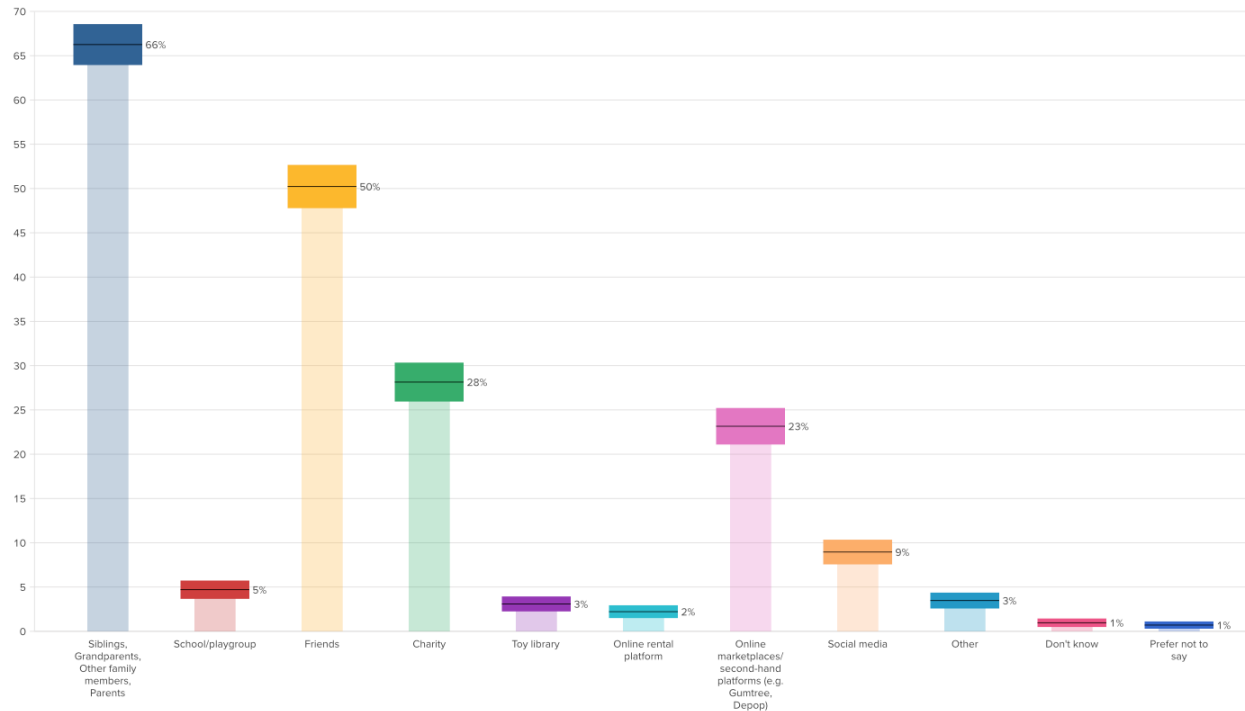
Source of previous research: [Illuminas Survey 2012, 2019](#)



# 11. Sources of second-hand toys

Sources of handed-down toys combined

From whom or where do the second-hand toys come? (Please select all that apply)



- Children who received second-hand toys were most likely to receive them from family (66%) including siblings, grandparents, parents, and other family members.

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