

Kentucky K-12 Students with Smartphones

ZOOM IN

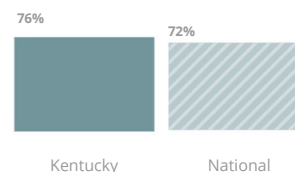
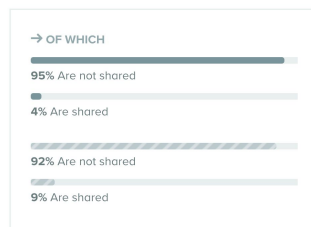
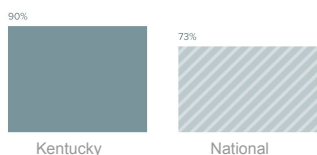
A smartphone is a device used for phone calls and is also a mini-mobile computer with an operating system, touchscreen interface that can create content, and run a variety of downloaded applications. It provides access to high speed Internet in two primary ways: **(1)** the smartphone connects to a wireless WIFI device in a home, restaurant, hotel, arena, etc., that is connected by wire to the Internet **(2)** when WIFI is not available the smartphone connects to the Internet through a pure wireless service (e.g., 4G, 5G, LTE) provided by a cellular company.

A very high percentage of Kentucky's 3rd-12th grade students report owning a smartphone and the personal Internet service that comes with each phone parents pay for. In most situations, if a free WIFI service is within range (e.g., while at home, at McDonalds, at the Yum Center/Rupp Arena) the student will likely prefer to connect their smartphone to the WIFI service given the increased Internet speed, quality/stability of service, or offset of cellular billing cycle and data plan. However, if WIFI is not readily available at their home or other locations (e.g., traveling in a car), students connect via the wireless Internet service (e.g., 5G, 4G, LTE) packaged with their smartphone by the cellular company.

BrightBytes Technology & Learning Student Survey

Project Tomorrow Speak Up Student Survey

Kentucky 3rd through 12th graders report owning a smartphone at a higher percentage than the national average



In 2020, 90% of Kentucky students report owning a smartphone versus 73% nationally. This represents a 23% increase for Kentucky students since the 2014-2015 school year. The information is asked of 3rd grade through 12th grade students in a variety of urban and rural schools, with the majority of the responses representing middle school and high school students. The BrightBytes national comparison is representative of approximately 20% of schools nationwide. Kentucky data is representative of 17 school districts with over 125 schools where survey data was collected at a statistically significant level (received from a cut percentage of students within the school).

76% of Kentucky students report owning a smartphone versus 72% nationally. This information is asked of 17 participating Kentucky school districts and is responded to by K-12 students. SpeakUp is national project. Speak Up is the research tool districts use to learn what students, educators, parents and the community have to say about education issues. The Speak Up Research Project for Digital Learning, a national initiative of Project Tomorrow, is both a national research project and a free service to schools and districts everywhere.

Why does Kentucky have 4% to 17% more 3rd-12th grade students with a smartphone and Internet access than the national average? Possibly, as in other countries, some families did not wait for a wired connection with Internet access to be available for their home and opted for cellular Internet access. Also, most households are moving away from having [both a smartphone and landline](#) for phone service and choosing cellular only. The same could be said of Internet service as households opt for wireless connections instead of wired. Additionally, smartphones can be used as a WIFI Internet "hotspot" enabling laptops, tablets, etc. to be connected at home or other locations WIFI is not available. So in order to truly measure the amount of high speed Internet access available to Kentucky K-12 student homes, both wired and wireless (including cellular) should be accounted for versus purely wired Internet access.

**One known exception for a student not wanting to use free WIFI Internet exists where a student may want to go to a certain website or use a certain app while at school (or at home) but there is an Internet management content filter at their school (or home) preventing the student from accessing inappropriate content (e.g., sexually explicit, hate sites, adult rated video games, etc.) with their smartphone. In this situation most students also know that the inappropriate Internet websites/content the student attempted to or successfully got to is logged and potentially monitored.*



ACCESS @ HOME ASSISTANCE OPTIONS

Federal Lifeline Program: [Providers Near You](#) | Broadband Now: [Programs](#)

Consumer Programs

[AT&T Access Program](#) | [Comcast Internet Essentials](#)
[Digital Access Programs](#) | [Spectrum Internet Assist](#)

K-12 School-Based Programs

[Kajeet ConnectEdNow](#) | [Sprint 1 Million Project Foundation](#)
[T-mobile Empowered 2.0 Program](#)