



New McAfee Global Research Shows Children and Teens Are More Vulnerable Than Ever to Sophisticated Mobile Threats

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With device-based consumer behavior changing rapidly, McAfee showcased its Consumer Mindset Survey: Mobile Report and Consumer Mobile Threat Report ahead of Mobile World Congress (Barcelona)

- **McAfee's 2022 Consumer Mindset Survey: Mobile Report** reveals that as mobile devices have replaced PCs/laptops as the primary device, a high level of trust in smartphone security exists among children and teens, but is coupled with a low level of protection, even though risk is at an all-time high.
- **McAfee's 2022 Consumer Mobile Threat Report** details new and trending threats posed by cybercriminals to defraud consumers and how cryptocurrencies are providing new opportunities for mobile device attacks.

SAN JOSE, Calif.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Feb. 24, 2022-- Today, McAfee Corp. (NASDAQ: MCFE, "McAfee"), a global leader in online protection, unveiled its *Consumer Mindset Survey: Mobile Report* and *Consumer Mobile Threat Report* ahead of Mobile World Congress (MWC) Barcelona, which together reveal the level of disconnect that exists between generations over how safe mobile devices are and how vulnerable consumers are to threats on those devices.

"Meaningful protection is a personal right for consumers, whether they are connected families or individuals," said McAfee Executive Vice President, Chief Product and Revenue Officer, Gagan Singh. "The common thread linking these two research offerings are that consumers value protection of their data, privacy, and identity. As our use of mobile devices rapidly increases, we must remember that a mobile device is a connected device, just like a computer. McAfee's world-class Labs Research team works tirelessly to identify and protect consumers from new and emerging threats that impact all ages and connected devices, across the globe."

McAfee's 2022 Consumer Mindset Survey: Mobile Report

In this report, McAfee surveyed parents and children about their mobile behaviors as part of its larger 2022 Connected Families Research to uncover how children are using mobile devices and where their actual behavior differs from their parents' assumptions, a new area of research in the industry that includes crucial perspective from children. Key findings from the research show:

- **13 Going on 30:** While consumers understand their desktops and laptops need protection, awareness of the need for protection of mobile devices has not kept pace.
 - Globally, children and teens have higher trust in mobile devices. Most children (59%) think a new phone is more secure than a new computer, whereas parents are equally split (49%).
 - Children's mobile devices are less protected globally. While the majority of parents (56%) use passwords to protect mobile devices, only 41% of children and teens do, creating safety risks.
 - Children are experiencing adult risks. One in 10 parents reported that children had experienced a financial information leak, and 15% of children report that an attempt had been made to steal their online account.
- **Parents Protecting Their Progeny (or not):** Parents demonstrate greater focus and action around protecting young children and teen girls on their mobile devices, as compared to boys of the same age, leading to hidden risks for boys, particularly younger boys who report higher instances of harm. Specifically:
 - In the U.S., 40% of parents of boys aged 10-14 put mobile parental controls software on their children's devices compared to 34% for girls of the same age.
 - Younger boys report more cyberbullying and online threats than girls of the same age, a pattern that held across all threats examined, as seen in the following:
 - In the U.S., 29% of boys 10-14 reported a threat to their account compared to 16% of girls the same age.
 - Boys 10-14 in the U.S. (28%), Australia (26%), India (21%) and the UK (19%) reported cyberbullying at the highest rates of countries surveyed.
 - Girls 10-14 in the U.S. (22%), Australia (21%), India (20%), and the UK (18%) reported cyberbullying at the highest rates of the countries surveyed.
- **Mobile Maturity and Gender Parity:** While family members nearly all rely on mobile devices, how they use those devices differs greatly by gender.
 - The research showed that globally, at the age of 15, mobile use jumps significantly and stays consistent into adulthood.
 - Girls reported an earlier adoption of mobile usage in many countries studied, particularly in North America and Europe. In these regions, significantly more girls ages 10-14 are using mobile devices than boys of the same age.
 - Usage of social media in the U.S. showed significant differences by gender and girls reported adopting almost all mobile activities at a rate higher than boys:
 - Globally, 53% of girls across all age groups use social networks compared to 44% of boys.
 - In the U.S., 65% of girls 10-14 stream music compared to 51% of boys.

- In the U.S., 30% of girls shop online compared to 24% of boys.
- This is even true for the gaming arena in the U.S., in which 57% girls 10-14 report gaming on mobile devices, compared to 52% of boys the same age.

Find the full report [here](#).

McAfee's 2022 Consumer Mobile Threat Report

McAfee's *Consumer Mobile Threat Report* focuses on some of the newest techniques that cybercriminals are using to trick or defraud consumers in growing numbers as identified by McAfee's Mobile Research team.

Key findings of the latest threats detailed in the report include:

- **Smishing for Malware:** Mobile smishing (SMS + phishing) attacks are using personalized greetings in text messages that pretend to be from legitimate organizations to appear more credible. These messages often link to websites with authentic logos, icons, and other graphics, prompting the user to enter personal information or download an app. Once downloaded, these apps steal personal information, contacts and SMS messages from consumers devices. Stolen contacts are used to fuel cybercriminal campaigns, expanding their network of targets.
- **Gamers Get Gamed:** Cheat codes and hacking apps are popular ways to get extra capabilities in mobile games. Criminals are exploiting this by adding malicious code to existing open-source apps and promoting them on legitimate messaging channels. If installed, the malware steals account credentials for social media and gaming accounts.
- **Mining for Nothing:** The cryptocurrency market is particularly ripe for mobile device attacks, with cybercriminals deploying phony apps that promise to mine coins in the cloud for a monthly fee, promising monetary payouts to the subscriber. The catch is that they take the user's money, but do not actually do any mining or increase the value of the subscriber's wallet.
- **Fake it to Make It:** Cybercriminals are using personal information and high-quality graphics to make their malware look like legitimate apps. Hundreds of these apps promise features such as mobile games or photo editing and are supported by fake five-star reviews. When installed, the apps simply ask for the user's phone number and verification PIN and use them to sign up for premium text services that direct payments to the criminals.

What can consumers do to protect themselves?

- Having a critical eye and a degree of skepticism are essential tools to protect yourself, your family, and your growing collection of digital devices.
- Gamers should use caution when installing game hacks, especially if they request superuser permissions. These permissions give cybercriminals the ability to take control of devices.
- Mobile security defenses are evolving and adapting to these types of threats, adding or enhancing important features such as phishing and fraud alerts, identity protection, and active notification if personal info is found on the dark web.

Find the full report [here](#).

The reports demonstrate McAfee's position as a leader in online protection and underpin the company's new pure play consumer business strategy to singularly focus on consumer solutions that deliver the future of online protection, today.

About McAfee

McAfee Corp. (Nasdaq: MCFE) is a global leader in online protection for consumers. Focused on protecting people, not just devices, McAfee's consumer solutions adapt to users' needs in an always online world, empowering them to live securely through integrated, intuitive solutions that protect their families and communities with the right security at the right moment. For more information, please visit <https://www.mcafee.com>.

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