NEWSLETTER

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DIFI
معهد الدوحة الدولي للأسرة
Doha International Family Institute
البحوث لدعم السياسات الأسرية
Research to advance family policies

عضــو فــي مؤسســة قطــر
Member of Qatar Foundation

Family Time x Screen Time

Executive Director, Dr. Sharifa Noaman AL – Emadi's Message

Dear Readers,

In an era defined by rapid technological transformations, technology has become an integral part of our daily lives, leading to profound changes in the structure, relationships, and dynamics of families.

The "Families and Technology" report, published by the Doha International Family Institute (DIFI) in collaboration with Duke University, highlights that technology is not merely a facilitative tool but a transformative force shaping family life in multiple ways, bringing both opportunities and significant challenges.

Children and youth are the most active technology users, with 79% of young people using social media platforms compared to 65% of the general population. While these platforms provide educational and social benefits, they also pose serious challenges, most notably cyberbullying, which affects the mental health of 93% of users.

Although technology enhances digital learning opportunities for children, excessive screen time has negatively affected family bonds. Many families have reported increased individual isolation as children become preoccupied with screens, reducing their engagement in family interactions.

The shift to remote work has also brought greater flexibility, with 90% of individuals expressing satisfaction with this flexibility and 67.6% noting increased productivity. However, blurred boundaries between professional and personal roles create difficulties for families , representing a main challenge to balancing work and family life.

Additionally, the report indicates that assistive technologies, such as supportive educational apps and voice translation devices, serve as a lifeline for families with members who have disabilities. For example, families surveyed reported benefiting significantly from these tools to enhance their communication with educational and healthcare institutions.

We recommend taking effective steps to improve the relationship between technology and family life, such as the implementation of policies that protect children in digital environments through strict regulations on privacy and measures to combat cyberbullying. It is also critical to sustainably integrate technology into education to enhance learning outcomes while minimizing its negative mental health impacts on children. In terms of work-life balance, flexible work arrangements can clearly define boundaries for remote work hours and provide support for parents and caregivers. Additionally, fostering digital literacy within families is vital to encourage the constructive use of technology that strengthens family bonds.

Technology holds immense potential to improve the quality of family life but requires thoughtful policies to mitigate its adverse effects and ensure its use as a tool for enhancing family cohesion. Achieving a balance between the benefits and challenges is a shared responsibility among governments, institutions, and families, aimed at building sustainable and harmonious communities.

Dr. Sharifa Noaman Al-Emadi
Executive Director
Doha International Family Institute

International Studies

Families and Technology

The "Families and Technology" report, published by the Doha International Family Institute (DIFI) in collaboration with Duke University, is a pioneering study that examines the impact of technology on family life worldwide. The report highlights both the positive and negative aspects of technology use, focusing on its relationship with education, family communication, mental health, and achieving a balance between work and family life.

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Regional Studies

How To Keep Your Child Safe Online

This article offers guidance on keeping children safe online, emphasizing the importance of protecting them from potential risks while enabling positive engagement with digital platforms. It highlights common online threats, such as cyberbullying, exposure to inappropriate content, and potential exploitation, and provides practical tips for parents to create a safer digital environment.

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Local Reports

Parental perspectives on adolescents' excessive use of technology in Qatar: challenges and coping strategies

This report conducted by DIFI researchers, explores the challenges and coping strategies associated with the excessive use of technology among adolescents in Qatar from the perspective of parents. The article presents the qualitative findings of a 2021-2022 study conducted in Qatar. The original study followed a mixed-method approach: investigating the experiences of adolescents and their parents, and the use of technology in their lives.

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DIFI News

DIFI and the Care Farm in Germany (Zukunft Pflegebauernhof) exchanged bilateral visits.

Subsequently, by an invitation from Zukunft Pflegebauernhof, a delegation from DIFI and Ehsan Center visited the Care Farm in Germany to learn about its exceptional elderly care model and explore potential collaborations to introduce this concept in the region. This visit comes after the farm participated in the 30th anniversary conference of the International Year of the Family in Doha.

Video

"Beit Amer": The Importance of Effective Communication Between Family Members

In this episode of the "Beit Amer" podcast, Dr. Khalid Al-Naama, Director of the Family Research and Policy Department at the Doha International Family Institute (DIFI), hosts Dr. Abdulrahman Al-Harmi to discuss the importance of open and honest communication among all family members. They explore how it can be the key to solving problems, building strong and enduring relationships, and the impact of words on our emotions, both positively and negatively.