

# Seniors Say This Is Their Go-To Emoji When Bonding With Grandkids



For today's seniors, texting and social media have given them much joy as they found a way to bond with their grandkids, according to new research.

Americans over 65 have finally mastered the art of the text — one in three now prefer texting to phone calls.

A recent survey found that those over 65 even have favorite emojis — the heart (43%) and the happy face (43%) are getting the most use. Other popular emojis for those over 65 included the beer emoji and assorted animals.

Older Americans have also had a heartwarming reason to embrace texting — their grandkids.

One in 10 have even surpassed emoji use and now send GIFs to stay in touch with their grandchildren.

The pandemic also prompted one in three seniors to learn how to use social media and brush up on their pop culture skills as a way to bond with the younger members of their family.

Nearly one in five (17%) were introduced to Netflix by their kids or grandkids.

Conducted by OnePoll on behalf of Comfort Keepers, the survey polled 2,000 Americans, 1,000 of whom were 65 and older. It examined changing attitudes toward family and joy after a year of isolation compared to a similar study conducted in 2020.

While people are thankful tech has kept them connected, nothing beats an in-person visit.

Respondents said seeing family members (42%) and spending time with them (38%) would bring them more joy than traveling (37%), seeing close friends (32%) or not wearing a mask as often (28%).

Those over 65 prioritized seeing family the most (55%), compared to last year, when dining at a restaurant topped their post-pandemic to-do list.

While last summer saw Americans missing dining out, travel and personal freedom, they found more happiness in connecting with family.

When asked to name the first thing they can think of that brings them joy, most respondents named children, grandchildren or spouses.

So it's no surprise that people plan to see their loved ones as soon as they're vaccinated (45%), before attending a sporting event (20%) and frequenting the beach or pool (27%).

"Fueled by a desire to reconnect and bond with their younger family members during a year of social distancing and quarantining, the older generation is making an effort to 'learn their language.'" said Alexis Abramson, PhD, Lifestyle Gerontologist, author and spokesperson for Comfort Keepers. "The past year has only reaffirmed that the non-material things like family and friends bring us the most joy."

The pandemic will have a long-term impact on respondents' day-to-day lives, with four in 10 saying they learned how to "stop and smell the roses."

Minor inconveniences seem inconsequential after 2020. Two in five said they can't be bothered to "sweat the small stuff."

Even still, nearly two in three are desperate to get back to the hustle of their daily routines.

"People are seeing the benefits of slowing down and taking the time to appreciate all they have," Abramson added. "Whether staying connected with family or just taking a moment to reflect, they continue to find joy in the simple things."

## **POST-PANDEMIC ACTIVITIES THAT WOULD BRING JOY TO RESPONDENTS 65+**

- Seeing family members 55%
- Not wearing a mask as often 50%
- Spending time with family 47%
- Traveling 40%
- Seeing close friends 38%
- Not being scared about getting sick 37%
- Not having to live in fear 31%
- Participating in group activities 25%
- Being in public spaces with people I don't know 24%

## **AMERICANS' PLANS TO APPRECIATE THINGS THEY'VE BEEN UNABLE TO DO**

- Savor every moment 43%
- Try not to "sweat" the small stuff 43%
- Make an effort to attend as many events/get-togethers as I can 40%
- Tell people I care about how much they matter to me 36%
- Take photos 25%
- Only do things that bring me joy 17%

