



These days, families often use messenger apps to keep in contact.

LAATEST research shows that 97% of people interact with their family members digitally. The study reveals that 86% of participants, including Malaysians, communicate with family via messaging apps, 58% have regular video calls and 44% have even established joint streaming service accounts.

While digitalisation offers unprecedented convenience and flexibility in family communication, experts warn that this increased online connectivity demands a heightened awareness of digital safety practices and the protection of devices.

Communication in the digital sphere has become an integral part of everyday life. Thanks to video calls and instant messaging, we can maintain connections with our loved ones, no matter where we are. Digitalisation has reshaped not only how we communicate, but also how we spend our free time together.

Kaspersky recently conducted a survey to reveal the common patterns of modern family life in the digital age and discover the cybersecurity challenges that lurk beneath our screen interactions.

Cyber safety during family communication

According to the survey, regular messaging via WhatsApp, Telegram, Signal, Viber and other messenger apps were top of users' choices when communicating with their families. People in the 35-54 age group were the most likely to engage this way, with 89% of respondents choosing this option. Video calls were a much less popular option among respondents as a way of keeping in touch with relatives, with only 58% choosing this digital solution.

Another popular way of staying connected online for many families is exchanging posts and memes on social media and messengers (53%). The 18-34 age group leads this trend with an 58% participation rate, showcasing how humour and shared cultural references are becoming essential family bonding mechanisms.

The older generation (above 55 years old) is in general less digitally engaged than other ages, though the share of those who chat with their families in messengers is on par with the

Family dynamics in digital age

» From video calls to exchanging memes

The survey shows that in their free time, 70% of families choose to watch movies together. — **PICS FROM 123RF**



average (85%). 42% of this age group even exchange memes and posts via social media. Despite the fact that older people are more active in the digital sphere, they may still not be ready to face cyber threats and scams. Users should therefore educate their older relatives on how to stay safe online and use

gadgets securely.

In a highly connected digital environment such as Malaysia, family communication tools are closely tied to everyday online connectivity. The survey showed that nine in 10 respondents regularly use messaging applications, reflecting how instant communication has become

embedded in daily life. In addition, around 60% of respondents said they regularly use video calls to stay in touch with family members.

Even for advanced users, communication online carries potential cyber security risks. From phishing attempts disguised as legitimate messages to sophisticated social engineering attacks, the digital battlefield operates within our most personal communication channels. To ensure the complex protection for your messengers, it is highly recommended to enable two-factor authentication where possible, use unique, complex passwords for each account, remain skeptical of unexpected links or attachments, use a reliable security solution with anti-phishing protection for messengers and follow security tips from experts.

Family accounts – convenience or risk?

The survey showed that in their free time, 70% of families choose to watch movies together, with 44% having family streaming accounts. Online games do not have such popularity as a family pastime, with only 35% of general respondents opting for them. However, among the younger generation, this figure rises to 45%.

In Malaysia, 73% of families watch movies together, reflecting how digital platforms are often used as shared spaces within households. However, less than half (43%) use a shared family streaming account, pointing to a more cautious approach to account sharing.

While sharing streaming subscriptions and gaming accounts may seem like a cost-effective solution, it opens the door to a host of digital vulnerabilities that can compromise your family's security and privacy, especially when an account is used by different family members under the same login and password. Such accounts create a perfect storm for security breaches.

If one family member's device is compromised, hackers gain access to the entire account. Additionally, password reuse across multiple platforms means that a single breach could expose your financial information, email accounts and other sensitive data. To manage all passwords securely, it is highly recommended to use a password manager for all family members.