



parentcircle

#GadgetFreeHour

REPORT 2020

01

INTRODUCTION



SUMMARY

At ParentCircle, we have been pursuing a single-minded mission—to build confidence in parents to raise happy, healthy, confident, compassionate children. To be a confident parent, we believe a strong parent-child connection is the key.

Keeping this in mind, we launched our **#GadgetFreeHour** campaign in 2019 to encourage parents and children to spend time together without the distraction of gadgets. Seeing its roaring success, touching the lives of millions of people, we brought it back this year, a bigger edition of **#GadgetFreeHour** on November 20, World Children's Day.

The second year of this campaign was supported by our sponsors, association partners, educational boards, schools, organizations, corporates, media partners, experts, celebrities and more. We had families who joined hands in being a part of **#GadgetFreeHour** last year as well as this year, and we also had new families joining us this year and sharing how much they found it useful.

SIGNIFICANCE

The aim of our #GadgetFreeHour Campaign was to help parents and children experience the **MAGIC and JOY** of connecting with each other without any distractions. We wanted this one hour to serve as a starting point to make #GadgetFreeHour a regular activity among families.

During #GadgetFreeHour, we urge all families to spend one special hour connecting and engaging with each other, free from work and gadgets. In this one hour, families can decide to do anything together—it can be some of the simplest activities like playing a board game, having a casual chat, dancing to a tune, making music with things lying around, cooking something together or even doing nothing at all together. Spending an hour without gadgets can bring families closer together and help them experience meaningful and fun-filled times and create happy memories.





RELEVANCE IN 2020

In 2020, **#GadgetFreeHour** became even more of a necessity. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, families mostly were together under one roof, yet divided by individual preoccupation with screens and gadgets. Parents are on gadgets working from home, older children are on gadgets doing online classes or socializing with friends, and younger children are given gadgets to keep them engaged while parents are busy. Taking an hour every now and then to spend time and connect as a family—free from the distraction of gadgets—is essential during these stressful times. A gadget-free hour is a wondrous elixir to create meaningful relationships and build happy families.

THE JOURNEY

This year's campaign involved a lot of pre-events that helped in spreading the word and the importance of having gadget-free family time.

Before World Children's Day, November 20:

1. **Panel Discussion in collaboration with Early Childhood Association (ECA) on Why You Need to Spend Gadget-Free Time with Your Child.** The panel consisted of Nalina Ramalakshmi (Managing Director, ParentCircle), Arundhati Swamy (Family and School Counselor, ParentCircle), Swati Popat Vats (President, Podar Education Network and ECA) and Kauser Sayeed (National Core Committee, ECA). The session was moderated by Dr Meghna Singhal (Clinical Psychologist, ParentCircle).

Watch the complete panel discussion here:
<https://fb.watch/8iYxUkX3uK/>

2. **Parents vs Teenagers, Virtual Debate** where we brought together teenagers and parents of teenagers for an interactive debate to hear each other's views on social media and screen usage. This exclusive virtual debate was on the topic, **Parents Should Set Limits and Controls on Their Teens' Social Media and Screen Usage.** We had Team Parents proposing this statement and Team Teens opposing it.

Watch the complete debate here:
https://youtu.be/W_tJPLFxd6k

3. **Family Connect Sessions** with families of employee where the HR team at ParentCircle individually reached out to all employees and their families to get them into a conversation together as to how they would like to spend #GadgetFreeHour. Working from home during these times definitely brought together a lot of families, and the HR team made the conversations lively and answered all the queries of the employees related to the campaign.
4. **#GadgetFreeHour MY FAMILY TIME Contest** for children where we asked children to exhibit their creativity in any art form (creative, visual or performing) as to how they would like to spend gadget-free family time. We received over 350 entries from children across age groups and across the country. All the participants received a participation certificate as a token of appreciation

for their efforts, while the winners bagged gift vouchers and ParentCircle activity books.

5. **20-20 Disconnect2Reconnect Challenge** was an exclusive 20-Day Challenge for families to engage in creative ways for just 20 minutes for 20 days without the use of any gadgets. We had over 700 families taking part in this challenge, tracking their progress and sharing their experiences with us.

6. Expert and celebrity endorsements

7. Press release and media coverage On World Children's Day, November 20 (#GadgetFreeHour Day):

1. Live Blog on #GadgetFreeHour updates
Visit our live blog for updates on all that happened:
<https://www.parentcircle.com/article/gadget-free-hour-2020-live-updates/>
2. Resources for spending #GadgetFreeHour with family

Post World Children's Day, November 20:

1. Stories from our community
2. Impact of #GadgetFreeHour 2020
3. Post-event media coverage

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HIGHLIGHTS



IMPACT

A staggering **45 million-plus** reach, both offline and online; despite schools being shut due to the pandemic, we saw **41,635 schools** in India participating big time; social media buzzing with **37 million-plus** impressions; and exciting celebrity endorsements.

FROM OUR EXPERTS

Some individuals experience digital burnout, which refers to the feelings of fatigue and exhaustion—and reduced productivity—caused by excessive use of screens. Experiencing digital burnout is not about the hours of usage, it's about how gadget use affects the person using screens. If you experience eye strain, fatigue and exhaustion after screen usage, you should take a break and switch to another activity.

– **Dr Manoj Kumar Sharma**, SHUT
(Service for Healthy Use of Technology)
Clinic, NIMHANS, Bengaluru

Educational screen time is not the same as entertainment screen time, in terms of its effects on the child's nervous system. Use 'slow media' as a potentially family bonding experience by watching with your children movies or TV shows that give out a positive message or enable you to have a discussion with your child about history, or help your child learn about different cultures or nature.

– **Anya Kamenetz**, NYT bestselling
author of 'The Art of Screen Time'

Consider protecting your time with your child, away from gadgets, to form a close and accurate connection with them. Spend time with your child to help them develop their sense of self.

– **Dr Nithya Poornima**, Assistant
professor of child and adolescent
psychology, NIMHANS, Bengaluru

Parents can counter screen overexposure due to online classes by ensuring that their child engages in some form of physical activity, that older children engage in reflection exercises, away from screens ... Try to mimic the 'regular' as much as you can!

– **Dr Catherine Steiner-Adair**, author of
'The Big Disconnect'

Have your child make a wish list of 25 nonscreen activities they can do ... Encourage your child to go on a screen vacation!

– **Diana Graber**, author of 'Raising
Humans in a Digital World' and Founder
of CyberWise.org and CyberCivics.com

Watch the #GadgetFreeHour Expert Interviews
here: <http://bit.ly/34CyQHC>

PLEDGE TAKERS



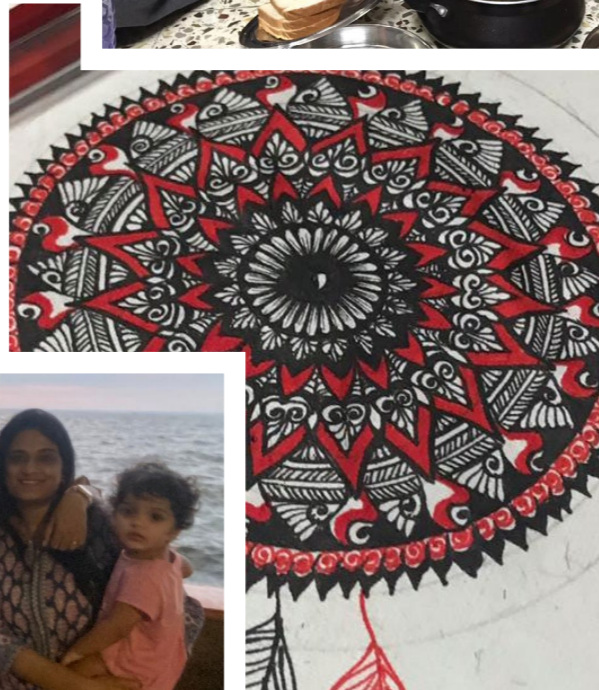
Watch the **#GadgetFreeHour**
2020

Pledge videos here:
<https://fb.watch/8iYxUkX3uK/>

**#GadgetFreeHour 2020
was covered extensively
by TV, Print and Online
media houses.**

founder and managing director of ParentCircle, said, "To have a strong trusting-relationship with your child, you need to have a clear line of communication and con-

GALLERY





STORIES & TESTIMONIALS

It's indeed our pleasure to join hands in your endeavor toward a community of better parent-child relationships.

– **Dr Sumathi Chandrasekharan**,
Founder of Yuvathi (NGO), Chennai

Had our regular talk time and early dinner. My son prepared the chutney for the dosa. Our cousin's family, too, joined us for GFH. Nice to know that many people had observed GFH and intend to follow it regularly in the future, as it meant a lot to them.

– **Sathiyapriya**

We would like to join hands with you in this wonderful campaign. Thanks for inviting us to participate in the noble cause.

– **Kalpana Suryakumar**, President - Chennai Counselors' Foundation

Thank you very much. I personally was part of this and enjoyed every minute of those 60 minutes with my son without gadgets. Glad that we as an organization could be part of this initiative.

– **Punitha Antony**, CSS Corp

ParentCircle is doing a wonderful job! Appreciate all your work and would love to be part of it.

– **Kaumudi Nagaraju**, Co-founder - Learning Space Foundation, Hyderabad



Looking forward to being a part of this again.

– **Leeann Almeida**, Jeevan Aadhar Transformative Services, Mumbai

My dog was waiting for this moment. We had a lot of fun being gadget-free. The most surprising thing was the dog at home. Looks like very rarely she had all eyes on her. Our family even extended the time by 10 minutes to fully enjoy the moments of togetherness. I must admit the first 10 minutes were tough, with everyone staring at each other, looking lost.

– **Jaigopal Nair**



”

The one hour assigned for gadget-free activities was the most enjoyable time for us. After a long time in this pandemic, we as a family stopped working on our respective gadgets. My kids organized interesting family games, and we drove and shared views on different topics. There were so many interactions that we continued past the allotted time. Actually, we did not realize how much time we spent. Thank you, Team ParentCircle, for this, as it was a memorable experience.

– Mansi Chaturvedi



“

Me, my husband, daughter and my mother in law had a wonderful time together. Actually it extended to 9. Me, my daughter and my mother in law sang together.

– Suguna

What an hour it was! Such a simple concept but so rewarding. My sister and kids are at home, so we stepped out. Found ourselves a beautiful place with nobody around. So, the place was corona-safe, too...

– Meera Matthew

Had a wonderful experience. Never had it before. My elder daughter started asking why I had kept my phone switched off for a long time. I explained to her about GFH. She loved it and wants it every day. Thanks for the great moment.

– Franklin Philip

We played hide-and-seek with my son. He enjoyed it a lot. We (hubby, father-in-law, my son and I) played together, laughed together. My son's long-time dream came true. We played as a family. Thanks, ParentCircle, for this lovely time.

– Deepika

After a long time, I took out our wedding album. We gave an intro about our various relatives to our daughters and explained how they are related to us. On seeing the photos, the old memories came back and we enjoyed remembering those good old days. Thanks for GFH.

– Mandirammoorthy

My daughter and I prepared an instant no-cook meal today and cherished the new preparation, which was tasty. She told me that when we need food during our trips, we can try making instant meals. And then we read a few moral-based kids' stories.

– Abhishek Bothra

The grandkids are with us for the weekend. We played dumb charades and then had dinner during which all conversation was in song. The kids are still singing! I discovered that the kids have a great sense of humor.

– Arundhati Swamy

The first 10 minutes were challenging for me, because my kids' mealtime has always been their TV time as well. Then my husband picked up the Narakasura story from this month's issue of ParentCircle. Once that got over, we made up our own stories. One of my daughters came up with a hyena story that went on for hours. Finally, she ended up saying hyenas may look cunning, but they are friendly wild animals!

– Gayathri



To share your #GadgetFreeHour experience with us and to read more such interesting stories, visit <https://www.parentcircle.com/circle-topic/gadgetfreehour-2020-experience-the-joy-magic-of-connection-b4f7a/>

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PARTNERSHIPS

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Schools Under Early Childhood Association, India
Empowering Women in IT
Young Indians

SCHOOLS



Shree Niketan Patasala, Chennai

Coorg Public School and Pre-University College,
Kodagu

BRS Global Centre for Excellence, Bengaluru

Mind Success International School, Pimpri Chinchwad

Maharishi International Residential School,
Kanchipuram

Bharath Vidya Mandir, Madurai

Divyam International Preschool and Kindergarten,
Chennai

AMM Foundation (Murugappa Group), Chennai

Arsha Vidya Mandir, Chennai

Babaji Vidyashram Senior Sec School, Chennai

Big Dreamers Academy, Dindigul

Royale Concorde International, Bengaluru

Excel Global School, Kanyakumari

HAAQ Academy, Bengaluru (HBR Layout)

Shivam International Dancing Art, Bengaluru

Smart Vision School, Pune

Ashvattha School, Madurai

Brain Master, Bengaluru

UCMAS, Bengaluru

EuroKids Preschool, Dombivli

EuroKids Preschool, Badlapur

RAMCO Vidyalaya Mandir School, Ariyalur

RAMCO Vidyalaya Mandir School, Alathiyur

Chinmaya Vidyalaya Srimathi Lingammal Ramaraju
Matriculation School, Rajapalayam

URC Palaniammal Matriculation Higher Secondary
School, Erode

Vista Billabong High International School, Chennai

Smart Vision International Kindergarten Best
Preschool, Pune (Kaspatewasti)

Smart Vision International Kindergarten Best
Preschool, Pune (Model Colony)

Smart Vision International Kindergarten Best
Preschool, Pune (Keshav Nagar)

Smart Vision International Kindergarten Best
Preschool, Pune (Nanded City)

RAMCO Vidyalaya, Virudhunagar

Lakshmi Matriculation Higher Secondary School,
Madurai

Sri Ramana Vidyalaya, Rajapalayam

EuroKids Preschool, Chennai (Porur)

Hive Play School, Madurai

Loknaya Jayaprakash Narayan Vidyalaya, Chennai

The Shri Ram Universal School, Chennai
Vidya Mandir Matriculation Higher Secondary School,
Alathiyur
S.P.A.C.R. Sethuramammal Primary School,
Rajapalayam
Chinmaya Vidyalaya, PACR Matriculation Higher
Secondary School, Rajapalayam
Gnan Srishti School of Excellence, Bengaluru
School of India, Bengaluru
Sree Cauvery School, Bengaluru
TVS Higher Secondary School, Madurai
EuroKids Preschool, Navi Mumbai (Kalamboli)
ASP Public School, Navi Mumbai
EuroKids Preschool, Navi Mumbai (Sector 19)
The Tree House, Pune
Assisi School, Bengaluru
Amudham Matriculation Higher Secondary School,
Madurai
Bala Vidya Mandir Senior Secondary School, Chennai
KVT Matriculation Higher Secondary School, Madurai
Akshar Arbol International School, Chennai
Kidzee, Pune
White Clouds Public School, Tiruppur

Vishwa Vidyapeeth, Bengaluru
St. Nicholas Middle School, Salem
Islamiyah Matriculation Higher Secondary School,
Coimbatore
Vedic Lore Preschool by Moms, Bengaluru
EuroKids Preschool, Navi Mumbai (Sector 15)
Grace Public Nursery & Primary School, Madurai
Sri Vidyalayam Matriculation Higher Secondary
School, Madurai
Little Diamonds Matriculation School, Madurai
S.B.O.A. Senior Secondary School (CBSE), Madurai
Sri Vani Vidhyalaya Matriculation Higher Secondary
School, Madurai
Seventh-Day Adventist Matriculation Higher
Secondary School, Madurai (Ellis Nagar)
EBG Matriculation Higher Secondary School, Madurai
Yadava Matriculation Higher Secondary School,
Madurai
Kiddies Choice Montessori and Kindergarten School,
Chennai
Podar Jumbo Kids, Pune
St. Peter's High School, Hyderabad
Darbari Lal D.A.V. Model School, Delhi
My Madurai Nursery and Primary School, Madurai

San Academy, Chennai (Velachery)
San Academy, Chennai (Pallikaranai)
BMS Matriculation School, Madurai
The Indian 3C School, Madurai
Vidyamandir Matriculation School, Pandalkudi
Pandugudi Sri Lakshmi Narayana Vidyalaya (CBSE),
Madurai
Crescent Matriculation Higher Secondary School,
Madurai
Young World International School, Madurai
PNU ASN Matriculation School, Madurai
SPJ Matriculation Higher Secondary School, Madurai
Panchayat Union Middle School, Madurai
Sethurajan Padma Matriculation Higher Secondary
School, Madurai
O.P.R. Reddy Nursery and Primary School, Madurai
Happy Kidz Playschool, Madurai
Mahalakshmi's Princess Preschool, Madurai
P.N. Matriculation Higher Secondary School, Madurai
Bharat Vidya Mandir Matriculation School, Madurai
Bharathi Vidhyashram, Madurai
MPF International School, Madurai
St. Michael Matriculation Higher Secondary School, Madurai

Panchayat Union Middle School, Thanjavur
Oxford Matriculation Higher Secondary School,
Sivaganga
ANV Vidhyalaya Matriculation School
D.A.V. Boys Senior Secondary School, Chennai
(Gopalapuram)
D.A.V. Girls Senior Secondary School, Chennai
(Gopalapuram)
D.A.V. Boys Senior Secondary School, Chennai
(Mogappair)
D.A.V. Girls Senior Secondary School, Chennai
(Mogappair)
D.A.V. Higher Secondary School, Chennai (Mogappair)
D.A.V. Matriculation School, Chennai (Gill Nagar)
Legacy School, Bengaluru
E-Campus OneWorld Junior School, Vadodara
PSGR Krishnammal Nursery and Primary School,
Coimbatore
Whitefield Global School, Bengaluru
Jana Gana Mana English Secondary School, Dombivli
Aalam Montessori House of Children, Coimbatore
RVS Matriculation Higher Secondary School,
Coimbatore

Tiny Teddies Playgroup & Activity Centre by KADAL,
Chennai
Kids Club CBSE School, Tiruppur
Vels Vidyasharam, Chennai
Sri Balaji Nursery & Primary School, Cuddalore
Periwinkle Day Care and Preschool, Bengaluru
Little Diamonds Matriculation School, Madurai
Shri Natesan Vidyasala Matriculation Higher
Secondary School, Chennai
Lakshya's Launchpad, Bengaluru
National Public School, Chennai
Chettinad Vidyashram, Chennai
Lalaji Memorial Omega International School, Chennai
Anjuman Matriculation Higher Secondary School,
Chennai
Maharishi Vidya Mandir Group of Schools, Tamil Nadu
S J T Surana Jain Vidyalaya Higher Secondary
School, Chennai
Madras Christian College Higher Secondary School,
Chennai
Sri Bala Vidyalaya, Chennai
St. Thomas Higher Secondary School, Chennai
Anita Methodist School, Chennai

Primrose School, Chennai
Billabong High International School, Chennai
Sudar (Spark) Montessori School, Chennai
Akshara Matriculation Higher Secondary School,
Madurai
Sundaram Matriculation Higher Secondary School,
Aruppukottai
Sri Prasanna Venkateswara Matriculation Higher
Secondary School, Madurai
Sourashtra Boys Higher Secondary School, Madurai

CORPORATES AND ORGANIZATIONS



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Adarsh Student Counselling Centre
GS Fashions
Book-A-Star
Easan Electric
Skills On Biz
TietoEVERY
Yuvathi Trust
Digital Empowerment Foundation

ROAD AHEAD

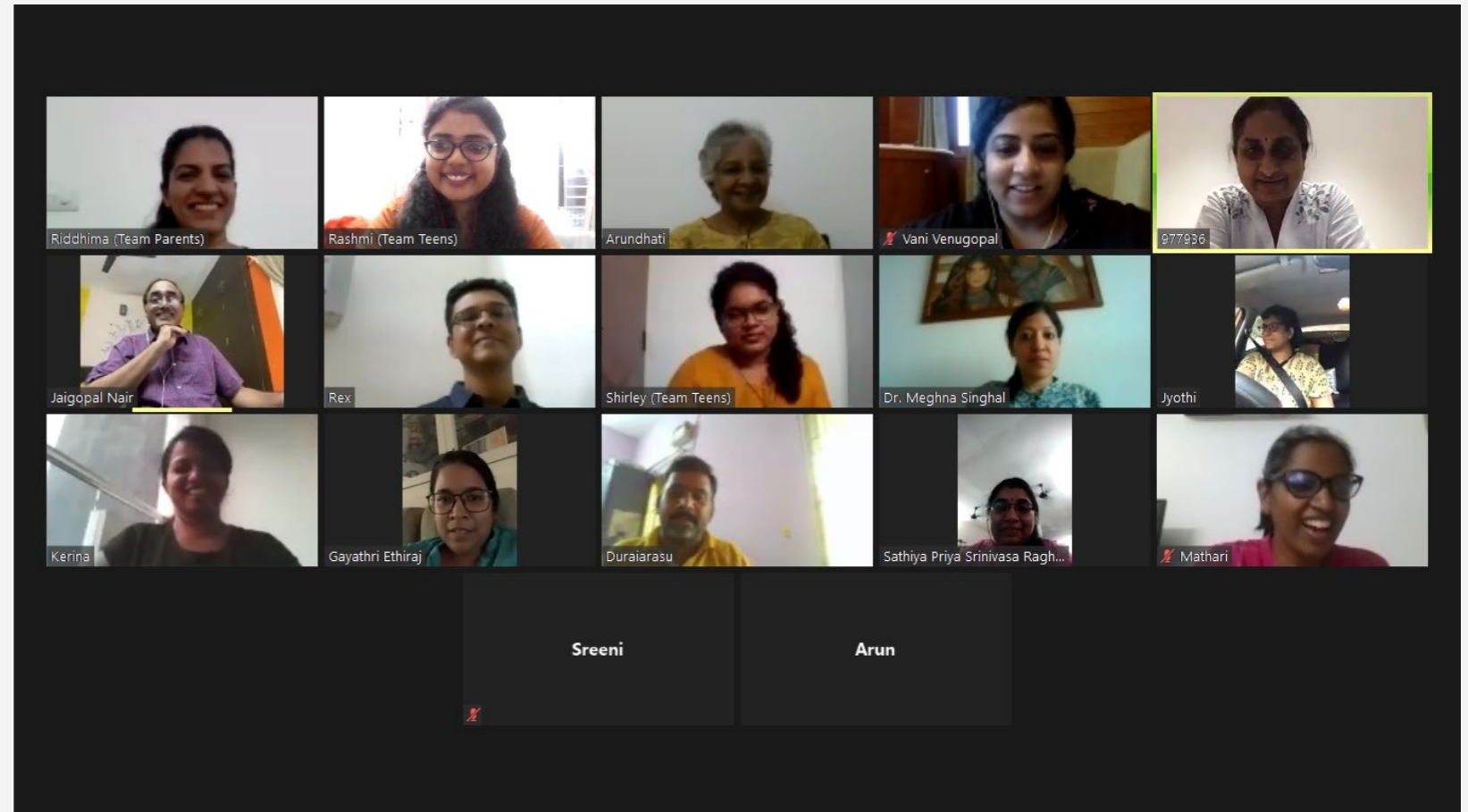
We endeavor to make this initiative much bigger in the next season and urge parents to understand why such moments are important. MD of ParentCircle Nalina Ramalakshmi, says, “#GadgetFreeHour 2020 has been an immeasurable success. In spite of our apprehensions about COVID-19 impacting the reach of this initiative by ParentCircle, I am glad to say we were able to reach out and touch the lives of millions of children and parents. Many parents have come forward to tell us how this one hour has inspired them to spend time with their children every day without the distraction of gadgets. This motivates all of us at ParentCircle to come back with a bigger edition of #GadgetFreeHour next year.”



BEHIND THE SCENES

Although it was the second year of organizing #GadgetFreeHour for us as a team, this time was certainly challenging and different than usual in many ways. All of us at ParentCircle were working remotely from different parts of the country all through the campaign. Right from the ideation and planning stage, until the final stage of documenting this year's impact, learnings and experiences, everything was done virtually. Working from home, nevertheless, had a positive overall impact on the campaign. The whole team—managerial, design, editorial, PR, digital marketing, community, sales, marketing, product, HR—contributed in various ways to make this entire process fun-filled, vibrant and interesting to all.

We also took several virtual initiatives to connect with employee families and to lighten the load and stress of employees during such busy campaigns. The team showcased collaboration, resilience, adaptability and enthusiasm during the whole campaign. Looking forward to more such opportunities to build the community together.



THANK YOU