



New Whirlpool Corporation research uncovers shift in life at home during 2020; expert predicts changes are here to stay

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BENTON HARBOR, Mich., Dec. 10, 2020 /PRNewswire/ -- With 2020 drawing to a close, many are speculating about when life will return to normal. But experts say COVID-19 has forever changed the world already—including life at home. To understand how the pandemic will impact life at home in the long-term, home appliance manufacturer Whirlpool Corporation has commissioned new research to understand how lives have changed in 2020.

The report has found that more than half of U.S. adults (53 percent) surveyed are spending on average an extra 7.4 hours at home each day, equating to over two extra days at home per week.* This has created positive shifts in dynamics in households—which experts predict could remain for the long-term.

The research, conducted with YouGov among adults in the U.S., found:

A shift in household responsibilities

- 14 percent of those surveyed are cooking together more as a household since the pandemic began, allowing the inference that nearly 36 million people in the U.S. are cooking together more.
- For 12 percent housework has also become more of a joint effort than ever before, meaning that over 15 million households in the U.S. are sharing more chores—with laundry (66 percent) and cooking (65 percent) the most popular shared chores among those sharing the effort.

More quality time spent together as a household

- Nearly a quarter (24 percent) say they feel closer to friends and family.
- Unsurprisingly, the most popular reason for this is people spending more time as a household (57 percent). But also one in five (22 percent) say it's because they have been exercising or learning new skills together.

Finding time for self-improvement

- More people have become hobbyists. 16 percent (which would represent nearly 41 million people in the U.S.) have taken up at least one new hobby or skill since the start of the pandemic.
- From the given list, cooking (29 percent), gardening (23 percent), drawing/painting (23 percent) and embarking on a new course of learning (21 percent) are the most popular hobbies picked up by those who have started a new one.
- 17 percent also say they've become more creative in the kitchen.

Perhaps it's no surprise that nearly a third (32 percent) say they've found a new appreciation for their homes this year, and 27 percent say spending more time at home has produced unexpected positives.

It's not likely to change either. Although half of people (54 percent) hope life returns to normal heading into 2021, over a quarter (28 percent) say they want to keep up the positive new changes they've made at home long-term.

"When the world feels chaotic, we often look for shelter and comfort in our homes as somewhere we can control. That's never been more true than over the last few months," says Meik Wiking, world-leading happiness expert, New York Times bestselling author and CEO, The Happiness Research Institute. "As this study shows, the effort we've made to make our homes a sanctuary from the outside world has led to us making changes to our home lives and household dynamics. From transforming what our homes look like, to reviewing how we share the housework, to thinking about how we can continue to grow as individuals—even if it's within our four walls. Looking ahead to 2021, we might not be able to keep up all the good hobbies we've picked up, but I think the understanding that happiness is homemade is here to stay."

The Improving Life At Home online hub

To help people keep these habits up, Whirlpool Corporation is launching a new "Improving Life At Home" online hub, which brings expert advice together from across its many brands, with tips from happiness expert Wiking:

<http://www.improvinglifeathome.com/>.

"At Whirlpool Corporation, we are in constant pursuit of improving life in the home," said Eleanor Reece, senior director of global campaigns, Whirlpool Corporation. "That's why we commissioned this new study to understand how lives have changed in the last year. Amidst the hardships, challenges and uncertainty that have come in 2020, it's been heartening to see some silver linings as new dynamics and habits emerge in homes everywhere. We want to play our part in helping people keep those up, which is why we've launched this online hub, which brings together the best of our company's advice-led content to help people make the most of life at home."

About Whirlpool Corporation

Whirlpool Corporation (NYSE: WHR) is the world's leading kitchen and laundry appliance company, with approximately \$20 billion in annual sales, 77,000 employees and 59 manufacturing and technology research centers in 2019. The

company markets Whirlpool, KitchenAid, Maytag, Consul, Brastemp, Amana, Bauknecht, JennAir, Indesit and other major brand names in nearly every country throughout the world. Additional information about the company can be found at whirlpoolcorp.com.

About Meik Wiking & The Happiness Research Institute

Meik Wiking is the CEO of The Happiness Research Institute and is a New York Times and The Times Bestselling author. His books, which have sold 2 million copies worldwide, include The Little Book of Hygge, The Little Book of Lykke, and The Art of Making Memories.

Besides his work at the Happiness Research Institute, he is Research Associate for Denmark at the World Database of Happiness, member of the policy advisory group for the Global Happiness Policy Report, Board Member at The Health and Happiness Research Foundation, and creator of the Happiness Museum in Copenhagen.

Meik has been called The Indiana Jones of Smiles and probably the World's happiest man by The Times.

*All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc. Total sample size was 1380 adults. Fieldwork was undertaken between 10th - 12th November 2020. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all US adults (aged 18+).

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SOURCE Whirlpool Corporation