



STATE OF THE DATE NIGHT REPORT



Parents have shown amazing resiliency over the past two years (and counting), navigating unprecedented times during a pandemic while trying to raise, educate and protect their children. From the creativity of turning a kitchen table into a multifunctional school-desk-remote-office-workstation, to juggling new roles and responsibilities including childcare provider, tutor, and teacher, parents' ingenuity has even extended into their relationships as they found new ways to keep their love life interesting during the season of romance.

Seventy-four percent of parents agree that COVID-19 has changed the dating dynamic, and in parallel, their dating preferences. Even so, consumers planned to spend an average of \$165 on Valentine's Day gifts and celebrations last year – the second-highest Valentine's Day in terms of expected spending – meaning they still feel it's important to treat their loved ones to something special this holiday.

As another Valentine's Day approaches, Zulily reveals parents' sentiments toward the current "state of the date night" and how their behaviors and attitudes have evolved. Read on to learn more.

Last year, Zulily found that over half of moms (55%) were looking for the gift of “me time” following a year of togetherness. This year, new research shows that ‘**micro moment dating**’, defined as shorter, more frequent moments of quality time under 90 minutes, is gaining popularity among parents. In other words, moms are redefining what quality time means for them and their families; it’s not necessarily about the amount of time spent with loved ones, but **about how that time is spent together.**

How do parents plan to celebrate their relationships this Valentine’s Day and throughout the year? While some of the traditional adages still ring true, **love certainly looks different now than in years past.**

DATE NIGHT TRENDS

Dating with kids in the home can take some creativity, but the pandemic has forced parents to reimagine the traditional date night as they’ve identified what’s truly important to them and their relationships.

DOUBLE DATE, DOUBLE FUN

Parents are turning to double dates to switch up their time together. Coupled-up parents are more than twice as likely to prefer double dates with other couples (30%) as compared to single parents (13%).

For the mom who enjoys group activities, consider gifting a trivia game, then testing your knowledge against your friends on your next double date.

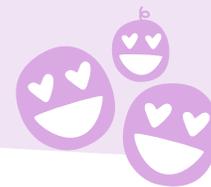
LOVE AT SUNRISE

While moms are still partial to an evening date (44%), dads are warming to nontraditional date times like mornings (19%) as compared to moms (8%). For the morning person in your relationship, a coffee or travel mug will add some flair to those early-a.m. bonding moments.

THREE IS NO LONGER A CROWD – IT’S A DATE!

Parents are celebrating Valentine’s Day with more than their spouse or date; they’re also asking their children to ‘be mine’. In fact, 49% of married parents consider time with their significant other a date night, even if their kids are present.

For the mom who enjoys a family affair, try gifting art supplies for a crafty date night that’s fun for the entire family.



49%

of married parents we surveyed consider time with each other as a “date night” – even if kids are present.

SHORT ON TIME AND IDEAS

Forty-eight percent of parents find that working around busy schedules is the most challenging part of planning a date night, while 23% even have trouble choosing what to do. Too much overthinking may be the reason why **58% of parents are open to someone else planning a date night theme or activity for them.**

For the busy mom who’s always on the go, try gifting a nice planner and pen set on your next date night, or a catch-all tote to hold all those “mom” essentials.

THE TRIED AND TRUE, WITH A TWIST

The classic “dinner and movie night” still ranks high for both moms and dads when it comes to their preferred date night, but the pandemic has shifted the destination, with 36% of moms and dads saying they now prefer date nights in.

For the mom who likes to cozy up at home, a candle or fancy glassware can add a touch of romance to your dining room table setting.



36%

of moms and dads we surveyed prefer date nights in.

THE THOUGHT REALLY DOES COUNT

Fifty-six percent of parents say they spend between \$100 and \$250 for Valentine’s Day, while the ‘sweet spot’ for single parents is around \$100. Thirty-five percent of parents would prefer that money to be spent on a thoughtful date night, compared to 25% who would prefer a material gift.

For the mom who expects a more thoughtful gift, create a stay-at-home spa date night with cozy slippers, candles and a relaxing bath bomb.



39%

of married parents we surveyed prefer one-on-one quality time with their significant other.

DATE NIGHT & VALENTINE’S DAY RESPONSIBILITIES

Parents say that their dating lives have changed significantly since having kids. They’re having dates less frequently, planning further ahead to accommodate childcare and getting more creative – as well as less elaborate – when planning dates. In fact, most single parents (31%) say they go on just one to five dates per year, while married parents (26%) report going on 11-15 dates per year. **So, how have parents adapted?**



53%

of parents prefer enjoying an overnight trip for Valentine’s Day.

A DAD WITH A PLAN

Moms are largely the decision-makers in households, and control much of the spending for their families, thus making them responsible for the bulk of planning.

However, data shows that dads are committed to making the holiday special for the special woman in their life. The survey revealed that **dads (40%) are more likely than moms (28%) to plan a date for Valentine’s Day,** as opposed to any other time throughout the year.

When it comes to choosing how to spend Valentine’s Day together, parents prefer these four options: an overnight trip (53%), a date night in (46%), a fancy dinner (42%), a night out on the town (41%) or having drinks in a bar (38%).

THE GREAT DATE NIGHT EXCHANGE

Over half of married parents (55%) and single parents (51%) would consider exchanging childcare responsibilities with another couple to have a date night.

TOP COUPLE THEMES

The last year has also sparked creativity among married parents who have taken up new hobbies to do together. The top three couple themes revealed are:

THE EPICUREAN COUPLE

Food is the way into the hearts of 19% of parents who say they make a date night of baking or cooking together.

For the foodie mom, consider gifting a interesting cookbook for date night dinner inspiration, or Le Creuset® cookware or bakeware.



THE HOME IMPROVEMENT COUPLE

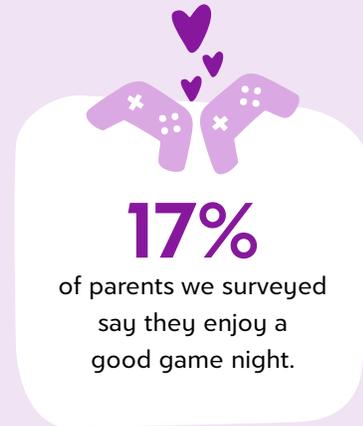
Assembling furniture together used to be the true test of a strong relationship, but now **19% of parents say they like to DIY or remodel their home with their partner.**

For the mom with an eye for interior design, surprise her with home décor items, such as art, picture frames or throw pillows, and spend the evening redecorating a room in your home together.

THE GAMER COUPLE

Seventeen percent of parents like a bit of competition and enjoy playing games together.

For the mom who likes a good game night, try gifting a board game, card game or bring back an old classic: a jigsaw puzzle.



CONCLUSION

Most married parents (82%) and single parents (74%) say date nights are more important than ever in helping them feel more emotionally and physically connected to their partner. The survey reveals that parents are keeping romance alive by experiencing moments of togetherness in more creative ways. So, whether a couple prefers multiple quick bursts of time together, double dates, date nights or even date mornings, quality time is key to connecting with the important relationships in your life.

METHODOLOGY

The survey of 2000 parents and 500 single parents of children 0-18 was commissioned by Zulily between Nov. 23 and Nov. 29, 2021 and conducted by market research company OnePoll.