



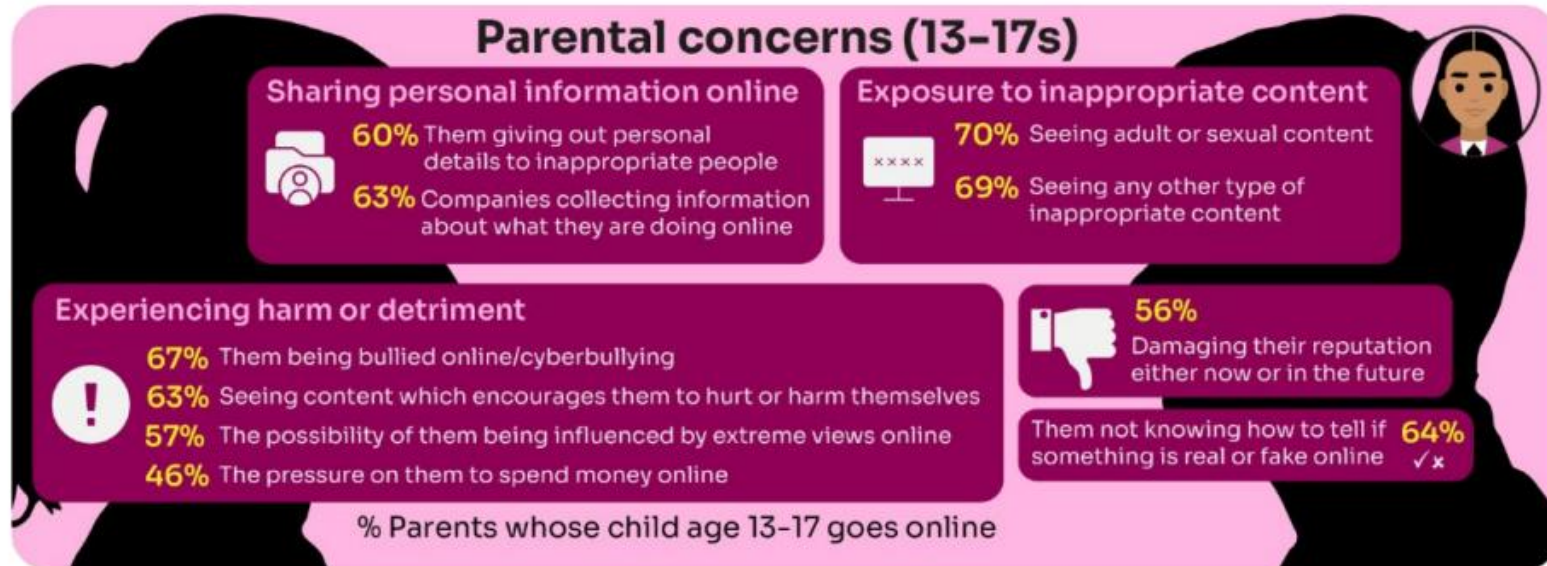
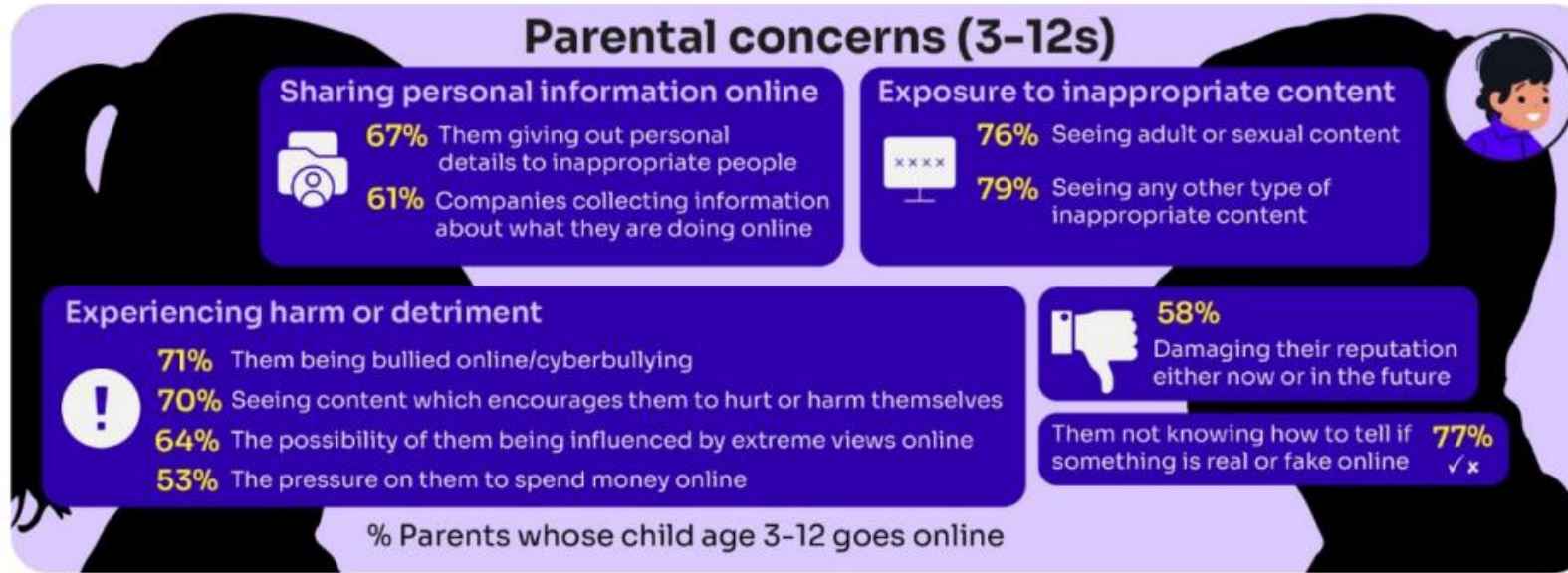
# TALKING TO YOUR CHILD ABOUT LIFE ONLINE

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# Summary of parental concerns (3 – 17 yr-olds)

Source: Children and parents: media use and attitudes report 2025



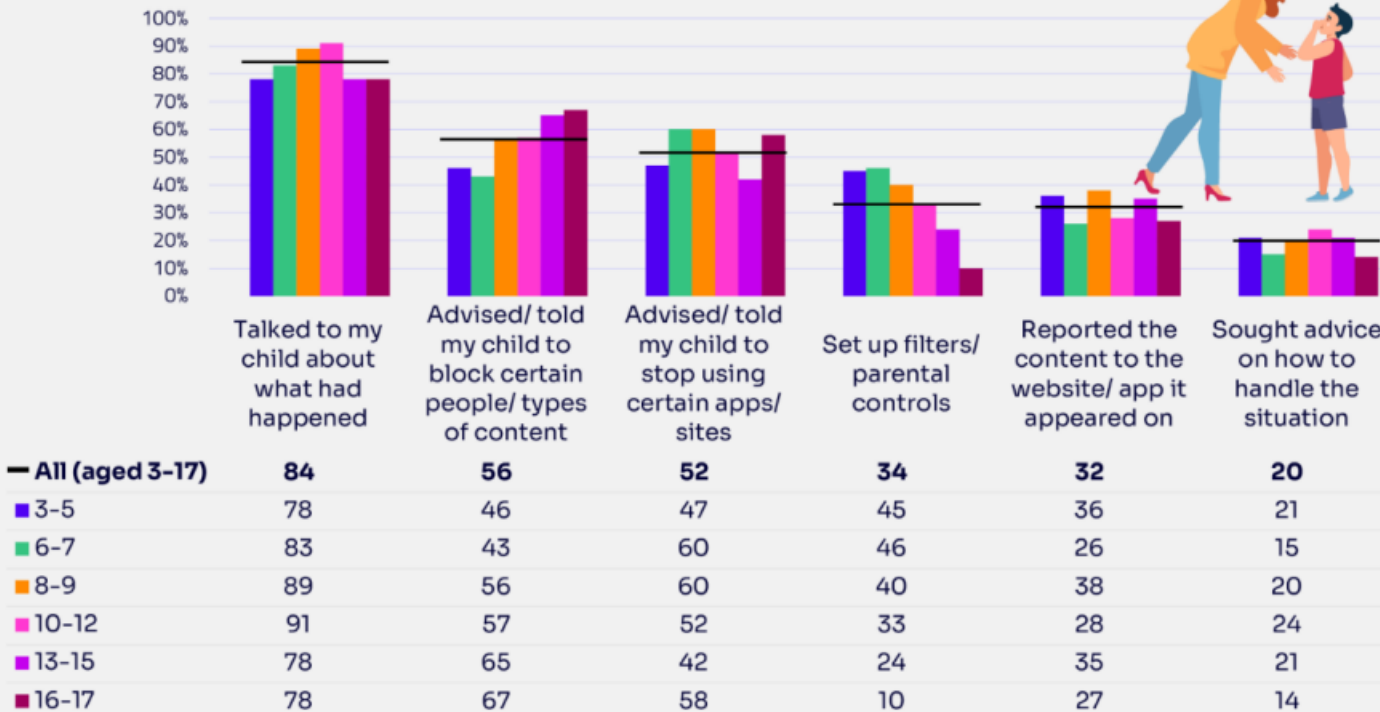


# Are you **CONFIDENT** to **TALK TO YOUR CHILD?** Is your child confident to **TALK TO YOU?**

**WHAT WOULD YOU DO?**  
Are there any areas you would not feel confident or comfortable to discuss?

**1 in 5** parents said their child told them about something they'd seen online that scared or upset them

Action taken (%)



**Younger children are more likely to tell a parent if they see something worrying or nasty online:**

- **92% of 8-12-year-olds** say that they would tell a parent
- **85% of 13-17s** say that they would tell a parent



# YOU don't need to be an **EXPERT ... be a PARENT**



- **It's your choice** – don't let others dictate when the right time is to use tech.
- **Stay involved** – make time to communicate, talk about what they are doing. What do they enjoy? What makes them laugh?
- **Don't quiz them** – have regular conversations. What's their favourite app? What is the best site to learn new things from?
- **Join in** – watch them play a game and join in. Who are they playing with? Do they know the other players?
- **'Show me how...'** – ask their advice to help you with your privacy settings, who you should add as a friend, are there any risks?
- **Lead by example** – children learn as much from watching as they do from being told not to do something, so model good behaviour
- **Reassure them** – tell them that they won't get in trouble and that you are always there to help

# PARENTSAFE

*Keeping your children safe: online & beyond*

This page is for parents - if you are a teacher, click [here](#)

It's never easy to know how to keep our children safe when they aren't with us, and sometimes even when are, if we don't know what's happening in their lives or on their devices! Who are they talking to, what are they doing, are they okay? Don't despair though...scroll through this page for help or click a button to go straight to a particular topics.

TOP TIPS RIGHT NOW

SAFE SETTINGS & CONTROLS

WHAT'S THAT APP?

TALKING TO CHILDREN

SCREENTIME

TOP TOPICS (porn, bullying, ...)

SEX & RELATIONSHIPS

HELP & REPORTING

LGfL

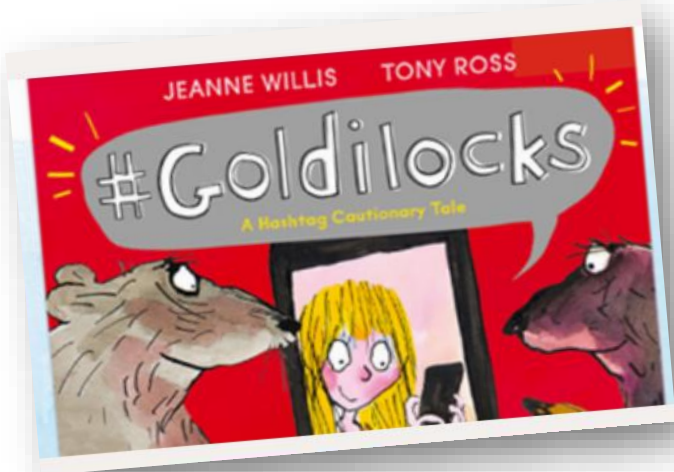


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[parentsafe.lgfl.net](https://parentsafe.lgfl.net)

# TALKING TO CHILDREN ABOUT LIFE ONLINE

Find conversation starters, story time ideas and top tips to reinforce key safety messages at [parentsafe.lgfl.net](https://parentsafe.lgfl.net)



Discussion Guide



Thorn have 18 topic-based discussion guides with questions to help start conversations!



**PARENTSAFE**  
Keeping your children safe: online & beyond



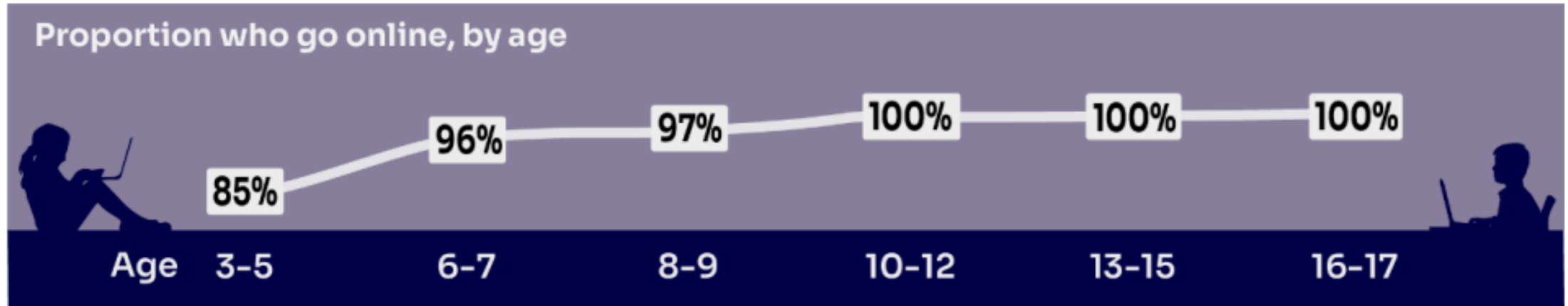
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# DEVICE USE AND OWNERSHIP

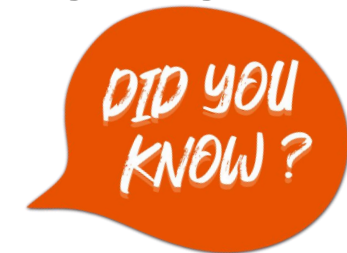


## HOW MUCH DO YOU KNOW about your child's life online?



**Almost all children (96%) aged 3 – 17 went online in 2024**, highlighting the centrality of the internet in their lives:

- Younger children commonly use **tablets** to go online
- Older children are more likely to use **mobile phones**

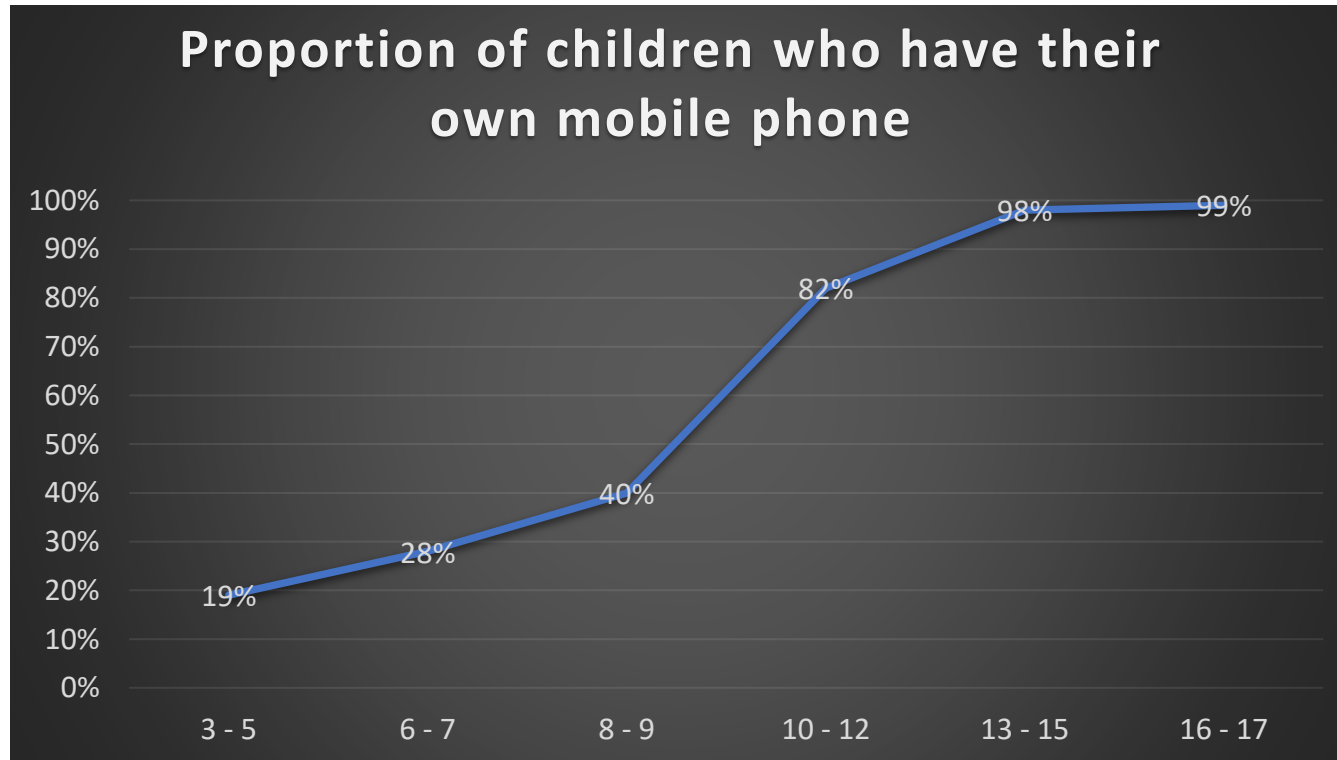
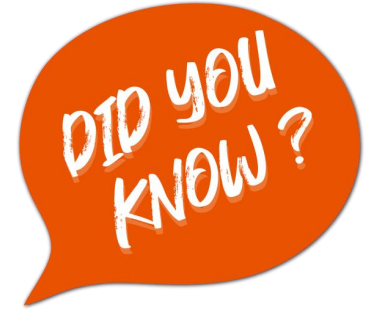




Does your child have their **OWN MOBILE PHONE?** If so, is it a **SMART PHONE?**



What **AGE** do you think is appropriate?





## SMARTPHONE or 'NON'-SMART / BRICK phone?

- Internet access
- Social media, apps and games
- Notifications
- Anytime connection
- Parental controls

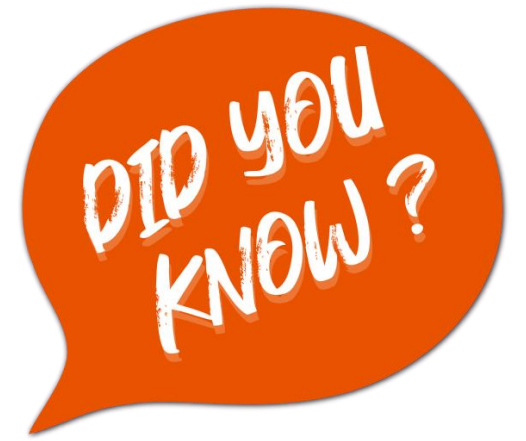
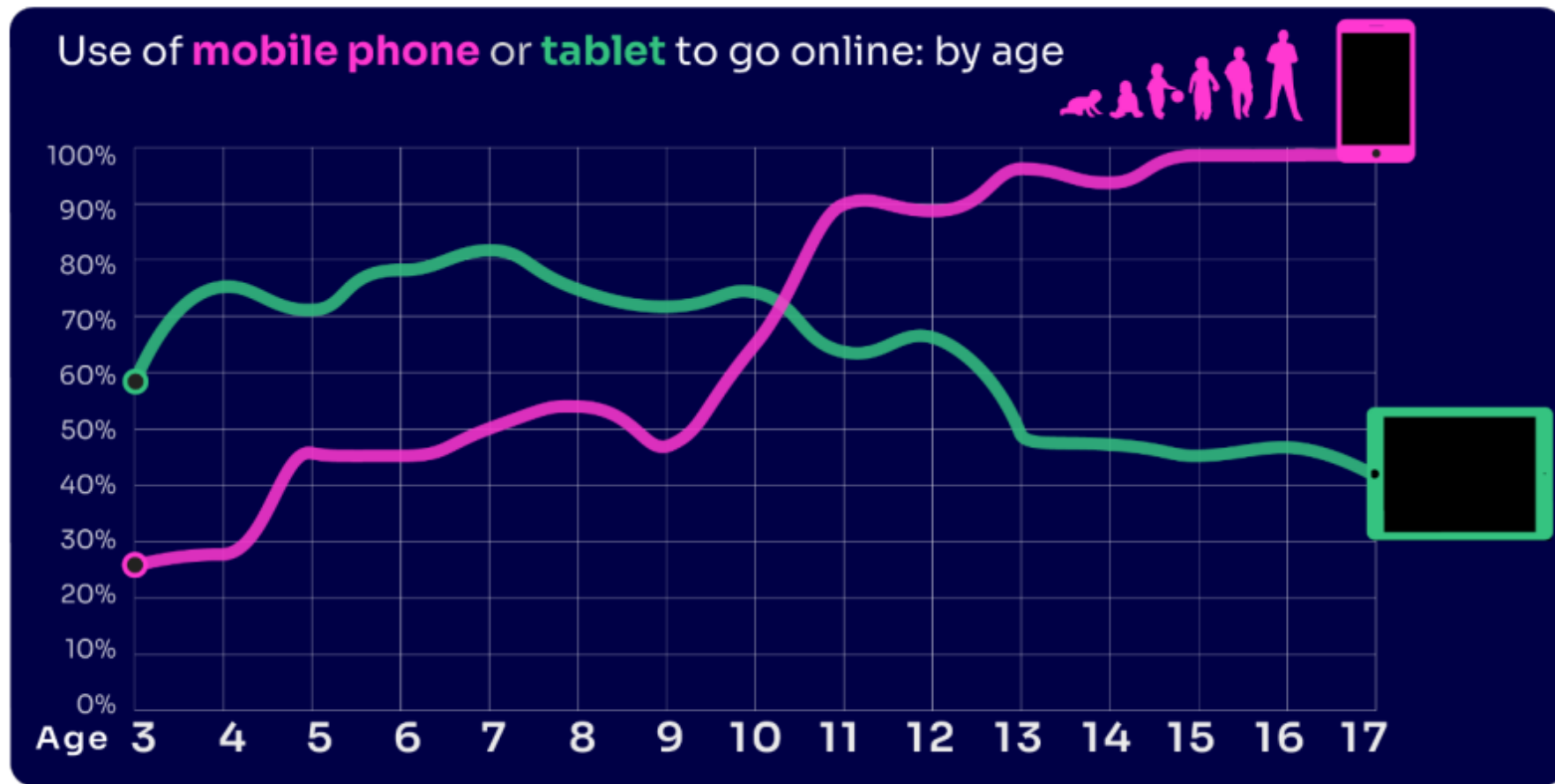


### REMEMBER IT'S YOUR CHOICE

Every child and situation is unique,  
and you are best placed to know their needs

- NO internet access
- Some games
- Anytime phone calls and texts
- Limited parental controls





- **By age 11, nine in ten children own their own mobile phone, distinct from using a family device**
- This correlates with **transition from primary to secondary school.**



# **SUPERVISION AND PARENTAL CONTROLS**

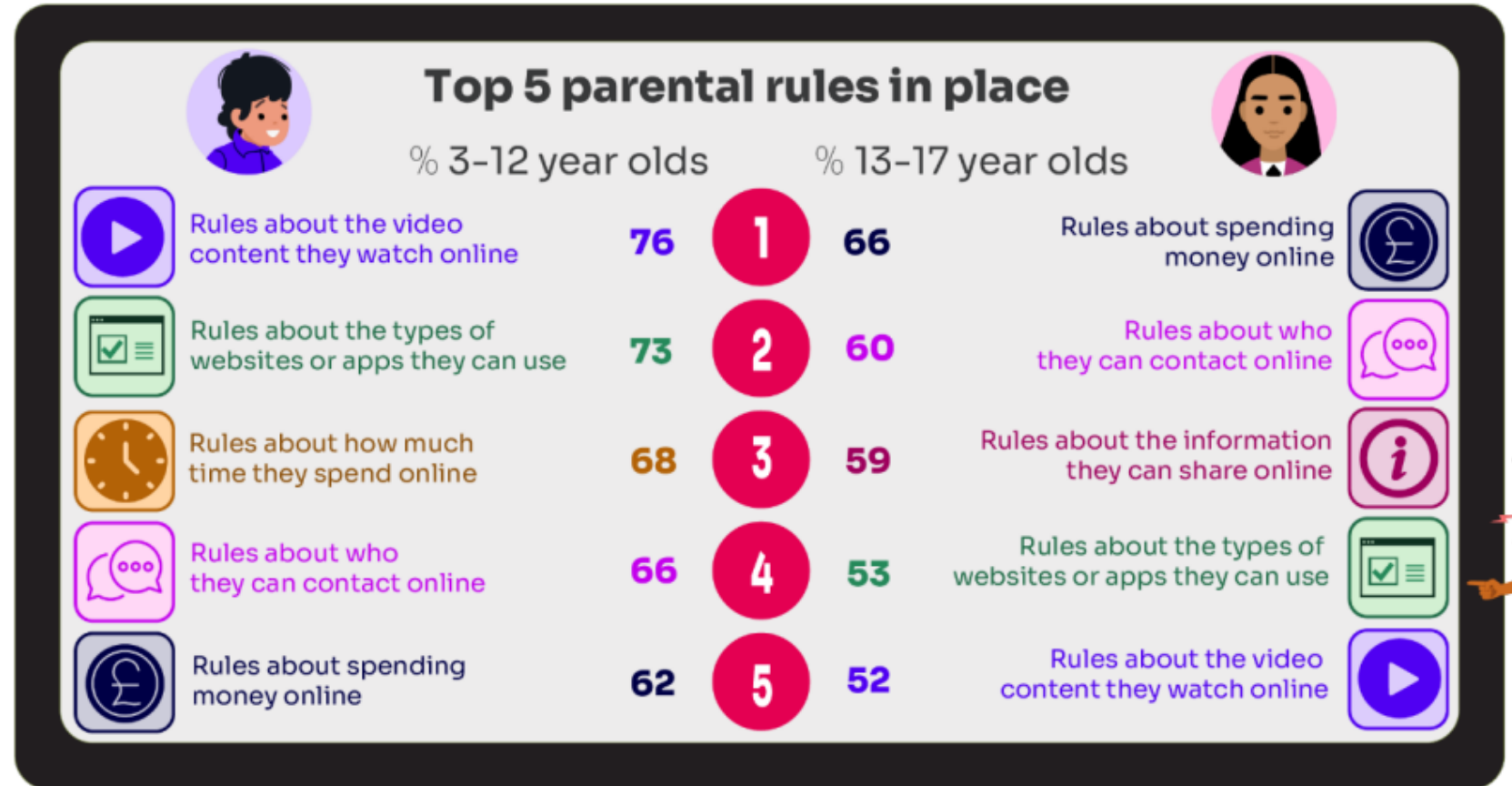
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# What **RULES** do **YOU SET** about being online? What do you do that **WORKS**?

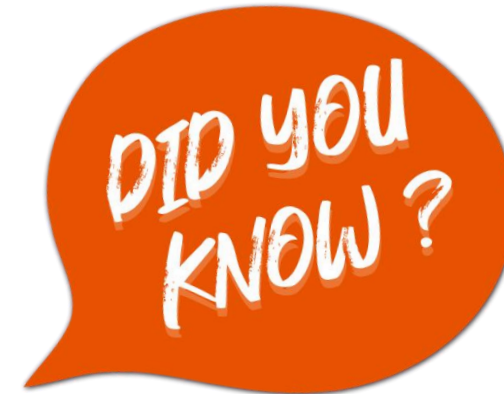
While parental concerns in some areas have increased considerably, their **enforcement of rules appears to be diminishing**, partly due to parents' **resignation** about their **ability to intervene** in their children's online lives.





# Do you **RESTRICT** their **MOBILE PHONE USE**?

If so, have you found it **CHALLENGING**?



## Primary

**93%** have restrictions at home

- 74% when in bed at night time
- 65% when having meals
- 61% when doing homework
- 39% when spending time with family



## Secondary

**81%** have restrictions at home

- 55% when having meals
- 54% when in bed at night time
- 36% when doing homework
- 33% when spending time with family





# Digital Family Agreement

## Why not have a family agreement to:

- **clarify** what is allowed...or not
- **establish** ground rules like no phones at the table or in the bedroom at night-time
- **agree** shared expectations to reduce arguments and keep everyone safe & healthy



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parentsafe.lgfl.net

Download it at [parentsafe.lgfl.net/digital-family-agreement](https://parentsafe.lgfl.net/digital-family-agreement)

PDF version to view, print and write on

Powerpoint version to edit online

Google Sheets version to edit online

# Digital Family Agreement



## I will:

## Why?

- Check with dad before I chat with anyone for the first time, even if they are a 'chatbot'
- Check with mum before getting a new app or game, or buying an add-on so she can check it is safe
- Not post or share any personal information, e.g. mobile, address to stay private and safe
- Check with mum and dad before going 'live' and explain what I can do to avoid any risks
- Put my phone down when we're eating together or family want to talk, as it's respectful
- Turn off notifications when I'm doing homework or at bedtime so I can concentrate and sleep
- Come off my devices an hour before bedtime to help me unwind and sleep

### If there are any issues:

We will talk about it calmly and respectfully

I may have to show you more about what I do on devices, or face consequences

## Parent/carer will:

## Why?

- Put our devices down when you want to talk to me/us so we can model good behaviour
- Keep our mobiles away for important family time e.g. breakfast and dinner so we can have quality time and talk
- Trust you to manage your screen time sensibly as we agreed, and only say something if I/we are worried, to help you stay safe and healthy
- Ask permission before sharing any photos of you to respect your privacy

### If I'm worried by anything:

I can tell mum and dad, and they won't judge me

I can talk to.....  
At school

I can contact  
Childline or The Mix

Signed: *Sophie Mum Dad*

Today's date: *22<sup>nd</sup> July*

Date we will review this: *22<sup>nd</sup> October*

Download me again and find more support for parents

**SHARENTING!**



## What's wrong with **SHARENTING**?

(when parents share photos of their children online)

- Identity theft
- Permanence of digital content
- Losing control of images
- Exposure to child predators
- Creates their children's digital footprints before they are old enough to consent to it





# Do you **SUPERVISE** your child's online activity? **HOW?**

**Main online supervision method used** (% of parents whose children go online)

**Being nearby and regularly checking what they do**

3-5s 66%  
6-7s 75%  
8-9s 76%



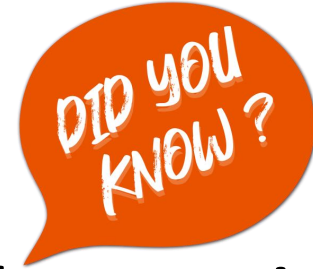
**Asking about what they are doing or have been doing online**

10-12s 70%  
13-15s 64%  
16-17s 48%





## Have you set up parental **CONTROLS/PRIVACY SETTINGS** for **ALL DEVICES** and **NETWORKS**?



- Controls need to be set up on both the **broadband connection** **AND** each individual device
- These **do not come as standard** so it's worth checking

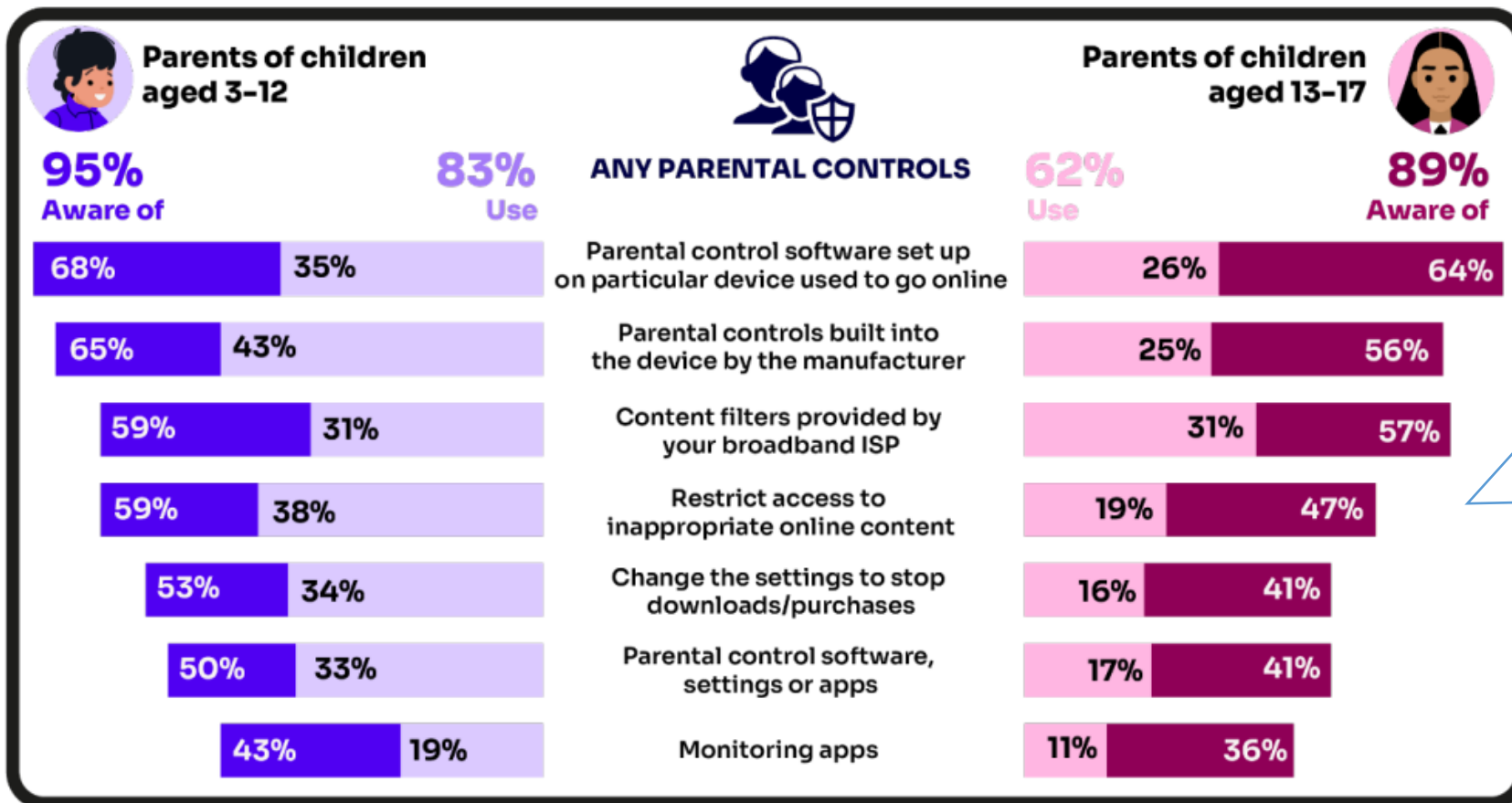
They are important because they allow you to:

- **Block and filter** upsetting or inappropriate content or sites
- **Plan what time and how long** your child can go online for






# Are you **AWARE** of these **PARENTAL CONTROL TOOLS**? Which ones have **YOU USED**?



**‘I prefer to supervise my child’s online use by talking to them about setting rules’ (39%)**

Visit [internetmatters.org/parental-controls](https://internetmatters.org/parental-controls) to find out how to set controls on devices:




**Set up devices safely**

Set parental controls on a range of devices, apps, and platforms with our how-to guides.

Smartphones & other devices


Select the smartphone, other device or OS from the dropdown list:



**VIEW ALL**

Broadband & mobile networks


Select your network provider from the dropdown list:



**VIEW ALL**

Social media


Select the social media app or platform from the dropdown list:



**VIEW ALL**

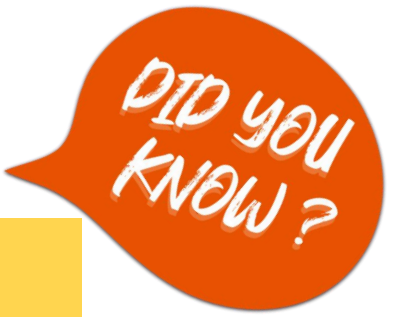
Video games & consoles

Select the video game or console from the dropdown list:



**VIEW ALL**

Parental control apps like [Google Family Link](#), [Screen Time](#) and [Microsoft Family](#) can let you set limits across devices, apps and platforms



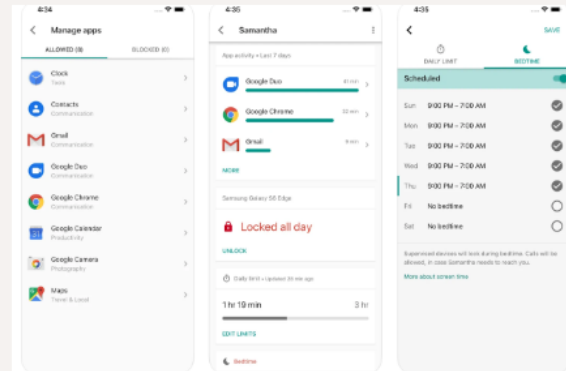
## SAFE SETTINGS, CONTROLS & MONITORING

Apple, Android and Microsoft have tools to help you control what younger children can use and how long for. Click the images below for details. Once they are older and have your trust, the same tools can help avoid arguments and help them learn to self-regulate (how long have they really been on insta today? have they put down the phone at all in the last week?).



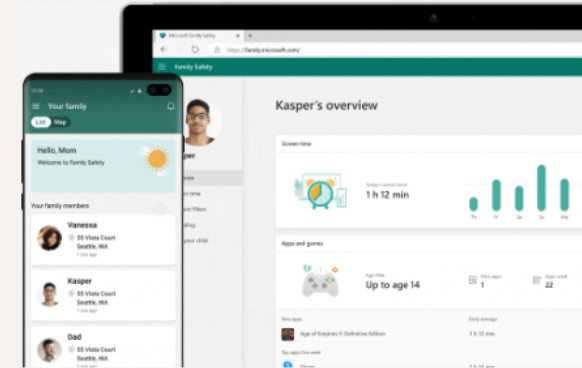
[Apple Screen Time](#)

Great for both parental controls and teen self-regulation



[Google Family Link](#)

Digital Wellbeing is the next step for the older ones after Family Link



[Microsoft Family Safety](#)

There are no self-regulation features for older teens, but Family Safety is great for the younger ones

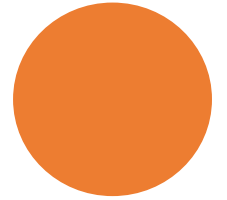


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Visit [parentsafe.lgfl.net/](https://parentsafe.lgfl.net/) for additional advice and tips on settings and controls for all devices

# REMEMBER

- As children get older, restrictions and controls you use will change, but only at a pace you feel is appropriate for your child, not pressure from your child *“because everyone else is allowed”*
- Content filters are never 100% effective, at some point your child may come across inappropriate or upsetting content, so *make time to talk regularly*



# SCREENTIME

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**WORRIED** about their **SCREENTIME**? How do you **MANAGE** this?  
 Know **HOW LONG YOUR CHILD SPENDS** online daily?

*DID YOU KNOW?*

Parents of 3-17-year-olds

*"I've been told is that when I get off my screen, I'm less fun to be around. ..And like I can also feel angrier for like no reason."*



- Children spent an average **3 hours 5 minutes per day** accessing the internet via smartphones/tablets/computers
- **Four in ten (39%)** parents of children aged 3-17 report finding it **hard to control their child's screentime**



Visit [parentsafe.lgfl.net/](https://parentsafe.lgfl.net/) for advice and tips to manage screentime

## SCREENTIME

Lots of parents worry about it, but we don't think you should worry about screentime - it's not **how long** they are online but **what and when they are doing** that counts (and the same goes for grown-ups, like in the Will Ferrell video above). You can use the control settings near the top of this page to regulate screen time in general and on specific apps, but beyond that we recommend you follow the Children's Commissioner's 'Digital 5 A Day' and help your children to aim for each of the targets in this pie chart ↪

Children's  
COMMISSIONER



Digital 5 A Day  
Simple steps to a balanced digital diet and better wellbeing

The UK Chief Medical Officers agree - check out [their version of what counts](#).

### UK Chief Medical Officers' advice for parents and carers on Children and Young People's screen and social media use

Technology can be a wonderful thing but too much time sitting down or using mobile devices can get in the way of important, healthy activities. Here are some tips for balancing screen use with healthy living.

#### Sleep matters

Getting enough, good quality sleep is very important. Leave phones outside the bedroom when it is bedtime.



#### Sharing sensibly

Talk about sharing photos and information online and how photos and words are sometimes manipulated. Parents and carers should never assume that children are happy for their photos to be shared. For everyone - when in doubt, don't upload!



#### Education matters

Make sure you and your children are aware of, and abide by, their school's policy on screen time.



#### Keep moving!

Everyone should take a break after a couple of hours sitting or lying down using a screen. It's good to get up and move about a bit. #sitlessmove more



#### Safety when out and about

Advise children to put their screens away while crossing the road or doing an activity that needs their full attention.



#### Talking helps

Talk with children about using screens and what they are watching. A change in behaviour can be a sign they are distressed - make sure they know they can always speak to you or another responsible adult if they feel uncomfortable with screen or social media use.



#### Family time together

Screen-free meal times are a good idea - you can enjoy face-to-face conversation, with adults giving their full attention to children.



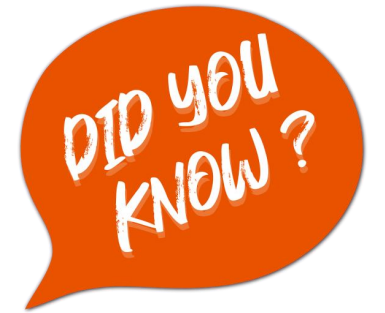
#### Use helpful phone features

Some devices and platforms have special features - by using these features to keep track of how much time you (and with their permission, your children) spend looking at screens or on social media.





## How does your child feel about **YOUR SCREENTIME vs THEIRS?**



**52% of 8-11s feel that their parents' screentime is too high**

**33% of 8-17s feel that their own screentime is too high**



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### MAKES YOU THINK...

Talk to your child about their device use, but remember yours, too



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Source: Children and parents: media use and attitudes report 2025



# **SOCIAL MEDIA AND GAMING**

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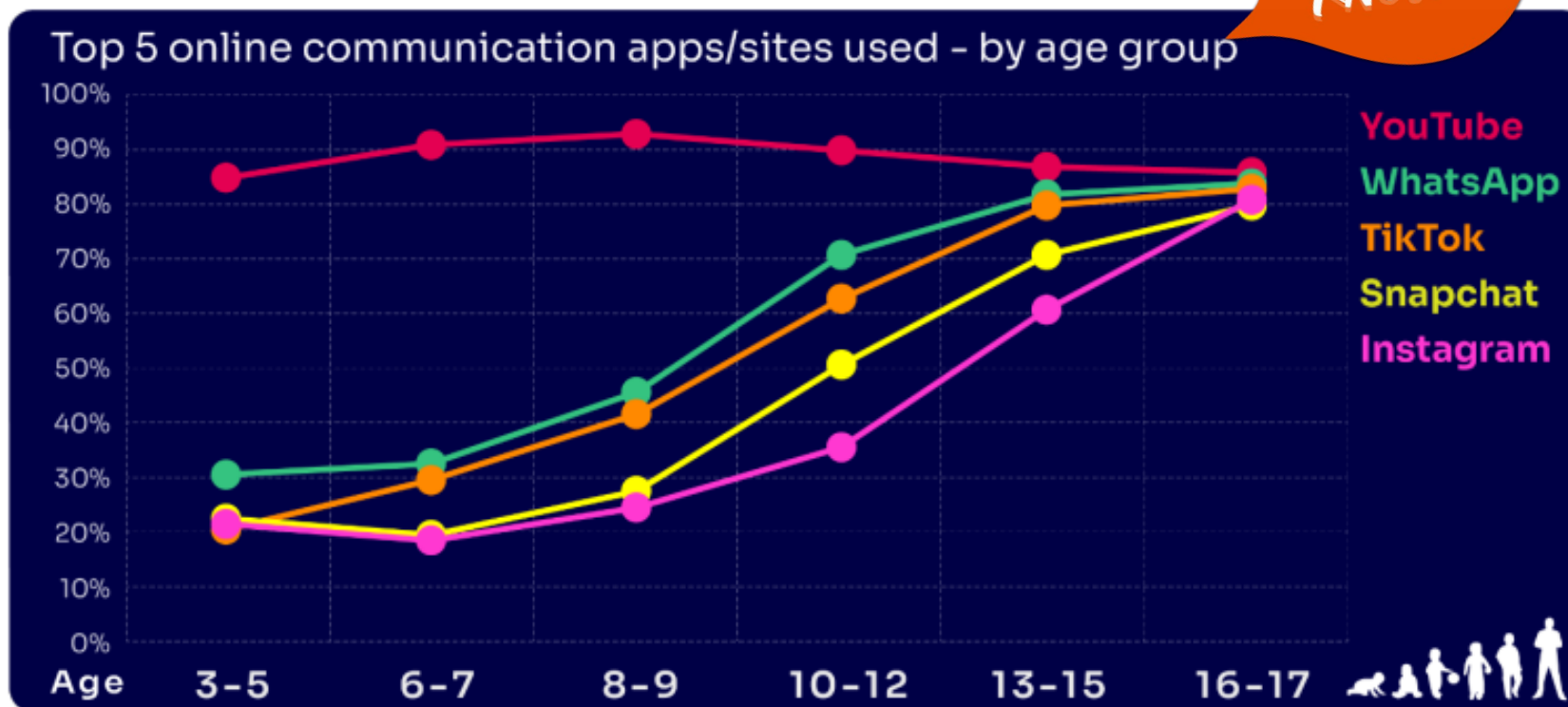
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# Are you **FAMILIAR WITH THE APPS** and **GAMES** your child is on?

YouTube is the most popular, but the appeal of many social media platforms varies by age

DID YOU KNOW?



- The two most popular apps for 3 – 7 yr-olds are **WhatsApp** (2 in 10) and **Snapchat** (3 in 10)

- The proportion of 8-9s with an **Instagram** profile increased from 8% in 2023 to 14% in 2024

- 13-17s are most likely to have profiles on **WhatsApp** (62%), **Snapchat** (62%) or **TikTok** (61%)

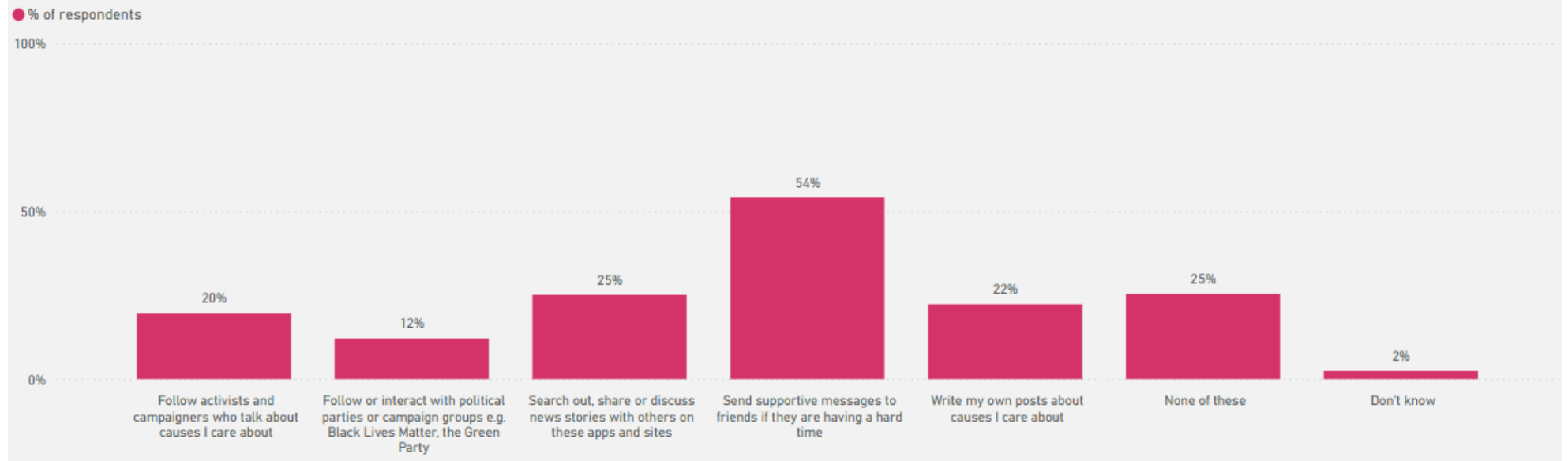


## KNOW WHAT THEY DO on social media?

Eight in ten (81%) of all children aged 8-17 use at least one social media app/site for following friends, people and organisations, reading, liking or sharing content

**TikTok** was the most favoured platform to message and communicate with friends.

QC18. Still thinking about social media and messaging apps and sites - like Snapchat, Instagram, WhatsApp and TikTok... Which, if any, of these things do you ever do on social media or messaging apps or sites?





## WHY DOES THIS MATTER?

Young people can **get around age restrictions** on apps and websites, increasing the risk of them coming to harm online

**Addictive algorithms can make it harder to take a break** and maintain a healthy balance between time on and offline



Algorithms can also **target content** similar to what you've already selected/liked/shared

This can prevent you from finding new ideas and perspectives, create **misinformation** and **reinforce stereotypes**

# What might they NOT BE TELLING YOU?

DID YOU KNOW?

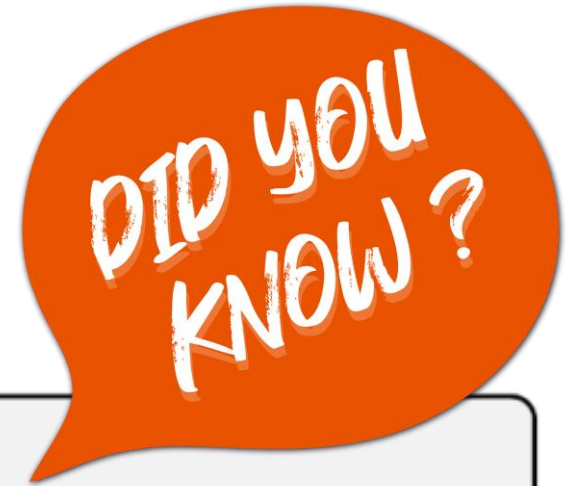
Nearly six in ten (56%) 8-17s use **multiple profiles** on at least one social media platform:

(23%) said it was because one account was **just for parents/family** to see

15% said one account was **for the 'real me' and another contained edited/filtered posts** or photos



# WHY is this 'RISKY'?



**68%**  
know how to do  
any of the  
"risky  
measures"

**40%**  
do any of them



**40% had engaged in 'risky' behaviour!**



## What about **WHATSAPP?**

Do you know the **minimum age** to use this? What are the **risks**?



### **Unwanted contact**

to contact somebody on WhatsApp, all you need is their phone number, which could expose you to unwanted messages or calls

### **Inappropriate content**

messages are end-to-end encrypted which means that the content cannot be monitored. This means that your child could see or hear harmful or upsetting content e.g. pornography or violence.

### **Location sharing**

live location feature means that your child could reveal their current location to others

### **Cyberbullying**

children could be bullied, feel left out or deliberately excluded or removed from groups

### **Oversharing**

privacy features, such as disappearing and 'view once' messages, might mean that your child feels safe to reveal private or risky information or images. However, there is always a risk that this could be copied and shared



What can you do?

The infographic features the WhatsApp logo and the text 'WhatsApp safety guide for parents' in green and black. The 'internet matters.org' logo is in a green box. Three yellow boxes contain statistics: '13+' for minimum age, '58%' for kids aged 3-17, and '37%' for kids under 13. An illustration of a woman with a smartphone and a checkmark is on the right. Below is a section titled '5 tips to keep kids safe on WhatsApp' with numbered icons and text.

**13+** WhatsApp's minimum age in the UK

**58%** Kids aged 3-17 who use WhatsApp

**37%** Kids under 13 who use WhatsApp

**5 tips to keep kids safe on WhatsApp**

- 1 Review privacy settings** WhatsApp has a range of privacy and security settings to keep users safe. Customise groups, app access, live location and more.
- 2 Customise contacts** Show your child how to report and block unwanted contacts. Then, work with them to add their friends and family. Review and talk about their contacts regularly.
- 3 Talk about personal information** Make sure your child understands what personal information is. Talk about the importance of keeping that information private on WhatsApp.
- 4 Show them where to get support** If something goes wrong or they see something worrying on WhatsApp, make sure they know to come to you, and talk about other sources of support.
- 5 Check in regularly** Once you've done all of the above, check in with them regularly to review settings and how they use WhatsApp.



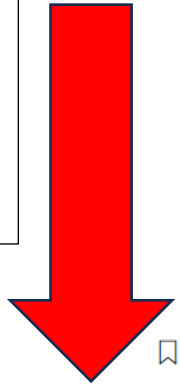
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Visit <https://www.internetmatters.org/resources/whatsapp-safety-a-how-to-guide-for-parents/#whatsapp-safety-tips> for advice for parents

Find ratings and reviews for parents on apps, games and social media at [commonsensemedia.org](https://commonsensemedia.org)



Movies	TV	Books	Games	Podcasts	Apps	YouTube	Parent Tips and FAQs	Celebrating Co
<b>By Age</b>		<b>By Topic</b>			<b>By Platform</b>			
Preschoolers (2-4)		Screen Time			TikTok			
Little Kids (5-7)		Learning			Snapchat			
Big Kids (8-9)		Social Media			Minecraft			
Pre-Teens (10-12)		Cellphones			Roblox			
Teens (13+)		Online Safety			Fortnite			
		Identity and Community			Discord			
		More ...			More ...			



[See full review](#)

[See full review](#)



APP

**Snapchat**

✓ age 16+ ★★★★★

Send moments in photos, watch curated content; use wisely.

Devices: iPhone , iPod Touch , iPad , Android (2011)



APP

**Discord**

✓ age 13+ ★★★★★

Voice and video chat; slick features, some mature content.

Devices: iPhone , iPod Touch , iPad , Mac , Android , Windows app (2017)



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# Do you know the **DIFFERENCE** between an **'ONLINE' FRIEND** and a real one? How does this differ from your **CHILD'S VIEW**?

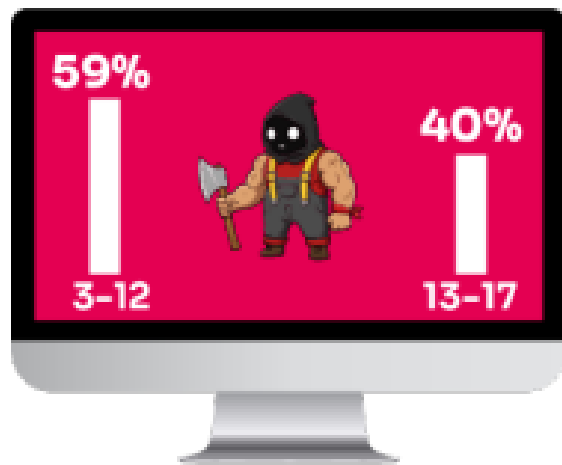
- Are you familiar with who they are in **contact** with whilst playing games?
- Have you asked about the **chat** facility?
- Do you know the **content** and **age restrictions** for these games?





# What are **YOU** most **WORRIED** about when it comes to **GAMING**?

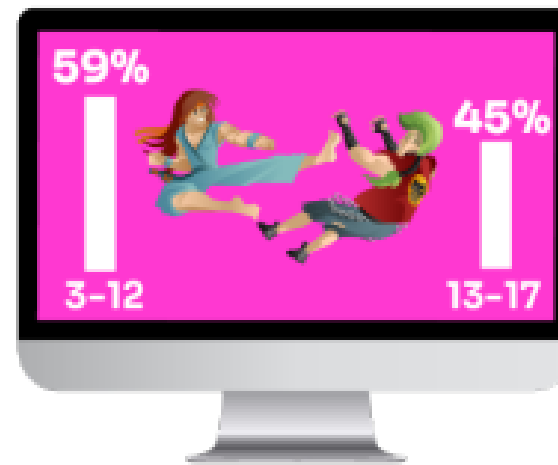
## Parental concerns about gaming (% of parents of children who game)



The content of the games like violence, bad language, disturbing content, etc



Pressure to make in-game purchases, e.g. access to upgrades, skins, loot-boxes, in-game currency, etc



The possibility of them being bullied by other players



The possibility of them talking to strangers while gaming (within the game or via chat)

# Research finds children's online spaces "saturated" with **GAMBLING-like** content and advertising:

*"They make it look like a game, it does not look like gambling."*

DID YOU KNOW?

Risks are not understood by children due to the blurred lines between gambling and gambling-like activity such as loot boxes



Do you **DISCUSS THIS** when you talk about **MONEY** to your children and how gambling is made to **LOOK ATTRACTIVE** and likely that you would **WIN**?

[https://www.gambleaware.org/media/hbcp3qgd/exploring-the-lived-experience-and-views-of-gambling-among-children-and-young-people\\_final\\_0.pdf](https://www.gambleaware.org/media/hbcp3qgd/exploring-the-lived-experience-and-views-of-gambling-among-children-and-young-people_final_0.pdf)

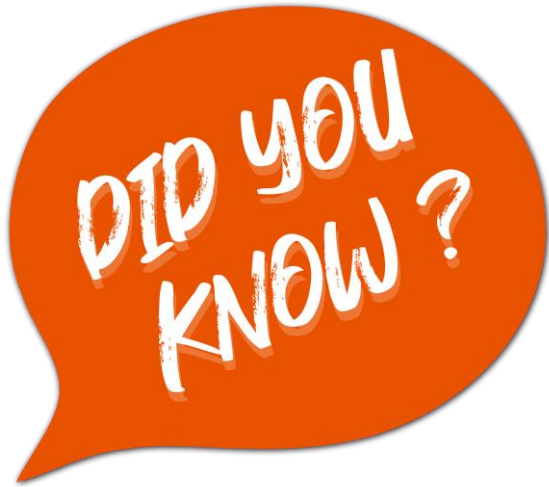
## How can **YOU GET INVOLVED?**



- ASK what type of games your child enjoys – are they **age-appropriate**?
- PLAY games together - keep the tech in **shared spaces** rather than bedrooms
- TALK about **who they are playing** with - what **information** are they sharing?
- EXPLAIN what is/isn't **appropriate to share**, e.g. personal details to identify them/location
- AGREE how they will spend their **money** online
- DISCUSS what they would do if they were **bullied** online, and what steps to take
- DECIDE **how long is appropriate** to play in one session - how many sessions a day
- SETUP these restrictions in **parental settings** with your child

# PEGI helps parents to make informed decisions when buying video games:

- The age rating confirms that the game content is appropriate for players of certain age
- It considers the age **suitability** of a game, **not the level of difficulty**



## TWO LEVELS OF INFORMATION AS A GUIDE : THE PEGI AGE LABELS



## THE CONTENT DESCRIPTORS



# AGE REQUIREMENTS

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## Are **YOU** aware of the **MINIMUM AGE REQUIREMENT** for social media?

**83%** of parents of 3-17s are aware of a minimum age requirement to have a profile on social media apps

**BUT ONLY**  
**33%** of parents knew the correct age requirement  
(13 yrs)

**More than a third (37%) say they would allow their child to have a profile on sites or apps before they had reached the minimum age.**

Find ratings and reviews for parents on apps, games and social media at [www.commonsensemedia.org](http://www.commonsensemedia.org)

## What about YOUNG PEOPLE?

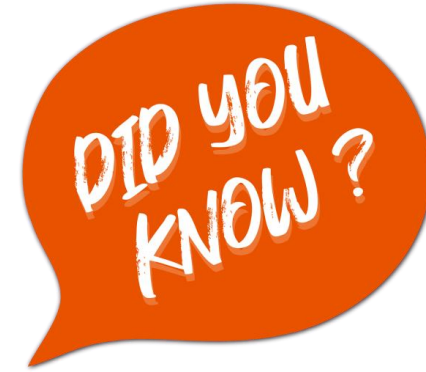
- Three quarters (**75%**) of children are aware of **minimum age** requirements
- A third (**33%**) of **8-17 yr-olds** admit to **giving a fake age online** to access a new app/site
- Up to a **quarter** had **changed their date of birth** on their profile since initially setting it up
- **25%** of **8-12 yr-olds** were more likely to change it on Snapchat



WHY is this **WORRYING?**

SECRET

**Four in ten under-13s have a profile on social media apps or sites...**

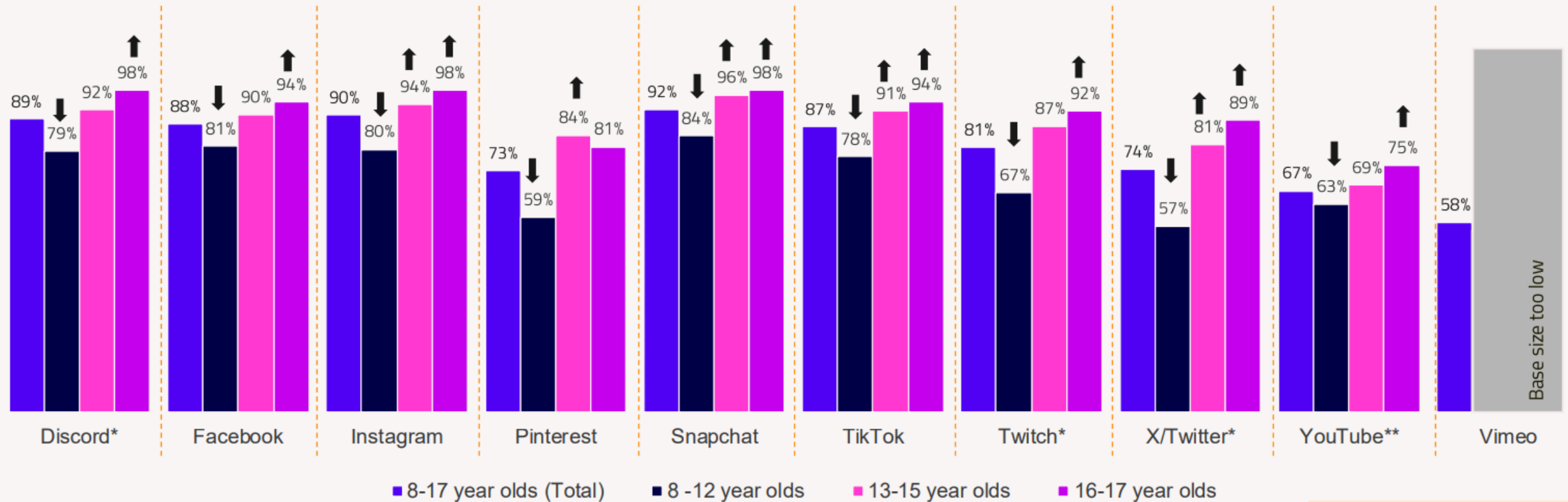


- YouTube/YouTube Kids (44%)
- WhatsApp (23%)
- TikTok (23%)
- The proportion of 8-9s with an Instagram profile increased from 8% in 2023 to 14% in 2024

Despite there being a minimum age requirement of 13 for using most social media apps, over half of 3-12-year olds (55%) were reported as using at least one social media app or site, an increase on last year, when 51% of these children did so.

The majority of online service users (e.g., social media) in each age group have their own profile on at least one online service, with the likelihood of having a profile generally increasing with age. This pattern has remained consistent with Jan/Feb 2024 (W2).

Proportion of **children 8-17** who use each online service that have their own profile – by age group of child (Wave 4):

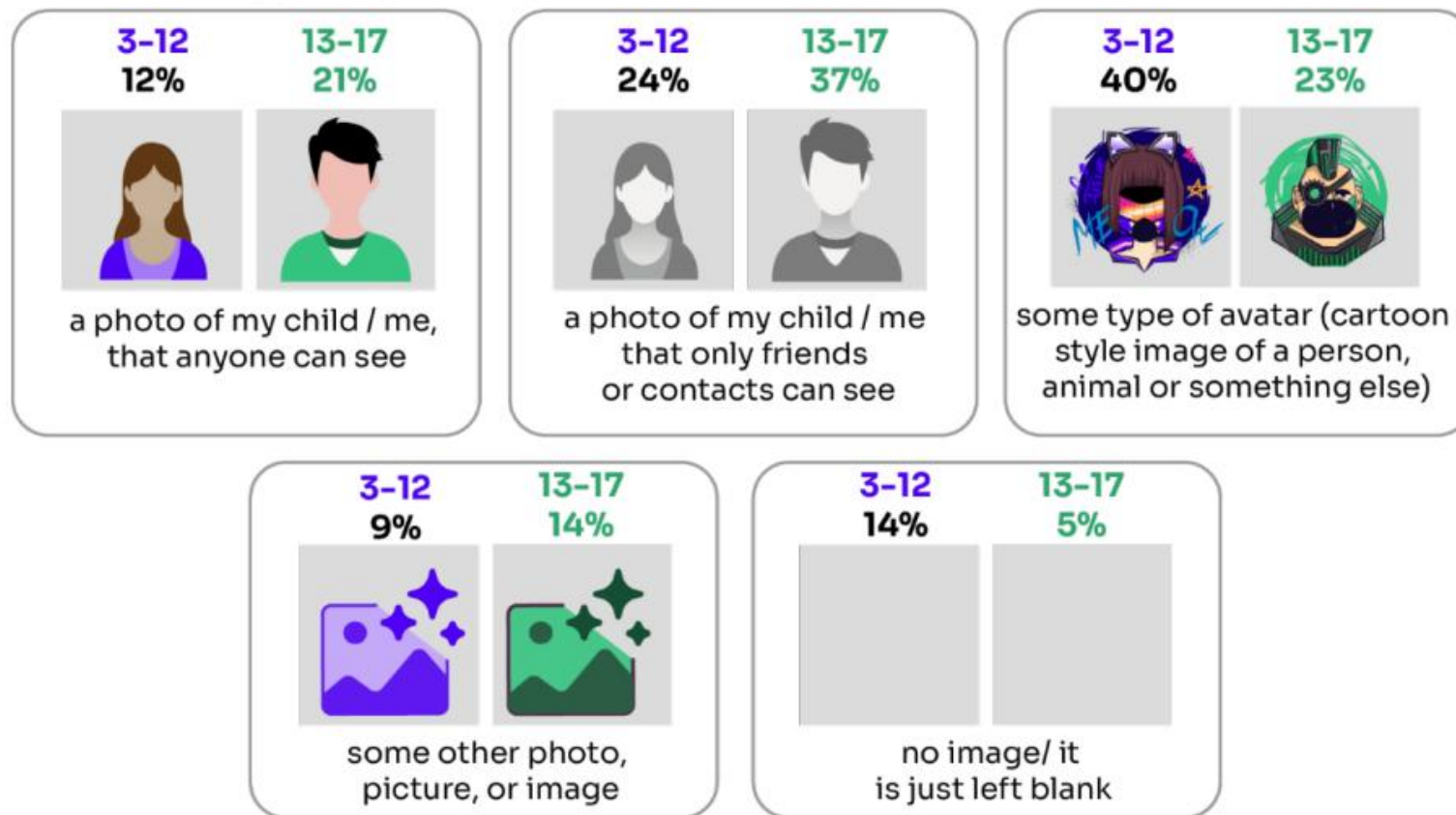




## Do you know what they **SHARE**?

**16%** of children who have a social media profile include a **photo of themselves** which anyone can see

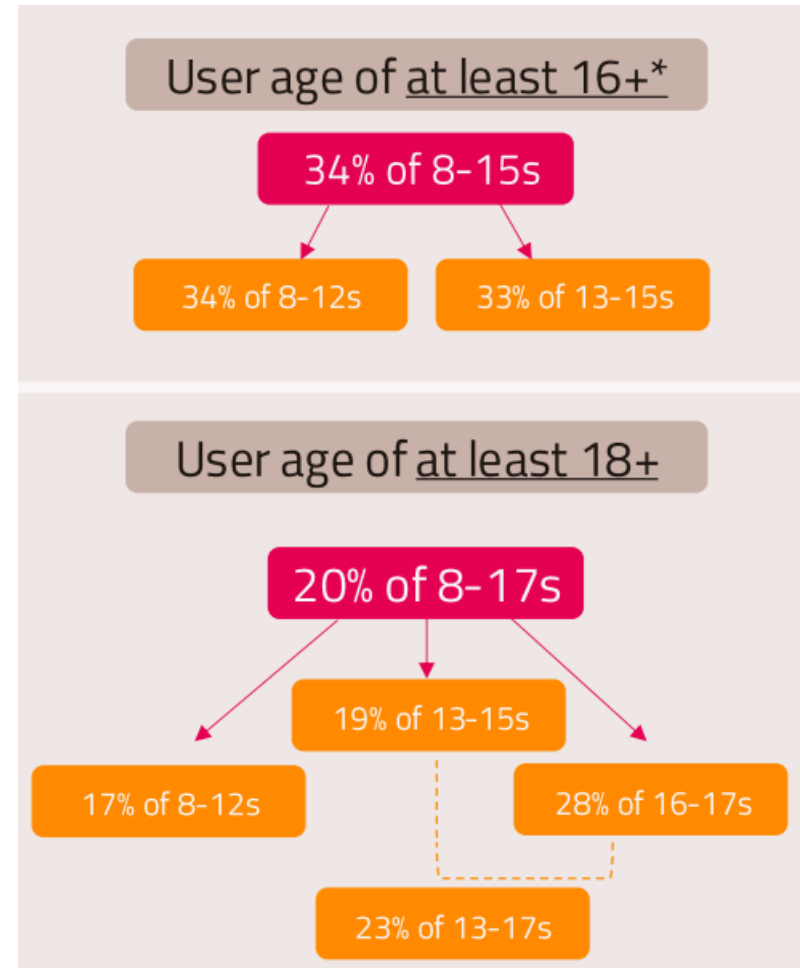
### Type of profile picture used (among those with a profile)





## Why does this **MATTER**?

- Young people can get around age restrictions on apps and websites, increasing the risk of them coming to harm online
- To understand the extent to which children are bypassing age checks, Ofcom researched how many children have online profiles that make them appear older than they actually are.

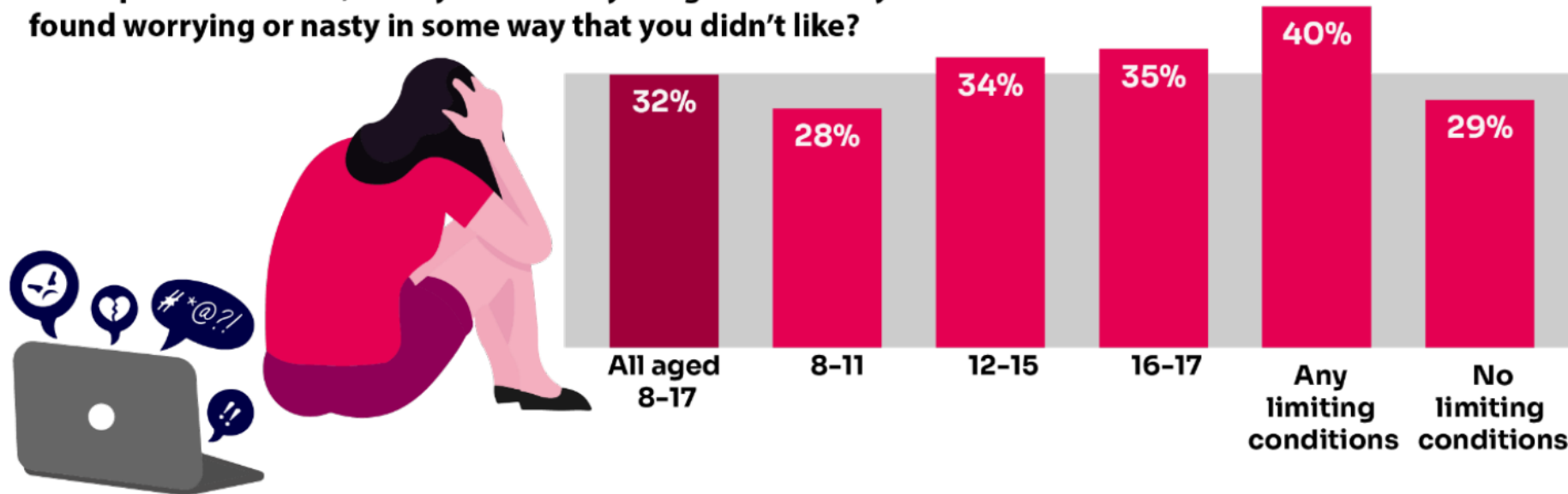




# **RISKS AND NEGATIVE EXPERIENCES**

# Summary of children's negative experiences

In the past 12 months, have you seen anything online that you found worrying or nasty in some way that you didn't like?



**BUT Only 20% of parents report their child telling them about this in the same time frame.**

Source: Children and parents: Media use and attitudes report

# Current issues that schools are dealing with right now Include:

**Gen AI**

**Pornography**

Threats to harm family members if they don't...

An internet made for adults accessible to children

**Bullying**

**Nudes**  
pressure to share and receiving them

**Lack of role models**

**Grooming Exploitation**

**Violent misogyny**

**Radicalisation**

**Fake accounts profiles**

**Self-harm suicide content**

**Sexual extortion**

**Disinformation Misinformation**  
what can you believe?

## So what are the **RISKS?**

**content:** being exposed to illegal, inappropriate, or harmful content, for example: **pornography, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, antisemitism, radicalisation, extremism, misinformation, disinformation** (including fake news) and **conspiracy theories**.

Updated to clarify misinformation, disinformation and conspiracy theories are safeguarding harms

**contact:** being subjected to harmful online **interaction** with other users; for example: peer to **peer pressure**, commercial **advertising** and **adults posing as children** or young adults with the intention to **groom** or **exploit** them for **sexual, criminal, financial** or other purposes

**conduct:** online **behaviour** that increases the likelihood of, or **causes, harm**; sharing and receiving **explicit images** (e.g. **nudes** and semi-nudes and/or **pornography** and online **bullying**

**commerce:** risks such as online **gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing** and or **financial scams**



# PARENTSAFE

*Keeping your children safe: online & beyond*

## TOP TOPICS (porn, bullying, extremism, fake news...) ↻

We have selected our top two or three resources to help parents on six key themes, which we think are important to all families. Take a look and see what you think - even if you think it may not apply to you.

Body Safe

Accessing Pornography

Bullying

Extremism & Radicalisation

Gangs & County Lines

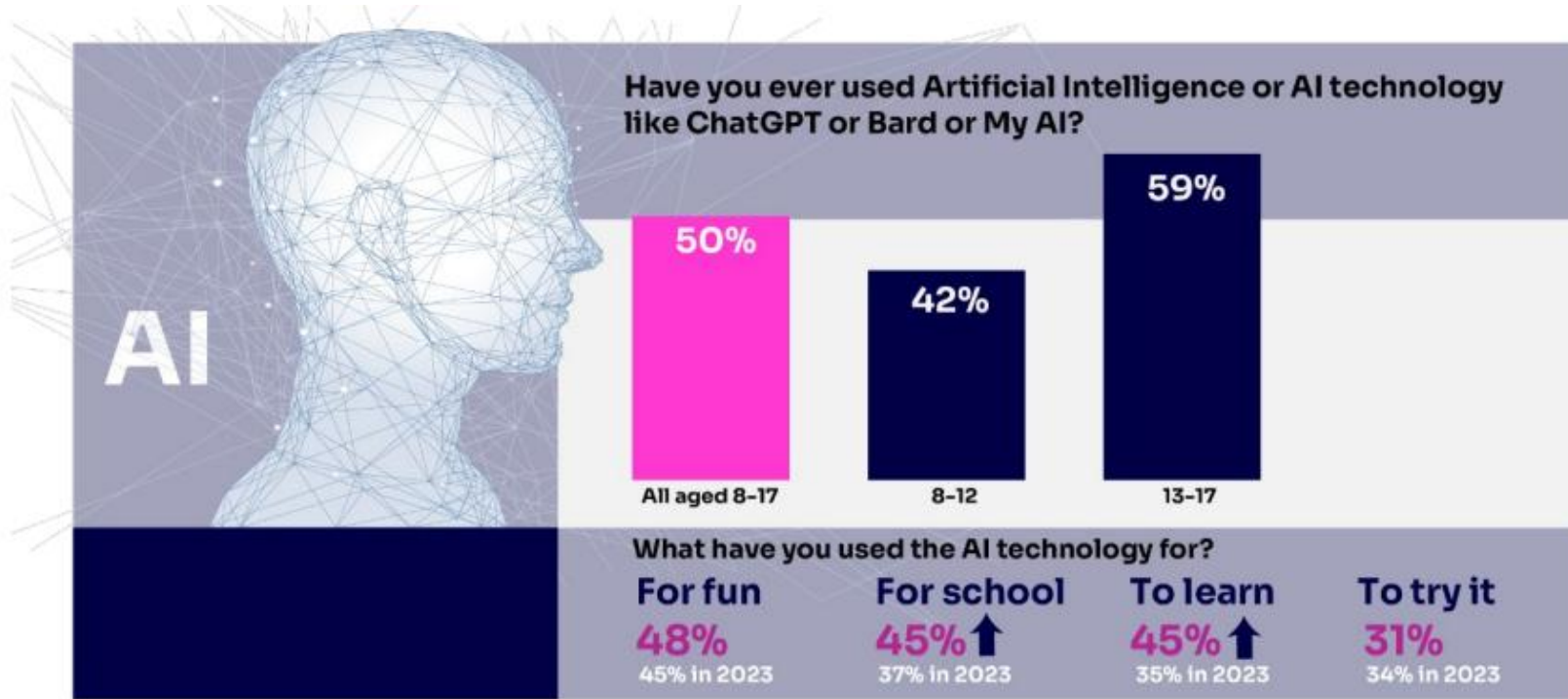
Fake News & Hoaxes

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<https://parentsafe.lgfl.net/>

# Half of children say they use artificial intelligence (AI) tools



**Childnet Cheat Sheet GenAI**  
PDF Format (844.65kB)



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<https://www.childnet.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Childnet-Cheat-Sheet-GenAI.pdf>

Source: Children and parents: media use and attitudes report 2025




# Generative AI – what do you think the risks are ?

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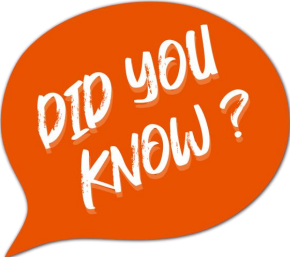
## Design the AI Girlfriend You've Always Desired

Ready to meet your new virtual AI girlfriend?  
She's eager to text you, send you pictures,  
and help you explore your deepest desires.

 **Create AI Girlfriend**



**Generative AI** – find out how nudify apps might impact young people or why a teenager might make friends with a chatbot



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[WeProtect](#)



Why not share this poster with parents?

# GEN-AI & SAFEGUARDING RISKS



## Fake Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM)

AI can create CSAM, posing serious risks to children e.g. exploitation, grooming, bullying etc.



## Adult Content via Chatbots

Chatbots can engage children in explicit adult conversations and make adult imagery available.



## Inappropriate Advice

Chatbots can give harmful or inappropriate advice e.g. mental health, dieting, physical appearance



## Exposure to Harmful or Fake Content

Fake or harmful messages promoting false ideals and narratives.



## Emotional Impact of AI Companions

AI companions can replace human interactions and r'ships risking harm to children's social and emotional wellbeing.



## Bias Reinforcing Harmful Stereotypes

AI can deepen stereotypes by reinforcing harmful biases.



## Risks of Sharing Personal Data Online

Sharing personal info with AI risks children's exposure to cyber crime.

*Gen-AI is embedded in many websites/apps & easily available to anyone. Children ARE using Gen-AI & so are exposed to these risks.*

# Financially Motivated Sexual Extortion – ‘SEXTORTION’

“I recently got tricked into sending nudes to whom I thought was a girl, but I now know to be a grown man. They threatened to post my nudes on socials unless I paid them. At first, they wanted £20 so I sent it to them. Then they came back asking for £30, £50, sometimes more.”

Boy aged 16, Childline

“I sent nudes to this boy on Snapchat. I thought I could trust him, but I was wrong cos he saved the images to his camera roll. Now he’s threatening to post them to my friends and family unless I do stuff on FaceTime. I don’t know how to handle this, I’ve never been so anxious in my life.”

Girl aged 15, Childline





Learn about FMSE



Talk with your child about FMSE



Know how to support your child and where to report if they become a victim of FMSE

### What does FMSE look like?

If your child has been approached by an offender, they may tell you that they have been:

- contacted by an online account they do not know but appears to be another child or young person
- quickly engaged in a sexually explicit conversation. This may include the offender sharing indecent content first
- pressured into taking nude or semi-nude photos or videos. Or, they may have been blackmailed with images that have been digitally manipulated or **AI-generated**
- blackmailed into sending money or meeting another financial demand, such as buying a pre-paid gift card

## Financially Motivated Sexual Extortion (FMSE): advice for parents and carers

How to talk to your child and access support if they need help

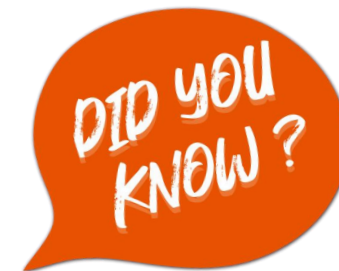


### Parents and carers template letter

Dear parent/guardian,

All schools in the UK have recently been sent information from the National Crime Agency, raising awareness of the recent rise in reporting of financially motivated sexual extortion (a type of online blackmail often known in the media as 'sextortion'). Children and young people worldwide are being targeted.

# Livestreaming



Sixteen per cent of children livestream their own videos

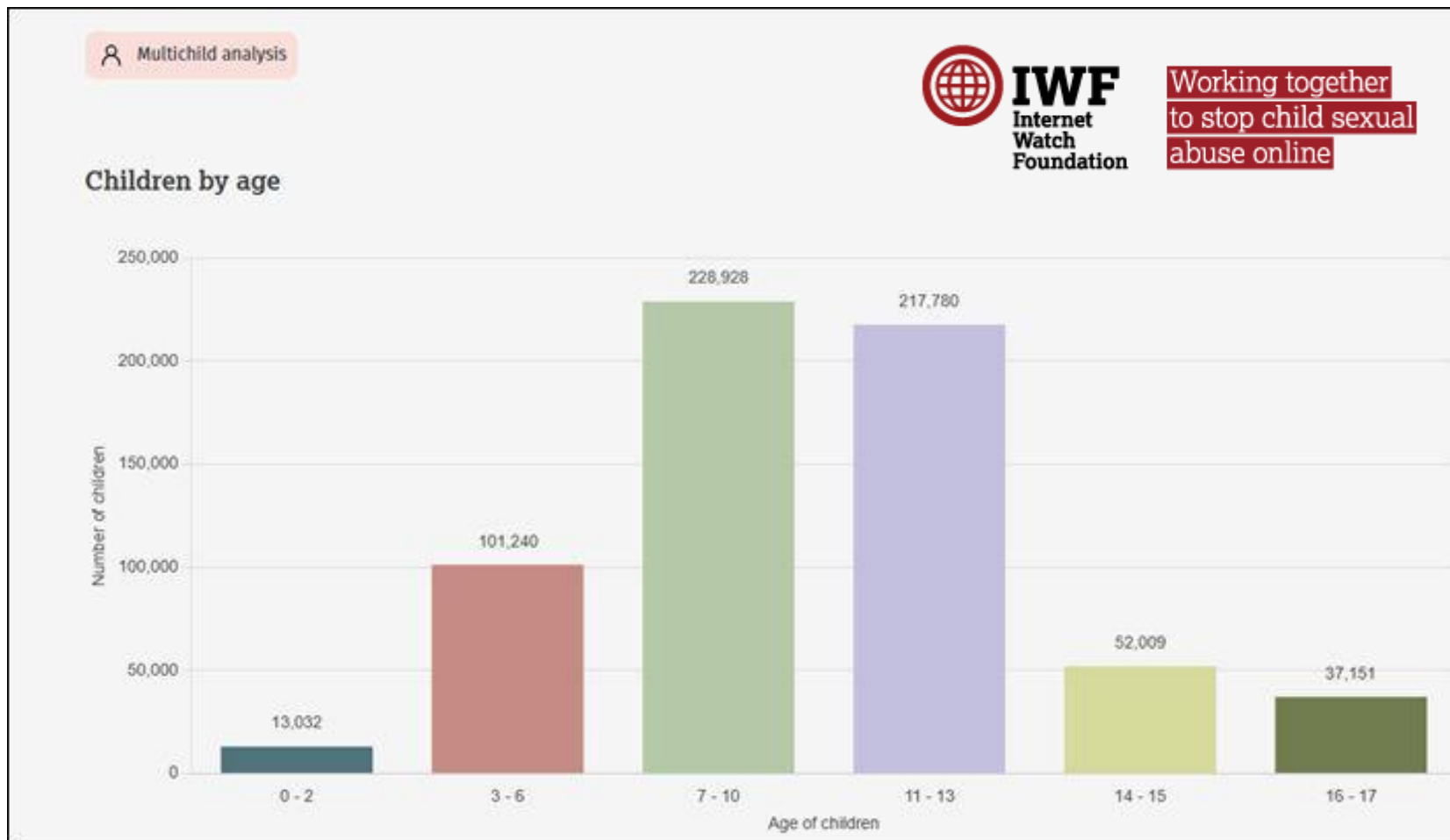
- 3-9 year-olds (1 in 10)
- 10-12 year-olds (2 – 10)



**Why does this MATTER?**

# There were more 7-10-year-olds in child sexual abuse material (CSAM) images found by IWF than 11-13s in 2024

*It can also affect younger children*



Source: IWF Annual Data & Insights Report 2024, published April 2025

# Being safer while live streaming

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- **Talk** to them about what they are sharing
- Use devices in **public spaces** e.g. lounge not bedroom
- Check privacy and safety **settings** on the app/site
- Be wary of **requests to chat in private**
- Know **Support and Reporting** functions

So, what can **YOU** do?



# Sharing Nudes / Semi-Nudes

Older girls (aged 16-18) were more likely than boys to have ever been exposed to potentially uncomfortable or unwanted types of contact:

DID YOU KNOW?

Asked to share  
naked/half-dressed  
pictures of themselves

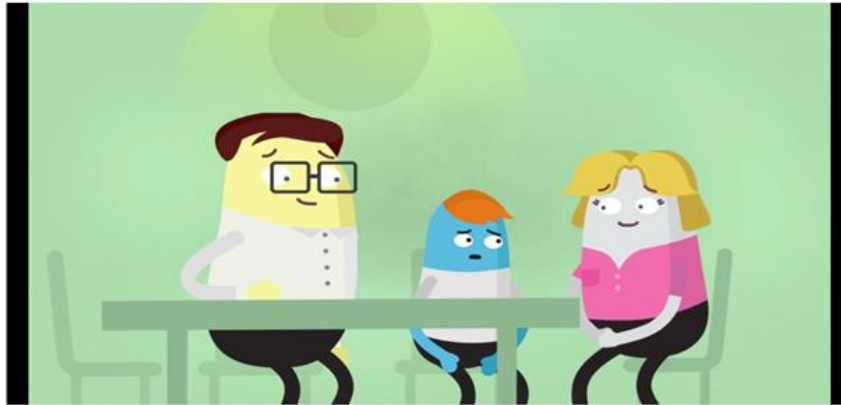
24%

Receiving pictures or  
videos of naked / half-  
dressed people

32%

# So, what can **YOU** do?

Nude Selfies: Understanding Why



Nude Selfies: Talking to your child



Nude Selfies: When should I be worried?



Nude Selfies: Where to get help



[youtu.be/XjV0lKYpakk?si=6ONdtZJRjfB6bSRj](https://youtu.be/XjV0lKYpakk?si=6ONdtZJRjfB6bSRj) – what parents and carers need to know  
[youtu.be/E5LA2nKHVZ0?si=gU3\\_jXFF51TU3vTq](https://youtu.be/E5LA2nKHVZ0?si=gU3_jXFF51TU3vTq) – when should you be worried?

# Pornography

Average age children first view pornography is 13

Substantial proportions viewed it at a much younger age – **27% by age 11 and 10% by the age of 9**

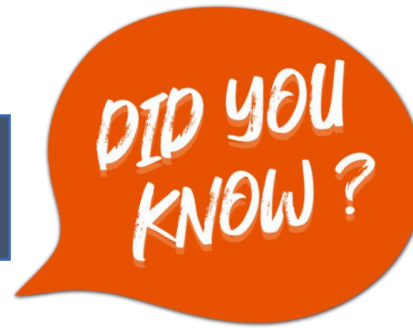
Unbearable **pressure to view hardcore** pornography even if they do not want to

Degrading acts and **violence against women**

Think it is **reflective of real life or healthy relationships**

**Pornography sites are not the only way**, or even the most popular way, that young people access online porn

Wide **prevalence of on social media platforms** such as Twitter, **Snapchat** and **Instagram**



Would you know how to talk to your child about pornography?

# UK Reporting Helplines and Services for Children and Young People

Call 101 or 999 if there is an immediate risk of harm to your child



## NCA

Young people can report concerns about child sexual abuse and exploitation to NCA



Nude image of you online?  
We can help take it down.

## Report Remove

A free tool that allows children to report nude or sexual images and videos of themselves that they think might have been shared online



## ChildLine

A free, private and confidential service where CYP can talk about anything to a trained counsellor, online or on the phone



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Go to [reporting.lgfl.net](https://reporting.lgfl.net) to find out more

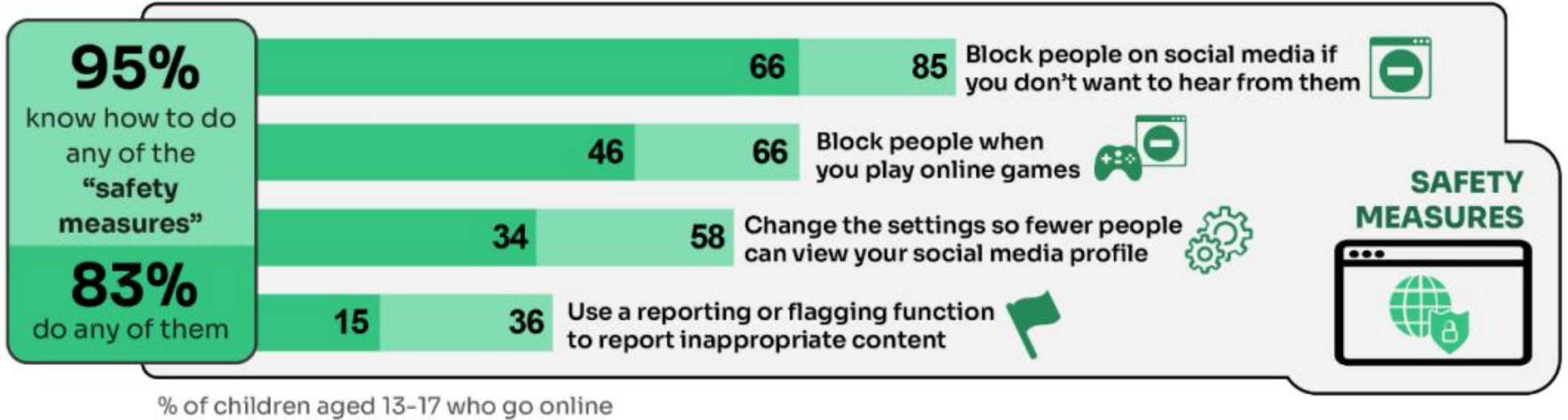


# **STAYING SAFE ONLINE AND REPORTING**

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# What do **YOUNG PEOPLE** do to **STAY SAFE ONLINE**?



**Only 15% had used a reporting or flagging function**  
(36% were aware of these functions)

Go to [reporting.lgfl.net](https://reporting.lgfl.net) to find out how to remove content from social media and where to report bullying, racial hatred, terrorism, sexual abuse and more



## Do **YOU** know **HOW TO REPORT** to apps / sites?

### Step-by-step Guides

Click on the guides for step-by-step instructions to set controls on popular devices.



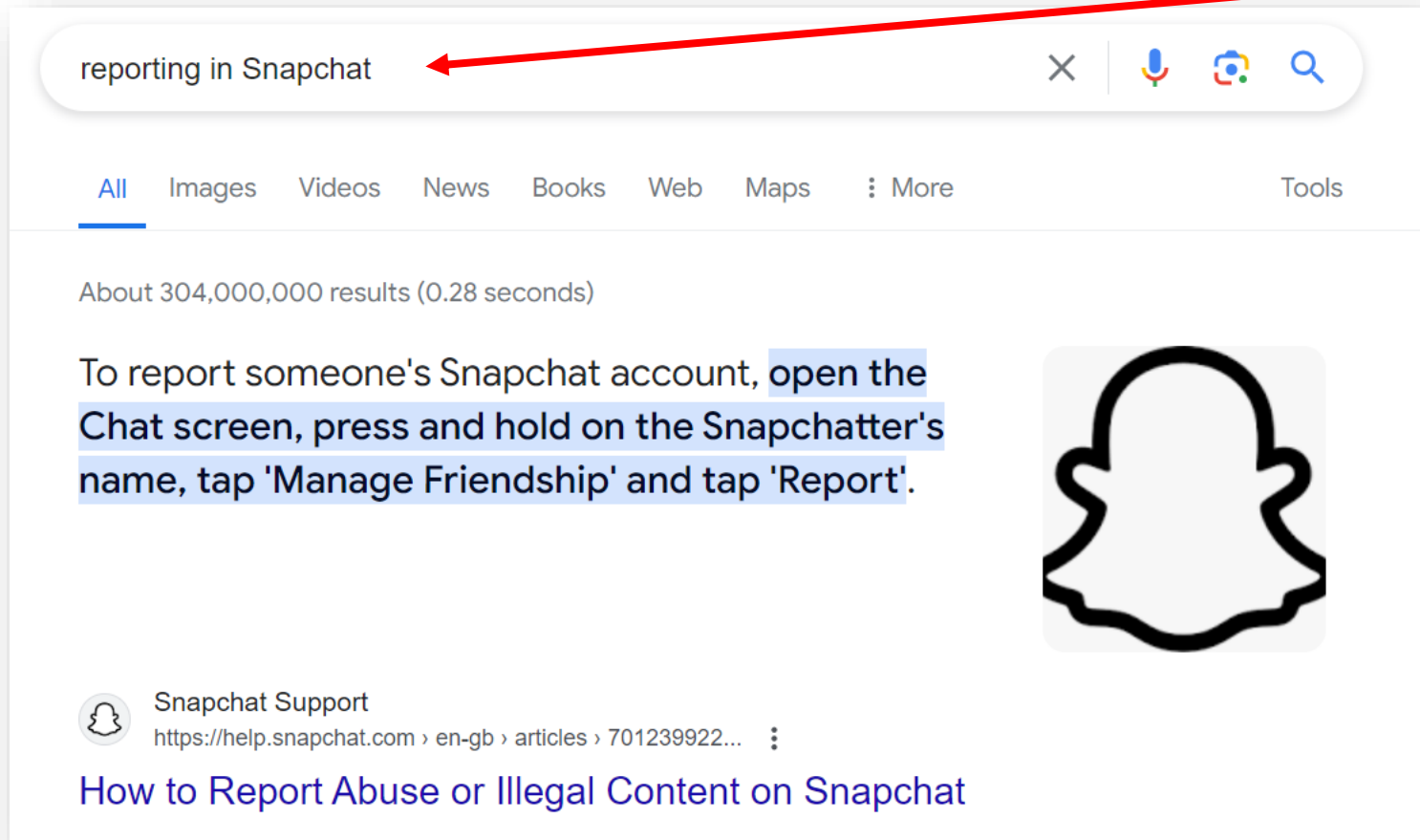
Internet Matters has helpful guides for social media apps and sites at

[internetmatters.org/parental-controls/social-media](https://internetmatters.org/parental-controls/social-media)

### Popular Parental control guides



Search our step by step guide



A simple **Google search** with the site name, e.g. **'reporting in Snapchat'** will bring up the steps to take and signpost to the reporting page

# Remember!



## Before signing up to any app/site

check that your child meets the minimum age requirement

## Remind your child to be cautious about accepting friend requests:

a real friend is someone they/you know in real life, not a 'friend' they met gaming or in a chat room.

## Stress the importance of not sharing personal information with online 'friends'

## Keep passwords confidential

## Check their privacy settings

emphasise the importance of not sharing personal information with strangers

## Report any content

e.g. a post, image or harmful, misleading or damaging comment

## Reporting doesn't guarantee immediate removal

platforms assess reported content based on their rules and policies

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# RESOURCES AND SUPPORT

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Visit [parentsafe.lgfl.net](https://parentsafe.lgfl.net) for tips and ideas to help parents:

- Manage **screen time**
- Set controls and **settings**
- Understand **apps and games**
- Talk to children about **risk** - from bullying & sharing content, to extremism & gangs

# parentsafe.lgfl.net



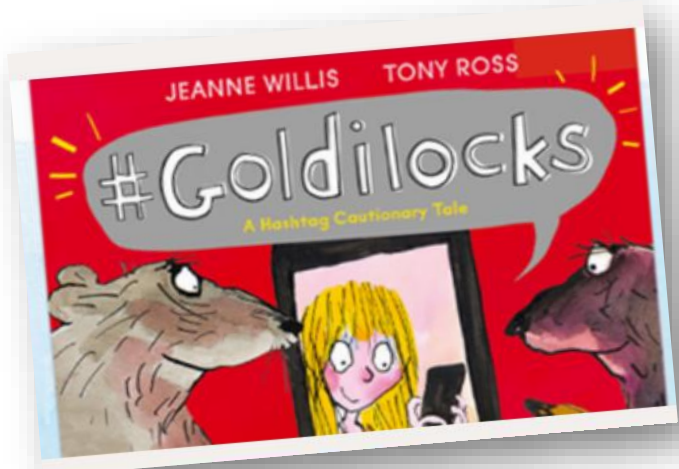
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# TALKING TO CHILDREN ABOUT LIFE ONLINE

Find conversation starters, story time ideas and top tips to reinforce key safety messages at [parentsafe.lgfl.net](https://parentsafe.lgfl.net)



Discussion Guide

Thorn have 18 topic-based discussion guides with questions to help start conversations!



# PARENTSAFE

*Keeping your children safe: online & beyond*



# SIX TOP TIPS

For Parents To Keep Your Children Safe Online

## SafeguardED

Most parents & carers think their children and young people spend too much time on devices. **DON'T FEEL BAD!** Lots of it is perfectly healthy anyway. Instead, follow these tips to keep them safe, happy and healthy.

### Don't worry about screen time; aim for screen quality

Scrolling through social media isn't the same as making a film or story, or video calling Grandma. Use the Children's Commissioner's 'Digital Five A Day' to plan or review each day together.



### Check the safety settings are turned on



Whether it's your home internet, mobile devices, consoles, apps or games, there are lots of settings to make them safer. The key ones are - can they chat to strangers, can they video chat or 'go live', are their posts public? What about safe search and Youtube? See [parentsafe.lgfl.net](https://parentsafe.lgfl.net) for more.

### Get your children to show you their apps and games



You don't need to know all about the latest app or game, but if your child shows you what they are doing and with whom, you'll probably see if it's appropriate or not. Remember 18 games are not more advanced - they are harmful to children! For parent guides to apps, including recommendations for kidsafe apps and video platforms, search for **Common Sense Media** reviews.

### Don't try to hide news about scary things in the news



If you don't talk about it, your children might read inappropriate pages, believe scare stories or simply catastrophise in their heads. Why not watch **Newsround** together and talk about how they feel - there is guidance from **Childline** to help you.