



TALKING TO YOUR CHILD ABOUT LIFE ONLINE

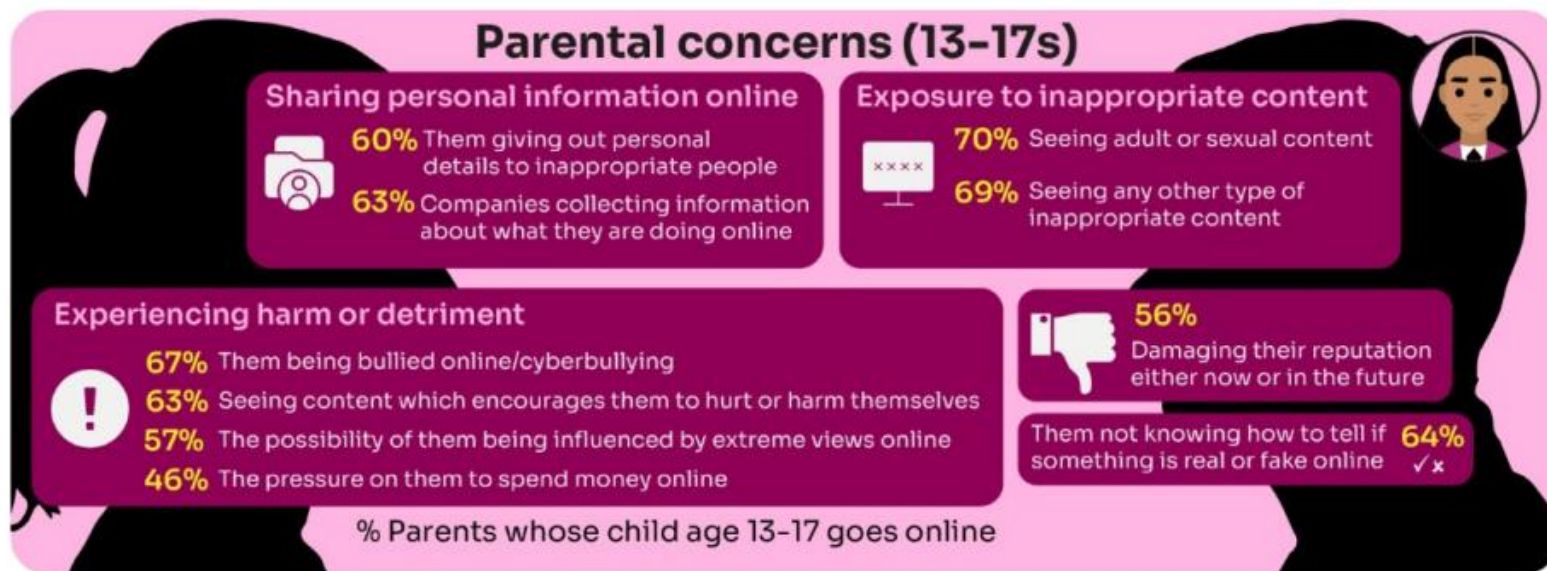
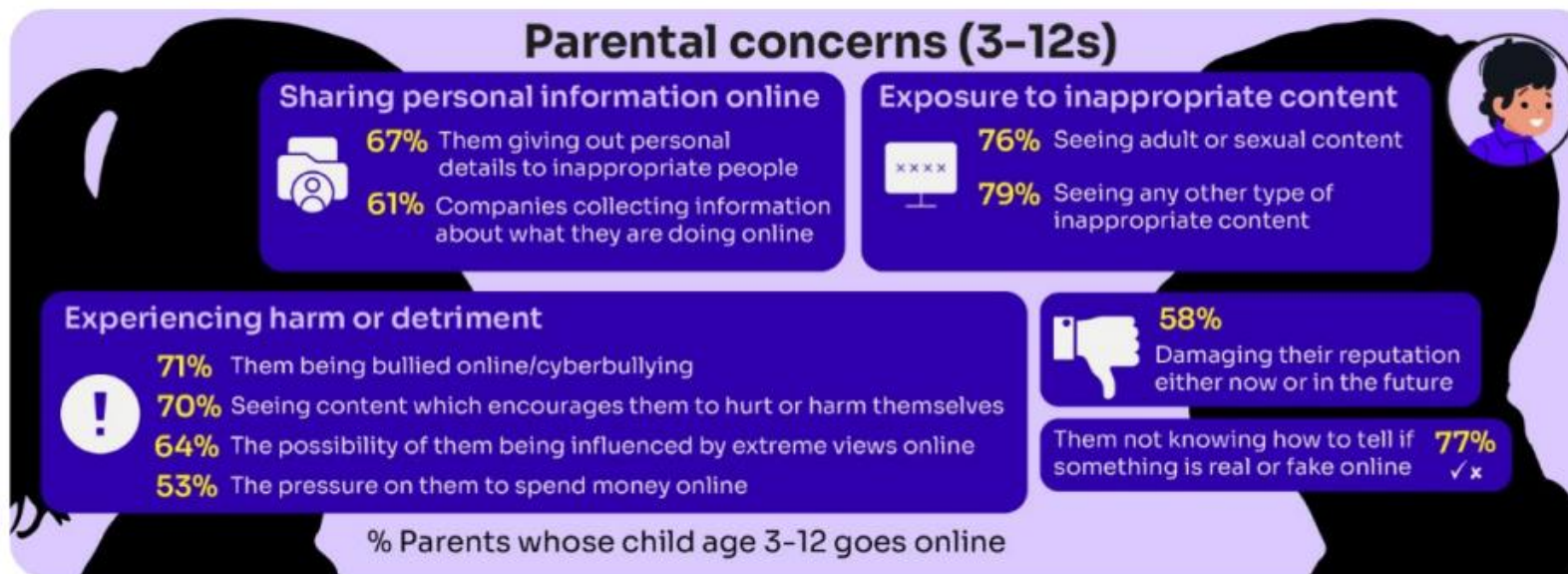


What are you most **WORRIED** about when your child is **ONLINE**?



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

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





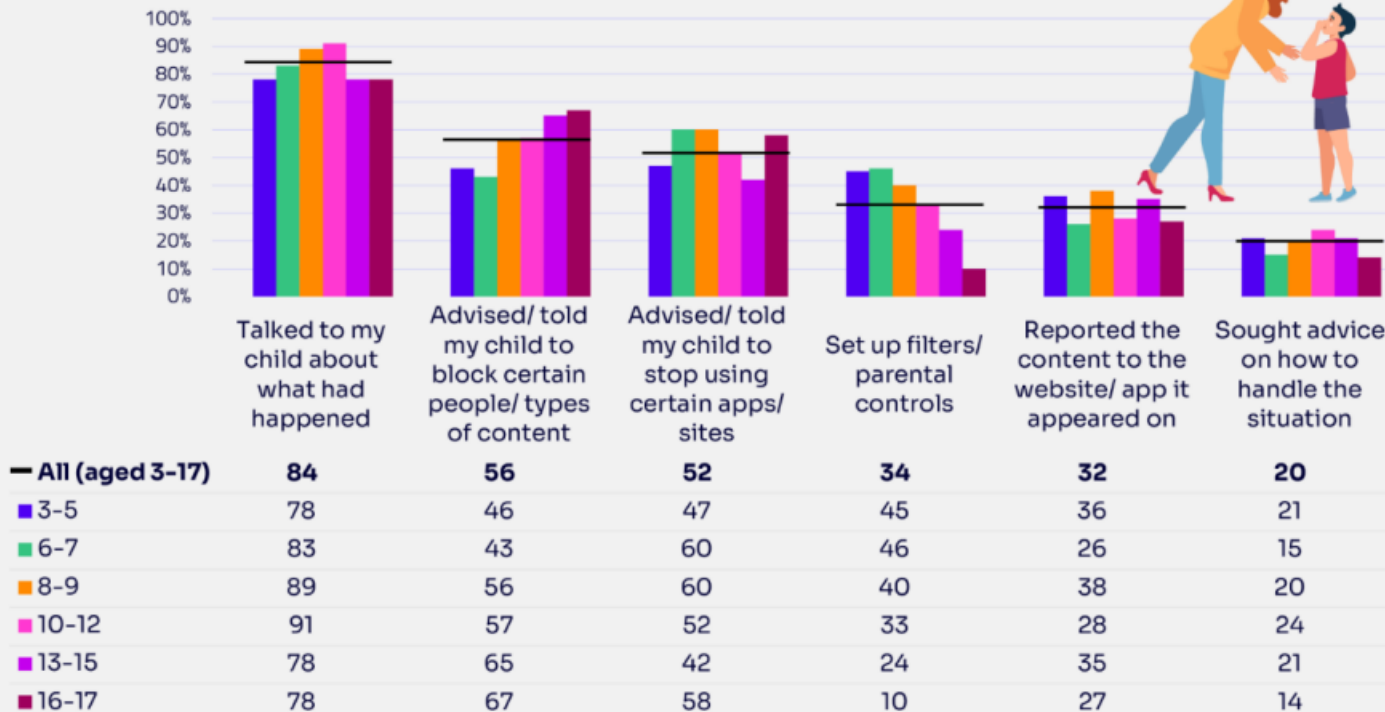
Are you **CONFIDENT** to **TALK TO YOUR CHILD**? Is your child confident to **TALK TO YOU**?

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

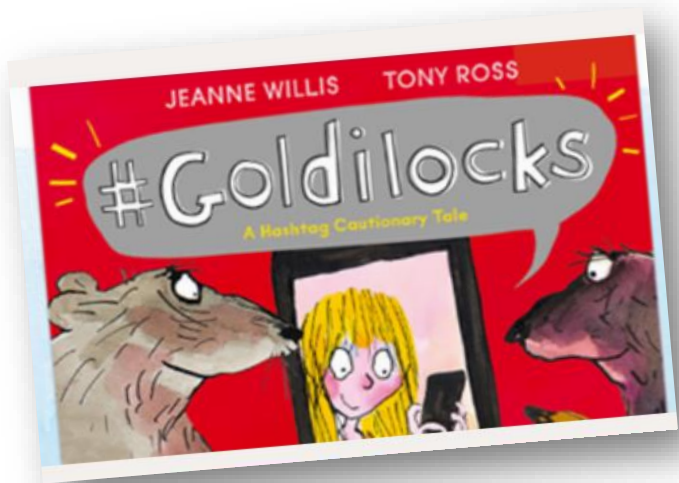
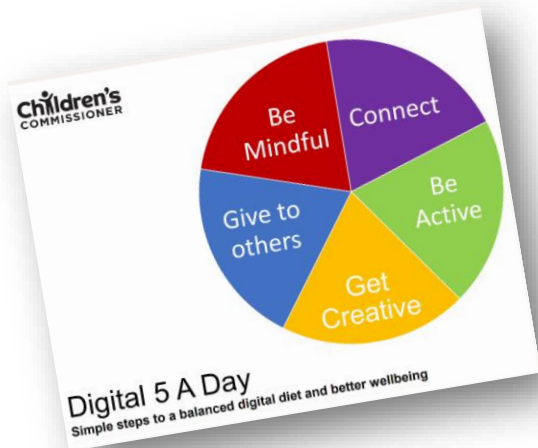
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SafeguardED


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



Discussion Guide



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



PARENTSAFE

Keeping your children safe: online & beyond

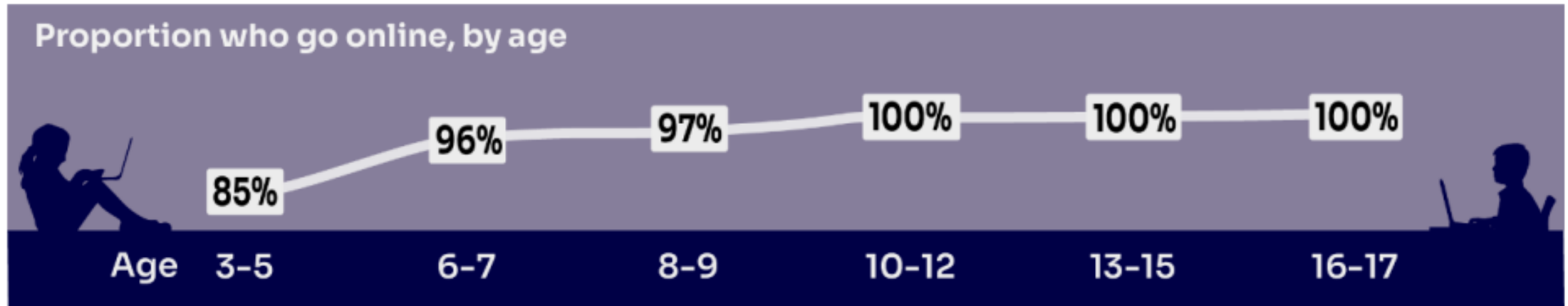




DEVICE USE AND OWNERSHIP



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**

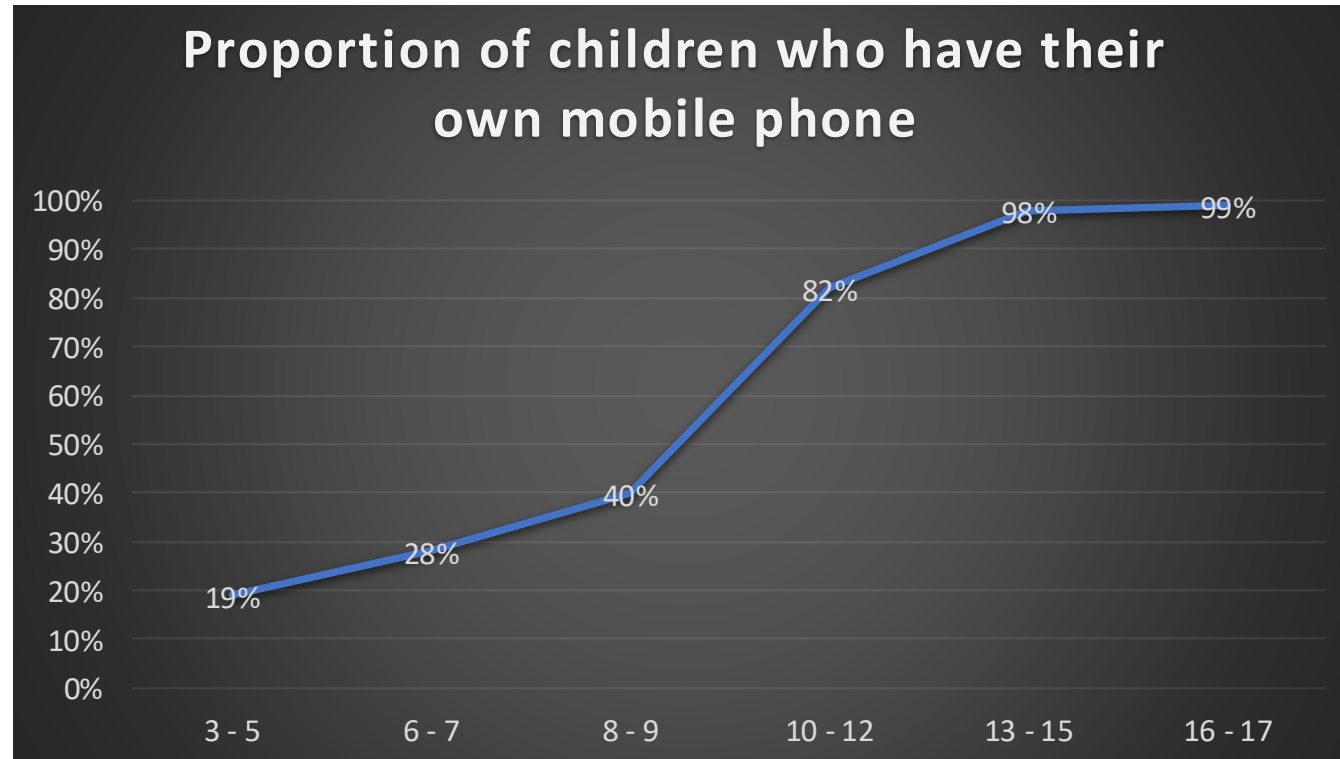
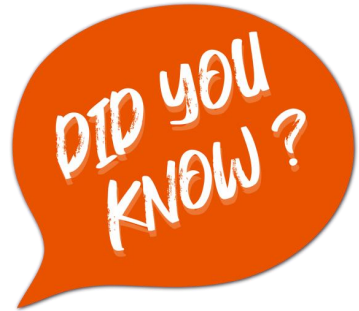




Does your child have their **OWN MOBILE PHONE?** If so, is it a **SMART PHONE?**



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

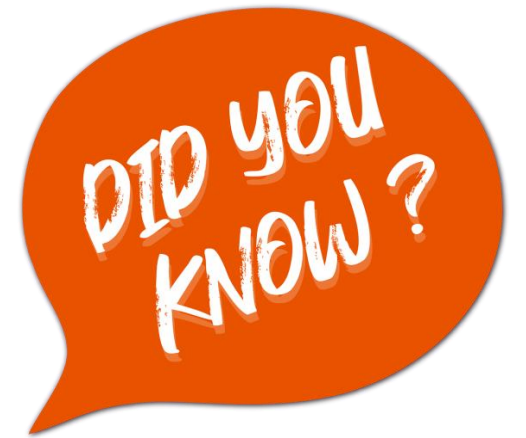
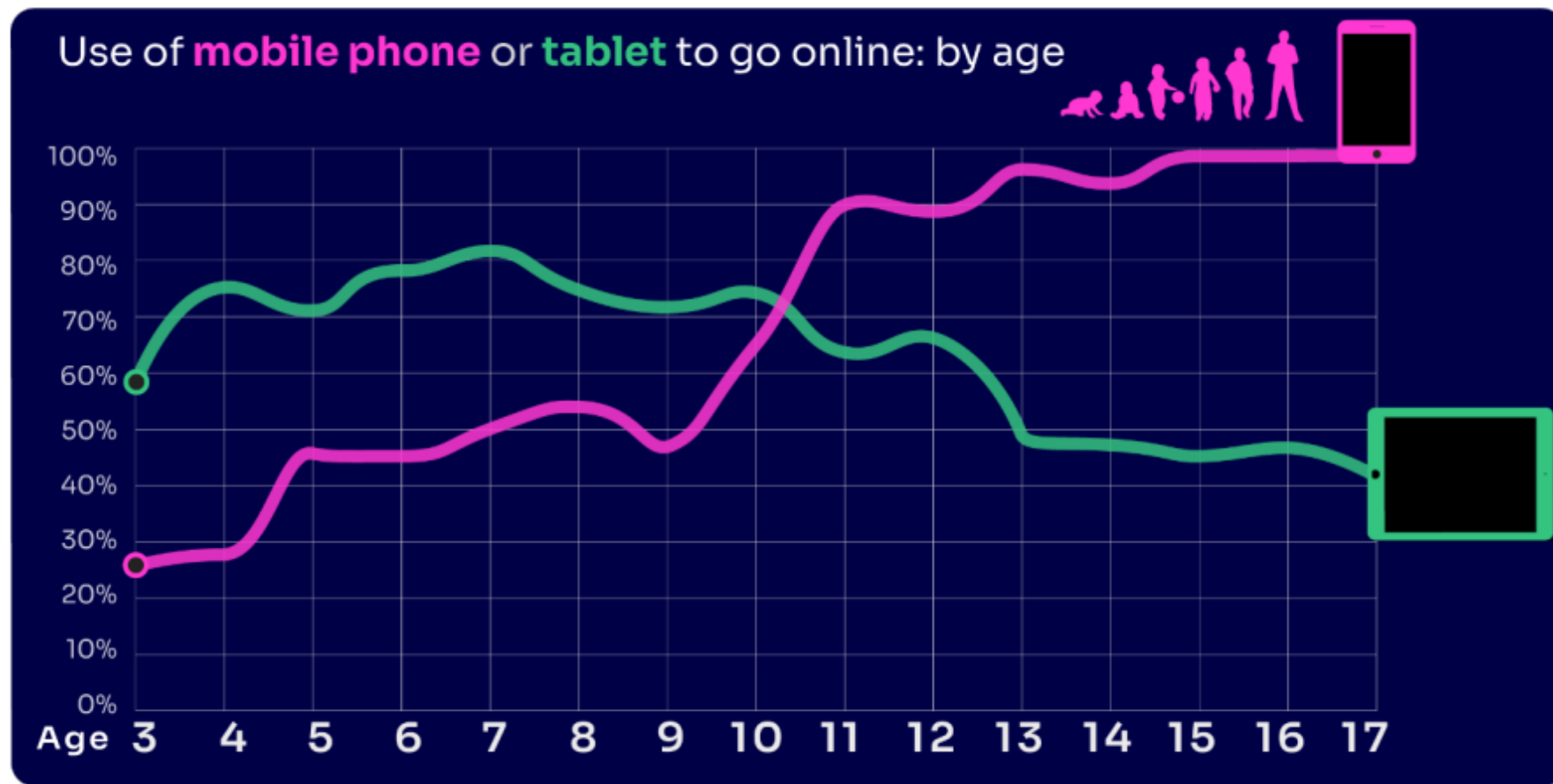


REMEMBER IT'S YOUR CHOICE

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**.



To help you with the transition of pupils from primary to secondary, why not download our **FREE Leaflet for parents:**

- understanding **risk**
- using **tech for good**
- **healthy habits** and tips
- **when best** to get a phone

Secondary school ready?

Pointers for family conversations about safety

Use and watch good tech

- Choose technology that supports learning – e.g. maths, languages and BBC Bitesize.
- Enjoy quality TV as a family - avoid endless short-reel videos on individual devices. For ideas see: commonsensemedia.org
- Ask your school for device recommendations.

Follow school phone policy

- Read the school's policy to support the school and reinforce the messages at home.
- Consider, does your child have the skills to manage a smart phone? Would a more basic phone be better to start with?
- Agree Home Rules for device use too – such as: familyagreement.lgfl.net

Form good daily habits

- Limit gaming to the weekends – school nights will be busy with homework and clubs.
- Follow minimum age restrictions on apps and games.
- Avoid mindless scrolling. Be mindful of what you digitally consume.
- Read quality books at bedtime.
- Create a study area at home without mobile devices.
- Keep phones and gaming out of bedrooms.
- Buy an alarm clock and consider a "wake up" alarm.



Real online harms

The NSPCC calls the internet the "Wild West," because extreme and harmful content is easily accessible on mainstream social media and contact with strangers via platforms and games is all too frequent. Children don't always understand the meaning of words nor the impact of viewing/hearing extreme content. They get excited by new friendship groups and often struggle to self-regulate on these highly addictive apps, which nudge children to share photos, videos and location. Schools have behaviour policies which include expectations of online behaviour. Children who reuse rude words they've heard online or share inappropriate content could face serious consequences.

- Be involved and set security passcodes on children's devices. Consider limiting access to this 'junk food' type tech.



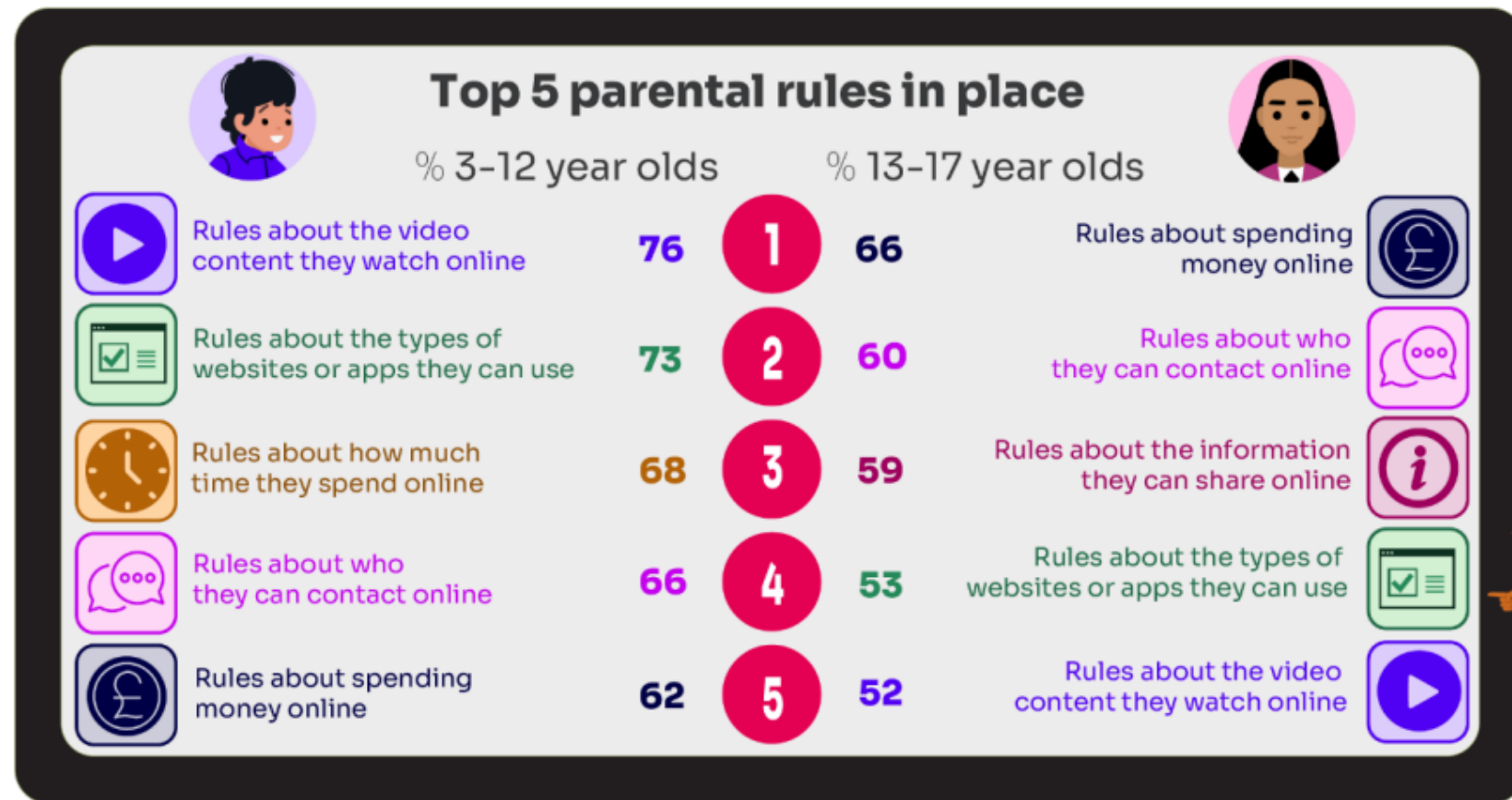
SUPERVISION AND PARENTAL CONTROLS



What **RULES** do **YOU SET** about being online?

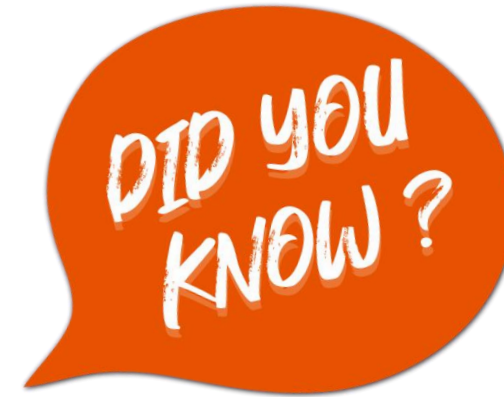
What do you do that **WORKS**?

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



parentsafe.lgfl.net

Download it at 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: *22nd July*

Date we will review this: *22nd 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 who's children go online)

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

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



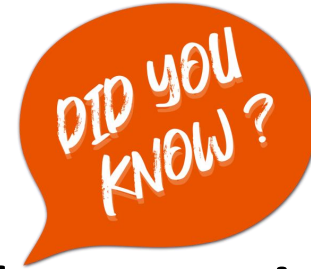
**Asking about what they are
doing or have been doing online**

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

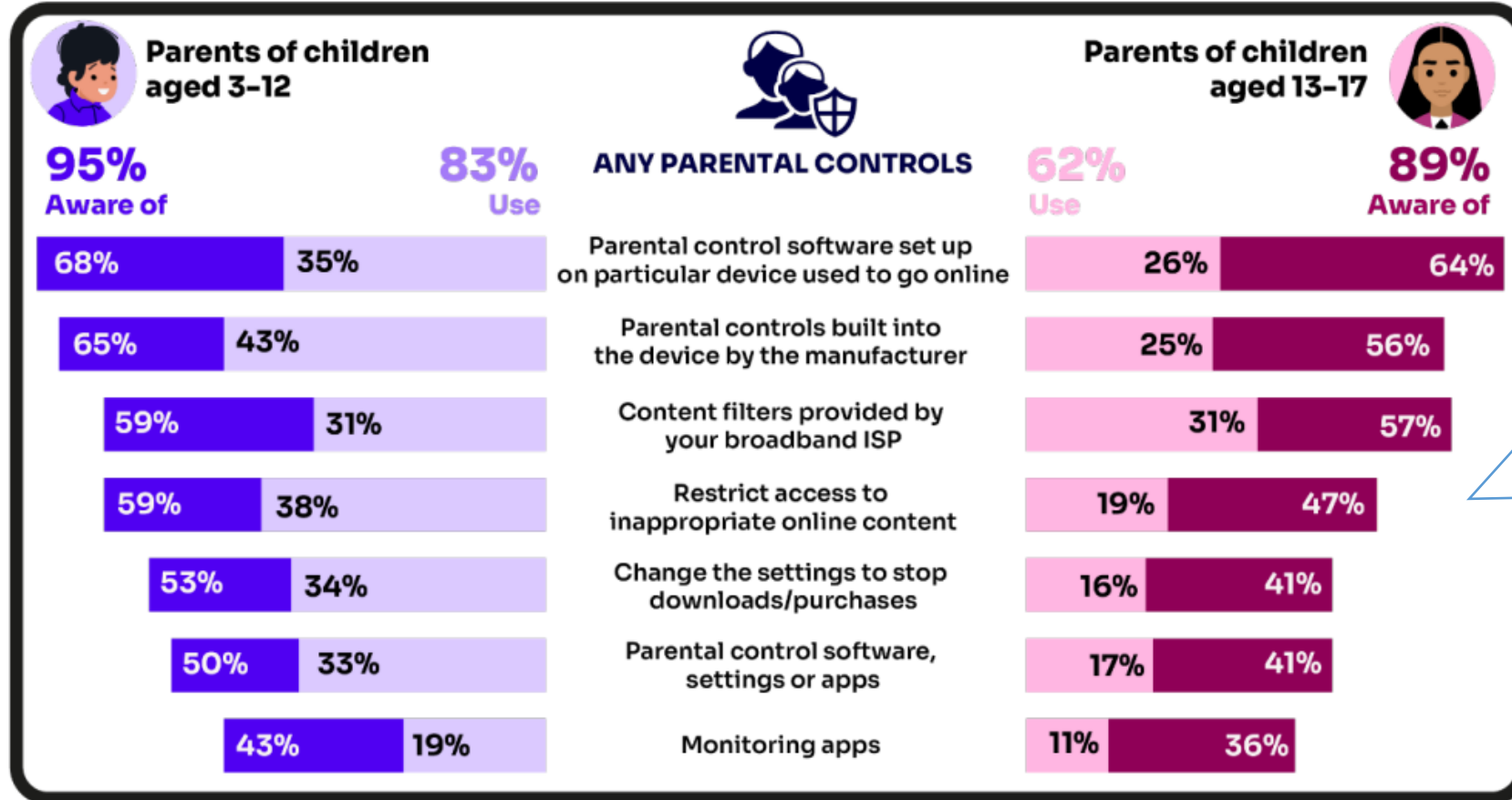
They are important because they allow you to:

- **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 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

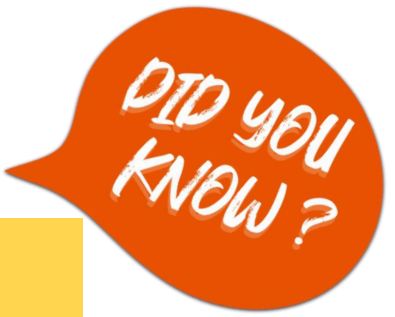
Video games & consoles

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



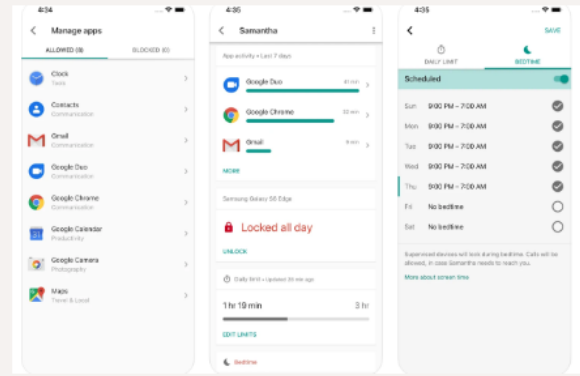
SAFE SETTINGS, CONTROLS & MONITORING

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?).



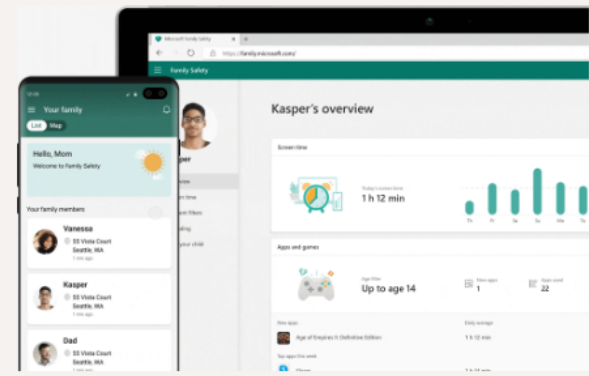
Apple Screen Time

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

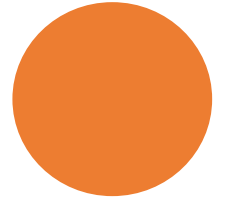


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Visit parentsafe.lgfl.net/ for additional advice and tips on settings and controls for all devices

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?

"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/ 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 - try 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.

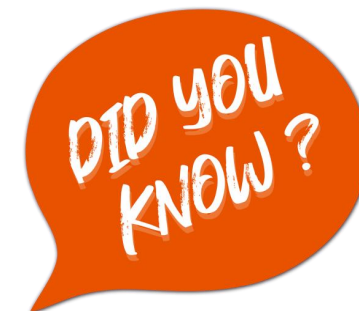


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How does your child feel about **YOUR SCREENTIME vs THEIRS?**



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

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





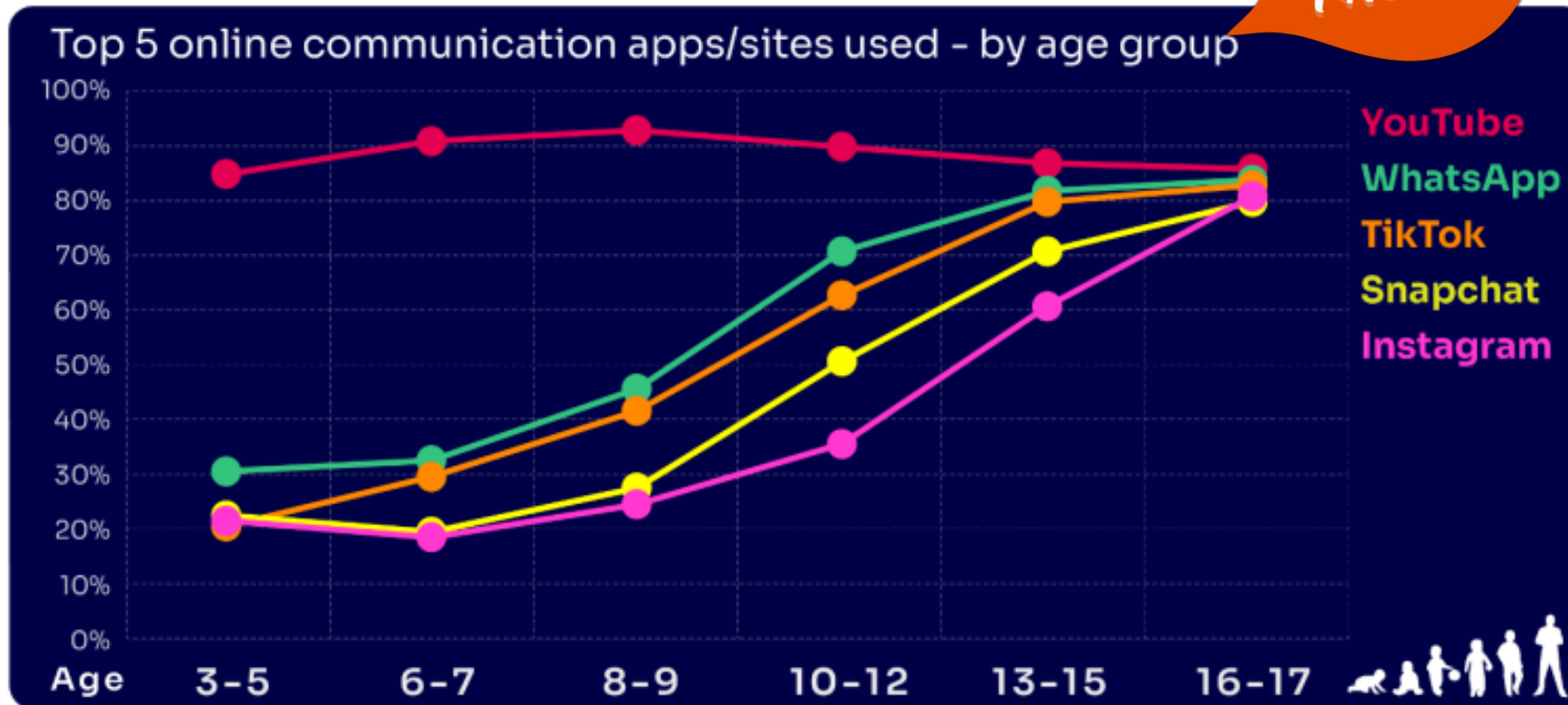
SOCIAL MEDIA AND GAMING



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%)



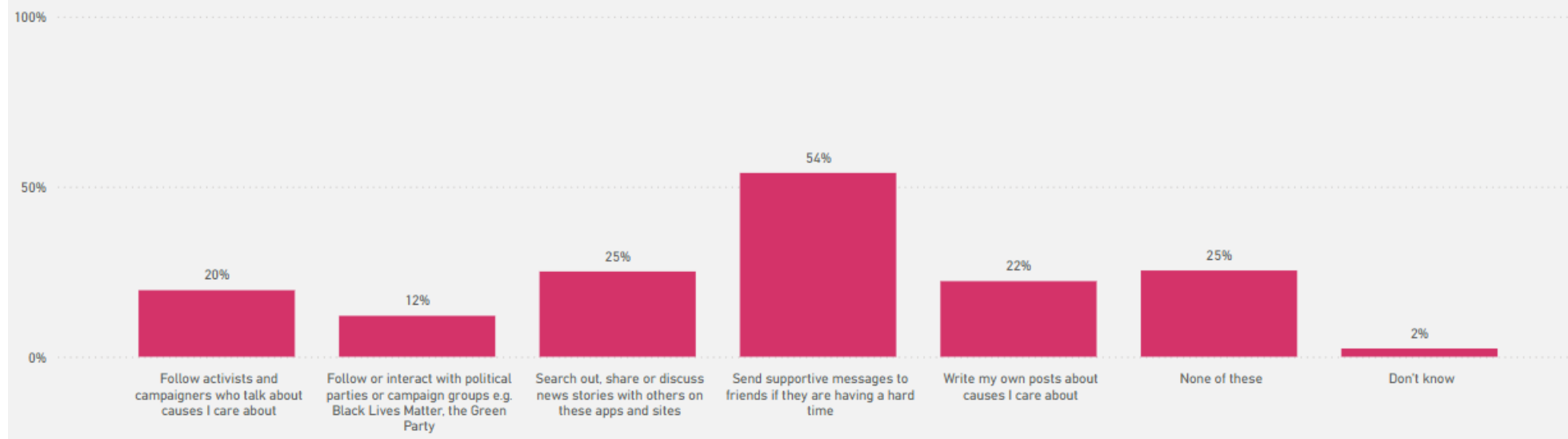
KNOW WHAT THEY DO on social media?

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?

● % of respondents





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:

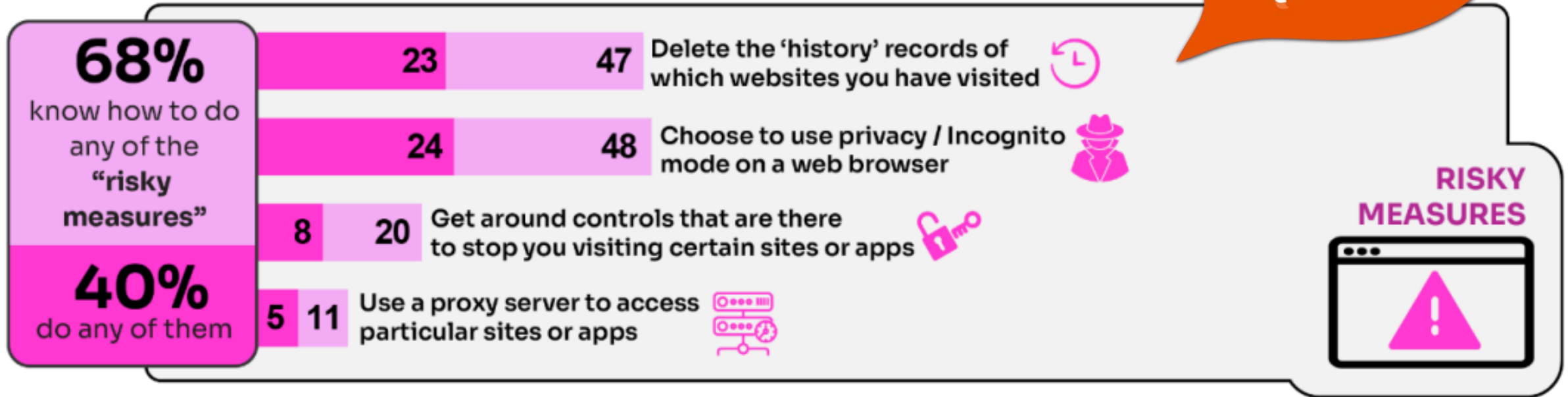
(23%) said it was because one account was **just for parents/family** to see

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



WHY is this 'RISKY'?

DID YOU KNOW?



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?



WhatsApp safety guide for parents



13+	58%	37%
WhatsApp's minimum age in the UK	Kids aged 3-17 who use WhatsApp	Kids under 13 who use WhatsApp

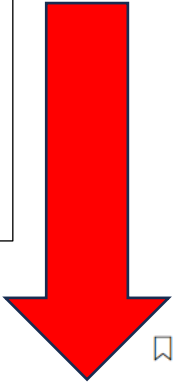
5 tips to keep kids safe on WhatsApp

-  **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.

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



Movies	TV	Books	Games	Podcasts	Apps	YouTube	Parent Tips and FAQs	Celebrating Co
By Age			By Topic			By Platform		
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



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)

See full review



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

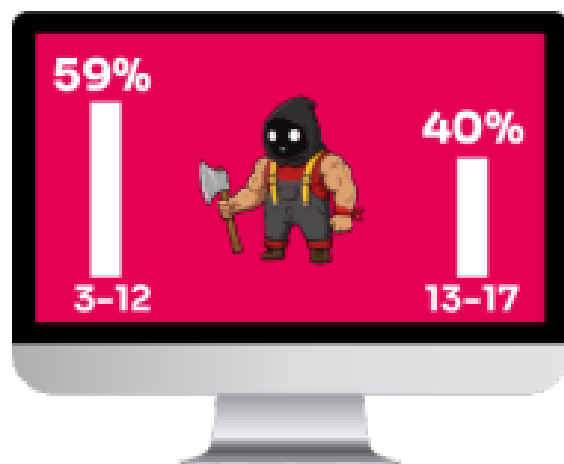
- Are you familiar with who they are in **contact** with whilst playing games?
- Have you asked about the **chat** facility?
- Do you know the **content** and **age restrictions** for these games?





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

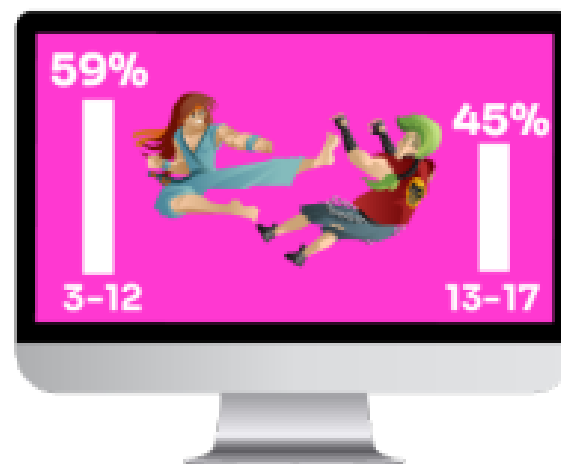
Parental concerns about gaming (% of parents of children who game)



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



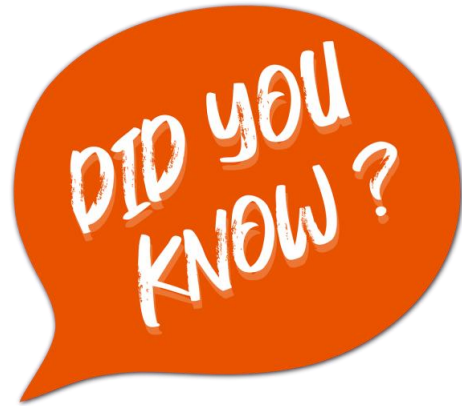
The possibility of them being bullied by other players



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."



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

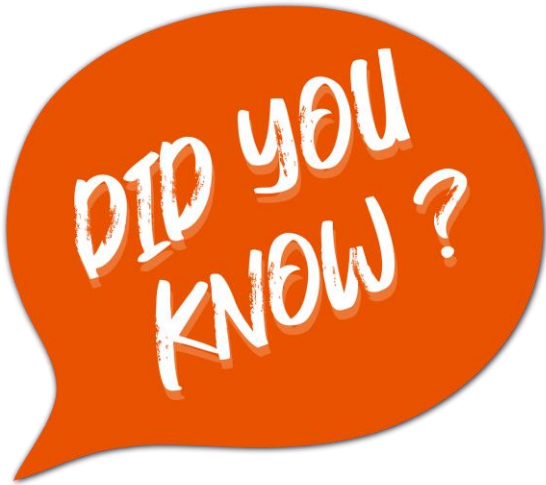
How can **YOU GET INVOLVED?**



- 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.

What about YOUNG PEOPLE?

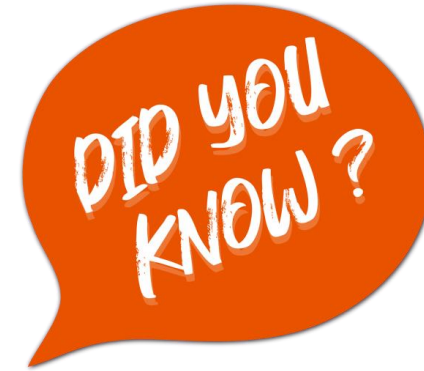
- Three quarters **(75%) of children are aware of minimum age** requirements
- A third **(33%) of 8-17 yr-olds admit to giving a fake age online** to access a new app/site
- Up to a **quarter had changed their date of birth** on their profile since initially setting it up
- **25% of 8-12 yr-olds were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

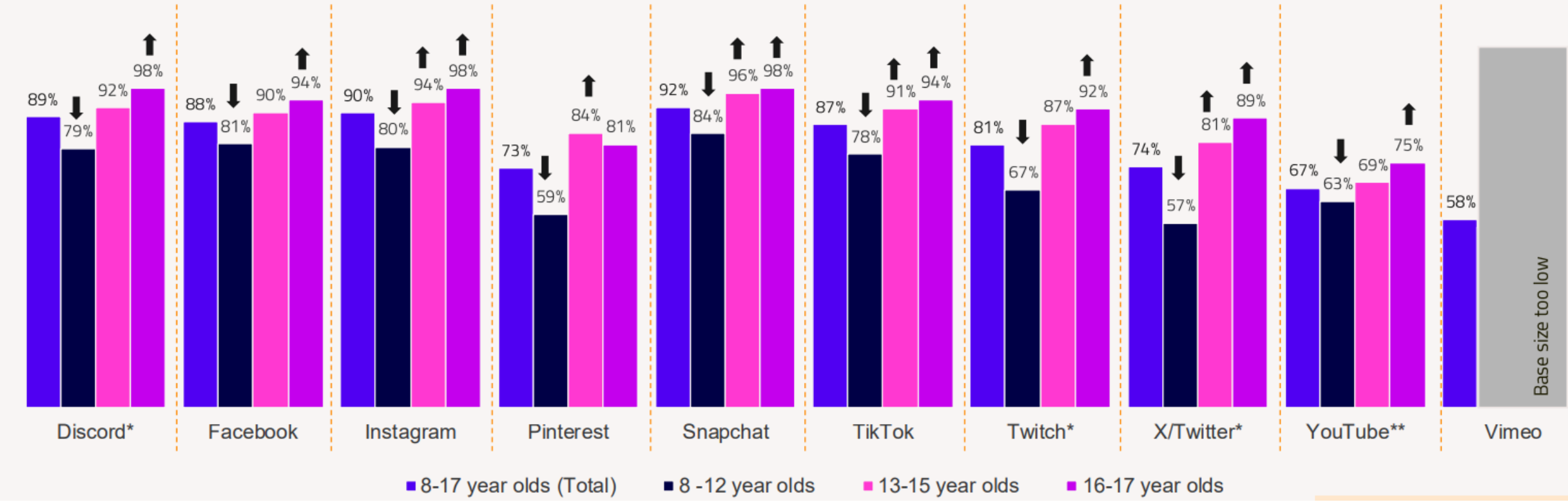


- YouTube/YouTube Kids (44%)
- WhatsApp (23%)
- TikTok (23%)
- The proportion of 8-9s with an Instagram profile increased from 8% in 2023 to 14% in 2024

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):

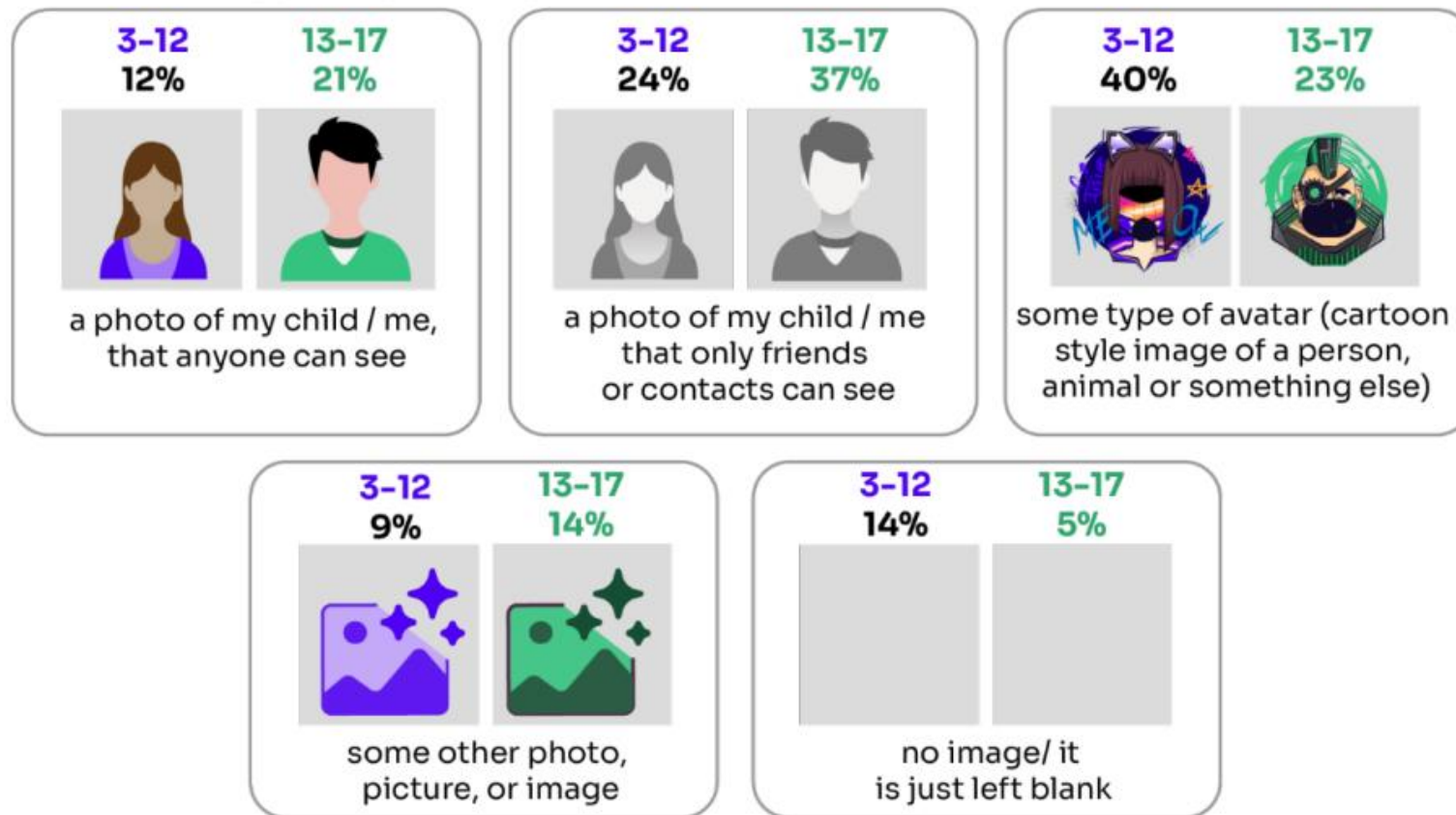




Do you know what they **SHARE**?

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

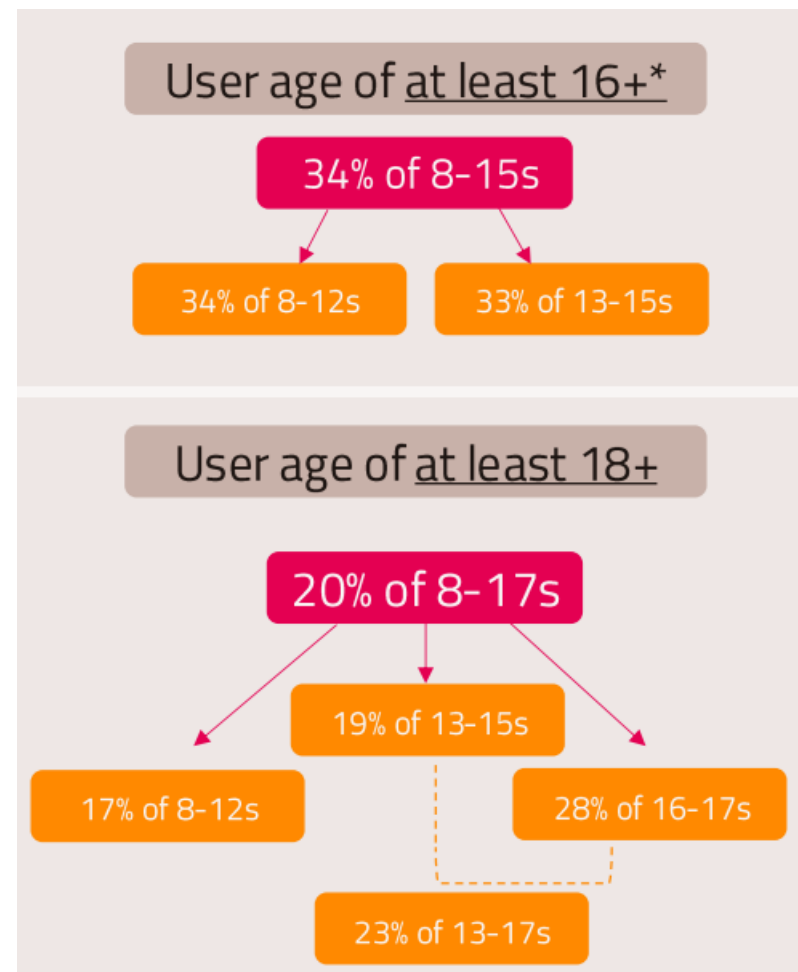
Type of profile picture used (among those with a profile)





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.**

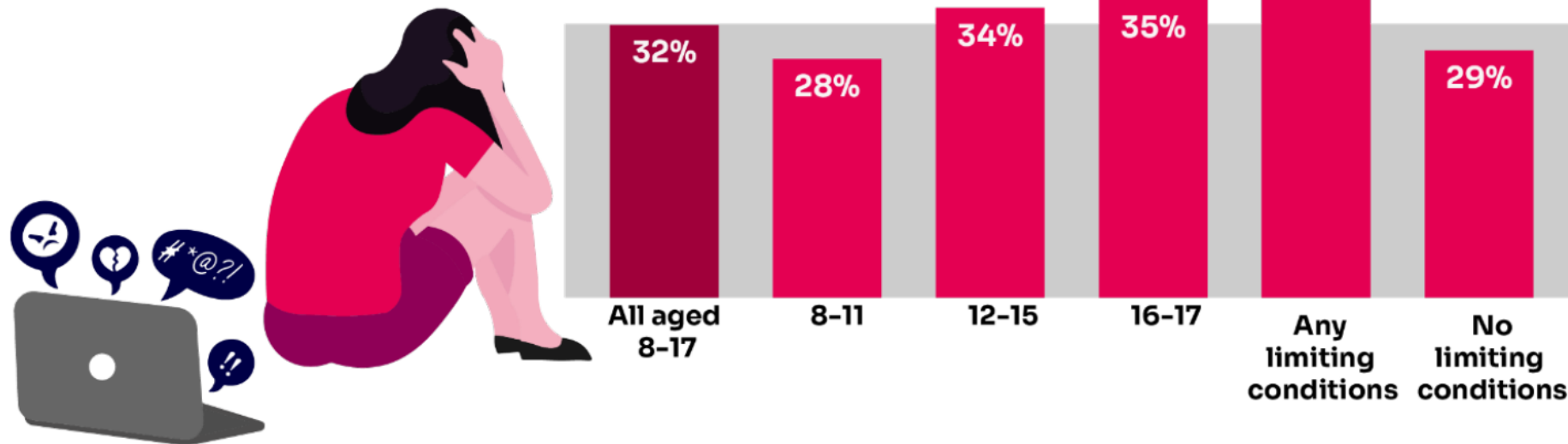




RISKS AND NEGATIVE EXPERIENCES

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**

**Disinformation
Misinformation**
what can you believe?

**Sexual
extortion**

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

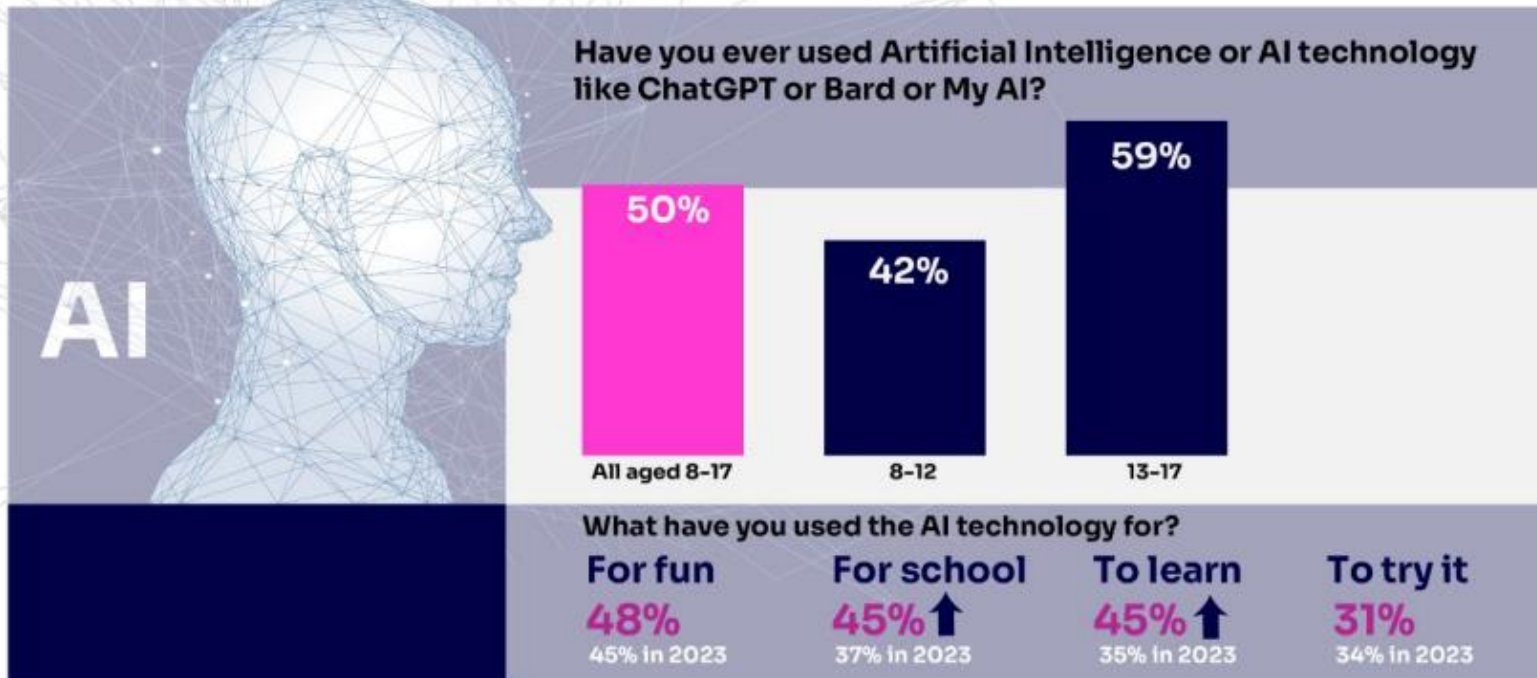
Bullying

Extremism & Radicalisation

Gangs & County Lines

Fake News & Hoaxes

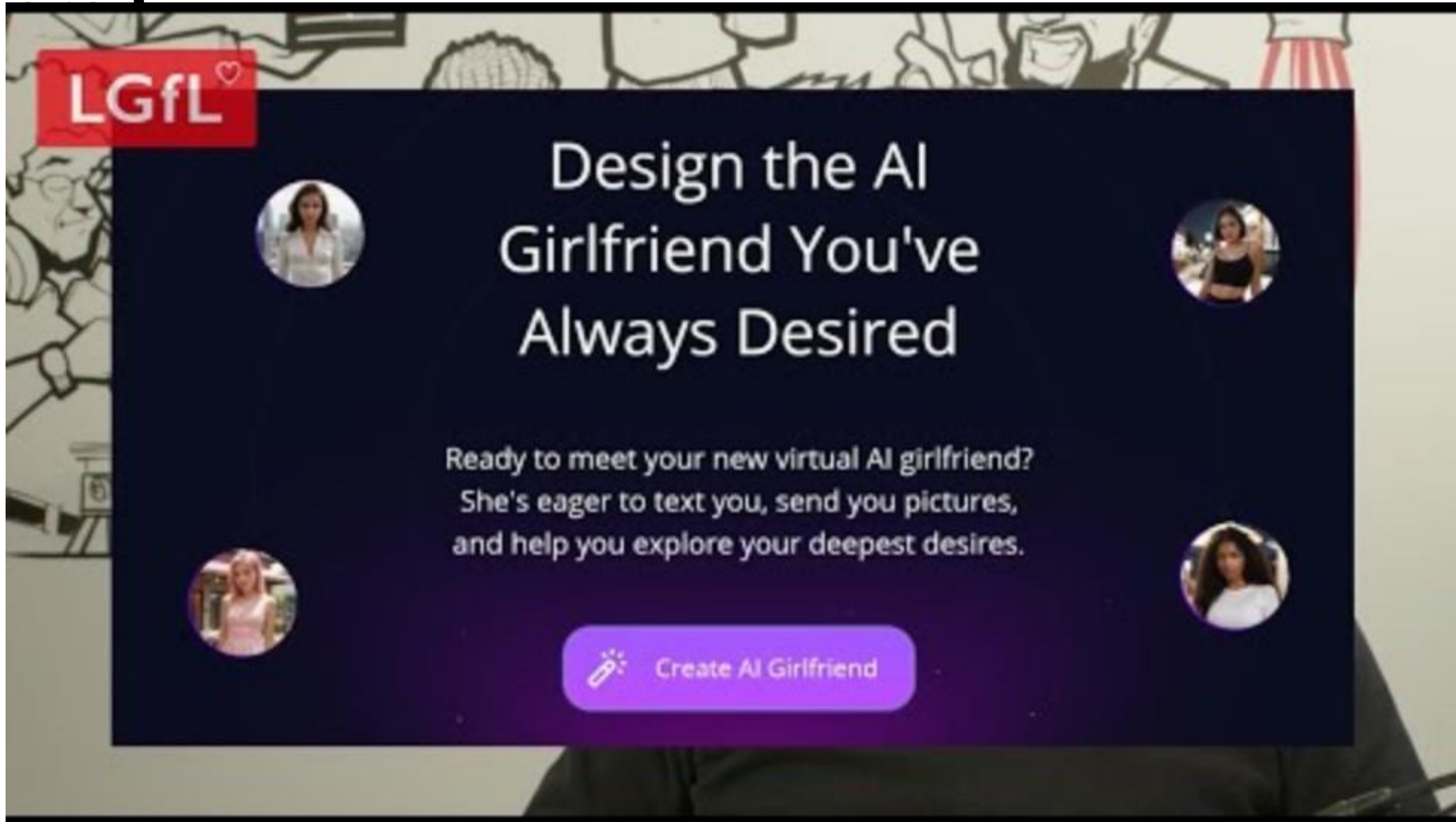
Half of children say they use artificial intelligence (AI) tools



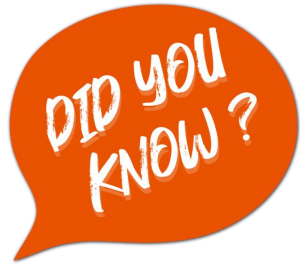
Childnet Cheat Sheet GenAI
PDF Format (844.65kB)



Generative AI – what do you think the risks are ?



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



SafeguardED

[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

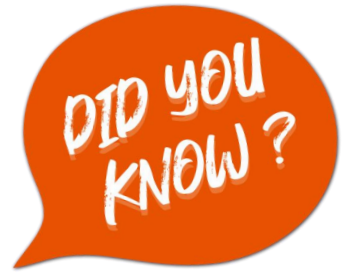


Parents and carers template letter

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

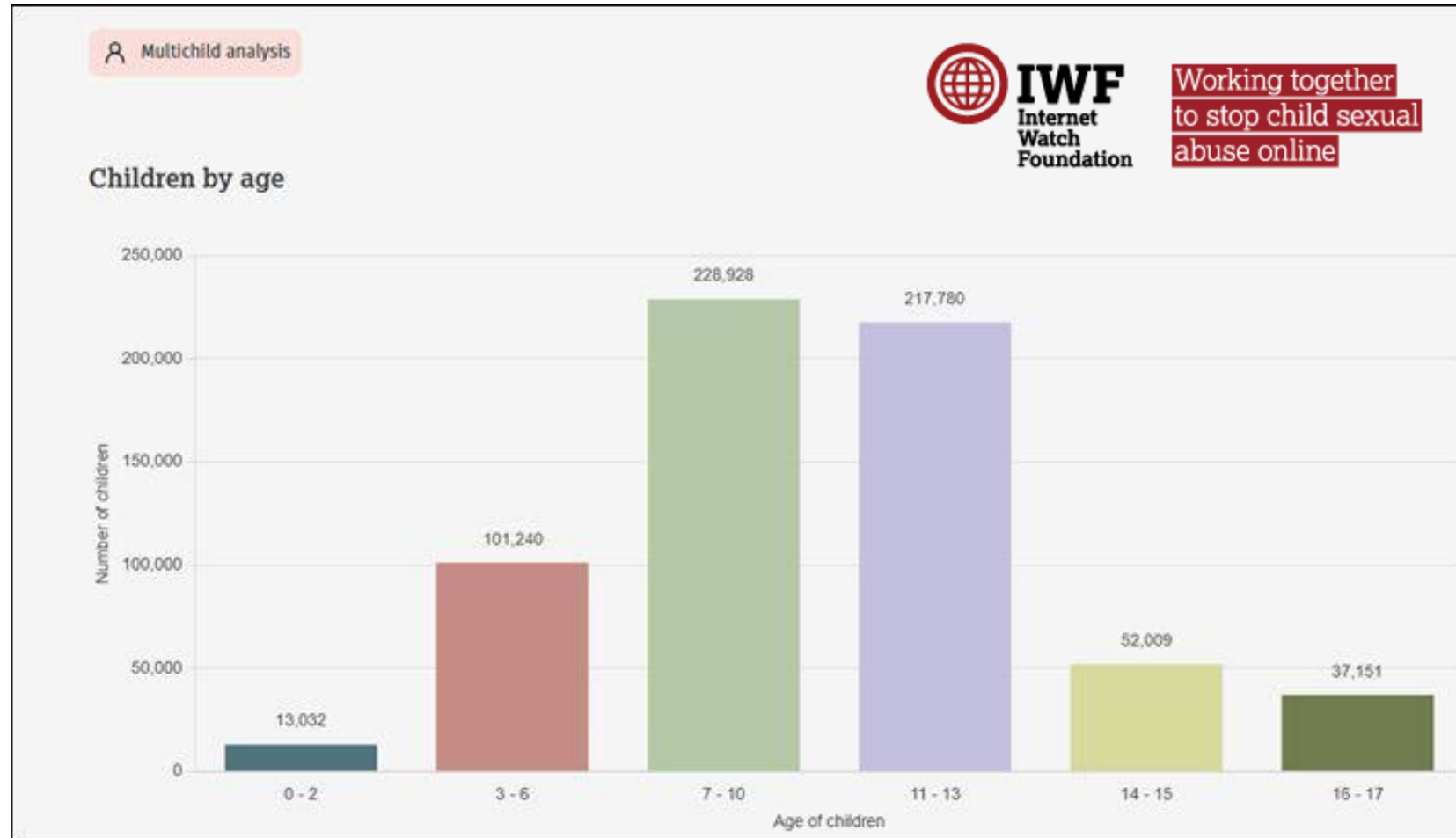
- **3-9 year-olds (1 in 10)**
- **10-12 year-olds (2 – 10)**



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



Being safer while live streaming



- **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%

Early in the year: Taylor (13) received messages from people she did not know that **included nude images or inappropriate messages.**

“I’d probably get one or two messages a month. They want [to add you on Snapchat] because on Snapchat, you can send pictures that you can’t get away with on Instagram.”

End of year: She had taken steps to reduce this happening by **no longer adding people on Snapchat after they had messaged her on Instagram or using Snapchat’s Quick Add feature to talk to strangers.**

*“It [receiving an inappropriate message from a stranger] hasn’t happened in a long time.
Maybe once in the last year...
It doesn’t happen much anymore because I don’t really talk to people I don’t know any more.”*

One 15-year-old* who contacted Childline said:

[NSPCC Targeting of Girls Online Report](#)

“I’ve been sent lots of inappropriate images online recently, like pictures of naked people that I don’t want to see. At first I thought they were coming from just one person, so I blocked them. But then I realised the stuff was coming from loads of random people I don’t know. I’m going to try and disable ways people can add me, so hopefully I’ll stop getting this stuff.”

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 – what parents and carers need to know
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**

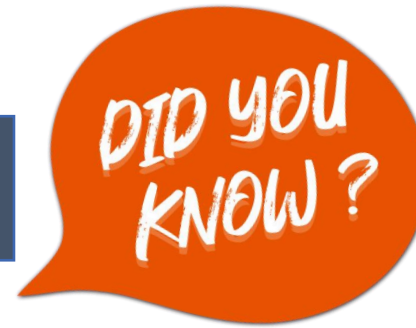
Unbearable **pressure** to view hardcore pornography even if they do not want to

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

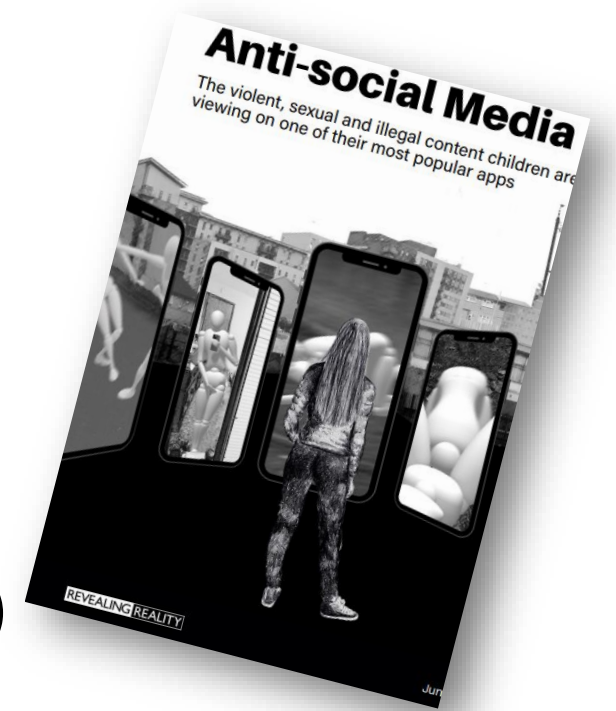
Wide **prevalence** of on **social media platforms** such as Twitter, **Snapchat** and **Instagram**



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

Snapchat: 'It's our evening news...'

- **Disturbing, graphic and illegal content:**
 - Fights / beatings / stabbings / raids
 - Sexual assaults, sex acts involving children, CSAM
 - Sale of weapons and drugs online(Some see this type of content several times a day, daily)
- **Wouldn't consider reporting** – seen what happens to a 'grass'
- While other children use Snapchat's built-in filters to add funny effects to their selfies, the filter these children experience is the **normalisation of humiliation, aggression, violence and crime**



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



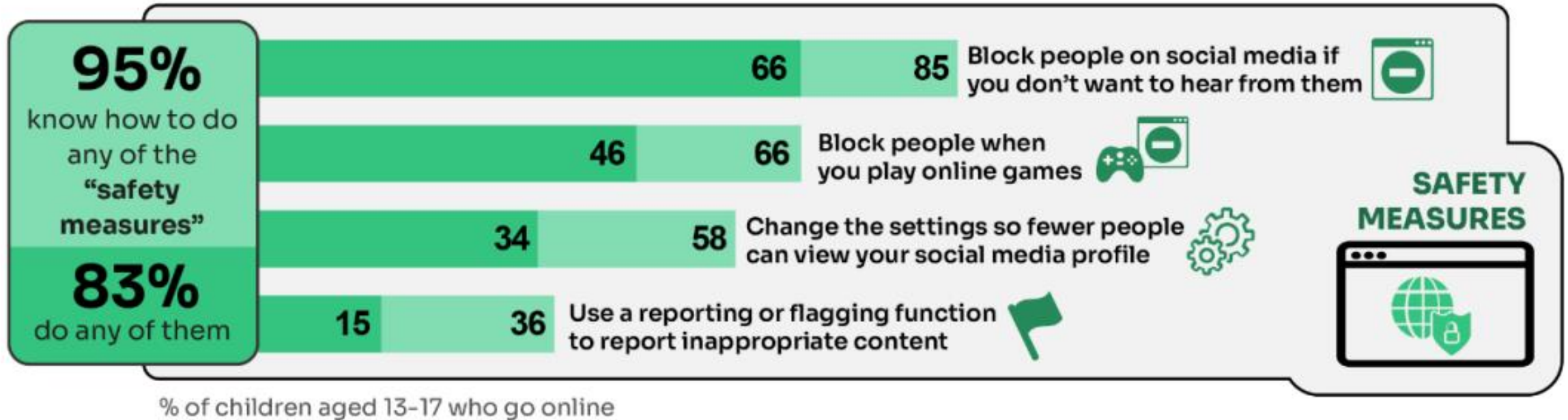
SafeguardED

Go to reporting.lgfl.net to find out more



STAYING SAFE ONLINE AND REPORTING

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



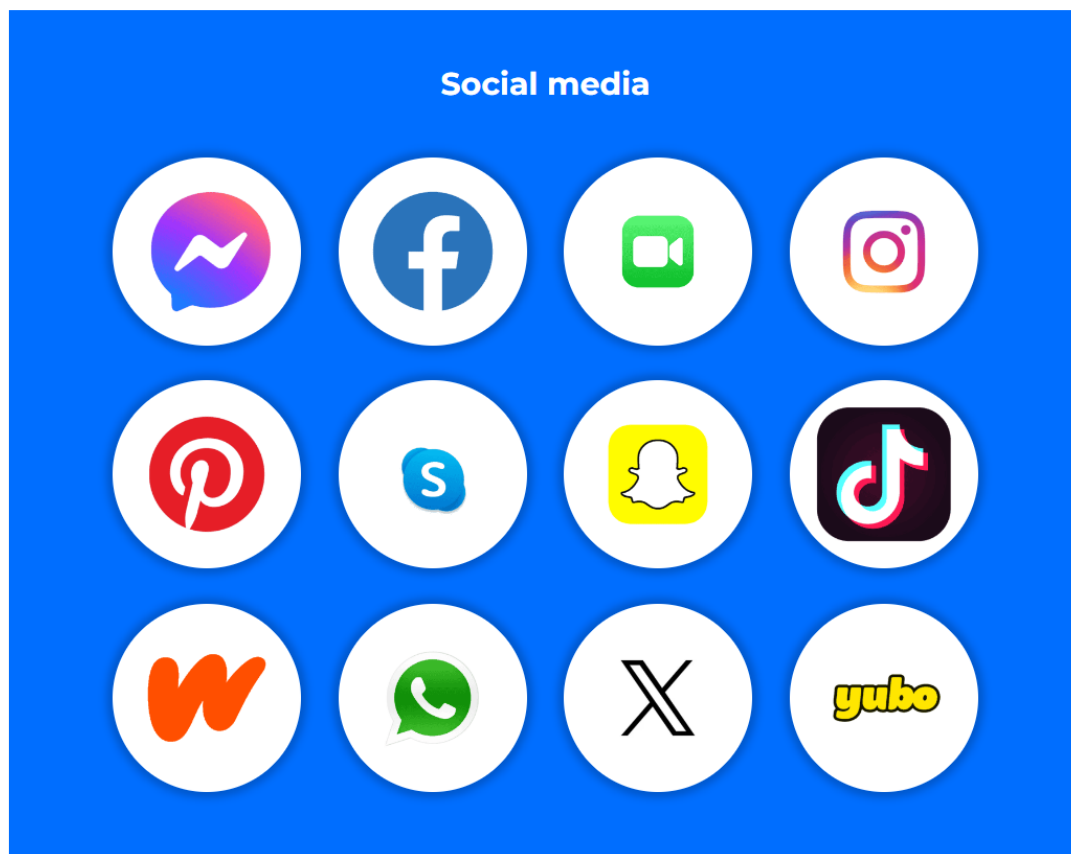
Only 15% had used a reporting or flagging function
(36% were aware of these functions)



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

Step-by-step Guides

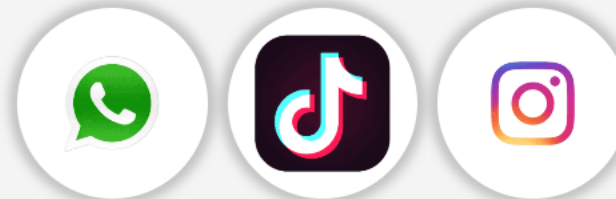
Click on the guides for step-by-step instructions to set controls on popular devices.



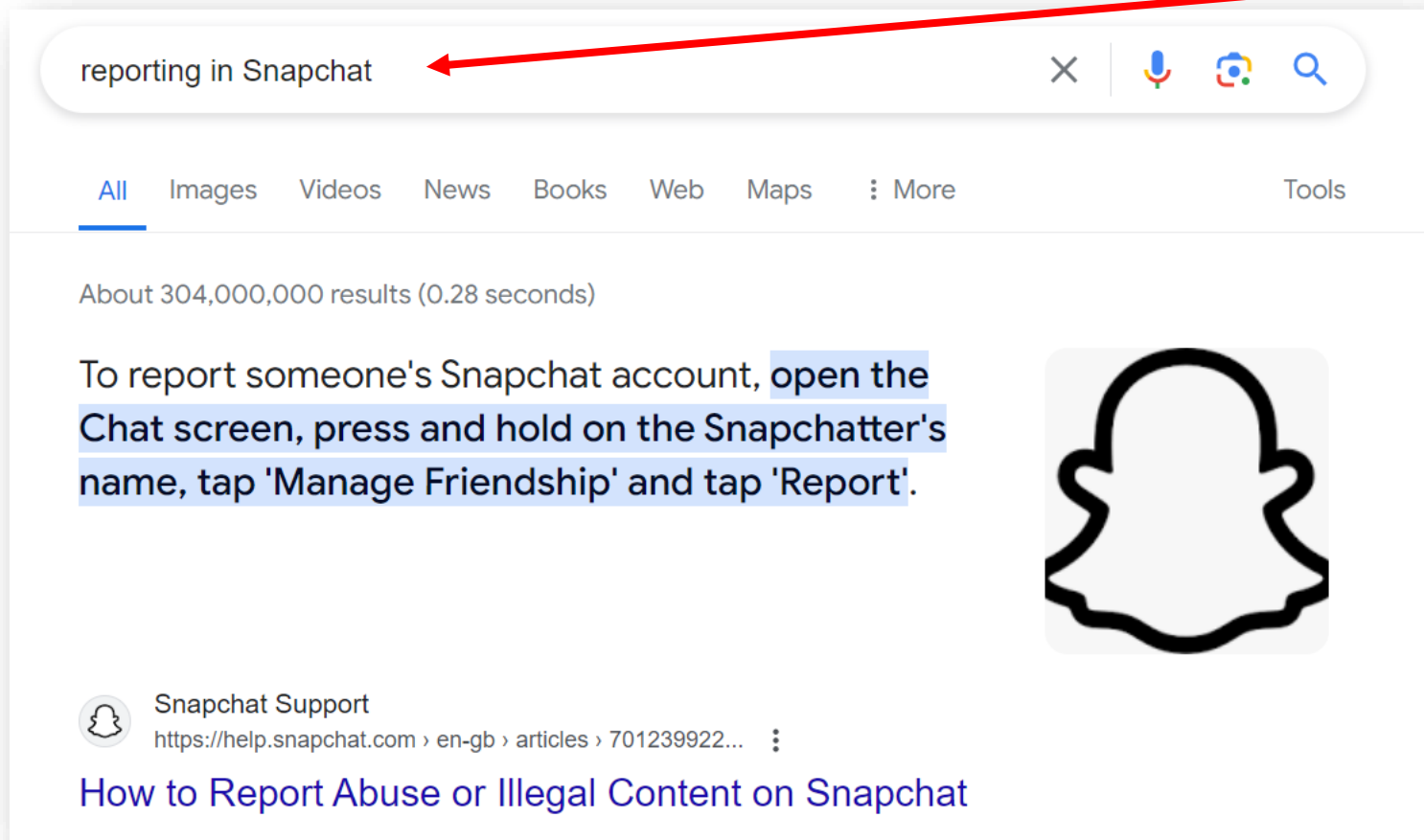
Internet Matters has helpful guides for social media apps and sites at

internetmatters.org/parental-controls/social-media

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 for the platform to understand the risks**
- ✓ **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. Encourage them to **ask you for advice** if they are unsure.
- ✓ **Stress the importance of not sharing personal information** with online 'friends'
- ✓ **Keep passwords confidential**
- ✓ **Check their privacy settings** - emphasising the importance of not sharing personal information with strangers, and keeping passwords confidential are all important steps
- ✓ **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

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

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online or on the
phone



SafeguardED

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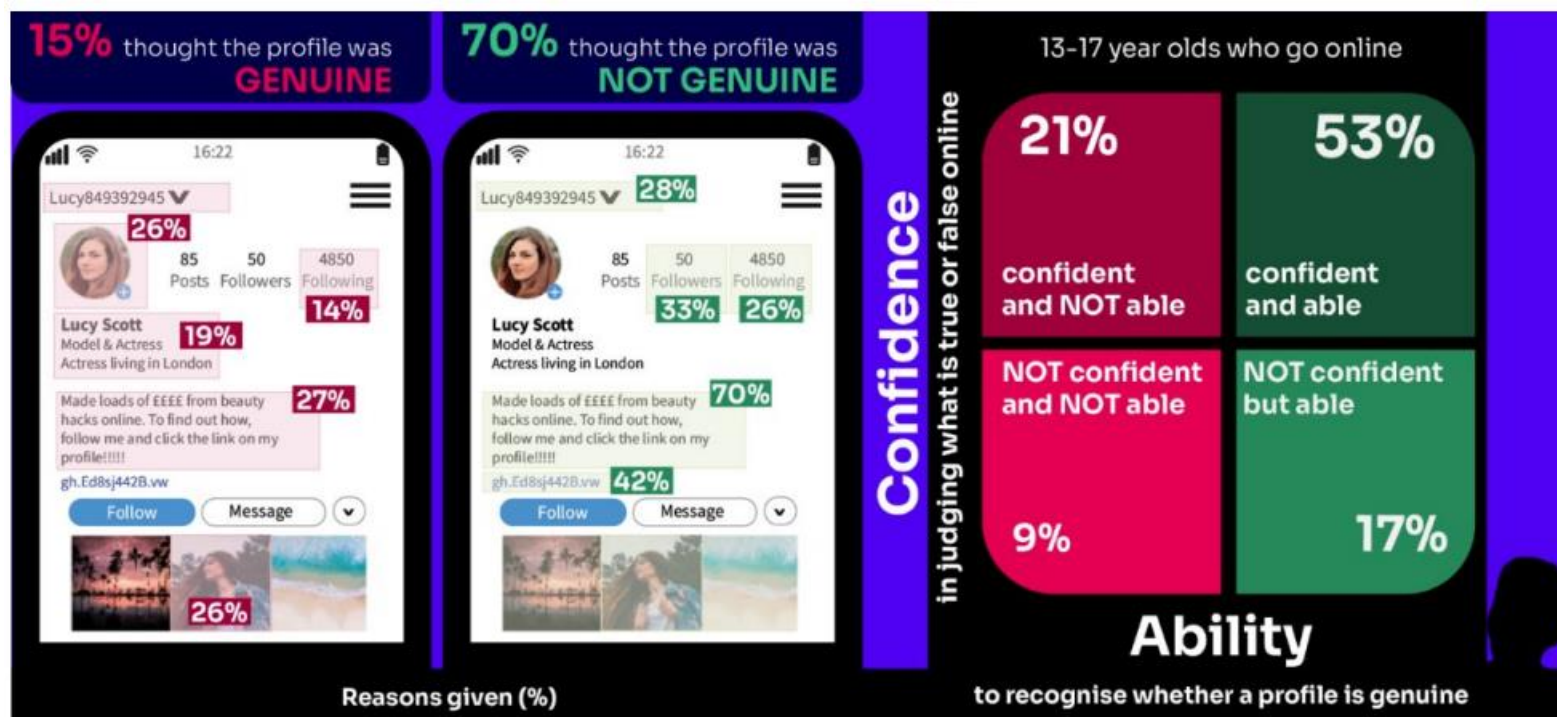
CRITICAL THINKING



Does your child **TRUST** everything they see online?

For young teenagers (12-15s), although TikTok continues to be their most-used single source for news, their most trustworthy source for news is their family.

Sixteen and seventeen-year-olds are less sure of their ability to distinguish the real from the fake online than they were last year





DISINFORMATION / MISINFORMATION / FAKE NEWS – what do these terms mean to you?

LGfL DigiSafe

Department for Education

goingtoofar.lgfl.net

GOING TOO FAR?

THE LAW AND ONLINE EXTREMISM

Critical Thinking...

BELIEVE IT OR NOT?

Critical Thinking activity: Believe it or not?

Try our Critical Thinking Quiz at believe.lgfl.net

BELIEVE IT OR NOT?

Match the terms to the definitions

- **Disinformation** what you want to achieve by sharing certain messages or content
- **Misinformation** presenting inaccurate stories or hoaxes as factual reporting or journalism
- **Fake news** accidentally sharing inaccurate information – not trying to trick anyone
- **Agenda** deliberate and selective use of facts and/or misleading information to influence choices, actions or beliefs
- **Propaganda** deliberately sharing inaccurate information – to trick, confuse or influence

BELIEVE IT OR NOT?

goingtoofar.lgfl.net

GOING TOO FAR?

THE LAW AND ONLINE EXTREMISM

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BELIEVE IT OR NOT?

Match the terms to the definitions

- **Stereotype**

information that is true and backed up by evidence

- **Opinion**

background or surrounding information to help you fully understand something that could have a different meaning on its own

- **Fact**

a fixed or oversimplified idea about what someone or something is like

- **Context**

a belief based on personal feelings, which cannot be proved

BELIEVE IT OR NOT?

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GOING TOO FAR?

THE LAW AND ONLINE EXTREMISM

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Echo chambers create **misinformation**, reinforce **stereotypes** and distort one's perspective, making it harder to consider opposing viewpoints

Social media can act as an '**echo chamber**' - a place where individuals find their ideas supported and echoed by other like-minded individuals

Sharing things that appeals to others in echo chambers makes it more **popular** and **spread faster** – even if it isn't true!

And makes it easier to **confirm existing beliefs**

A **filter bubble** is a type of echo chamber created by algorithms that keep track of what you click on

Websites use **algorithms** to show content similar to what you've already selected. This can prevent you from finding new ideas and perspectives online

BELIEVE IT OR NOT?

goingtoofar.lgfl.net

GOING TOO FAR?

THE LAW AND ONLINE EXTREMISM



BELIEVE IT OR NOT?

goingtoofar.lgfl.net

GOING TOO FAR?

THE LAW AND ONLINE EXTREMISM



What can you do about filter bubbles?

- Look at things **in context**
- **Look for evidence** to separate facts from opinion
- **Question** what you come across and consider other points of view
- Follow accounts you might not always agree with, so algorithms can show you a **variety** of viewpoints
- Only share something if you're **certain**
- Just because you **WANT** it to be true, doesn't mean it is!



32% of 8-17s had seen something they found **worrying or nasty** online in the past 12 months

59% of parents were concerned about them being influenced by **extremist** content



Visit goingtoofar.lgfl.net to find out how to help children:

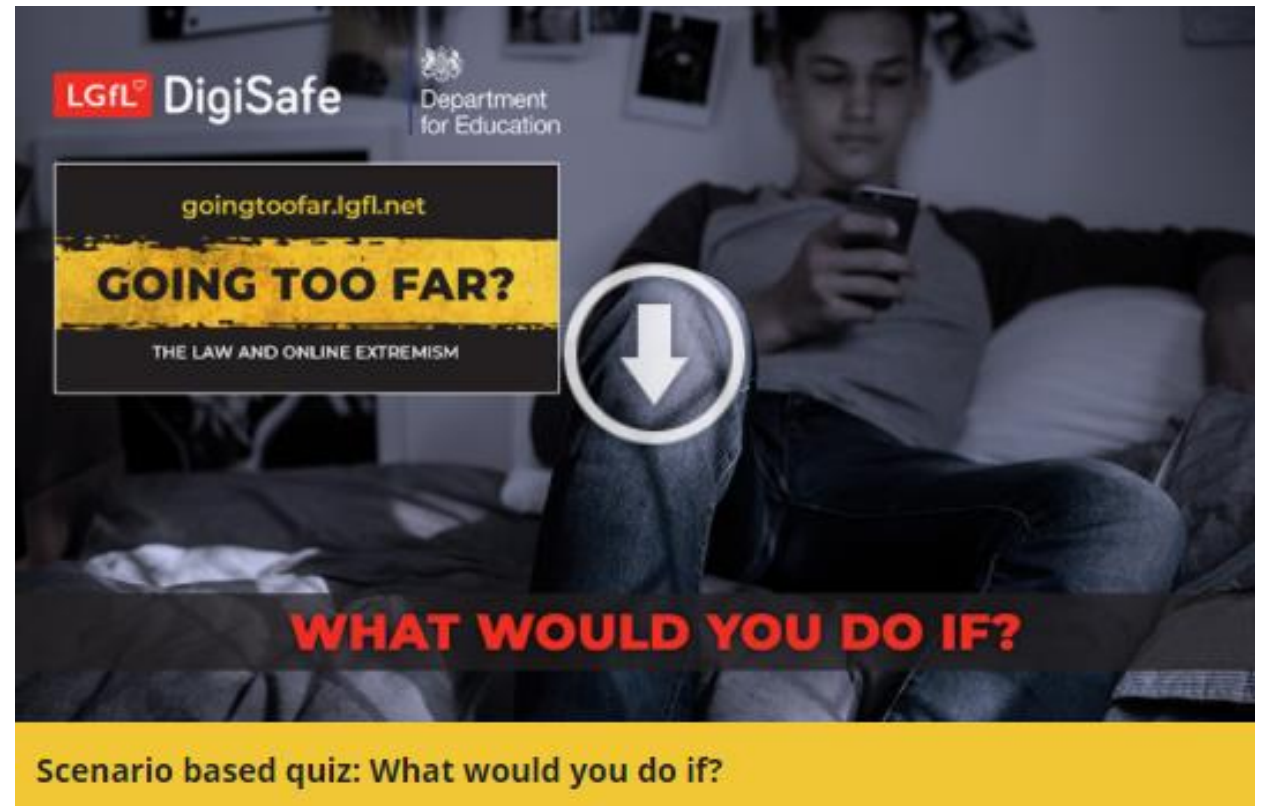
- recognise extremist behaviour and content on social media/apps/games
- understand actions likely to attract police investigation
- get help
- report concerns

Are **YOU** aware of the **IMPLICATIONS** your **ACTIONS** could have?

Could be you the law?

Or putting yourselves or others at risk?

Let's take this quiz
together at
takingastand.lgfl.net



WHAT WOULD YOU DO IF?

goingtoofar.lgfl.net

GOING TOO FAR?

THE LAW AND ONLINE EXTREMISM

1. You notice lately there are lots of posts from a group appearing on your page which are offensive and racist.

What can you do about it?



WHAT WOULD YOU DO IF?

goingtoofar.lgfl.net

GOING TOO FAR?

THE LAW AND ONLINE EXTREMISM

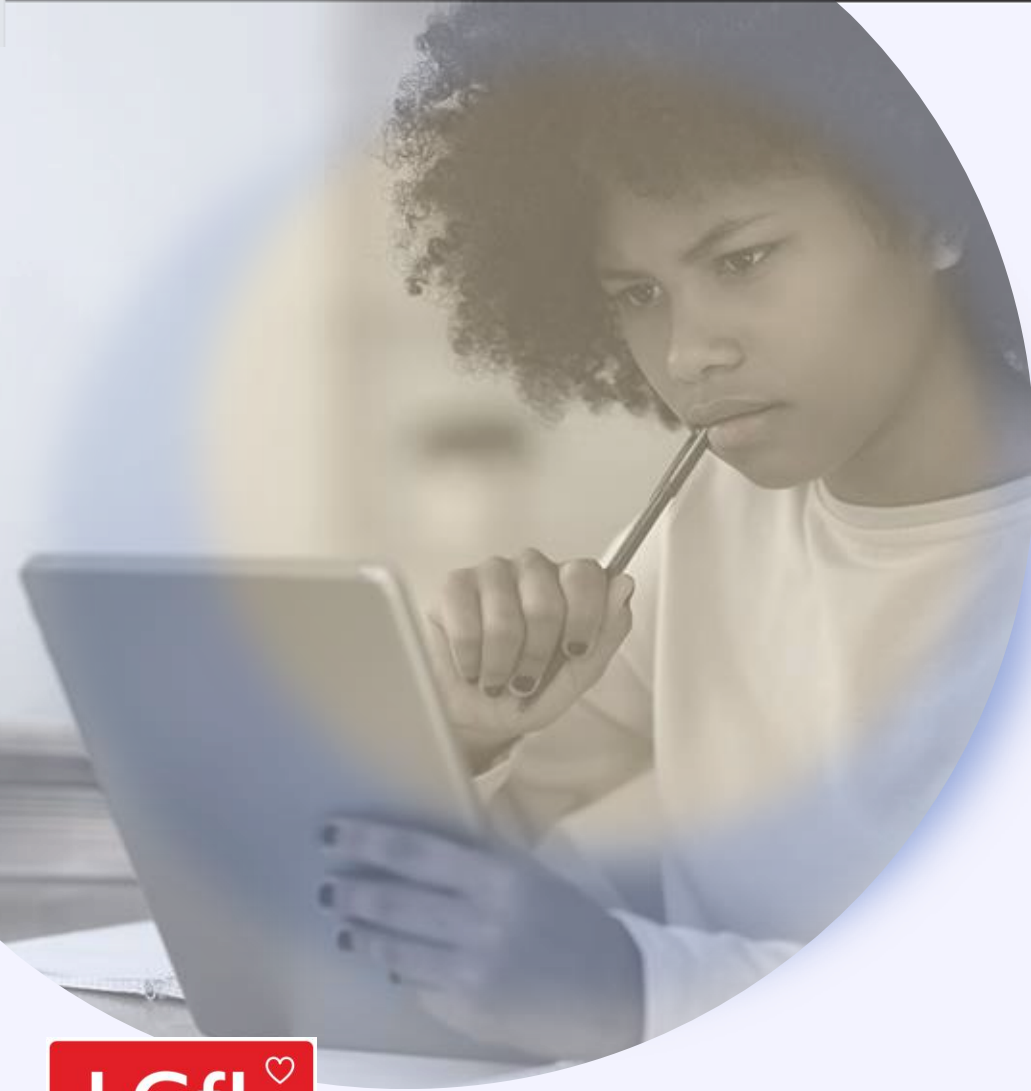
- Nothing, just ignore them
- Report them directly via the site's report button
- Select the option to unfollow or stop seeing posts from this group

WHAT WOULD YOU DO IF?

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GOING TOO FAR?

THE LAW AND ONLINE EXTREMISM



2. Your class are all talking about this funny meme. It's making fun of people from another country, and some of the comments are really rude.

There are lots of 'likes'.

How could you respond?

WHAT WOULD YOU DO IF?

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GOING TOO FAR?

THE LAW AND ONLINE EXTREMISM

- 'Like' it – after all it can't do any harm
- Join in the comments so you can also be part of the group
- Share it
- Report it directly to the site as racism
- Talk to a trusted adult for advice

WHAT WOULD YOU DO IF?

goingtoofar.lgfl.net

GOING TOO FAR?

THE LAW AND ONLINE EXTREMISM

3. This pop star tweets a post showing how she's lost weight by taking these diet pills- she says the first 100 people can get it half price.

What could you do?



WHAT WOULD YOU DO IF?

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GOING TOO FAR?

THE LAW AND ONLINE EXTREMISM

- Buy them straight away
- Think about her motives - she might be being paid to advertise it
- Check the reviews
- Discuss with a parent/carer before buying anything online
- Do your research and to find out more about this subject

WHAT WOULD YOU DO IF?

goingtoofar.lgfl.net

GOING TOO FAR?

THE LAW AND ONLINE EXTREMISM

9. An influencer you came across shared a link where you can meet new friends and chat anonymously without worrying about getting in trouble with the law.

What could you do?



WHAT WOULD YOU DO IF?

goingtoofar.lgfl.net

GOING TOO FAR?

THE LAW AND ONLINE EXTREMISM

- Join the chat, after all it's anonymous so it can't do any harm
- Invite one of your friends to come along so you can both make new friends
- Check with a trusted adult at home or school



RESOURCES AND SUPPORT

Visit 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

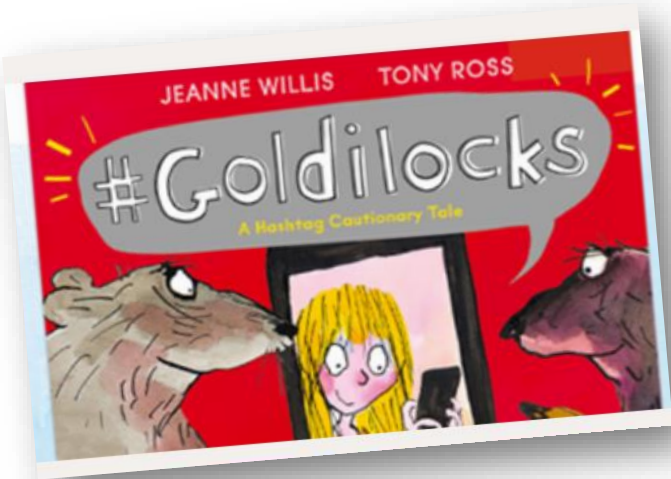


LGfL  **SafeguardED**



SafeguardED

Find conversation starters, story time ideas and top tips to reinforce key safety messages at 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 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.



SafeguardED

ONLINE TUTORS KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE



GUIDANCE FOR PARENTS & CARERS

YOU MIGHT GET A TUTOR FROM SCHOOL, THE NATIONAL TUTORING PROGRAMME, A GOOGLE SEARCH OR A RECOMMENDATION. BUT ANYONE CAN CALL THEMSELVES A TUTOR, SO HOW CAN YOU KEEP YOUR CHILDREN SAFE WHILE THEY CATCH UP?

1) Select the right tutor

- o Get to know them first - ask about qualifications, experience (freelance? umbrella body?) & approach
- o Take up references and speak to them if you can
- o Ask to see a DBS (criminal record) check. NB - private tutors can only get the basic check; (don't let a DBS give you a false sense of security though)
- o Find out which platform they will use and its safety features



2) Establish clear rules

- o Sessions must always be arranged via you; the tutor should not contact your child directly between sessions, send private messages or change communication platform
- o A tutor is not a friend - they should behave in a professional way, like a teacher
- o Sessions must not be recorded without your approval
- o Try to be in the room for all sessions, especially for younger children, and certainly the first time
- o Your child should not join a session from a bedroom. If this is unavoidable, pop in frequently, ensure they are fully dressed at all times, point the camera away from beds & personal information, and blur or change the background



3) Make sure your child knows

- o The rules apply to them and the tutor
- o A tutor is a teacher not a friend
- o Neither tutor nor child should share personal information, private messages or photos & videos
- o They must never meet without your approval or communicate on a different platform
- o Who their trusted adults are at home and school
- o They can tell you if they are asked to keep a secret or anything happens or is said that is strange or makes them feel uncomfortable, scared or upset



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



Download it at parentsafe.lgfl.net/digital-family-agreement

Digital Family Agreement



LGfL DigiSafe®

I will:

Why?

Check with mum before getting a new app or game or buying an add-on so she can check it's safe

Set up privacy and safety settings on any apps and sites I use and show them to dad, so he doesn't worry

Check with mum or dad before going live and explain what I can do to avoid any risks

Not post or share any personal information, e.g. mobile, address, to stay private and safe

Put my phone down when we're eating together or mum or dad want to talk, as it's respectful

Turn off notifications when I'm doing homework and at bed time, to help concentrate and sleep

Come off my devices an hour before bedtime to unwind and Sleep well

If there are any issues:
We will talk about it calmly and respectfully
I may have to show you more about what I am doing on devices, or other consequences

Parent/carers 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 or dad and they won't judge me

I can talk to Ms Patel at school

I can contact Childline or The Mix

Signed: *Sophie Mum Dad*

Today's date: *24th March*

Date we will review this: *24th May*

Download me again and find more support for parents at parentsafe.lgfl.net

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