



Ofcom report on internet safety measures

Strategies of parental protection for children online

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About this document

This report on internet safety measures looks at parents' strategies for protecting children when they are online. We set out the context of the internet, look at the opportunities, risks and challenges, and explore how parents can manage those risks and challenges.

The report also provides an update on the steps taken by the UK's four largest fixed-line internet service providers (ISPs) - BT, Sky, TalkTalk and Virgin Media - to offer an unavoidable choice, both to new and to existing customers, whether or not to activate a family-friendly network-level filtering service. This followed an agreement between the Government and the ISPs, under which the ISPs committed to present the unavoidable choice to all new and existing internet customers by the end of December 2014.

The Department for Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS) asked Ofcom to report on internet filters and online safety, including the measures put in place by the ISPs. This fourth report focuses on recent research, the progress made by the ISPs, and other developments during the past year.

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Section 1

Executive summary

Introduction

- 1.1 This is the fourth report requested by DCMS on internet safety. It includes detailed information on the implementation of family-friendly network-level filtering services by the ISPs, and more broadly addresses the options available to parents to manage their children's safety online.

Background

- 1.2 On 22 July 2013 the Prime Minister announced that the ISPs had agreed to offer family-friendly network level filtering to all new customers by the end of December 2013 and to all existing customers by the end of December 2014. The ISPs made a commitment to offer an “unavoidable choice” to all customers as to whether to implement family-friendly network-level filtering.
- 1.3 In his speech in 2013 the Prime Minister gave Ofcom a role in reporting on the roll out of the filtering by the ISPs and we have done so in a series of reports from January 2014. The first report¹ examined the context of parenting in a digital age and reported on the broad strategies parents can adopt to improve children's online safety, the levels of parental awareness of and confidence in the safety measures which may be in place on sites regularly visited by children, and research into why parents choose not to adopt parental controls.
- 1.4 The second report², published in July 2014, looked at the action taken by the ISPs to meet their commitment to offer all new customers the unavoidable choice by the end of December 2013.
- 1.5 We published our third report in January 2015³, updating the first report and including findings from Ofcom's 2014 *Children and Parents: Media Use and Attitudes* research. The report provided an overview of how parents are mediating their children's access to, and use of, media. It examined four approaches: regularly talking to children about managing online risks; rules about media use; supervision of media use; and technical tools.
- 1.6 In January 2015, DCMS asked Ofcom to report on the extent to which the ISPs met their commitment to deliver the unavoidable choice of family-friendly network-level filtering to all customers by the end of December 2014 and by June 2015. In this fourth report, we set out how the ISPs have offered the filtering to existing as well as new customers, in line with their commitment to Government, and we report on levels of take-up across the services.
- 1.7 Against the backdrop of the ISPs' commitment, our internet safety reports are designed to address a broad range of research questions in the context of the opportunities, risks and challenges presented by the internet.

¹ <http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/binaries/internet/internet-safety-measures.pdf>

² http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/binaries/internet/internet_safety_measures_2.pdf

³ http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/binaries/internet/third_internet_safety_report.pdf

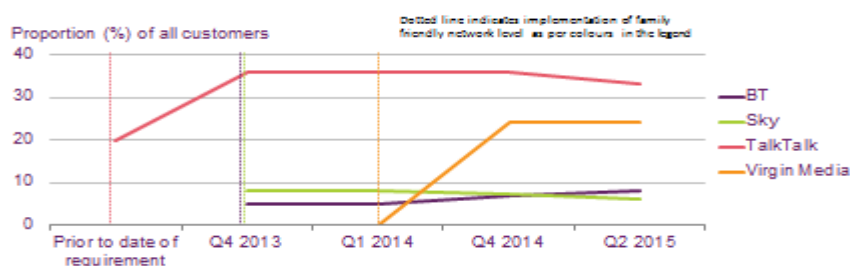
- 1.8 DCMS also asked Ofcom to provide detailed analysis of the ways in which parents are using network-level filters, and the wider mediation strategies they may be employing to help keep their children safe online. We have examined take-up and awareness of, and confidence in, a range of technical tools, including filters, among parents of 3-15 year olds. We have also looked at the reasons why parents may choose not to apply parental controls.
- 1.9 We have reviewed recent Ofcom and other research looking at children's online safety, and we report on a range of initiatives aimed at protecting children or providing advice or information for children and parents. We include an update on other steps taken, by the industry and others, to offer protection and guidance to children and parents on making the most of the internet and using it safely.

What the ISPs told us: update on network level filtering since the introduction of the unavoidable choice

- 1.10 Ofcom has been reporting on the roll out and take up of family friendly network level filtering since the launch of the unavoidable choice described at 1.2 above, following the ISPs' commitment to Government in 2013. The roll out was in two phases, first for all new customers joining the ISPs, as part of the subscription process, and second to address those customers who were already with the relevant ISPs by the time of that first roll out - termed "existing customers" in this document. The Government set deadlines for those two rollouts, new customers by end 2013, and existing customers by end 2014.
- 1.11 The chart below shows the take up figures for new customers across this period up i.e. ie for those who subscribed to one of the ISPs since launch of the unavoidable choice, to June 2015, showing the position prior to the ISPs' commitment and up to the end of June 2015. BT, Sky and TalkTalk⁴ were all offering their family friendly network level filtering services to new customers by the end of December 2013. Virgin Media launched its service in February 2014.

"New" customers

Take-up of family friendly network level filtering by new customers

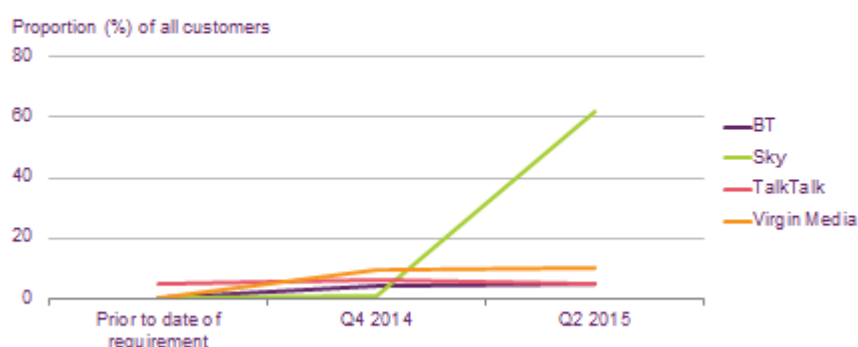


⁴ TalkTalk launched its service in May 2011.

- 1.12 The chart below shows the take up figures for existing customers across the same period. Each of the ISPs had started this process by the end of December 2014⁵. The chart shows the position prior to the ISPs' commitment and up to the end of June 2015. As above, the phrase "existing customers" means those who were customers prior to the ISPs starting to offer the unavoidable choice to new customers by end 2014.

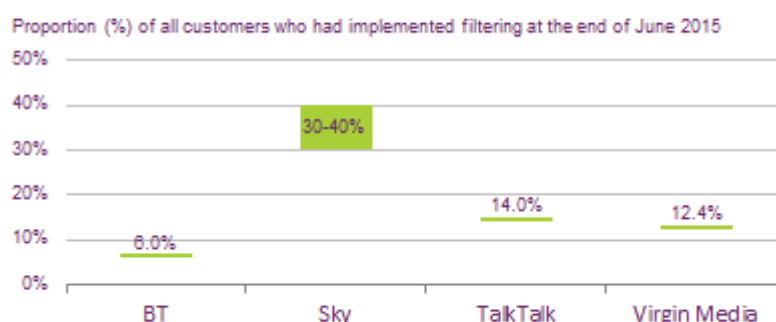
Existing customers

Take-up of family friendly network level filtering by existing customers



- 1.13 Finally for this report only, we also asked the ISPs to give us overall take up figures at the end of June 2015, which was the final period Ofcom was requested to report on. The chart below provides a snapshot of take up figures at that date.

Take-up of family friendly network level filtering by new and existing customers at the end of June 2015



⁵ Sky changed its process from January 2015 to a default on process (see paragraph 1.17 below).

Key developments since 2014 in detail

- 1.14 As outlined above, across 2014 and 2015 the ISPs extended the unavoidable choice of family-friendly network-level filtering to existing customers as well as new customers⁶. The ISPs have explained the steps they have taken to inform their customers about the filtering options and to extend an unavoidable choice. In Section 3 below we set out the steps the ISPs have taken, and evaluate consumers' take-up of the offer.
- 1.15 We report on take-up figures for the filtering, both for new and existing customers in detail in section 2. By December 2014, BT, TalkTalk and Virgin Media had completed their various strategies to extend the offer of family-friendly network-level filtering, in line with the Government's original request.
- 1.16 **BT** said that by the end of the June 2015 data collection period, 8% of new customers and 5% of existing customers had taken up the offer of parental controls. It indicated that only around 25% of its customers were in households with children, and that 24% of that group were using network-level filters or parental control software.
- 1.17 By the end of June 2015, 6% of new **Sky** customers had taken up Broadband Shield. At the end of December 2014, only around 3% of Sky's existing customers had made an active choice. Sky therefore decided to engineer further processes to encourage adoption of family-friendly network-level filtering by existing customers. This it described as a 'default on' system, so that if a customer did not make a choice the filters turned on automatically. Sky said that at the end of the roll-out 62% of customers within Sky's total customer base (other than new customers from November 2013 onwards) had accepted Broadband Shield's parental controls (61% at '13' and 1% activating the higher level of protection at 'PG'). A further 8% chose the 18 category. The 'default on' setting was actively switched off by 30% of customers. Sky intends, following the high levels of engagement and take up of Broadband Shield while implementing "Default On" to its existing customers, to extend this to all other customers in 2016.
- 1.18 **TalkTalk** indicated that take-up by the end of the data collection period in June 2015 remained at 33% among new customers; broadly in proportion to the number of households with children in its customer base. Take-up by existing customers when presented with the unavoidable choice was 5%.
- 1.19 **Virgin Media** said that between the launch of its service and the end of June 2015, 24.12% of new customers had chosen to switch on parental controls, and 10.5% of existing customers. Virgin Media confirmed that in September 2014 it had introduced an account-holder verification system for changes made to its Web Safe settings, similar to those already in place with the other ISPs' services.
- 1.20 The ISPs also told us about other alternative filtering options they offer, such as device level filtering and security options, which we note may affect take up levels for family friendly network level filtering. BT, for example, said that when network level filtering was taken into account, 9-15% of its consumer broadband base had adopted some form of filtering and all the other ISPs offer forms of device level security.

⁶ For clarity, all existing TalkTalk customers had had the offer of family-friendly network-level filtering since 2011, but TalkTalk made it an unavoidable choice to existing customers in 2014/15.

What parents told us: take-up and awareness of and confidence in parental controls

- 1.21 Findings from Ofcom's 2015 *Children and Parents: Media Use and Attitudes* report show that awareness of parental tools to help children's safety online, in homes with broadband and where children go online, is very high, at more than four in five parents, and over half use some kind of technical tools.
- 1.22 Awareness of ISP content filters has increased among parents of 5-15s since 2014 (from 50% to 57%).
- 1.23 Use of these filters has also increased among parents of 5-15s since 2014 (from 21% to 26%) and parents are more likely than in 2014 to say they are useful. Tools are generally popular with those parents that use them, and the 97% of parents who use network-level filters say they find them useful.
- 1.24 In 2015 more parents said they had looked for or received information or advice about how to help their child manage online risks (from 70% to 75%). For those parents seeking information about technical tools in particular, there is no single source of information used by a majority of parents, but information provided by an ISP, and hearing about tools from friends or relatives, are sources used by more than four in ten.
- 1.25 In 2015 most parents agreed that they knew enough to help their child to manage online risks; 80% of parents of 3-4s and (76%) of parents of 5-15s agreed with this statement. However, there has been a decrease since 2014 in the number who trust their child to use the internet safely, from 83% to 78%.
- 1.26 We also asked why some parents do not apply parental controls. Among parents without technical tools in place, the top three reasons for not using each are consistent: around half of parents of children aged 5-15 prefer to talk to their children and use other methods of mediation; four in ten say they trust their child to be sensible/ responsible; and around two in ten parents say it is because their child is always supervised or there is always an adult present.
- 1.27 Parents were asked about eight different technical tools and whether they thought their child could "get round them". Around one in five parents of 5-15s who used each tool felt that their child was able to bypass the tools. A quarter of parents felt that their child could get around their ISP's network-level home filtering, and about one in 12 parents who used each of the eight tools said they were unsure whether their child could bypass it.

Broader parental strategies

- 1.28 Parents tend to combine strategies of internet mediation, with talking, rules and supervision playing a part.
- 1.29 More than nine in ten parents in 2015 said they mediated their child's use of the internet in some way, with 96% of parents of 3-4s and 94% of parents of 5-15s using a combination of: regularly talking to their children about managing online risks, using technical tools, supervising their child, and using rules or restrictions. Nearly four in ten parents of children aged 5-15 who ever go online used all four types of approach asked about. This was less likely among parents of 3-4s (18%).

- 1.30 Four per cent of parents of 3-4s, and 6% of parents of 5-15s, do not mediate their child's internet use in any of the ways we asked about, rising to 12% among parents of 12-15s.
- 1.31 It is clear from the developments noted during 2015 that parents continue to adopt a range of strategies to mediate their children's online lives and that filtering is increasing in its role in protecting children online.

This report

- 1.32 This report is divided into the following three sections:

Developments since 2014

- 1.33 Section 1 looks at research into children's online safety by Ofcom and others and other developments, which we look at in terms of the opportunities, risks and challenges of the internet.

Safety mechanisms and the role of industry

- 1.34 Section 2 updates the ISPs' progress in rolling out family friendly network level filtering to existing customers in detail. We have reported on the 2015 figures in the analysis above but the report also notes any changes to the filtering services offered and explaining how the ISPs have communicated with their customers to raise awareness of the offer.

How can parents manage the risks to children?

- 1.35 Section 3 of the report is a digest of key findings relevant to children's online safety from Ofcom's 2015 *Children and Parents: Media Use and Attitudes* report. Some of the key findings have been covered above; the full report was covered in a paper to PMB on PMB 121(15) on 5 November.

Structure of this report

Following the Executive Summary in Section 1, the report has a three-part structure:

Part 1: Developments since 2014

Section 2 – Opportunities, risks and challenges

Opportunities

An overview of children's access to the open internet as an educational resource and a platform for communication and creativity.

Risks

The internet as a source of distinct risks: from content, contact and conduct, with specific regulatory challenges. Here we look at the tactics that parents, carers and educators can use to guide and inform children's behaviour through education and advice, and mediation and rules, as critical aspects of child protection online.

Challenges

We look here at the challenges to parents, and the regulatory challenges presented by the internet.

Part 2: Safety mechanisms and the role of industry

Section 3 - Update on network-level filtering

This section describes progress by the ISPs in offering an unavoidable choice of network-level filtering to new and existing customers. It also updates the information provided in Ofcom's second report on internet safety measures.

Section 4 – Other industry developments

In this section we describe initiatives aimed at protecting children online and providing advice on how to use the internet safely

Part 3 How can parents manage the risks to children?

Section 5 – Research background

Section 6 – Children's internet use

Section 7 – Children's online understanding

Section 8 – Children's attitudes and concerns

Section 9 – Children and the internet: parental concerns

Section 10 – Parental mediation strategies: take-up, awareness and confidence in parental controls

Section 2

Part 1: Developments since 2014

Opportunities, risks and challenges

- 2.1 Our internet safety reports have looked at the opportunities, risks and challenges presented by the internet. These reports recognise that, as well as the risks, there are many benefits of access to the internet: as an educational resource, as a platform for social interaction and creativity and as a source of entertainment.
- 2.2 In this section we report on research conducted during 2014/2015 that builds an increasingly detailed picture of these opportunities, risks and challenges. We set out the key findings of Ofcom's 2015 *Children and Parents': Media Use and Attitudes* report in these areas, and parents' responses to them, in Part 3 of this report.

Opportunities

Children's media use

- 2.3 In November 2014 we published *Digital Day 2014: Results from the children's diary study*⁷. A sample of 186 primary school-aged children (6-11s) and 173 secondary school- aged children (11-15s) completed a three-day media diary. The report highlighted the varied ways that children use the internet: We found that:
- 11-15s are more likely to do more than one activity concurrently; they squeeze 9 hours 33 minutes of media activity into 7 hours 3 minutes each day. 6-11 year-olds spend less time on media and communications each day and undertake less media multi-tasking, compressing 5 hours 36 minutes of daily media activity into 5 hours 6 minutes.
 - Over half of the time spent on communication activities is taken up by text messaging, instant messaging and photo messaging (54% of communication time for 6-11s and 56% for children aged 11-15). Among adults, 28% of communication time is attributed to messaging.
 - Of all the time spent on 'watching' activities, per week, among 11-15 year olds, just over half (52%) is to live television, compared to 69% for all adults. However, this age group spends a significantly greater proportion of its viewing time watching short online video clips (19% vs. 2% for adults).
 - Overall, three-quarters of children aged 6-15 reported playing games on an electronic device (including games consoles and tablets) during the week. These gaming activities took up a fifth of children's total time spent on media and communications – well above the 5% of media time taken up by this among adults.
- 2.4 In May 2015, the LSE published qualitative research, *Net Children Go Mobile UK Children's experience of smartphones and tablets: perspectives from children, parents and teachers*. This project investigated access and use, and the risks and

⁷ <http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/binaries/research/cross-media/2014/children-digital-day.pdf>

opportunities of the mobile internet for children, in a European context. Among other findings, the research noted that parents were aware of the positive aspects of their children's internet use, such as increased sociability for some and the benefits of educational content online.

- 2.5 In January 2015, the LSE published *Young children (0-8) and digital technology: a qualitative exploratory study – national report - UK*⁸. This qualitative survey studied ten families in London, Sheffield and Edinburgh, each with at least one child aged 6-7. This research is a reminder of the ease of use of tablets; young children can access them independently before they can use devices such as laptops. Gaming is particularly important to young children, and largely carried out on tablets. The report found that much of young children's use of digital devices is independent and individual, with parents having little awareness of what they are doing. Most of the parents felt that concerted parental mediation was not necessary at this age and could wait until later.
- 2.6 Also in January this year, Childwise published its report: *Trends in media use*⁹, a survey that has been carried out each year since 1994 among children and young people aged 5–16 in 80 schools across the UK. Some key findings were:
- In 2014, the majority of children said that they downloaded and used apps (81%), with almost half (45%) accessing apps on mobile phones or tablets. Favourite apps were YouTube, Snapchat, Facebook (each 9%), Instagram and Minecraft (both 8%).
 - YouTube was visited by 75% of children and young people who had used the internet in the past week (and 23% said that this was their favourite website). This included 57% of children aged 5-10 and 92% of children and young people aged 11-16.
 - Facebook was visited by 45% of children and young people who had used the internet in the past week (11% said this was their favourite website). This was a decrease from 65% in 2010. Facebook was used by 15% of children aged 5-10 and 71% of children and young people aged 11-16.
 - Instagram or Snapchat were used by 38% of children and young people who had used the internet in the past week (a significant increase on 26% and 24% respectively in 2014), while 29% reported visiting Skype and 25% reported visiting Twitter in the past week.
 - Minecraft was by far the most popular social gaming site among children who used the internet; 38% reported a visit in the past week (up from 27% in 2014). This compared with just 15% who reported visiting Moshi Monsters (down 22% year on year) and 13% who reported visiting Bin Weevils or Club Penguin.

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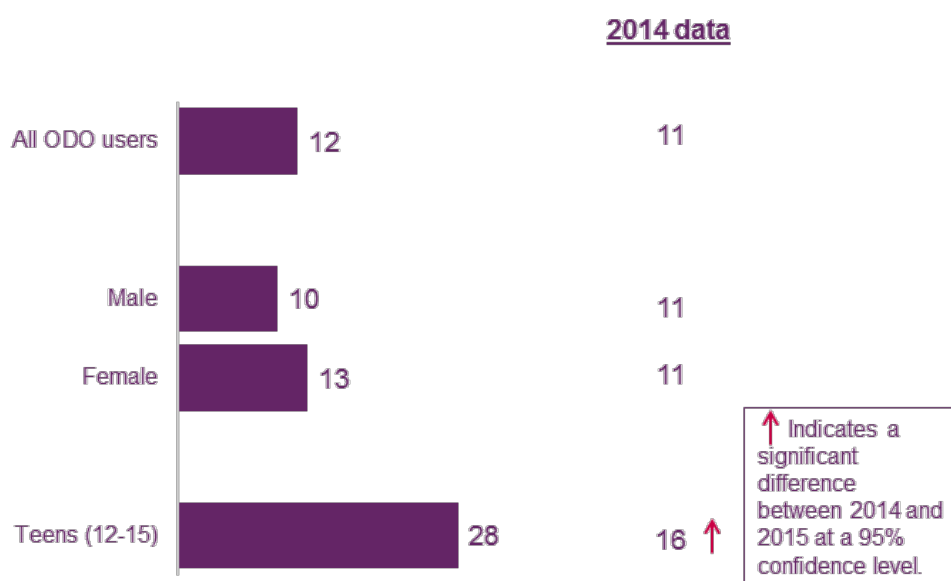
http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/60799/1/_lse.ac.uk_storage_LIBRARY_Secondary_libfile_shared_repository_Content_Livingstone%2C%20S_Young%20children%200-8_Livingstone_Young%20children%200-8_2015.pdf

9 <http://www.childwise.co.uk/reports.html>

Risks

- 2.7 As well as identifying some of the opportunities that come with use of the internet, research by Ofcom and others has drawn attention to risks encountered by children in their online lives.
- 2.8 Ofcom's report *Attitudes to online and on-demand content*¹⁰, commissioned in 2014, focused on people's perceptions of, and concerns about, standards in online and on-demand audio-visual content. Ofcom has commissioned a second shorter wave of this research. The survey was carried out in September 2015 among 1453 UK online and on demand users. As in 2014, the adult survey was accompanied by an online survey among 500 teens aged 12-15, which ran concurrently with the adults' survey. We published the data tables¹¹ from this research on 3 December 2015 and we will publish the full report in early 2016.
- 2.9 Figure 1 below shows that overall levels of concern regarding online and on-demand (ODO) video content among all UK adults appears stable (12% in 2015 compared to 11% in 2014). This level of concern among *all* adults is relatively low in comparison to broadcast television. Ofcom's *Media Tracker 2014* indicates that a fifth (21%) of adult viewers in the UK said they had personally found something on television *offensive* in the past 12 months¹².
- 2.10 However, the most notable findings from the two surveys relate to the level of concern regarding online and on-demand video content among *teens*; over a quarter of teens (28%) who watched online or on-demand content claimed to have seen content that concerned them - a significant increase on 16% in 2014.

Figure 1: Overall levels of concern regarding online and on-demand content



Source: BDRC F2F Omnibus September 2015

Q7. Has anything that you have seen on any online or on-demand service caused you any concern?

Base: All on-demand and online adult users: online 2014 (2678), F2F omnibus 2015 (1453); on-demand and online teen users 2014 (500), 2015 (500)

¹⁰

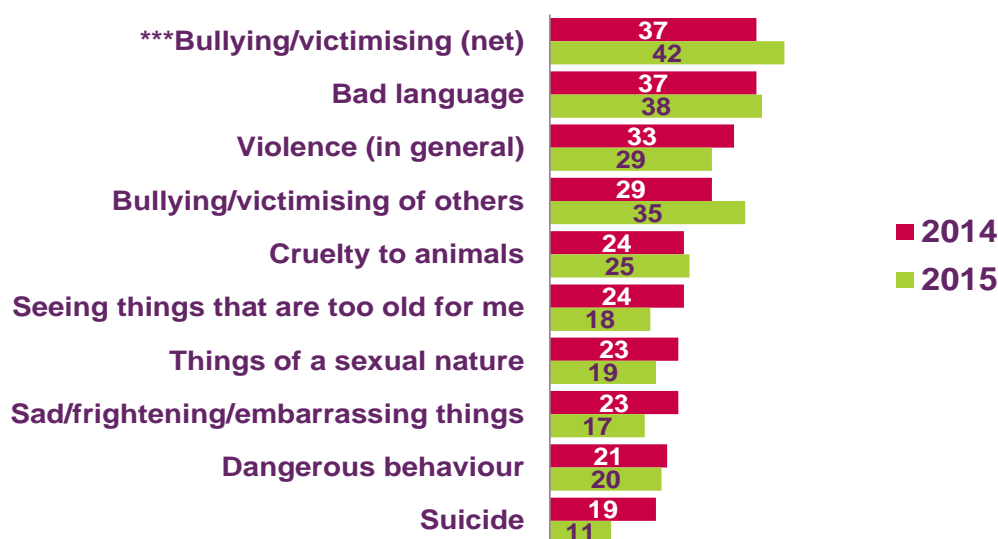
http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/binaries/internet/Attitudes_to_Online_and_On_Demand_Content_report_2014_report.pdf

¹¹ <http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/market-data-research/other/internet/OD-online-data-tables-2015/>

¹² http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/binaries/research/tv-research/attitudes-to-media/UK_audience_attitudes_towards_broadcast_media_2014.pdf.

2.11 Figure 2 shows the top ten concerns of those teenagers who reported anything of concern in their online viewing.

Figure 2: Top ten concerns among teenagers: 2014-2015



Source: BDRC F2F Omnibus September 2015. Q13 What kind of thing caused you concern on the online or on-demand TV or video content you saw?

Base: All on-demand and online users seeing something of concern: teens (85*)/(151) *Effective base size <100

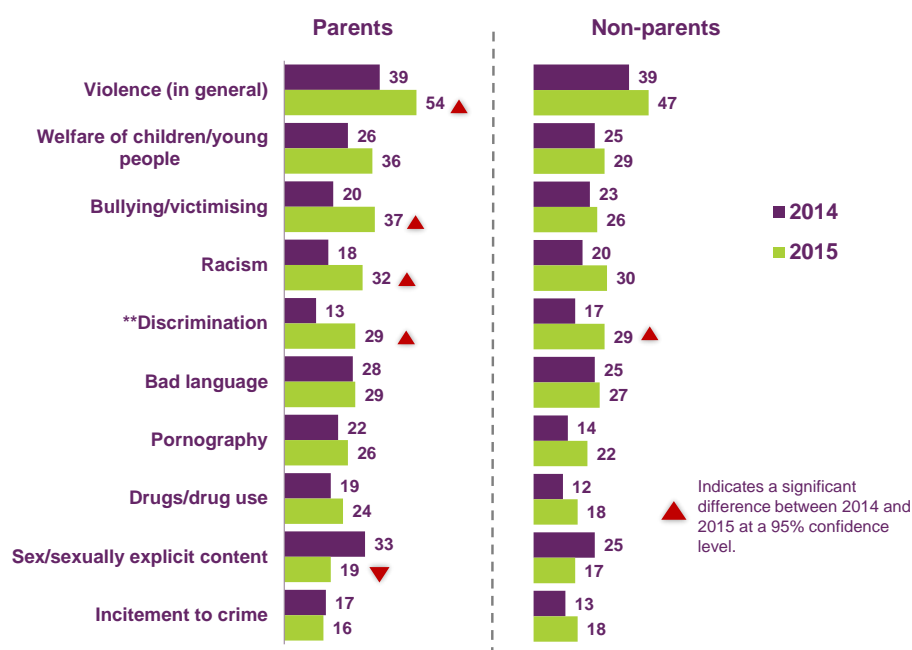
2.12 Figure 3 below looks at concerns among parents and non-parents. The top mentions in 2015 among all 'concerned' parents include: violence (54%), welfare of children/young people (36%), bullying/victimising (37%), racism (32%), discrimination (29%), bad language (28%), and pornography (26%).

2.13 Non-parents' concerns largely reflect the same concerns regarding broadcast content: bad language (44%), exposure to violent content (41%), sexually explicit material (41%), and discrimination (23%).

2.14 The main difference seen among parents in 2015 is that bullying/victimisation (32%) is now in their top three concerns, having risen from sixth position (20%) in 2014, and representing a statistically significant increase. This mirrors the increase in concern over bullying seen among teenagers.

2.15 There have also been significant rises in levels of concern among parents regarding violence (up from 39% to 51%) and racism (up from 18% to 32%) since 2014. Concerns among parents regarding sexually explicit content have fallen from 33% in 2014 to 21% in 2015.

Figure 3: Top 10 concerns among those reporting concerns: parents vs. non-parents



Source: On-demand and online tracker 2014 / 2015 online

Base: All on-demand and online users seeing something of concern: parents (256/63*), non-parents (215/103)
Q13 What kind of thing caused you concern on the online or on-demand TV or video content you saw?

2.16 In June this year we published *Children's Media Lives: Year 1 Findings*¹³. This is a three-year qualitative study of 18 children aged 8-15, which provides a small-scale, rich and detailed qualitative complement to our quantitative surveys of media literacy. The project is following the children over three years, interviewing them each year about their media habits and attitudes. It looks at motivations, the context of their media use, and how the media are part of their daily life and domestic circumstances. The study also provides rich detail of how media habits and attitudes change over time, linked to the children's emotional and cognitive development. As well as looking at opportunities, the research identified some risks:

- Both children and parents tended to be unsure when children were actually online, given the seamless functionality of apps and services on various devices.
- It was hard to distinguish between social media and gaming, with children often using the gaming chat function to talk to their own friends or to people they didn't know.
- The role of older siblings, and at times the absence of parents, was important in introducing the child to new types of (older) content.
- Children were more likely to think about physical dangers in relation to online safety, such as being stalked or kidnapped, than issues such as online bullying. Children knew how to stay safe online in theory, but in practice their behaviour was not always consistent.

¹³ http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/binaries/research/media-literacy/childrens-media-lives-year-1/childrens_media_lives_report_FINAL1.pdf

- 2.17 In our third internet safety report we referred in detail to research published by EU Kids Online¹⁴ about UK children's online access, opportunities, risks and parental mediation. In June 2014, EU Kids Online published *Results of qualitative cross-cultural investigation in nine European countries: The meaning of online problematic situations for children*¹⁵. Using a sample of 378 interviews/focus groups with internet users aged 9-16 across nine European countries, the research focused on children's views of what is potentially negative or problematic while using the internet, what risks they are aware of when using the internet, what consequences online negative experiences might have, how children react to negative experiences, what children do to avoid or prevent these problematic experiences, and why children perceive certain situations as negative.
- 2.18 The research found that children saw content issues such as violent, vulgar or sexual material as the most common problems online. They also mentioned contact issues such as unpleasant messaging. Sexual content has some positive as well as negative connotations for older children, with some saying they intentionally searched for it, and some older girls saying they intentionally displayed more sexualised images of themselves to encourage 'likes'. Children said that they often shared personal information and passwords with friends and family, and did not see this as risky behaviour.
- 2.19 Children's views about risks are stratified by age: younger children tend to frame their concerns according to what they are told by parents and the media, and older children either through personal experience or their peers'. Younger children were more likely to welcome parental mediation, while older children preferred to talk to their peers about the issues, feeling that parents were invading their privacy.
- 2.20 The LSE's Net Children Go Mobile UK children's experience of smartphones and tablets: perspectives from children, parents and teachers, referred to above also looked at risks:
- Parents were predominantly concerned about the increased screen time involved in their child's use of a smartphone or tablet, particularly in relation to the child not having enough 'offline' time, and the consequent effect on the child's offline sociability and socialising skills.
 - Children were keen on their smartphones, but also aware of their downsides, including the compulsion to communicate immediately, and the antisocial behaviour that smartphones can enable. The research underlined that children do not necessarily have continual access to their phone, as school policies and parenting rules mean that their use is often restricted. The main online risk children associated with smartphones was identity theft.
- 2.21 In May 2015, the London Grid for Learning published its report: *Young people and e-safety: The results of the 2015 London Grid for Learning e-safety survey*¹⁶, based on an online survey of children in years three to nine who used the internet. Some key findings were:

¹⁴ A multinational research network funded under the European Council's Safer Internet programme, which seeks to enhance knowledge of European children's online opportunities, risks and safety

¹⁵ http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/56972/1/EU_Kids_Online_Report_Online_Problematic_Situations_for_Children_June2014.pdf

¹⁶ <http://www.lgfl.net/esafety/Pages/E-safety-Survey.aspx>

- Among online 7-year-olds, 44% said they had their own device for going online, rising to 80% of online 15-year-olds.
- Four in ten (39%) online 7-16s said that their parents did not know what they did online “always” or “most of the time”.
- Six in ten (59%) online 7-16s said they used social media sites. Girls (30%) were more likely than boys (17%) to use them, while boys were more likely than girls to say they used YouTube (34% vs. 24%).
- One in five of the sample (22%) said they had been bullied online, and one in ten said they had bullied others. Boys were more likely than girls to say they had bullied others (14% vs. 10%), and the games console or mobile were the devices most likely to be used for bullying.
- Eight per cent of online 12 year olds, and 15% of online young people aged 14 said they played 18+ games. Boys were twice as likely as girls to say they did this.
- Sixteen per cent of the sample said they had seen things online that had made them feel uncomfortable or worried.

Challenges

- 2.22 Ofcom’s 2015 report *Children and Parent’s: Media Use and Attitudes* reports on various challenges to parents in mediating their children’s exposure to the risks identified above, consequent to their children’s individual use of media, such as the increased use of smaller screens making supervision more difficult, and the proliferation of devices creating a need for parents to keep up to date with technology. This section focuses on challenges inherent in the structure of the internet, its global nature, and the many ways it can be accessed beyond straightforward access through an ISP.
- 2.23 In our previous reports we looked at the challenges that the open and international nature of the internet poses to parents. The global nature of the players providing the content can provide challenging cultural differences in online content, and inhibits effective national regulation. UK regulations cover certain forms of online content distribution through video-on-demand services, where services are based in the UK. But much of the content available in the UK on the internet is provided from international sources, so falls outside this regulation, or falls outside the narrow boundaries of the types of audio-visual material covered. We have also looked at the challenges presented by the fact that the internet is accessible almost everywhere and on a wide range of devices, so the risks are present constantly rather than just in the home.

Bypassing filtering

- 2.24 There is broad agreement that all content filtering solutions are liable to circumvention by a dedicated and technically competent user, supported by a range of advice available online. The main mechanisms by which filters can be bypassed are through proxy sites or virtual private networks (VPNs)¹⁷. All four ISPs provide

¹⁷ A VPN allows individuals and businesses to communicate securely over shared network infrastructure by encrypting communications traffic, as though the user were on a private network. ISPs cannot see which sites and services their subscribers are accessing via a VPN.

their subscribers with advice about the actions they can take to help secure their children's online safety, and they have all taken steps to limit the extent of circumvention. For example, the ISPs include lists of proxy sites, whose primary purpose is to bypass filters or increase user anonymity, as part of their standard blocking lists. However, the use of wholly encrypted connections, as is the case when a virtual private network (VPN) service is active, would bypass all selective filtering services. In some cases, children would be able to bypass filters, either by altering the filtering settings or by using tools to hide the sites they are visiting from the filtering software. There are legitimate reasons for using such services; for example, Google's language translation service can be used as a proxy site, and employees who work from home will typically be required to use a VPN to connect to their business IT systems. Although it may also be possible for a filtering tool to restrict the use of proxies and/or VPN services, this will not be appropriate in all homes or on all devices.

- 2.25 The ToR¹⁸ (The Onion Router) network, is an anonymising network that allows web browsing to 'hidden websites' and prevents third-party surveillance of the user's internet traffic by creating layers of encrypted traffic. ToR can be used to bypass filters in a similar way to a commercial VPN, although it tends to allow slower connectivity than a commercial VPN might.

Content outside the filtered environment

- 2.26 Content outside the filtered environment also presents challenges. The primary focus of filtering tools is content on the world wide web, accessed using a web browser. But potentially harmful content is also widely available via newsgroups, peer-to-peer (P2P) file-sharing networks, file transfer protocol (FTP) technology, instant messaging and email. Internet filtering systems typically offer options to manage access to these protocols and services. But tools like email, instant messaging and FTP have acceptable uses as well as potentially harmful ones, so filtering is a less satisfactory means of controlling risk.
- 2.27 Progress in the use of apps presents a different challenge, as most app content is not currently controlled by standard filtering. An app may not necessarily be subject to an ISP's network filtering system, or be addressed by broader blocking, such as blocking of P2P. The widespread use of smartphones and tablets by children has introduced a new challenge for parents who wish to control the content to which their children have access. Controlling apps requires an additional mechanism, which places restrictions on which apps can be installed on a device.

R18 content

- 2.28 We noted in our third report that the Government had introduced legislation to restrict children's access to R18 sexual material online or on demand. Since then Ofcom has taken action in relation to several services to take down such content or ensure it is behind an effective paywall.

¹⁸ <https://www.torproject.org>

Section 3

Part 2 Safety mechanisms and the role of industry

Update on network-level filtering

- 3.1 Our second report¹⁹ set out in detail the steps taken by the ISPs to meet their commitment to Government to offer an unavoidable choice of network-level filtering to all new customers by the end of December 2013. In this latest report, we set out how the ISPs have met their commitment to offer an unavoidable choice to new customers, and how the ISPs have implemented the offer to existing customers by the end of December 2014 and by the end of June 2015.
- 3.2 The ISPs have provided Ofcom with information about changes to the nature and scope of their services since the second report, and have explained how they have extended their filtering services to existing customers.

Launch of network-level filtering services

- 3.3 Under the agreement between the Government and the ISPs in 2013, the ISPs committed to offering family-friendly network-level filtering to all new customers by the end of December 2013, and to all existing customers by the end of December 2014. The commitment was to offer “an unavoidable choice” to customers as to whether to activate the filtering service²⁰.
- 3.4 The table below shows when each filtering service was launched for new customers.

	BT	Sky	TalkTalk	Virgin Media
Launch date	Dec 2013	Nov 2013	May 2011	Feb 2014

- 3.5 The ISPs all continue to offer this choice to new consumers.

Scope of the measures: devices covered

- 3.6 All the ISPs reported that there had been no change to the basic description of their services. They confirmed that their filters would cover all devices in the home using the home's internet connection, and that websites and any other internet services using standard http protocols and ports were covered by the filters. BT, Virgin Media and TalkTalk acknowledged that many mobile apps would not be covered by their filtering services, while Sky indicated that its filter would cover some apps as well as web browsing. The ISPs also confirmed that their services continued to have no

¹⁹ http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/binaries/internet/internet_safety_measures_2.pdf

²⁰ At the time of the commitment to Government, TalkTalk already offered an unavoidable choice to new and existing customers to apply filters.

impact on the general quality of the internet access services that their subscribers received.

Scope of the measures: editorial categories and filter settings

Editorial categories

3.7 The table below summarises the different filtering categories offered by the ISPs. It shows that there are a number of filtering categories common to all the ISPs, with others covered by only some of them. The categories are largely unchanged since our second report.

Content	BT	Sky	TalkTalk	Virgin
Alcohol	✓	X	✓	X
Crime, violence and hate	✓	✓	✓ <i>filter does not explicitly cover crime</i>	✓
Dating	✓	✓	✓	✓
Drugs	✓	✓	✓	✓
File sharing	✓	✓	✓	✓
Gambling	✓	X	✓	✓
Games	✓	✓	✓	✓
Hacking	✓	✓	✓	✓
Nudity	✓	X	X	✓
Pornography	✓	✓	✓	✓
Sexual education	✓	X	X	X
Social networking	✓	✓	✓	✓
Suicide and self-harm	✓	✓	✓	✓
Tobacco	✓	X	✓	X

Developments in levels of filtering and customisation

3.8 All the ISPs either already allow customisation of the content categories operated by the filter, or propose to do so. BT and Sky also offer an option to select a pre-determined range of content categories. This table shows any available pre-determined settings offered to the user by the ISP's filtering service, along with any levels of customisation offered.

	BT	Sky	TalkTalk	Virgin Media
Pre-defined settings	Strict Moderate Light	PG 13 18	None (on or off with individual customisation)	9 basic categories blocked by Child Safe
Customisation options	All or any of 16 categories can be selected individually	All or any of ten categories can be selected individually	All or any of nine categories can be selected individually	All or any of 11 additional categories can be selected individually

- 3.9 BT said that since September 2014 it had simplified the activation process, so that when a customer selected 'yes' to the offer of BT Parental Controls, the 'light' filter level was automatically activated. The customer could still log in and select one of the other two pre-defined filter levels, or completely customise the blocked categories. The majority of customers remained on the light filter (67%). Of the others, 7% selected 'moderate', 2% chose 'strict' and 24% opted for the 'custom' level filter.
- 3.10 In November 2014 Sky added a new 'watershed' feature to its Broadband Shield. This allows customers to apply settings that suit their family life; for example, a customer could apply the age certificate 13 during the day and set the filter to switch automatically to age certificate 18 at 9pm. This is the configuration deployed in the rollout of filters to existing customers.
- 3.11 TalkTalk reported that there had been no change to its levels of filtering and customisation since Ofcom's second report.
- 3.12 Virgin Media has launched Web Safe 2, which provides options to block additional categories, black/white listing features and the ability to active filters at specific times during the day.

Roll-out of unavoidable choice to existing customers

- 3.13 We noted that TalkTalk's existing customers were able to choose filtering from June 2013. BT and Virgin Media offered filtering to existing customers from the date of launch of their services. Sky offered its filtering service to existing customers from February 2014.
- 3.14 We asked the ISPs to report to us how they had extended the unavoidable choice whether to activate their filtering services to their **existing customers** by the end of December 2014, and by the end of June 2015. The table below shows the proportion of existing subscribers presented with the unavoidable choice. We then describe how the ISPs achieved this, and the different route taken by Sky below.

	BT	Sky	TalkTalk	Virgin Media
Existing subscribers offered unavoidable choice by end of December 2014	100%	N/A	95%	100%
Existing subscribers offered unavoidable choice by end of June 2015	100%	100% ²¹	100%	100%

BT

To December 2014

- 3.15 BT said that it had taken the following steps to contact all existing customers and present them with an active choice on whether or not to activate BT Parental Controls by the end of December 2014:
- **email campaigns** presenting the benefits of BT Parental Controls, including how to get advice on keeping the family safe online²²;
 - **pop-up message** presented when customers logged into various BT services, including My BT and My Mail, asking if they would like BT Parental Controls;
 - **browser messaging** asking customers who had not made a decision to make their choice; and
 - **direct mail** sent to customers who had not used any online services in the past year were offered the choice of BT Parental Controls.
- 3.16 BT said that, as at 31 December 2014, 100% of existing broadband subscribers had been presented with the offer of BT Parental Controls, with a decision recorded from 90% of the existing base, reaching 100% by January 2015. All customers presented with the offer after 31 December 2014 were therefore new customers.
- 3.17 BT said that to support its active choice campaign during 2014, it had continued to promote the importance of online safety and to increase awareness of the tools available through various methods, including:
- an online family safety video message featuring Austin Healey²³, promoted via several media and radio interviews;
 - A TV advertisement shown on prime-time slots on BT Sports. highlighting the benefits of BT Parental Controls;

²¹ Sky decided to implement its commitment to unavoidable choice by automatically switching filters on for existing customers who had not already made a choice.

²² <http://www.internetmatters.org/>

²³ Former England rugby star and father of four children aged between six and 13.

- promotional features in *BT Update* magazine sent to paper billers and via bt.com banners;
- Parental Controls feature in Netmums email distributed to around 1.8 million readers;
- BT-sponsored article, in association with Internet Matters, in First News, which has a 2 million weekly readership, to raise awareness of BT Parental Controls; and
- inclusion of Parental Controls module as part of the UNICEF and BT partnership (*The Right Click: Internet Safety Matters*) providing parents, children and teachers with practical advice about how to stay safe online, via 600 workshops.

To June 2015

- 3.18 BT said that contacting all existing customers and presenting them with an active choice about whether or not to install BT Parental Controls, was “an incredible challenge”. However, by the end of December 2014 BT had obtained decisions from 90% of its existing base, reaching 100% by January 2015. All new customers continue to be presented with option of activating BT Parental Controls during broadband set-up.

Sky

To December 2014

- 3.19 Sky said it had embarked on a considerable marketing campaign to engage existing customers with Sky Broadband Shield during 2014, with extensive ‘Activate your Shield’ emails and mailings to millions of customers, and ‘Watershed’ and ‘Cyberbullying’ mailings. Detail of these include:
- Watershed feature in *Sky Buddy* (magazine aimed at Sky customer advisors) detailing how to talk to customers about the product;
 - Shield message on the recorded message played to customers on hold, revised with a stronger ‘activate now’ call to action;
 - *Rollout Today@Sky* (intranet) articles aimed at staff;
 - corporate website blog article;
 - new video tutorial on Sky.com; and
 - MySky ‘Make a choice’ messaging.
- 3.20 Sky said that, although its efforts had been considerable, the number of customers making a decision remained low, with about 3% of existing customers actively making a choice.

From January 2015 to June 2015

- 3.21 In view of the low engagement figures, Sky did not believe it could meet its commitment to offer an unavoidable choice through these mechanisms alone. Instead, during the first half of 2015, Sky informed customers that unless the account holder made a choice about filters, the filters would be automatically switched on at the '13' setting before 9pm and at the '18' setting after 9pm. This was applied to all Sky's existing customers who subscribed prior to November 2013.
- 3.22 The process involved an initial email asking customers to make a choice and explaining that if the customer did not click yes or no, the filters would be applied from a specified date. Three weeks later, Sky sent a reminder email. On the specified date, if no choice had been made by the customer, the filters were automatically switched on. After that point, if a customer went to a potentially harmful site, they would be presented with a page alerting them that the site had been blocked under a particular Broadband Shield category. The page provides instructions for how to log into their MySky account to either change the filters or turn them off, effectively giving them a further choice whether to accept the settings. The page is presented to the customer each time they go to a potentially harmful site until they make a decision. The whole communication process for each customer took four weeks.
- 3.23 Roll-out was completed on 19 June 2015.

TalkTalk

To December 2014

- 3.24 TalkTalk said that it had continued the roll-out process outlined in the second report, with a pop-up asking customers to make an unavoidable choice when they accessed their password-protected 'My Account' facility, with the option to set up 'Kids Safe' pre-ticked.
- 3.25 Over 95% of customers had made an unavoidable choice by the end of December 2014. The remaining minority of customers were the hardest to reach, having not responded to a range of emails and prompts designed to encourage them to use their My Account and make an unavoidable choice.

To June 2015

- 3.26 For the period 1 January to 30 June 2015, TalkTalk said that despite extensive efforts to encourage customers to use their My Account facility, a very small proportion had not done so. At the end of 2014, less than 5% of the customer base had not made an unavoidable choice on whether to activate parental controls. TalkTalk therefore developed a new pop-up, which customers saw first when they tried to access any content that would have been filtered if HomeSafe were active, set to the maximum level of protection. The pop-up presented the customer with an unavoidable choice. If they chose not to activate HomeSafe, they could continue browsing and a closed-loop email was sent to the account holder to confirm the selection and offer advice on how to change the selection if he or she wished.
- 3.27 TalkTalk said that 100% of existing customers had been presented with the unavoidable choice by 30 June 2015. The only possible exception would be customers with an active account who did not use the internet at all, or who never accessed any content that would be filtered by HomeSafe if it were activated. Such

customers would be forced to make a choice if they ever used the internet and tried to access content that would be filtered if HomeSafe was applied.

- 3.28 TalkTalk said that HomeSafe was identical for new and existing customers. Alongside the unavoidable choice, customers received information on online child safety to help them make an informed choice about the appropriate level of protection. This included: information on the types of content HomeSafe protected against; how settings could be configured; the information presented to children when a page was blocked; and details of how TalkTalk created and reviewed the list of filtered websites. Further information for parents is available on the TalkTalk website, including links to Internet Matters.

Virgin Media

To December 2014

- 3.29 Virgin Media said that in order to ensure that all existing customers were presented with an unavoidable and active choice on parental controls, it had taken the following steps as part of a phased approach:
- **Online safety portal for parents:** Virgin Media launched Switched On Families, an online platform and interactive guide on protecting children online to provide parents with information about risks to their children online, online safety and parental control filters.
 - **Customer communications:** Virgin Media communicated to its customers about Web Safe and encouraged customers to make a choice on parental controls. This ongoing campaign utilised a number of customer channels, including: customer portals, Virgin Media's Discover portal, all owned media, including direct mail and Virgin Media's e-zine, customer emails and customers' bills.
 - **MyVM interstitial:** MyVM is Virgin Media's dedicated customer portal. Since July 2014, any customers who had not yet made a choice has had their session intercepted and has been required to make an active choice before continuing to use the site.
 - **Browser interstitial/pop-ups:** All customers who had still not made an active choice were targeted as part of three browser interstitial or "pop-up" campaigns. The customer's browsing session would be intercepted with a pop-up and they would be unable to continue their browsing session unless i) they opted in or out of parental controls or ii) or indicated that they were not the main account holder. This activity took place between October and December 2014 and was carried out on three consecutive occasions to ensure that all customers were targeted.
- 3.30 Virgin Media said that it had been tracking customer awareness of Web Safe, which had risen from 0% to 37% since its launch in 2014.
- 3.31 Virgin Media said that 100% of its existing customers had been targeted with an active choice. Of those, 56% had made their choice by 31 December 2014.

To June 2015

- 3.32 By 30 June 2015, 100% of Virgin Media customers had been targeted with an active choice, and 94% had successfully made their choice.

Take-up of network-level filtering

- 3.33 We reported in detail in our second report new customers' take-up figures to the end of December 2013²⁴. We noted that a range of factors determine subscriber behaviour, such as the presence of children in the home, and the extent to which parents have already adopted alternative parental controls such as device-level filtering, or other approaches to securing their children's online safety. It is also important to note that the ISPs will have varying definitions when measuring take-up.
- 3.34 For this report we asked the ISPs to provide updated figures for both roll outs to new and existing customers, as requested by DCMS. We also asked ISPs if it was possible to give an overall indication of how many consumers had chosen, through the combination of the different roll out programmes, to adopt parental controls. All did so with the exception of Sky, whose rationale is given below.
- 3.35 The tables below show the figures for take-up of family-friendly network-level filtering by new and existing customers who were offered it, at the end of December 2014 and the end of June 2015.

New customers

	BT	Sky	TalkTalk	Virgin Media
% of new customers who took up the offer of filtering from launch of the service to the end of December 2014	7%	7.15%	36%	24.2%
% of new customers who took up the offer of filtering from end December 2014 to the end of June 2015	8%	6%	33%	24.1%

²⁴ These were: BT: 5%; Sky: 8%; TalkTalk: 36%; and Virgin Media: 4%.

Existing customers

	BT	Sky	TalkTalk	Virgin Media
% of existing customers who took up the offer of filtering from launch of the service to the end of December 2014	4%	0.7% ²⁵	6%	9.5%
% of existing customers who took up the offer of filtering from end December 2014 to the end of June 2015	5%	62%	5%	10.5%

- 3.36 We also asked ISPs to give us additional data to indicate overall take-up by new and existing customers to the end of June 2015; further explanation from the ISPs appears below.

	BT	Sky	TalkTalk	Virgin Media
% of all customers who had implemented filtering at the end of June 2015	6% ²⁶	30-40%	14 %	12.4%

BT

- 3.37 Overall, 6% of the total BT consumer broadband base had adopted BT Parental Controls. BT stated that households with children made up around 25% of its consumer broadband base and that the take-up of parental controls among these customers was 24%. BT said that current take-up was in line with its expectations.

Sky

- 3.38 Sky said that at the end of the roll-out 62% of customers within its total customer base (other than new customers from November 2013 onwards) had accepted Broadband Shield's parental controls (61% at '13' and 1% activating the higher level of protection at 'PG'). A further 8% chose the 18 category. The 'default on' setting

²⁵ Sky explained that 3% of customers made a choice about Broadband Shield through marketing efforts before it moved to the 'default on' process, with around 0.7% of existing customers taking up the offer of parental control filtering (a further 1.9% chose the malware-only option).

²⁶ This was 24% of the intended consumer broadband base (i.e. households with children).

was actively switched off by 30% of customers. Sky said that overall 30-40% of its customers had taken up filtering (excluding phishing and malware)²⁷.

- 3.39 Sky recognised that there was a considerable difference in the behaviours indicated by the take-up data between active choice and 'default on', i.e. between those customers who did not take up filtering through active choice' and those who retained it when it was switched on automatically. Sky has indicated that there was no significant difference in marketing, and there was no indication of large numbers of consumers not recognising that they had filters, evidenced by the high levels of engagement by consumers who altered the pre-configured settings. Sky believes that its customers' ability to ignore the active choice page by entering a new URL in the internet browser may have contributed to the low take-up of filters. Sky believes that customers' unwillingness to engage may be related to the internet safety advice consumers are given about avoiding clicking on pop-ups. Sky has therefore decided to extend the default approach to all other customers during 2016. Sky Broadband Shield will be turned on by default for new Sky Broadband customers. This will mean that all Sky customers will have been through the same, rigorous, "default-on" process.

TalkTalk

- 3.40 TalkTalk said that take-up by existing customers during 2014 was 6%. It said that it was logical that take-up among existing customers was lower than take-up by new customers, for two reasons. First, all new customers had been offered an unavoidable choice at the point of sale since 2012, and the take-up of 36% among new customers was broadly proportionate to the number of households with children. A large proportion of customers who would be interested in KidsSafe had therefore already made a choice and activated filtering before January 2014. Second, HomeSafe had been available to customers for four years, so even those customers who joined before the unavoidable choice was introduced in 2012 had had four years to activate the filter. TalkTalk therefore expected take-up among the existing base in 2014 to be lower than take-up among new customers.
- 3.41 TalkTalk said that the combined figure for new and existing customers who had KidsSafe active at the end of June 2015 was 14%. TalkTalk said that as its filtering offer had been available since 2012, existing customers had had the opportunity to consider activating the filters for a lengthy period of time. The overall figure reflected the fact that a significant number of its customer base would have decided that they did not wish to opt for filtering. It said it made it very easy for customers to change their settings, and actively encouraged them to do so, recognising that the level of protection a family needs will change over time.

Virgin Media

- 3.42 Virgin Media said that from launch of Web Safe to the end of December 2014, 9.5% of its existing customers who had made their active choice, chose to switch on parental controls, rising to 10.5% between 1 January and 30 June 2015.
- 3.43 Virgin Media said that from the launch of its service to the end of June 2015, 12.4% of new and existing customers had chosen to switch on parental controls. During that period 87.6% of the customers who made an active choice chose to opt out of parental controls. Virgin Media's comparison of the 2014 and 2015 figures showed

²⁷ Sky has presented the overall take-up percentage as a range to preserve confidentiality of quarterly broadband acquisitions, which is not otherwise disclosed.

that take-up among customers had risen slightly, although among new and existing customers who had made their choice on parental controls, the clear majority had decided that filtering was not appropriate for their requirements. Virgin Media said that it respected its customers' choice, and would continue to support families to stay safe online and get the best from the web, through parental control tools as well as through awareness raising/ information campaigns and customer outreach.

Alternative filtering services

- 3.44 The ISPs offer a variety of alternative filtering options, including device-level options and additional security options. We note that take-up of these solutions may affect subscriber take-up of network-level filtering.
- 3.45 BT stated, for example, that 3% of its total consumer broadband base took up its device-level Family Protection option, with 12% of households with children taking up this option. BT also offers Net Protect, another device-level option. This is a security software option that includes parental controls and which has been adopted by up to 6% of its total broadband customer base and up to 24% of customers with children²⁸. BT said that, on that basis, once network level filtering was taken into account, 9-15% of its total consumer broadband base had adopted filtering.
- 3.46 Sky's Broadband Shield service offers both parental controls and security filters. Customers can select a level of protection; for example, the '13' option includes both parental controls and security settings, or if the '18' option is selected, only malware and phishing protection is offered. Sky indicated that it has device-level controls available on request; a McAfee Internet Security Suite product which contains a parental control element: this is offered not at the point of sale but after subscription.
- 3.47 TalkTalk offers a device-level product: 'Super Safe Boost' which features software protection for up to five PCs and includes parental controls. The Super Safe Boost package is separate from the HomeSafe service, but is promoted as part of the welcome communication for new customers.
- 3.48 Virgin Media indicated that it offers device-level security with certain built-in levels of parental control, through its 'F-Secure Safe' system, which is available to all customers on request.

Categorisation of sites or services

Reporting potential mis-categorisation

- 3.49 We asked the ISPs to describe their processes for handling reports from users, and from content or service providers, of **mis-categorisation** of a site or service. Each of the ISPs has a process for users or content owners to report potential mis-categorisation of a website, as described in our second report. Since then the ISPs have worked with Internet Matters; a site owner can now check the status of their site by emailing report@internetmatters.org. Internet Matters will then liaise with the ISPs to establish the status of the site and will email the site owner with details of the site's classification with each of the ISPs²⁹. We noted in our second report that none of the ISPs offered a dedicated route or mechanism to allow site providers to directly check the current categorisation of their site against an ISP's filter. This additional

²⁸ BT said that it could not guarantee that all customers who opted for Net Protect adopted parental controls.

²⁹ <http://www.internetmatters.org/technologies/parental-controls/overblocking.html>

mechanism via Internet Matters now makes it easier for sites such as charities to confirm the status of their websites without having to approach the ISPs individually. For more about Internet Matters, see Section 4 below.

- 3.50 BT said that since July 2014, and based on feedback from the over-blocking working group of the UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS)³⁰, the page presented to customers when a site has been blocked has contained an email address link, enabling users to raise a query. Between December 2013 and December 2014, the page presented to customers when a site was blocked was shown approximately 17,000 times a day, or six million times a year. As a result of the page appearances, BT received around 0.01% (609) reports of mis-categorisation, of which 74% were found to be correctly categorised and 26% were re-categorised. BT said that the categories were reviewed daily to ensure that all sites were correctly categorised. Where sites had been correctly categorised, the customer was given an option to add the site to their personal allowed/blocked list.
- 3.51 Sky said that in the period from December 2013 to December 2014, it had received 332 reports of mis-categorisation a month, representing around 0.02% of blocked pages. Of these, an average of 60 domains per month (18%) were re-categorised. Sky does not have targets for processing mis-categorisation reports but said that these were usually completed within 24-48 hours.
- 3.52 During the same period, TalkTalk had received less than ten reports per week from site owners about suspected mis-categorisation, and most of these were received directly rather than through Internet Matters. Of the total number of reports received by TalkTalk, less than 5% were actual instances of mis-categorisation.
- 3.53 Virgin Media said that the process for mis-categorisation remained unchanged since Ofcom's second internet safety report. Customers/website owners can send a website re-classification request to Virgin Media via an online web form. Between December 2013 and December 2014, it received 1,964 requests. Of these, 1,189 were requests to unblock specific URLs, with 424 requests being accepted (35%) and 765 rejected. These requests potentially include websites that are blocked under the Virus Safe filtering product, covering websites identified as hosting malware and viruses. There were also 775 requests to block specific URLs, of which 149 were accepted (19%) and 443 rejected.

Targets for responding to reports of mis-categorisation

- 3.54 BT aims to respond to mis-categorisation cases within 72 hours and takes no longer than seven days. Sky does not have targets for processing mis-categorisation reports but said that these were usually completed within 24 - 48 hours. TalkTalk advises that reports can take up to three days to investigate (the figure was previously five days) but said that in practice the vast majority were resolved within 24 hours. Virgin Media said its maximum response time was one week, but that change could be effected almost immediately.
- 3.55 We noted that the length of the stated turn-round times for dealing with reports of mis-categorisation could be problematic for sites whose access by the public is crucial to their business model, although all the ISPs said their actual turn-round times were far shorter than indicated.

³⁰ <https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/uk-council-for-child-internet-safety-ukccis>

Account holder verification

- 3.56 Each ISP confirmed their account holder verification processes. BT, Sky and TalkTalk did not report any change to their account holder verification processes as outlined in our second report. Virgin Media confirmed that in September 2014 it had introduced a system where, in order to ensure that changes were not made by anyone other than the main account holder, the account holder was sent an email to notify them of each change.

Section 4

Other industry developments

- 4.1 Many resources are available online to help parents understand their children's online lives and protect them from harmful or inappropriate material. We look at some of these in greater detail below.

Mobile network operators

- 4.2 With regard to filtering on mobile, EE, Telefonica (O2), Three and Vodafone (and the mobile virtual network operators using their networks) all provide free adult content filtering for PAYG and contract mobile devices and dongles, for the most part by default. Under the terms of the code of practice for the self-regulation on mobiles, the filtering is done in accordance with an independent framework provided by the BBFC. This means that adult content that is not appropriate for minors is blocked until the customer demonstrates to the network provider that he or she is at least 18. Where there is a question over whether the content is or is not 'adult' in nature, a customer or website owner can refer to the BBFC for an adjudication. The BBFC publishes a quarterly report on such adjudications³¹.

Friendly WiFi

- 4.3 The **Friendly WiFi**³² scheme was designed and developed by the Registered Digital Institute (RDI) and UKCCIS, following an agreement between UKCCIS and the UK's main WiFi providers (which provide 90% of public WiFi services). This accreditation scheme, launched in July 2014, verifies whether a business's public WiFi service meets a minimum level of filtering to block out access to pornographic and child sex abuse websites.



- 4.4 The Friendly WiFi logo shows that a business is accredited by the scheme and has filters in place.
- 4.5 In its first year, the scheme has entered accreditation with over 50 WiFi providers. Celebrating the first anniversary of the scheme, Baroness Shields OBE, Minister for Internet Safety and Security, said:

"The Friendly WiFi scheme has been a great success and is another example of how the UK is leading the world when it comes to making the internet a safer place for young people. I am delighted that organisations like IKEA, Queen

³¹ <http://www.bbfc.co.uk/what-classification/mobile-content/quarterly-report>

³² <http://www.getmedigital.com/friendly-wifi>

Elizabeth Olympic Park, the Maudsley Centre and the City of York Council are joining the current members who are setting the bar for the responsible provision of public WiFi. Parent can take comfort in knowing that their children are protected from harmful content in these zones, and wherever they see the Friendly WiFi logo”.

Voluntary classification of music videos

- 4.6 In March it was announced that age ratings are now being displayed on music videos uploaded to Vevo and YouTube. This pilot, by the BBFC and the British Phonographic Industry (BPI), in partnership with Vevo, YouTube and the UK recorded music industry, was set up to test how age ratings could be applied to music videos released online in the UK, so that family audiences can make more informed viewing decisions.
- 4.7 During the first phase of the pilot, the three major UK record companies (Sony Music UK, Universal Music UK and Warner Music UK) submitted videos to the BBFC for age rating. These were any music videos for release online in the UK which the companies expected would warrant at least a 12-rating. If appropriate, the BBFC then issued either a 12, 15 or 18 rating, in line with its classification guidelines. As part of the ratings process the BBFC explains in more detail why an age rating has been given. Once given an age rating, the labels pass on the rating and guidance when releasing their videos to Vevo and YouTube, which display it when the videos are broadcast online.

Internet Matters

- 4.8 On 13 May 2014, BT, Sky, TalkTalk and Virgin Media launched **Internet Matters**, a joint campaign to promote awareness of internet safety.
- 4.9 Internet Matters estimates that 36% of broadband households have heard about the campaign, amounting to almost 8 million households across the UK. Over 1.4 million unique visitors have visited the Internet Matters since launch, viewing over 2.5 million pages of content. Over 1,500 organisations now offer links to Internet Matters information, many of which are schools. Two large advertising campaigns this year, Protect their Curiosity³³ and Back to School³⁴, brought significant numbers of visitors to the site.
- 4.10 During its first year Internet Matters introduced content covering areas of concern identified by parents, for example:
- parents’ guide to apps: apps that parents should be aware of, including the most popular, but also the riskier ones;
 - schools: providing resources schools can use and share with parents;
 - self-harm: help to learn about the issue and advice on how to talk about, deal with it and get expert help;

³³ <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLJSbhHkqYnrTxrsznOns7r1Vtv2KDh9Ee>

³⁴ A free downloadable guide for parents providing information about sexting and cyberbullying.

- radicalisation: help to learn about the issue and advice on how to talk about, deal with it and get expert help;
 - new short videos targeted at parents to provide a checklist of things they can do to protect their children online, each one targeting a different age group, and offering different advice; and
 - parents' guide to technology: advice on buying a smartphone, tablet, games console or wearable technology.
- 4.11 The most popular area of the site, by far, is the advice about parental controls, which has been supported by advertising focusing on raising awareness about parental controls. Sexting and tech guides are also popular, again supported by advertising campaigns. Internet Matters said that it sees consistent traffic to three other areas of the site: age guides, where parents can get general advice and checklists by age; cyberbullying; and inappropriate content. These get more than twice as much traffic as other parts of the site, with the least popular pages being those on radicalisation, privacy and identity theft, and online reputation.
- 4.12 While self-harm traffic is not particularly high, it has had more page views than the apps guide and a similar level to the grooming page. Internet Matters believes that this is becoming an increasingly important area of parental concern.
- 4.13 This year Internet Matters has developed a web app that provides personalised step-by-step instructions on how to set parental controls across 34 networks, devices and content platforms. The tool allows parents to personalise their selection and either get immediate instructions or have them emailed to them in the form of a printable guide. The tool has had almost 200k visitors.

UKCCIS

- 4.14 **UKCCIS** has a number of working groups, including the **Filtering Working Group**. The group includes the ISPs, mobile operators and public WiFi providers, and looks at the deployment of family-friendly network-level filters. It works to share best practice, promote the benefits of filtering and issues that arise from filtering, including over- and under-blocking of content.
- 4.15 UKCCIS also has set up a **Social Media Working Group** to produce a practical guide on child online safety for social media service providers. It will be based on best practices from UKCCIS industry members, with advice from safety experts, on issues such as dealing with abuse/misuse, parental controls, privacy and education. The guide aims to encourage good practice by industry and is provided at a level that should be of use to both start-ups and larger social media providers. This guide is expected to be published in December 2015.

NSPCC

- 4.16 The **NSPCC** offers a wide range of resources to young people and their parents about staying safe online³⁵, with initiatives such as **Share Aware**, which was launched in January 2015 and offers help to keep children safe on social networks, apps and games, and other advice on online safety relating to, for example, online porn, sexting and self-harm.

³⁵ <http://www.nspcc.org.uk>

UK Safer Internet Centre

- 4.17 The **UK Safer Internet Centre**³⁶ provides online safety advice and resources for young people (aged 3-19 years), parents and carers, teachers and child protection professionals. Among its initiatives is Safer Internet Day, which takes place in February each year to promote safer and more responsible use of online technology and mobile phones, especially among children and young people around the world. The theme of the 2015 Safer Internet Day³⁷ was: "Let's create a better internet together". Safer Internet Day 2016 will be on 9 February, with the theme "Play your part for a better internet!"

Parent Zone

- 4.18 The Parent Zone³⁸ provides information, help, advice, support and resources to parents and those who engage with parents, such as teachers, health professionals, police officers, e-safety officers and HR professionals. In July 2015 The Parent Zone and the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) launched Parent Info,³⁹ a new service for schools, providing information for parents that can be hosted on school websites. The information is designed to help parents build their children's resilience online and offline.

³⁶ www.saferinternet.org.uk

³⁷ <http://www.saferinternet.org.uk/safer-internet-day/2015>

³⁸ <http://www.theparentzone.co.uk/>

³⁹ http://www.theparentzone.co.uk/parent_info/4921

Section 5

Part 3 How can parents manage the risks to children?

Research background

Ofcom's 2015 *Children and Parents: Media Use and Attitudes* report

5.1 As we have identified in previous reports, there are four broad approaches that parents can adopt to keep their children safe online:

- **Education and advice:** Parents can teach their children about the risks of harm, why certain types of online behaviour may expose them to harm and how to avoid this (e.g. by discussing social networking privacy settings, or how to handle contact from unknown individuals). Open discussion of the risks to which children may be exposed is particularly important, as it may help encourage children to let their parents know when they have unpleasant or distressing experiences (for example, if they are subject to abusive comments/bullying).
- **Supervision:** Parents can directly supervise their children's internet use, the sites and services they visit and the interaction and communication in which they participate. Supervision is likely to be most relevant for younger children.
- **Rules about internet use:** These may cover place and time: e.g. "only access the internet in the living room/when there is a parent present"; "only access the internet for x hours a day". Rules about online interaction and behaviour may help complement education and advice (e.g. "only communicate with friends/people you know").
- **Tools and safety mechanisms:** Finally, there are technical tools, as outlined in the following section, including filtering software and site safety mechanisms to restrict the internet sites and services to which children have access.

5.2 We detail parents' use of all of these types of mediation techniques in the research sections below, which set out the key findings of our 2015 *Children and Parents: Media Use and Attitudes* research, which provides quantitative insight in the following areas:

- use of devices and content, and concerns among parents and children;
- take-up, awareness of and confidence of parents in relation to parental controls and the broader strategies parents may adopt to improve children's online safety;
- levels of parental awareness and confidence with the safety measures which may be in place on sites regularly visited by children, including, but not restricted to, content providers, search engines and social networking sites; and
- why parents may choose not to apply parental control tools.

Methodology

- 5.3 Ofcom's 2015 *Children and Parents: Media Use and Attitudes* research provides a detailed examination of media literacy among children and young people⁴⁰ aged 5-15 and their parents⁴¹, as well as an overview of media use by children aged 3-4⁴². The 2015 research was conducted between April and June 2015, and consisted of 1,379 in-home interviews with parents and children aged 5-15, along with 688 interviews with parents of children aged 3-4.
- 5.4 Some contextual data is provided by the 2012 *Parents' views of parental controls report*⁴³. This research was carried out with parents of children aged between 5 and 15, to discuss attitudes to and use of parental controls. The research was conducted in July 2012, but nevertheless remains a valid bellwether of the ways in which parents consider mediation.

⁴⁰ References to children in this report are used to refer to children and young people.

⁴¹ References to parents in this report are used to refer to parents and carers.

⁴² www.ofcom.org.uk/medialiteracyresearch.

⁴³ http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/binaries/research/research-publications/childrens/oct2012/Annex_1.pdf

Section 6

Children's internet use

Key findings

Time online

The amount of time 5-15s spend online has increased since 2014.

12-15s now spend nearly three and a half hours a week more online than they do watching a TV set.

Mobile devices

Tablets are now the device most often used for going online among all age groups except 12-15s. 12-15s in 2015 are most likely to use their mobile to go online; seven in ten 12-15s now have a smartphone.

On-demand use

The majority of children aged 5-15 live in households with access to on-demand services.

For the first time, in 2015, 12-15s who watch both TV and YouTube content are more likely to say they prefer to watch YouTube.

Social media

Three-quarters of 12-15s have a social media profile. Facebook continues to dominate as the main network of all children, but imaged-based apps are growing in popularity; increasing numbers of children have a profile on Instagram or Snapchat.

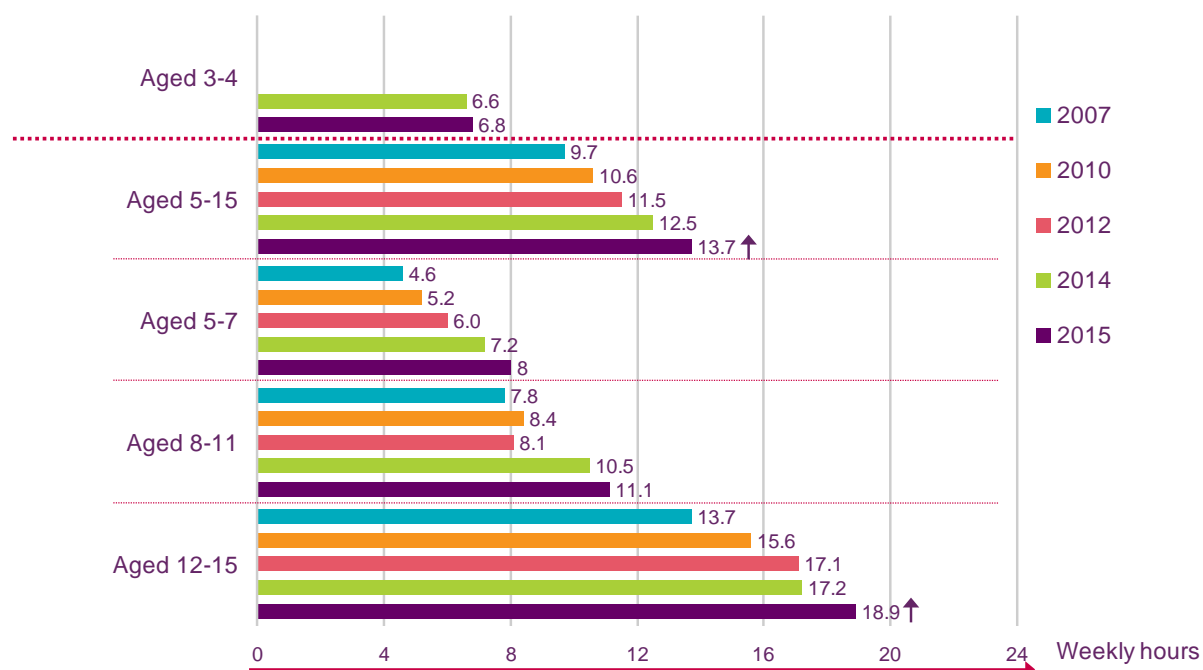
- 6.1 This section looks at key changes in children's take-up and use of media devices. It provides useful context to the findings on parental online mediation strategies, and the levels of parental awareness of, and confidence in, the safety measures in place on sites used by children. The most notable development is the increase in the use of portable internet-enabled devices. While this brings opportunities it also poses a challenge to parents, with children able to access the internet from more devices and in more places, potentially out of sight of their parents, making supervision harder.

Children's media use in the home

12-15s are spending more time online than in 2014

- 6.2 Since 2014 there has been an increase in the estimated time spent online, at home or elsewhere, among children aged 5-15, rising from 12.5 hours to 13.7 hours per week in 2015. As shown in Figure 4, this overall increase is due to those aged 12-15 spending more hours per week going online in 2015 (18.9 vs. 17.2 hours in 2014). The estimated time spent online at home or elsewhere is unchanged since 2014 for those aged 3-4, 5-7 and 8-11.

Figure 4: Estimated weekly hours of internet consumption, by age, at home (2007, 2010 and 2012) or elsewhere (2014 and 2015)



QP25A-B– How many hours would you say he/ she spends going online on a typical school day/ on a weekend day? (spontaneous question, single coded) In 2007-2012 the response for 12-15 was taken from the child and the parent for 5-7s and 8-11s. In 2007-2013 parents/ children were asked about use at home whereas from 2014 they were asked about use at home or elsewhere.

Base: Parents of children aged 3-7 who use the internet at home or elsewhere and children aged 8-15 who use the internet at home or elsewhere (variable base) - Significance testing shows any differences between 2014 and 2015

Since 2014, there has been growth in tablet use, with a majority of children in each age group now using one

- 6.3 We asked parents about their child's use of media devices in the home. Figure 4 shows the media devices used by all children aged 5-15, while Figure 6 shows the key media used among 3-4s, 5-7s, 8-11 and 12-15s.
- 6.4 Around three-quarters of children aged 5-15 use an internet-connected desktop/laptop/netbook at home (74%), or a tablet (73%) or a fixed or portable games player (72%). in 2015 5-15s are more likely than in 2014 to use a tablet computer (73% vs. 62%). Since 2010, use of most devices has either declined or stayed relatively consistent, with the key exception being tablet use, which has seen considerable year-on-year growth.
- 6.5 As shown in Figure 5, use of an internet-enabled desktop/laptop/netbook at home increases with age, rising from one in four 3-4s (27%) to more than four in ten 12-15s (85%). Although use has not decreased in the past year among 5-15s overall, 12-15s are less likely than in 2014 to use an internet-enabled desktop/ laptop/ netbook (85% vs. 90%).
- 6.6 A majority of children in each age group now use a tablet computer, with increases across each age group since 2014. The increase is greatest among younger children (around 15 percentage points for 3-4s and 5-7s).

6.7 While not charted below, a substantial minority of children have their own tablet. In 2015, tablets were owned by 15% of 3-4s and two in five (40%) 5-15s. Ownership is higher among 8-11s (43%) and 12-15s (45%) than among 5-7s (29%). Tablet ownership is up since 2014 among all children aged 5-15 (40% vs. 34%), attributable to an increase among 8-11s (43% vs. 34%). It is also higher among children aged 3-4 (15% vs. 11%).

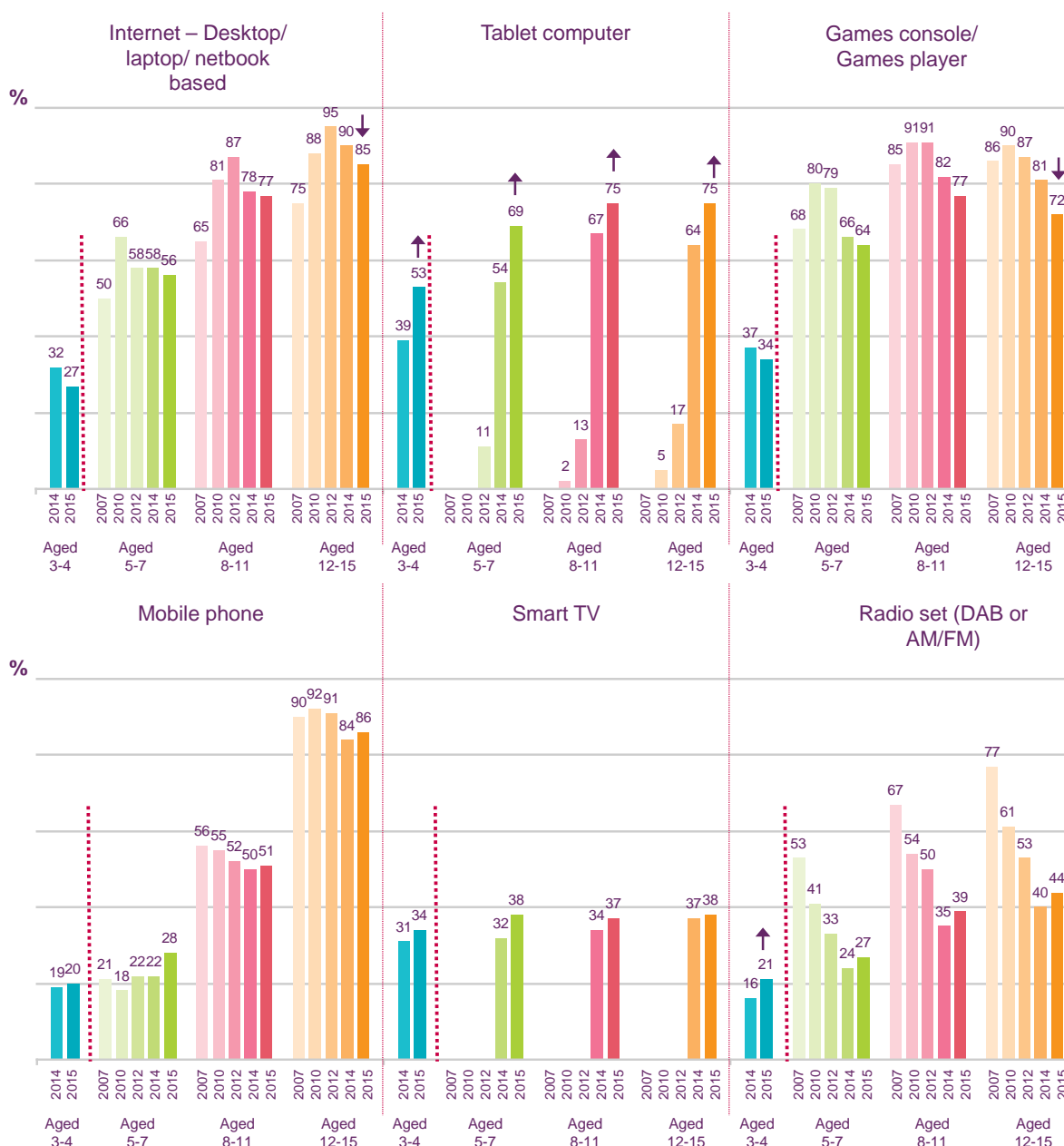
Figure 5: Media used by children aged 5-15 at home: 2007, 2010, 2012, 2014 and 2015



QP3 - I'm going to read out a list of different types of equipment that you may or may not have in your home, and which your child may or may not use. (prompted responses, single coded)

Base: Parents of children aged 5-15 (1379) - significance testing shows any change between 2014 and 2015

Figure 6: Media used by children at home, by age: 2007, 2010, 2012, 2014 and 2015



QP3 – I'm going to read out a list of different types of equipment that you may or may not have in your home, and which your child may or may not use. (prompted responses, single coded)

Base: Parents of children aged 3-4 (688 in 2015) or 5-15 (399 aged 5-7, 492 aged 8-11, 488 aged 12-15 in 2015)
- significance testing shows any change between 2014 and 2015.

Mobile phone ownership

Smartphone ownership has increased

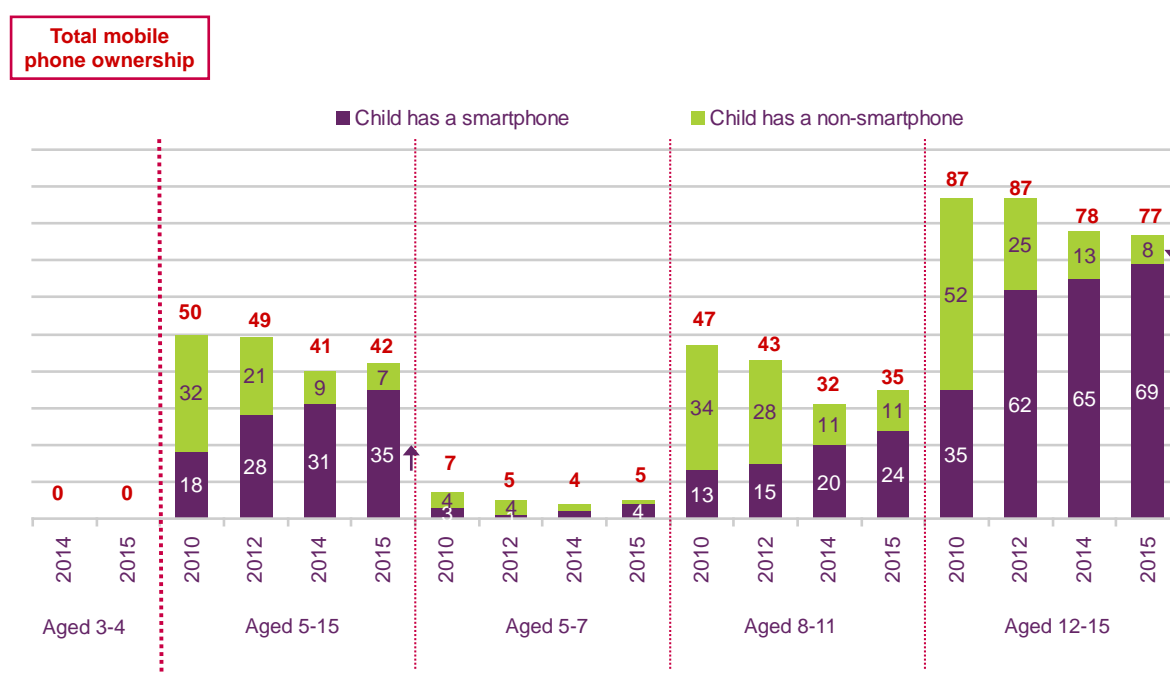
6.8 Figure 7 shows that four in ten children aged 5-15 (42%) have a mobile phone of some kind and one in three (35%) children aged 5-15 have a smartphone⁴⁴.

⁴⁴ The question (to parents) established smartphone ownership in the following way: "You mentioned that your child has their own mobile phone. Is this a smartphone? A smartphone is a phone on which you can easily access emails, download apps/ applications and other files, as well as view websites and generally surf the internet/ go online. Popular brands of smartphone include iPhone, BlackBerry, and Android phones such as the Samsung Galaxy".

Smartphone ownership is higher than in 2014 among all 5-15s, although the increase is not evident for any particular age group. The likelihood of owning a smartphone increases with the age of the child, at just 4% of 5-7s, one in four 8-11s (24%) and seven in ten 12-15s (69%). As in 2014, no children aged 3-4 had their own mobile phone.

- 6.9 Levels of ownership of a smartphone are very low among those aged 5 to 8 and start to rise from age 9. Children aged 5 to 9 are equally likely to own non-smartphones as smartphones, but from age 10 onwards smartphone ownership clearly outstrips ownership of non-smartphones, and by the age of 15, 89% of children have smartphones. In previous years smartphone dominance was more likely from age 11.
- 6.10 Smartphone ownership is more likely among girls aged 8-11 (29%) compared to boys (19%), although there are no differences by gender among 12-15s.

Figure 7: Smartphone and non-smartphone ownership, by age: 2010, 2012, 2014 and 2015



QP3F/ QP4 - I'm going to read out a list of different types of equipment that you may or may not have in your home, and which your child may or may not use (prompted responses, single coded)/ You mentioned that your child has their own mobile phone. Is this a smartphone? A smartphone is a phone on which you can easily access emails, download apps/ applications and other files as well as view websites and generally surf the internet/ go online. Popular brands of smartphone include iPhone, BlackBerry and Android phones such as the Samsung Galaxy. (spontaneous responses, single coded)

Base: Parents of children aged 3-4 (688) or 5-15 (1379) aged 5-15, 399 aged 5-7, 492 aged 8-11, 488 aged 12-15) - significance testing shows any change between 2014 and 2015

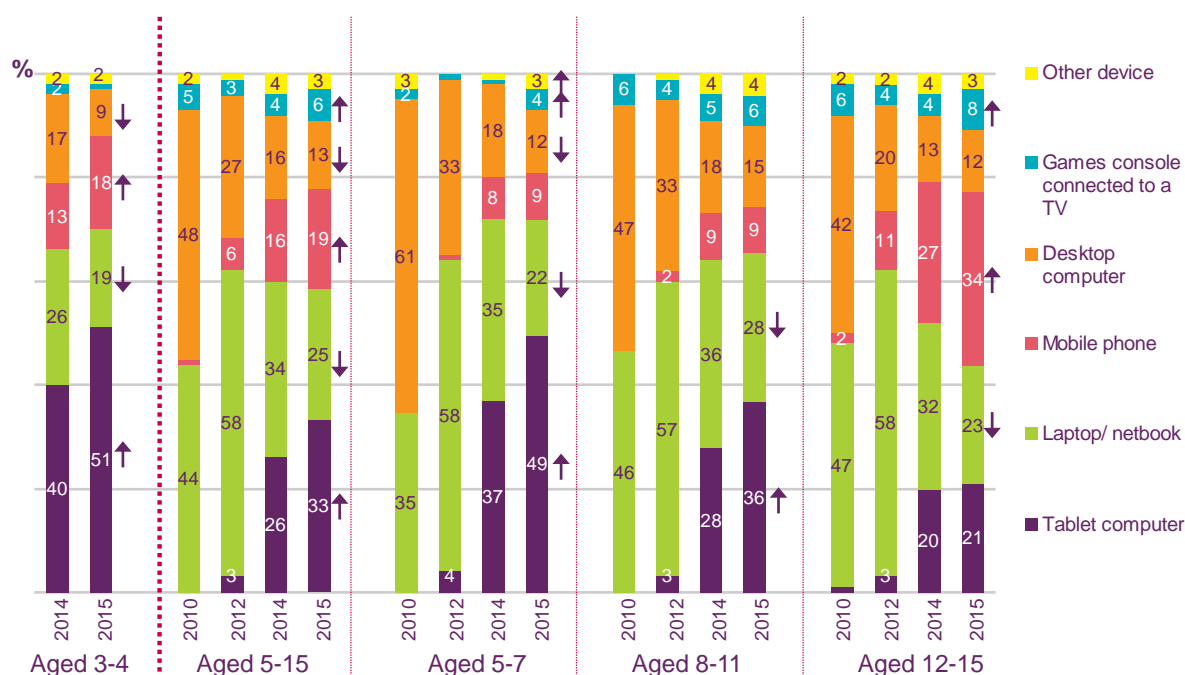
Device ‘mostly’ used to go online at home or elsewhere

Since 2014 the tablet has overtaken the laptop as the device most often used to go online

- 6.11 Figure 8 shows responses from parents of 5-7s and from children aged 8-11 and 12-15 as to which devices the child mostly uses to go online at home or elsewhere⁴⁵.
- 6.12 5-15s who go online are most likely to say they ‘mostly’ use a tablet (33%) followed by a laptop/netbook (25%) or a mobile phone (19%). Compared to 2014, 5-15s were more likely in 2015 to nominate a tablet (33% vs. 26%) and a mobile phone (19% vs. 16%) and less likely to mention laptops/netbooks (25% vs. 34%) or desktop computers (13% vs. 16%).
- 6.13 Half of 5-7s who go online mostly use a tablet to do this (49%), an increase of 12 percentage points since 2014 (37%). One in five (22%) mostly use a laptop/netbook; this is down since 2014 (35%). All other devices are ‘mostly’ used to go online by around one in ten 5-7s.
- 6.14 Among 8-11s who go online, the same two devices dominate as the most-used: one in three 8-11s (36%) mostly use a tablet computer (up from 28% in 2014) and three in ten use a laptop/netbook (28%, down from 36% in 2014). Around one in seven mostly use a desktop computer (18%), unchanged since 2014.
- 6.15 There is more variety in terms of the device most used to go online by 12-15s: a third mostly use a mobile phone (34%), a quarter mostly use a laptop/netbook (23%) and one in five mostly use a tablet computer (21%), with around one in eight mostly using a desktop computer (12%). Use of a mobile phone has therefore increased since 2014 (from 27%) while use of a laptop/netbook has decreased (from 23%).
- 6.16 Among 3-4s who go online, half (51%) mostly use a tablet, with one in five (19%) using a laptop/netbook or a mobile phone (18%). One in ten (9%) mostly use a desktop computer. Compared to 2014, 3-4s are more likely to mostly use a tablet or mobile, and less likely to use a laptop/netbook or a desktop computer.

⁴⁵ Since 2014 responses have been taken from the child aged 8-11 or 12-15 rather than from the parent, whereas in 2010-2012 responses were taken from the parent for children aged 8-11 and from children aged 12-15. Since 2014 parents and children have been asked about devices used to go online at home or elsewhere, whereas in 2010-2012 the question was asked about devices used to go online at home.

Figure 8: Device ‘mostly’ used by children to go online at home (2010, 2012) or elsewhere (2014, 2015), by age



QP24 – And when your child goes online at home or elsewhere, which device do they mostly use? (prompted responses, single coded).

Base: Parents whose child ever goes online at home or elsewhere aged 3-4 (262) or 5-15 (1176 aged 5-15, 260 aged 5-7, 441 aged 8-11, 475 aged 12-15). Significance testing shows any change between 2014 and 2015. From 2014 responses are taken from the child aged 8-11 or aged 12-15 rather than the parent

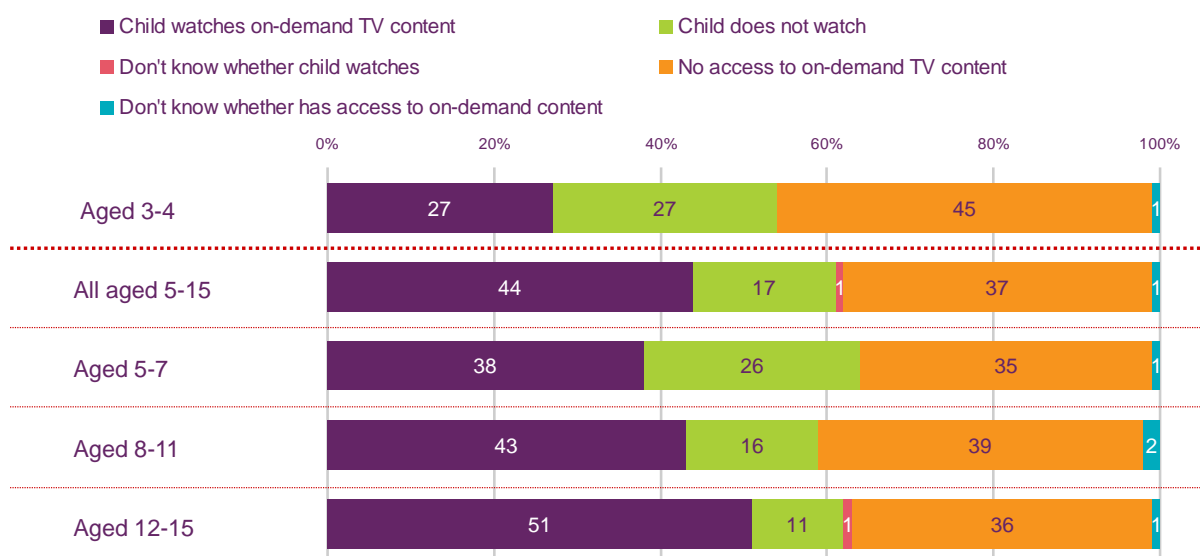
Children’s use of on-demand television content

More than four in ten children aged 5-15 watch on-demand TV content

6.17 Figure 9 shows use of, and access to, on-demand TV services among children in each age group in 2015.

6.18 A majority of children aged 5-15 (62%) live in households with access to on-demand services, with children being more likely (44%) than not (17%) to use these services. Half of 12-15s (51%) watch on-demand content, and this is more likely than for younger children. Just over half (54%) of children aged 3-4 live in households with access to on-demand services, and one in four of these (27%) watch on-demand services.

Figure 9: Access to, and use of, on-demand content, by age: 2015



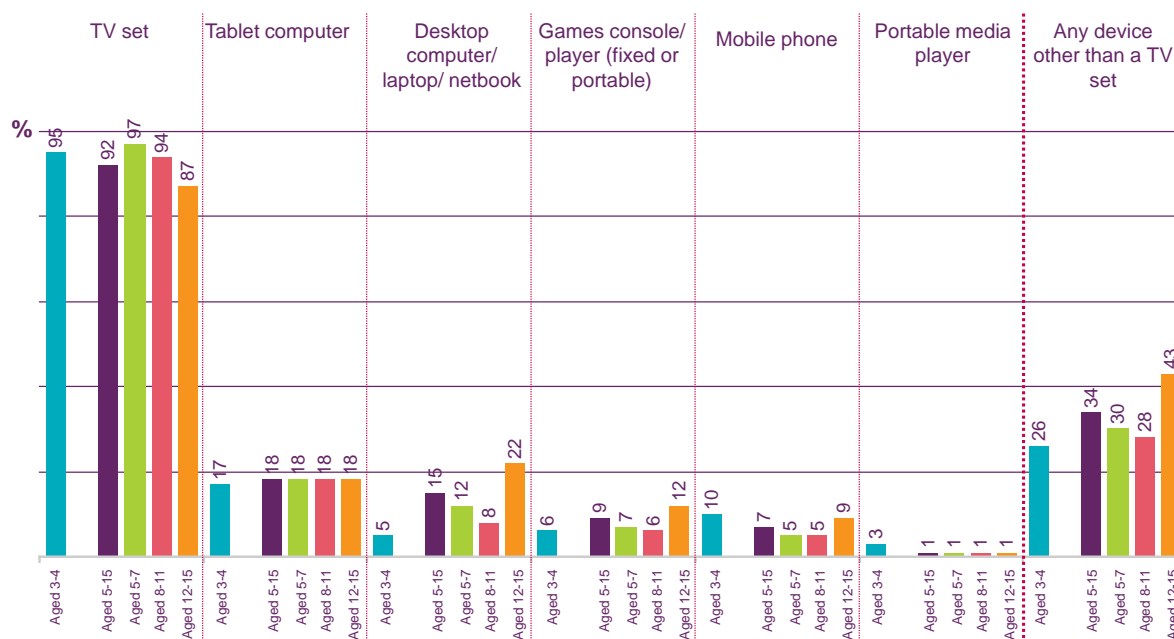
QP8/ QP9– Can you or anyone in your household watch TV programmes or films 'on-demand' through a TV set, or any other type of device in any of these ways?/ Does your child watch TV programmes or films 'on-demand' in any of these ways? (prompted responses, single coded)

Base: Parents of children aged 3-4 (688) or 5-15 (1379 aged 5-15, 399 aged 5-7, 492 aged 8-11, 488 aged 12-15) - significance testing shows any change between 2014 and 2015

More than four in ten 12-15s who watch on-demand content do so on devices other than a TV set

- 6.19 More than a quarter (27%) of 3-4s and over two in five (44%) of 5-15s ever watch on-demand TV content, with this increasing in likelihood from 5-7s (38%) to 12-15s (51%).
- 6.20 Figure 10 shows that on-demand content is most likely to be watched on a TV set, with over nine in ten of 3-4s (95%) and 5-15s (92%) who watch on-demand doing this. However, a quarter of 3-4s (26%) and one in three children aged 5-15 (34%) watch on devices other than a TV set, and this is more likely for 12-15s (43%) than for 5-7s (30%) or 8-11s (28%).
- 6.21 One in five children (18%) aged 5-15 use a tablet for this purpose, with use not varying by age. While one in seven (15%) 5-15s watch on a desktop computer/ laptop/netbook, this is more likely for 12-15s (22%). No other device is used by more than one in ten children aged 5-15.
- 6.22 Among 3-4s, 17% watch on a tablet and 10% watch on a mobile phone (10%), with other devices used by less than one in ten 3-4s.

Figure 10: Devices ever used to watch television on demand: 2015



QP10 – Which of these devices does your child ever use to watch television programmes or films at home or elsewhere, on demand (prompted responses, multi-coded)

Base: Parents of children aged 3-4 (185) or 5-15 whose child ever watches on-demand content (586 aged 5-15, 143 aged 5-7, 204 aged 8-11, 239 aged 12-15)

Device ‘mostly’ used by children for different activities

6.23 Parents whose child aged 3-4 or 5-7 goes online, and children aged 8-11 or 12-15 who go online, were asked about a range of activities in order to establish whether the child did the activities, and if so, which device they mostly used⁴⁶.

6.24 Figure 10 and Figure 11 look in particular at two key areas relevant to the issues discussed in this report: watching video content and looking at or sharing photos, videos or messages. The activities shown in each figure are ranked by the incidence of 5-15s undertaking each activity.

Tablets are the preferred device for watching videos among under-12s

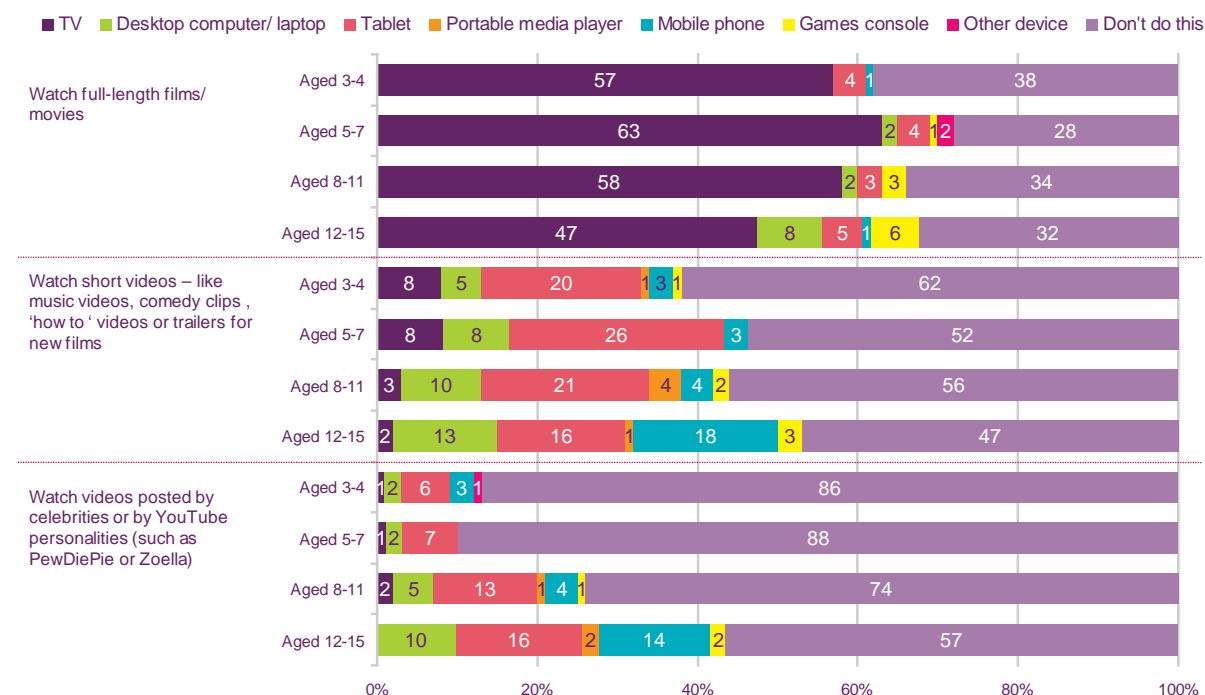
6.25 Figure 11 shows the device mostly used for activities related to watching video content, among all children aged 3 to 15 who go online. A majority of children in each age group who go online ever watch full length films/movies, and TV dominates as the device most often used.

6.26 While around four in ten or more children in each age group who go online also watch short videos (like music videos), the dominant device varies by age. Children from 3 to 11 are more likely to ‘mostly’ use a tablet to watch short videos, while 12-15s are about as likely to use a mobile phone, a tablet or a desktop/laptop.

⁴⁶ This section of questions was modified in 2015 and so we do not have previous data to compare findings.

6.27 A minority of children who go online ever watch videos posted by celebrities or YouTube personalities. Among those who do, the most-used device for children aged 3 to 11 is a tablet, while 12-15s are equally likely to use a mobile phone or a tablet for this activity.

Figure 11: Device mostly used for activities by children aged 3-4, 5-7, 8-11 and 12-15 who go online – watching video content: 2015



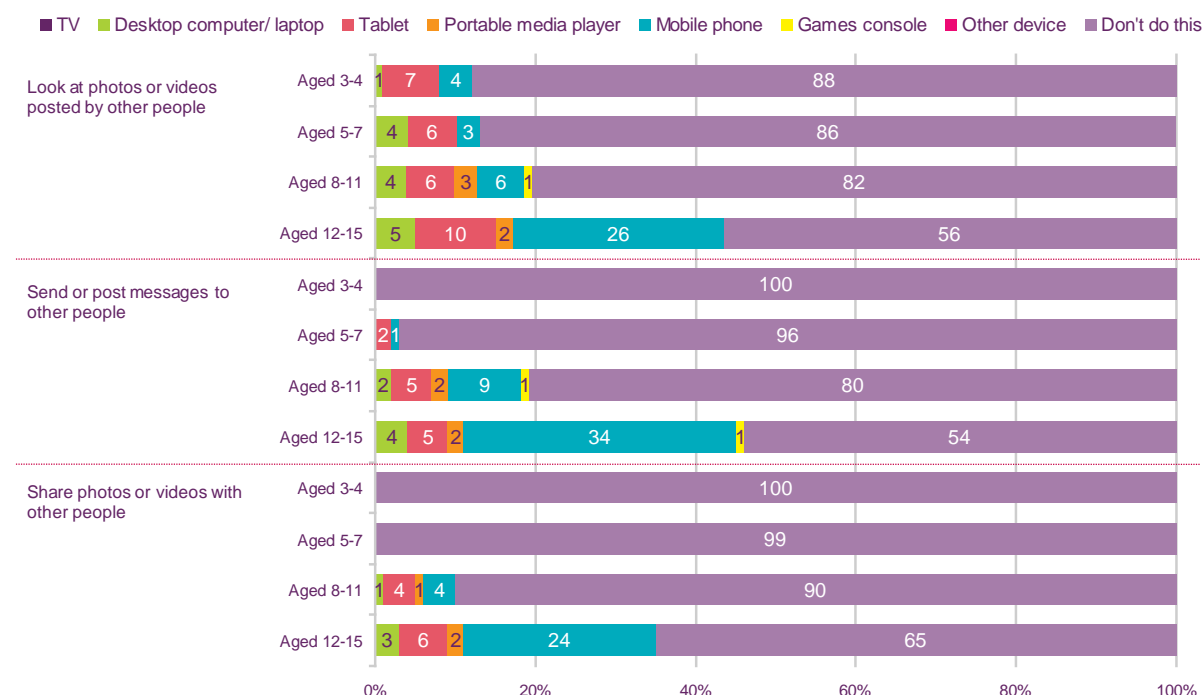
QP55/ QC14 Which device do they/ you mostly use to [activity]? (prompted responses, single coded)

Base: Parents of children aged 3-4 or 5-7 and children aged 8-11 or 12-15 who go online at home or elsewhere (262 aged 3-4, 260 aged 5-7, 441 aged 8-11, 475 aged 12-15 in 2015).

12-15s are most likely to use a mobile phone to post, share or look at posted content

6.28 In Figure 12 we look at the devices mostly used by 3-15s who go online to post, share or look at posted content. These activities are undertaken by a minority in each age group; accounting for one in five (or less) under-12s. Among those aged 12-15, each of these broadly social activities is more likely to be 'mostly' undertaken with a mobile phone.

Figure 12: Device mostly used for activities by children aged 3-4, 5-7 8-11 and 12-15 who go online – photos, videos, posting messages: 2015



QP55/ QC14 Which device do they/ you mostly use to [activity]? (prompted responses, single coded)

Base: Parents of children aged 3-4 or 5-7 and children aged 8-11 or 12-15 who go online at home or elsewhere (262 aged 3-4, 260 aged 5-7, 441 aged 8-11, 475 aged 12-15 in 2015).

Using social media

Three-quarters of 12-15s have a social media profile

6.29 Among all children, 1% of 3-4s, and 35% of 5-15s have a social media profile⁴⁷. This overall figure among 5-15s breaks out by age as follows: 2% of 5-7s, 21% of 8-11s and 74% of 12-15s. Measures are unchanged since 2014.

More 12-15s cite Snapchat as their main social media profile than in 2014 (11% vs. 3%), while fewer cite Facebook (58% vs. 75%).

6.30 Children aged 12-15 with a social media profile were asked to say which social media sites or apps they used⁴⁸. As shown in Figure 13, close to nine in ten 12-15s with a social media profile used Facebook (87%). While a majority of 12-15s with a social media profile are Facebook users, this is a decrease since 2014 (from 96%). Three sites or apps are more likely than in 2014 to be used by 12-15s with a social media profile: Instagram (53% vs. 36%), Snapchat (43% vs. 26%) and YouTube (33% vs. 22%).

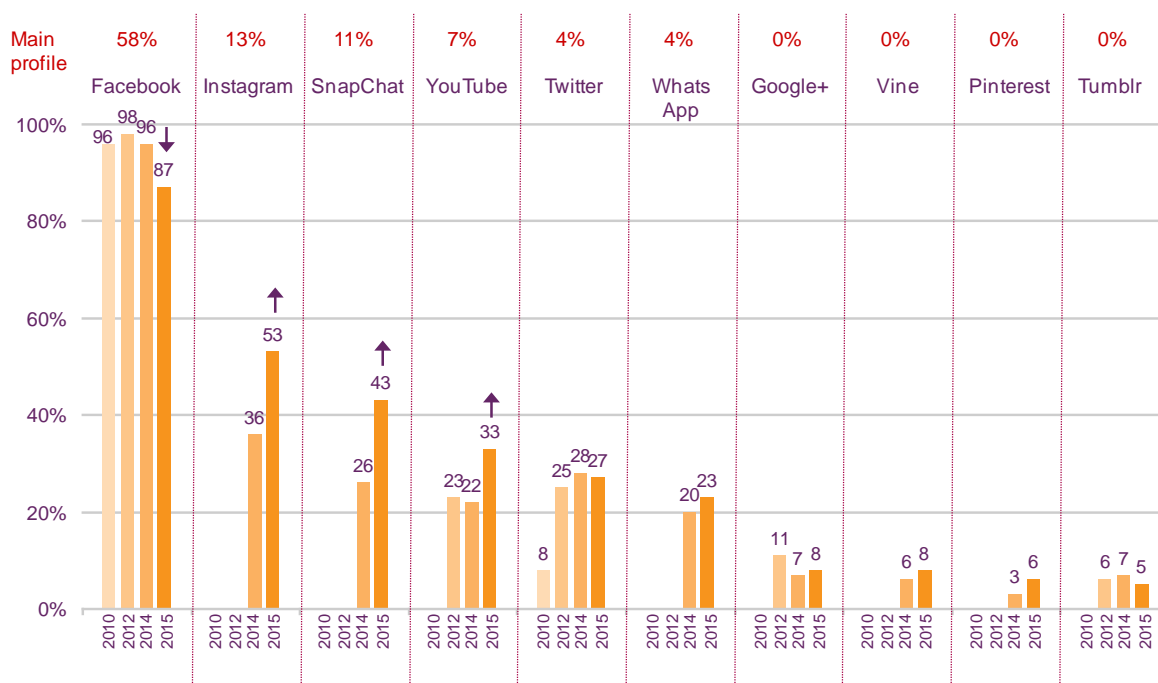
6.31 In 2015, six in ten 12-15s (58%) with a social media profile said they considered Facebook to be their main one, while 13% named Instagram and 11% chose YouTube. While most 12-15s with a social media profile named Facebook as the

⁴⁷ Parents of children aged 3-4 or aged 5-7 who go online and children aged 8-11 or 12-15 who go online were prompted with a description of social media and were asked whether the child had a social media profile or account on any sites or apps.

⁴⁸ There are too few social media site users in younger age groups to look at in more detail

main site or app, this has decreased since 2014 (58% vs. 75%). Since 2014, 12-15s are more likely to say their main profile site or app is Snapchat (11% vs. 3%). In 2015 girls aged 12-15 are more likely than boys to say their main profile is on Snapchat (16% vs. 6%).

Figure 13: Social networking sites where children aged 12-15 have a profile (2010, 2012) and social media sites or apps used by children aged 12-15 (2014, 2015)



QC21 – Which social media sites or apps do you use? (spontaneous responses, multi-coded) – showing responses of more than 4% of children aged 12-15 using any social media sites or apps

Base: Children aged 12-15 who have a social media profile (345). Significance testing shows any change between 2014 and 2015

Question amended from 2014 to refer to social media sites or apps, previously referred to social networking sites.

Section 7

Children's online understanding

Key findings

Critical understanding of online content

Most children understand that not all information found by a search engine will be truthful. However, one in five of 12-15s believe something must be true if it is listed by a search engine, and a similar proportion do not think about the truthfulness of results but just “visit the sites they like the look of”.

The BBC is still the preferred online source for children for true and accurate information about ‘serious things that are going on in the world’, although a third of 12-15s would turn to YouTube.

12-15s are less likely than in 2014 to say that they use lots of websites they haven’t visited before. While this could indicate an increase in caution, it also suggests that children are less likely to be discovering new things online.

Sharing information

12-15s differentiate between the kinds of information they are happy to share. They are more inclined to share information about what they are doing and photos, and less inclined to share specific personal details, such as home address, mobile number and email address.

The majority would want either nobody, or just friends, to see each of the types of personal information. Less than 5% would be happy to share this information with anyone, although between 8% and 14% would be happy to share it with friends of friends, which could include people not known to them.

Critical understanding of online content

- 7.1 ‘Critical understanding’ is a measure of the skills and knowledge children need in order to understand, question and manage their media environment. This is important if they are to get the benefits of the internet, and avoid the risks. Critical understanding covers a wide range of knowledge and skills. The following section explores the extent to which children possess these skills, and whether they have developed in line with the increasing complexity of the media landscape.
- 7.2 Children’s levels of critical awareness – about advertising messages, about how services are funded (and therefore whether they are being *sold to*) and about the extent to which they can trust information – are relatively low, given the ubiquity of internet use.
- 7.3 Set alongside the wider range of sources of content children have access to, their increased exposure to advertising and the use of services like social networking raises challenges for how parents help children keep their personal information safe, understand the implications of sharing personal information and content and navigate the increasingly complex online environment safely in a way which will allow them to get the benefits and minimise the risks.

Children are more likely than in 2014 to think that information on websites I apps used for school work and on social media sites is “always true”

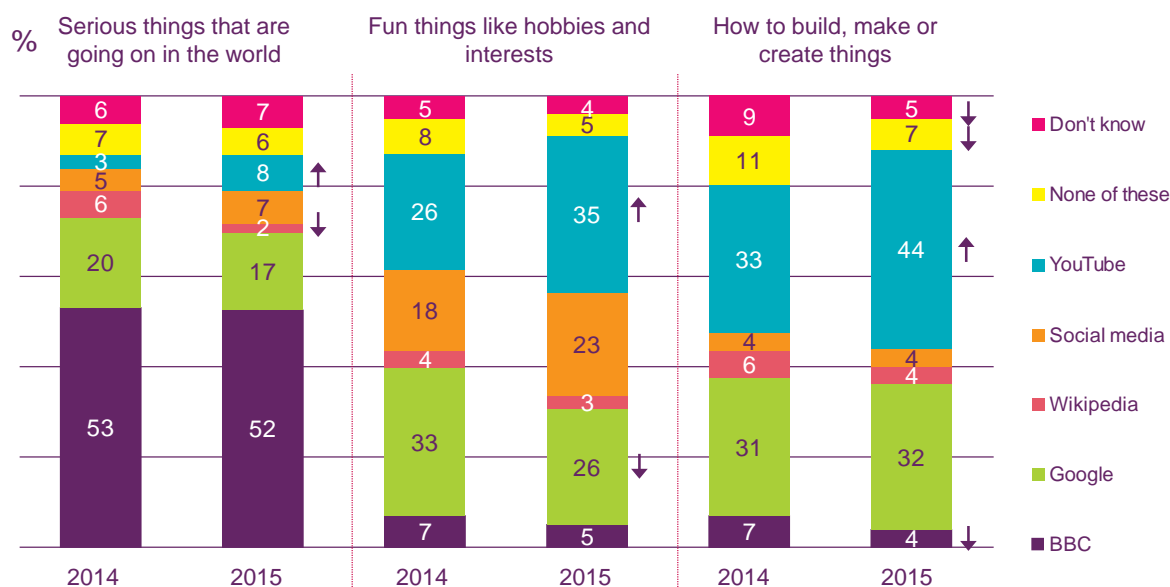
- 7.4 Children aged 8-15 who go online at home or elsewhere were asked whether they visited various types of websites or apps. Those who visited each type were then asked whether they thought all the information on these sites or apps is true, most of it is true or some of it is true.
- 7.5 The majority of 8-11s and 12-15s who go online say they visit websites or apps for schoolwork/homework. Of those who do so, 28% of 8-11s and 17% of 12-15s believe that all the information shown is true. Compared to 2014, 8-11s in 2015 are more likely to believe that all the information they see on these sites/ apps is true.
- 7.6 More than half of 8-11s (53%) and nine in ten 12-15s (89%) who go online say they have visited social media sites or apps (like Facebook, Google Plus, Snapchat Twitter, Tumblr, WhatsApp or YouTube). While the majority say that only ‘most’ or ‘some of’ the information on social media sites is true, a small proportion in each age group believe that all the information on social media sites and apps is true (8% for 8-11s and 9% for 12-15s). This is an increase since 2014 for 12-15s.

Distinguishing between different sources of online content

Since 2014, 12-15s are more likely to use YouTube as an information source

- 7.7 In 2015 and in 2014, children aged 12-15 who go online were prompted with five sources of online information and were asked to say which one they would turn to first for accurate and true information, in each of three scenarios (Figure 14).
- 7.8 A majority of 12-15s (52%) said they would turn to the BBC website when wanting to find out about serious things that are going on in the world, with less than one in five saying they would turn to Google for this purpose (17%). No other source was chosen by more than one in ten children aged 12-15. Compared to 2014, 12-15s are more likely in 2015 to say they would use YouTube for this purpose (8% vs. 3%), and less likely to rely on Wikipedia (2% vs. 6%).
- 7.9 YouTube has also increased in popularity for finding accurate information online about hobbies and interests (35% vs. 26%) and for information online about how to build, make or create things (44% compared to 33% in 2014). Relatively few would opt to use the BBC for the latter activity (4%), and this is less likely than in 2014 (7%).

Figure 14: Online sources of accurate and true information for different scenarios among 12-15s: 2014 and 2015



QC52A-C I'm going to read out some types of information you may want to find out about and I'd like you to say which one of these you would turn to first for accurate and true information online about... (prompted responses, single coded)

Base: Children aged 12-15 who go online at home or elsewhere (475 aged 12-15 in 2015). Significance testing shows any difference between 2014 and 2015.

Critical understanding of search engines

One in five 12-15s who use search engines believe that if a search engine lists information it must be true.

7.10 Children aged 12-15 who ever use search engines (88% of all who go online at home or elsewhere) were asked about the truthfulness of information that was returned by the search engine. Children were asked to say which of the following statements was closer to their opinion:

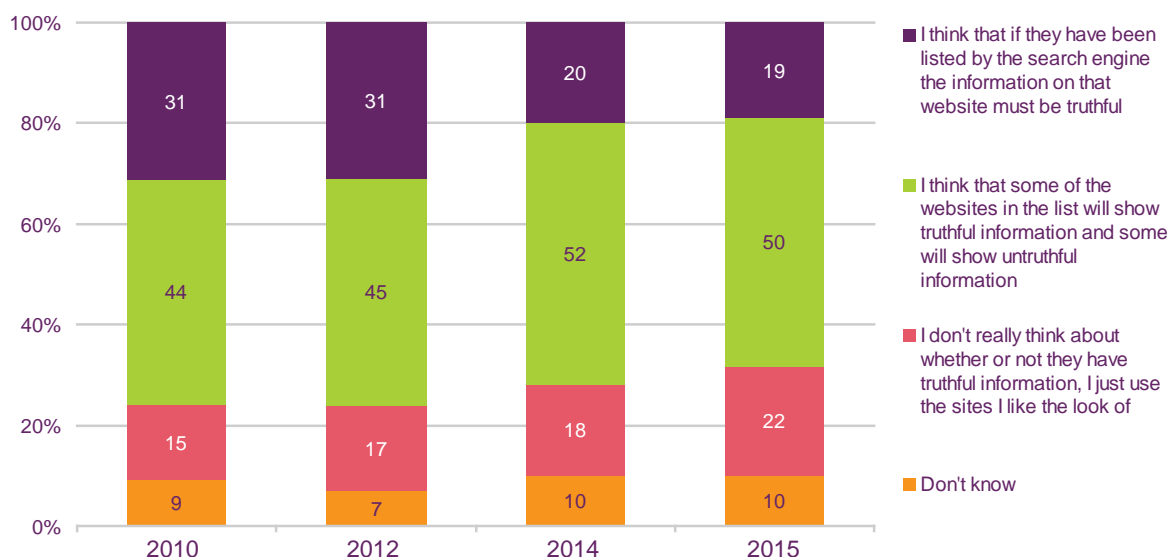
- "I think that if they have been listed by the search engine the information on the website must be truthful."
- "I think that some of the websites in the list will show truthful information and some will show untruthful information."
- "I don't really think about whether or not they have truthful information, I just use the sites I like the look of."

7.11 As shown in Figure 15, half of search engine users aged 12-15 (50%) make some type of critical judgement about search engine results, believing that some of the sites returned will be truthful while others may not be.

7.12 One in five 12-15s (19%) believe that if a search engine lists information it must be truthful, and a similar proportion (22%) don't consider the veracity of results but just visit the sites they like the look of, while one in ten 12-15s (10%) are unsure. Each of these measures is unchanged since 2014. Compared to 2010 and 2012, however,

children are less likely to believe that all the information listed must be truthful (19% vs. 31%).

Figure 15: 12-15s' understanding of results listed by search engines, among users at home (2010, 2012) or elsewhere (2014, 2015)



QC24– Which one of these is the closest to your opinion about the truthfulness of the information in the websites that appear in the results pages? (prompted responses, single coded)

Base: Children aged 12-15 who go online at home or elsewhere, who ever use search engines or apps (417).

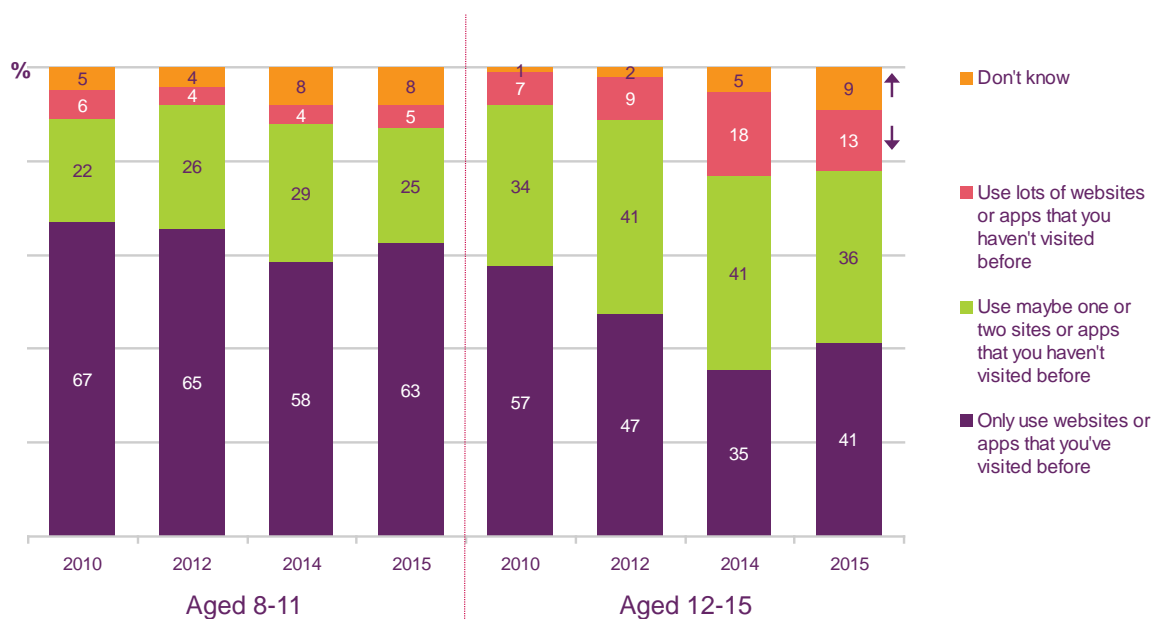
Significance testing shows any change between 2014 and 2015.

Visiting new websites

Since 2014, 12-15s are less likely to say they use lots of websites or apps they haven't visited before

- 7.13 Children aged 8-15 who go online were asked to say whether, in most weeks, they only used sites or apps that they had visited before, used one or two sites that they hadn't visited before, or used lots of sites they hadn't visited before.
- 7.14 As shown in Figure 16, a majority of 8-11s (63%) said they only used websites they had visited before, compared to four in ten 12-15s (41%). Twelve to 15 year olds are more likely than 8-11s to say they use lots of websites or apps they have not visited before (13% vs. 5%) and to say they use one or two websites or apps they haven't visited before (36% vs. 25%).
- 7.15 Since 2014 there has been no change in 8-11s' claimed experience of visiting websites. However, 12-15s are less likely in 2015 to say they use lots of websites or apps they have not visited before (13% vs. 18%), following an increase in this measure between 2012 and 2014.

Figure 16: Experience of visiting websites not visited before, among those who go online at home (2010, 2012) or elsewhere (2014, 2015), by age



QC17 – In most weeks when you go online on any type of computer, a mobile phone, a games player or a media player would you say that you....?

Base: Children aged 8-15 who use the internet at home or elsewhere (441 aged 8-11, 475 aged 12-15 in 2015). Significance testing shows any differences between 2014 and 2015.

Attitudes towards sharing personal information online

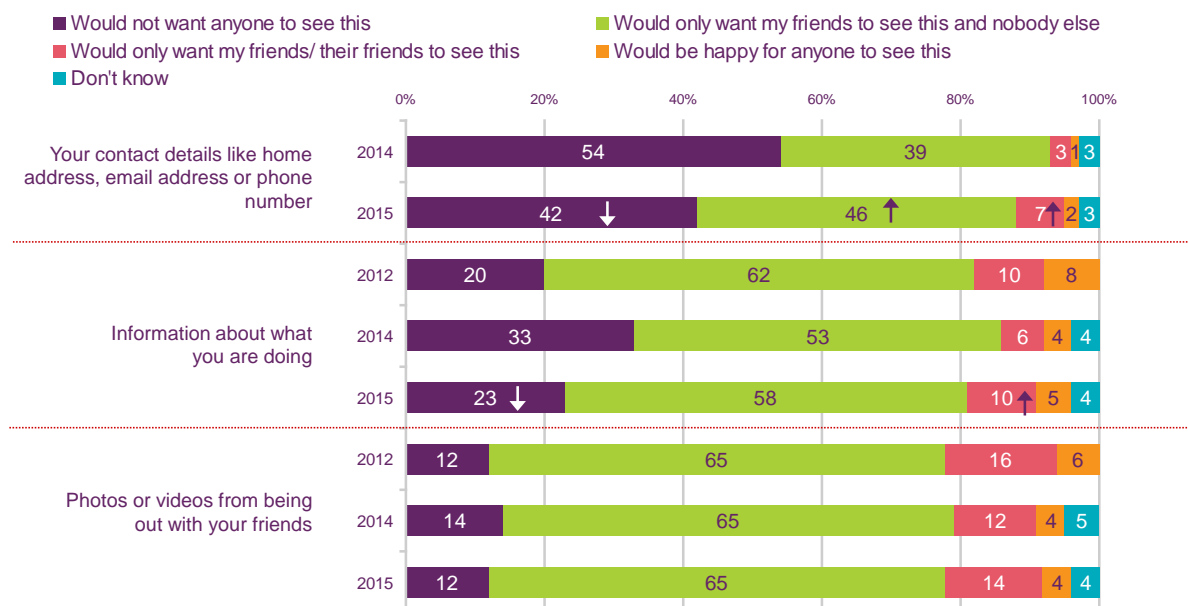
12-15s are more willing to share their personal information online than in 2014, but only with their friends

- 7.16 Children aged 12-15 who go online were prompted with a list of types of information that people can show online, and were asked to say how they felt about people seeing each type of information. As shown in Figure 17, 12-15s differentiate between the types of information they are happy to share. They are less inclined to share personal details such as their home address, their mobile number or their email address, and are more inclined to share information about what they are doing and to share photos online.
- 7.17 The majority of 12-15s would either want nobody, or just their friends⁴⁹, to see each type of information that was asked about. Very few 12-15s would be happy for 'anyone' to see contact details such as their home address, email address or phone number online (2%), information about what they are doing (5%) or photos/videos of them out with their friends (4%).
- 7.18 Since 2014, 12-15s are less likely to say they would not want anyone to see their personal information (42% vs. 54%) and are more inclined to share this information with friends only (46% vs. 39%) or with friends and their friends (7% vs. 3%). They are also less likely to say they would not want anyone to see information about what

⁴⁹ It is worth bearing in mind that, while this question does not focus specifically on social media, some children could be referring to 'friends' in the widest sense, rather than a smaller number of more personal or close friends.

they are doing (23% vs. 33%) and are more inclined to share this information with friends and their friends (10% vs. 6%).

Figure 17: Personal information that children aged 12-15 are willing to share online: 2012, 2014, 2015



QC27A-C - I'm going to read out some types of information that people can show online. For each one I'd like you to say which one of the statements on this card best describes how you feel about who could see each type of information (prompted responses, single coded)

Base: Children aged 12-15 who use the internet at home or elsewhere (475 in 2015).

Section 8

Children's attitudes and concerns

Key findings

Reporting worrying, nasty or offensive online content

One in six 12-15s and one in ten 8-11s who go online say they have seen something online in the past year that was worrying, nasty or offensive, unchanged since 2014.

The majority of 8-11s and 12-15s would tell somebody if they saw something online that was worrying, nasty or offensive, but the proportion of 8-11s and 12-15s who say they would not tell anyone if they saw this kind of content has gone up since 2014, to about one in 20, similar to the proportion of 12-15s who say this.

Negative experiences online/via mobile

Three in ten 12-15s (28%) said they knew of someone who had had any of a range of negative experiences asked about, including online/mobile contact or conduct, in the past year. One in seven (14%) say they have personally experienced at least one of these negative experiences in the past year.

Around one in 12 12-15s (8%) say they have been contacted online by someone they do not know and one in eight (13%) know someone this has happened to. Two per cent say they have seen something of a sexual nature, either online or on their mobile phone, rising to 5% saying they know someone this has happened to.

Only one in ten 8-11s and 12-15s say they have personally experienced any kind of bullying in the past 12 months, including face to face. Bullying is more likely to happen in person rather than via text message, social media or online games.

Potentially risky behaviour

Some older children (12-15s) do have knowledge of potentially risky behaviours, for example one-third of internet users know how to delete their browsing history. While this is not inherently risky, it might limit parental supervision of sites visited by the child. However, very few report having done so. Only one in ten say they have deleted their history records.

Knowledge of more complex tactics to get around parental controls such as disabling online filters or controls, or use of proxy sites or VPNs to access filtered sites or apps is lower. One in ten internet users say they know how to disable a filter or control, 6% say they know how to use a proxy site or a VPN. However those reporting that they have actually done so is far lower than the claimed knowledge, in all cases only 1% say they have done it.

Information and advice

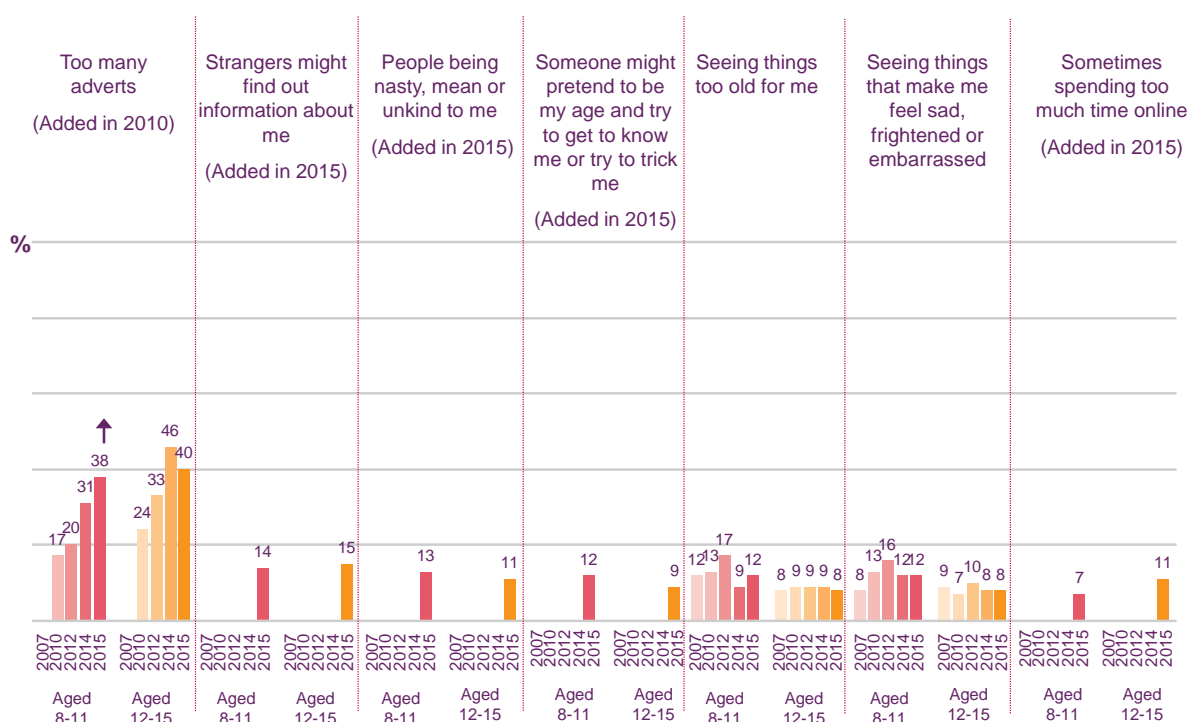
Nearly all internet users aged 8-15 say they have been given information or advice about how to manage risks when online.

The number of 8-11s and 12-15s who say they received advice about online risks has increased since 2014.

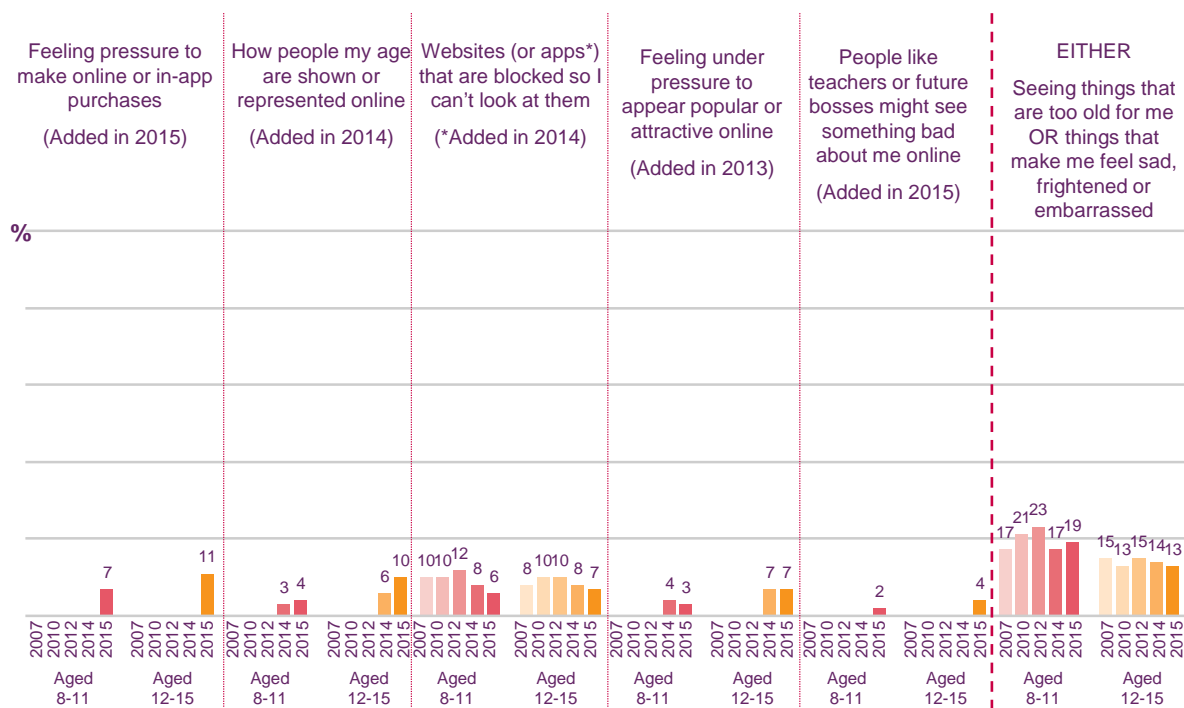
One in five 8-11s and one in eight 12-15s say they dislike seeing things online that are too old for them or that make them feel sad, frightened or embarrassed

- 8.1 Children aged 8-15 who use the internet at home or elsewhere were prompted with a list of 12 things that they might not like about using the internet, and were asked to say which, if any, applied to them. These are shown in Figure 18, ranked according to overall incidence among 8-15s.
- 8.2 Apart from too many adverts (the most popular dislike among the majority of internet users aged 8-11 and 12-15), the next most popular dislikes among all 8-15s were: “strangers might find out information about me” (14% for 8-11s vs. 15% for 12-15s), “people being nasty, mean or unkind to me” (13% for 8-11s vs. 11% for 12-15s) and “someone might pretend to be my age and try to get to know me or try to trick me” (12% for 8-11s vs. 9% for 12-15s)⁵⁰.
- 8.3 Eight to 11 year olds are more likely than 12-15s to say they dislike seeing things that are too old for them, (12% vs. 8%), or that make them feel sad, frightened or embarrassed (also 12% vs. 8%). When looking at the proportion of children who have either of these two key concerns, 19% of 8-11s and 13% of 12-15s dislike seeing things online that are too old for them or things that make them feel sad, frightened or embarrassed. This incidence has not changed since 2014 for either age group.

Figure 18: Children’s dislikes about the internet, among those who go online at home (2007, 2010, 2012) or elsewhere (2014, 2015), by age



⁵⁰ All new to the study or significantly amended in 2015, and are as likely to be nominated by 8-11s as 12-15s:



QC16 – Which of these things if any, are things you don't like about being online?

Base: Children aged 8-15 who use the internet at home or elsewhere (441 aged 8-11, 475 aged 12-15 in 2015).

Significance testing shows any difference between 2014 and 2015

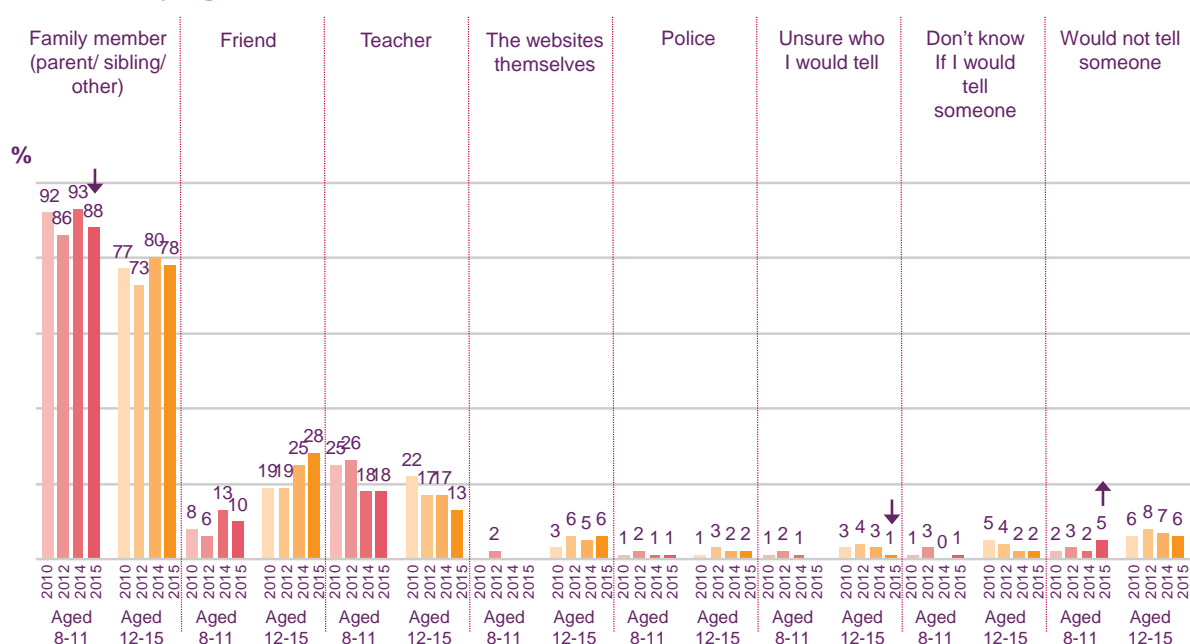
Reporting online content that is nasty, worrying or offensive

The majority of 8-11s and 12-15s would tell somebody if they saw something online that was worrying, nasty or offensive, but the number of 8-11s who say they would not tell anyone has increased since 2014

- 8.4 Children aged 8-15 who go online at home or elsewhere were asked whether they would tell anyone if they saw something online that they found worrying, nasty or offensive in some way. If they said they would tell someone, they were asked who that person would be. Responses are shown in Figure 19.
- 8.5 Eight to 11 year olds (94%) are as likely as 12-15s (91%) to say they would tell someone⁵¹. The majority of both age groups would tell a family member (parent/sibling or other family member), with younger children more likely than older children to do this (88% vs. 78%). Younger children would also be more likely to tell a teacher (18% vs. 13%). Twelve to 15 year olds would be more likely than 8-11s to tell a friend (28% vs. 10%) or the website (6% vs. 0%).
- 8.6 Less than one in ten children aged 12-15 (6%) and 8-11 (5%) would not tell anyone if they saw something online that they found worrying, nasty or offensive. This has increased among 8-11s from 2% in 2014.
- 8.7 In 2015, 8-11s were less likely than in 2014 to say they would tell a family member (88% vs. 93%) and were more likely to say they would not tell anyone (5% vs. 2%). Twelve to 15 year olds were also less likely to say they were unsure whom they would tell (1% vs. 3%).

⁵¹ Included in this group are the 1% of 12-15s who said they were unsure who they would tell.

Figure 19: Reporting online content considered by the child to be worrying, nasty or offensive, by age: 2010, 2012, 2014 and 2015



QC28 – If you saw something online that you found worrying, nasty or offensive in some way that you didn't like, would you let someone know about it? If yes – who would you tell? (Shows spontaneous responses from > 1% of all internet users aged 8-15) (spontaneous responses, multi-coded)

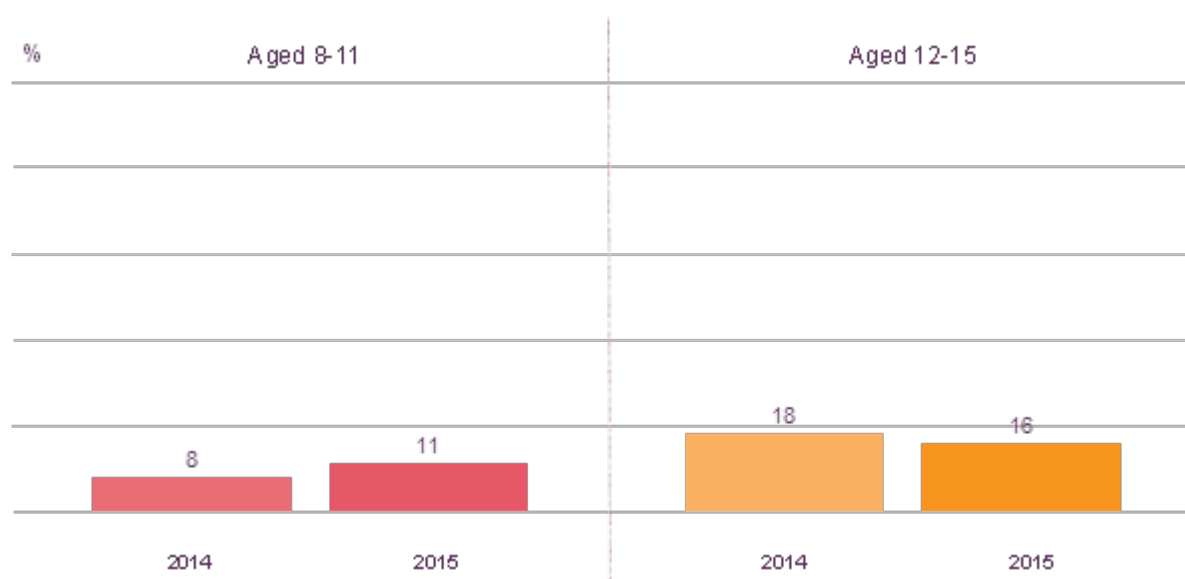
Base: Children aged 8-15 who use the internet at home or elsewhere (441 aged 8-11, 475 aged 12-15 in 2015). Significance testing shows any difference between 2014 and 2015.

Incidence of negative experiences online

One in six 12-15s and one in ten 8-11s say they have seen something online in the past year that was worrying, nasty or offensive

- 8.8 Children aged 8-11 and 12-15 who use the internet at home or elsewhere were asked whether, in the past year, they had seen anything online that was worrying, nasty or offensive, as shown in Figure 20.
- 8.9 One in ten children aged 8-11 (11%) who go online said they had seen something online in the past year that was worrying, nasty or offensive, with 12-15s being more likely to say this (16%). Both measures are unchanged since 2014.

Figure 20: Child's claimed experience of having seen any online content in the past year that was considered worrying, nasty or offensive, by age: 2012, 2014 and 2015



QC29 – And in the last year, have you seen anything online that you found worrying, nasty or offensive in some way, that you didn't like? (Prompted responses, single coded).

Base: Children aged 8-15 who go online at home or elsewhere (441 aged 8-11, 475 aged 12-15). Significance testing shows any change between 2014 and 2015.

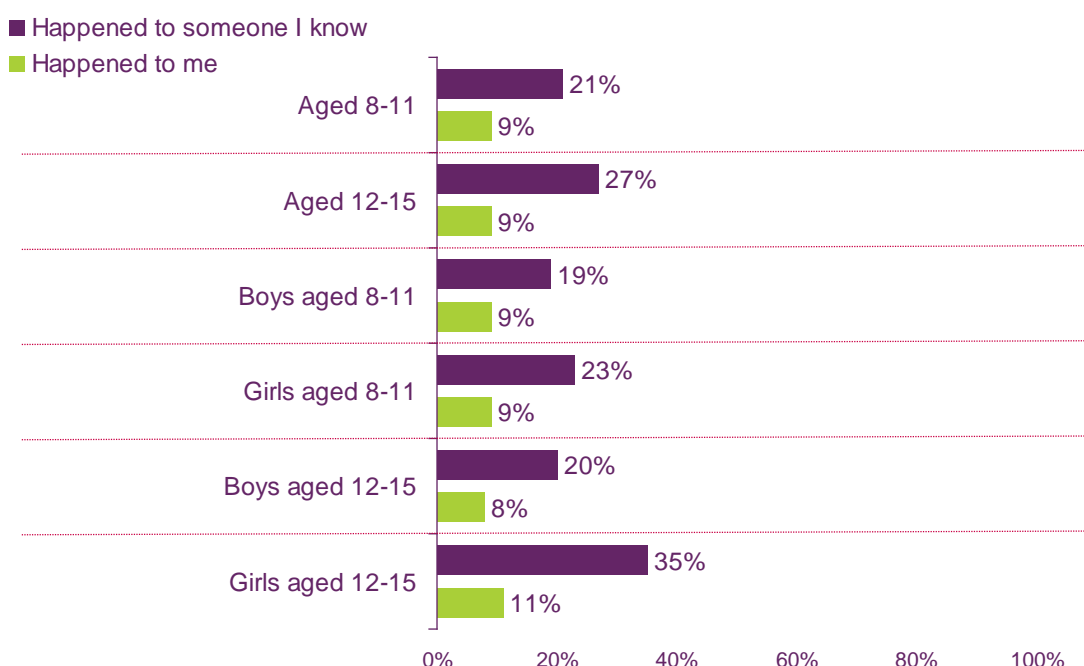
One in ten 8-11s and 12-15s say they have personally experienced bullying in the past 12 months

8.10 Children aged 8-11 and 12-15 were asked whether they knew of anyone who had been bullied⁵² (through someone being nasty or hurtful to them)⁵³ in the past year. This question was followed by asking the child whether they felt they had themselves been bullied in the past year. Figure 21 shows that one in ten 8-11s (9%) and 12-15s (9%) said they had been bullied in the past twelve months. However, 12-15s are more likely than 8-11s to know of someone who has been bullied (27% vs. 21%).

⁵² It was important to ensure that these questions about bullying and the potentially harmful side of mobile phone and internet use did not distress the child. The questions were placed at the end of the questionnaire, options for declining to answer were always provided, and the questions used show-cards, allowing the child to read out the letter relating to the particular response they wanted to give.

⁵³ The specific definition of bullying that was read out to children was: "Sometimes children or teenagers can say things or do things that can be quite nasty or hurtful. This type of behaviour is known as bullying. This could be in person, by pushing, hitting, calling people names or by leaving them out. It could also be through nasty telephone calls or text messages, by sharing embarrassing photos or videos of someone, or by being nasty or hurtful to people through mobile phones, social media sites or other websites or online games. In the last year, do you know of anyone who has been bullied by someone being nasty or hurtful to them in any of these ways?"

Figure 21: Experience of being bullied, by age and gender: 2015



QC53/ QC54– (description of bullying read out to child) In the last year, do you know of anyone who has been bullied by someone being nasty or hurtful to them in any of these ways?/ In the last year, do you feel you have been bullied by someone being nasty or hurtful to you in any of these ways? (Prompted responses, single coded)
Base: Children aged 8-15 (492 aged 8-11, 488 aged 12-15)

Bullying is more likely to happen in person rather than via text message, social media or online games

8.11 In addition to asking whether the children had witnessed or experienced bullying, we asked what form that bullying had taken. This is most likely to have been in person, with 6% of all 8-11s and all 12-15s saying they had experienced this. Bullying via text message or on social media is less common, with 1% of 8-11s saying they had experienced each of these kinds of bullying, rising to 4% of 12-15s. Two per cent of 8-11s and 1% of 12-15s said they had been bullied through online games, and 1% of 12-15s via photo message or video, and via telephone calls.

Three in ten 12-15s know someone with experience of negative online/mobile phone activity

8.12 In addition to asking children about their experience of being bullied, children aged 12-15 were asked whether they personally knew anyone who, in the past year, had experienced, online or through a mobile phone, any of a range of negative experiences. They were also asked if they had personally experienced any of these in the past year. Responses are shown in Figure 22.

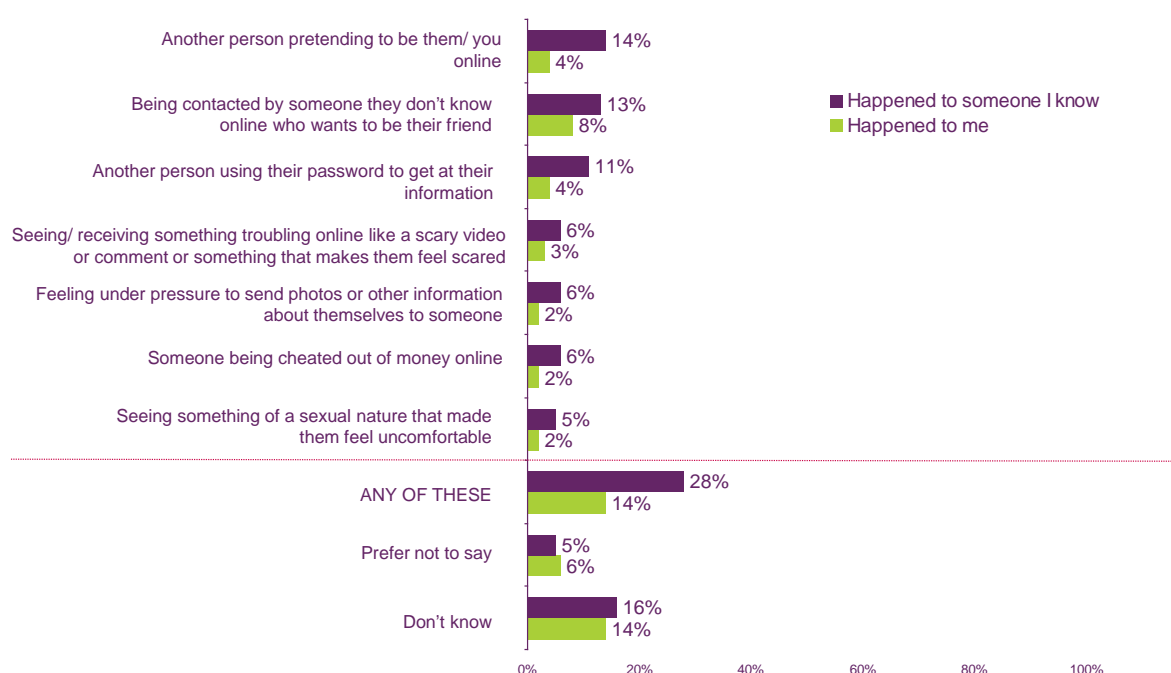
8.13 Three in ten children aged 12-15 (28%) said they knew of someone who had had any of the negative experiences. One in seven 12-15s (14%) said they had personally experienced at least one of them in the past year.

8.14 Around one in 12 of the 12-15s (8%) said they had been contacted online by someone they didn't know and one in eight (13%) knew of someone this had happened to. Two per cent said they had seen something of a sexual nature, either

online or on their mobile phone, rising to 5% saying they knew someone this had happened to⁵⁴.

- 8.15 Four of the negative types of online or mobile activity shown in Figure 20 were also asked about in 2014: another person pretending to be them online, another person using their password to get at their information, seeing or receiving something troubling online like a scary video or comment or something that makes them feel scared and someone being cheated out of money online. The only difference since 2014 is that 12-15s are more likely to say they have been cheated out of money online (2% vs. 0%).

Figure 22: Experience of negative types of online/mobile phone activity among children aged 12-15: 2015



QC58/ QC59 – Please take a look at the list of things shown on this card and think about whether you know anyone who has experienced any of these things in the last year, either online or on a mobile phone/ Again, please just read out the letters from the card if you yourself have experienced any of these things in the last year. (Prompted responses, multi-coded).

Base: All children aged 12-15 (488 aged 12-15 in 2015)

Potentially risky, and safe, online behaviour

One in seven internet users aged 12-15 have had experience of potentially risky online behaviour in the past year

- 8.16 Children aged 12-15 who use the internet at home or elsewhere were prompted with a list of actions linked to potentially risky online behaviour, and asked whether they had undertaken any of these actions in the past year.
- 8.17 Figure 23 shows that one in seven (15%) internet users aged 12-15 had done any of these things in the past year. Seven per cent of 12-15s had added people to their

⁵⁴ The face-to-face nature of the survey and the sensitive topic may have resulted in some under-reporting in response to this question.

friends list/contacts lists that they had only had contact with online, 4% had sent a photo or video of themselves to a person they had only had contact with online, and 3% had sent personal information to a person they had only had contact with online.

- 8.18 Each of the five potentially risky online behaviours was also asked about in 2015 and there has been no change for any of them.

Figure 23: Potentially risky online behaviour among children aged 12-15: 2015



QC60 – Please take a look at the list of things shown on this card and think about whether you have done any of these things in the last year. If there is something on the list that you have done in the last year then please just read out the numbers from the card. (Prompted responses, multi-coded)

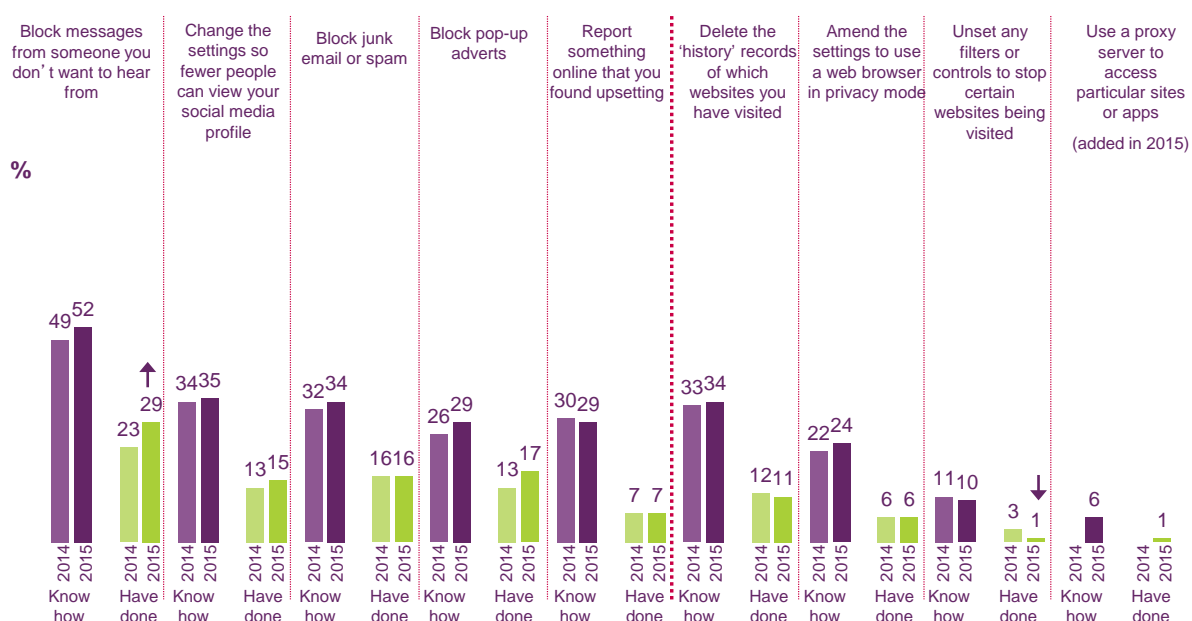
Base: Children aged 12-15 who go online at home or elsewhere (475)

One in ten internet users aged 12-15 know how to disable online filters or controls, although just 1% say they have done this, a decrease since 2014

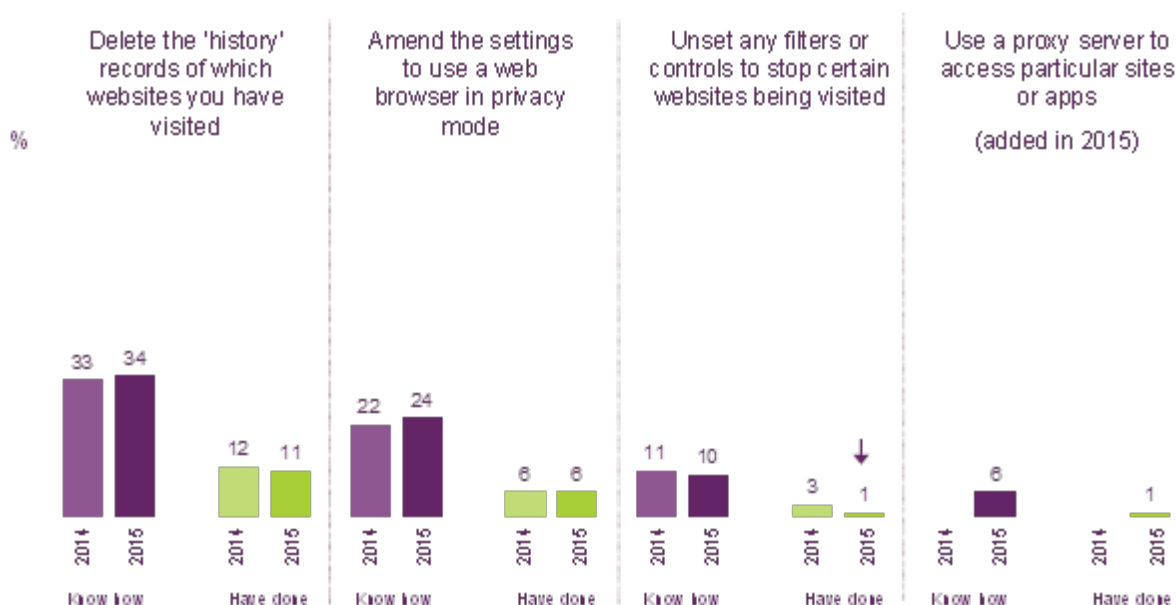
- 8.19 Children aged 12-15 who go online were prompted with a list of online behaviours and were asked to say whether they knew how to do any of them, and whether they had done any of them in the past year. Figure 24 groups the behaviours that were asked about into 'safe' and 'risky' groups.
- 8.20 Looking first at the 'safe' behaviours, half of 12-15s say they know how to block messages from someone they do not want to hear from (52%) with around three in ten having done this (29%). Around one-third know how to change settings on their social media profile so fewer people can view it (35%) or know how to block junk email or spam (34%) with this being done by 15% and 16% of 12-15s respectively. Three in ten know how to report something online they find upsetting (29%), with less than one in ten (7%) having done this.
- 8.21 Compared to 2014, 12-15s are more likely to say they have blocked messages from someone they don't want to hear from (29% vs. 23%), although this follows a corresponding decrease for this measure between 2013 and 2014 (from 32% to 23%).
- 8.22 Internet users aged 12-15 were also asked about their awareness and experience of 'risky' activities; as shown on the right hand side of Figure 22. One-third (34%) say they know how to delete their browsing history, one in four (24%) know how to amend settings to use a web browser in privacy mode, one in ten (10%) know how to

disable online filters or controls and 6% know how to use a proxy server to access particular sites or apps. Relatively few 12-15s said they had done each of these 'risky' activities in the past year, ranging from 11% saying they had deleted history records to 1% having unset any filters or controls, or used a proxy server.

Figure 24: Experience of 'safe' and 'risky' online measures among children aged 12-15: 2014 and 2015



RISKY MEASURES



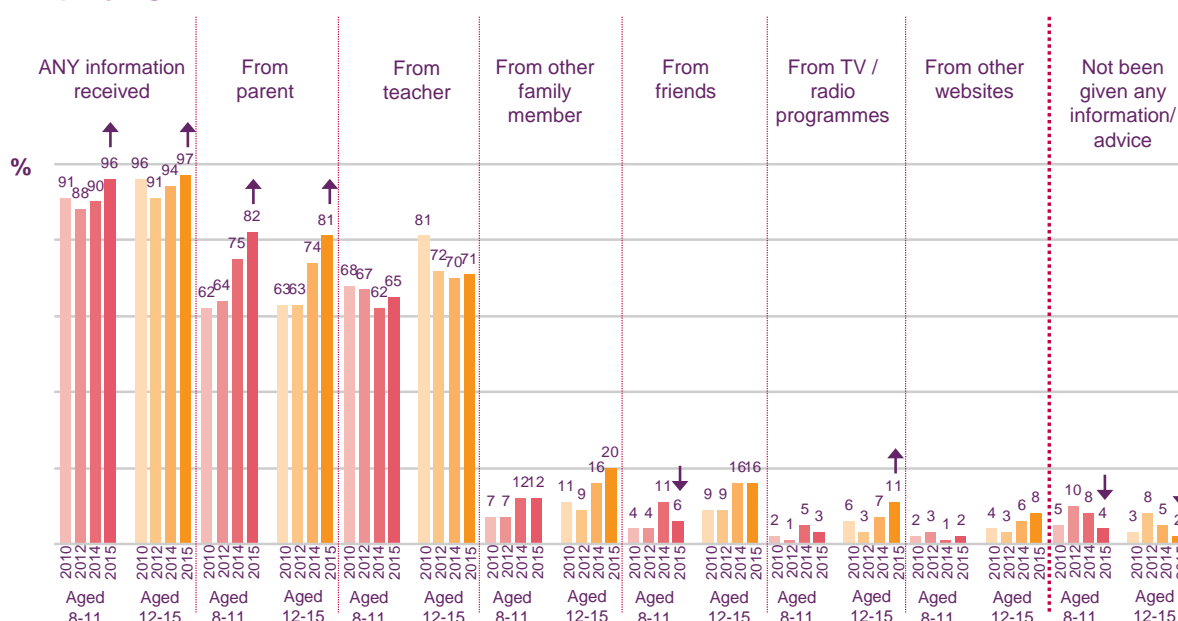
QC61/ 62 – Please take a look at the list of things shown on this card and think about whether you know how to do any of these things online. Please read out the letters on the card if you know how to do this. And are there any things on this list that you personally have done online in the last year? Please read out the letters on the card if you personally have done this in the last year. (Prompted responses, multi-coded)

Base: Children aged 12-15 who use the internet at home or elsewhere (475 aged 12-15 in 2015) – Significance testing shows any difference between 2014 and 2015

Nearly all internet users aged 8-15 say they have been given information or advice about how to manage risks when online, with more saying they have received advice from a parent than in 2014

- 8.23 Figure 25 shows that more than nine in ten children aged 8-11 (96%) and 12-15 (97%) who use the internet recall receiving advice about online risks.
- 8.24 In 2015, for both age groups, children are most likely to recall receiving the information from a parent (82% for 8-11s and 81% for 12-15s). More than six in ten 8-11s and seven in ten 12-15s recall receiving it from a teacher (65% for 8-11s, 71% for 12-15s). Those aged 12-15 are more likely than the 8-11s to recall receiving advice from other family members (20% vs. 12%), from friends (16% vs. 6%), from the media (11% vs. 3%), or from websites (8% vs. 2%).
- 8.25 Compared to 2014, children aged 8-11 and 12-15 are now more likely to say they have been given any information or advice (96% vs. 90% for 8-11s and 97% vs. 94% for 12-15s) with these increases for both age groups attributable to being given advice from a parent⁵⁵.

Figure 25: Children stating they have been given any information or advice about online risks, among those who go online at home (2010, 2012) or elsewhere (2014, 2015), by age



QC30 – Have you ever been given any information or advice about the risks of being online (2015)/ risks while you are online (2014)/ how to stay safe when you are online (2010-2012)? (spontaneous responses, multi-coded)
Base: Children aged 8-15 who use the internet at home or elsewhere (441 aged 8-11, 475 aged 12-15 in 2015).
Significance testing shows any difference between 2014 and 2015.

⁵⁵ As shown in section 10 of this report, 88% of parents of children aged 8-11 and 86% of parents of 12-15s who go online at home or elsewhere say they have ever talked to their child about any of the 12 online risks they were prompted with. Since 2014, parents of 8-11s are more likely to say they have spoken to their child about these risks (88% vs. 81%) and the incidence is unchanged for parents of 12-15s (86% vs. 87% in 2014)

Section 9

Children and the internet: parental concerns

Key findings

Parental attitudes

The majority of parents continue to feel that the benefits of the internet outweigh the risks, with parents of older children more likely to say this. Most parents are not concerned about their child's online use.

The majority of parents also trust their children to use the internet safely, although this has declined a little since 2014.

Parental concerns

A quarter of parents of 5-15s are concerned about the online content their child is exposed to.

One in five parents of 5-15s are concerned about whom their child is in contact with online, a decrease since 2014.

A third of parents of children aged 5-15 are concerned that their child may be giving out personal details to inappropriate people.

Around three in ten parents of 5-15s are concerned about online bullying.

A quarter of parents of 12-15s are concerned about their child sharing inappropriate or personal photos or videos online.

One in four parents of 5-15s are concerned about their child seeing content which encourages them to harm themselves.

One in eight parents of 12-15s feel they don't know enough to help their child manage online risks.

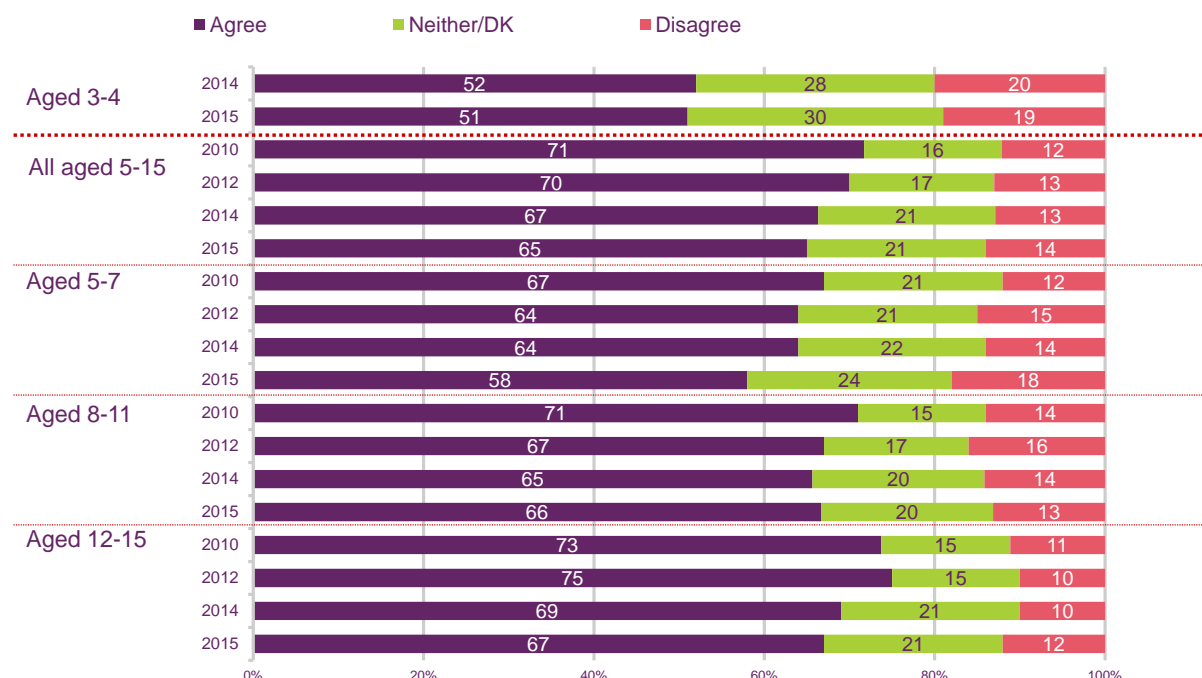
Parental attitudes towards the internet

The majority of parents continue to feel that the benefits of the internet outweigh the risks, with parents of older children more likely to say this

- 9.1 Half of parents of 3-4s who go online (51%) agree that the benefits of the internet outweigh the risks, while one in five disagree (19%). The majority of parents of 5-15s who go online also agree with this statement (65%), while around one in seven (14%) disagree (Figure 26).
- 9.2 Parents of 8-11s (66%) and 12-15s (67%) are more likely than parents of 3-4s (51%) or 5-7s (58%) to agree.

9.3 There has been no change in the levels of agreement for any age group of children since 2014.

Figure 26: Parental agreement: “The benefits of the internet for my child outweigh any risks”, among those whose child goes online at home (2010, 2012) or elsewhere (2014, 2015), by age



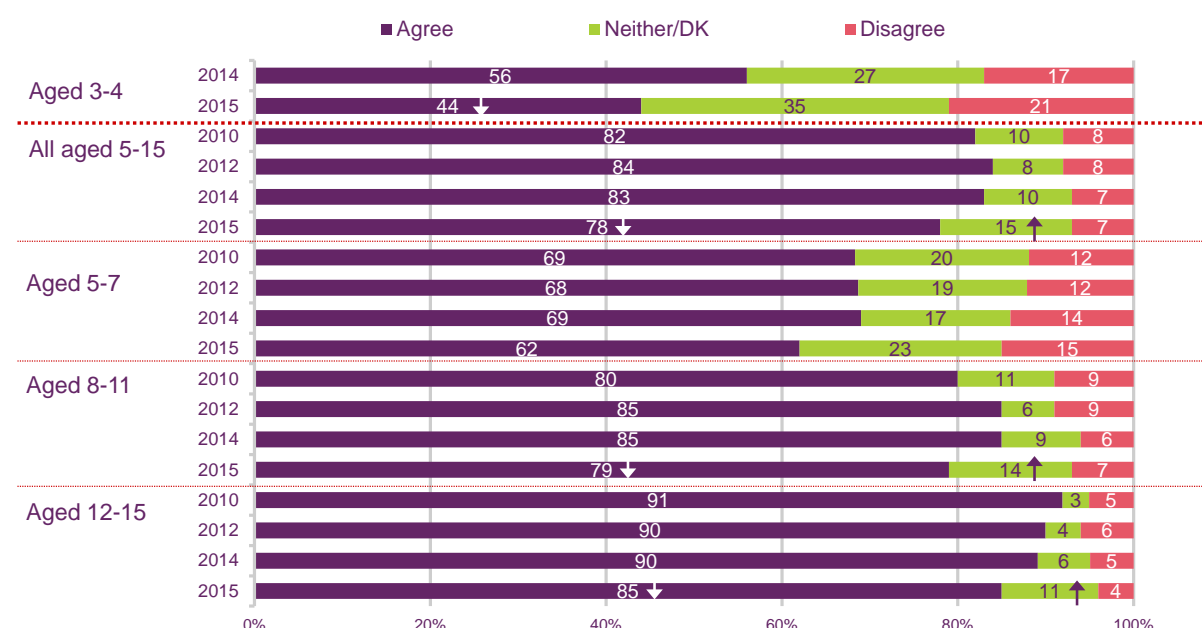
QP48A – Please tell me the extent to which you agree or disagree with these statements in relation to your child? (prompted responses, single coded).

Base: Parents of children who go online at home or elsewhere (262 aged 3-4, 1169 aged 5-15, 260 aged 5-7, 440 aged 8-11, 469 aged 12-15 in 2015). Significance testing shows any difference between 2014 and 2015.

Parents are less likely than in 2014 to trust their child to use the internet safely

9.4 Figure 27 shows that a minority of parents of 3-4s whose child goes online agree with the statement “I trust my child to use the internet safely” (44%), lower than in 2014 (56%). While a majority of parents of 5-15s agree with the statement (78%), they are also less likely than in 2014 to say they trust their child to use the internet safely (83%). This decrease is seen among parents of 8-11s (79% vs. 85%) and 12-15s (85% vs. 90%). Parents’ agreement that they trust their child increases with each age group, as was the case in 2014.

Figure 27: Parental agreement: “I trust my child to use the internet safely”, among those whose child goes online at home (2010, 2012) or elsewhere (2014, 2015), by age



QP48B – Please tell me the extent to which you agree or disagree with these statements in relation to your child? (prompted responses, single coded).

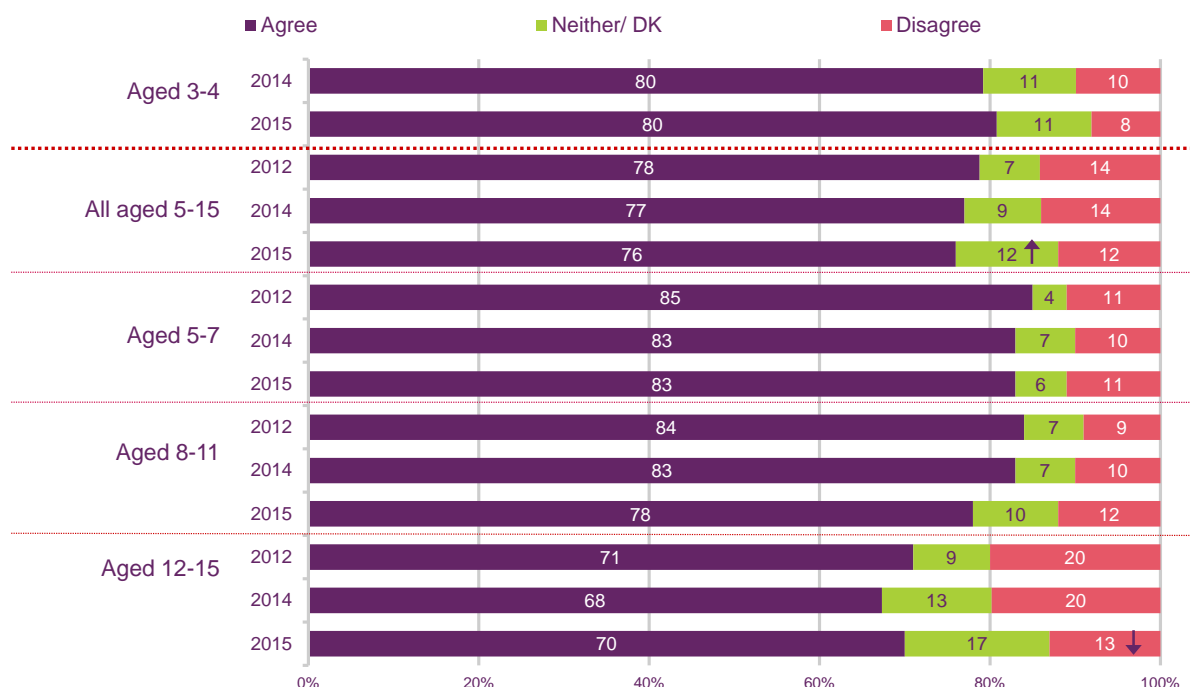
Base: Parents of children who go online at home or elsewhere (262 aged 3-4, 1169 aged 5-15, 260 aged 5-7, 440 aged 8-11, 469 aged 12-15 in 2015). Significance testing shows any difference between 2014 and 2015.

One in eight parents of 12-15s feel they don't know enough to help their child manage online risks

- 9.5 Parents of children aged 3-4 or 5-15 who go online were asked the extent to which they agreed that “I feel I know enough to help my child to manage online risks”⁵⁶.
- 9.6 Figure 28 shows that in 2015, nearly eight in ten (76%) parents of 5-15s who go online agree with the statement. Parents of 3-4s (80%), 5-7s (83%) and 8-11s (78%) are more likely than parents of 12-15s (70%) to agree. Around one in eight (12%) parents of 5-15s disagree (either strongly or slightly) that they know enough to help their child to manage online risks, with no variation by age. Slightly fewer parents of 3-4s disagree (8%).

⁵⁶ Responses are shown in Figure 26 alongside responses to the statement “I feel I know enough to help my child to stay safe when they are online” from 2012, as given by parents of children in each age group who go online at home.

Figure 28: Parental agreement: “I feel I know enough to help my child to manage online risks*” among those whose child goes online at home (2012), or elsewhere (2014, 2015), by age



QP48E –Please tell me the extent to which you agree or disagree with these statements in relation to your child (prompted responses, single coded)

*In 2012, this question referred to 'I feel I know enough to help my child to stay safe when they are online' Base: Parents of children who go online home or elsewhere (262 aged 3-4, 1169 aged 5-15, 260 aged 5-7, 440 aged 8-11, 469 aged 12-15 in 2015). Significance testing shows any difference between 2014 and 2015

Parental concerns about the internet

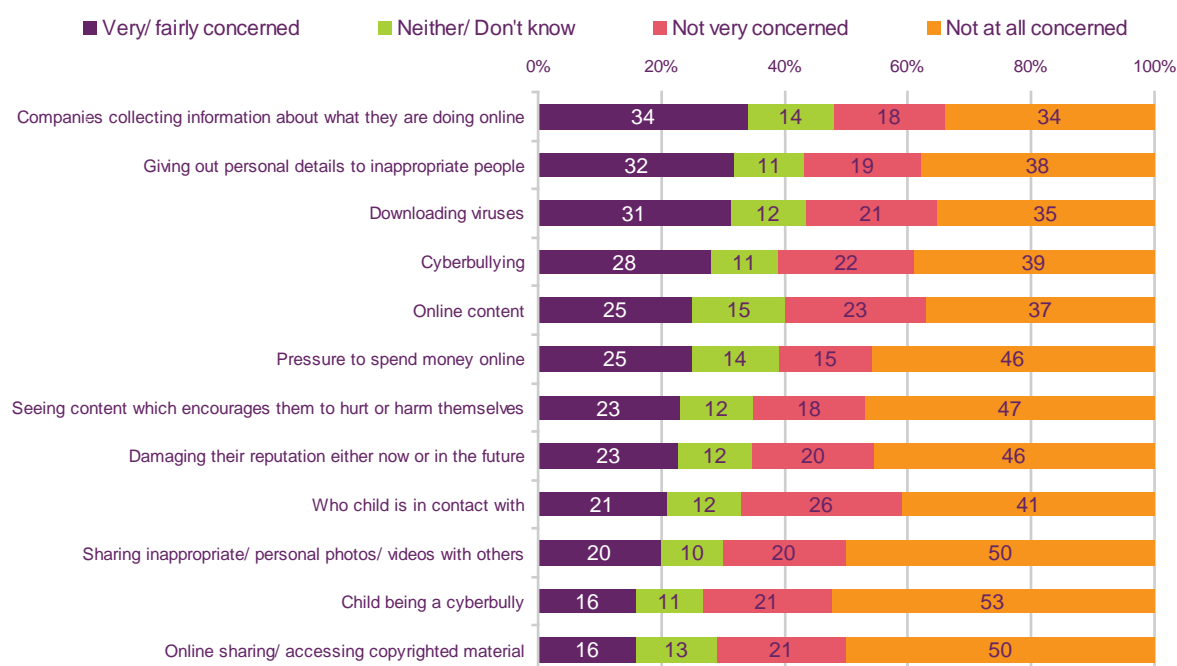
A minority of parents say they have concerns about their child's online activities

- 9.7 Figure 29 below summarises, in ranked order, the 12 concerns that parents of 5-15s who use the internet at home or elsewhere were asked about. Subsequent Figures in this section show these concerns over time among parents of 3-4s, 5-7s, 8-11s and 12-15s.
- 9.8 A majority of parents of 5-15s are unconcerned (either not very or not at all concerned) about each of the 12 aspects of their child's internet use they were asked about.
- 9.9 Among all parents of 5-15s, around three in ten are concerned about companies collecting information about what their child is doing online (34%), their child giving out details to inappropriate people (32%), downloading viruses (31%), or cyberbullying (28%). Around a quarter are concerned about the content of the websites their child visits (25%), the pressure on their child to spend money online (25%), their child seeing content online that encourages them to harm themselves (23%), or about their child damaging their reputation (23%). Around one in five parents are concerned about whom their child may be in contact with online (21%) or their child sharing inappropriate or personal photos or videos with others online (20%), with around one in six concerned about their child potentially being a cyber-

bully (16%) or about any illegal online sharing or accessing of copyrighted material (16%).

- 9.10 Since 2014, and where it is possible to make a comparison, parents of 5-15s are less likely to be concerned about whom their child is in contact with online (21% vs. 26%) and about their child downloading viruses (31% vs. 36%). For each of the other measures, concerns among parents of 5-15s overall are unchanged, although there are some increases or decreases in concern by each of the separate age groups (so among parents of children aged 3-4, 5-7, 8-11 or 12-15).

Figure 29: Parental concerns about aspects of their child's internet use, among 5-15s: 2015



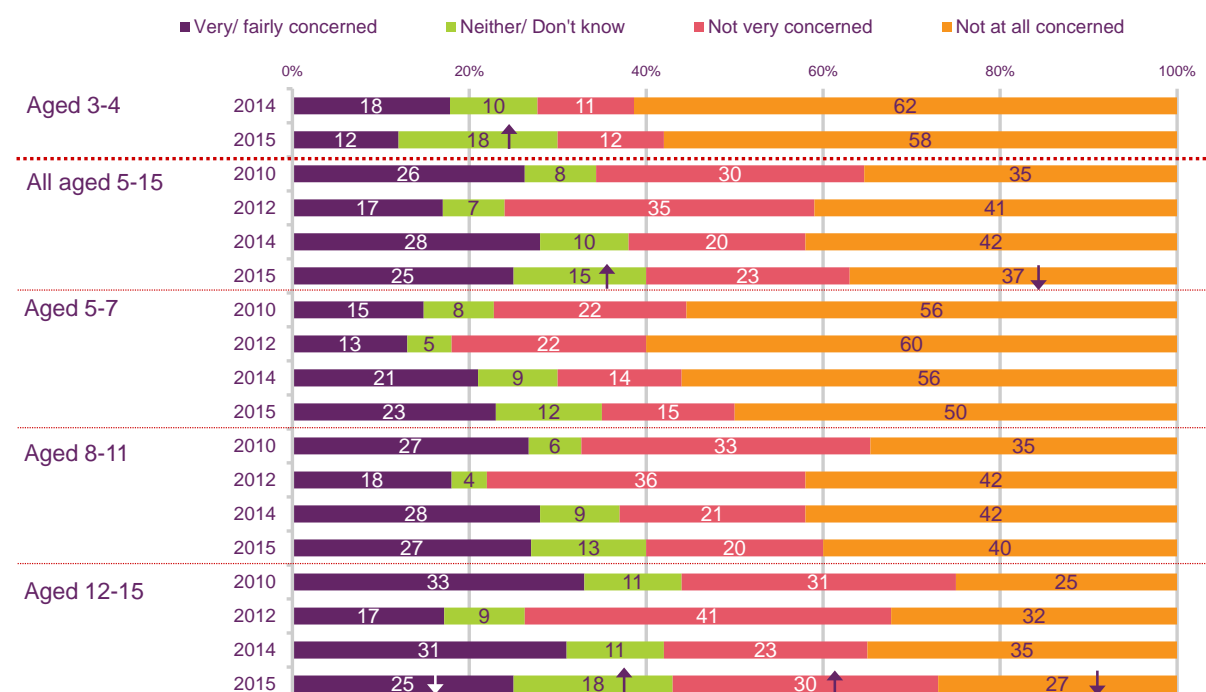
QP51A- M – Please tell me the extent to which you are concerned about these possible aspects of your child's online activities (prompted responses, single coded).

Base: Parents of children who go online at home or elsewhere (1169 aged 5-15 in 2015).

A quarter of parents of 5-15s (25%) are concerned about the online content their child is exposed to

- 9.11 Parents of children aged 3-4 or 5-15 who go online were asked about the extent of their concerns relating to online content and about whom their children were in contact with online
- 9.12 Figure 30 shows that while one in eight parents of 3-4s (12%) whose child goes online are concerned about the content of websites their child visits, this doubles to one in four (25%) for parents of 5-15s. Among parents of 5-15s, concern does not vary by the age of the child. Compared to 2014, parents of 12-15s are now less likely to say they are either concerned (25% vs. 31%) or not at all concerned (27% vs. 35%), and more likely to say they don't know (18% vs. 11%) or that they are not very concerned (30% vs. 23%).

Figure 30: Parental concerns about online content among those whose child goes online at home (2010, 2012) or elsewhere (2014, 2015), by age



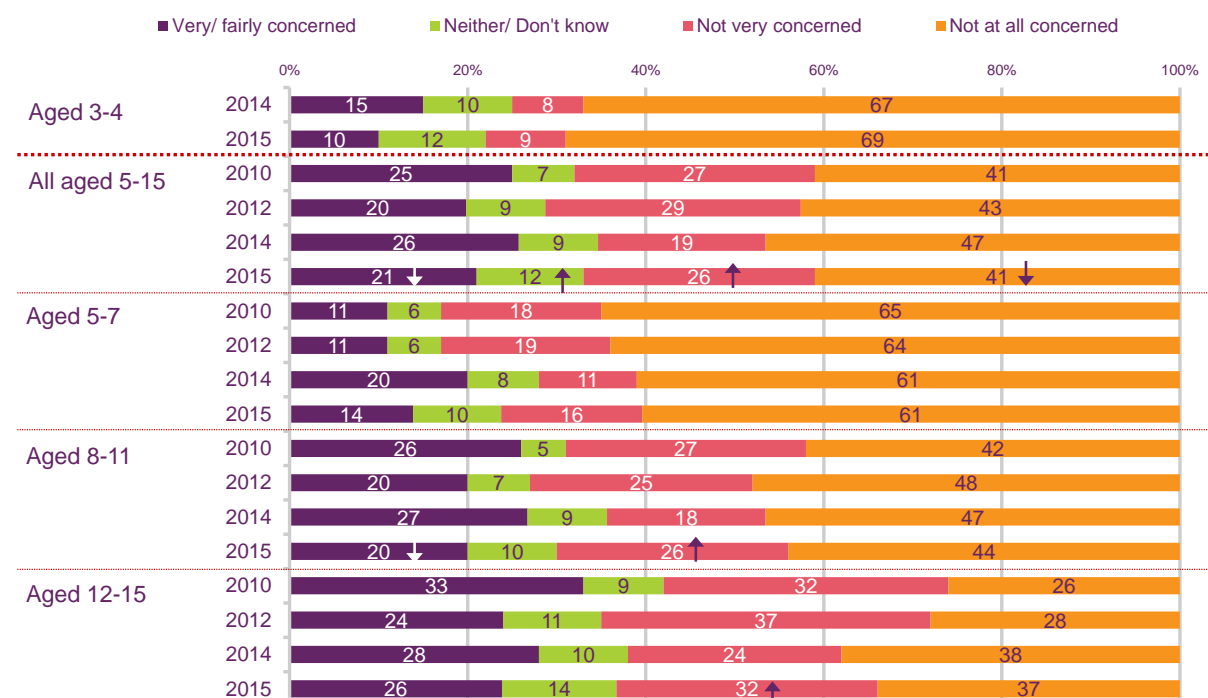
QP51A – Please tell me the extent to which you are concerned about these possible aspects of your child's online activities – The content on the websites or apps* that they visit (prompted responses, single coded). Apps was added in 2015.

Base: Parents of children who go online at home or elsewhere (262 aged 3-4, 1169 aged 5-15, 260 aged 5-7, 440 aged 8-11, 469 aged 12-15 in 2015). Significance testing shows any difference between 2014 and 2015

One in five parents of 5-15s are concerned about whom their child is in contact with online, a decrease since 2014

- 9.13 One in five parents of 5-15s (21%) are concerned about whom their child is in contact with online. Unlike concerns about content, concern about whom the child is in contact with increases with the age of the child, ranging from 10% of parents of 3-4s and 14% for 5-7s to 26% for 12-15s.
- 9.14 As shown in Figure 31, parental concerns about whom the child may be in contact with online have decreased since 2014 for 5-15s (21% vs. 26%), attributable to a decrease among parents of 8-11s (20% vs. 27%).

Figure 31: Parental concerns about whom their child may be in contact with online, among those whose child goes online at home (2010, 2012) or elsewhere (2014, 2015), by age



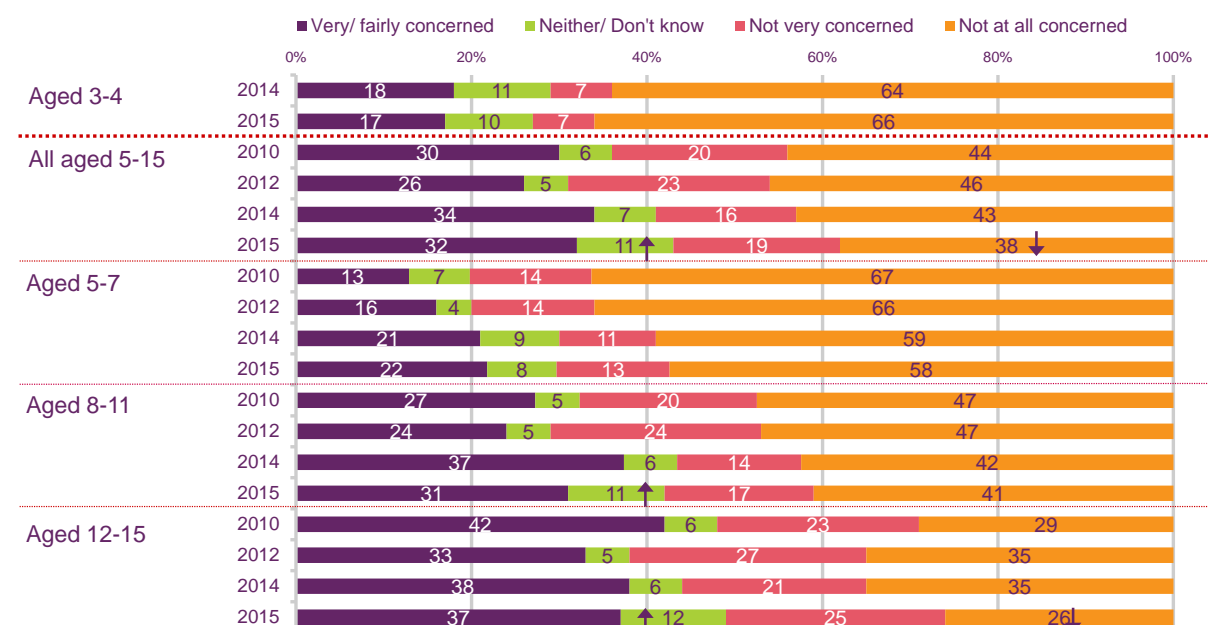
QP51C – Please tell me the extent to which you are concerned about these possible aspects of your child's online activities – Whom they are in contact with online (prompted responses, single coded).

Base: Parents of children who go online at home or elsewhere (262 aged 3-4, 1169 aged 5-15, 260 aged 5-7, 440 aged 8-11, 469 aged 12-15 in 2015). Significance testing shows any difference between 2014 and 2015.

One-third of parents of children aged 5-15 are concerned that their child may be giving out personal details to inappropriate people

9.15 One in six parents of 3-4s (17%) and one-third (32%) of parents of children aged 5-15 who go online are concerned that their child may be giving out personal details to inappropriate people, as shown in Figure 32. Concern increases with the age of the child, and parents are no more likely now than in 2014 to say they are concerned. Parents of 5-15s are, however, less likely to say they are not at all concerned (38% vs. 43%), with this being attributable to parents of 12-15s (26% vs. 35%).

Figure 32: Parental concerns about their child giving out personal details online to inappropriate people, among those whose child goes online at home (2010, 2012) or elsewhere (2014, 2015), by age



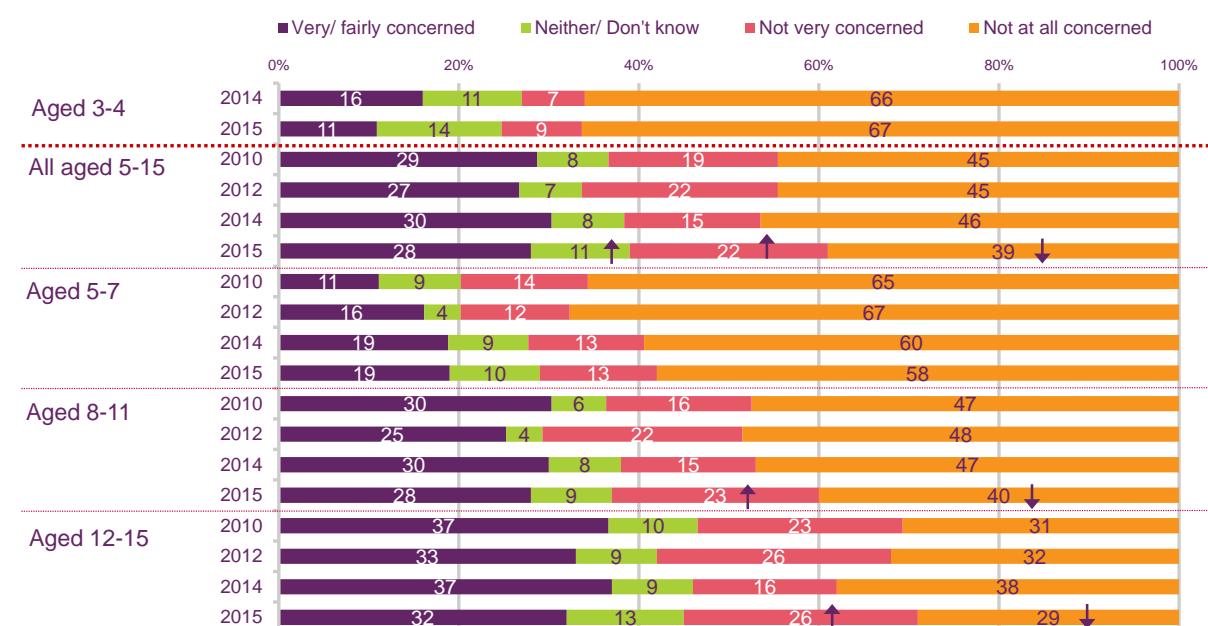
QP51F – Please tell me the extent to which you are concerned about these possible aspects of your child's online activities – Them giving out their personal details to inappropriate people (prompted responses, single coded).

Base: Parents of children who go online at home or elsewhere (262 aged 3-4, 1169 aged 5-15, 260 aged 5-7, 440 aged 8-11, 469 aged 12-15 in 2015). Significance testing shows any difference between 2014 and 2015.

One third of parents of 12-15s whose child goes online are concerned about online bullying

- 9.16 Around three in ten (28%) parents of 5-15s and one in ten parents of 3-4s (11%) are concerned about their child being bullied online.
- 9.17 As shown in Figure 33, concern about cyberbullying is more likely among parents of 8-11s (28%) and 12-15s (32%) than parents of 3-4s (11%) or 5-7s (19%).
- 9.18 Since 2014 there has been no change in the extent of concern among parents of 3-4s. While parents of 5-15s are no more or less likely to say they are very, or fairly, concerned, they are less likely to say they are not at all concerned (39% vs. 45%); this is attributable to parents of 8-11s (40% vs. 47%) and 12-15s (29% vs. 38%).

Figure 33: Parents' concerns about their child and cyberbullying, among those whose child goes online at home (2010, 2012) or elsewhere (2014, 2015), by age

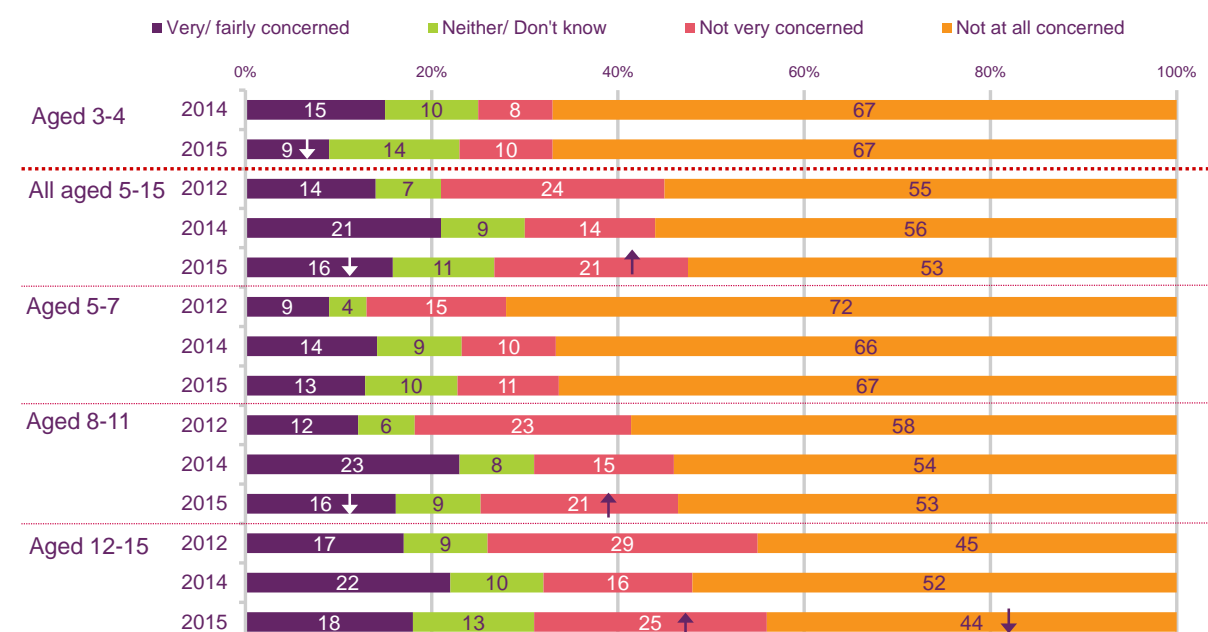


QP51G- Please tell me the extent to which you are concerned about these possible aspects of your child's online activities – Them being bullied online/ cyberbullying (prompted responses, single coded).

Base: Parents of children who go online at home or elsewhere (262 aged 3-4, 1169 aged 5-15, 260 aged 5-7, 440 aged 8-11, 469 aged 12-15 in 2015). Significance testing shows any difference between 2014 and 2015.

- 9.19 Parents are also asked about the extent to which they are, or are not, concerned about the possibility of their child bullying others online. Figure 34 shows that one in ten (9%) parents of 3-4s say they are concerned, which is lower than among parents of 5-15s (16%). Concern does not vary by the age of the child among parents of 5-15s.
- 9.20 As in 2014, parents of 5-15s are less likely to be concerned about their child bullying others (16%) than their child being bullied online (28%).
- 9.21 Parents of 3-4s are less likely to be concerned than in 2014 (9% vs. 15%). Parents of 5-15s are also less likely to be concerned (16% vs. 21%), with this attributable to lower levels of concern among parents of 8-11s (16% vs. 23%).

Figure 34: Parents' concerns about their child bullying others online, among those whose child goes online at home (2012) or elsewhere (2014, 2015), by age



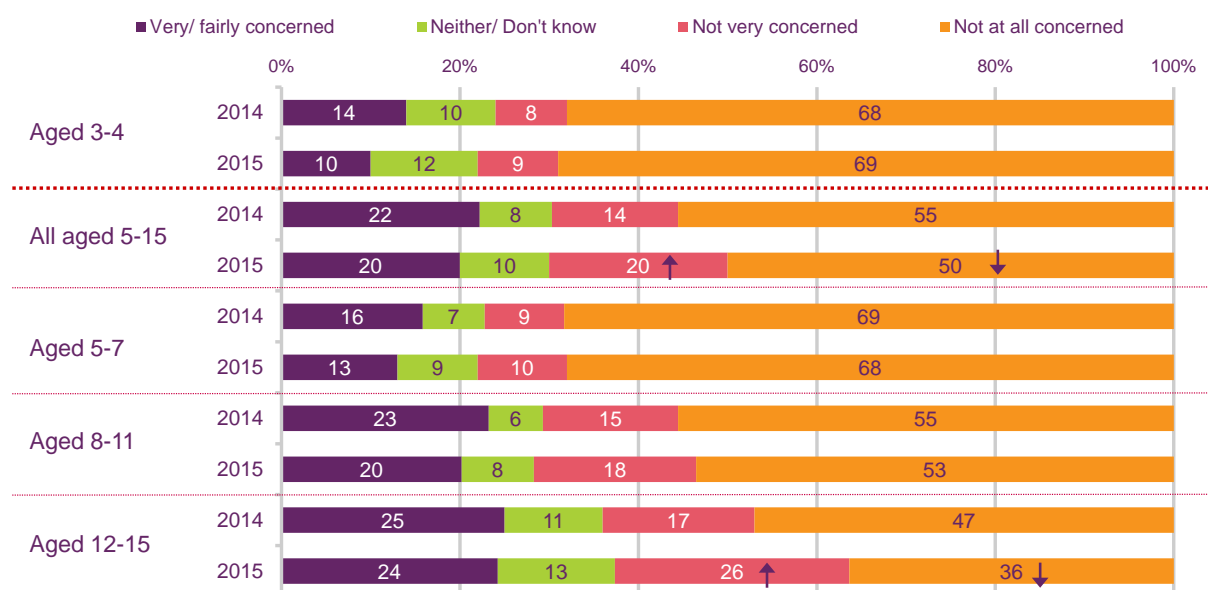
QP51H- Please tell me the extent to which you are concerned about these possible aspects of your child's online activities – The possibility of them bullying others online or making negative comments about other people online (prompted responses, single coded).

Base: Parents of children who go online at home or elsewhere (262 aged 3-4, 1169 aged 5-15, 260 aged 5-7, 440 aged 8-11, 469 aged 12-15 in 2015). Significance testing shows any difference between 2014 and 2015.

A quarter of parents of 12-15s are concerned about their child sharing inappropriate or personal photos or videos online

- 9.22 Twice as many parents of 5-15s (20%) than parents of 3-4s (10%) who go online are concerned about their child sharing inappropriate or personal photos or videos with others, as shown in Figure 35.
- 9.23 Levels of concern are broadly similar for the two younger age groups (10% for 3-4s and 13% for 5-7s) and the two older age groups (20% for 8-11s and 24% for 12-15s), and most parents are not concerned about this aspect of their child's online activity.
- 9.24 Parents of 3-4s, 5-7s, 8-11s and 12-15s are no more or less likely than in 2014 to say they are very, or fairly, concerned about this aspect of their child's internet use. Since 2014, parents of 12-15s are less likely to say they are not at all concerned (36% vs. 47%).

Figure 35: Parents' concerns about their child sharing inappropriate or personal photos or videos with others, by age: 2014 and 2015

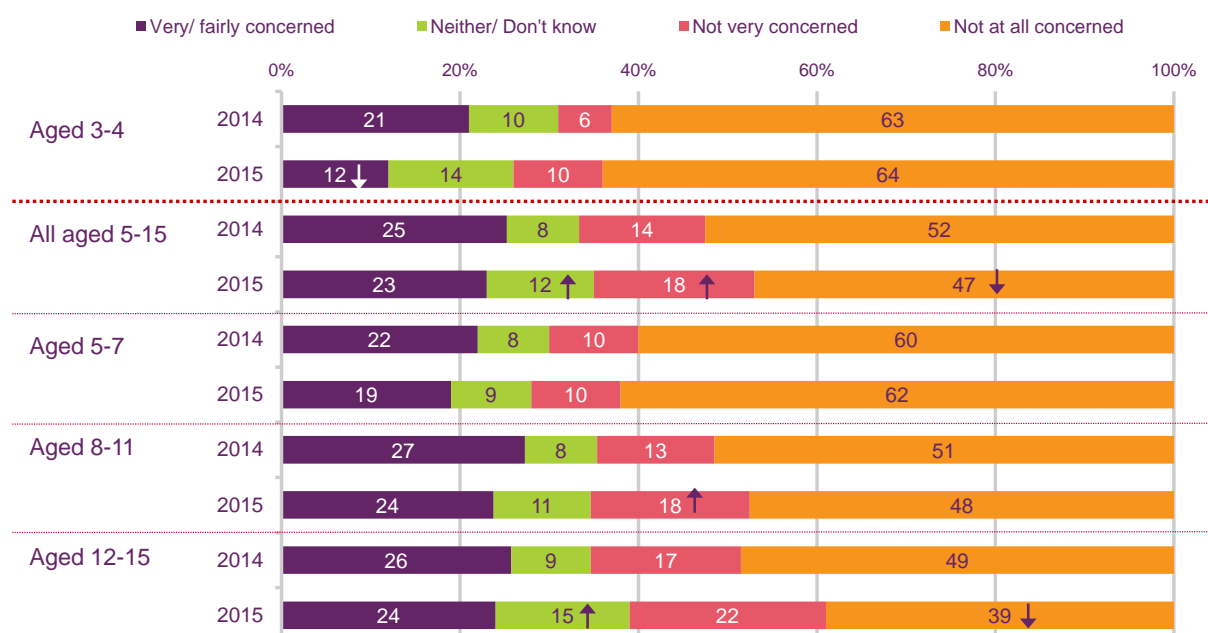


QP511 - Please tell me the extent to which you are concerned about these possible aspects of your child's online activities – Sharing of inappropriate or personal photos/ videos with others (prompted responses, single-coded). Base: Parents of children who go online at home or elsewhere (262 aged 3-4, 1169 aged 5-15, 260 aged 5-7, 440 aged 8-11, 469 aged 12-15 in 2015). Significance testing shows any difference between 2014 and 2015.

One in four parents of 5-15s are concerned about their child seeing content which encourages them to harm themselves

- 9.25 One in eight parents of 3-4s (12%) and twice as many parents of 5-15s (23%) who go online are concerned about their child seeing content which encourages them to harm themselves, as shown in Figure 36.
- 9.26 Concern is at a similar level for 5-7s (19%), 8-11s (24%) and 12-15s (24%). Parents of 3-4s are less likely than in 2014 to say they are concerned (12% vs. 21%). Concern among parents of 5-15s is unchanged since 2014 (23% vs. 25%), although parents of 12-15s are less likely to say they are not at all concerned (39% vs. 49%).

Figure 36: Parents' concerns about their child seeing content which encourages them to harm themselves, by age: 2014, 2015



QP51K - Please tell me the extent to which you are concerned about these possible aspects of your child's online activities – Seeing content which encourages them to hurt or harm themselves.

Base: Parents of children who go online at home or elsewhere (262 aged 3-4, 1169 aged 5-15, 260 aged 5-7, 440 aged 8-11, 469 aged 12-15 in 2015). Significance testing shows any difference between 2014 and 2015.

Section 10

Parental mediation strategies: take-up, awareness of and confidence in parental controls

Key findings

Parental mediation

Unsurprisingly, given the levels of concern reported in Section 9 above, we see high levels of engagement among parents with their children's online safety: over nine in ten parents in 2015 mediate their child's use of the internet in some way.

Awareness, confidence in and use of technical tools

Four in ten parents of 5-15s who go online use all four kinds of mediation asked about: technical tools, supervision, rules or restrictions and regularly talking to their child about managing online risks.

In 2015, in broadband homes where children go online, parental awareness of technical tools is very high, at over four in five parents, and over half use some kind of technical tools. Three in five parents are aware of ISP content filters and about a quarter use them.

The majority of parents who use technical tools think they are useful. Among those parents who use network-level filters, 97% say they are useful.

Around one in five parents of 5-15s who used each technical tool we ask about felt that their child was able to bypass the tools. A quarter of parents who used ISP network-level home filtering felt that their children could get round these filters, although, as we saw in section 8 above, very few children say they do so.

Awareness and use of tools for restricting app installation and use is lower than for technical tools, but has increased since 2014.

Why parents may choose not to use technical tools.

Parents tend to use a combination of strategies for internet mediation; talking, rules and supervision all play a part. Over half of the parents who chose not to use filtering said this was because they used a combination of other strategies. Less than one in ten said it was because it would be too complicated to install, or because their child would find a way round it.

Fewer parents have parental controls installed on games consoles. Seventeen per cent of parents who had not installed these controls said this was because they were unaware that it was possible, or because they would not know how to do this. The proportion who say that it is because they were unaware of how to do this is higher than for network-level filters.

More parents than in 2014 said they had looked for or received information or advice about how to help their child manage online risks.

An overview of parental mediation strategies

Four in ten parents of 5-15s who go online use all four kinds of mediation asked about: technical tools, supervision, rules or restrictions and regularly talking to their child about managing online risks

- 10.1 There are a range of approaches that parents can take to manage their child's access to and use of online content and services. We have grouped these approaches into four categories:
- various technical tools⁵⁷ including content filters⁵⁸, PIN/passwords, safe search and other forms of technical mediation;
 - regularly⁵⁹ talking to their child about managing online risks;
 - rules or restrictions around online access and use⁶⁰; and
 - supervision when online.
- 10.2 Figure 37 shows the relationship between the four types of mediation that parents might use to mediate their child's use of the internet⁶¹.
- 10.3 The majority of parents whose child goes online at home or elsewhere (96% of parents of 3-4s and 94% of parents of 5-15s) use at least one of these approaches to mediating their child's internet use, and one in five parents of 3-4s (18%), and two in five parents of 12-15s (38%) use all four.
- 10.4 Parents of 8-11s (44%) and 12-15s (33%) who go online are most likely to say they use all four types of mediation, as opposed to any of the other options shown in Figure 1, while parents of 3-4s are less likely (18%). Parents of 5-7s are as likely to say they use all four approaches (35%) as they are to use a combination of three types of mediation (33%), while parents of 3-4s are most likely to say they use a combination of two (32%) or three (30%) approaches. Three in ten parents of 5-15s rely on any combination of three of the four mediation strategies (31%) with fewer relying on any two of the four (17%).
- 10.5 Compared to parents of 5-15s, parents of 3-4s are more likely to use parental supervision (95% vs. 84%), but are less likely to use any of the rules about online use (69% vs. 81%) or to talk to their child at least every few months about managing online risks (25% vs. 65%).

⁵⁷ 'Technical tools' in this instance refers to at least one of the following eight types of tools or controls, which were selected as they are non-device-specific tools which could be used by parents whose child goes online: content filters provided by the broadband internet service provider, content filters in the form of parental control software set up on a particular computer or device used to go online (e.g. Net Nanny, McAfee Family Protection, Open DNS etc), parental controls built into the device by the manufacturer (e.g. Windows, Apple, Xbox, PlayStation etc), PIN/password required to enter websites unless already approved, safe search enabled on search engine websites, YouTube safety mode enabled to filter inappropriate content, time-limiting software and anti-spam/antivirus software.

⁵⁸ Content filters include ISP home network-level filters and parental control software such as McAfee and Net Nanny.

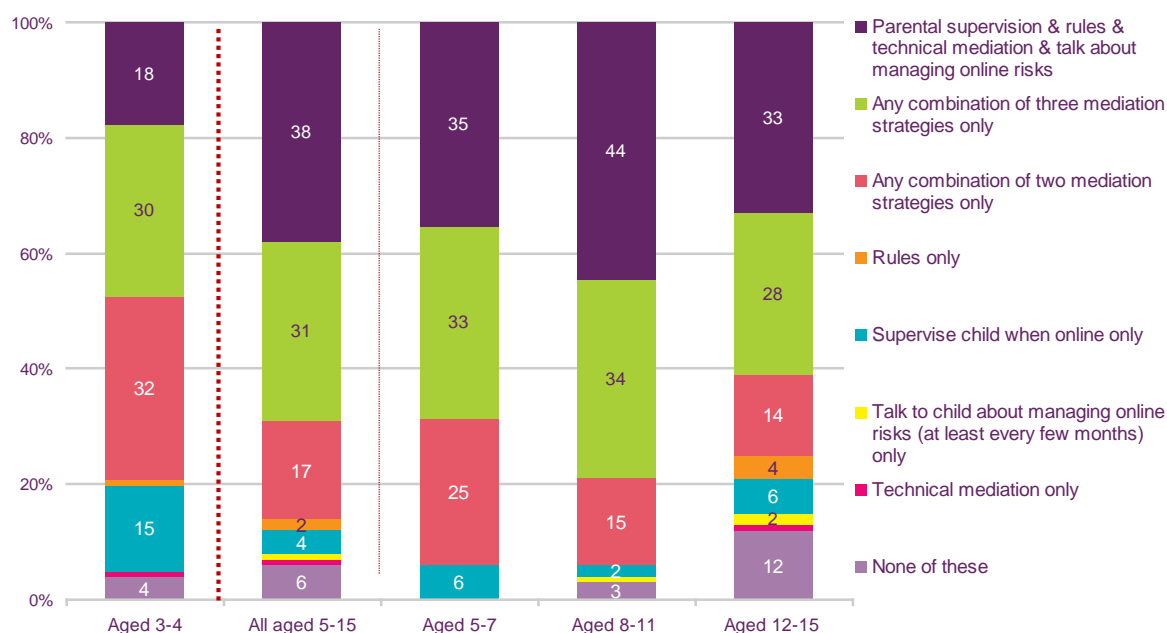
⁵⁹ In this instance 'regularly' refers to talking to the child at least every few months.

⁶⁰ The rules included here relate to any of the eleven rules about specific online services and content, as shown in Figure 56.

⁶¹ Please note that subsequent sections in this chapter of the report look at each of these forms of mediation in more detail

- 10.6 Four per cent of parents of 3-4s, and 6% of parents of 5-15s do not use any of the four approaches. The likelihood of not using any of these elements increases with the age of the child from 5 to 15; ranging from 0% for 5-7s, to 3% for 8-11s and 12% for 12-15s.
- 10.7 Looking at each of the different types of mediation in turn, we see that around half of parents of 3-4s or 5-15s whose child goes online use any of the eight types of technical tools we asked about (54% for 3-4s and 56% for 5-15s), although few parents rely on technical mediation alone (1% for parents of 3-4s and parents of 5-15s).
- 10.8 Nearly all parents of 3-4s (95%) and more than four in five parents of 5-15s (84%) say they supervise their child when online. One in seven parents of 3-4s (15%) and fewer parents of 5-15s (4%) say they rely solely on parental supervision.
- 10.9 One in four parents of 3-4s (25%) and around two in three parents of 5-15s who go online (65%) say they talk to their child at least every few months about managing online risks. No parents of 3-4s and only 1% of parents of 5-15s only talk to their child at least every few months about managing online risks.
- 10.10 Seven in ten parents of 3-4s (69%) and eight in ten parents of 5-15s who go online (81%) say they use rules or restrictions. Only 1% of parents of 3-4s and 2% of parents of 5-15s who go online rely solely on rules.
- 10.11 It is important to note that while 6% of parents of 5-15s fall into the category of using 'none of these' online mediation strategies in Figure 34 below, around half of them (3% of all parents whose child goes online) have spoken to their child about managing online risks, but less frequently than every few months. Therefore, the remaining 3% of parents of 5-15s have never spoken to their child about managing online risks, nor do they supervise their child online or have technical mediation or any of the rules or restrictions in place.

Figure 37: Combinations of online mediation strategies used by parents of 5-15s, whose child goes online at home or elsewhere: 2015



Base: Parents of children who go online at home or elsewhere (262 aged 3-4, 1169 aged 5-15, 260 aged 5-7, 440 aged 8-11, 469 aged 12-15).

Use of technical tools to manage online access and use

At an overall level, 83% of parents with home broadband whose child goes online are aware of any of the eight technical tools, and over half (57%) use any of them

10.12 As technology has changed, so has the range and functionality of the technical tools available to parents to manage their child's access to and use of online content. In 2014 additional questions were added to the study in order to further explore parents' awareness and use of these technical tools. Parents were given descriptions of a range of technical tools and were asked whether they were aware of them, and if so, whether they used any of them. Parents who said they did not use a particular tool were asked whether they had stopped using it.

10.13 Eight of the controls asked about are non-device-specific and can be used by any parent whose child goes online. Figure 36 shows awareness and use of these eight tools among parents of 5-15s whose child goes online and who have a broadband internet connection at home⁶², ranked according to use. Parents were also asked about some tools relating specifically to app installation and use, which are looked at in more detail later in this section.

10.14 The eight tools that parents were asked about are:

⁶² The rationale for including those households with a broadband connection (as opposed to those where the child goes online) was twofold: firstly home network-level filters work by restricting access to content across any internet-enabled devices that connect to the home broadband service. Secondly it is consistent with how the data was reported on in 2014, allowing commentary on any changes over time. Overall, 33% of 3-4s and 80% of 5-15s with broadband access go online.

- content filters in the form of home network-level filtering provided by the ISPs, which apply to all the computers and other devices using the home broadband service;
- content filters in the form of parental control software set up on a particular computer or device used to go online. This software may be from a shop, the manufacturer or the ISP;
- parental controls built into the device by the manufacturer – e.g. Windows, Apple, Xbox, PlayStation;
- PINs/passwords required to enter websites, unless already approved;
- ‘safe search’ enabled on search engine websites, e.g. Google;
- YouTube safety mode enabled to filter inappropriate content;
- software that limits the amount of time spent online; and
- software to protect against junk email/spam or computer viruses.

10.15 At an overall level, 89% of parents of 3-4s and 83% of parents of 5-15s who have home broadband and whose child goes online are aware of one or more of the eight technical tools shown in Figure 36. Parents of 3-4s (89%), parents of 5-7s (88%) and parents of 8-11s (86%) are more likely than parents of 12-15s (78%) to be aware of any of these tools.

10.16 More than half of parents of 3-4s (56%) and 5-15s (57%) use any of these eight tools; use is lower among parents of 12-15s (50%) compared to 5-7s (62%) and 8-11s (61%).

10.17 Grouping together the two types of filter, three in four parents of 3-4s (76%) and two-thirds of parents of 5-15s (69%) who have home broadband and whose child goes online are aware of filters, and around a third (34% for 3-4s and 36% for 5-15s) use them. Parents of 3-4s (76%) and 5-7s (74%) are more likely to be aware of either type of content filter compared to parents of 12-15s (64%), while parents of 8-11s are more likely to use them (40%) compared to parents of 12-15s (32%).

PIN/password controls, ISP network-level content filters and parental control software set up on a particular device are the technical tools with the highest levels of awareness and use

10.18 Looking at the tools individually, the tools with the highest level of both awareness and use are:

- PIN/password controls: 67% of parents of 3-4s and 61% of parents of 5-15s are aware of this tool and 30% of parents of 3-4s and 32% of parents of 5-15s use it;
- content filters provided by the ISP: 65% of parents of 3-4s and 57% of parents of 5-15s are aware of these and around a quarter use them (25% of parents of 3-4s and 26% of parents of 5-15s);
- parental control software set up on a particular computer or device; 64% of parents of 3-4s and 55% of parents of 5-15s are aware of these and 23% of parents of both 3-4s and 5-15s use them;

- parental controls built into the device by the manufacturer; 50% of parents of 3-4s and 47% of parents of 5-15s are aware of these 14% of parents of 3-4s and 18% of parents of 5-15s use them.

10.19 Less than half of parents of 3-4s and 5-15s were aware of the other four technical tools and less than one in five used them.

10.20 There are some differences by the age of the child, among parents of 5-15s. Parents of 5-7s and 8-11s are more likely than parents of 12-15s to say they use three controls: parental controls built into the device by the manufacturer (19% for 5-7s, 24% for 8-11s vs. 13% for 12-15s), safe search enabled on search engine websites (18% for both 5-7s and 8-11s vs. 11% for 12-15s) and YouTube safety mode enabled (18% for both 5-7s and 8-11s vs. 8% for 12-15s).

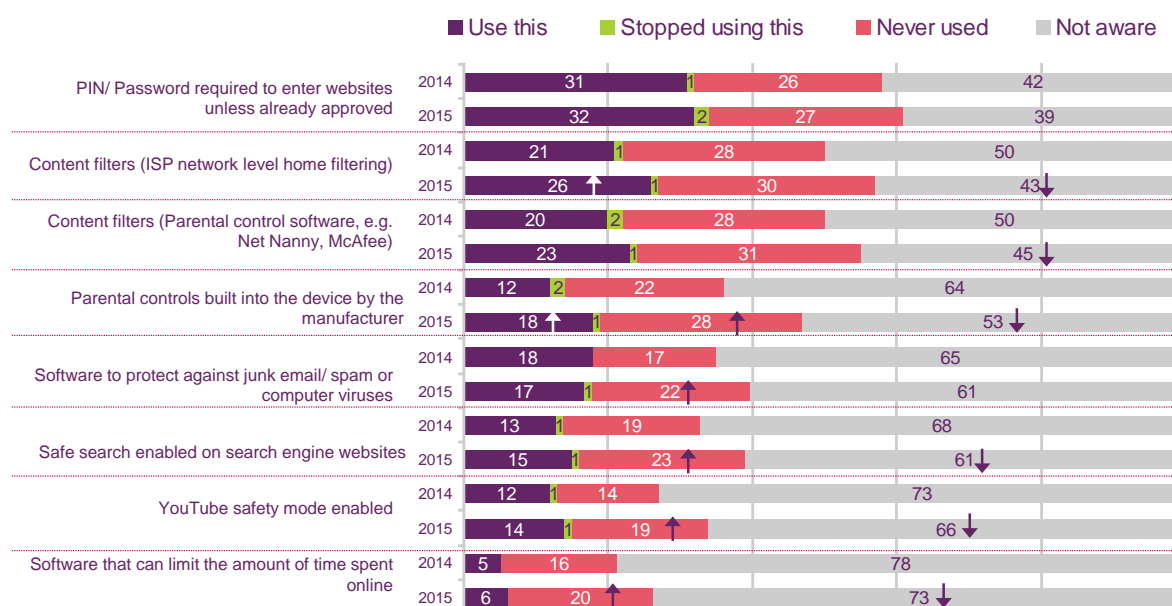
10.21 As shown in Figure 38, few parents of 5-15s have stopped using any of these tools, ranging from 0%-2% for each of the eight tools.

Since 2014 more parents of 5-15s are using ISP network-level home filtering and parental controls built into the device

10.22 Since 2014, among parents of 5-15s, awareness of most of these tools has increased, although use has only increased since 2014 for ISP network-level home filtering (26% vs. 21%) and for parental controls built into the device by the manufacturer (18% vs. 12%). The increase in use of ISP network-level home filtering is attributable to parents of 8-11s (30% in 2015 vs. 22% in 2014) and the increased use of parental controls built into the device by the manufacturer is attributable to parents of 5-7s (19% vs. 11%) and parents of 8-11s (24% vs. 13%).

10.23 Parents of 3-4s (not charted) are more likely than in 2014 to be aware of PIN/passwords required to enter websites (67% vs. 53%), YouTube safety mode (44% vs. 31%) and software to protect against junk email or computer viruses (45% vs. 35%). Use among parents of 3-4s has increased since 2014 for YouTube safety mode (19% vs. 6%), software to protect against junk email or computer viruses (14% vs. 7%) and software to limit the amount of time spent online (6% vs. 2%).

Figure 38: Parents of 5-15s whose child goes online and who have home broadband, use and awareness of technical tools: 2014, 2015



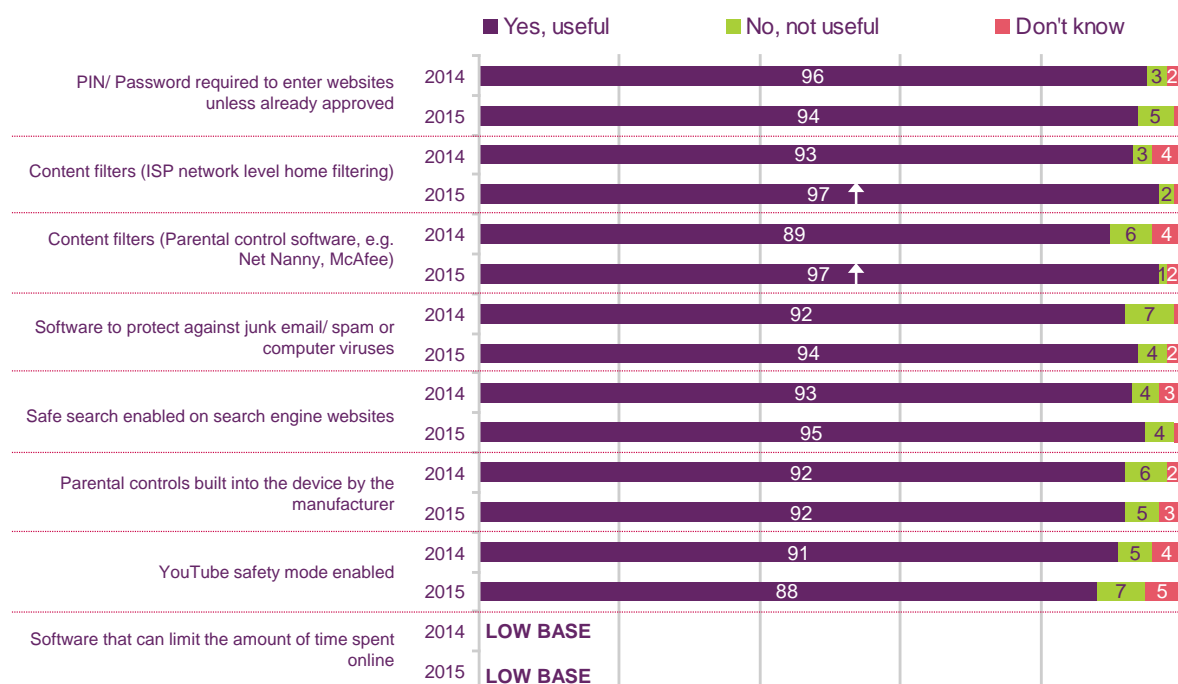
QP34A-H Do you find this tool useful? (Spontaneous responses, single coded)

Base: Parents of children aged 5-15 who go online that have a broadband internet connection at home who use each technical tool or control (Variable base) Significance testing shows any change between 2014 and 2015.

More parents than in 2014 say they consider ISP network-level filters and parental control software useful

10.24 As shown in Figure 39, around nine in ten parents who use each tool consider them useful. Ninety-seven per cent of parents who use either type of content filter consider them useful, with both of these measures increasing since 2014. Very few parents of 5-15s who use each tool said they did not consider the tools useful (around 5% or less, for each measure).

Figure 39: Parents of 5-15s who use each tool, usefulness of technical tools: 2014, 2015



QP34A-H Do you find this tool useful? (Spontaneous responses, single coded)

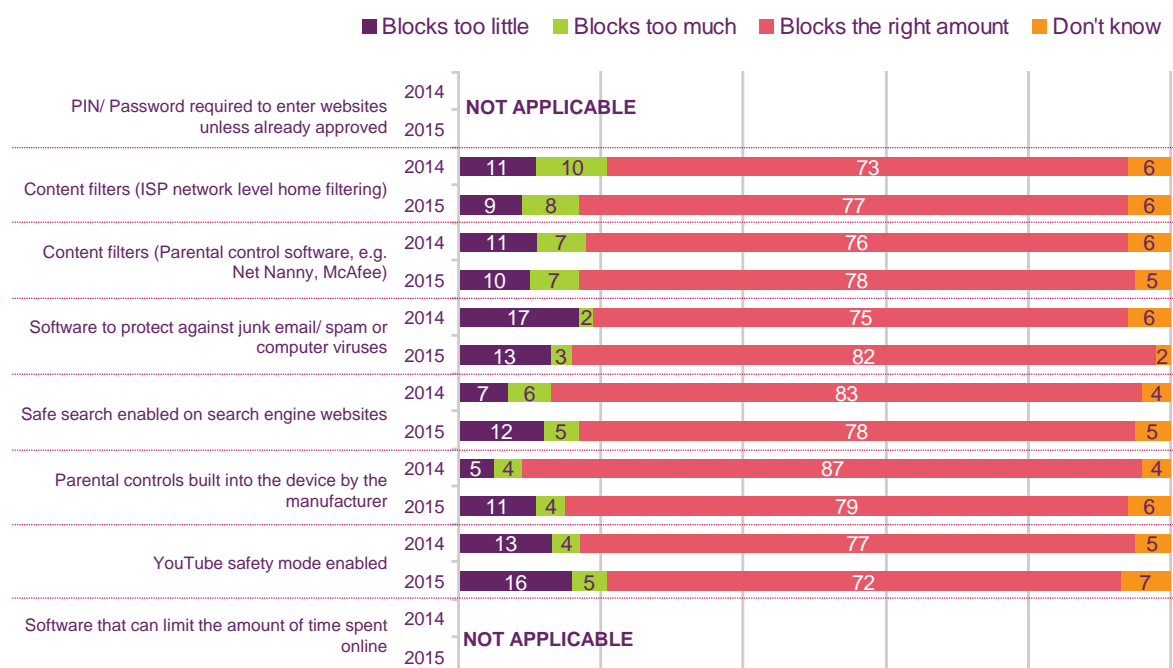
Base: Parents of children aged 5-15 who go online that have a broadband internet connection at home who use each technical tool or control (Variable base) Significance testing shows any change between 2014 and 2015.

Three in four parents of 5-15s who use each tool say it blocks the right amount of content

- 10.25 Parents who use each of the tools were asked whether they felt these tools blocked too much, too little or the right amount of content⁶³. The results are shown in Figure 40.
- 10.26 Around three in four parents who used each tool said it blocked the right amount of content, while around one in six parents of 5-15s who used each tool said they blocked too much or too little content. There has been no change since 2014 in any of the measures for any of the tools.

⁶³ It was not relevant to ask about the effectiveness of two controls in terms of whether they blocked too much or too little content, so these are shown as not applicable: PIN/ password controls to enter websites unless already approved and software that can limit the amount of time spent online.

Figure 40: Parents of 5-15s who use each tool, perception of technical tools blocking too much/too little: 2014, 2015



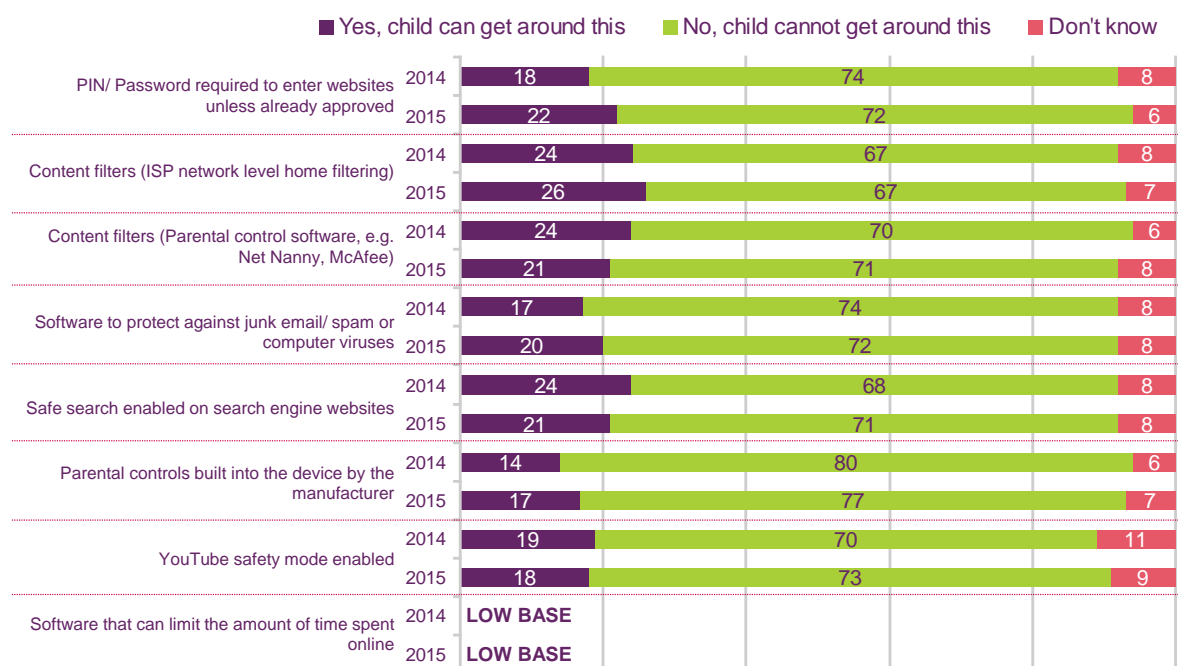
QP35A-H Do you think they block too much content or too little content? (Spontaneous responses, single coded)
Base: Parents of children aged 5-15 who go online that have a broadband internet connection at home and who use each technical tool or control (Variable base). Significance testing shows any change between 2014 and 2015.

10.27 Parents who used each of the tools were also asked whether they felt their child was able to bypass the tools. The results for 5-15s are shown in Figure 41.

10.28 Around one in five parents of 5-15s who used each tool felt their child was able to bypass the tool. One in four parents (26%) thought their child could get round their ISP network-level home filtering, compared to 18% who said their child could get round the YouTube safety mode. About one in twelve parents of 5-15s who used each tool said they were unsure whether their child could bypass it.

10.29 There has been no change in these measures since 2014.

Figure 41: Parents of 5-15s who use each tool, perception of child's ability to bypass technical tools: 2014, 2015



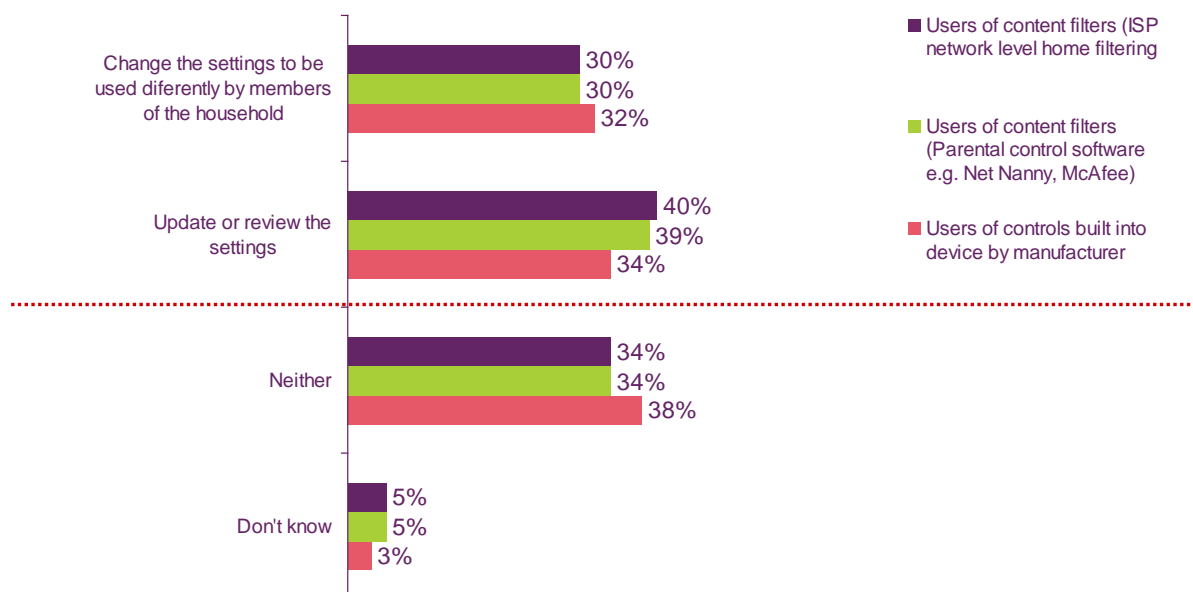
QP36A-H Do you think your child can get around them? (Spontaneous responses, single coded)

Base: Parents of children aged 5-15 who go online that have a broadband connection at home and who use each technical tool or control (Variable base). Significance testing shows any change between 2014 and 2015.

Around three in ten parents change the setting of parental controls, depending on who in the household is using them

- 10.30 Parents whose child goes online, who have home broadband and who use three specific technical tools (ISP network-level filtering, content filters on a particular device, or controls built into the device by the manufacturer) were asked in 2015 whether they tended to change the settings on these tools, depending on who in the household was using them. They were also asked whether they reviewed or updated these settings. The results are shown in Figure 42.
- 10.31 Around three in ten parents say they tend to change the setting of each of these tools depending on who in the household is using them. Four in ten say they update or review the settings on content filters, while 34% of parents who have controls built into the device by the manufacturer say they do this.

Figure 42: Use of filters among parents of 5-15s whose child goes online and who have home broadband: 2015



QP37/ QP38/ QP39 - You said you use [technical tool or control shown]. Do either of the options shown on this card apply to how your household uses this particular control? (Prompted responses, multi-coded)
 Base: Parents of children aged 5-15 who use each type of control (278/ 251/ 189)

Four in ten parents whose child uses a smartphone or tablet are aware of at least one of the three tools asked about to manage app installation or use

10.32 In addition to asking about technical tools used with any type of device, parents were asked about their awareness and use of tools that relate specifically to app installation and use. These are:

- changing the settings on a phone or tablet to stop apps being downloaded;
- changing the settings on a phone or tablet to prevent in-app purchases; and
- parental control software to restrict app installation or use.

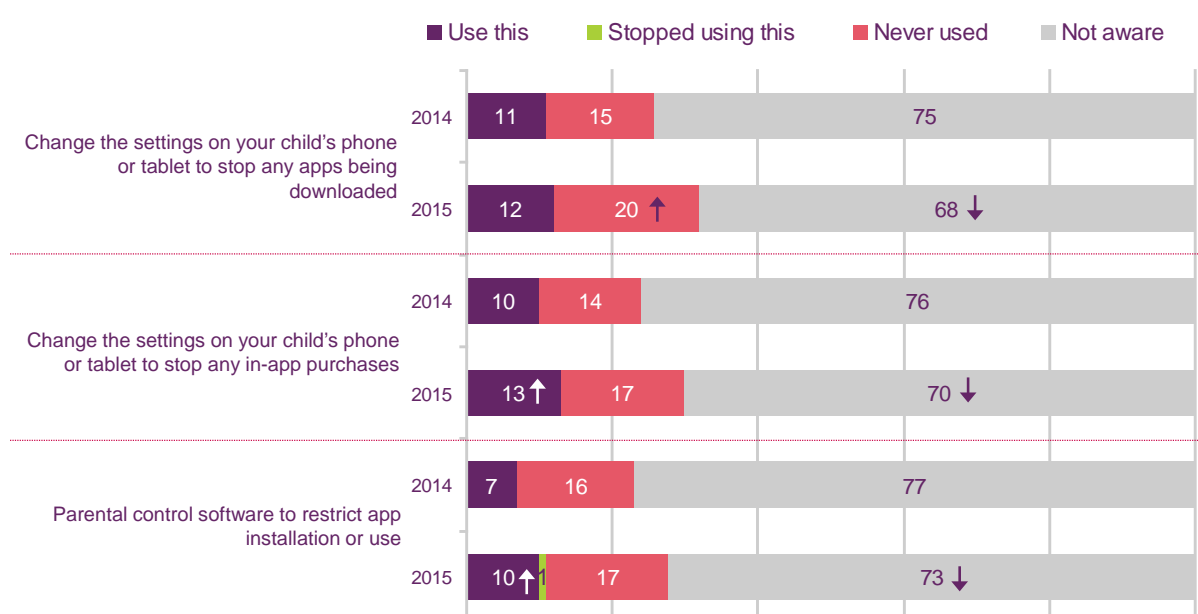
10.33 Four in ten of parents of 3-4s (42%) and 5-15s (41%) whose child uses a smartphone or tablet are aware of any of these three tools that can be used to restrict app installation or use, and 18% of parents of 3-4s and 5-15s use any of them.

10.34 Figure 43 below shows awareness and use of each of these three tools among parents of 5-15s whose child uses a smartphone or a tablet computer.

10.35 Around seven in ten parents of 5-15s whose child uses a smartphone or tablet are unaware of each of these tools. Parents whose child uses a smartphone or tablet are more likely to say each type of tool is not used rather than used. One in eight parents say they have changed the settings on their child's phone or tablet to prevent in-app purchases (13%) or to prevent apps being downloaded (12%); one in ten (10%) say they use software to restrict app installation or use. Parents of 5-7s and 8-11s whose child uses a smartphone or tablet are more likely than parents of 12-15s to use each of these tools.

- 10.36 Only 1% of parents say they have stopped using parental control software to restrict app installation or use.
- 10.37 There are no differences in levels of awareness and use, for each of these types of technical tool, between parents of 3-4s whose child uses a smartphone or tablet and parents of 5-15s.
- 10.38 Parents of 3-4s are more likely than in 2014 to be aware of changing the settings to prevent apps being downloaded (36% vs. 28%) and to prevent in-app purchases (33% vs. 25%), although use has increased only for the latter measure (12% vs. 6%). As shown in Figure 43, among parents of 5-15s, awareness of all three tools has increased, and use of settings to prevent in-app purchases is more likely (13% vs. 10%), as is use of software to restrict app installation or use (10% vs. 7%).

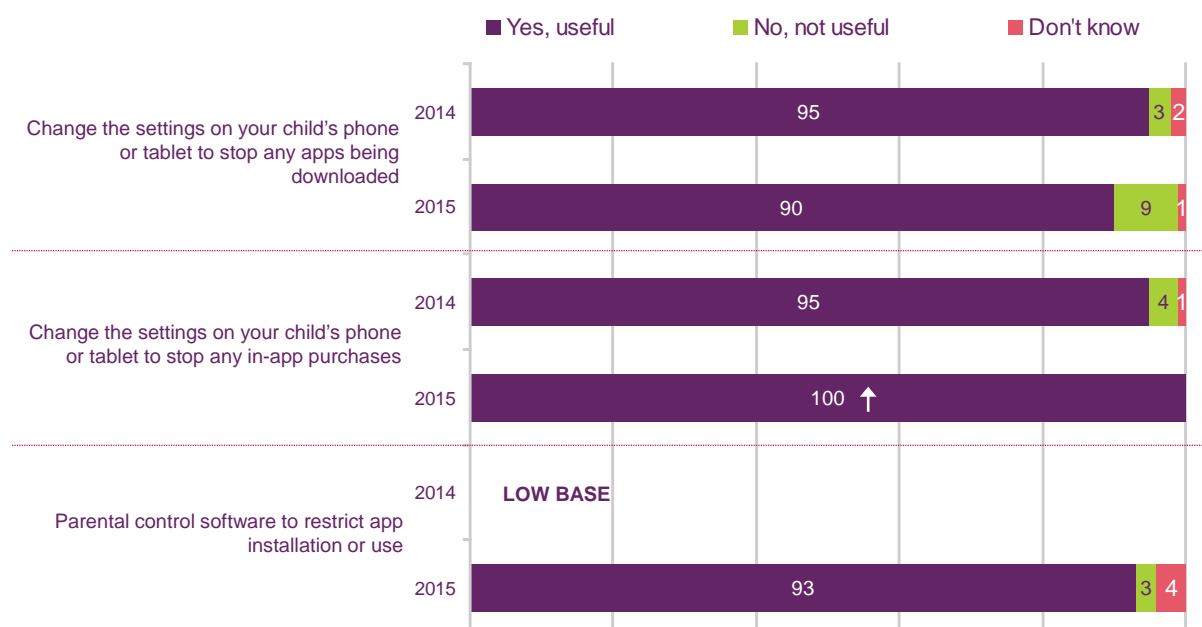
Figure 43: Parents of 5-15s whose child uses a smartphone or tablet computer, use and awareness of technical tools/ controls for these devices: 2014, 2015



QP31J-L Please read each of the descriptions shown on this card. Before today were you aware of any of these types of technical tools or controls? Which ones? (Prompted responses, multi-coded)/ QP32J-L Do you use any of these types of technical tools or controls to manage your child's access to online content? Which ones? (Prompted responses, multi-coded)/ QP33J-L Have you stopped using any of these types of technical tools or controls to manage your child's access to online content? Which ones? (Prompted responses, multi-coded). Base: Parents whose child uses a smartphone or tablet computer (1085). Significance testing shows any change between 2014 and 2015.

- 10.39 As shown in Figure 44, at least nine in ten parents of 5-15s who use each of these tools consider them useful. Parents of 5-15s are more likely than in 2014 to consider changing the settings to stop in-app purchases to be useful (100% vs. 95%).

Figure 44: Parents of 5-15s who use each tool, usefulness of technical tools for smartphones/ tablet computers: 2014 and 2015



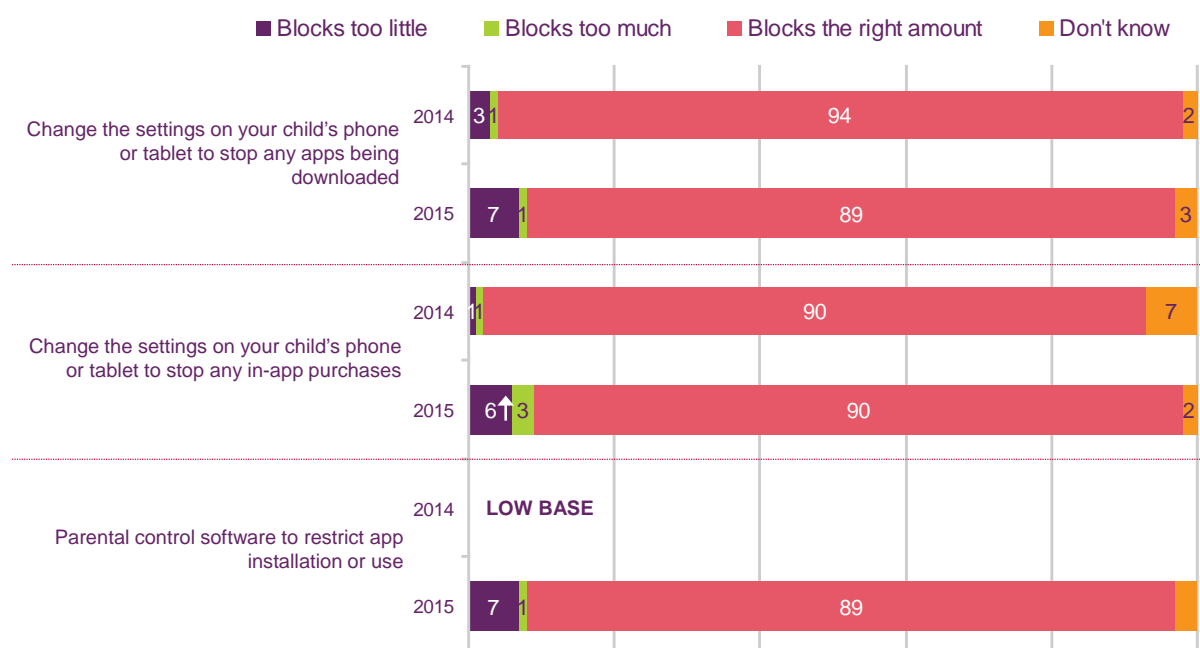
QP34J-L Do you find this tool useful (spontaneous responses, single coded)

Base: Parents whose child uses a smartphone or tablet computer and who use each technical control (variable base). Significance testing shows any change between 2014 and 2015.

10.40 Figure 45 below shows the extent to which parents who use each type of tool feel it blocks too little, too much, or the right amount of content.

10.41 Around nine in ten parents of 5-15s who use each of these tools feel it blocks the right amount of content. Between 1% and 3% of users say it blocks too much, and around 6-7% say it blocks too little. Parents who change the settings on their child's phone or tablet to stop any in-app purchases are more likely than they were in 2014 to say it blocks too little (6% vs. 1%).

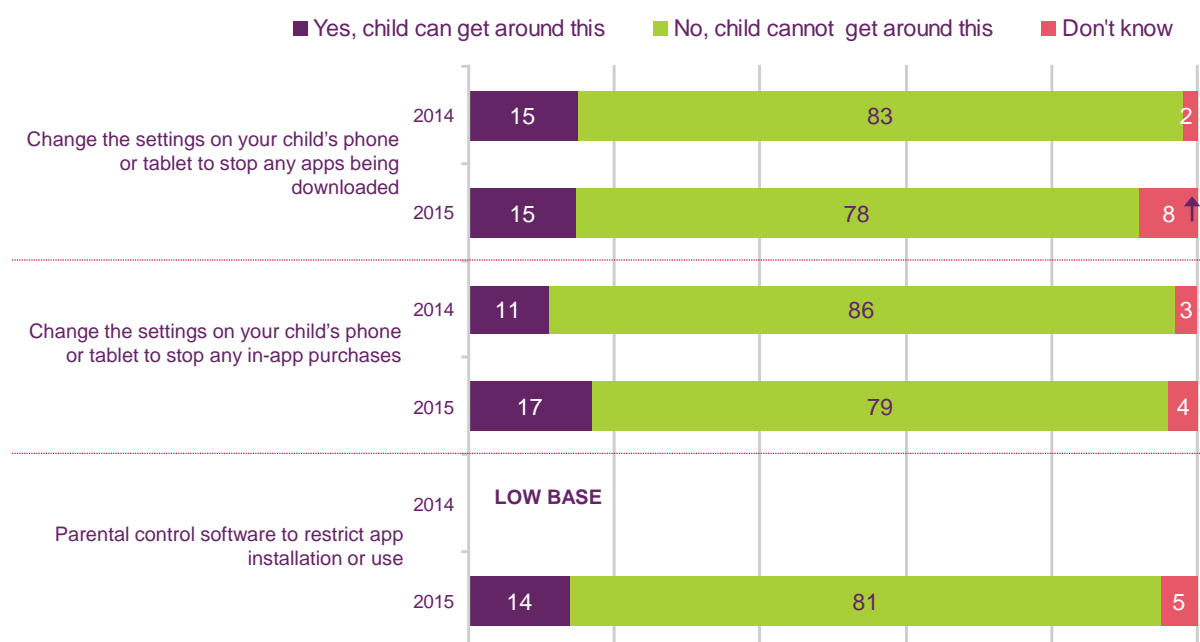
Figure 45: Parents of 5-15s who use each tool, technical tools for smartphones/ tablets blocking the right amount of content: 2014 and 2015



QP35J-L Do you think they block too much content or too little content? (Spontaneous responses, single coded)
Base: Parents whose child uses a smartphone or tablet computer and who use each technical control (variable base). Significance testing shows any change between 2014 and 2015.

10.42 Parents who use each of the smartphone or tablet tools were asked whether they thought their child was able to bypass these tools. As shown in Figure 46, around one in seven (15%) parents of 5-15s who used each tool felt their child was able to bypass it, unchanged since 2014.

Figure 46: Parents of 5-15s who use each tool, perception of child's ability to bypass technical tools for smartphones/tablet computers: 2014 and 2015



QP36J-L Do you think your child can get around them? (spontaneous responses, single coded)

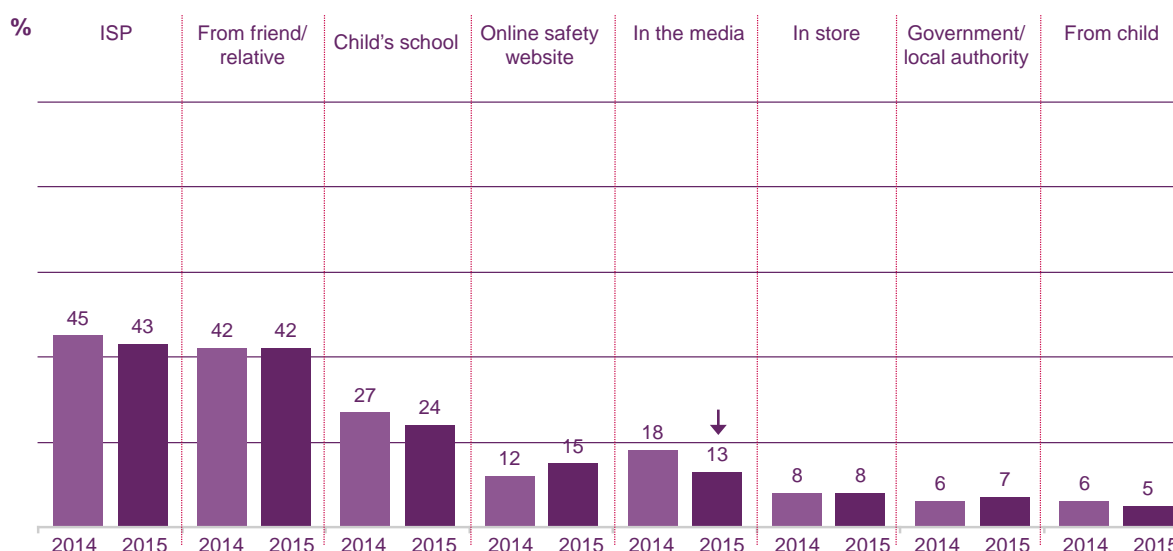
Base: Parents whose child uses a smartphone or tablet computer and who use each technical control (variable base). Significance testing shows any change between 2014 and 2015.

Information sources for finding out about technical tools

Parents of 5-15s are as likely to find out about technical tools from their friends/family as from ISPs

- 10.43 Parents who used any of the technical tools to manage their child's access to and use of online content were asked about where they found information about these tools. Figure 47 shows the results for parents of 5-15s, in 2014 and in 2015.
- 10.44 Among parents of 5-15s, no single information source was used by a majority of parents in 2015, although two sources were used by more than four in ten parents: information provided by an ISP (43%) and hearing about tools from friends or relatives (42%). Around one in four got information from their child's school (24%), with around one in seven saying they used online safety websites, e.g. Safer Internet Centre (15%) or heard about it in the media (13%), and around one in 20 from the Government or local authority (7%). Parents of 5-15s are less likely than in 2014 to say they found out through the media (13% vs. 18%).

Figure 47: Information sources for finding out about technical tools to manage child's online access and use, 5-15s: 2014, 2015



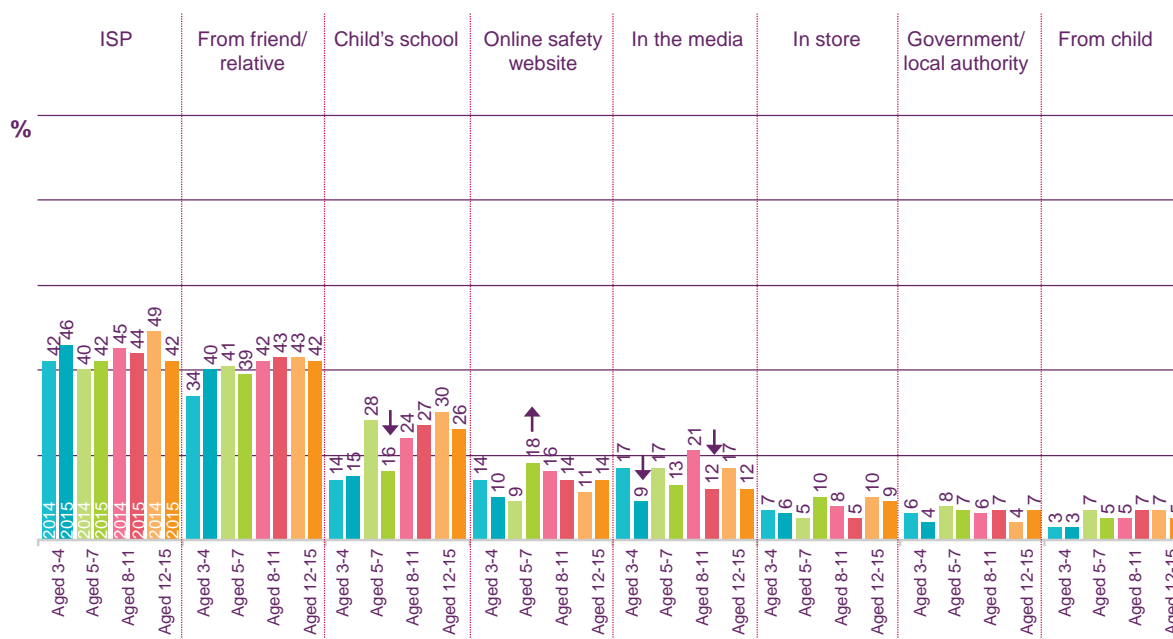
QP40 – Where did you find information about tools or controls that you can use to manage your child's online access and use? (spontaneous responses, multi-coded) NB - Only showing responses given by more than 5% of parents of 5-15s who use any controls in 2015

Base: Parents of children aged 3-4 or 5-15 who use any of the tools/ controls (732 aged 5-15 in 2015).

Significance testing shows any change between 2014 and 2015.

10.45 As shown in Figure 48, there is little variation by the age of the child in the information sources used, although, perhaps unsurprisingly, parents of 3-4s are less likely to have heard about technical tools from the child's school, compared to parents of 5-7s, 8-11s and 12-15s. There are some differences since 2014. Parents of 3-4s and 8-11s are less likely to say they have found information in the media (9% vs. 17% for 3-4s and 12% vs. 21% for 8-11s), while parents of 5-7s are less likely to have found out from the child's school (16% vs. 28%) and more likely to have found out from online safety websites (18% vs. 9%).

Figure 48: Information sources for finding out about technical tools to manage children's online access and use, by age: 2014 and 2015



QP40 – Where do you find information about technical tools/ controls that you can use to manage your child's online access and use? (spontaneous responses, multi-coded) NB - Only showing responses given by more than 5% of parents of 5-15s who use any controls in 2015

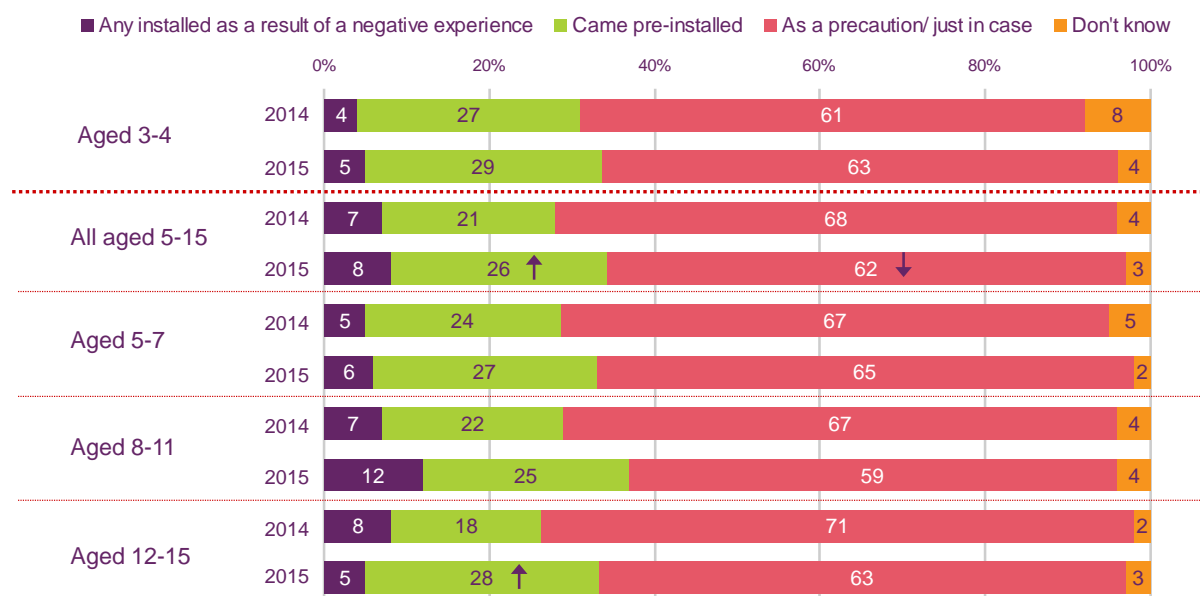
Base: Parents of children aged 3-4 or 5-15 who use any of the tools/ controls (227 aged 3-4, 197 aged 5-7, 286 aged 8-11, 249 aged 12-15 in 2015). Significance testing shows any change between 2014 and 2015.

Reasons for installing tools to manage children's online access and use

Three in five parents who use any type of technical tools say they installed them as a precautionary measure

- 10.46 Figure 49 shows that among parents of 3-4s, around one in 20 parents who use tools installed them as a result of a negative experience (5%), with three in ten saying they came pre-installed (29%) and six in ten saying they were installed as a precautionary measure (63%).
- 10.47 Around one in ten (8%) parents of 5-15s who used any of the tools we asked about said that they installed them as the result of a negative experience. One in four of these parents said the tools were pre-installed (26%) with three in five (62%) saying they installed them as a precautionary measure.
- 10.48 Parents of 5-15s are less likely than in 2014 to say the tools were installed as a precautionary measure (62% vs. 68%) and are more likely to say they came pre-installed (26% vs. 21%); this increase is attributable to parents of 12-15s (28% vs. 18%).

Figure 49: Reasons for installing any of the technical tools or controls, by age of child: 2014 and 2015



QP41 – Please look at the reasons shown on this card. Which one of these describes why the technical tools/ controls were put in place? (prompted responses, single coded)

Base: Parents of children aged 3-4 or 5-15 who use any of the tools/ controls (227 aged 3-4, 732 aged 5-15, 197 aged 5-7, 286 aged 8-11, 249 aged 12-15 in 2015). Significance testing shows any change between 2014 and 2015.

Reasons for not using tools that manage online access and use

Parents without technical tools in place say they are using other mediation strategies

- 10.49 Parents of children aged 3-4 and 5-15 who were aware of, but did not use, five particular tools were prompted with some possible reasons for this and were asked to say whether these reasons applied.
- 10.50 Figure 50 below shows the results for the five tools that parents of 5-15s were asked about, expressed as a proportion of those whose child goes online and who have a broadband internet connection at home⁶⁴. The five tools are ranked according to the proportion of parents who are aware of, but do not use, each of them.
- 10.51 Across all five tools, the top three reasons for not using each are consistent. Around half of parents of 5-15s say they do not use these tools because they prefer to talk to their child and use other methods of mediation, while four in ten say it is because they trust their child to be sensible/responsible. Around two in ten parents who are aware of each tool but do not use it, say it is because the child is always supervised/there is always an adult present. More than one in ten parents tend to say it is because their child learns how to be safe on the internet at school. All other reasons for not using each tool are mentioned by around one in ten parents of 5-15s or less.
- 10.52 Since 2014, parents of 5-15s who do not use parental control software on a particular computer or device are more likely to say this is because they prefer to use a

⁶⁴ Low base sizes prevent analysis among parents of 3-4s

combination of mediation strategies (53% vs. 43%), because the child learns how to be safe online at school (14% vs. 6%), because filters block too much (10% vs. 4%), or because the child would find a way around the controls (6% vs. 2%).

10.53 Parents of 5-15s who do not use ISP network-level filtering are also more likely to say, compared to 2014, that it is because they prefer to use a combination of mediation strategies (52% vs. 42%), because it would be too complicated or time-consuming to install (8% vs. 3%) or because the child would find a way around the controls (8% vs. 3%).

10.54 Parents who do not use controls built into the device by the manufacturer are also more likely to say it is because they prefer to use a combination of strategies (52% vs. 38%), because the child learns how to be safe online at school (15% vs. 7%), because filters block too much (6% vs. 2%) or because the child would find a way around the controls (7% vs. 1%).

Figure 50: Parents of 5-15s who go online, who have a home broadband connection and who are aware of each control, reasons for not using each type of online technical tool: 2015

All aged 5-15	Content filters (Parental control software e.g. Net Nanny, McAfee) (n=345)	Content filters (ISP network level home filtering) (n=324)	Parental controls built into the device by the manufacturer (n=307)	Safe search enabled on search engine websites (n= 251)	YouTube safety mode enabled (n=210)
% of those who go online that have broadband at home who are aware of but do not use this feature	32%	31%	29%	24%	20%
I prefer to talk to my child and use supervision and rules	53%	52%	52%	48%	43%
Trust my child to be sensible/responsible	44%	43%	42%	43%	40%
Child is always supervised/ always an adult present	22%	22%	19%	23%	24%
Child learns how to be safe on the internet at school	14%	15%	15%	11%	8%
Filters block too much/ get in the way	10%	10%	6%	5%	6%
Too complicated/ time consuming to install/ administer	7%	8%	6%	5%	5%
Don't know how to do this/ Didn't know this was possible	6%	7%	6%	10%	9%
Wouldn't work / They would find a way round the controls	6%	8%	7%	6%	7%

QP42 Here are some reasons that other people have given for not using particular technical tools or controls. For each tool or control that you said earlier you were aware of but did not use, can you please say whether any of these reasons apply? (Prompted response, multi-coded) showing responses given by 5% or more of all parents of 5-15s responding about the controls shown

Base: : Parents of children aged 5-15 who go online that have a broadband internet connection at home and are aware of but who do not use each technical tool or control (variable base)

10.55 Figure 51 below shows the reasons for not using parental control software to restrict app installation or use, among parents of 5-15s who use a smartphone or tablet⁶⁵. More than four in ten of parents say they do not use this tool because they trust their child to be sensible/responsible (45%), or they prefer to talk to their child and use supervision and rules (44%). Around one in four (24%) do not use the tool because

⁶⁵ Low base size prevents analysis among parents of 3-4s whose child uses a smartphone or tablet who are aware of but do not use this control

their child is always supervised. All other reasons are mentioned by one in ten parents or less.

- 10.56 Parents are more likely than in 2014 to say they do not use this tool because their child is always supervised (24% vs. 15%) or because the child would find a way round the controls (7% vs. 2%).

Figure 51: Parents of 5-15s who use a smartphone or tablet, aware of each control, reasons for not using each type of online technical tool: 2015

All aged 5-15	Parental control software to restrict app installation / use (n=189)
% of those whose child uses a smartphone or tablet who are aware of but do not use this feature	18%
Trust my child to be sensible/ responsible	45%
I prefer to talk to my child and use supervision and rules	44%
Child is always supervised/ always an adult present	24%
Child learns how to be safe on the internet at school	11%
Wouldn't work/ They would find a way round the controls	7%
Don't know how to do this/ Didn't know this was possible	6%
Too complicated/ time consuming to install/ administer	6%
Filters block too much/ get in the way	3%
Filters don't block enough	2%

QP42 Here are some reasons that other people have given for not using particular technical tools or controls. For each tool or control that you said earlier you were aware of but did not use, can you please say whether any of these reasons apply? (Prompted response, multi-coded)

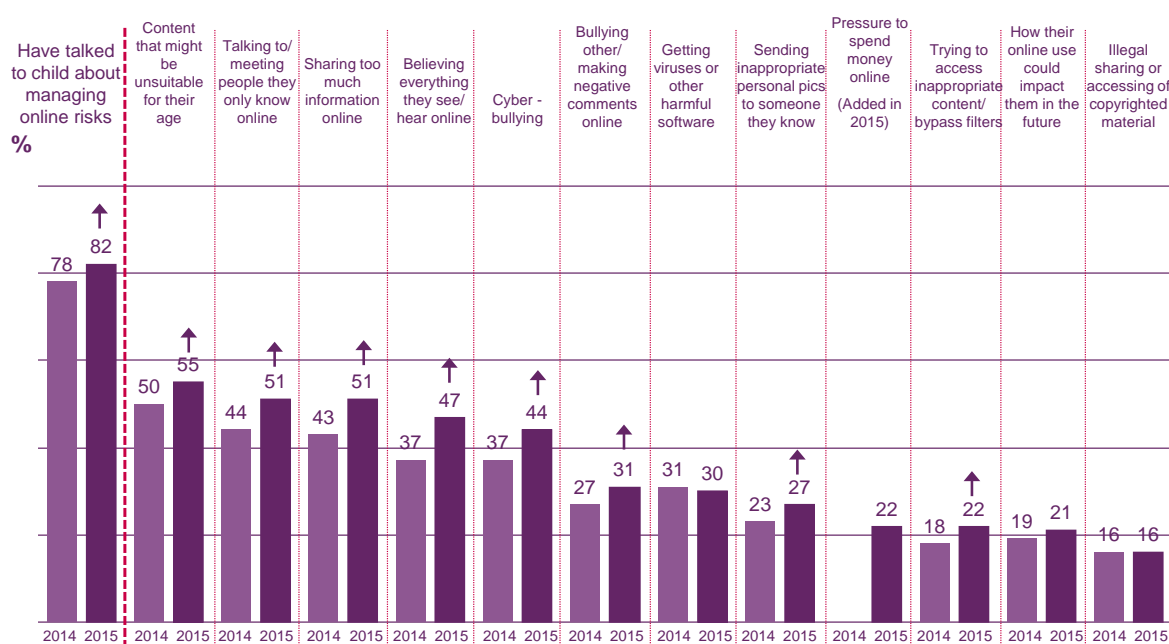
Base: Parents whose child uses a smartphone or tablet computer and who are aware of this feature but who do not use it (189).

Talking to children about managing online risks

Parents of 5-15s are more likely than in 2014 to say they have talked to their child about managing any of the online risks asked about

- 10.57 Parents of 5-15s who go online were prompted with 12 possible online risks and asked whether they had ever talked to their child about any of them.
- 10.58 Figure 52 shows that eight in ten parents of 5-15s (82%) had ever talked to their child about managing at least one of these online risks. Half of parents (55%) had talked to their child about content on sites or apps that might be unsuitable for their age, about talking to or meeting people that they only know online (51%), or about sharing too much information online (51%). More than four in ten had talked to their child about believing everything they see or hear online (47%), or cyberbullying (44%), with three in ten parents talking to their child about bullying others (31%) or downloading viruses or other harmful software as a result of what they do online (30%).
- 10.59 All other potential online risks had been discussed by less than three in ten parents.
- 10.60 Parents are more likely than in 2014 to have spoken with their child about eight of the risks, with the largest increase for “believing everything they see or hear online” (47% vs. 37%).

Figure 52: Frequency of talking to child about managing online risks, 5-15s: 2014 and 2015



QP28 – Have you ever talked to your child about any of the following things that could happen online? (prompted responses, multi-coded)

Base: Parents whose child goes online at home or elsewhere (1169 aged 5-15 in 2015). Significance testing shows any change between 2014 and 2015

- 10.61 Figure 53 shows how this overall incidence breaks down by the age of the child, for parents of children aged 5-7, 8-11 and 12-15 and among parents of 3-4s.
- 10.62 Parents of 8-11s (88%) and 12-15s (86%) are more likely than parents of 5-7s (64%) to have talked to their child about managing risks. Parents of 5-7s are twice as likely as parents of 3-4s (30%) to have talked to their child.
- 10.63 The risk that parents of 3-4s are most likely to have talked to their child about is content on sites or apps that might be unsuitable for their age (18%). The next most common online risk they have discussed is “believing everything that they see or hear online” (11%). All other online risks have been discussed by one in ten, or fewer, parents of 3-4s.
- 10.64 There is no individual risk that the majority of parents of 5-7s have discussed with their child, although they are more likely than in 2014 to have spoken to their child about any of these risks (64% vs. 54%). This increase is due to their being more likely to discuss content that might be unsuitable for the child’s age (44% vs. 35%) and “believing everything they see or hear online” (30% vs. 19%).
- 10.65 Around half, or more, of parents of 8-11s and 12-15s have discussed five specific online risks: content that might be unsuitable for the child’s age (62% for 8-11s and 54% for 12-15s), talking to or meeting people the child only knows online (56% for 8-11s and 60% for 12-15s), sharing too much information online (54% for 8-11s and 61% for 12-15s), believing everything they see or hear online (50% for 8-11s and 52% for 12-15s) and cyber-bullying (48% for 8-11s and 54% for 12-15s). At an overall level, parents of 8-11s are more likely than in 2014 to have discussed any of the risks (88% vs. 81%); this overall increase is attributable to an increase for each of the five specific risks.

10.66 Although parents of 12-15s are no more likely at an overall level to have spoken about the risks of being online (87% in 2014 vs. 86% in 2015), they are more likely to have spoken to their child about believing everything they see or hear online (52% vs. 44%) and about bullying others or making negative comments online (39% vs. 32%).

Figure 53: Parents talking to their child about managing online risks, by age: 2014 and 2015



QP28 – Have you ever talked to your child about any of the following things that could happen online? (prompted responses, multi-coded)

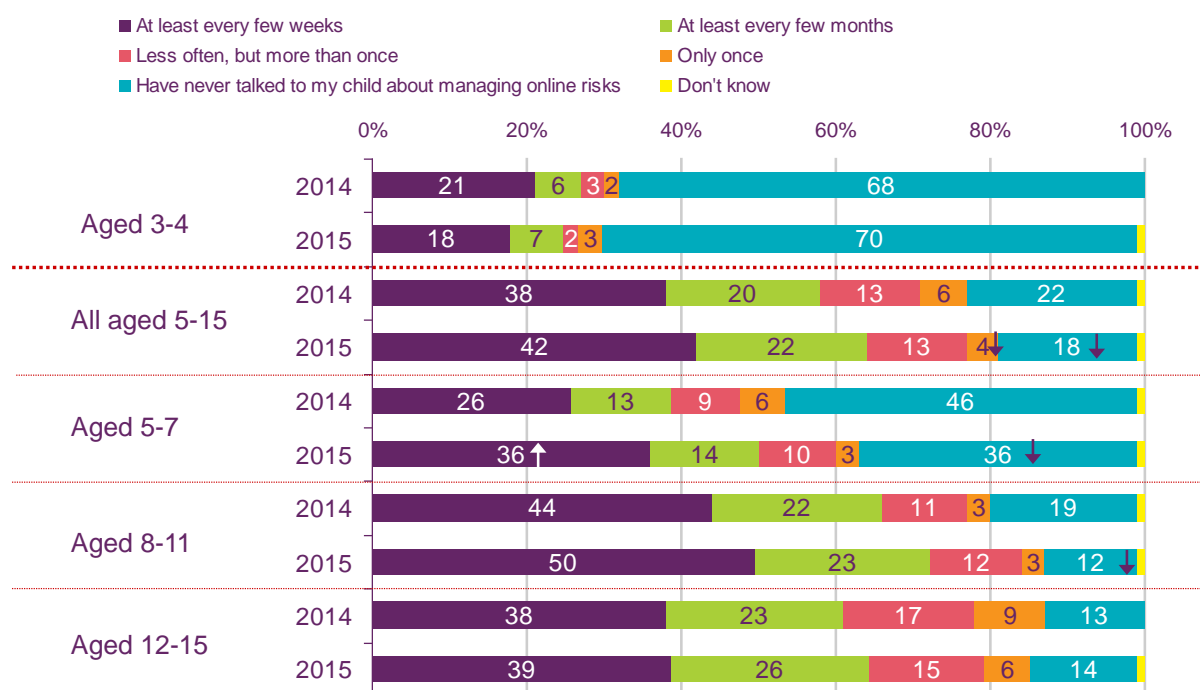
Base: Parents whose child goes online at home or elsewhere aged 3-4 (262) or 5-15 (260 aged 5-7, 440 aged 8-11, 469 aged 12-15 in 2015). Significance testing shows any change between 2014 and 2015.

Two in five parents of 5-15s say they talk to their child at least every few weeks about managing online risks

- 10.67 Parents who said they had ever spoken to their child about any of the 12 online risks were then asked how often they talked to their child about managing these types of risk⁶⁶.
- 10.68 The results are shown in Figure 54, expressed as a proportion of those whose child goes online at home or elsewhere.
- 10.69 As discussed above, the likelihood of having spoken to their child about managing online risks tends to increase with the age of the child. As such, two in three parents of 3-4s (70%) have never spoken to their child about managing any of the online risks. One in five parents of 3-4s (18%) talk to their child at least every few weeks. A further 7% of parents of 3-4s say they do this at least every few months.
- 10.70 Two in five parents of 5-15s who go online (42%) say they talk to their child about managing these online risks at least every few weeks. This is more likely for 8-11s (50%) than for 5-7s (36%) or 12-15s (39%). A further one in five parents of 5-15s (22%) who go online say that although they don't speak to their child every few weeks, they do speak to them every few months. Therefore, a majority of parents of 5-15s (65%) speak to their child at least every few months. This incidence is higher among parents of 8-11s (73%) and 12-15s (65%) and lower among parents of 5-7s (50%).
- 10.71 Since 2014, parents of 5-7s are more likely to say they talk to their child at least every few weeks (36% vs. 26%).

⁶⁶ This question was used in the analysis relating to 'Talking to child about managing online risks at least every few months' for the combinations of online mediation strategies used by parents, as shown in Figure 35 but more detail about frequency of discussing online risk is provided in this section of the report

Figure 54: Frequency of talking to children about managing online risks, by age: 2014 and 2015



QP29 – Which of these best describes how often you talk to your child about these things? (single coded)
 Base: Parents whose child goes online at home or elsewhere aged 3-4 (262) or 5-15 (1169 aged 5-15, 260 aged 5-7, 440 aged 8-11, 469 aged 12-15 in 2015). Significance testing shows any change between 2014 and 2015.

10.72 Parents who said they had never talked to their child about any of the 12 risks were asked why they had not done so. Figure 55 shows the responses among parents of 5-15s⁶⁷.

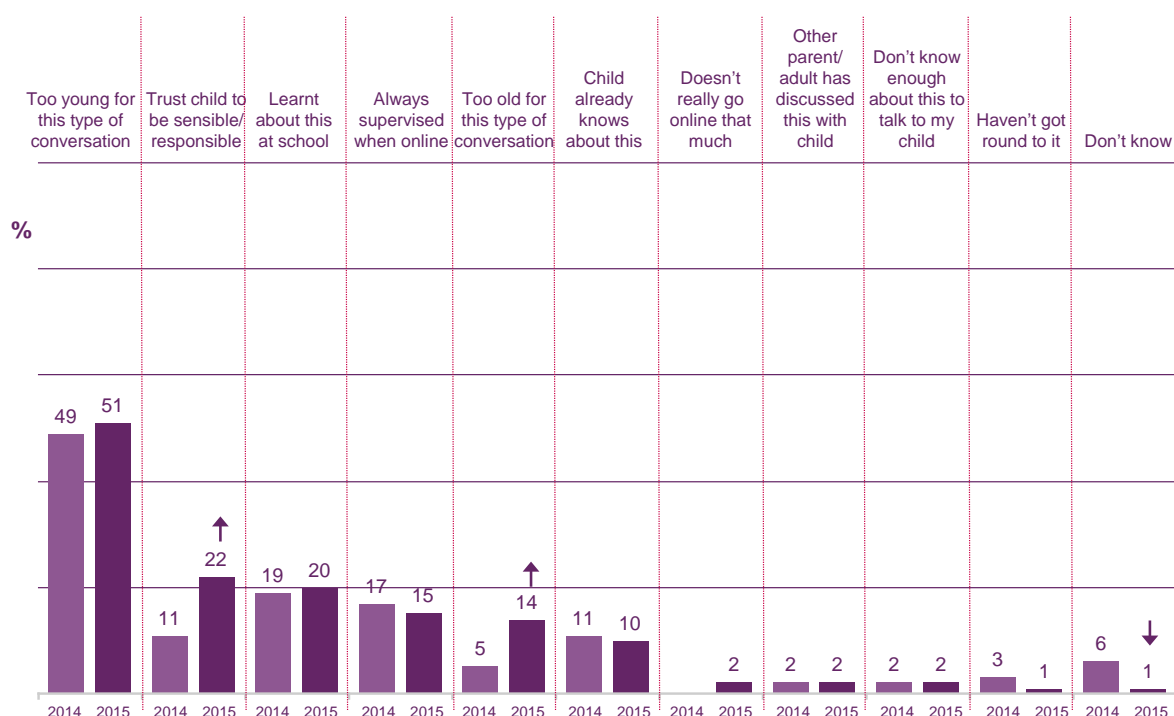
10.73 As in 2014, half of parents of 5-15s who go online (51%) said they had never talked to their child about this because their child was too young for this type of conversation. One in five said it was because they trusted their child to be sensible/responsible (22%) (higher than in 2014 (11%)), or because their child had learnt about this at school (20%). Around one in seven parents (15%) said it was because their child was always supervised or because their child was too old for this type of conversation (14%), with this latter measure more likely than in 2014 (5%). One in ten parents said it was because their child already knew about this (10%), with all other reasons given by less than one in ten parents.

10.74 Among parents of 3-4s⁶⁸, 95% of parents who had not talked to their child about managing online risks said this was because their child was too young for this type of conversation, higher than in 2014 (85%). A further one in ten (9%) parents said it was because their child was always supervised/there was always an adult present, unchanged since 2014.

⁶⁷ Where more than 1% of parents of 5-15s gave that response.

⁶⁸ It is not possible to show results broken out by children aged 5-7, 8-11 or 12-15 due to low base sizes

Figure 55: Reasons for not having talked to child about managing online risks, 5-15s: 2014 and 2015



QP30 – And can you tell me why you have not talked with your child about these things (spontaneous responses, multi-coded)

Base: Parents of children aged 5-15 who have not talked to their child about managing online risks (214 aged 5-15 in 2015). Significance testing shows any change between 2014 and 2015.

Three-quarters of parents have looked for or received information or advice about how to help their child manage online risks - up since 2014

10.75 Parents of children who go online were asked whether they had ever looked for, or received, information or advice about how to help their child manage online risks. Parents were prompted with 16 possible sources, with the option of nominating other sources. Figure 56 shows the responses given by parents of 5-15s, while Figure 57 shows responses among parents of 3-4s, 5-7s, 8-11s and 12-15s.⁶⁹

10.76 Three in four parents of children aged 5-15 (75%) had looked for or received information/advice from any source, and half of parents had looked for/received information or advice from the child's school (53%). Four in ten said they had looked for/received information/advice from friends or family (40%) and around one in seven from ISPs (14%), from the child themselves (14%) or from the media (12%). One in ten had received advice from the Government or local authority (9%). All other information sources were mentioned by one in ten parents or less, and around one in twenty parents said they had used UKCCIS or Get Safe Online (GSO) as sources of information of advice.

10.77 Compared to 2014, parents of 5-15s were more likely to say they had looked for or received information/advice from any source (75% vs. 70%); with increases for the following sources: child's school (53% vs. 48%), family/friends (40% vs. 32%), the child themselves (14% vs. 10%), Government/local authority (9% vs. 6%), and Get Safe Online (6% vs. 3%).

⁶⁹ Where more than 1% of parents of 5-15s gave that response.

- 10.78 Parents of 8-11s (76%) and 12-15s (77%) were more likely than parents of 3-4s (58%) and 5-7s (69%) to say they had looked for or received any information or advice.
- 10.79 The incidence of looking for/receiving information/ advice from the child's school does not tend to vary by age among parents of 5-15s (46% for 5-7s, 57% for 8-11s and 53% for 12-15s) but is less likely for parents of 3-4s (26%). Parents of 8-11s (43%) and 12-15s (41%) are more likely than parents of 3-4s (22%) or 5-7s (32%) to seek information from family/ friends. Looking for information or advice from internet service providers does not vary by the age of the child, while looking for information or advice from TV, radio, newspapers or magazines does not differ by age among parents of 5-15s (12%), but is lower among parents of 3-4s (6%). The incidence of parents saying they have received information from their child increases with the age of the child; from 4% among parents of 3-4s to 18% among parents of 12-15s.
- 10.80 Parents of 3-4s (58% vs. 48%) and parents of 12-15s (77% vs. 70%) are more likely than in 2014 to say they have looked for or received any information or advice about how to help their child manage online risks. The overall increase among parents of 3-4s is mostly attributable to an increase in looking for or receiving information from internet service providers (13% vs. 7%). The increase seen among parents of 12-15s is mostly attributable to an increase in looking for/ receiving information from family or friends (41% vs. 31%) or from the child themselves (18% vs. 12%).

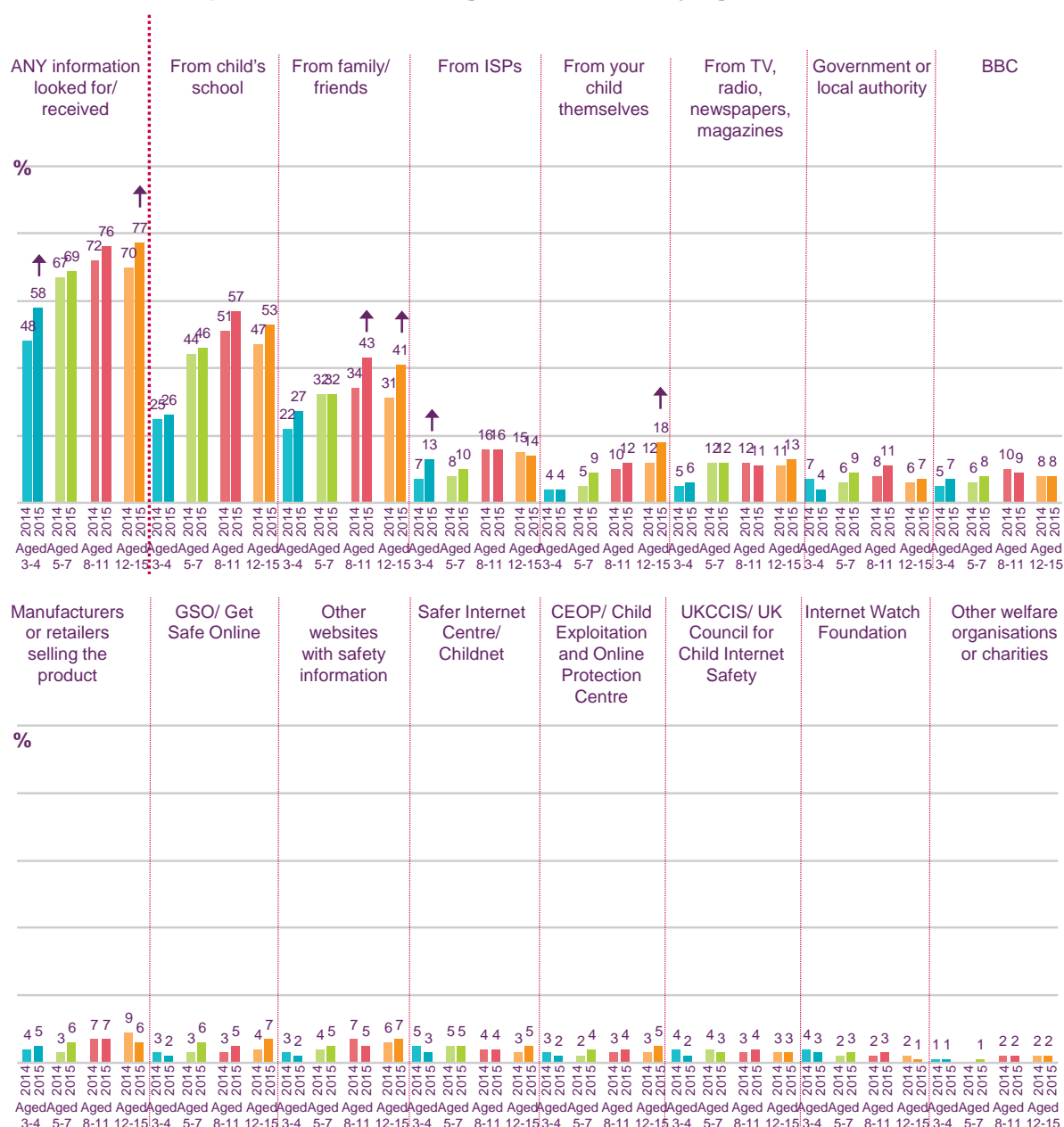
Figure 56: Parents of 5-15s stating they have looked for or received any information or advice about how to help their child to manage online risks: 2014 and 2015



QP52 – Have you looked for or received information or advice about how to help your child manage online risks from any of these sources or in any other way? (prompted responses, multi-coded) – only responses shown where >1% of all parents of 5-15s have given that answer

Base: Children aged 5-15 who use the internet at home or elsewhere (1169 aged 5-15 in 2015) - Significance testing shows any differences between 2014 and 2015

Figure 57: Parents stating they have looked for or received any information or advice about how to help their child to manage online risks, by age: 2014 and 2015



QP52 – Have you looked for or received information or advice about how to help your child manage online risks from any of these sources or in any other way? (prompted responses, multi-coded) – only responses shown where >1% of all parents of 5-15s have given that answer

Base: Children aged 3-4 or 5-15s who use the internet at home or elsewhere (262 aged 3-4, 260 aged 5-7, 440 aged 8-11, 469 aged 12-15 in 2015) – Significance testing shows any differences between 2014 and 2015

Rules about the internet

Eight in ten parents of 5-15s who go online at home or elsewhere have rules in place about their child's online activities – an increase since 2014

10.81 We asked parents of 3-4s and 5-15s who go online about rules they might have in place to mediate their child's online activities and behaviour. Parents were prompted

with 11 rules⁷⁰ and were asked which, if any, they had in place. Figure 58 shows the results among parents of 5-15s, while Figure 59 shows results among parents of 3-4s, 5-7s, 8-11s and 12-15s.

- 10.82 Eight in ten parents of 5-15s have any of these rules in place (81%), with only one rule in place among a majority of parents: only use sites approved by parents (52%).
- 10.83 Four types of rule are in place among at least a third of parents of 5-15s: those relating to contact with people online - e.g. no contact with strangers, no sharing of personal information etc. (42%), those about online purchasing (37%), about use of social media (33%) and about how to behave online (33% vs. 20%).
- 10.84 Three in ten parents have rules in place relating to when and where their child can go online (29%) and around a quarter have rules relating to use of instant messaging services (23%). All other rules are in place among one in four parents of 5-15s or less.
- 10.85 Parents appear to be more likely than in 2014 to have any rules in place about online activities⁷¹ (81% vs. 70%); each of the ten rules that have been asked about since 2014 are also more prevalent, with the greatest increases (13 percentage points) for rules about only using sites approved by parents (52% from 39%) and about online behaviour (33% from 20%).
- 10.86 A majority of parents of 3-4s who go online have any of these rules in place (69%). As in 2014, one rule stands out as more likely to be used than any of the other rules that were asked about: only using websites approved by parents (60%). One in seven parents of 3-4s who go online have the rule about online purchasing (14%) or contact with people online (13%). All other rules are used by less than one in ten parents of 3-4s.
- 10.87 Parents of 3-4s appear to be more likely than in 2014 to have any of these rules in place (69% vs. 58%); this increase is attributable to an increase in use of the following rules: only use sites approved by parents (60% vs. 46%), rules about contact with people online (13% vs. 7%) and rules about online behaviour (11% vs. 4%).
- 10.88 Rules are now more likely for 5-7s (87%) and 8-11s (88%) than for 3-4s (69%) or 12-15s (72%). Among parents of 5-15s, use of the rule about only using websites approved by parents decreases with the age of the child, and is used by three-quarters of parents of 5-7s (74%) compared to three in ten parents (31%) of 12-15s. The rule about when and where the child can go online is more likely to be in place for 5-7s (32%) and 8-11s (35%) than for 12-15s (22%).
- 10.89 There are five rules that are more likely to be in place for 8-11s and 12-15s than for 5-7s: rules about contact with people online (48% for 8-11s and 42% for 12-15s vs. 32% for 5-7s), rules about online purchasing (38% for 8-11s, 40% for 12-15s vs. 29%

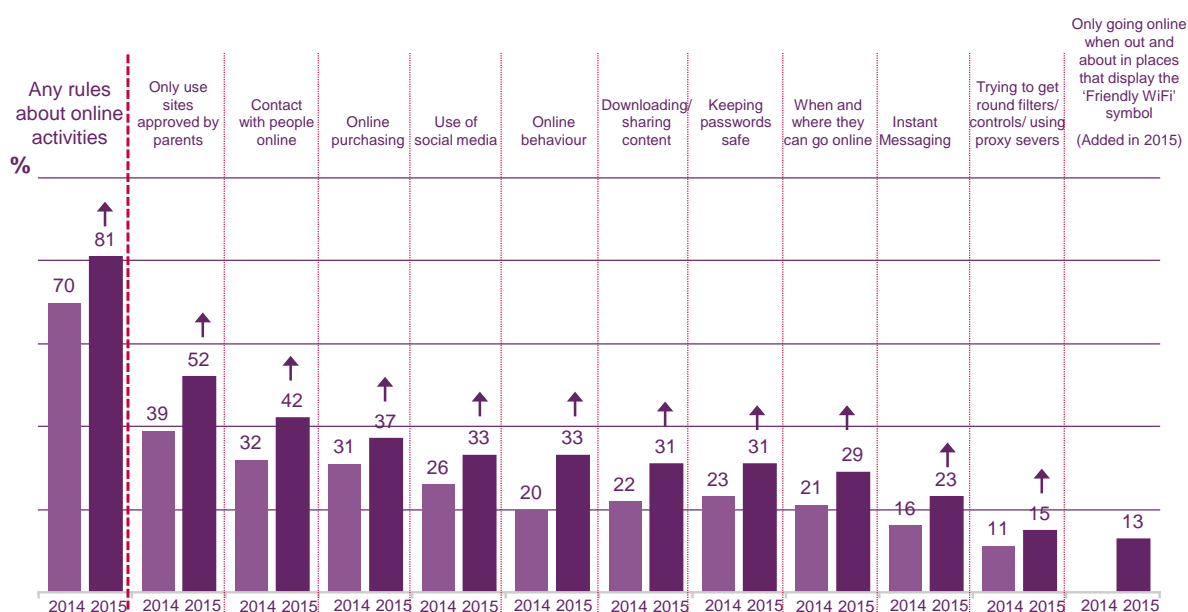
⁷⁰ In 2014, parents were prompted with ten rules, with 'Only going online when out and about in places that display the Friendly WiFi symbol, added in 2015. Any time series analysis between 2014 and 2015 therefore excludes this individual rule.

⁷¹ While there has been an increase in the proportion of parents stating they have rules in place, this could be partly due to the fact that in 2015 parents were only asked about rules relating to their mediation of their child's online activities and behaviour, and not about rules relating to their child's online access and use. In 2014, the question relating to rules about online access and use directly preceded the current question about rules relating to mediation, and as such, might have affected the responses given to the latter question.

for 12-15s), rules about use of social media sites (38% for 8-11s 34% for 12-15s, vs. 25% for 5-7s), rules about how to behave online (35% for 8-11s and 12-15s, vs 26% for 5-7s) and rules about keeping passwords safe/not sharing passwords (35% for 8-11s, 33% for 12-15s vs. 21% for 5-7s).

- 10.90 Since 2014, as for parents of 3-4s, parents of 5-7s (87% vs. 68%) and 8-11s (87% vs. 68%) appear to be more likely to have any rules about online activities in place. Each of the individual rules (where it is possible to compare with 2014) are more likely to be in place among parents of 5-7s, while seven of the ten rules are more likely to be in place among parents of 8-11s, as shown in Figure 57. While at an overall level rules are no more likely among parents of 12-15s, five individual rules are more likely than in 2014. These are also flagged in Figure 57.

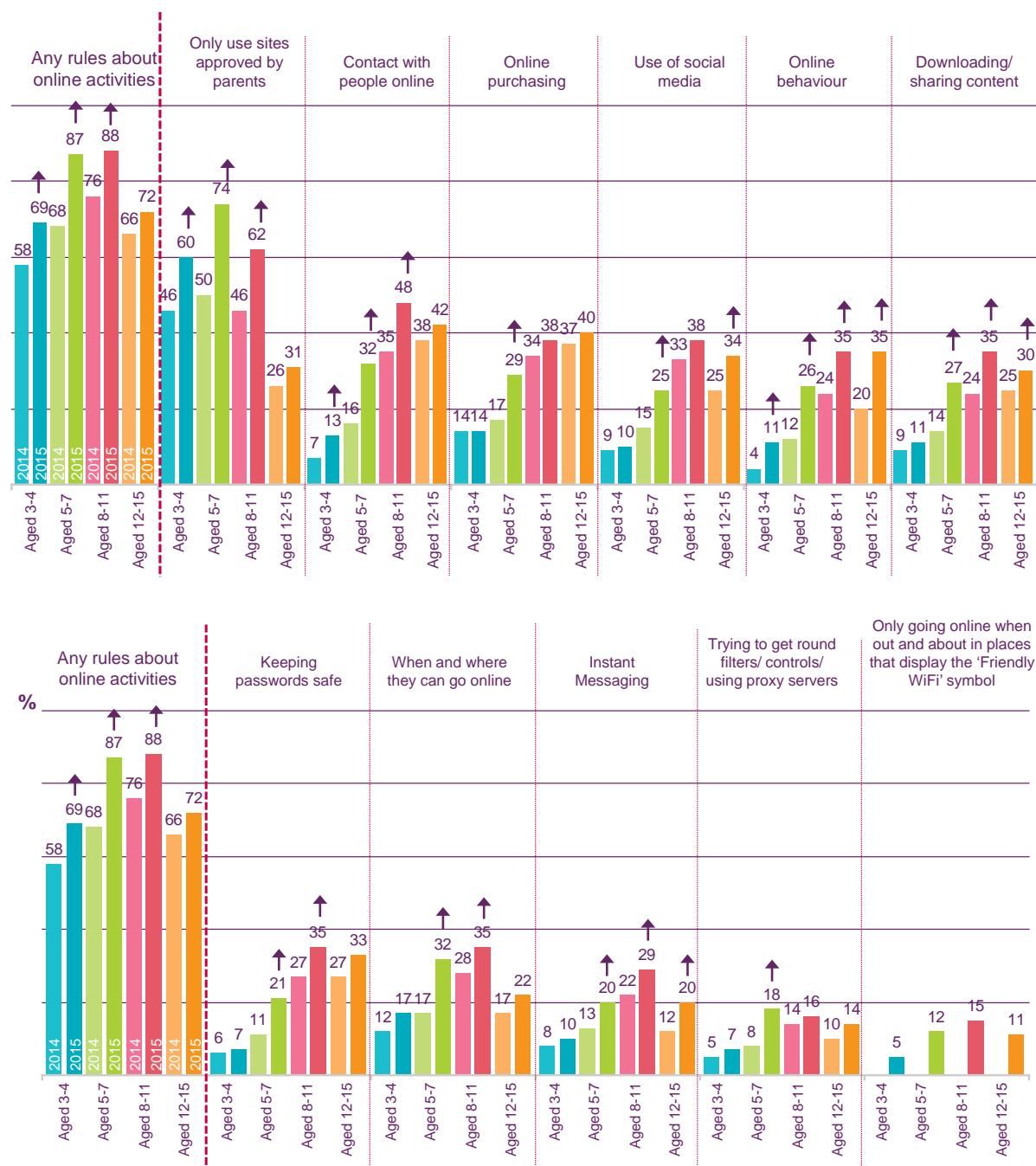
Figure 58: Rules about child's online activities, among parents of 5-15s: 2014 and 2015



QP26 – And now looking particularly at these rules about your child's online activities on any of the devices they use to go online. Which, if any, of the following rules do you have in place? Do you have any other types of rules about online activities? (prompted responses, multi-coded)

Base: Parents whose child goes online at home or elsewhere (1169 aged 5-15 in 2015). Significance testing shows any change between 2014 and 2015.

Figure 59: Rules about child's online activities among parents, by age: 2014 and 2015



QP26 – And now looking particularly at these rules about your child's online activities on any of the devices they use to go online. Which, if any, of the following rules do you have in place? Do you have any other types of rules about online activities? (prompted responses, multi-coded)

Base: Parents whose child goes online at home or elsewhere aged 3-4 (262) or 5-15 (260 aged 5-7, 440 aged 8-11, 469 aged 12-15 in 2015). Significance testing shows any change between 2014 and 2015.

Parental supervision of the internet

More than four in five parents say they supervise their child in some way when they go online, at home or elsewhere

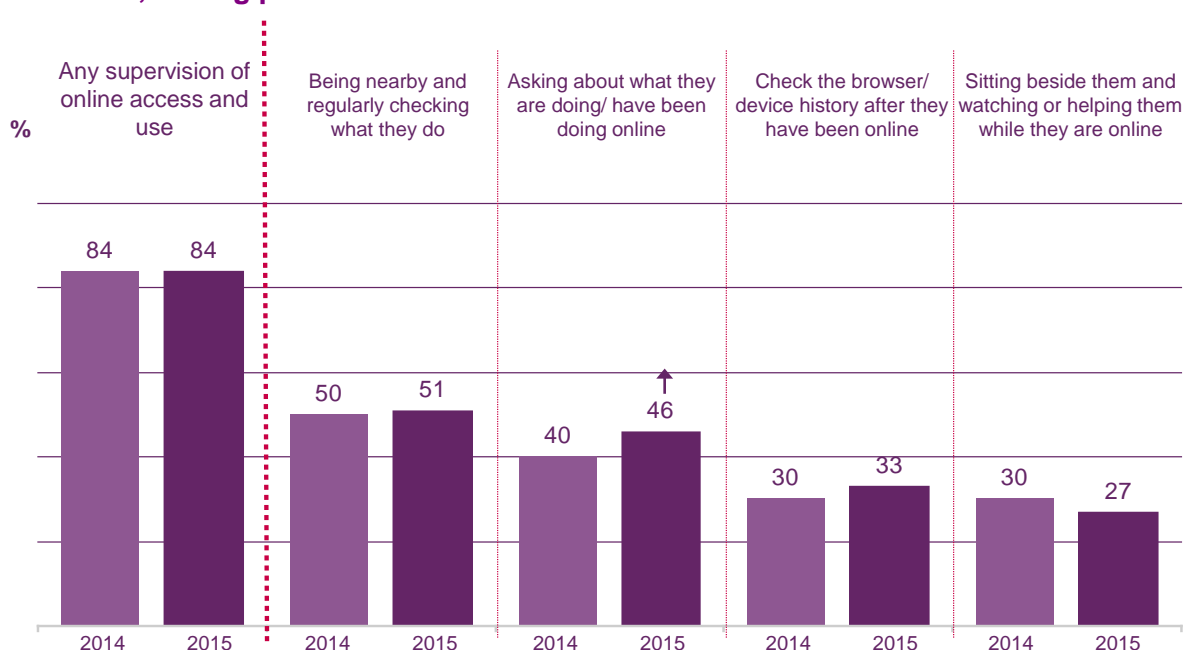
10.91 Since 2014, parents of children aged 3-4 and 5-15 who go online have been prompted with four possible responses relating to the ways in which they supervise

their child online, and have been asked whether they usually supervise their child in any of these ways when their child is online (using any type of device).⁷²

- 10.92 Figure 60 shows the responses of parents of 5-15s, and Figure 61 shows the responses of parents of 3-4s, 5-7s, 8-11s and 12-15s.
- 10.93 Among parents of children aged 5-15, more than four in five (84%) say they supervise their child's online access and use in any of these four ways. Half of parents (51%) say they are usually nearby when their child goes online and regularly check what they are doing, with slightly fewer (46%) saying they usually ask them about what they are doing/have been doing online. One in three (33%) parents say they check the browser/device history after the child has been online, and around one in four (27%) usually sit beside their child and watch or help them when online (30%). Parents of 5-15s are more likely than in 2014 to supervise their child by asking them about what they have been doing online (46% vs. 40%).
- 10.94 Among parents of 5-15s, the likelihood of using any of these means of online supervision decreases with the age of the child (99% for 5-7s, vs. 91% for 8-11s, vs. 70% for 12-15s). Parents of 3-4s (95%) are less likely to use at least one of these approaches, compared to parents of 5-7s (99%). As might be expected, the likelihood of parents supervising their child by sitting beside them and watching/helping them decreases with the age of the child; this is the most likely way of supervising a child aged 3-4, (68%) and the least likely for parents of 12-15s (8%). A majority of parents of 3-4s (56%), 5-7s (68%) and 8-11s (61%) say they supervise their child by being nearby and regularly checking what they do. One in three parents of 12-15s also adopt this approach (33%).
- 10.95 Parents of 8-11s (52%) are more likely than parents of 3-4s (25%), 5-7s (39%) and 12-15s (44%) to rely on asking their child what they have been doing online. Parents of 8-11s and 12-15s are more likely than parents of 3-4s and 5-7s to say they check the browser/device history after their child has been online (38% for 8-11s and 32% for 12-15s vs. 13% for 3-4s and 22% for 5-7s).
- 10.96 Since 2014, supervision of children's online access and use is more likely only among parents of 5-7s (99% vs. 94%), due to the higher incidence of parents asking their child about what they have been doing online (39% vs. 30%).

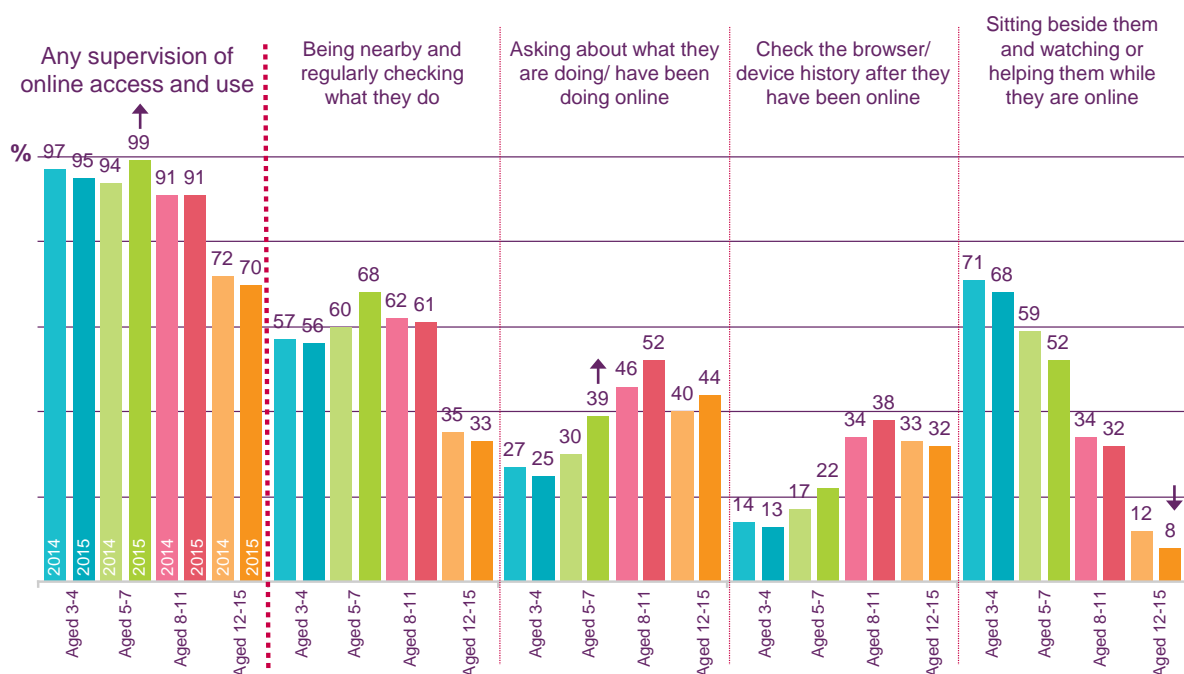
⁷² This question was used in the analysis relating to 'Parental supervision' for the combinations of online mediation strategies used by parents, as shown in Figure 35; more detail about online supervision is provided in this section of the report

Figure 60: Types of parental supervision when child goes online at home or elsewhere, among parents of 5-15s: 2014 and 2015



QP27 – When your child goes online on any devices, would you usually supervise them, in any of these ways? Do you usually use any other types of supervision? (prompted responses, multi-coded)
 Base: Parents whose child goes online at home or elsewhere (1169 aged 5-15 in 2015). Significance testing shows any change between 2014 and 2015.

Figure 61: Types of parental supervision when child goes online, by age: 2014 and 2015



QP27 – When your child goes online on any devices, would you usually supervise them, in any of these ways? Do you usually use any other types of supervision? (prompted responses, multi-coded)
 Base: Parents whose child goes online at home or elsewhere aged 3-4 (262) or 5-15 (260 aged 5-7, 440 aged 8-11, 469 aged 12-15 in 2015). Significance testing shows any change between 2014 and 2015.

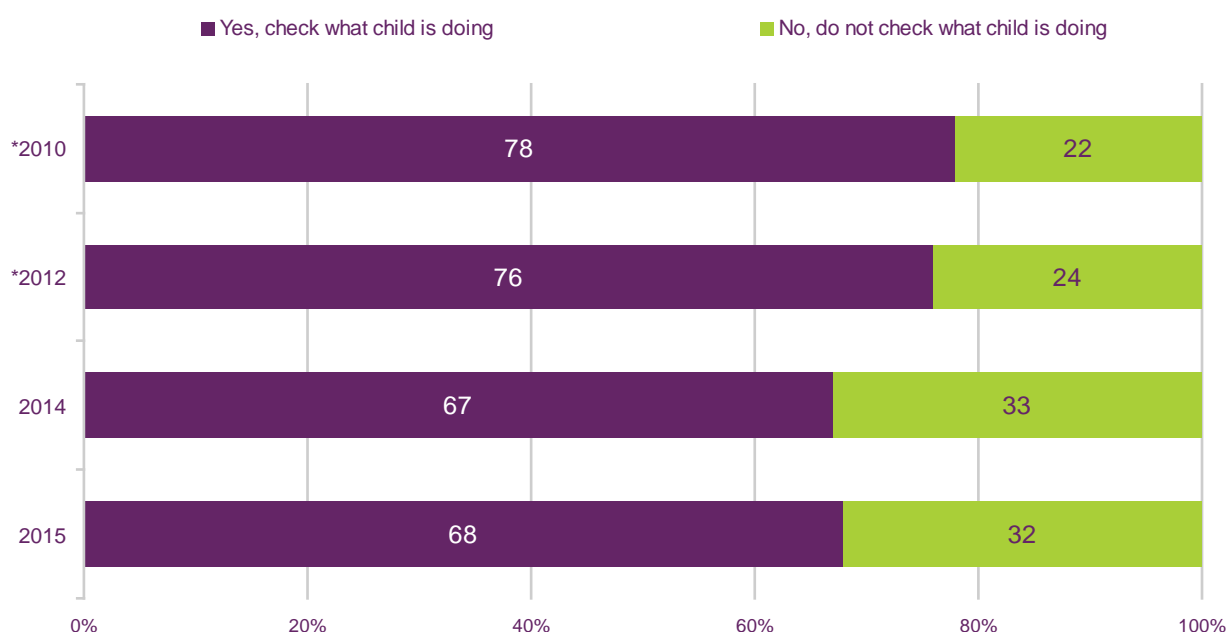
Parental supervision of social media activity

Two in three parents of 12-15s with a social media profile check what their child is doing when using these sites or apps

10.97 Parents of 3-15s⁷³ whose child has a profile on a social media site⁷⁴ were asked whether they checked what their child was doing online when visiting these types of sites or apps.

10.98 As shown in Figure 62, two in three (68%) parents of children aged 12-15 check what their child is doing when visiting social media sites; this incidence has not changed since 2014.

Figure 62: Parental checking of social media site activity among children aged 12-15 who go online at home (2010, 2012) or elsewhere (2014, 2015)



QP46 – Do you tend to check what they are doing when they are visiting these types of social media sites or apps? *Prior to 2014 it was asked about social networking sites rather than social media sites or apps.

Base: Parents of children with a social media profile (422 aged 12-15 in 2015) – Significance testing shows any differences between 2014 and 2015.

10.99 Since 2014, parents who say they tend to check what their child is doing when visiting social media sites or apps have been prompted with a list of possible ways in which they might mediate their child's activities when using these sites/apps, and asked to say which applies. Figure 63 below shows the results among parents of 12-15s⁷⁵.

10.100 A majority of parents of 12-15s ask about what their child is doing online (52%) or become a 'friend' or 'follower' of their child on these sites or apps (51%). More than four in ten parents check the browser/ device history (43%), while three in ten (29%)

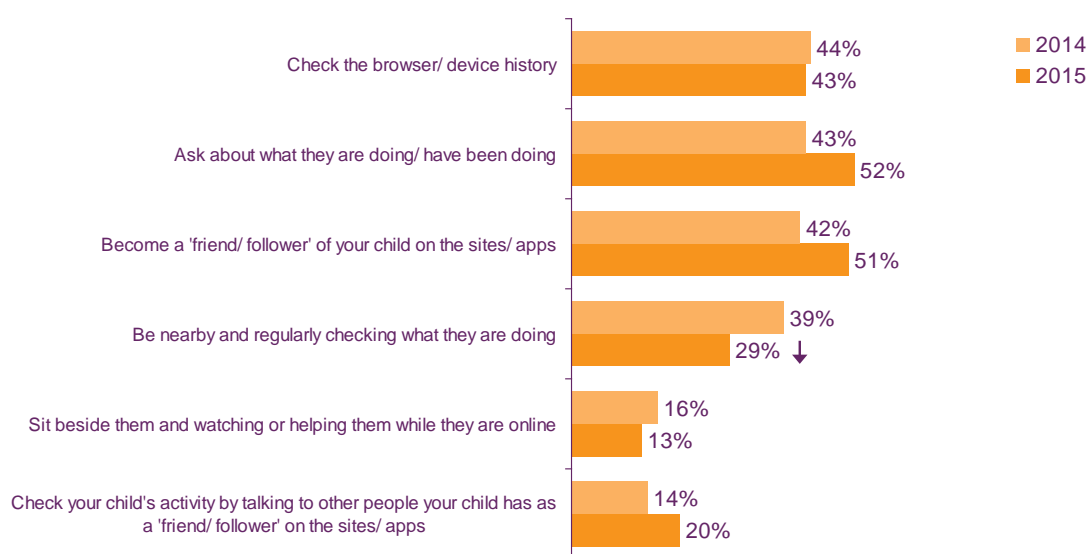
⁷³ Low base sizes prevent analysis among 3-4s, 5-7s and 8-11s

⁷⁴ Before 2014, parents were asked about their monitoring of 'social networking websites' rather than 'social media websites or apps'

⁷⁵ Low base sizes prevent analysis among 3-4s, 5-7s and 8-11s

are nearby/regularly check what they are doing. One in five (20%) check their child's activity by talking to their child's 'friends' or followers, while one in eight (13%) sit beside their child and watch or help them when they are online. Parents of 12-15s are less likely than in 2014 to say they mediate their child's social media use through being nearby and regularly checking what they are doing (29% vs. 39%).

Figure 63: Methods of supervising/checking 12-15 year old child's use of social media sites or apps: 2014, 2015



QP47 Which of these ways do you check what your child is doing on social media sites or apps? (Prompted responses, multi-coded)

Base: Parents whose child has a social media profile or account and who say they check what their child is doing (224 aged 12-15)

Parental controls for mobile phones

Half of parents of 12-15s whose child's mobile phone can be used to go online are unsure whether the bar on adult content is in place

10.101 Parents of 3-4 and 5-15s with their own mobile phone were prompted with the following information: 'The UK mobile phone networks, O2, Vodafone, EE and so on, each have a block on adult or 18+ content which requires users to go through an age verification process before this content can be unblocked and received on their mobile device'. The parents were then asked whether they had been aware of this bar on adult content before being prompted.

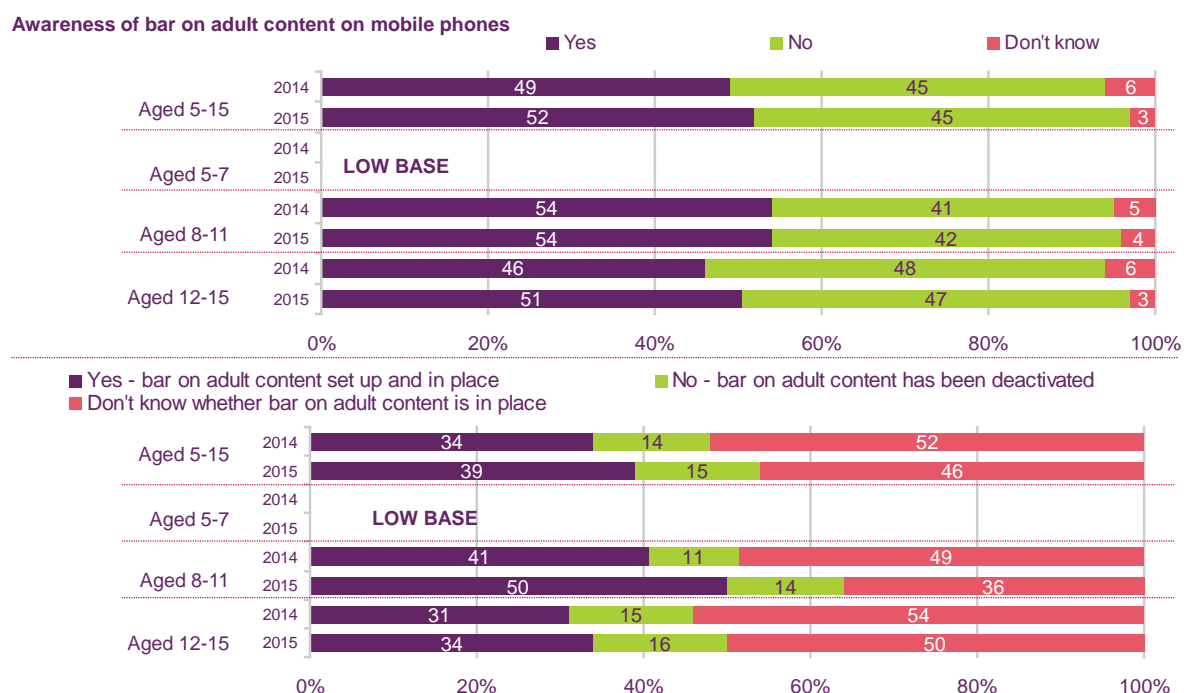
10.102 The results are shown in Figure 64 below for parents of 5-15s, 8-11s and 12-15s.⁷⁶ Half of parents of 5-15s said they were aware of the bar on adult content (52%) with fewer saying they were not aware (45%).

10.103 Parents whose child's mobile phone was web-enabled were then asked whether the bar on adult content was set up on their child's phone or had been deactivated. Close to half of parents of 5-15s whose child had their own mobile phone were unsure whether the bar was in place (46%); four in ten said it was (39%) and around one in

⁷⁶ Low base sizes prevent analysis among parents of 3-4s and 5-7s

seven (15%) said it had been deactivated⁷⁷. Parents of 8-11s (50%) were more likely than parents of 12-15s (34%) to say this bar was in place.

Figure 64: Awareness and use of bar on adult content for mobile phones, by age: 2014 and 2015



QP61/ 63 The UK mobile phone networks - so O2, Vodafone, EE and so on - each have a block on adult or 18+ content which requires users to go through an age verification process before this content can be unblocked and received on their mobile device. Did you know about this bar on adult content before today?(spontaneous responses, single coded) / Do you know whether the bar on accessing adult content is set up on your child's mobile phone, or has this been deactivated? (spontaneous responses, single-coded)

Base: Parents whose child has a mobile phone (545 aged 5-15, 156 aged 8-11, 372 aged 12-15 in 2015)/ Parents of children aged 5-15 whose child has a mobile phone that can be used to go online (461 aged 5-15, 113 aged 8-11, 333 aged 12-15 in 2015). Significance testing shows any differences between 2014 and 2015

Parental rules for mobile phones

The majority of parents of 8-11s and 12-15s have rules in place about their child's mobile phone use

10.104 Most parents whose child has their own mobile phone have put in place at least one of the rules that we asked about.

10.105 As in 2014, many of the rules and restrictions for mobile phone use relate to the cost associated with using the phone rather than the possibility of encountering inappropriate or potentially harmful content.

10.106 At an overall level, rules about mobile phone use are as likely for 12-15s (82%) as they are for 8-11s (88%), as was the case in 2014. There are, however, seven single rules that are more likely among parents of 8-11s than among parents of 12-15s: regularly check what the child is doing with the phone (34% vs. 20%), rules about what they do online with their phone (28% vs. 18%), only make calls or texts to an agreed list of people (29% vs. 15%), no going online/ using apps to go online (20%

⁷⁷ As this is an opt-out service, actual use may be higher.

vs. 5%), the app store password not being known by the child (13% vs. 7%), preventing certain apps from knowing the child's location by disabling location (14% vs. 7%) and rules about making or receiving voice calls or texts but nothing else (14% vs. 4%).

10.107 Three rules are more likely among parents of 12-15s than 8-11s: an agreed limit for the amount spent on contract or through top-up (54% vs. 40%), no calls to premium-rate numbers (37% vs. 25%) and no texts to premium-rate numbers (34% vs. 21%).

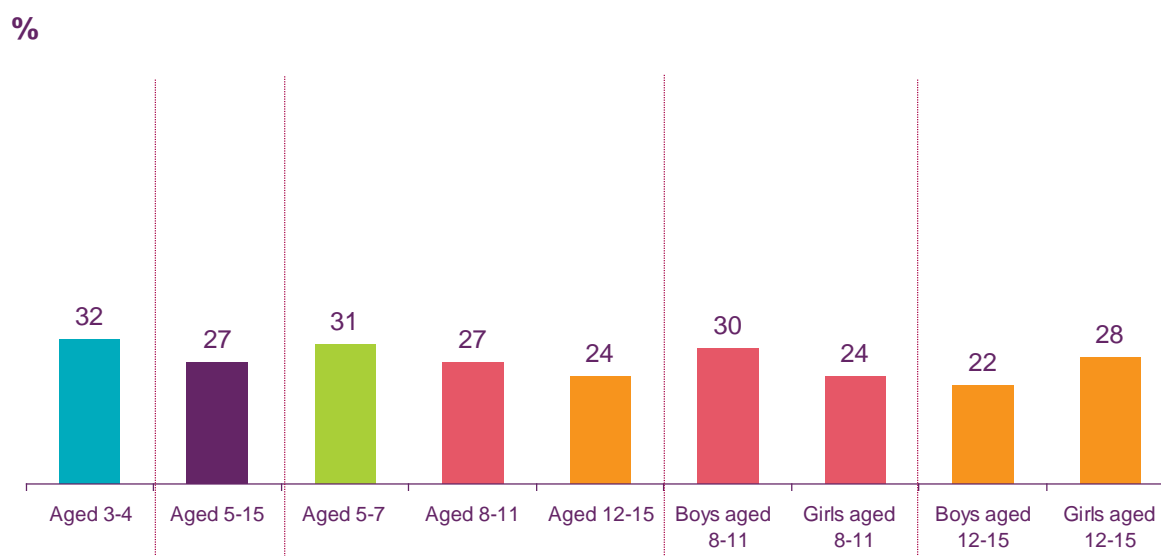
Parental controls on gaming devices

One in four parents of 5-15s have controls on either the handheld or fixed games console that their child plays games on

10.108 Parents whose child aged 3-4 or 5-15 plays games at home or elsewhere on a handheld/ portable games console, or a fixed games console connected to a television, were asked whether any parental controls were loaded on either type of console, either to stop their child playing games above a certain age rating, or to restrict or prevent their child from going online using the games console.

10.109 As shown in Figure 65, one in three parents of 3-4s (32%) who play games on either type of device have controls in place, as do a similar proportion of parents of 5-7s (31%), 8-11s (27%) and 12-15s (24%).

Figure 65: Use of parental controls on games consoles/ games players used at home or elsewhere, by age: 2015



QP71 – Are there any controls set on either the handheld games player or the games console connected to a TV? This might include things like time-limiting software that only allows them to play for a set amount of time or controls to stop your child playing games above a certain age rating or to restrict or prevent them going online. (spontaneous responses, single coded)

Base: Parents whose child ever plays games on a handheld games console or a games console connected to a TV (272 aged 3-4, 843 aged 5-15, 215 aged 5-7, 330 aged 8-11, 298 aged 12-15, 187 boys aged 8-11, 143 girls aged 8-11, 193 boys aged 12-15, 105 girls aged 12-15).

One in five parents are unaware of, or don't know how to use, parental controls on gaming devices

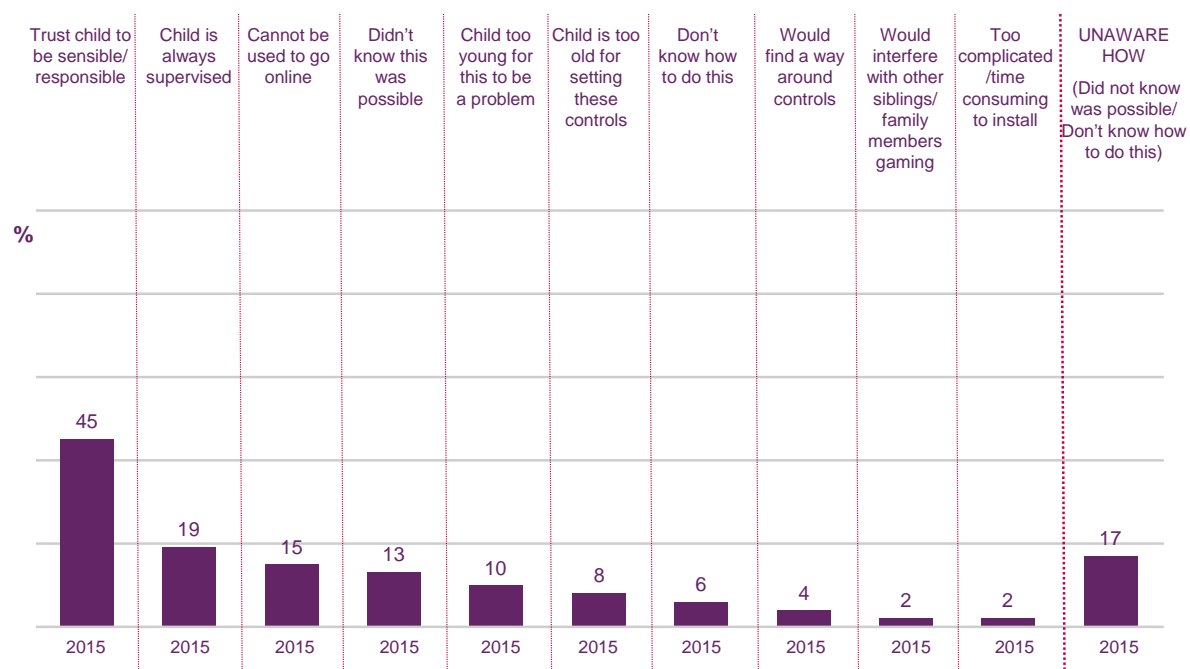
10.110 Those parents who do not have parental controls set on either the handheld/portable games console, or on the fixed games console connected to a television, were asked to say why. Figure 66 looks at reasons for not having parental controls, among parents of 5-15s, while Figure 67 shows reasons by the age of the child.

10.111 Among all parents of 5-15s without controls on either type of gaming device, more than four in ten (45%) say this is because they trust their child to be sensible/responsible. One in five (19%) say it is because their child is always supervised, and one in seven (15%) because the device cannot be used to go online, or because they were unaware it was possible (13%). One in ten (10%) state it is because their child is too young for this to be a problem, with all other reasons given by less than one in ten.

10.112 Some parents do not use parental controls on the handheld/portable or fixed games console because they don't know how to do it, or are not aware that it is possible. Being unaware of parental controls in either of these ways accounts for nearly one in five (17%) parents of 5-15s who do not have parental controls in place.

10.113 Figure 65 shows that reasons for not having controls vary considerably by the age of the child. Trusting their child to be sensible/responsible increases dramatically with age, while saying that the child is always supervised is more likely for younger children (31% for 3-4s and 32% for 5-7s) than for older children (20% for 8-11s and 9% for 12-15s). Parents of 3-4s (42%) and 5-7s (27%) are more likely than parents of 8-11s (10%) and 12-15s (0%) to say it is because their child is too young for this to be a problem. The likelihood of not using parental controls because they don't know how to do it, or are not aware it is possible, does not vary by the age of the child.

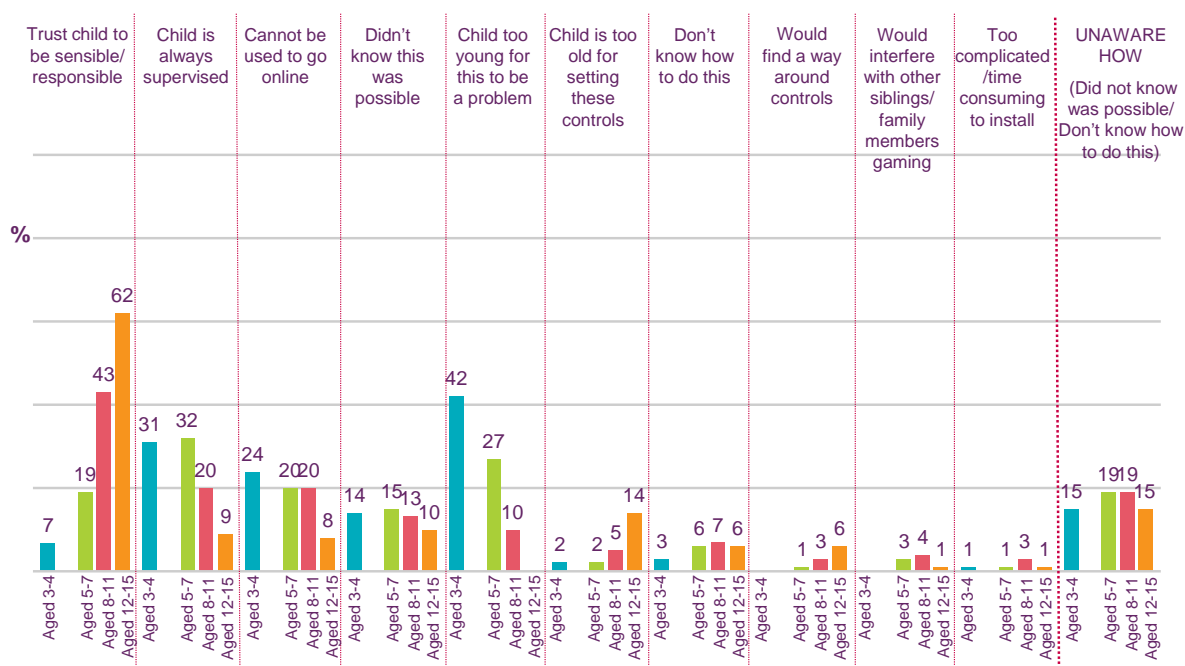
Figure 66: Reasons for not having parental controls on games consoles/games players, among parents of 5-15s whose child plays games at home or elsewhere: 2015



QP73 – And can you tell me why there are no parental controls set on the handheld games player or the games console connected to a TV? (spontaneous responses, multi-coded). Showing responses given by >1% of parents of 5-15s

Base: Parents whose child does not have controls set on either the handheld games console or on the games console connected to a TV (568 aged 5-15 in 2015)

Figure 67: Reasons for not having parental controls on games consoles/games players, among parents of 5-15s whose child plays games at home or elsewhere, by age: 2015



QP73 – And can you tell me why there are no parental controls set on the handheld games player or the games console connected to a TV? (spontaneous responses, multi-coded). Showing responses given by >1% of parents of 5-15s

Base: Parents whose child does not have controls set on either the handheld games console or on the games console connected to a TV (121 aged 3-4, 139 aged 5-7, 222 aged 8-11, 207 aged 12-15 in 2015).

Awareness and use of PIN controls on catch-up services

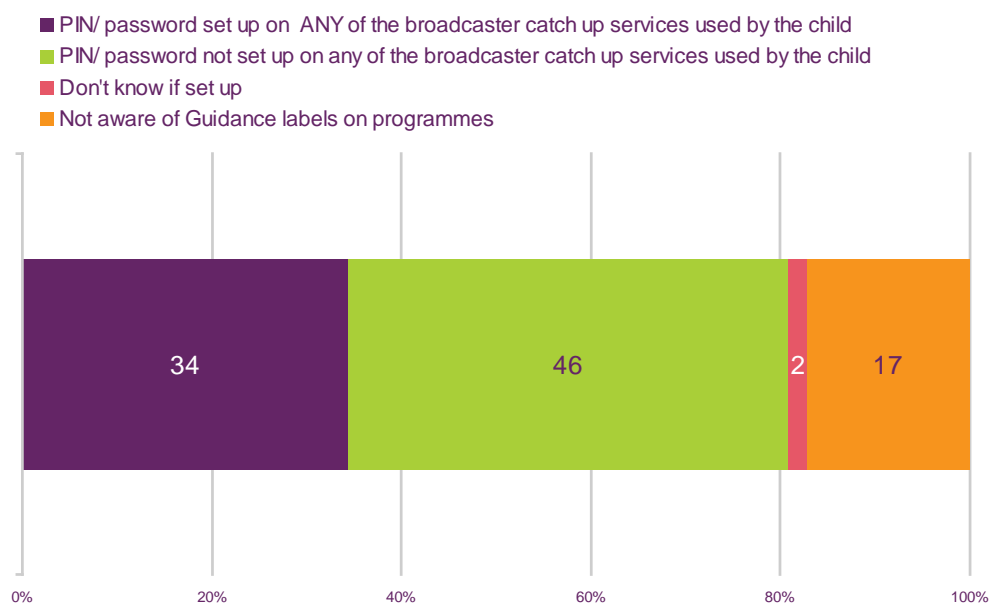
One in three parents have set controls on the catch-up services used by their child

10.114 Parents of children aged 3-4 and 5-15⁷⁸ who say their child watches TV programmes through catch-up services (on a TV or other online-enabled device) were asked whether they were aware that catch-up services have guidance labels for programmes, and may include content unsuitable for young audiences. These parents were also asked whether they had set a PIN or password on any of the catch-up services that their child used to watch or download TV programmes or films.

10.115 As shown in Figure 68, around one in five (17%) of these parents of 5-15s were not aware of the guidance labels for programmes, and around one in three (34%) had set up a PIN/ password on any of the catch-up services their child used. As such, nearly half (46%) had not set up PIN/ passwords on any of the catch-up services used.

⁷⁸ Does not show data for 3-4s, 5-7s, 8-11s or 12-15s due to low base sizes

Figure 68: Awareness and use of PIN controls on catch-up services, among parents of 5-15s: 2015



QP49/ 50 – You mentioned earlier that your child watches TV programmes /films using the catch up services such as BBC iPlayer or ITV Player. Did you know that UK broadcasters ' websites like BBC iPlayer and ITV player show Guidance labels for programmes that may include content that is unsuitable for young audiences, (such as violence, sex, drug use or strong language)? / Have you set a PIN or password on any of the UK catch up services that your child uses to watch or download TV programmes or films ?(spontaneous responses, single coded)




Base: Parents of children aged 5-15 who say their child watches TV programmes on demand through catch up services on a TV or other online enabled device (180 aged 5-15, in 2015)

Annex 1

Parental controls: screenshots

BT

Email campaign




Protect your family online today

Hello,

As the new school term approaches, you may be seeing a fresh burst of internet activity. With children busy researching for school projects and students planning for university life, keeping everyone safe online at home can be a concern.

But thanks to BT's free Parental Controls, you don't have to worry. With the power to block unsuitable sites from every device that connects to your BT Home Hub, you can have peace of mind when online.



It's for everyone

Our customisable filter lets you tailor internet access to suit your needs. You can use it to totally protect anyone in your home, or tune the filter by handpicking a selection of sites to block to your peace of mind. Whatever the situation, you're in control.

It's easy to get started

Let us know whether you want BT Parental Controls, click on one of the links below. There's no software to download and once it's activated you can change your filter level to suit your family's needs.

Clicking 'yes' will take you through to My BT for quick activation.


[Yes - I want to activate parental controls](#)

[No - I don't want to activate parental controls now](#)


Already have BT Family Protection?

Activating Parental Controls won't affect your current settings and gives you a whole host of extra features.

Thanks for choosing BT.





Libby Barr
Managing Director
Customer Care



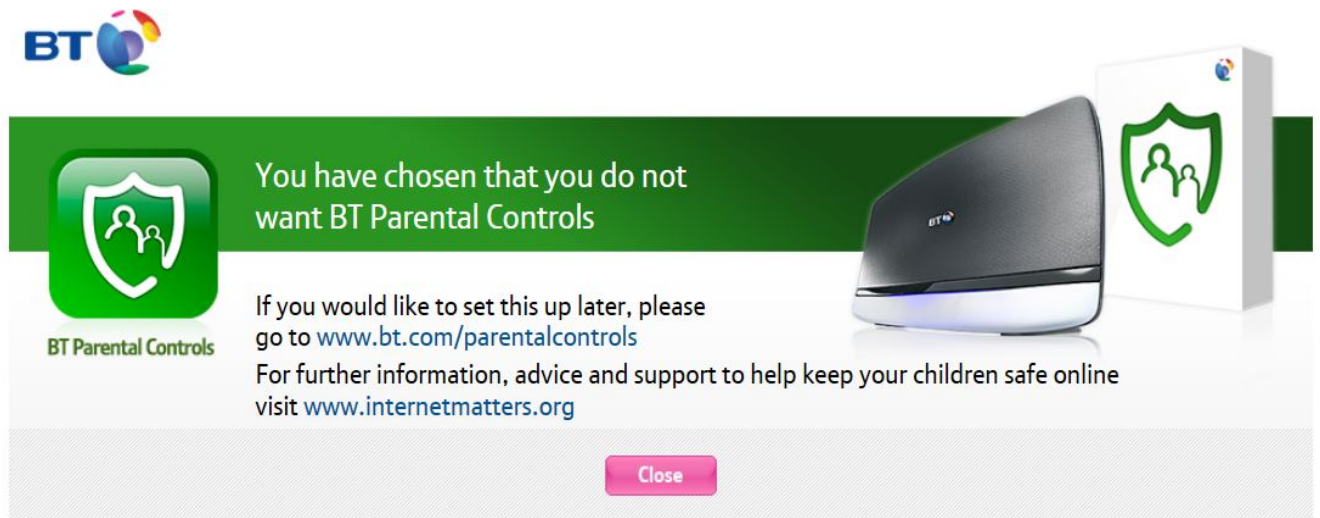
Internet
matters.org

Learn about it
talk about it
deal with it

[Contact us](#) [Privacy policy](#) [Is this email genuine?](#)

Find BT on:  

If a customer says “No”, they are taken to a page which confirms their decision, which they can close to go back to their original screen.



If a customer says “Yes, I want to activate” they are taken to a page to confirm their decision and a button to login / set up with their BT ID and password to activate.

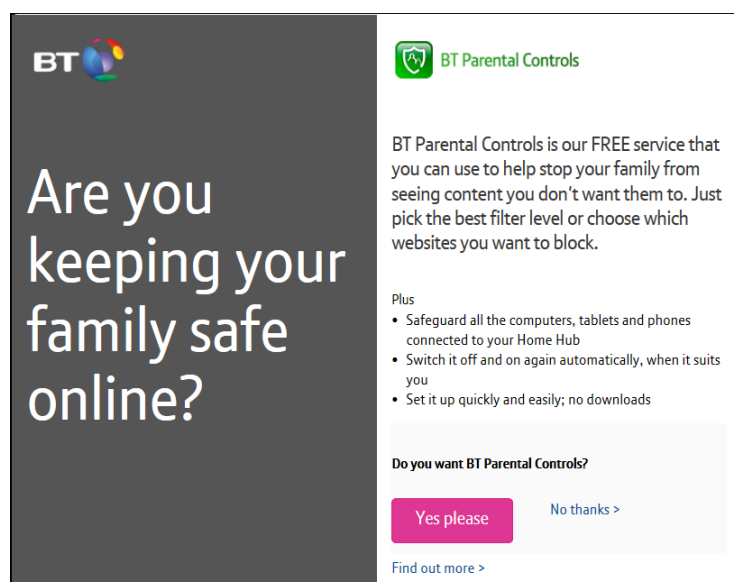
This screenshot shows the 'My BT' login interface. On the left, there is a login form with fields for 'BT ID' and 'Password', each with a 'Forgotten your BT ID?' link. Below the password field is a 'Remember me (don't select if on a shared computer)' checkbox and a 'Log into My BT' button. On the right, there is a 'Not signed up yet?' section with a list of benefits: 'See all your bills online', 'Check your usage between bills', 'Set up all of your Extras and get: - FREE Online storage with BT Cloud - FREE and unlimited BT VoIP - BT Sport on the go, and much more'. Below this is a section 'All you need is:' with a list: 'Your contact email address' and 'Your BT Account number'. A note states: '(Your BT Account number can be found at the top of your bill. If you don't get paper bills from BT then we can send it to you in the post. [Request account number reminder](#))'. At the bottom, there is a footer with links: 'BT.com -> Contact BT -> Sitemap -> About BT -> Privacy policy -> Code of practice -> Find a number' and a 'Change cookie settings' link.

Once logged in, a customer is auto activated to the Light Filter and presented with a confirmation page. The account holder is also sent an email to confirm that BT Parental Controls has been activated.



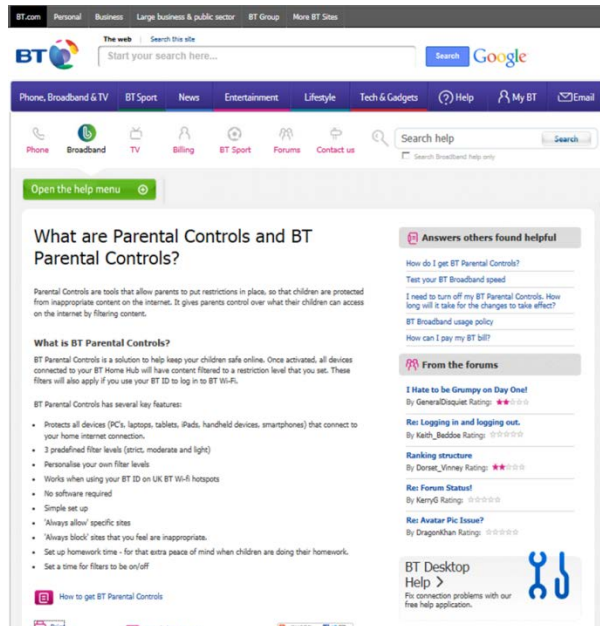
My BT/My Mail pop-up

When a customer who has not made a decision on Parental Controls logs in to My BT or My Mail, they are presented with the following pop-up.



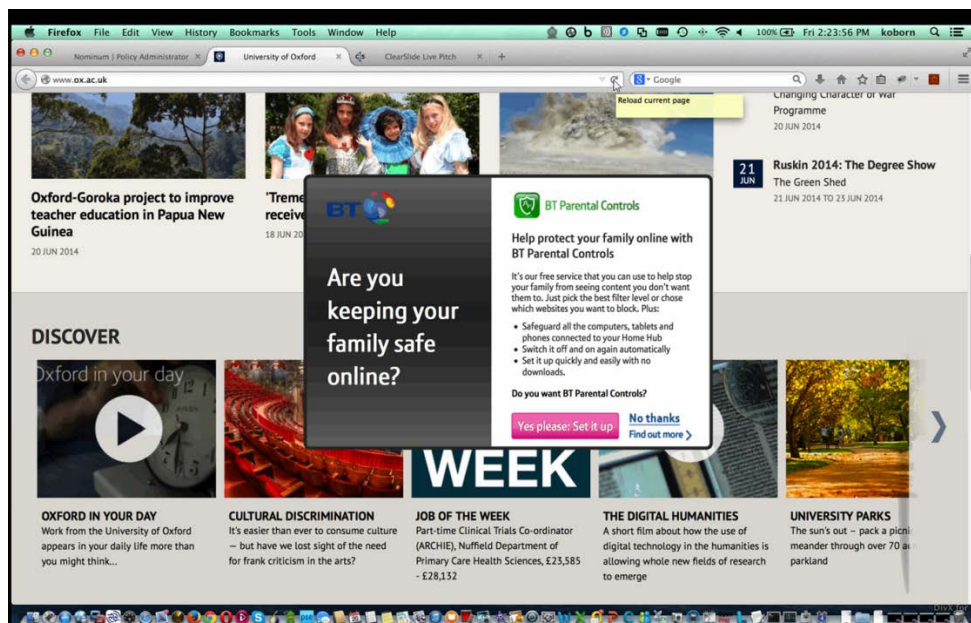
If a customer says “No thanks”, the pop-up disappears and they are not shown the message again. If a customer says “Yes please”, they are already logged in so are auto-activated to the ‘light’ setting and presented with the activation confirmation page with the option to “Personalise your settings”.

If a customer selects “Find out more” they are taken to a new page with the following help article. The pop-up will remain until the customer makes a choice.



Browser messaging

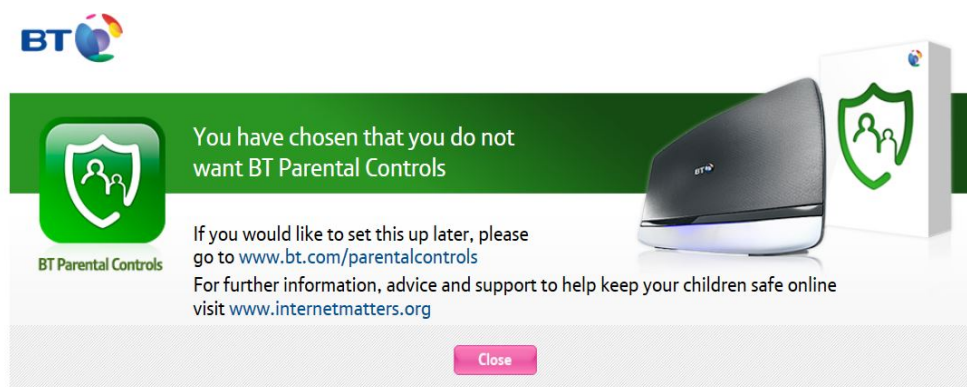
When a customer who has not made a decision on Parental Controls opens their browser on a non-https page, they are presented with a message offering them Parental Controls.



A customer who selects “Find out more” is taken to a new page with the help article shown above. The message will remain until the customer makes a choice.

If a customer says “No thanks” they are taken to a page which confirms their decision. The customer can close this and to go back to their original screen. They are not shown the message again and can continue to browse. The account holder is sent an email to inform

them of the decision made and how to activate at a later date in case someone else in the household made the decision.



If a customer says “Yes, I want to activate”, they are taken to a page to confirm their decision and a button to login/set up with their BT ID and password to activate.

This screenshot shows the "My BT" login page. On the left is a login form with fields for "BT ID" and "Password", each with a "Forgotten your BT ID?" and "Forgotten your password?" link below it. There is a "Remember me (don't select if on a shared computer)" checkbox and a blue "Log in to My BT" button. On the right is a box titled "Not signed up yet?" with the text "Here's what you can do in My BT:" followed by a bulleted list of benefits: "See all your bills online", "Check your usage between bills", "Set up all of your Extras and get: - FREE Online storage with BT Cloud - FREE and unlimited BT Wi-fi - BT Sport on the go, and much more". Below this is a section "All you need is:" with a bulleted list: "Your contact email address" and "Your BT Account number". A note at the bottom says: "(Your BT Account number can be found at the top of your bill. If you don't get paper bills from BT then we can send it to you in the post. [Request account number reminder](\"#\"))". At the very bottom is a footer with links: "BT.com", "Contact BT", "Sitemap", "About BT", "Privacy policy", "Code of practice", and "Find a number". On the bottom right are social media icons and a "Change cookie settings" link.

Once logged in, a customer is auto-activated to the 'light' filter and presented with a confirmation page. The account holder is also sent an email to confirm that BT Parental Controls has been activated. The customer can then “Personalise your settings”.

BT  The web Search this site
Start your search here... 

Phone, Broadband & TV BT Sport News Entertainment Lifestyle Tech & Gadgets  Help  My BT  Email

BT Parental Controls


Account number

[edit account >](#)
[log out >](#)

[Back to My BT >](#)



BT Parental Controls activation

 Complete! Your Light filters will be live within the next 2 hours. If you want it sooner, simply reset your hub.

Please note: BT Parental Controls also allows you to block secure sites (beginning https://). If a secure site is blocked, you'll see a blank screen.

It's important that parental controls are part of a range of measures used to keep your family safe online. More information can be found [here](#).

[Continue to My BT](#) [Personalise your settings](#)

A customer can turn off BT Parental Controls by selecting 'off' and their filter settings will remain saved.

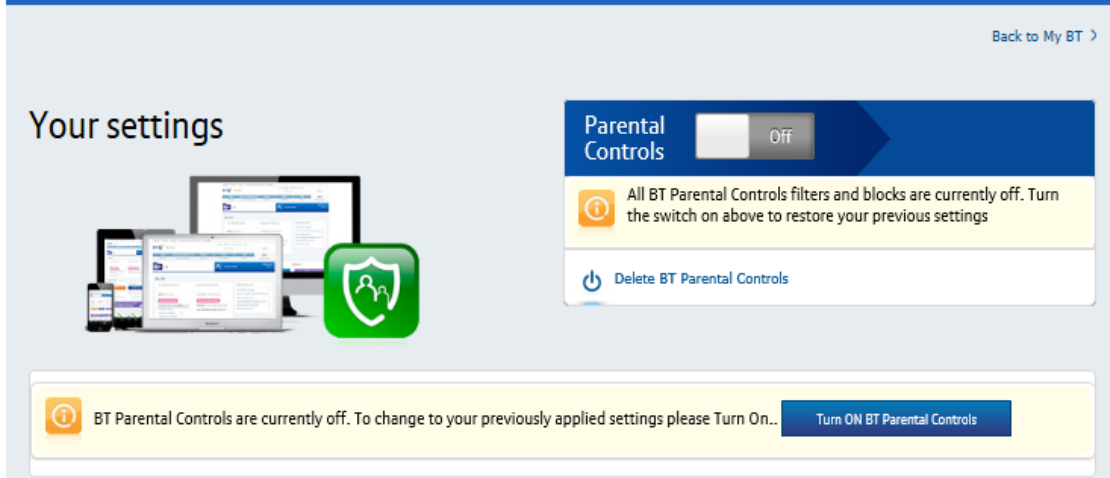
BT Parental Controls


Account number


[edit account >](#)
[log out >](#)


[Back to My BT >](#)


Your settings



Parental Controls ☐ Off 

 All BT Parental Controls filters and blocks are currently off. Turn the switch on above to restore your previous settings

 [Delete BT Parental Controls](#)

 BT Parental Controls are currently off. To change to your previously applied settings please Turn On.. [Turn ON BT Parental Controls](#)

A customer can also completely delete BT Parental Controls by clicking “Delete BT Parental Controls”.

Are you sure you want to delete BT Parental Controls?


All your settings will be lost and your household will no longer be protected against potentially inappropriate online content.

You can reactivate at any time but you will have to set up from scratch.

No, go back

Yes, delete now


When a site is blocked the customer is presented with the following screen.



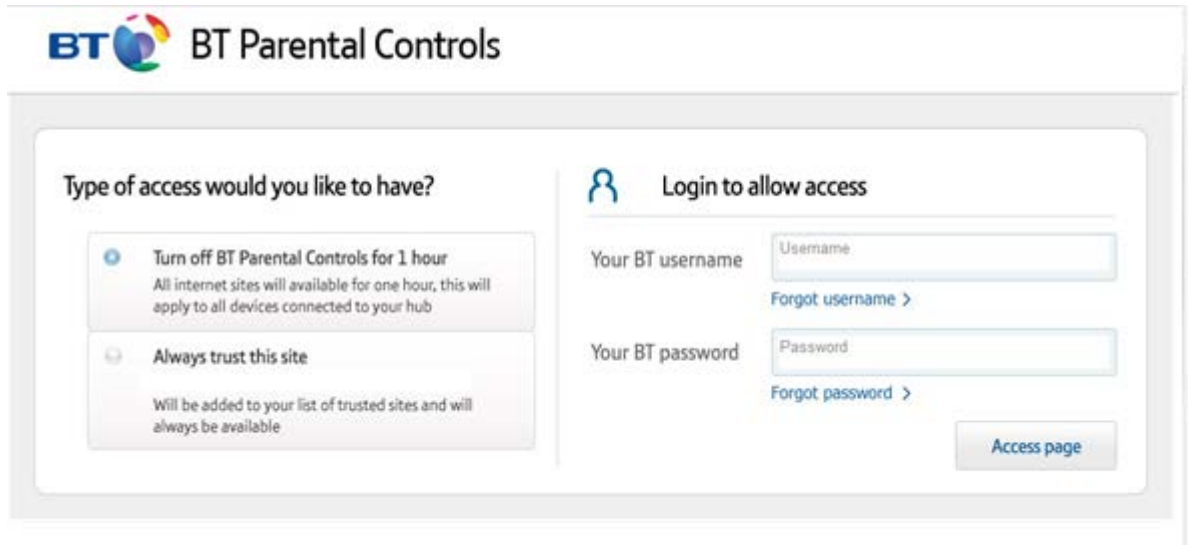
 has been blocked by BT Parental Controls because the account holder has Light filters on.

FAQ: A site is being blocked incorrectly by BT Parental Controls. [How can I report this?](#)

Allow access, if you are the account holder

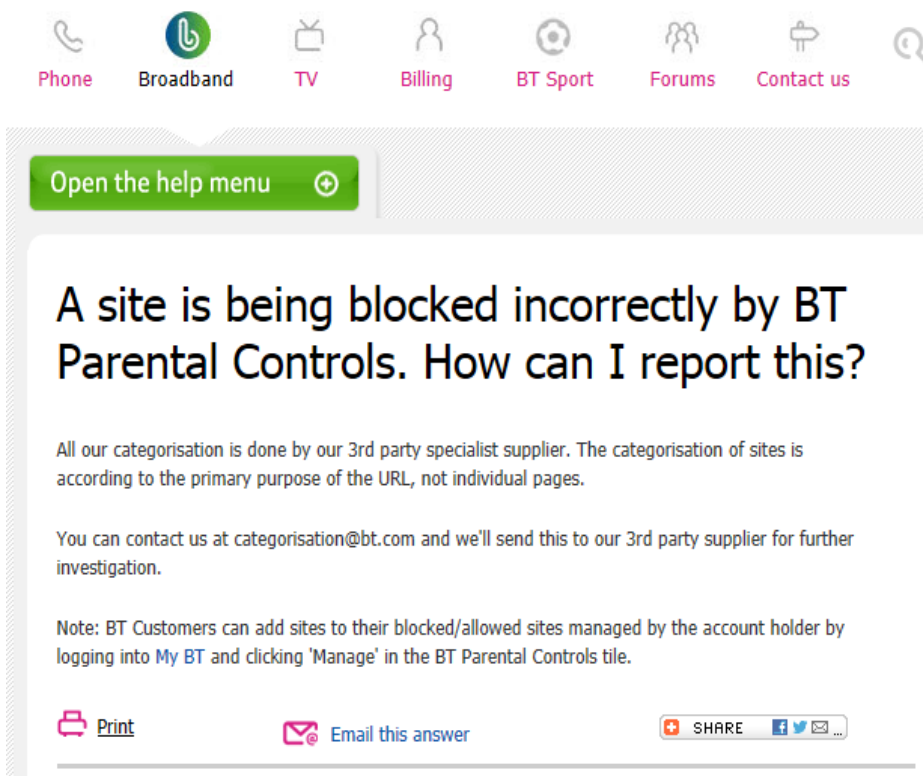


If the customer is the account holder, they have the option to turn off BT Parental Controls for one hour, or 'always trust the site'.



The screenshot shows the BT Parental Controls interface. At the top is the BT logo and the text "BT Parental Controls". Below this, there are two main sections. The left section, titled "Type of access would you like to have?", contains two options: "Turn off BT Parental Controls for 1 hour" (with a blue circle icon) and "Always trust this site" (with a grey circle icon). The right section, titled "Login to allow access" (with a person icon), contains fields for "Your BT username" and "Your BT password", each with a "Forgot" link. An "Access page" button is at the bottom right.

If a content owner or customer believes a site is blocked incorrectly, they have the option to add to the allowed or blocked list, or they can email categorisation@bt.com.



The screenshot shows a BT help menu page. At the top is a navigation bar with icons and labels for "Phone", "Broadband", "TV", "Billing", "BT Sport", "Forums", and "Contact us". Below this is a green button labeled "Open the help menu" with a plus icon. The main content area has a heading "A site is being blocked incorrectly by BT Parental Controls. How can I report this?". Below the heading is a paragraph: "All our categorisation is done by our 3rd party specialist supplier. The categorisation of sites is according to the primary purpose of the URL, not individual pages." This is followed by another paragraph: "You can contact us at categorisation@bt.com and we'll send this to our 3rd party supplier for further investigation." A note at the bottom states: "Note: BT Customers can add sites to their blocked/allowed sites managed by the account holder by logging into [My BT](#) and clicking 'Manage' in the BT Parental Controls tile." At the bottom of the page are links for "Print", "Email this answer", and a "SHARE" button with social media icons.

Block page seen by existing customers with Shield activated via roll-out

Sky Broadband Shield

www.skybroadbandshieldtest.com has been blocked by Sky Broadband Shield, which lets you choose the websites that can be seen in your home.

Your current settings are:

Suitable for teens & older
Effective **05:30** to **21:00**

Suitable for adults
Effective **21:00** to **05:30**

If you'd like to access this website now, you can add it to your allowed list or change your age rating on your Sky Broadband Shield settings page. Otherwise you can close this window and continue browsing other websites.

[Change your settings](#)
[Switch off Sky Broadband Shield](#)

The site was blocked because it matched the following categories:


- Dating

[Report this site](#) if you think this category is incorrect.

Sky Broadband Shield doesn't give us access to what you do online so your privacy will be protected.

If you want to know more about keeping your children safe online, Internet Matters is here to bring you information, advice and support.

sky and the Sky trademarks are owned by British Sky Broadcasting Group plc and Sky International AG and are used under licence. © 2015 BSkyB



New Watershed feature

Sky Broadband Shield

Sky Broadband Shield is our online tool that lets you block the websites that you don't want in your home. You can choose a setting from PG, 13 or 18, and customise it to block or allow specific sites.

The new Watershed feature means you can choose to have the 18 setting come into effect daily for a period of time that you specify.

You can change your settings at any time.

Custom
Effective **05:30** to **21:00**

Watershed (18)
Effective **21:00** to **05:30**

Block & allow websites
Nothing added

Watershed is: ☒ On ☐ Off

Select the hours you want Watershed to be in effect. The 18 setting will be applied during these hours.

From

21


00

To

05

30

[Save all settings](#)



Updated category list

Sky Broadband Shield

Sky Broadband Shield is our online tool that lets you block the websites that you don't want in your home. You can choose a setting from PG, 13 or 18, and customise it to block or allow specific sites.

The new Watershed feature means you can choose to have the 18 setting come into effect daily for a period of time that you specify.

You can change your settings at any time.



Custom
Effective 05:30 to 21:00



Watershed (18)
Effective 21:00 to 05:30



Block & allow websites
Nothing added



Suitable for everyone



Suitable for teens & older



Suitable for adults only



Custom

Blocked categories:

i You haven't added any categories yet.

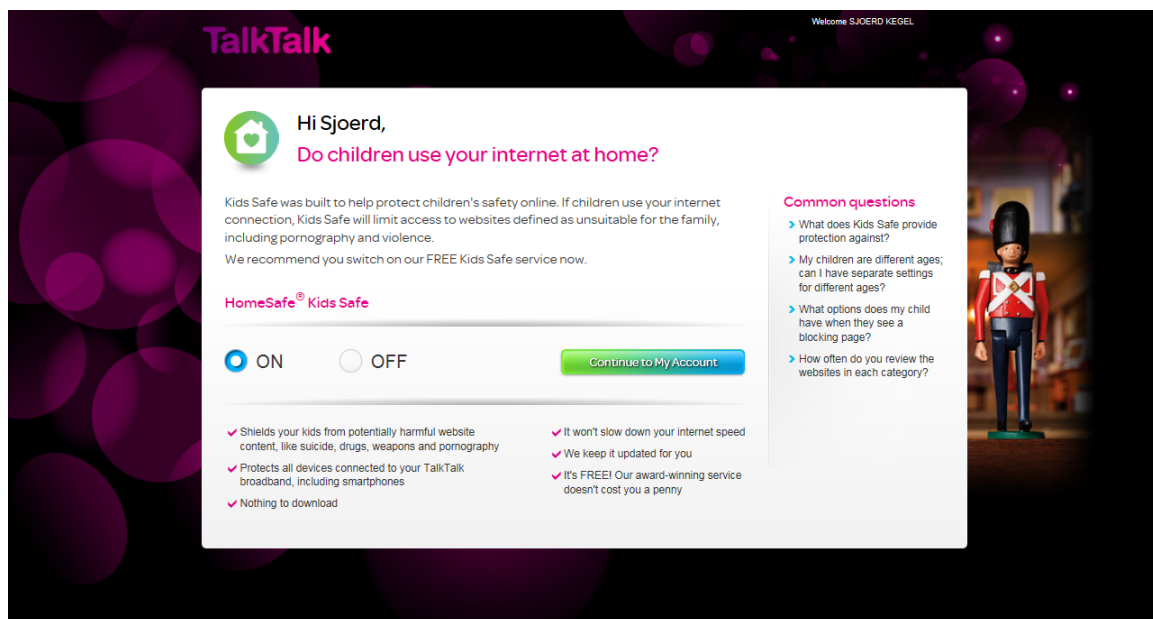
Unblocked categories:

Social networking	Block	?
Online games	Block	?
Pornography & adult	Block	?
Suicide & self harm	Block	?
Weapons, violence, gore & hate	Block	?
Anonymizers, filesharing & hacking	Block	?
Drugs & criminal skills	Block	?
Dating	Block	?
Phishing & malware	Block	?

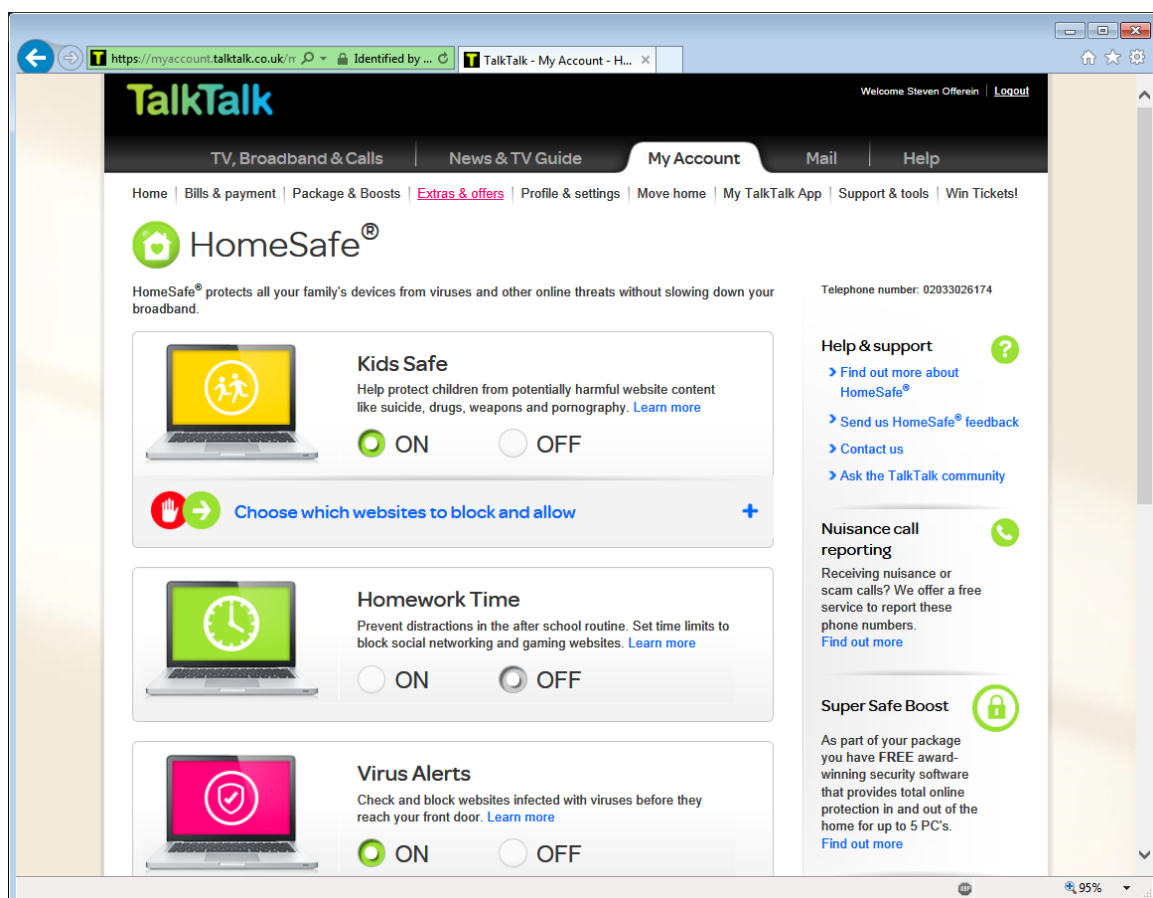
Save all settings


TalkTalk

Screen shot of prompt for existing subscribers



Screen shots of user journey when the existing subscriber chooses and customises their filtering options







Kids Safe

Help protect children from potentially harmful website content like suicide, drugs, weapons and pornography. [Learn more](#)

☒ ON
 ☐ OFF

Choose which websites to block and allow

Website categories

Tick the types of websites you want to block.

Unsuitable for under 18s

☒ Dating ⓘ
 ☒ Drugs, Alcohol and Tobacco ⓘ
 ☒ Gambling ⓘ
 ☒ Pornography ⓘ
 ☒ Suicide and Self-Harm ⓘ
 ☒ Weapons and Violence ⓘ

Other types of website

☐ File Sharing Sites ⓘ
 ☐ Games ⓘ
 ☐ Social Networking ⓘ

Specific websites

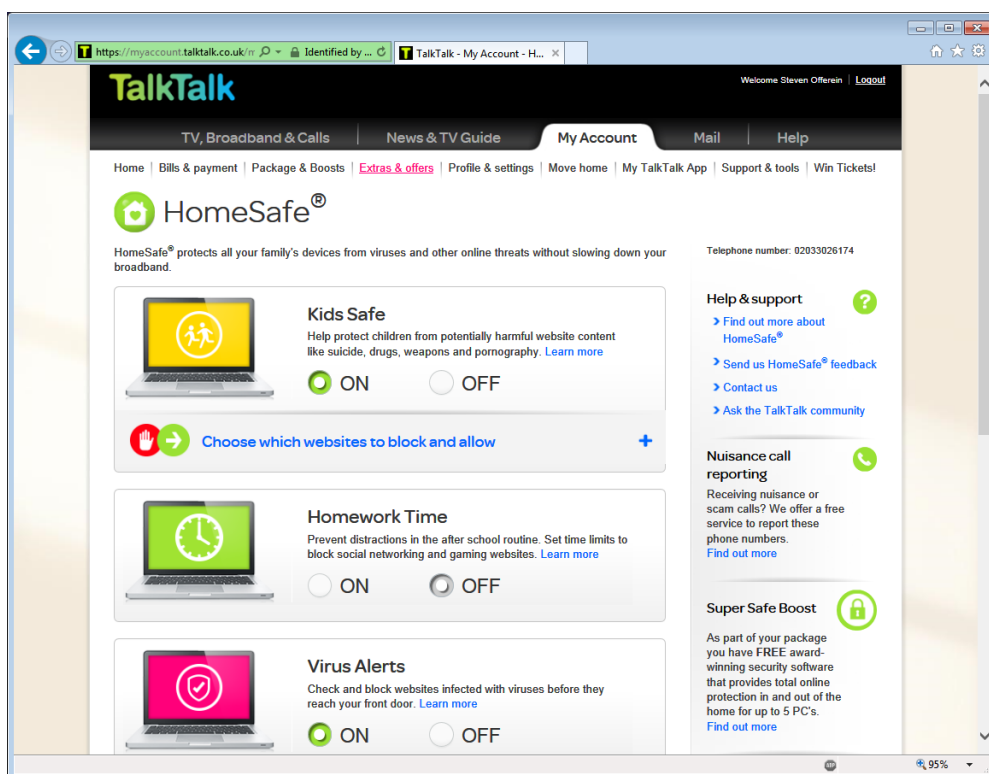
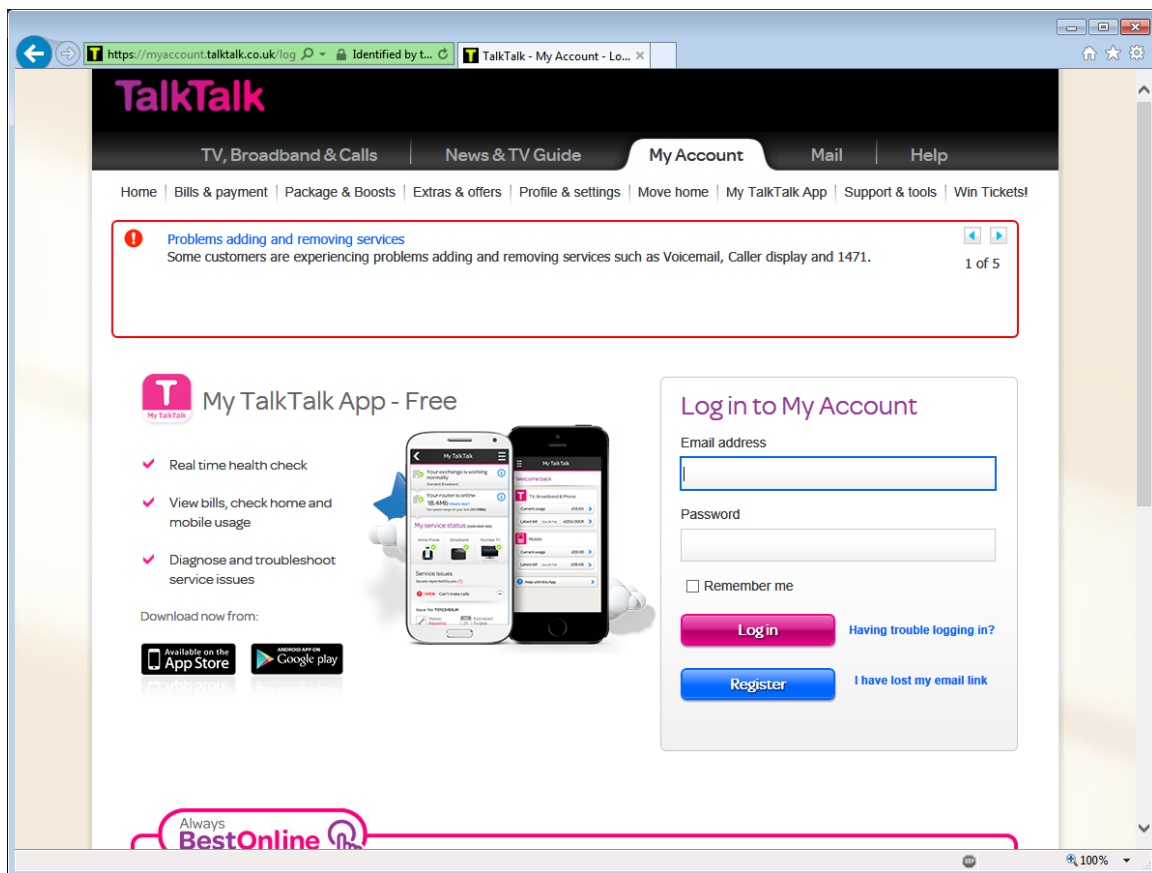
Add websites you want to always block or allow.
Example: [www.national-lottery.co.uk](#)

	Block	Allow
<input type="text" value="www.example.com"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="text" value="www.example.com"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="text" value="www.example.com"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="text" value="www.example.com"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="text" value="www.example.com"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="text" value="www.example.com"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="text" value="www.example.com"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="text" value="www.example.com"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

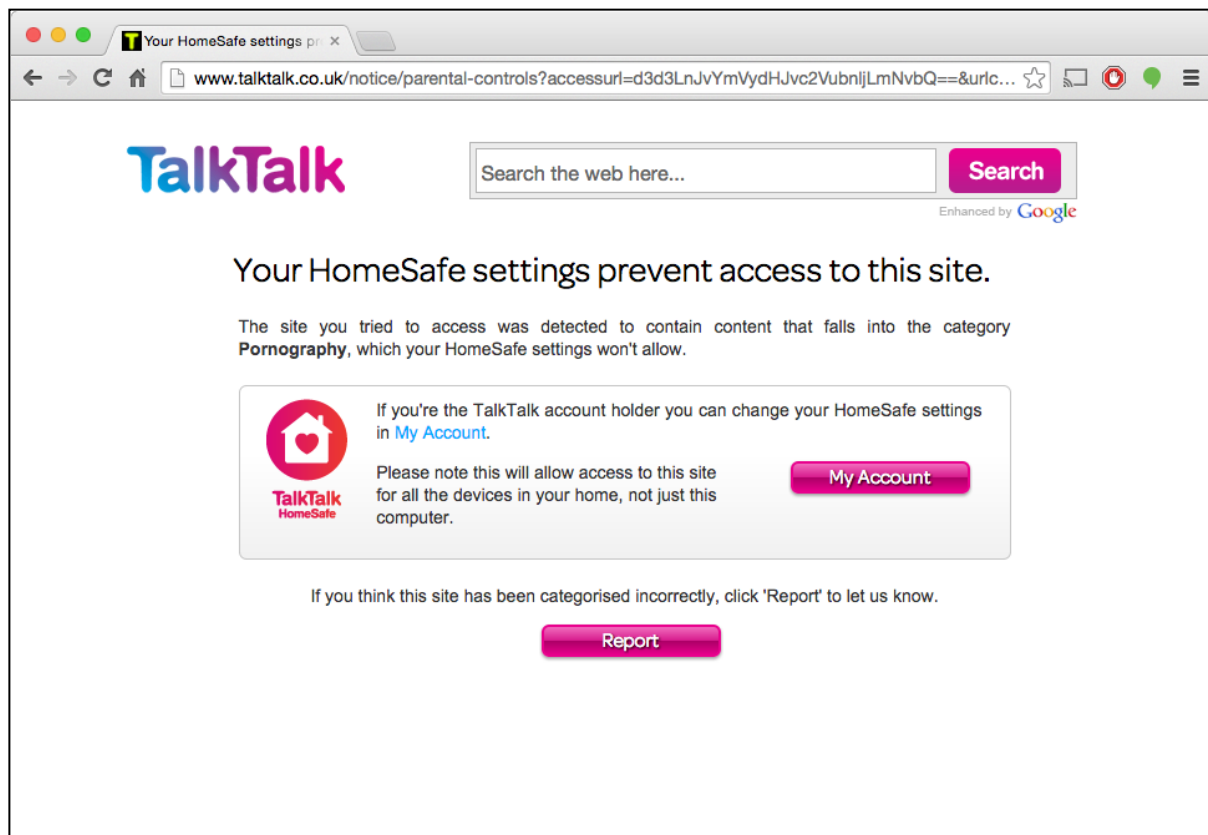
Save changes

Note: It can take up to two minutes for changes to take affect. If you have issues after changing your settings, try [clearing the browser cache](#)

Screen shots of user journey to change settings, including complete removal of filtering service

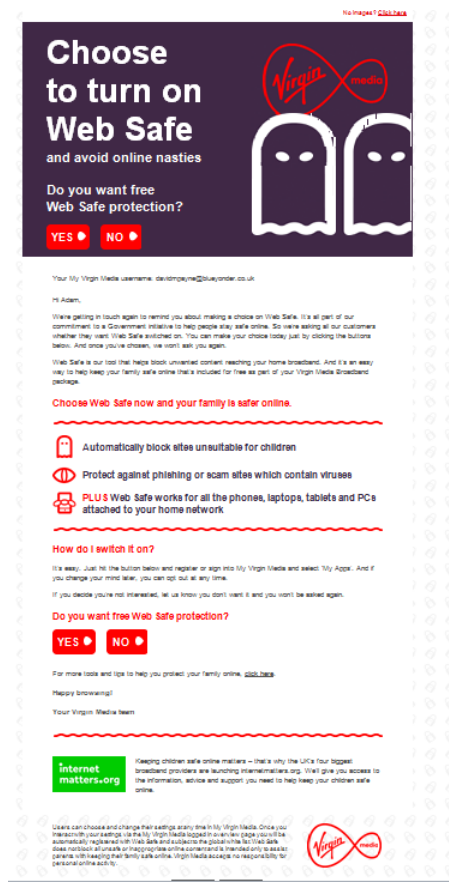


Information provided to users when a site or service is blocked, including screen shots provided when a site is blocked



Virgin Media

Email campaign example



Information on VM website

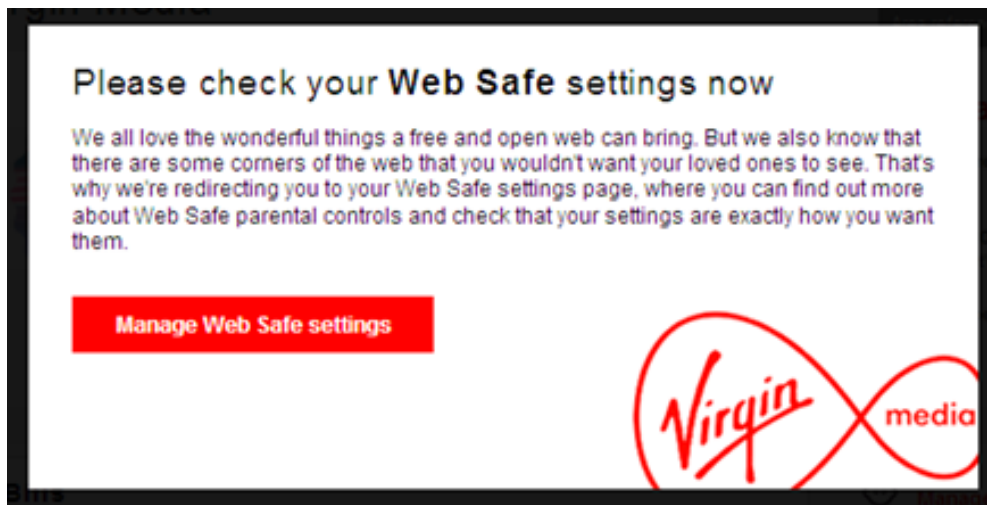
Stay safe on the web

Tools and tips to help you protect your family online

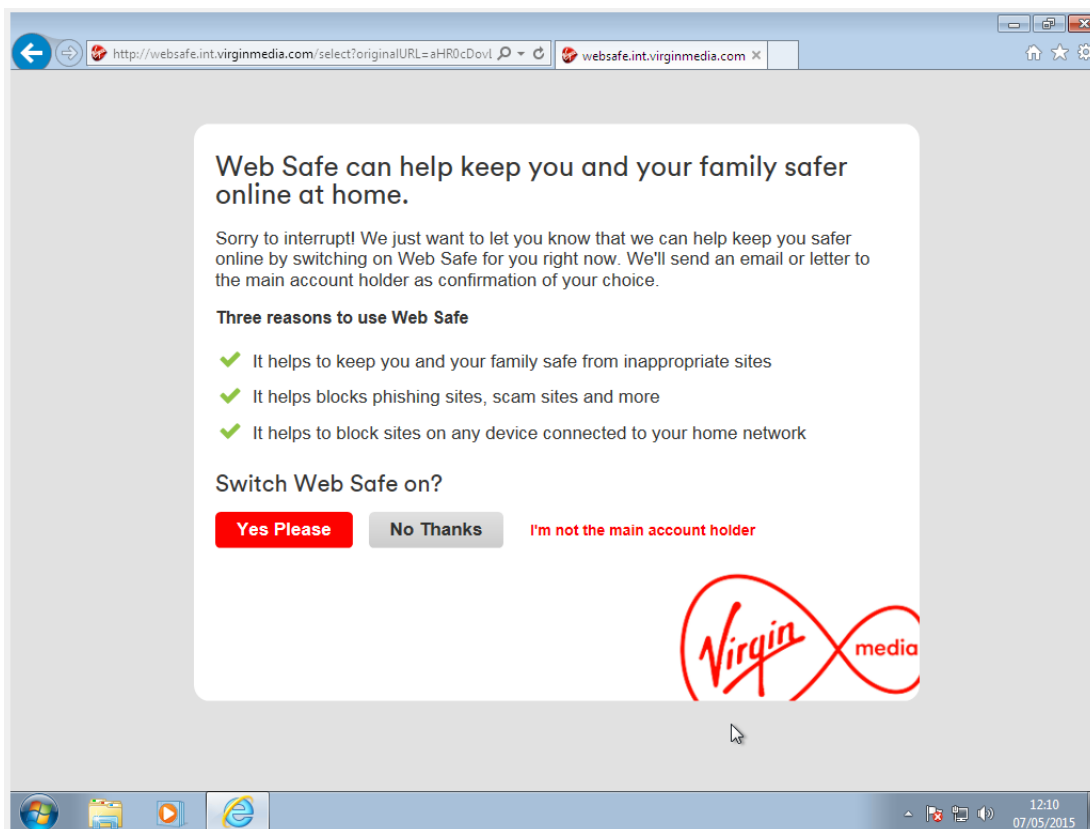
We know the web can feel pretty daunting for parents. To help you keep your family safe and give you extra peace of mind, we've created these handy tools and tips.

Handy advice for parents	Protect your family at home	Protect your devices anywhere	Resource tools for parents
<p>This online platform and interactive guide gives parents honest and useful advice to make sure their family gets the best from the web and their kids stay safe online.</p> <p>Go to Switched On Families</p>	<p>Web Safe works on your home network to protect your family from inappropriate content or malicious websites.</p> <p>More about Web Safe</p>	<p>There are plenty of things to be wary of online. Luckily, all our broadband customers can get award winning Internet security, F-Secure SAFE, to keep internet baddies at bay.</p> <p>More about F-Secure SAFE</p>	<p>Virgin Media and other major broadband providers have launched Internet Matters, a not-for-profit organisation offering parents further resources to help them keep their children safer online.</p> <p>Go to Internet Matters</p>

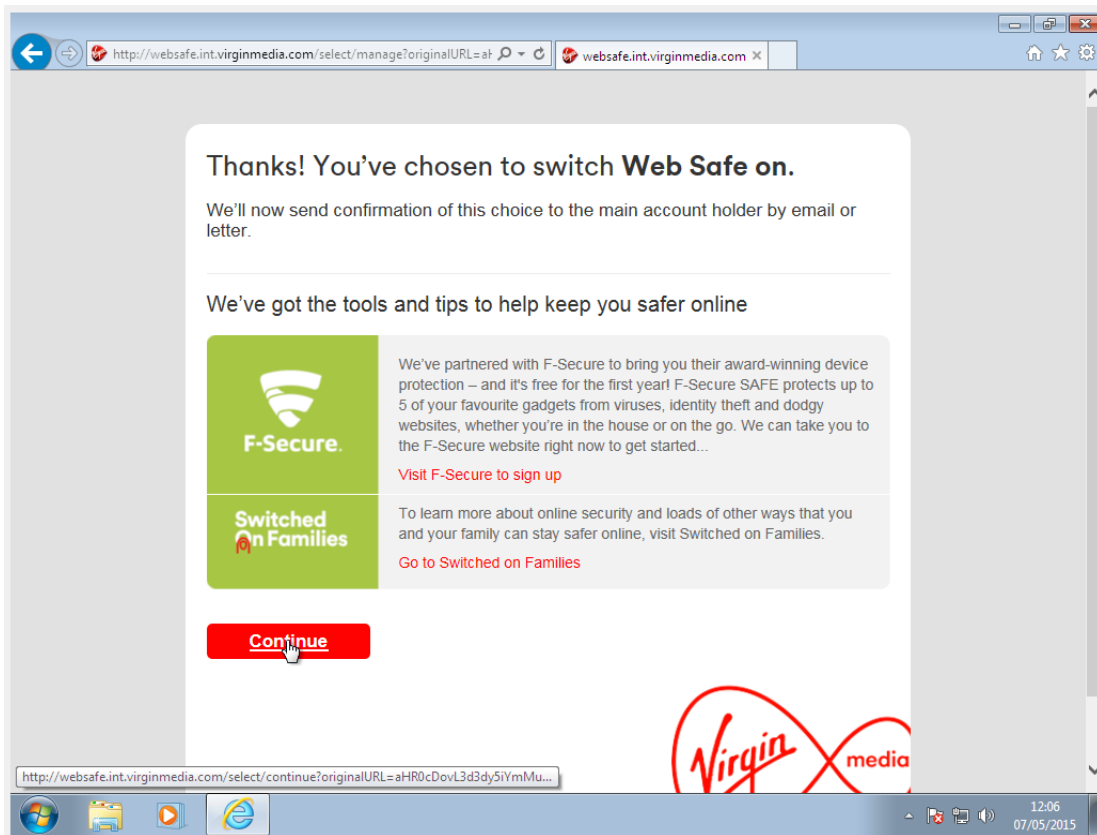
Interstitial in MyVM



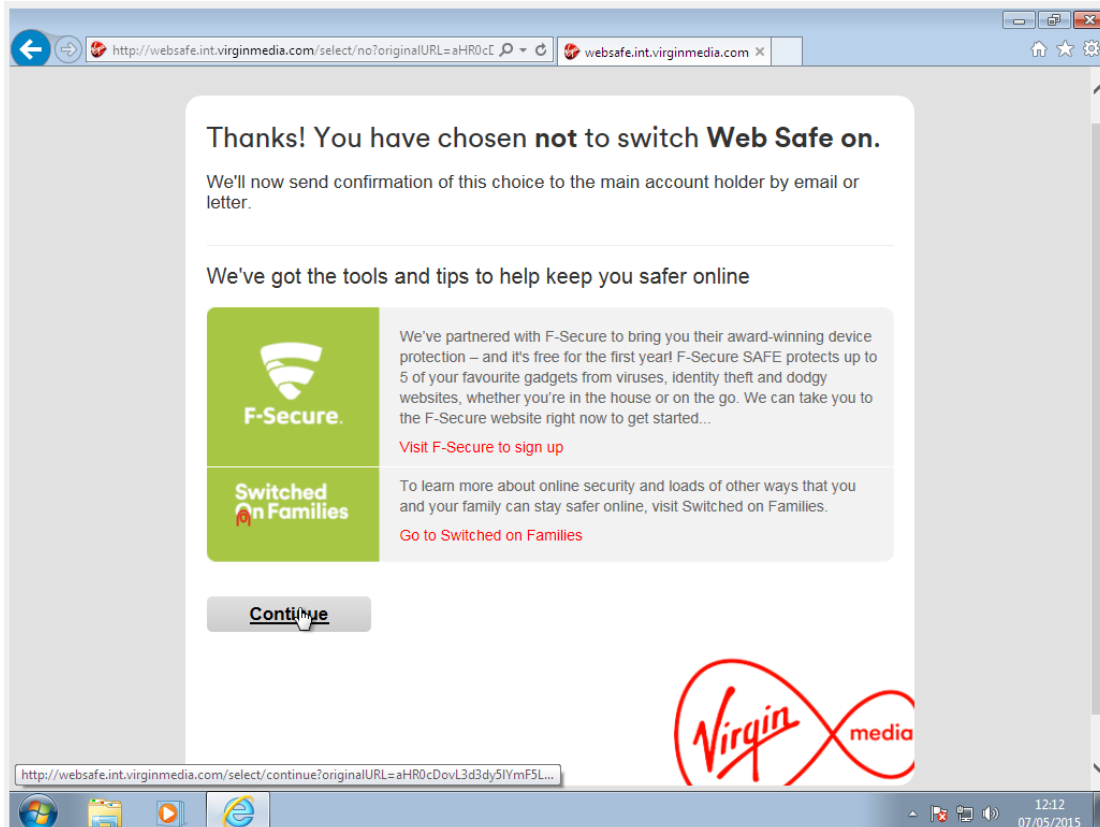
Browser Intercept




Turn on web safe




No thanks



User journey when the existing subscriber chooses not to adopt filtering



You've switched Child Safe mode OFF.
You can switch it ON at any time - we recommend you do this to help stop you and your family seeing offensive content online.



Child Safe

Switch on Child Safe browsing to help stop you and your family from seeing unsuitable content online.

Child Safe mode will give you 24/7 protection against sites that contain or promote (to find out more about the content we block with Child Safe, visit our [FAQs](#)):


- Pornography
- Hate
- Violence
- Drugs
- Crime
- Hacking crime
- Self-harm and suicide
- Address hiding

Turn On ☐ Turn Off ☒

User journey to change settings, including complete removal of filtering service

MyVM sign-in page

Sign in



Username

Enter your username in full e.g.
joe.bloggs@email.com.

Forgotten or don't know your username? [➔](#)

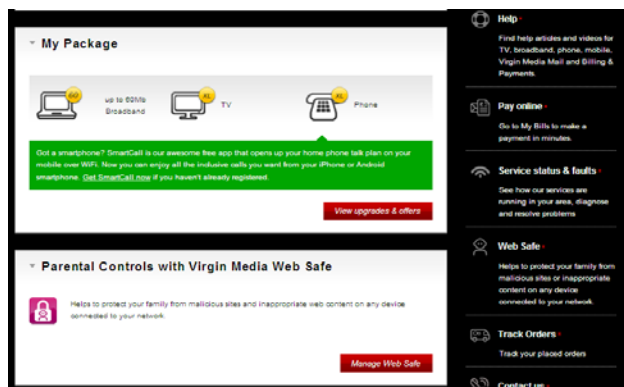
Password

Forgotten password? [➔](#)

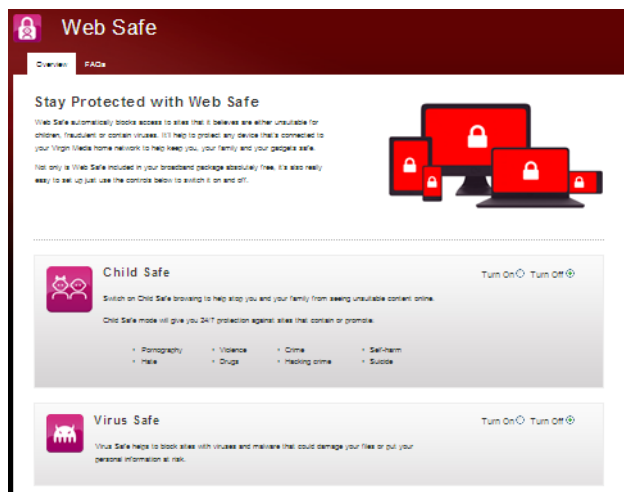
Sign in

If you're already a Virgin Media customer but don't have a My Virgin Media account, you can [register now](#). It only takes a minute.

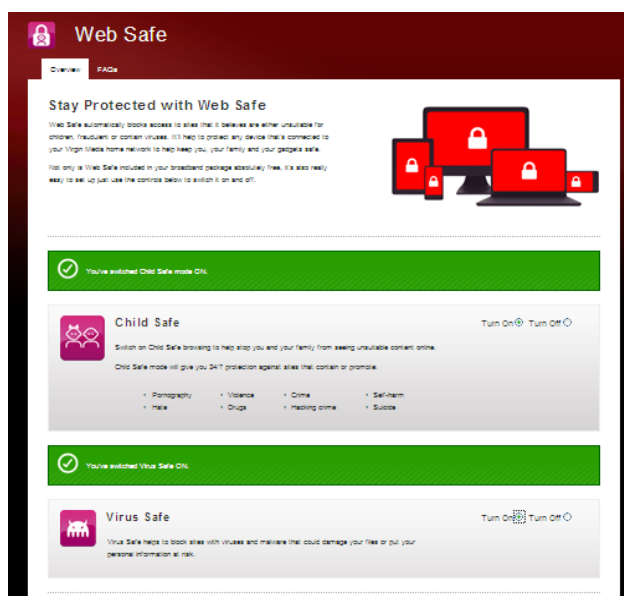
MyVM logged-in screen



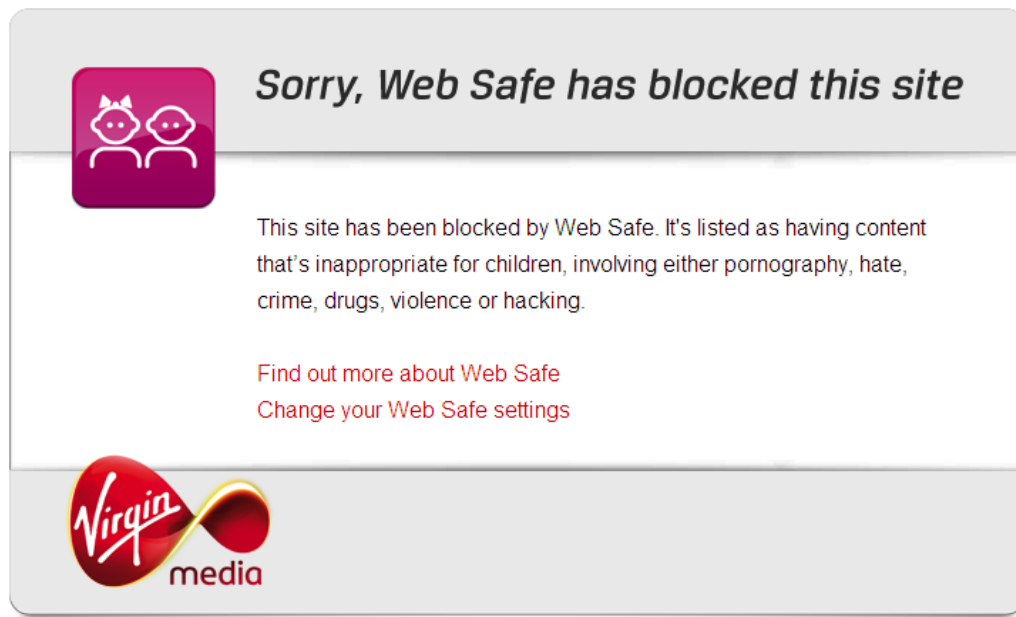
Web Safe user interface



Web Safe user interface – filters on



Information provided to users when a site or service is blocked, including screen shots provided when a site is blocked.



Online reporting process for over- and under-blocking

A screenshot of the Virgin Media website's online reporting process for Web Safe. The page has a red background. At the top, there's a navigation bar with links like "Broadband", "TV", "Phone", "Mobile", "Collections", "Discover", and "Existing customers". Below this is a section titled "Help us make Web Safe better". The main content area is white and contains a form. The form starts with a paragraph explaining that Web Safe blocks sites with malicious content and asks users to help by reporting sites that should be blocked. It then asks for the URL of the page and provides two radio button options: "This page was incorrectly blocked" and "This page should be blocked". Below these are two more radio button options: "Child Safe" and "Virus Safe". There is a text box for "Any other comments (optional)" and a "Submit" button. The footer contains links like "About Virgin Media", "Careers", "Advertise with us", "Accessibility", "Legal stuff", "Contact us", and "Our cookies".