



Ofcom Report on Internet safety measures

Strategies of parental protection for children online

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About this document

This Internet safety measures report looks at parental strategies for protection of children. The report gathers data from our Children and Parents: Media use and attitudes survey 2014 and looks at other developments in children's online safety during 2014.

This is the third of three reports that Government asked Ofcom to produce on online safety. The first report, published in January 2014, looked at how parents protect children online. The second report set out the measures put in place by the UK's four largest fixed line internet service providers – BT, Sky, TalkTalk and Virgin Media – to introduce family friendly network level filtering.

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Section 1

Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report sets out Ofcom's latest media literacy research into parents' mediation of their children's internet experience and the wide ranging strategies and tools used by parents to protect their children online. It is the third of three reports provided in response to a request from the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) following the Government's request to UK Internet Service Providers (ISPs) regarding implementation of network level filters¹.
- 1.2 The reports were designed to address a broad range of research questions on the take up, awareness of and confidence of parents in relation to parental controls, including:
- any broader strategies parents may adopt to improve children's online safety;
 - the 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
 - any research into why parents may choose not to apply parental control tools.
- 1.3 Our first report, *Internet safety measures: Strategies of parental protection for children online*², published on 15 January 2014, looked at the strategies used by parents, ranging from communication and supervision to the use of technical controls to manage their children's access to the internet. The report set out the findings of Ofcom's 2013 Children and Parents: Media use and attitudes report³ and reported on the technical tools employed by parents. Key conclusions of the report were that parents use a combination of mediation and controls, across a range of technical tools and other safety measures. It also explored the reasons that parents gave for not using the technical tools referred to in the report, in particular a combination of trusting and supervising the child.
- 1.4 The second report, *Internet safety measures: Network level filtering measures*⁴, was published on 22 July 2014. The report set out the measures put in place by the UK's four largest ISPs (the ISPs) - BT, Sky, TalkTalk and Virgin Media - to introduce a family-friendly network level filtering service, which allows the account holder to choose to block web based content that might be inappropriate for children at a network level. The report described the approach taken by each ISP to the implementation of a filtering service and the presentation of an "unavoidable choice" to new customers whether or not to activate the filter.
- 1.5 This third report updates the first report, setting out the findings from Ofcom's 2014 *Children and Parents: Media use and attitudes report*⁵ ("the Children and Parents

¹ Full details of the request can be found at Annex 1.

² <http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/binaries/internet/internet-safety-measures.pdf>

³ <http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/binaries/research/media-literacy/october-2013/research07Oct2013.pdf>

⁴ http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/binaries/internet/internet_safety_measures_2.pdf

⁵ http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/binaries/research/media-literacy/media-use-attitudes-14/Childrens_2014_Report.pdf

survey”), which was published on 9 October 2014 and includes extended data on parental mediation.

- 1.6 The Children and Parents survey provides an overview of how parents are mediating their children’s access to and use of media. It examines four approaches: regularly **talking** to children about managing online risks, **rules** about media use, **supervision** of media use and **technical tools**.

Part 1: The context of the internet: developments since 2013

- 1.7 This third internet safety report does not repeat the analysis of the context of digital parenting that we included in the first report, but focuses on developments since that report was published.
- 1.8 In section 2 we report on new research by EU Kids Online⁶ and Ofcom’s continuing research in this area.
- 1.9 Our first qualitative analysis of children’s critical thinking skills⁷ found that children’s theoretical understanding of online risks was relatively robust and stemmed largely from school initiatives, stories in the media, and parents.
- 1.10 We found that children are most concerned by contact risks, with younger children concerned about the possibility of being kidnapped and older children more aware of attracting unwanted attention from strangers, particularly among girls. All age-groups are aware of cyberbullying and hacking. Younger children are concerned about content risks, while older children were more likely to accept various types of content as a predictable aspect of being online. Older children are more disposed to take risks online, despite awareness of those risks, trading off the known dangers for the rewards or benefits on offer.
- 1.11 Image management is a central aspect of being online for many children and is linked to risk-taking behaviour, as some children keep open profiles in order to gain more “likes”. Children did not consider the longer term reputational risks arising from their online behaviour. They thought that the content they posted could be deleted should they no longer want it to be available online. Only the oldest in the sample were beginning to be aware of how they might be perceived by future employers or college tutors.
- 1.12 Ofcom’s new *Online and On Demand survey*, which explores the attitudes and opinions of users of online and on demand video services and complements Ofcom’s annual Media Tracker, focuses primarily on people’s attitudes towards television and radio.
- 1.13 The results of the 2014 survey will be published in early 2015. However, initial findings reveal that parents’ concerns around the content they encounter online largely reflect the same concerns people have regarding broadcast content; namely exposure to violent content, sexually explicit material and bad language, with some web specific concerns, such as suicide depiction and trolling/on-line harassment also evidenced.

⁶ EU Kids Online is a multinational research network that seeks to enhance knowledge of European children’s online opportunities, risks and safety.

⁷ <http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/binaries/research/research-publications/childrens/report.pdf>

- 1.14 The survey also measures opinions about the current level of regulation of on demand and online content. Views are mixed, with just over one in six thinking there is too little regulation, just under half think the level is about right and one third don't know, indicating a large level of uncertainty in this environment. A significantly higher proportion of parents think there is "too little" regulation compared to non-parents.
- 1.15 We also report on the introduction of new legislation in relation to online R18 content⁸ which is intended to ensure that material that would be rated R18 by the video classification authority, the British Board of Film Classification (BBFC), is put behind access controls on regulated services and to ban outright content on regulated services that would be refused a classification. This brings all video content provided by regulated On Demand Programme Services (ODPS) into line with the approach taken to the same material in licensed sex shops. The legislation placed new obligations on ODPS in relation to R18 and unclassified content and came into force on 1 December 2014. Ofcom and its co-regulator, the Authority for Television on Demand (ATVOD), will be responsible for enforcing the new provisions with the assistance of the BBFC.
- 1.16 In section 3 we look at developments during 2014 in the role of industry in the provision of internet safety mechanisms, including the introduction of home filtering for fixed broadband by the ISPs, the launch of Internet Matters, a campaign by the ISPs to offer advice to help parents protect children online, and the roll out of Friendly WiFi, setting out a minimum standard of filtering for public WiFi services.

Part 2: Ofcom's 2014 Children and Parents: Media Use and Attitudes survey

- 1.17 We published the full report of the *Children and Parents survey* on 9 October 2014. In Part 2 of this report, we set out the key findings of the survey in relation to children and parents and look at changes in use and attitudes since last year's report.
- 1.18 We made some major changes to the survey's questionnaire this year, to reflect the fact that, over the last few years, both technology and the kinds of devices that children are using to access the internet have evolved.
- 1.19 The first change was to ask about children's media use "at home and elsewhere", instead of just "at home", as we had done in previous years. This change was to better reflect the increased mobility of both devices and internet access.
- 1.20 The second was that, given the increase in multi-functional devices, the 2014 survey asked what activities children were undertaking on media devices, rather than simply asking about the frequency of different activities. This allows us to better understand which devices are being used for which activities.
- 1.21 The third, and most significant change for the purposes of this report, was to change the way we asked about parents' use of technical tools. This was to better reflect the changes in the kinds of tools available to parents to manage their child's access to and use of online content. The change to the questions means that it is not possible to show trend data this year for the use of technical controls, with the exception of gaming and television, for which the questions did not change.

⁸ "R18 equivalent" indicates sex works the primary purpose of which is sexual arousal or stimulation usually involving clearly unstimulated sexual activity.

- 1.22 Finally we extended the range of questions about the other ways in which parents may mediate their child's online activity, adding more detailed questions on parents' use of rules, supervision and the issues and risks they may have discussed with their child, so we can more clearly understand the balance between talking, rules, supervision and use of controls.
- 1.23 It is important to note that the roll-out of fixed broadband network level filtering measures by the four major fixed broadband ISPs, set out in detail in the second report, was at a relatively early stage for BT, Sky and Virgin Media when the field research for this current report was conducted, in April and June this year. Therefore any impact the broad availability of ISP network level filtering may have had on parental behaviour during 2014 is unlikely to be apparent from the data in this report.

The 2014 research: main conclusions of the report

Children and the internet: use and concerns

- 1.24 Since 2013 there has been a significant increase in access to, ownership of and use of tablet computers by children of all ages. Many older children also own smartphones (20% of 8-11s and 65% of 12-15s) and among 12-15s, this is the device they would most miss.
- 1.25 Around one in 10 children expressed dislikes about some of the things they see online, either things that make them feel sad, frightened or embarrassed or things that were too old for them.
- 1.26 Levels of bullying reported by 8-11s and 12-15s have not changed since 2013, with children in the older group more likely to say they have been bullied online.

Children and the internet: parental concerns

- 1.27 Most parents trust their child to use the internet safely and consider that the benefits of the internet outweigh the risks. The number of parents who have concerns about media content has increased since 2013, but this may be due to a change in the questions to include media use outside the home.
- 1.28 Parents are most concerned about their children downloading viruses or giving out their personal details to inappropriate people. There has also been an increase in the number of parents concerned about what their child sees or reads on their mobile phone.

Parental mediation strategies

- 1.29 Parental mediation takes place in the context of multiple, portable devices. Most parents trust their children to use the internet safely and feel they know enough to help their child manage online risks. Parents of 5-15s use a combination of approaches to mediate their child's access and use of online content and services, including:
- regularly talking to their children about managing online risks;
 - using technical tools;
 - supervising their child; and

- using rules or restrictions.
- 1.30 The majority of parents of 5-15s whose child ever goes online (95%) use at least one of these approaches and one in three use all four. Five per cent do not mediate their child's internet use in any of these ways, rising to 11% for parents of 12-15s⁹.
- 1.31 Rules, supervision and talking to their children are all used by around four in five parents of 5-15s. Most parents of 5-15s have rules in place for their child's use of the internet (82%), mobile phones (71%) and gaming (78%). More than four in five parents (84%) of 5-15s who go online say they supervise their child when online in any of the four ways we asked about. Nearly four in five parents of 5-15s (78%) who go online have ever talked to their child about managing various types of online risks, with this likelihood increasing with age. More than half (58%) of parents say they talk to their child at least every few months.

Technical tools and other safety measures regularly used by parents

- 1.32 Eighty four per cent of parents of 5-15s with home broadband are aware of one or more of the eight technical tools for managing their child's access to and use of online content we asked about and over half (56%) use at least one of them.
- 1.33 Awareness and use of tools relating to app installation and use on tablets and mobile phones is lower, with just over a third of parents of 5-15s (34%) whose child uses a smartphone or tablet aware of any of the three tools, and 15% of parents using any of them.
- 1.34 We also asked about the bar on adult content available on mobile phones that can be used to go online. Among parents whose child has a mobile phone that can be used to go online, four in 10 parents of 8-11s (41%) and three in 10 parents of 12-15s (31%) say their child's phone has a bar on adult content in place.
- 1.35 Looking specifically at ISP network level content filters, 50% are aware of these filters and 21% use them. Almost all parents who use network level filters think they are useful (93%) and about three quarters think that they block the right amount of content (73%). The most popular websites visited by 6-14 year olds in 2014 were Google and YouTube. 13% per cent of parents of 5-15s with a home broadband connection, use Safe Search, available on Google and other search engines and 12% of parents of 5-15s have enabled the YouTube safety mode.
- 1.36 Parents are more likely than in 2013 to have sought advice on helping their child manage online risks, with seven in 10 parents of 5-15s (70%) who go online saying they have looked for or received information or advice about how to help their child manage online risks. Two sources of information about technical tools are used by more than four in 10 parents of 5-15s who use these tools: information provided by an ISP (45%) and hearing about tools from friends or relatives (42%).

⁹ It is important to note that while 5% of parents of 5-15s do not mediate their child in any of the ways outlined, around four in 10 of these (2% of all parents whose child goes online) have spoken to their child about managing online risks, but they do so less frequently than every few months. Therefore, the remaining 3% of parents have never spoken to their child about managing online risks, do not supervise their child online, do not have technical tools and do not have any of the rules or restrictions in place.

Reasons for not using technical tools

- 1.37 Reasons for not using technical tools to supervise children's internet use vary by the age of the child. Around four in 10 parents of 5-15s with broadband at home who do not use any particular technical tools say that this is because they talk to their child and use other types of supervision. A similar proportion says it is because they trust their child. Around one in five parents who are aware of each tool but do not use it say this because the child is always supervised or there is an adult present. The reasons given by the remaining one in 10 parents who do not use the tools are set out in figure 47 below.

Part 1 The context of the internet

Section 2

Developments since 2013

Opportunities, risks and challenges

- 2.1 Our first internet safety report looked at the opportunities, risks and challenges presented by the internet. The 2014 *Children and Parents survey* shows that children remain active and enthusiastic participants in the online world, with 87% of 5-15s accessing the internet at home or elsewhere, increasing to 98% for 12-15s in 2013¹⁰.
- 2.2 The internet provides children with an educational resource, a platform for social interaction and creativity and a source of entertainment. While recognising these exciting benefits of internet use, the first report also laid out the risks to children using the internet. We looked at these risks in terms of: potentially harmful content (for example sexually explicit content); potentially harmful contact (for example receiving abusive messages or communicating or sharing information with unknown individuals); and potentially harmful conduct (for example originating or distributing potentially harmful or abusive content; failing to safeguard personal content; and/or ignoring the risks to their safety on and offline created by widespread distribution of their personal information).
- 2.3 Both Ofcom and EU Kids Online¹¹ have conducted research in this area since we published the first report and key findings of these reports are set out below.

Ofcom's second report on Internet safety measures

- 2.4 In July 2014 we published the second of our three reports, looking at the network level filtering measures implemented by the ISPs. Further information about this report and the role of industry is provided in section 3 of this report below.

EU Kids Online Research

- 2.5 In July 2014 EU Kids Online published *Net children go mobile*¹². EU Kids Online is a multinational research network funded under the European Council's Safer Internet programme and directed by Professor Sonia Livingstone, of the Department of Media and Communications at the London School of Economics, who also sits on the board of the UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS). EU Kids Online seeks to enhance knowledge of European children's online opportunities, risks and safety. This report presented new findings about UK children's online access, opportunities, risks and parental mediation, with a primary focus on risk and safety considerations.

¹⁰ <http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/market-data-research/other/research-publications/childrens/children-parents-oct-14/>

¹¹ <http://www.lse.ac.uk/media@lse/research/EUKidsOnline/Home.aspx>

¹²

<http://www.lse.ac.uk/media@lse/research/EUKidsOnline/EU%20Kids%20III/Reports/NCGMUKReportfinal.pdf>

2.6 In terms of **risks** the *Net children go mobile* research found that:

- Overall, 15% of UK 9- to 16-year-olds have been bothered, uncomfortable or upset by something online in the past year, with such experiences being reported much more by girls, older teens and those from high socio-economic status homes.
- Online upsetting experiences are much higher among smartphone and tablet users than non-users, reflecting the fact that these children do more online generally and possibly more privately from their parents.
- In 2010, 16% of children reported being bullied face to face, 8% on the internet and 5% via mobile phone. By 2013, this ratio had reversed, making cyberbullying (12%) more common than face-to-face bullying (9%) – most cyberbullying occurs on social networking sites.
- UK children aged 11-16 report receiving fewer sexual messages (4%) than the European average (11%). This represents a notable decrease since 2010, when the figure was 12%. As with cyberbullying, receiving sexual messages is reported more often by smartphone and tablet users, especially via social networking sites.
- Seventeen per cent of children aged 9-16 said that they have been in contact online with someone they had not previously met offline, but just 3% of children said they had been to meet such a person face to face. The UK figures are notably lower than across Europe and are a reduction from 2010, when the figures were 27% and 5% respectively.
- Seventeen per cent of children aged 9-16 reported seeing sexual images in the past year, online or offline – this is less than across Europe (28%) and less than in 2010 in the UK (24%). This is more common among teenagers and girls, who are also more likely to report being upset, or even very upset by this.
- In 2010, mass media (television, film, video/DVD) were a more common source of exposure to sexual images than the internet. In 2013, the internet has become just as common a source, though mass media still matter in this regard.
- Twenty-nine per cent of 11- to 16-year-olds had seen one or more of the potentially negative forms of user-generated content (UGC) asked about, with hate messages (23%) being the most common, followed by self-harm sites (17%). Such exposure represented a sharp increase on 2010, and was more common among teens, especially 15- to 16-year-olds.
- When they encounter an upsetting problem on the internet, UK children are much more likely than the European average to talk to others (to mothers (48%), friends (26%), and teachers, near the bottom, at 7%). Twelve per cent said that they did not tell anyone when something bothered them online.
- By far the main benefit of their smartphone perceived by UK children is feeling more connected to friends. However one in three children feel they must be always available for contact.
- One-quarter of children say they miss eating or sleeping because of their use of the internet, and nearly two thirds say that the internet gets in the way of time they should spend with family, friends or schoolwork – a higher figure than for others in Europe.
- Regarding smartphone use, children are much more likely to say they have difficulties limiting their use; UK children are also more likely to say this than in other European countries.

2.7 The report also looked at **mediation** and made the following findings:

- According to their children, UK parents' main form of active mediation of internet use is to talk to their child (68%), though 56% also encourage their child to explore and learn online.

- Parents apply restrictions across a wide range of activities, especially giving out personal information and revealing their geographic location, according to their children. Compared with 2010, parents are less restrictive about uploading and downloading, but just as restrictive as before when it comes to rules about social media use.
- Forty-eight per cent of children say their parents use parental filtering software, compared with only 26% across Europe. This is little changed since 2010, when 46% said their parents had filters installed – and 54% of parents said the same.
- Parental controls are less often used on smartphones than on domestic computers, according to children. Nonetheless, the percentages for UK parents who use filtering software are almost twice that of the European average.
- Nearly half of UK children think their parents know a lot about what they do online – especially among the younger children. However, when it comes to their phone, children are a bit less confident that their parents know how they use it.

2.8 In September 2014 EU Kids Online published *Final recommendations for policy*¹³, a report that provides research-based proposals on ways to make the internet a better and safer place for children, with guidance for children and young people, parents, educators, governments, awareness raisers and the media and industry providers.

2.9 Recommendations for governments were that they should:

- Coordinate multi-stakeholder efforts to bring about greater levels of internet safety and ensure there is meaningful youth participation in all relevant multi-stakeholder groupings.
- Review legislative provision for dealing with online harassment and abuse.
- Ensure that provision for youth protection in traditional media can also support online safety provision.
- Continue efforts to support digital inclusion of all citizens while providing support for socially disadvantaged parents and households.
- Promote positive online content, encouraging broadcasters, content developers and entrepreneurs to develop content tailored to the needs of different age groups.

2.10 Recommendations for awareness raisers and the media were that they should:

- Increase parental understanding about the risks young people face online without being alarmist or sensationalist.
- Focus first on the many opportunities and benefits that the internet affords and only secondly on the risks to be managed and harm to be avoided.
- Represent and present young people's perspectives about online experiences in ways that respect their rights and their privacy.
- Ensure reporting and awareness raising is based on reliable evidence and robust research.

Ofcom Research in 2014

2.11 Ofcom has also conducted additional research since the first internet safety report was published, to enhance our understanding of both children's and parent's responses to the risks and challenges outlined above and how they can or should be mediated.

13

<http://www.lse.ac.uk/media@lse/research/EUKidsOnline/EU%20Kids%20III/Reports/D64Policy.pdf>

Children's online behaviour: issues of risk and trust

- 2.12 In September this year we published new qualitative research, *Children's online behaviour: issues of risk and trust*¹⁴. This examines children's understanding of risks around sharing personal data and information and how much trust they have in different aspects of online content or service. This research was carried out by Sherbert Research for Ofcom.
- 2.13 Using an innovative methodology, 54 children aged 8-17 were interviewed across the UK, asking the following two core research questions:
- Do children understand the issues and risks around their personal data and their wider online activity and what, if any, strategies do they employ to manage these issues and risks?
 - How do they decide which external information sources to trust online, and what authentication approaches do they use?
- 2.14 This summary focuses on the first question, which is most relevant to this report. The second question covered: how children evaluate different types of online information, ideas and communication; the degree to which children question or seek alternative sources of information and points of view in the online world; the role that trust plays in making judgements online; and how children identify trustworthiness of information sources, brands and services. Issues around trust in people they meet online and the relationship of that to contact risks was covered under the first research question and summary findings on this are set out below.

Children's theoretical understanding of online risks was relatively good, and stems mainly from parents and school

- 2.15 All children and young people who participated in the research recognised that there was some degree of risk associated with going online. Parents were a key source of information about risks, as well as mediators of online behaviour. Many children said they were told at school about the risks of the online world and a number of specific school initiatives were mentioned¹⁵.

Contact risks were perceived to be the most serious, particularly by younger children

- 2.16 Overall, the online risk of which children and young people were most aware was "stranger danger" or malicious contact from strangers online. While direct experience of this risk was negligible, there was a high level of concern expressed, particularly by younger children who tended to associate this with potentially extreme consequences, such as being kidnapped – "If I write down all my personal details I worry I might get stolen" (8-9 year old girl, Nottingham).
- 2.17 Among tweens and teenagers, girls highlighted the possibility of receiving unsolicited male contact online. The experience of this type of contact risk was relatively common among this cohort and while of concern to some, it appeared that others accepted this as a normal part of the online environment – "The weirdos PM-ing

¹⁴ <http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/binaries/research/research-publications/childrens/report.pdf>

¹⁵ It is important to note that this research did not ask children explicitly about "risks". Rather, the methodology was designed to capture the children's own views of their online behaviour and possible issues arising, which at analysis stage were categorised as risks or otherwise.

[private messaging] you on Facebook... we just think it's normal but my mum gets all panicky about it" (14-15 year old girl, Edinburgh).

- 2.18 There was also high awareness, across all age groups, of the risks of cyberbullying, and younger children in particular were concerned that they might personally experience it –“When you're older, anybody could see you [photos on Instagram] and they might start bullying you and stuff" (9-10 year old girl, Bristol).
- 2.19 In addition, children of all ages were concerned about the possibility of having online accounts and profiles “hacked”. Younger children were concerned about the perceived potential for manipulation or even blackmail by someone pretending to be them. Tweens and teenagers also identified fraudulent activity as a potential repercussion of hacking, along with the possibility of getting viruses which cause damage to devices.

Content risks were also of concern to younger children, while older groups tended to be less concerned about exposure to inappropriate content

- 2.20 While contact risks were considered the most serious overall, younger children also had concerns about exposure to inappropriate content. Swear words were the most top-of-mind inappropriate online content among this age group – “I'm allowed to play FIFA online as long as I keep the sound off because other players can swear a lot and my mum doesn't like me to hear it" (9-10 year old boy, Carshalton). Younger boys were also aware of the existence of graphic scenes in video games. At this age, many worried about seeing such content accidentally.
- 2.21 Tweens, and particularly teens, had greater awareness of the range of visually inappropriate material that they might encounter, including graphic scenes of crime, violence and pornography. However, for older children the existence of such graphic content online appeared to be fairly normalised. Although most claimed that they would not deliberately seek out such content, they were less concerned about the prospect of seeing it inadvertently.
- 2.22 Children's concerns in this area were less about the impact of such content upon themselves, and more about the fact that their parents might find out they had accessed such content. Such a discovery by their parents would be embarrassing, and might also lead to the online device being confiscated – something children were very keen to avoid – “I'd talk to my parents, but not for one 'swear'. I don't want my mum to ban me from the game" (9-10 year old boy, Carshalton).

Children were aware of how to avoid the most serious risks online, but these approaches were not always consistently practised

- 2.23 All age groups appeared to be aware of some common approaches to managing online risks, such as the ability to block and report rude or aggressive users on social networking and virtual world sites, use PayPal to make online purchasing 'safe' or run virus detection software to check whether sites are safe to use. However, these techniques were not always applied or used consistently.

The propensity for risky conduct online was higher among older children

- 2.24 Risky conduct online appeared to increase during the tween and teenage years. Some tweens were beginning to experiment with some risky behaviour in the online world and, for teenagers, risk-taking behaviour of varying degrees had become normalised, and they would trade off the risks versus the rewards/benefits of some

types of behaviour. The main risky behaviours reported included illegal downloading and communicating with unknown people. There were also some mentions of peers who were 'sexting', although none admitted to doing this themselves.

Image management was a driver of online risk-taking

- 2.25 Image management was a critical element of online behaviour for most teenagers in the sample and for some in the younger age-groups as well. Many were engaged in updating their photos continually and closely monitored the number and frequency of "likes" – "I would think of deleting something if it didn't get a like within four minutes" (14-year old girl, Edinburgh). "Likes" were a vital currency for many of the children, and led in some instances to a decision to make profiles open rather than closed – "You're cooler if you get more likes" (11-year old girl, North London).

Reputational issues were not front-of-mind

- 2.26 The perceived repercussions of risks were mostly fairly immediate – for example embarrassment about parents finding out about a child's accessing of inappropriate content or particular behaviour. Most children had not considered any longer-term potential consequences. Future reputational issues related to online conduct were a consideration only among the oldest teenagers, for whom 'the future', in terms of post-secondary education or entering the workforce, was a much closer and more tangible reality. Otherwise, children tended not to consider the issue, and when prompted, assumed that they would be able to delete any content they were no longer happy about.

Ofcom's Online and On Demand survey

- 2.27 In contrast to the qualitative approach above, Ofcom also commissioned a new quantitative *Online and On Demand survey* in 2014 that focuses on understanding people's online audio-visual experiences. The primary objective is to investigate peoples' perceptions of and concerns about content standards in relation to on demand and online audio-visual content. It is intended that this online tracker survey will be repeated annually to build data on trends within the online viewing experience. The survey complements Ofcom's existing Media Tracker, which has run since and which focuses on broadcast content. The new survey is carried out amongst a sample of 2000 UK adults (aged 16+) who use online and on demand video services and 500 children (aged 11-15).
- 2.28 The *Online and On Demand survey* results for 2014 will be published in full in early 2015. However, initial findings reveal that parents' concerns around the content they encounter online largely reflect the same concerns people have regarding broadcast content; namely exposure to violent content, sexually explicit material, and bad language. Some web specific concerns, such as suicide depiction and trolling/online harassment are also evidenced, but to a lesser degree than the aforementioned.
- 2.29 The survey also measures opinions towards the current level of regulation of on demand and online content. Views are mixed, just under over in six think there is too little regulation (16%), just under half (46%) think the level is about right and one third (32%) don't know, indicating a high level of uncertainty in this environment. A significantly higher proportion of parents (22%) think there is "too little" regulation compared to non-parents (13%).

The challenges of regulation

- 2.30 In the first report, we also 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 content online and also strongly affects effective national regulation. The regulation described in Annex 2 covers certain forms of online content distribution through video on demand services, where services are based in the UK. However, a much of the content easily accessed in the UK on the internet is provided from international sources, it largely falls outside this regulation or does not fall within the narrow boundaries of the types of audiovisual material covered.
- 2.31 We also looked at the challenges presented by the fact that the internet is accessible almost everywhere and on a wide range of devices, meaning that internet risks are present constantly rather than only in the home. We commented on the difference between online regulation of on demand programmes online and the traditional regulatory mechanisms of restricting children's access either physically – by barring under 18s from sex shops selling R18 sexual material – or temporally – with the watershed providing an effective child protection mechanism in relation to the television in living rooms..

Government action in response to the challenges

- 2.32 In response to this difference Government introduced further legislation in 2014 to *“legislate to ensure that material that would be rated R18 by the British Board of Film Classification is put behind access controls on regulated services and (...) [to] ban outright content on regulated services that is illegal even in licensed sex shops”*¹⁶. The current regulatory framework for ODPS was updated on 1 December 2014 by the introduction of the Audiovisual Media Services Regulations 2014.
- 2.33 The change means that:
- a) an ODPS must not contain a video work that the BBFC has refused to give a classification certificate to, or any material whose nature is such that it would be reasonable to expect would have been refused such a certificate, if it had been submitted for classification (“prohibited material”); and
 - b) an ODPS must not contain a video work that the BBFC has given a R18 certificate to or any material whose nature is such that it would be reasonable to expect would have received such a certificate had it been submitted for a classification (“specially restricted material”), or other material that might seriously impair the physical, mental or moral development of persons under the age of 18 - unless the material is made available in a manner which secures that such persons will not normally see or hear it.
- 2.34 The legislation places these new obligations on ODPS in relation to R18 content and unclassified content and gives Ofcom responsibility for enforcement in conjunction with ATVOD and with the assistance of the BBFC. Ofcom has worked with ATVOD and the BBFC to establish effective working processes to support this new legislation.

16

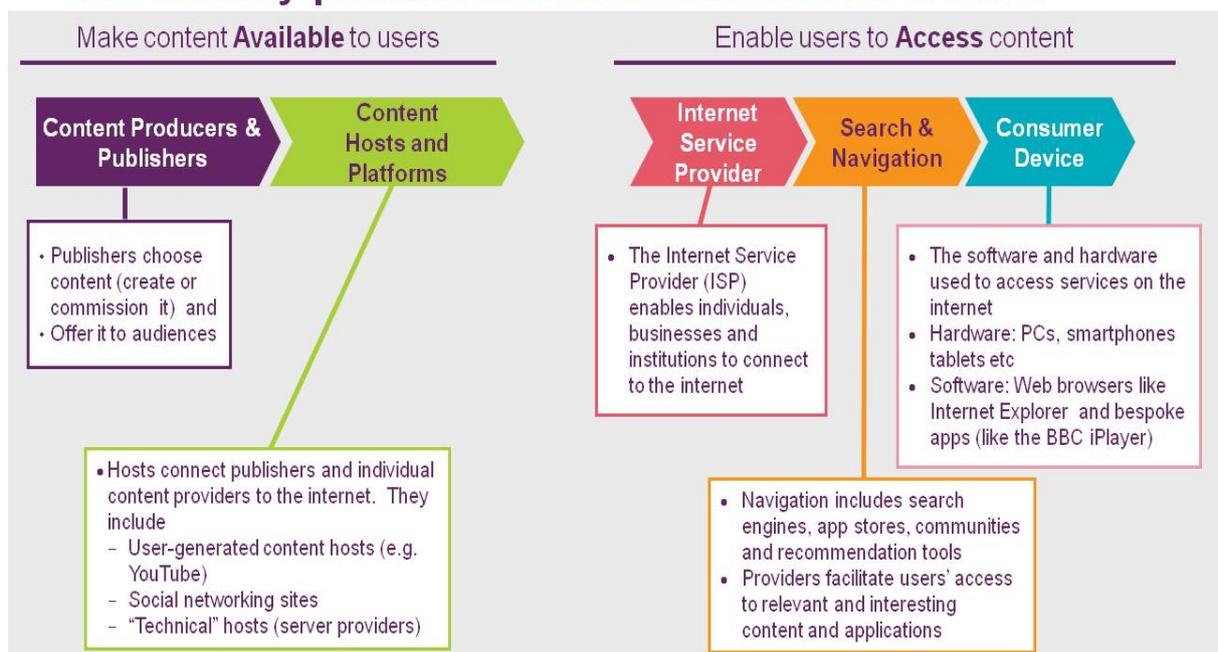
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/225783/Connectivity_Content_and_Consumers_2013.pdf

Section 3

Safety mechanisms and the role of industry

- 3.1 In our first report, we described the roles of certain key players involved in the creation and distribution of content over the internet and the various tools and mechanisms these different internet players can offer parents and children seeking to safeguard their online. This description is summarised in the table below.

How industry provides content to users on the internet



- 3.2 The report drew out the difference between the responsibilities of a potential content provider, such as a producer or publisher, under the Audio Visual Media Service Directive, and the protections from liability afforded to an ISP, in relation to the content it allows to transit over its network connections under the E-Commerce Directive. This basic architecture remains the same. We are therefore focusing in this report on the recent developments to the industry tools identified in the first report.

Developments in the tools service providers contribute to children’s online safety since 2013

Broad types of child safety tools provided by industry



3.3 There are two broad ranges of ways in which service providers can contribute to children’s online safety:

- **Service-specific safety measures:** Individual content service providers can offer tools which help parents protect children and help children protect themselves from harm. These tools and mechanisms range from providing classification information, requiring age-verification from users and restricting access to content inappropriate for children, through to the privacy settings on a social networking site, which may help protect children from contact with unknown adults.
- **Filtering:** The objective of a filtering system is to block access to websites and internet services which offer potentially harmful material. To be effective, a filtering solution must provide broad coverage of a child’s internet use: filtering tools must be applied at a point of access – for example, on the child’s device, or in the network by the internet access provider. Most filters operate by
 - Categorising content according to specific editorial criteria; and
 - Restricting access to content in the desired categories.

3.4 Filters have been offered by a range of providers, at device and network levels for some time. Among network operators for example, the Mobile Broadband Group has an agreed *UK Code of practice for the self-regulation of new forms of content on mobiles*¹⁷. This established a classification framework, operated in conjunction with the BBFC, which blocks any content classified above an 18 certificate level to any user who has not provided age verification proving they are over 18 to the relevant mobile broadband provider. Most fixed broadband ISPs have also offered filtering for use on individual devices for home users for some time. However in 2013, in a significant development in the range of parental tools available to home broadband users, the four major ISPs, BT, Sky, TalkTalk and Virgin Media committed to offering network level filtering, covering a range of content categories, to new customers by the end of 2013.

3.5 This roll-out was covered in detail in our second report, which set out the measures put in place by the ISPs to introduce a “family friendly” network level filtering service, which allows the account holder to activate network level blocking of web-based

¹⁷ http://www.mobilebroadbandgroup.com/documents/mbg_content_code_v2_100609.pdf

content that might be inappropriate for children. The report examined the implementation in the following ways:

The scope of the filtering measures

- 3.6 In terms of **devices covered**, all four ISPs confirmed that their filtering service would cover all devices in the home using the home's internet. They also confirmed that websites and any other internet services using standard HTTP protocols and ports were covered by the filters. Sky said that its filter would cover some apps, but the other ISPs acknowledged that their filters did not cover services that do not use HTTP, so were unlikely to cover many mobile apps that do not use HTTP.
- 3.7 Some **editorial categories** included in the filtering services were common to all ISPs, such as drug related content, crime, violence & hate, filesharing, pornographic content, suicide & self harm. Some of the ISPs also included categories covering sexual activity, gambling, alcohol, tobacco, social networking, cyberbullying and hacking.
- 3.8 All the ISPs apart from Virgin Media allow customisation of the content categories covered by the filter and we set out in the report how each of these systems operates. Virgin Media indicated that it intended to add customisable features to its filtering service.
- 3.9 All filtering systems are subject to a degree of **mis-categorisation**, in terms of overblocking (restricting access to acceptable content) and underblocking (permitting access to unacceptable content).
- 3.10 Each of the ISPs has a process for handling reports from users and content or service providers of **mis-categorisation** of a site or service. Users can report underblocking or overblocking and take steps to correct mis-categorisation. We noted the absence of a centralised process for making and sharing decisions, in contrast to the approach of the Mobile Broadband Group outlined in paragraph 3.4 above.
- 3.11 None of the ISPs offers a dedicated route or mechanism to allow site providers to directly check the current categorisation of their site against the ISP's filter, although each ISP would respond to email requests. In a development since publication of our second report, a free service operated by the Open Rights Society at www.blocked.org.uk now offers to check if any web address is currently blocked by the major ISP filters.

Implementation of network level filtering

- 3.12 The ISPs commitment to Government was to offer all new customers an "unavoidable choice" whether to turn the filters on when first subscribing to the service, meaning it should not be possible for a customer not to engage with the ISP's prompts. All the ISPs apart from Virgin Media were offering a filtering service allowing parents to restrict categories of content to all new customers by December 2013.
- 3.13 Virgin Media's service was launched in February 2014. Virgin Media explained that the delay arose from some of their installation engineers bypassing the full activation process. Virgin Media said that it was streamlining the activation process and implementing a number of additional opportunities for the customer to choose the network level filtering service.

- 3.14 Virgin Media presented additional data to Ofcom and DCMS in September 2014 confirming that they had increased the level of the offer of an unavoidable choice to new customers from 35% to 65% through training and process changes. Virgin Media introduced a final pre-selection process in December 2014 that means 100% of new Virgin Media customers have to make an active choice whether or not to adopt filtering, meaning that the customer has the option to pre-select network level filtering when they initially place an order for the broadband service, prior to installation. This is in addition to the offer at the point of subscription, as described in Ofcom's second report. Virgin Media expected a further rise on the introduction of the pre-selection process in addition to unavoidable choice in December 2014.
- 3.15 At the point when we reported, the figures for **take up** of the filtering service by new customers to whom it was offered were 36% for TalkTalk, 8% for Sky, 5% for BT and 4% for Virgin Media. Factors which would determine subscriber behaviour include the presence of children in the subscriber home and the extent to which parents had already adopted alternative parental controls such as device level filtering or other approaches to securing their children's online safety. The ISPs all offered a variety of alternative filtering options, including device level options and additional security options.
- 3.16 For all the ISPs, activation of the "unavoidable choice" at the point of subscription was only one of the routes by which customers could choose to activate network level filtering, with some of the ISPs reporting high levels of take up amongst existing customers.
- 3.17 All the ISPs have been rolling out the offer of family friendly network level filtering to existing customers, with a view to completing the process by the end of 2014, and some information on this process was given in the second report. Given the timing of the roll out and of this report, we are not able to provide figures for take up of the services by existing customers.
- 3.18 The second report looked briefly at **account holder verification processes** and the steps taken by each ISP to ensure changes to settings were made only by the account holder.
- 3.19 The report included a **technical description section**, which gave an overview of the technical architecture of the filtering solutions developed by the ISPs and the steps taken to limit circumvention of the filtering. All the ISPs stated that the filtering services had no impact on the general quality of the internet access service opted-in subscribers receive.

Other industry developments since the Second Report

- 3.20 In May 2014, **Internet Matters**¹⁸ was launched. This national online campaign was launched by the four main ISPs, BT, Sky TalkTalk and Virgin Media, and is supported by a number of organisations, including Ofcom. The ISPs have committed to funding the service for a minimum of two years. It offers a new online portal, providing advice to help parents protect children online. Internet Matters aims to be a one stop hub, directing parents, grandparents and carers to information from leading experts at organisations and charities in the child internet safety field.
- 3.21 Taking an approach that gives equal prominence to parents learning about an issue, talking about it to their children and using tools and reporting to managing it, the

¹⁸ <http://www.internetmatters.org>

online advice comprises information guides for pre-school (0-5), young children (6-9), pre-teens (10-13) and teens (14+). The site gives advice across issues such as inappropriate contact, online pornography, cyberbullying, online grooming, privacy and identity theft. Parents can learn more about the activities their children may enjoy online, such as social networking or gaming, as well as finding information on how to avoid downloading viruses, links to online safety help and advice. The campaign aims to increase awareness of parental controls; increase confidence and knowledge of parents on the internet and internet safety issues; and increase communication between parents. The site also gives detailed advice on where to report concerns and content issues.

- 3.22 The **Friendly WiFi**¹⁹ scheme was launched in July 2014. The 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 (who cover 90% of public WiFi services). The scheme sets out a minimum standard of filtering that must be achieved when providing public WiFi services. It was created in response to concerns raised by leading child safety charities that children and young people were being put at risk of viewing and accessing inappropriate material when using public WiFi.
- 3.23 The commitment made by the main WiFi providers was that their standard public WiFi offering would automatically filter webpages known to the Internet Watch Foundation (IWF)²⁰ that host Child sexual abuse content. The main public WiFi providers have also undertaken to filter advertisements or links to block adult content. The Friendly WiFi logo was created to ensure that businesses who offer their customers public WiFi and who wish to join the scheme could have their WiFi services verified by an independent body to confirm that filters are in place to block anyone from accessing inappropriate material and to advertise to their clients the fact that their WiFi is protected in this way. The scheme licenses the use of its logo to businesses that provide public internet access to their customers once the filters are in place. Ofcom liaised with the RDI and is noted on the Friendly WiFi website as a supporter of the scheme.
- 3.24 The **UKCCIS Over Blocking Working Group** was established on 1 November 2013 in response to the Prime Minister's request in his speech on 22 July 2013 to "make sure that the filters do not, even unintentionally, restrict this helpful and often educational content" for young people. This voluntary working group was chaired by the Family Online Safety Institute²¹ and consisted of the four main ISPs and representatives of charities and other organisations concerned with the possibility of over blocking as a result of whole home filtering. The Internet Matters portal provided website owners with a reporting mechanism to understand the classification of their site in respect of the ISPs network filters. Using this information, together with reports from consumers made to ISPs about their filtering services, the working group was able to collate and scope the level of over blocking. Its first quarterly report, in October 2014, showed very low levels of over blocking or mis-categorisation. The early indications from the working group were therefore that over blocking of legal content to children is relatively small-scale.
- 3.25 The group worked with the ISPs and explored a number of initiatives to ensure that users and owners of sites benefit from accurate filtering and that young people retain access to online guidance and resources. The working group also explored the

¹⁹ <http://www.getmedigital.com/friendly-wifi>

²⁰ <https://www.iwf.org.uk/>

²¹ www.fosi.org

option of setting up a “universally accessible” list of charities to minimise and deal effectively with unintended overblocking of sites within the charity sector that are working with and offering support to children. However, following indications from the charities within the working group that productive discussions with the ISPs outside the group had achieved their main objective, to ensure accessible emergency support for children remained available, it was decided further consideration of this list within this specific group could close.

- 3.26 The work of the group will now form part of a new combined internet parental controls group within UKCCIS which will bring together the interests of those operating or dealing with both network level and device level controls across a range of devices.

Part 2 Ofcom's 2014 Children and Parents: Media Use and Attitudes

Section 4

Background

- 4.1 This part of the report is drawn from the 2014 *Children and Parents: Media Use and Attitudes report* and provides predominantly quantitative insight around three specific areas:
- i) 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;
 - ii) 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
 - iii) Why parents may choose not to apply parental control tools.
- 4.2 It is divided into five sections:
1. **Children and the internet: use and concerns**, which covers the devices children use, the kinds of activities they do online, the sites that they regularly visit, their confidence and understanding online and any concerns that they, and their parents, have about their media use.
 2. **Children and the internet: parental concerns**, which looks at the kinds of concerns parents have about their children's media use.
 3. **Parental mediation strategies: take-up, awareness and confidence in parental controls**, covering the awareness and use of a wide range of technical controls as well as the other strategies parents use to mediate their children's media use.
 4. **Safety measures on sites regularly visited by children**, including social media sites, google, YouTube, and catch-up TV.
 5. **Why parents choose not to apply parental control tools**, including technical controls and parental controls on mobile phones and gaming devices.
- 4.3 Questions about whether parents mediate their child's media use could be subject to bias caused by a desire to adhere to socially acceptable parenting behaviours. In order to minimise this bias, the survey asks a range of detailed questions about specific techniques and behaviours. Response to these questions show that significant number of parents say that they do not take the steps asked about, suggesting that this strategy is successful in minimising potential bias. For instance, 50% of parent of 5-15s say that they do not use content filters to manage access to online content, 22% say they have not talked to their child about managing online

risks and 18% say they have no rules or restrictions about accessing the internet and other online services.

- 4.4 In this year's Children and Parents' survey we made some changes to the questions to provide more detail about the parental mediation strategies set out in the second section. These strategies consist of four broad approaches parents can adopt to secure their children's online safety, namely:

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 doing so (e.g. 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 or bullying). In 2014 we asked parents more detailed questions about the kinds of risks and issues they had discussed with their child.

Supervision: In 2014 we asked in more detail about the different ways in which parents can supervise their child's use. This can include asking them what they are or have been doing, sitting with them or being nearby while they are online or checking the browser history after the child has been online. Supervision is likely to be most relevant for younger children.

Rules about internet use: These include rules about access to and use of the internet, for example "only access the internet in the living room/when there is a parent present"; "only access the internet for x hours a day". To provide a more granular insight into parents' mediation of online services and content, in 2014 we also asked parents about rules they might have in place to mediate their child's online activities and behaviours. These may help complement education and advice (for example "only communicate with friends/people you know").

Tools and safety mechanisms: Finally, there is a range of technical tools available to parents to manage their child's access to and use of online content, including filtering software and site safety mechanisms to restrict the internet sites and services to which children have access. As technology has changed, so has the range and functionality of these tools. In 2014, additional questions were added to the study in order to further explore parents' awareness and use of these technical tools.

- 4.5 The changes to the questions provide useful additional detail and ensure that the data reflects the range of approaches currently available to parents. However, they also mean that we cannot make direct comparisons with the 2013 survey results.

Methodology

- 4.6 The findings reported in this part of the document are drawn from the 2014 Children and Parents: Media Use and Attitudes report²². This report provides a detailed examination of media literacy among children and young people²³ aged 5-15 and their parents/carers²⁴, as well as an overview of media use by children aged 3-4²⁵.

²² <http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/market-data-research/other/research-publications/childrens/children-parents-oct-14/>

²³ References to children in this report are used to refer to children and young people.

²⁴ References to parents in this report are used to refer to parents and carers.

²⁵ www.ofcom.org.uk/medialiteracyresearch.

The 2014 survey was carried out among over 4051 interviews, with 2391 interviews with parents of children aged 3-15 and 1660 with children aged 5-15. The survey was first carried out in 2005 and so it is possible to track trends over time in many areas.

- 4.7 Some contextual data is also provided by the 2012 *Parents' views of parental controls report*²⁶. 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 during July 2012, but nevertheless remains a valid bellwether of the ways that parents consider the issues of mediation.

²⁶ http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/binaries/research/media-literacy/oct2012/Annex_1.pdf

Section 5

Children and the internet: use and concerns

Key Findings

- There has been a significant increase in access to, ownership of and use of tablet computers by children of all ages. In contrast, the incidence of TVs and games consoles in the bedroom is declining, while smartphone ownership remains steady.
- Almost twice as many children aged 5-15 are going online via a tablet than in 2013. At the same time, access to the internet at home via a PC/laptop/netbook has declined.
- The number of children aged 5-7 with an active social media profile or account has increased since 2013 from 1% to 5%. There has been no change among any other age group.
- Around one in 10 children had dislikes about some of the things they see online. Focusing on social media, bullying, spending too much time on the sites and strangers finding out information about them were the concerns 12-15s were most likely to raise.
- There have been some increases in critical understanding among 5-15s since 2013, including an increase in the number who understand that some of the sites returned by a search engine will be truthful and some won't be, and a fall in the number who believe that information on a website listed by a search engine must be truthful. However, a majority of 12-15s who use search engines do not know that results from a Google search that appear in a shaded box are sponsored links or paid-for advertising.

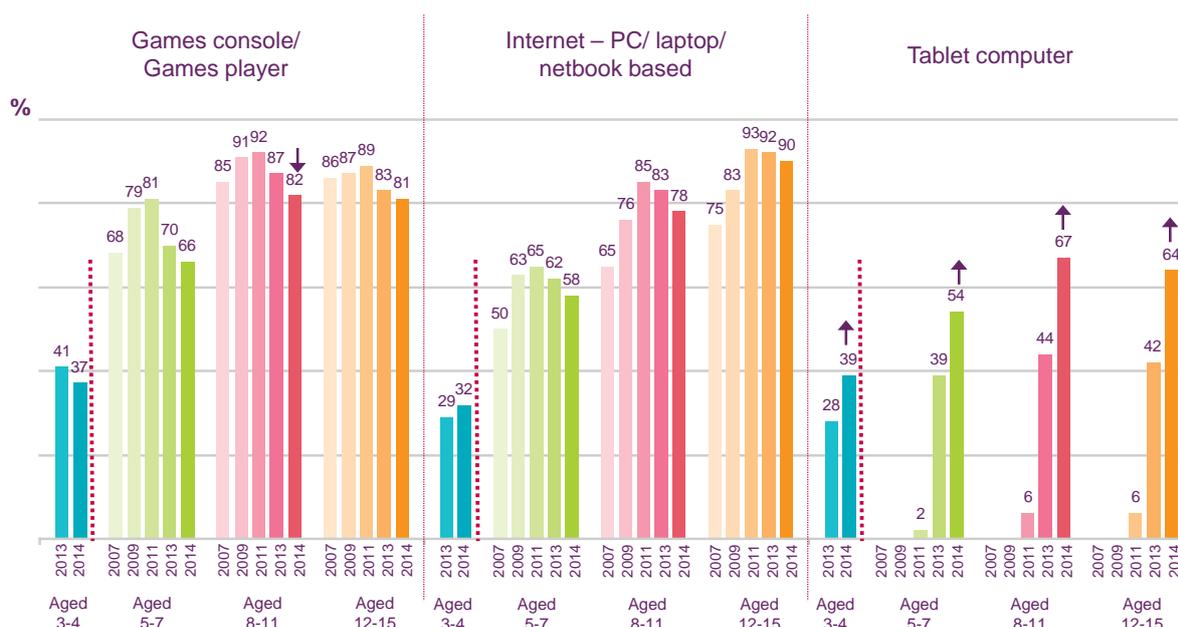
Children's access to and use of the internet

- 5.1 To better understand parental online mediation strategies and levels of parental awareness and confidence in safety measures in place on the sites regularly visited by children, it is useful to consider some of the key changes in children's use of the internet, and the current attitudes and concerns of both children and parents.

Tablets are becoming the must-have device for younger children while older children opt for smartphones.

- 5.2 Among children aged between 5 and 15, 34% now have their own tablet, rather than using devices belonging to their parents or school, up from a fifth (19%) in 2013. More than one in 10 children aged 3-4 now have their own tablet (11%, up from 3% in 2013).
- 5.3 Figure 1 shows that use of a tablet computer at home has increased in all age groups. Among 5-15 year olds use of a tablet has increased, from 39% in 2013 to 54% in 2014 and the increase among 8-11 year olds was from 44% in 2013 to 67% in 2014. Among 12-15 year olds there has been an increase in use of tablets from 42% in 2013 to 64% in 2014. Two in five (39%) of 3-4s use a tablet computer at home, an increase from 28% in 2013.

Figure 1: Media used by children at home, by age: 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013 and 2014

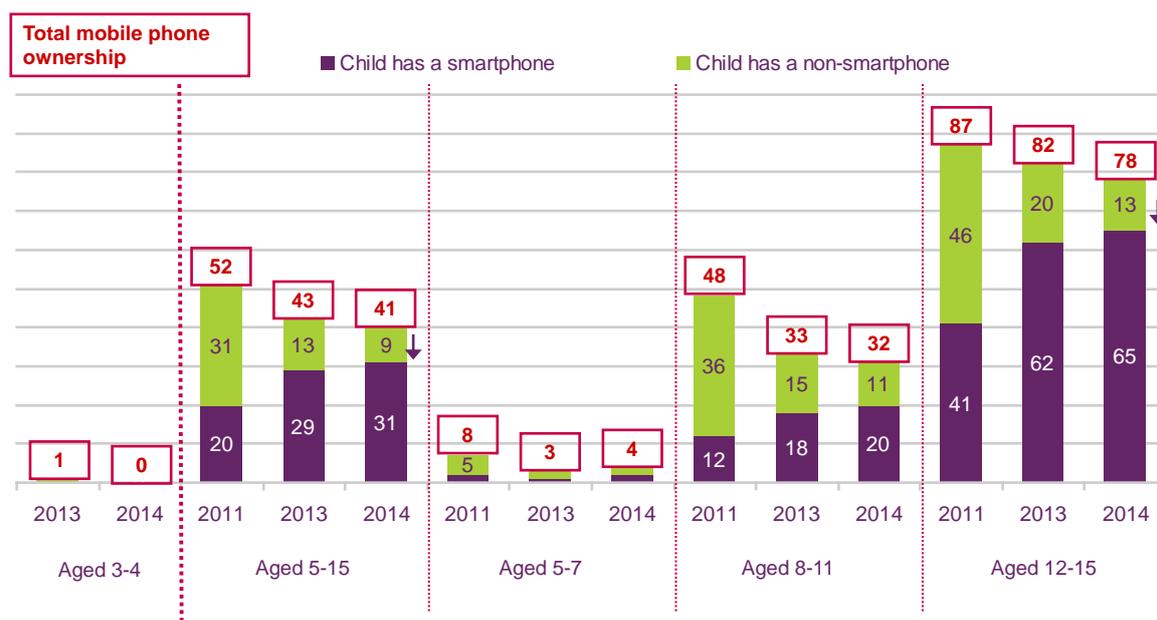


QP3H//D/E – I'm going to read out a list of different types of equipment that you may or may not have in your home, and which your child may or may not use. (prompted responses, single coded)

Base: Parents of children aged 3-4 or 5-15 (685 aged 3-4 in 2013, 731 aged 3-4 in 2014, 985 aged 5-7 in 2007, 576 aged 5-7 in 2009, 573 aged 5-7 in 2011, 533 aged 5-7 in 2013, 453 aged 5-7 in 2014, 1354 aged 8-11 in 2007, 774 aged 8-11 in 2009, 586 aged 8-11 in 2011, 587 aged 8-11 in 2013, 609 aged 8-11 in 2014, 1357 aged 12-15 in 2007, 781 aged 12-15 in 2009, 558 aged 12-15 in 2011, 569 aged 12-15 in 2013, 598 aged 12-15 in 2014) – significance testing shows any change between 2013 and 2014. Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to June 2014

- 5.4 Figure 2 below shows that the decline in ownership of non-smartphones noticed in 2013 has continued in 2014, from 13% to 9% among all 5-15s and from 20% to 13% among those aged 12-15. However, smartphone ownership has remained stable for 8-11s (20%) and 12-15s (65%).
- 5.5 In contrast, as in 2013, children aged 5-15 are less likely to have a games console/player in their bedroom in 2014 (41% vs. 47%). This reflects a decline in the use of fixed and handheld games players (77% vs. 81%) and an increase among 5-15s using tablet computers to play games (30% vs. 23%).

Figure 2: Smartphone and non-smartphone ownership, by age: 2011, 2013 and 2014

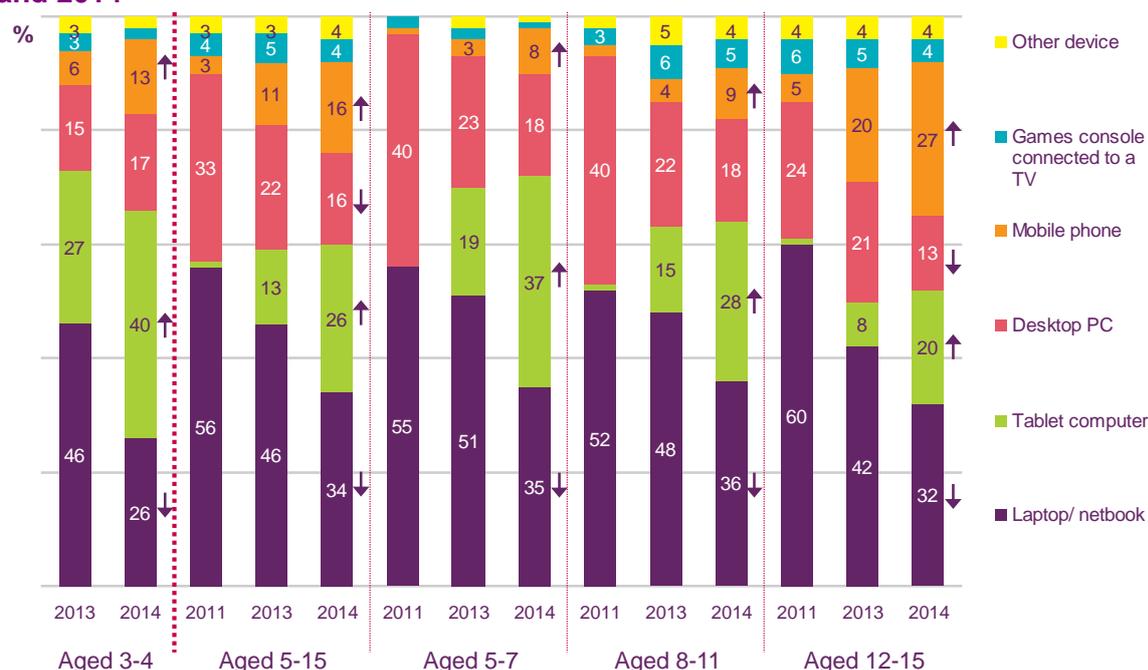


QP3F/ QP4 - I'm going to read out a list of different types of equipment that you may or may not have in your home, and which your child may or may not use (prompted responses, single coded)/ You mentioned that your child has their own mobile phone. Is this a Smartphone? A Smartphone is a phone on which 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 or 5-15 (685 aged 3-4 in 2013, 731 aged 3-4 in 2014, 1717 aged 5-15 in 2011, 1689 aged 5-15 in 2013, 1660 aged 5-15 in 2014, 573 aged 5-7 in 2011, 533 aged 5-7 in 2013, 453 aged 5-7 in 2014, 586 aged 8-11 in 2011, 587 aged 8-11 in 2013, 609 aged 8-11 in 2014, 558 aged 12-15 in 2011, 569 aged 12-15 in 2013, 598 aged 12-15 in 2014) - significance testing shows any differences between 2013 and 2014
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to June 2014

Half of children are using a device other than a PC, laptop or netbook for most of their online activity

- 5.6 Figure 3 shows that the number of children who mostly access the internet via a laptop or netbook has decreased to 34%, down from 46% in 2013. The number mostly using a PC has also decreased, from 22% to 16%. In contrast, the number of children who are now mainly using an alternative device to go online has increased to 50% from 32% in 2013, with tablets (26%) and mobiles (16%) the most popular devices.
- 5.7 Over two in five children are using tablets to go online (42%) – nearly twice as many as last year (23%). This increase is evident in every age group, rising from 12% to 20% among 3-4 year olds, 21% to 33% among 5-7 year olds, 27% to 43% among 8-11 year olds and 22% to 46% among 12-15 year olds.
- 5.8 Almost three in five of 12-15s use a mobile phone to go online at home (59% vs. 52% in 2013).

Figure 3: Devices used 'mostly' by children to go online at home, by age: 2011, 2013 and 2014



QP25B – And when your child goes online at home or elsewhere, which device do they mostly use? (prompted responses, single coded) In 2014 responses are taken from the child aged 8-11 or aged 12-15 rather than the parent
 Base: Parents of children whose child ever goes online at home or elsewhere aged 3-4 or 5-15 (219 aged 3-4 in 2013, 272 aged 3-4 in 2014, 1421 aged 5-15 in 2011, 1429 aged 5-15 in 2013, 1412 aged 5-15 in 2014, 396 aged 5-7 in 2011, 381 aged 5-7 in 2013, 300 aged 5-7 in 2014, 496 aged 8-11 in 2011, 497 aged 8-11 in 2013, 528 aged 8-11 in 2014, 529 aged 12-15 in 2011, 551 aged 12-15 in 2013, 584 aged 12-15 in 2014). Significance testing shows any change between 2013 and 2014.
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to June 2014

Children's media activities

5.9 Given the increase in multi-functional devices in 2014, the survey asked for the first time what media activities children were undertaking on media devices, to better understand which devices are being used for which activities. We also asked about the preferred device for undertaking particular activities. The results are displayed by age in figures 4, 5, 6 and 7, below.

Younger children are more likely to use tablets for many activities while older children are more likely to use their mobile phones

- 5.10 Among 3-4 year olds and 8-11 year olds one of the most popular activities was watching full length films and all age groups were most likely to use the TV for this activity.
- 5.11 PCs and tablets were the device most used for schoolwork among all ages except 3-4s.
- 5.12 Playing games on their own was an activity enjoyed by the majority of all age groups. Among 3-4 year olds and 5-7 year olds a tablet was the most popular device for doing this (used by 37% of 3-4s and 41% of 5-7s). Among 8-11 and 12-15 year olds the most popular device was a games player (39% of 8-11s and 43% of 12-15s), followed by a tablet for 8-11s (33%) and a mobile phone (34%) and then a tablet (24%) for 12-15s.
- 5.13 Tablets were the second most popular device for watching short videos among both 3-4s and 5-7s (22% for both), after the TV. A similar proportion of 8-11s watch short videos through a TV (33%) or a laptop/PC (25%) or a tablet (23%).

- 5.14 While the tablet was also popular among 12-15s, it was among this group that the mobile phone really came to prominence. The mobile phone was the most-used device among 12-15s for arranging to meet friends (71%), sending or posting messages just for friends (53%), looking at photos posted by friends (47%), sharing photos (45%), sending or posting messages that anybody can see (31%) and watching videos made by friends (28%).
- 5.15 The importance of mobile phones among 12-15s was reflected by the fact that this group was twice as likely to say that, of all the devices they use regularly, they would most miss their mobile phone (37%), compared with the next most missed device, the TV set (18%). The device children aged 5-7 and 8-11 were most likely to miss is the TV set (cited by 55% and 34% respectively), followed by a tablet computer (15% and 16%).

Figure 4: Devices used to undertake each activity among children aged 3-4 who go online: 2014

Activity	USE ANY DEVICE	TV	Laptop /PC	Tablet	Mobile phone	Games player
Watch full-length films/ movies	86%	76%	8%	13%	1%	1%
Play games on their own	75%	4%	24%	37%	14%	10%
Watch short videos – like music videos, comedy clips or trailers for new films	65%	27%	17%	22%	9%	0%
Listen to music	57%	14%	11%	12%	10%	0%
Look around online to pass the time or have fun	41%	3%	22%	16%	6%	0%
Play games with or against other people	30%	2%	9%	10%	6%	5%
Watch 'how to' videos for instructions or reviews	27%	9%	10%	9%	1%	0%
Find information for their school work	27%	1%	21%	7%	2%	0%
Look at photos posted by other people	21%	2%	10%	6%	6%	0%
Share photos or videos with other people	10%	1%	5%	2%	2%	0%
Send messages to other people	5%	1%	2%	1%	1%	0%

QP56 – Please think about all the different devices or types of technology that your child uses nowadays - either at home or at other people's homes, at school, on holiday or when out and about. I'm going to read some things that they might do and I'd like you to use this card to say which devices they use for each one I read out. Which devices do they use nowadays to [ACTIVITY]? (Prompted responses, multi-coded)

Base: Parents of children aged 3-4 who go online at home or elsewhere (272)

Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to June 2014. Although not shown in this chart parents/children were also asked about use of E-book readers and portable media players

Figure 5: Devices used to undertake each activity among children aged 5-7 who go online: 2014

Activity	USE ANY DEVICE	TV	Laptop /PC	Tablet	Mobile phone	Games player
Watch full-length films/ movies	94%	88%	9%	9%	0%	2%
Play games on their own	87%	4%	23%	41%	14%	29%
Watch short videos – like music videos, comedy clips or trailers for new films	69%	33%	19%	22%	5%	0%
Find information for their school work	65%	5%	48%	20%	3%	0%
Listen to music	64%	18%	13%	21%	8%	0%
Look around online to pass the time or have fun	56%	7%	25%	24%	7%	3%
Play games with or against other people	42%	3%	12%	16%	4%	14%
Watch 'how to' videos for instructions or reviews	31%	8%	10%	15%	2%	0%
Look at photos posted by other people	27%	1%	11%	10%	7%	0%
Send messages to other people	17%	0%	4%	4%	7%	1%
Share photos or videos with other people	12%	1%	5%	5%	3%	0%

QP56 – Please think about all the different devices or types of technology that your child uses nowadays - either at home or at other people’s homes, at school, on holiday or when out and about. I’m going to read some things that they might do and I’d like you to use this card to say which devices they use for each one I read out. Which devices do they use nowadays to [ACTIVITY]? (Prompted responses, multi-coded)

Base: Parents of children aged 5-7 who go online at home or elsewhere (300)

Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to June 2014.

Although not shown in the chart, parents/children were also asked about use of E-book readers and portable media players.

Figure 6: Devices used to undertake each activity, among children aged 8-11 who go online: 2014

Activity	USE ANY DEVICE	TV	Laptop /PC	Tablet	Mobile phone	Games player
Watch full-length films/ movies	93%	88%	10%	10%	1%	2%
Play games on your own	88%	3%	29%	33%	18%	39%
Find information for your school work	85%	2%	63%	27%	7%	0%
Watch short videos – like music videos, comedy clips or trailers for new films	74%	33%	25%	23%	7%	1%
Look around online to pass the time or have fun	73%	4%	46%	28%	11%	5%
Play games with or against other people	45%	1%	12%	9%	4%	25%
Send or post messages just for your friends	38%	0%	10%	10%	20%	1%
Arrange to meet friends	38%	0%	4%	5%	26%	1%
Watch 'how to' videos for instructions or reviews	36%	7%	16%	11%	4%	1%
Look at photos posted by your friends	35%	1%	14%	10%	16%	0%
Visit a site about something you're interested in where you can talk or message others - maybe a music or games site	34%	1%	17%	10%	10%	2%
Share photos you have taken	31%	0%	8%	9%	14%	0%
Watch videos made by your friends	30%	4%	12%	7%	9%	0%
Watch videos posted by celebrities or by YouTube personalities (such as PewDiePie or Jenna Marbles)	30%	4%	16%	10%	6%	1%
Make video calls through services like Skype, FaceTime or Oovoo	29%	0%	13%	11%	5%	0%
Download music for you to own	26%	0%	11%	7%	7%	0%
Listen to live radio programmes	24%	5%	1%	2%	3%	0%
Look at photos posted by celebrities	21%	2%	10%	6%	6%	0%
Share videos you have made	21%	0%	5%	7%	8%	1%
Send or post messages that anybody can see	21%	0%	6%	3%	11%	1%
Stream music online – through sites such as Spotify, Soundcloud, Dweezer and Last FM	18%	1%	7%	7%	6%	0%
Write reviews about apps, games or some other product or service	11%	0%	6%	3%	3%	0%

QC15 – Please think about all the different devices or types of technology that you use nowadays - either at home or at other people's homes, at school, on holiday or when out and about. I'm going to read some things that you might do and I'd like you to use this card to say which devices you use for each one I read out. Which devices do you use nowadays to [activity]? (Prompted responses, multi-coded)

Base: Children aged 8-11 who go online at home or elsewhere (528)

Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to June 2014. Although not shown in the chart, parents/children were also asked about use of e-book readers and portable media players.

Figure 7: Devices used to undertake each activity among children aged 12-15 who go online: 2014

Activity	USE ANY DEVICE	TV	Laptop /PC	Tablet	Mobile phone	Games player
Watch full-length films/ movies	96%	85%	19%	10%	3%	5%
Find information for your school work	91%	4%	73%	24%	18%	1%
Look around online to pass the time or have fun	89%	5%	50%	29%	35%	6%
Watch short videos – like music videos, comedy clips or trailers for new films	89%	29%	38%	27%	27%	5%
Play games on your own	89%	3%	27%	24%	34%	43%
Arrange to meet friends	84%	0%	13%	11%	71%	4%
Send or post messages just for your friends	81%	1%	29%	19%	53%	3%
Look at photos posted by your friends	78%	0%	31%	20%	47%	1%
Share photos you have taken	69%	0%	20%	15%	45%	2%
Download music for you to own	66%	1%	29%	13%	29%	1%
Visit a site about something you're interested in where you can talk or message others - maybe a music or games site	62%	1%	35%	18%	23%	3%
Watch videos posted by celebrities or by YouTube personalities (such as PewDiePie or Jenna Marbles)	59%	5%	26%	20%	22%	2%
Play games with or against other people	59%	3%	18%	10%	11%	34%
Watch videos made by your friends	57%	3%	22%	15%	28%	1%
Send or post messages that anybody can see	54%	1%	22%	12%	31%	1%
Watch 'how to' videos for instructions or reviews	52%	6%	29%	18%	14%	2%
Look at photos posted by celebrities	51%	2%	26%	12%	24%	1%
Make video calls through services like Skype, FaceTime or Oovoo	47%	1%	22%	15%	16%	1%
Stream music online – through sites such as Spotify, Soundcloud, Dweezer and Last FM	47%	1%	20%	14%	22%	1%
Share videos you have made	44%	0%	15%	8%	26%	1%
Listen to live radio programmes	37%	6%	6%	4%	15%	0%
Write reviews about apps, games or some other product or service	22%	0%	13%	6%	8%	1%

QC15 – Please think about all the different devices or types of technology that you use nowadays - either at home or at other people's homes, at school, on holiday or when out and about. I'm going to read some things that you might do and I'd like you to use this card to say which devices you use for each one I read out. Which devices do you use nowadays to [ACTIVITY]? (Prompted responses, multi-coded) Base: Children aged 12-15 who go online at home or elsewhere (584) Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to June 2014. Although not shown in the chart, parents/children were also asked about use of E-book readers and portable media players.

Children's use, attitudes and concerns around sites regularly visited

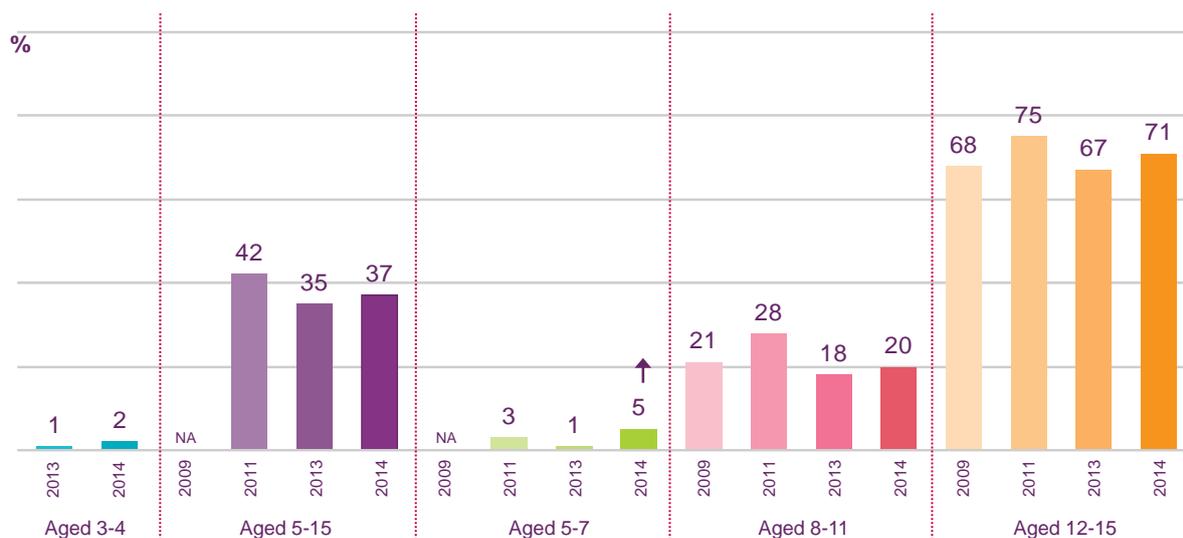
Older children are more likely to say that they use websites they have not visited before

- 5.16 The majority of 8-11s (58%) continue to say they only use websites they have visited before, compared to around one in three 12-15s (35%). 12-15s were more likely than 8-11s to say they use lots of websites they have not visited before (18% vs. 4%) and were also more likely than 8-11s to say they use one or two websites they haven't visited before (41% vs. 29%).

While the majority of 12-15s have a social media profile or account, this is much less likely among younger children

- 5.17 Parents of children aged 3-4 or aged 5-7 who went online at home or elsewhere and children aged 8-11 or 12-15 who went online at home or elsewhere 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. This represents a change in approach in 2014, as parents and children were previously asked about social networking sites rather than social media sites or apps.
- 5.18 As shown in Figure 8, below, very few parents of children aged 3-4 who go online say their child has a social media profile (2%). While very few parents of 5-7s who go online say their child has a social media profile (5%), this was higher than the 2013 measure for a social networking site profile among home users aged 5-7 (1%). One in five who go online aged 8-11 (20%) and seven in 10 who go online aged 12-15 (71%) had a social media profile, both measures unchanged since 2013. Nineteen per cent of 8-12s who go online at home or elsewhere in 2014 said they have a profile on Facebook.

Figure 8: Children who go online with an active social networking site profile (2009, 2011, and 2013) or social media profile or account (2014), by age

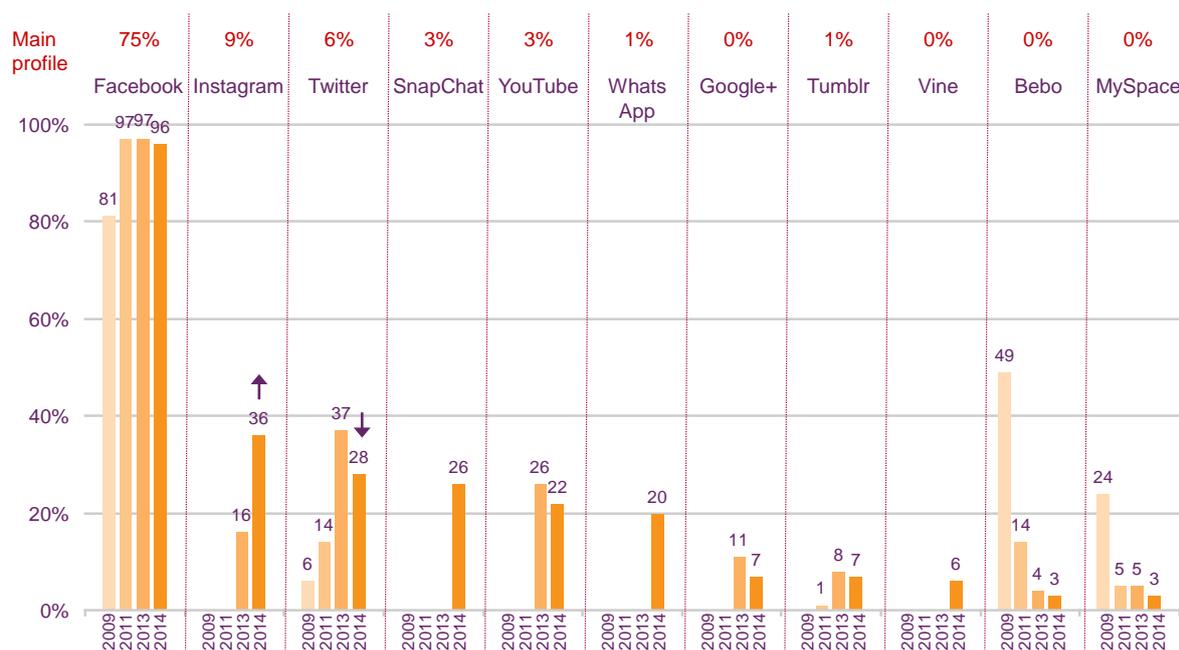


QP45/ QC22 – [READ OUT DESCRIPTION OF SOCIAL MEDIA ACTIVITIES, SITES AND APPS] Does your child have a social media profile or account on any sites or apps? (prompted responses, single coded) In 2014 responses are taken from the child aged 8-11 or aged 12-15 rather than the parent
 Base: Parents of children aged 3-4 or 5-15 who go online at home or elsewhere (685 aged 3-4 in 2013, 731 aged 3-4 in 2014, 576 aged 5-7 in 2009, 573 aged 5-7 in 2011, 533 aged 5-7 in 2013, 453 aged 5-7 in 2014, 773 aged 8-11 in 2009, 586 aged 8-11 in 2011, 587 aged 8-11 in 2013, 609 aged 8-11 in 2014, 781 aged 12-15 in 2009, 558 aged 12-15 in 2011, 569 aged 12-15 in 2013, 598 aged 12-15 in 2014). Question amended in 2014 to refer to social media sites or apps, previously referred to social networking sites.
 Significance testing shows any differences between 2013 and 2014
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rosstiter-Base in April to June 2014

While Facebook is still the most ubiquitous site, SnapChat and WhatsApp are now being used by a notable minority of 12-15s

5.19 As shown in Figure 9, nearly all 12-15s with a social media profile said they use Facebook (96%), unchanged since 2013. No other social media site or app was used by a majority of 12-15s with a social media profile. Instagram was now more likely to be used than in 2013 (36% vs. 16%), while fewer 12-15s said they have a profile on Twitter (28% vs. 37%). Three social media sites or apps were shown for the first time in 2014: SnapChat (26%), WhatsApp (20%) and Vine (6%).

Figure 9: Social networking sites where children aged 12-15 have a profile (2009, 2011, 2013) or social media sites or apps used by children aged 12-15 (2014)



QC23A – Which social media sites or apps do you use? (spontaneous responses, multi coded) – showing responses of more than 2% of children aged 12-15 using any social media sites or apps
 Base: Children aged 12-15 who have a social networking site profile (442 aged 12-15 in 2009, 407 aged 12-15 in 2011, 378 in 2013) using any social media sites or apps (415 aged 12-15 in 2014). Question amended in 2014 to refer to social media sites or apps, previously referred to social networking sites. Significance testing shows any differences between 2013 and 2014. Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to June 2014

- 5.20 In 2014, there were some differences by gender among 12-15s. Boys were more likely than girls to have a profile on YouTube (29% vs. 15%), while girls were more likely than boys to have a profile on Instagram (42% vs. 30%), SnapChat (33% vs. 20%) and Tumblr (11% vs. 3%).
- 5.21 Three-quarters (75%) of 12-15s with a profile considered Facebook to be their main profile, although this had decreased since 2013 (75% vs. 87%). In 2014 girls aged 12-15 were more likely than boys to say their main profile is on SnapChat (5% vs. 1%).

Bullying, spending too much time on the sites and strangers finding out information about them were the concerns 12-15s were most likely to raise about social media

- 5.22 Children aged 12-15 who use social media sites or apps were prompted with a list of 11 things that they might not like about social media sites or apps and were asked to say which, if any, applied to them. Three aspects were named as dislikes by around one-quarter of 12-15s who use social media sites or apps: “sometimes people get bullied on them” (29%), “I sometimes spend too much time on them” (29%) and “strangers might find out information about me” (24%). Other dislikes or concerns were mentioned by fewer than one in five users aged 12-15.
- 5.23 Four of the 11 aspects of social media were more likely to be mentioned as dislikes or concerns by girls than by boys aged 12-15: “sometimes people get bullied on them” (37% vs. 21%), “I sometimes spend too much time on them” (36% vs. 22%), “friends posting photos of me without my permission” (24% vs. 8%) and “friends can be mean, nasty or hurtful to me” (12% vs. 6%). Across all 11 aspects, three-quarters

of girls aged 12-15 (73%) mentioned any concerns or dislikes, compared to half of boys (52%).

Children's online understanding

There have been some increases in critical understanding since 2013, but identifying some kinds of advertising still poses problems

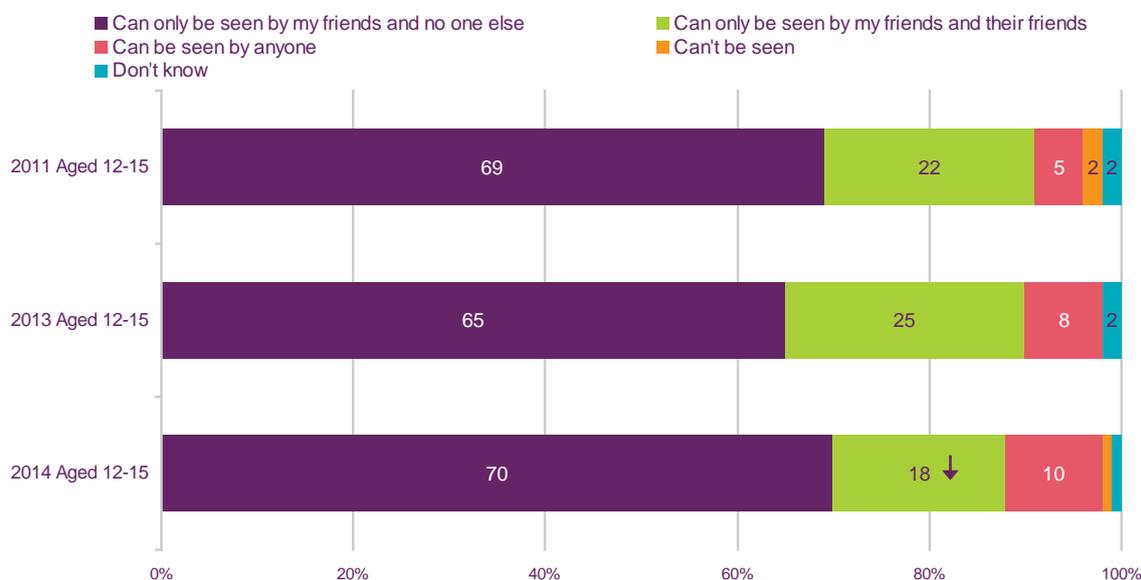
- 5.24 More than half of children aged 12-15 (52%) make some type of critical judgement about search engine results, believing that some of the sites returned will be truthful while others may not be. Two in 10 12-15s (20%) believed that if a search engine listed information then it must be truthful, and a similar proportion (18%) did not consider the veracity of results but just visited the sites they like the look of. One in 10 12-15s (10%) is unsure. Compared to 2013, 12-15s are now more likely to understand how search engines operate: they are less likely to believe that if a search engine lists a result it must be truthful (20% vs. 32%) and more likely to believe that some results will be truthful and others may not be (52% vs. 45%).
- 5.25 In 2014, children aged 8-15 who use search engine websites were shown a picture of the results returned by Google for an online search for trainers. Their attention was drawn to the first three results at the top of the list and asked whether they knew why these results appeared in a shaded box. A majority of search engine users aged 8-11 (60%) were unsure why these results were shown in a shaded box, with around one in eight (13%) correctly answering that it was because they were sponsored links/advertising/paid to appear there. Similar proportions of 8-11s gave incorrect responses, either saying it was due to the results being the most relevant or best results (15%) or that they were the most popular results used by other people (12%).
- 5.26 Compared to 8-11s, children aged 12-15 demonstrated a better understanding of which results are sponsored or paid for, with 34% giving the correct response. However, the majority either don't know or gave the incorrect response. Compared to 8-11s, children aged 12-15 are less likely to be unsure (38% vs. 60%) but are as likely to give an incorrect response.
- 5.27 More than half of 12-15s (56%), after being provided with a description of online personalised advertising, said they were aware of this practice; with one in three (34%) saying they were not aware that websites could use information in this way. Compared to 2013, children aged 12-15 are more likely to say they were aware of personalised online advertising (56% vs. 48%).

A third of children could be contacted through their social media profile by people not directly known to them, unchanged since 2013

- 5.28 In 2014, most children aged 12-15 with a social media profile said that their profile could be seen only by their friends (70%), while around one in 10 said it could be seen by anyone (10%) and nearly one in five said it could be seen only by "my friends and their friends", a decrease since 2013 (25%).
- 5.29 By combining the responses of children who said their profile could either be seen by anyone, or by friends and their friends, Figure 10 below shows the incidence of children who could be contacted through their social media profile by people who were not directly known to them. This accounts for nearly three in 10 12-15s (28%), unchanged since 2013 (33%).

5.30 When asked about sharing information online, very few 12-15s would be happy for anyone to see contact details such as their home address, email address or phone number online (1%) or their location (2%). They were more likely to say that they would be willing to share, with friend/their friend, holiday photos or videos (11%) or photos and videos of them when out with friends (12%).

Figure 10: Visibility of social networking site profiles, by age: 2011, 2013 and 2014



QC24 – Thinking about your main social media site or app, do you know if this profile can be seen by other people? Prompted responses, single coded) - In 2011 and 2013 children were asked about social networking site profiles rather than social media profiles
 Base: Children aged 8-15 who have a social media account or profile (403 aged 12-15 in 2011, 378 aged 12-15 in 2013, 415 aged 12-15 in 2014)
 Significance testing shows any difference between 2013 and 2014. Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to June 2014

Fewer children than in 2013 say they know how to take measures to increase their privacy or block unwanted content online

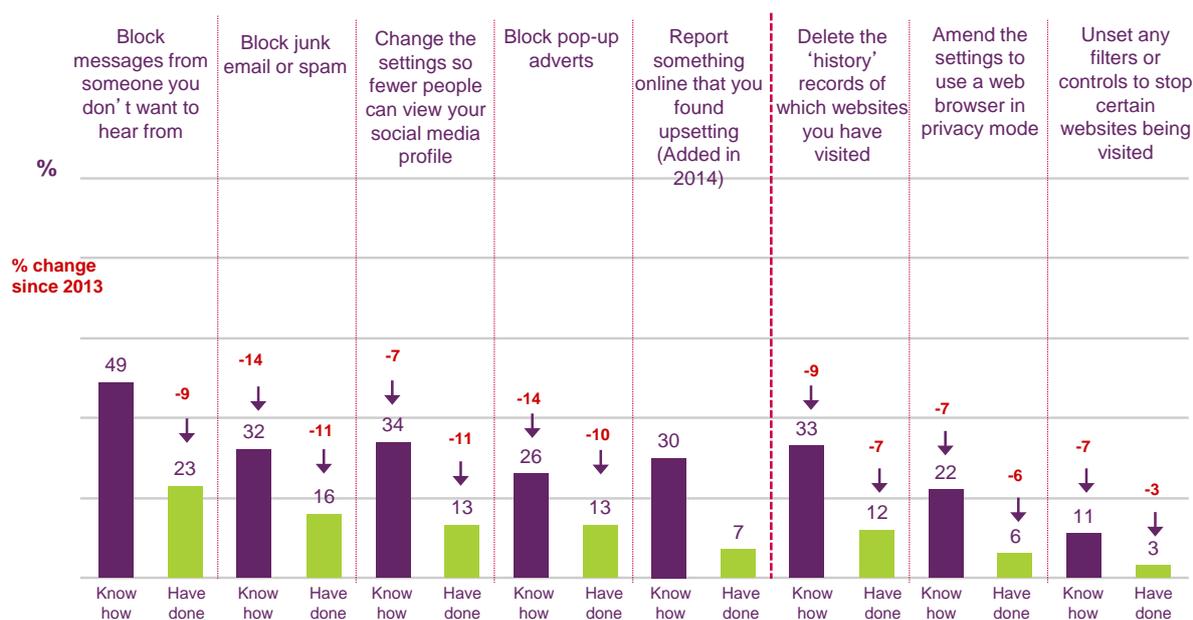
5.31 Figure 11 shows that there was no statistically significant change since 2013 in the number of children aged 12-15 who knew how to block messages from someone they don't want to hear from (49% vs. 53%), but there was a decline in the number who said they had done this (23% vs. 32%).

5.32 Around a third of 12-15s knew how to change settings on their social networking site profile so fewer people could view the profile (34%, down from 41% in 2013). Fewer than a third of 12-15s knew how to block junk email or spam (32%), down from around a half in 2013 (46%); block pop-up adverts (26% vs. 40%); or report something online that they found upsetting (30%, added in 2014). The numbers who said that they have done these things were even smaller, and all had fallen since last year (with the exception of reporting something online which was only added in 2014).

The numbers saying that they know how to, or have done, the potentially risky online activities that we ask about have also fallen.

5.33 Thirty three per cent of 12-15s knew how to delete their browsing history (42% in 2013) and 12% claimed to have done this in the past year (19% in 2013). One in five (22%) knew how to amend settings to use a web browser in privacy mode (29% in 2013) and 6% claimed to have done this (12% in 2013). Around one in 10 (11%) knew how to disable online filters or controls (18% in 2013), and just 3% had done this in the past year (6% in 2013).

Figure 11: Experience of 'safe' and 'risky' online measures among children aged 12-15: 2013



QC54/55 – 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 have done this in the last year. (Prompted responses, multi coded)
 Base: Children aged 12-15 who use the internet at home or elsewhere (584 aged 12-15) – Significance testing shows any difference between 2013 and 2014
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to June 2014

Parents are the most likely source of information on online risks

- 5.34 Around nine in 10 children aged 8-11 (90%) or 12-15 (94%) recalled receiving advice about online risks.
- 5.35 In 2014, for both age groups, the children were most likely to recall receiving the information from a parent (75% for 8-11s and 74% for 12-15s). More than six in 10 children aged 8-11 and seven in 10 12-15s recalled receiving it from a teacher (62% for 8-11s, 70% for 12-15s) and more than one in 10 from other family members (12% for 8-11s and 16% for 12-15s) or friends (11% for 8-11s and 16% for 12-15s). Other sources of information were nominated by fewer than one in 10 children in either age group. Children aged 8-11 were more likely than 12-15s to say they have not been given any information or advice (8% vs. 5%).

Figure 12: Children stating they have been given any information or advice about staying safe online, by age: 2011, 2013 and 2014



QC34 – Have you ever been given any information or advice about risks while you are online (*2014) how to stay safe when you are online (2013)? (spontaneous responses, multi-coded)

Base: Children aged 8-15 who use the internet at home or elsewhere (563 aged 8-11 in 2011, 554 aged 8-11 in 2013, 528 aged 8-11 in 2014, 550 aged 12-15 in 2011, 565 aged 12-15 in 2013, 584 aged 12-15 in 2014). Significance testing shows any difference between 2013 and 2014.

Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to June 2014

Children’s online concerns and dislikes

Around one in 10 children expressed dislikes about some of the things they see online

- 5.36 One in eight children aged 8-11 (12%) disliked seeing things that made them feel sad, frightened or embarrassed, compared to 8% of children aged 12-15.
- 5.37 Around one in 10 in each age group (9%) disliked seeing things that were too old for them, an increase for 12-15s since 2013 (from 4%).
- 5.38 When looking at the proportion of children who had either of these two key concerns, 17% of 8-11s and 14% of 12-15s disliked seeing things online that were too old for them or things that made them feel sad, frightened or embarrassed. This incidence had not changed since 2013 for either age group.
- 5.39 Twelves to fifteens were more likely than 8-11s to dislike: “Bad things friends have written about me or photos of me on their profile page/ web page” (11% of 12-15s vs. 6% of 8-11s), “Friends being nasty, mean or unkind to me” (9% 12-15s vs. 5% 8-11s) and “Feeling under pressure to appear popular or attractive online” (7% of 12-15s vs. 4% of 8-11s).

12-15s are more likely than 8-11s to encounter bullying online

- 5.40 Twice as many 12-15s as 8-11s said they had been bullied online in the past 12 months, accounting for 3% of 8-11s and 8% of 12-15s. Both measures were unchanged since 2013. In 2014, there was no difference by gender among 12-15s in terms of personal experience of being bullied online, whereas this was more likely among girls in 2013.

- 5.41 Twelve to 15s were also more likely than 8-11s to know of someone who had been bullied online (26% vs. 10%). Within the 12-15 group, girls were more likely than boys to know someone who had been bullied online (31% vs. 22%). Both of these differences were also evident in 2013.
- 5.42 One in 10 children aged 8-11 who use the internet at home or elsewhere (8%) said they had seen something online in the past year that was worrying, nasty or offensive, with 12-15s being twice as likely to say this (18%). Both measures are unchanged since 2013.
- 5.43 In 2014, 12-15s were more likely than in 2013 to say they would not tell anyone if they saw something online that was worrying, nasty or offensive (7% vs. 4% for 12-15s). Eight to 11s are now more likely to say they would tell a family member (93% vs. 86%) and less likely to say they would tell a teacher (18% vs. 27%).

Section 6

Children and the internet: parental concerns

Key Findings

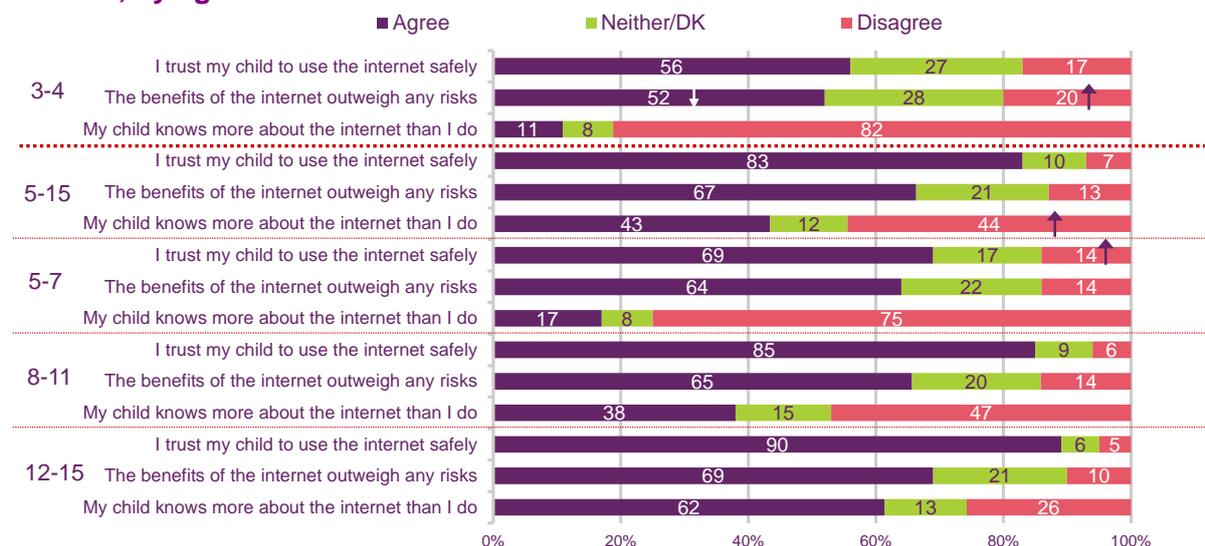
- A minority of parents of 3-4s and 5-15s express concerns about the media content that their child has access to, but the number of parents to say they are concerned about media content overall has increased. While it is likely that this increase is attributable to a change in the survey's focus from a child's use of media "at home" in previous years to "at home and elsewhere" in 2014, it is also possible that parents' concerns about particular aspects of their child's media use have increased as the use of mobile devices to go online has increased.
- Around three in 10 parents of 5-15s say they are concerned about their child being bullied online/cyberbullying (30%) or who their child may be in contact with online (26%).
- Around one in four parents of 5-15s say they are concerned about their child sharing inappropriate or personal photos or videos (22%), damaging their reputation (26%) or seeing content which encourages them to harm themselves (25%).
- Most parents of 5-15s who go online at home trust their child to use the internet safely (83%), and feel that the benefits of the internet outweigh the risks (67%).

Most parents trust their child to use the internet safely and agree that the benefits of the internet outweigh the risks

- 6.1 Parents of children aged 3-15 who use the internet at home were asked about the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with a range of statements about their child's use of the internet. Figure 13 below summarises these attitude statements by age for 2014.
- 6.2 The majority of parents agreed with the statement: "I trust my child to use the internet safely" (83%), unchanged since 2013. Slightly fewer than one in 10 parents of all 5-15s (7%) disagreed. Parent's agreement that they trust their child increased with each age group. While the majority of parents of 3-4s agreed (56%), they were much less likely to agree than parents of 5-7s, 8-11s and 12-15s.
- 6.3 The majority of parents of 5-15s who go online at home or elsewhere agreed that the benefits of the internet outweigh the risks (67%), while around one in eight (13%) disagreed. In 2014, as in 2013, there is no variation in the level of agreement by the age of the child and there has been no change in the levels of agreement for any age group of children aged 5-15 compared to 2013. Half of parents of 3-4s who go online also agreed with this statement, a decrease since 2013 (52%vs. 63%), while one in five disagreed, an increase since 2013 (20% vs. 12%).
- 6.4 Around two in five parents of a child aged 5-15 who goes online (43%) agreed with the statement: "My child knows more about the internet than I do", while a similar proportion (44%) disagreed. Agreement increases with each age group of 5-15s, with

nearly one in five parents of a 5-7 year old agreeing (17%), compared with two in five parents of an 8-11 year old (38%) and three in five parents of 12-15s (62%). One in 10 parents of children aged 3-4 (11%) agreed with this statement, with eight in 10 (82%) disagreeing. There is one change compared to 2013: parents of 5-15s are now more likely to disagree (44% vs. 39%), but there is no change in the level of agreement for any age group.

Figure 13: Summary of parental agreement with attitudinal statements about the internet, by age: 2014

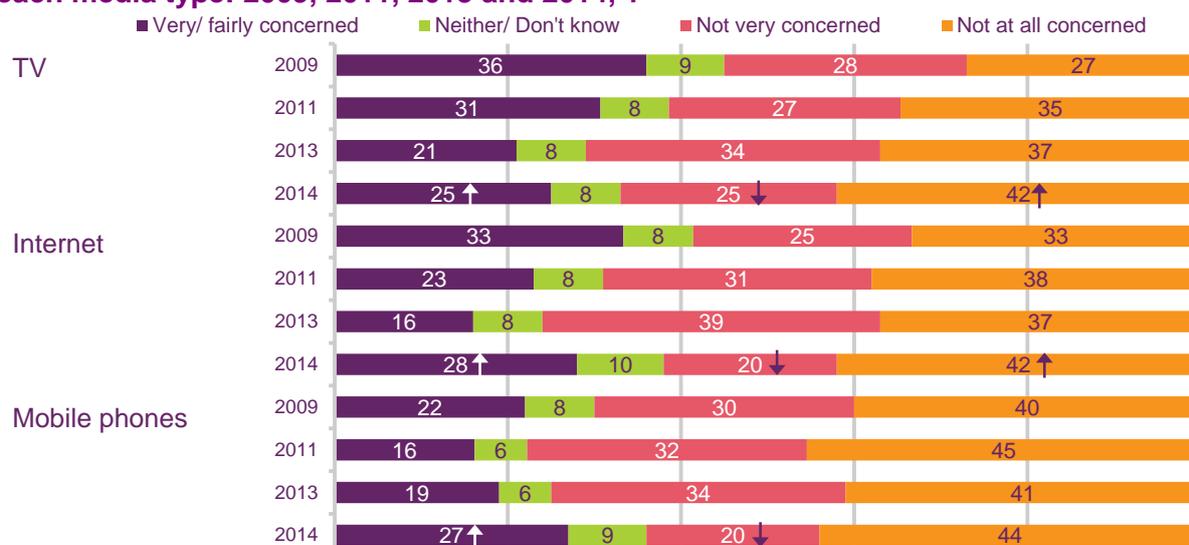


QP49B – Please tell me the extent to which you agree or disagree with these statements in relation to your child? (prompted responses, single coded)
 Base: Parents of children who use the internet at home or elsewhere (219 aged 3-4 in 2013, 272 aged 3-4 in 2014, 1421 aged 5-15 in 2011, 1426 aged 5-15 in 2013, 1402 aged 5-15 in 2014, 396 aged 5-7 in 2011, 381 aged 5-7 in 2013, 300 aged 5-7 in 2014, 496 aged 8-11 in 2011, 497 aged 8-11 in 2013, 523 aged 8-11 in 2014, 529 aged 12-15 in 2011, 548 aged 12-15 in 2013, 579 aged 12-15 in 2014). Significance testing shows any difference between 2013 and 2014
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to June 2014

The number of parents with concerns about media content has increase since 2013, possibly due to a change in the questions to include media use outside the home

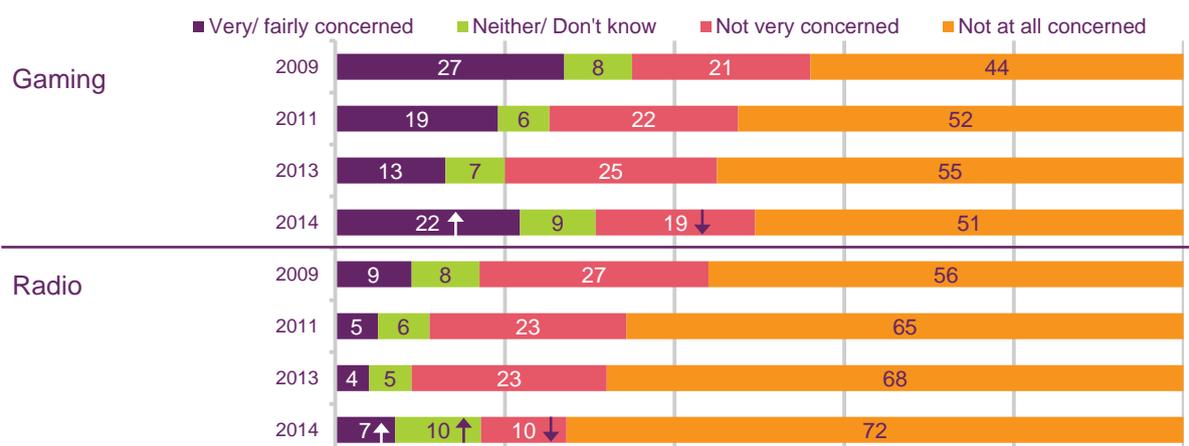
- 6.5 The research found an increase in concerns across all types of media content among parents of 5-15s in 2014, including content on TV, the internet, mobile phones, gaming and radio. There were also increases in concern among parents of 3-4 year olds about content on TV, the internet and gaming but not on the radio. This compares with year on year falls in levels of concern since 2009.
- 6.6 It is likely that this increase is attributable to a change in the survey’s focus from a child’s use of media “at home” in previous years to “at home and elsewhere” in 2014, with concerns increasing as parents took into consideration their child’s media use outside the home and/or use through portable devices. However, it is also possible that parents’ concerns about particular aspects of their child’s media use may have increased. Despite these higher levels compared to 2013, a minority of parents express concerns about the media content their child has access to, as shown in Figures 14 and 15, below.

Figure 14: Parental concerns about media content, among parents of 5-15s using each media type: 2009, 2011, 2013 and 2014, 1



QP17A/ QP53A/ QP61A – Please tell me the extent to which you are concerned about these aspects of your child's TV viewing/ internet use/ mobile phone use? (prompted responses, single coded)
 Base: Parents of users of each media at home or elsewhere aged 5-15 (VARIABLE BASE) – significance testing shows any change between 2013 and 2014
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to June 2014

Figure 15: Parental concerns about media content, among parents of 5-15s using each media type: 2009, 2011, 2013 and 2014, 2



QP80A/ QP24A – Please tell me the extent to which you are concerned about these aspects of your child's games playing/ radio listening? (prompted responses, single coded)
 Base: Parents of users of each media at home or elsewhere aged 5-15 (VARIABLE BASE) – significance testing shows any change between 2013 and 2014
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to June 2014

Downloading viruses or giving out personal details to inappropriate people are the areas that are most likely to concern parents

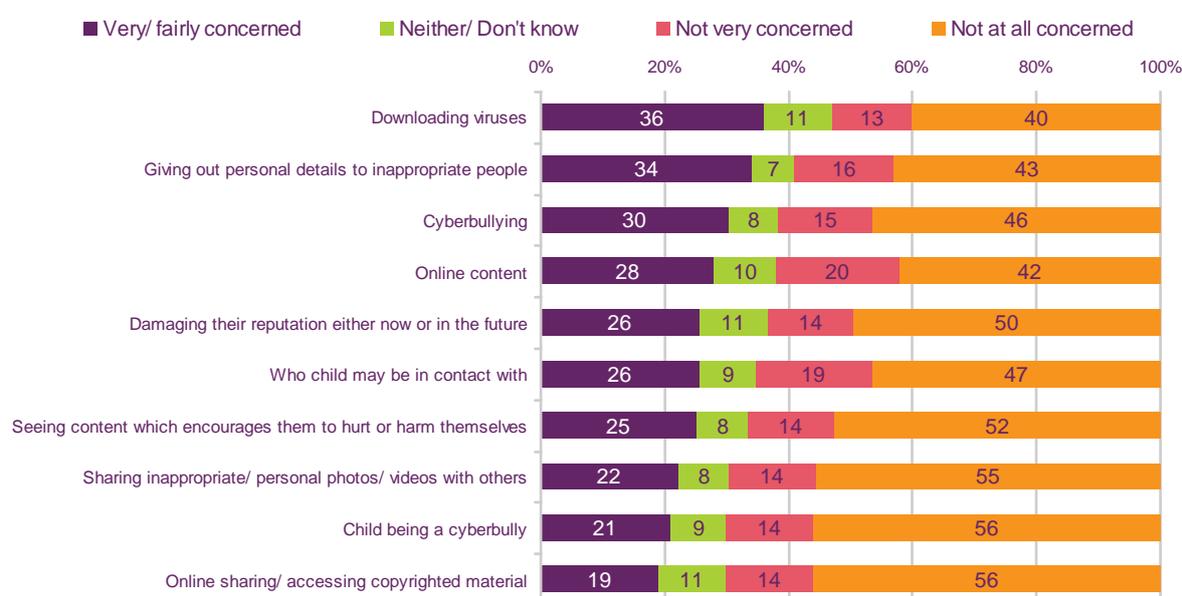
6.7 Figure 16 below summarises the various concerns that parents of 5-15s who use the internet at home were asked about. Among all parents, around one third were concerned either about their child downloading viruses (36%) or giving out details to inappropriate people (34%). Around three in 10 were concerned about their child being bullied (30%) or the content of the websites their child visits (28%). Around one-quarter were concerned about their child damaging their reputation (26%), whom their child may be in contact with online (26%) or their child seeing content online that encourages them to harm themselves (25%). Around one in five parents were concerned about their child sharing inappropriate or personal photos or videos with

others online (22%), their child potentially being a cyberbully (21%) or about any illegal online sharing or accessing of copyrighted material (19%).

6.8 Around six in 10 (58%) parents of 5-15s were concerned about any of the 10 aspects of their child’s online activities asked about. This overall summary measure of concern increases with the age of the child; accounting for 44% of parents of 5-7s, 57% of parents of 8-11s and 65% of parents of 12-15s. Concerns about each of the areas we asked about were also higher among parents of 8-11s and 12-15s than parents of 3-4s and 5-7s.

6.9 There has been an increase in the numbers of parents saying they are very or fairly concerned across all the measures asked about in both 2013 and 2014. As mentioned above, it is likely that this is attributable to the change in the survey’s focus to include media use outside the home. It is also possible that parents’ concerns about particular aspects of their child’s media use may have increased, as access to and use of mobile devices has increased.

Figure 16: Parental concerns about aspects of their child’s internet use among 5-15s: 2013



QP53A/C-K – 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 use the internet at home (1402 aged 5-15 in 2014)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to June 2014

Parental concerns about mobile phones

About a quarter of parents are concerned about that their child sees or reads on their mobile phone

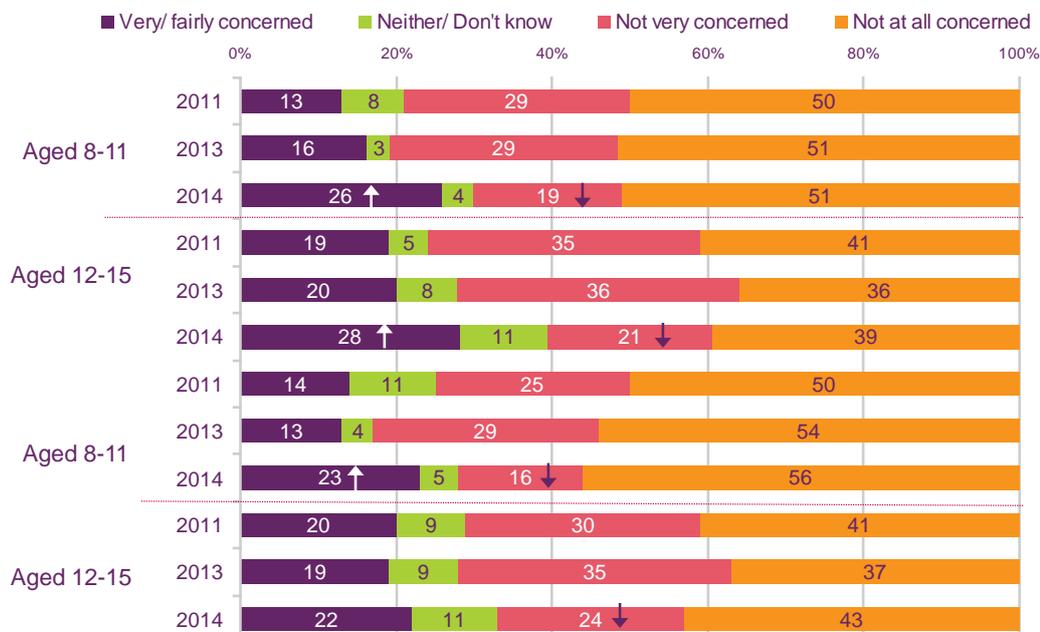
6.10 There has been an increase since 2013 in the number of parents who were concerned about what their child sees or reads on their mobile phone, and whom their child may be in contact with. This is also likely to have been affected by the change in the survey to include media use outside the home.

6.11 About a quarter of parents were concerned about what their child sees or reads on their mobile phone; accounting for 26% of parents of an 8-11 year old and 28% of

parents of a 12-15 year old. A similar proportion of parents of 8-11s (23%) and 12-15s (22%) was concerned about whom their child may be in contact with.

6.12 As in 2013, parents of children with a smartphone were no more likely than those whose child has a non-smartphone to be concerned about the mobile phone content seen by their child or whom their child is in contact with

Figure 17: Parental concerns about mobile phone content and who their child is in contact with via their mobile, by age: 2011, 2013 and 2014

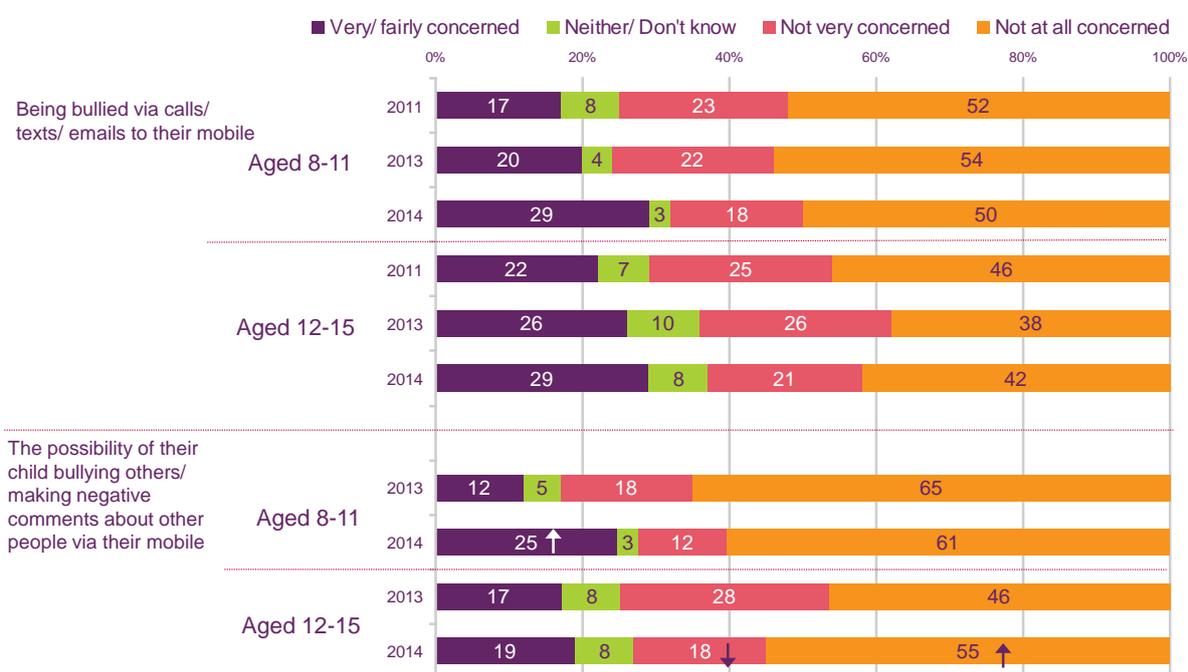


QP61A/ QP61C – Please tell me the extent to which you are concerned about these aspects of your child’s mobile phone use/ What they see or read on their mobile phone/ Who they are in contact with using their mobile phone ? (prompted responses, single coded)
 Base: Parents of children whose child has their own mobile phone (274 aged 8-11 in 2011, 188 aged 8-11 in 2013, 169 aged 8-11 in 2014, 496 aged 12-15 in 2011, 467 aged 12-15 in 2013, 463 aged 12-15 in 2014). Significance testing shows any difference between 2013 and 2014
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to June 2014

Three in 10 parents are concerned about their child being bullied through their mobile phone

6.13 Figure 18 shows that three in 10 parents of 8-11s and 12-15s (both 29%) said they were concerned about their child being bullied through their mobile phone. Around one-quarter of parents of a child aged 8-11 (25%) and 12-15 (19%) said they were concerned about their child bullying others through their mobile phone. These concerns do not vary by age or by whether the child has a smartphone or a non-smartphone and have not increased since 2013.

Figure 18: Parental concerns about their child being bullied via calls/texts/emails to the child's mobile phone, and the possibility of their child bullying others/making negative comments about other people via their mobile phone, by age: 2011, 2013 and 2014



QP61H/ QP61I – Please tell me the extent to which you are concerned about these aspects of your child's mobile phone use/ Being bullied via calls/ texts/ emails/ messages to their mobile phone/ The possibility of them bullying others or making negative comments about other people via their mobile phone (prompted responses, single coded)
 Base: Parents of children whose child has their own mobile phone (274 aged 8-11 in 2011, 188 aged 8-11 in 2013, 169 aged 8-11 in 2014, 496 aged 12-15 in 2011, 467 aged 12-15 in 2013, 463 aged 12-15 in 2014). Significance testing shows any difference between 2013 and 2014
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to June 2014

Between a fifth and a quarter of parents whose child owns a mobile phone were also concerned about their child giving out personal details, downloading malicious or bogus apps, using location based service and sharing inappropriate or personal photos or videos

- 6.14 Around one-quarter of parents whose child owns a mobile phone were concerned about their child giving out personal details to inappropriate people (23% for 8-11s and 28% for 12-15s), unchanged since 2013.
- 6.15 Parents of children aged 8-11 and 12-15, whose child has a smartphone, were asked about two additional concerns. Around one in four were concerned about their child downloading malicious or bogus apps (23% of parents of 8-11s and 26% of parents of 12-15s). A similar number were concerned about their child's use of location-based services (27% of parents of 8-11s and 26% of parents of 12-15s).
- 6.16 As with other concerns regarding mobile phones, a majority of parents of children with smartphones were unconcerned about either of these measures.
- 6.17 For the first time in 2014, parents of children with their own mobile phone were asked about concerns about their child sharing inappropriate/personal photos/videos with others through their mobile phone. One in five (22%) parents of 8-11s and 12-15s were concerned about this.

Parental concerns about online gaming

Since 2013 more parents are concerned about whom their child is playing online games with through the games player

- 6.18 Almost a quarter of parents of 5-15 year olds whose children play games online (23%) said they were concerned about whom their child is playing online games with through the games player, with no difference between 8-11s (26%) and 12-15s (22%)²⁷. This is an increase since 2013 (from 14% of parents of 8-11s and 13% of parents of 12-15s).

²⁷ The base for parents of children aged 3-4 and 5-7 who play games online is too low for analysis.

Section 7

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

Key findings: Parental confidence and mediation strategies

- Most parents agree that “I feel I know enough to help my child to manage online risks”.
- As with last year’s survey results parents use a combination of approaches to mediate their child’s access and use of online content and services, including: regularly talking to their children about managing online risks, using technical tools, supervising their child, and using rules or restrictions. One in three uses all four types of approach with only 1% of parents opting to use a technical tool in isolation of other parenting techniques.
- 5% do not mediate their child’s internet use in any of these ways, rising to 11% for parents for 12-15s¹.
- Since 2013, 12-15s are more likely to have rules regarding internet use (72% vs. 65%) and parents of 5-15s are more likely to have rules for gaming (78% vs. 74%).
- Parents of 3-11s (above 90%) are more likely to supervise their children on line than 12-15s. (In addition, parents of girls aged 12-15 are more likely than parents of boys to say they check their child’s social media activity (73% vs. 61%).
- Nearly four in five parents of 5-15s (78%) whose children go online talk to them about managing online risks, with this likelihood increasing with age. More than half (58%) of parents say they talk to their child at least every few months.
- Seven in 10 parents say they have looked for or received information or advice about how to help their child manage online risks – which appears to be more likely than in 2013. Two sources of information about technical tools are used by more than four in 10 parents of 5-15s who use these tools: information provided by an ISP (45%) and hearing about tools from friends or relatives (42%).

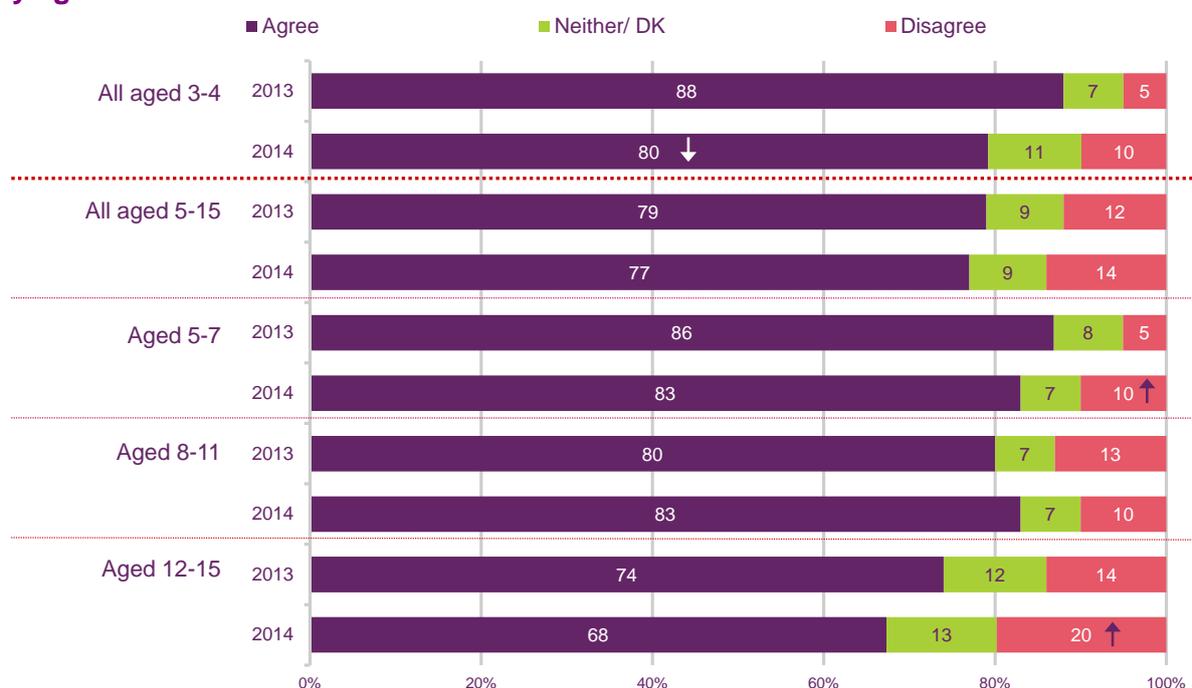
Parents’ confidence around keeping their child safe online

Most parents trust their children to use the internet safely and feel they know enough to help their children manage online risks

- 7.1 In 2014, parents of children aged 3-15 who go online at home or elsewhere were asked the extent to which they agreed that: “I feel I know enough to help my child to manage online risks”.
- 7.2 As shown in figure 19 below, three-quarters (77%) of parents of 5-15s who go online agreed with this statement, with parents of 5-7s and 8-11s (both 83%) and 3-4s (80%) more likely to agree than parents of 12-15s (68%). Around one in seven (14%) parents of 5-15s disagreed (either strongly or slightly) that they know enough to help

their child to manage online risks, with higher disagreement among parents of 12-15s (20%).

Figure 19: Parents who feel they know enough to help their child manage online risks by age: 2013 and 2014²⁸



QP49E –Please tell me the extent to which you agree or disagree with these statements in relation to your child (prompted responses, single coded)
²⁸In 2013, this question referred to 'I feel I know enough to help my child to stay safe online' Base: Parents of children who use the internet at home or elsewhere (219 aged 3-4 in 2013, 272 aged 3-4 in 2014, 1426 aged 5-15 in 2013, 1402 aged 5-15 in 2014, 381 aged 5-7 in 2013, 300 aged 5-7 in 2014, 497 aged 8-11 in 2013, 523 aged 8-11 in 2014, 548 aged 12-15 in 2013, 579 aged 12-15 in 2014). Significance testing shows any difference between 2013 and 2014. Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to June 2014

Parents are more likely than in 2013 to have sought advice on helping their child manage online risks

7.3 A majority of parents of children aged 5-15 (70%) have looked for or received information/advice from any source about how to help their child manage online risks, an increase since 2013 (53%)²⁹. Figures 20 and 21 show the responses given by parents³⁰ when they were prompted with 14 possible sources, with the option of nominating other sources.

7.4 Among parents of 5-15s, the most popular source of information is the child's school (48%). One in three said they had looked for/received information/advice from family or friends (32%) and one in seven from internet service providers/ISPs (14%). One in 10 had received advice from the media (11%) or from the child themselves (10%). All other information sources were mentioned by one in 10 parents or fewer, and fewer than one in twenty parents said they used UKCCIS or Get Safe Online (GSO)³¹ as sources of information of advice.

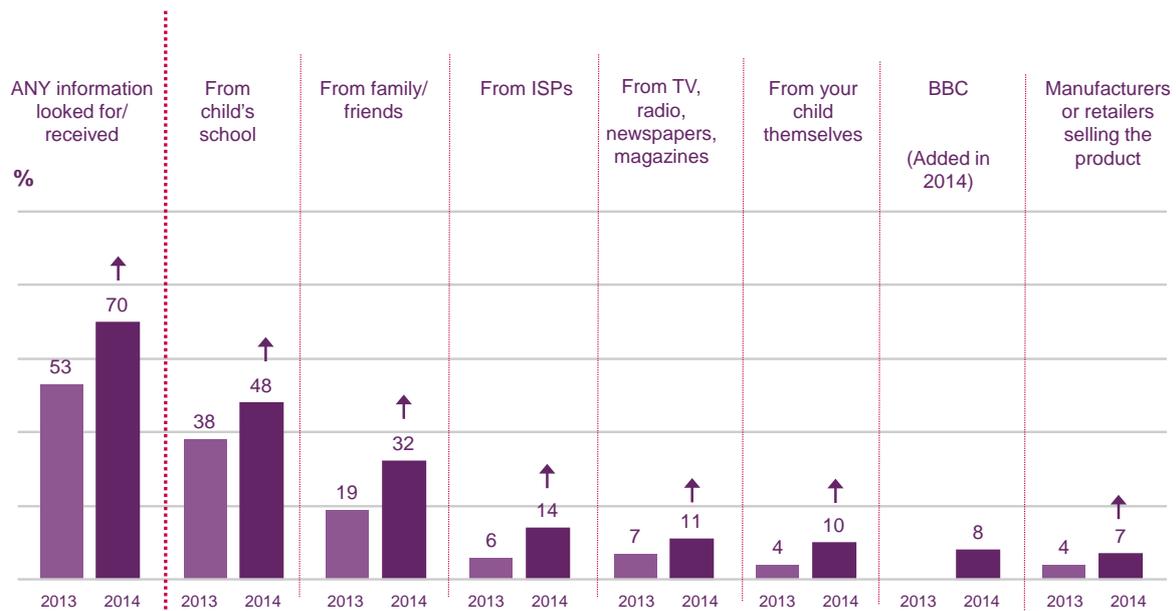
²⁸ Responses are shown alongside responses to the statement: "I feel that I know enough to help my child to stay safe online" from 2013.

²⁹ In 2013 this referred to helping their child 'to stay safe online' rather than 'to manage online risks'.

³⁰ Where more than 1% of parents gave that response.

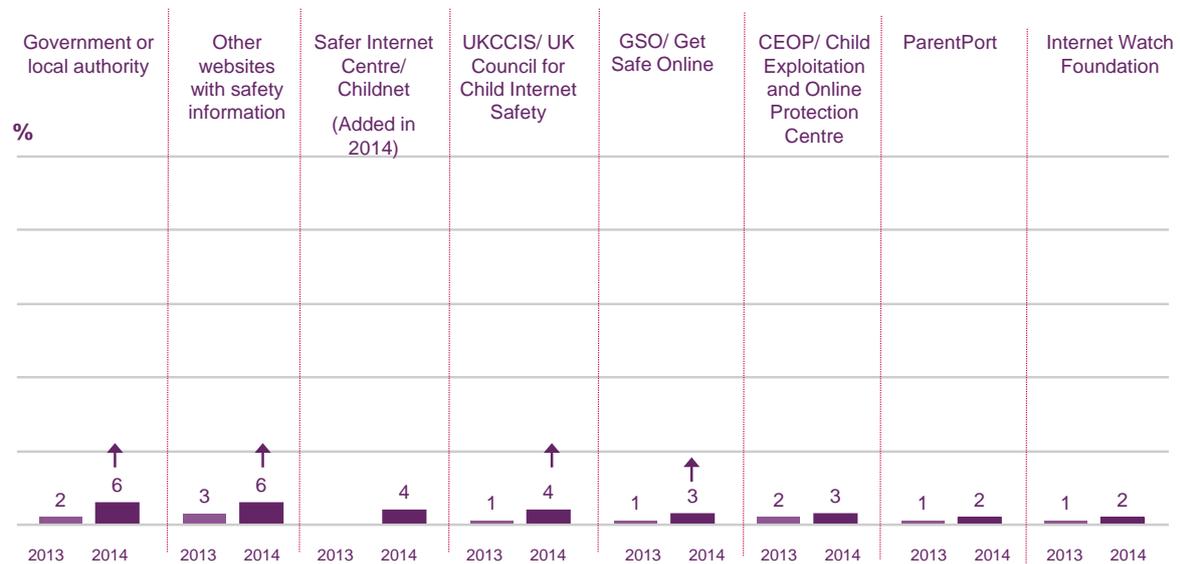
³¹ <https://www.getsafeonline.org/>

Figure 20: Parents stating they have looked for or received any information or advice about how to help their child manage online risks, 2014, 1



QP54 – Have you looked for or received information or advice about how to help your child manage online risks (* 2014)/ to stay safe when they are online (2013) from any of these sources or in any other way? (prompted responses, multi-coded) – only responses shown where >1% of all parents have given that answer
 Base: Children aged 5-15 who use the internet at home or elsewhere (1426 aged 5-15 in 2013, 1402 aged 5-15 in 2014) - Significance testing shows any differences between 2013 and 2014
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to June 2014

Figure 21: Parents stating they have looked for or received any information or advice about how to help their child to manage online risks, 2014, 2



QP54 – Have you looked for or received information or advice about how to help your child manage online risks (* 2014)/ to stay safe when they are online (2013) from any of these sources or in any other way? (prompted responses, multi-coded) – only responses shown where >1% of all parents have given that answer
 Base: Children aged 5-15 who use the internet at home or elsewhere (1426 aged 5-15 in 2013, 1402 aged 5-15 in 2014) - Significance testing shows any differences between 2013 and 2014
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to June 2014

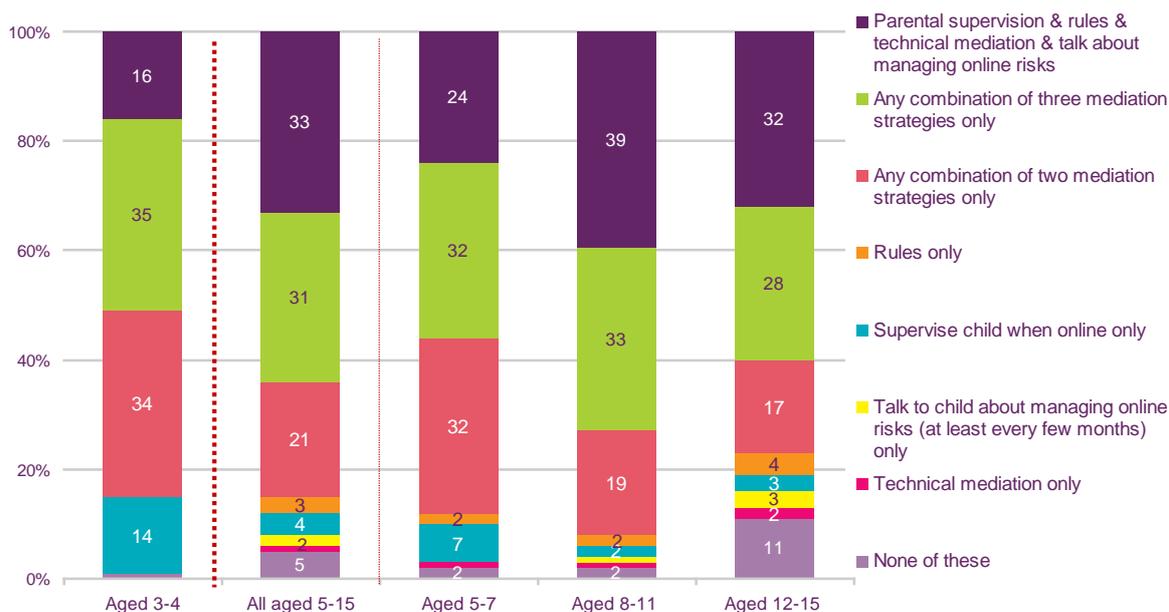
Parental mediation strategies

Parents of 5-15s use a combination of approaches to mediate their child's access to and use of online content and services, with few relying on technical tools alone

- 7.5 There is 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 into four categories:
- Various technical tools, including content filters, PIN/passwords, safe search and other forms of technical mediation;
 - Regularly talking to their child about managing online risks;
 - Rules or restrictions around online access and use; and
 - Supervision when online.
- 7.6 Figure 22 shows the relationship between the four types of mediation that parents might use to mediate their child's use of the internet.
- 7.7 One in three (33%) parents of 5-15s who go online at home or elsewhere use all four types of mediation; they regularly talk to their child about managing online risks, use any of the eight type of technical tools, supervise their child when online and use any of the eligible rules or restrictions relating to online access and use. This is more likely among parents of 8-11s (39%) and parents of 12-15s (32%) than parents of 3-4s (16%), or parents of 5-7s (24%).
- 7.8 In contrast, 5% of parents of 5-15s do not use any of these four elements. This is higher for 12-15s (11%) than for 5-7s (2%) and 8-11s (2%). Very few parents of 3-4s (1%) say they do not use any of the four approaches.
- 7.9 While 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 (49% for 3-4s and 54% for 5-15s), few parents rely on technical mediation alone (1% for 5-15s and no parents of 3-4s).
- 7.10 More than four in five parents of 5-15s (84%) and nearly all parents of 3-4s (97%) said they supervise their child when online. Four per cent of parents of 5-15s said they only rely on parental supervision alone; this is more likely for 5-7s (7%) than for 8-11s (2%) or 12-15s (3%). One in seven parents of 3-4s also said they rely solely on parental supervision (14%).
- 7.11 Fewer than one in 20 parents of 5-15s (2%) only talk to their child at least every few months about managing online risks or only use rules or restrictions (3%). No parents of 3-4s rely solely on talking to their child or rely solely on rules.
- 7.12 Three in 10 parents of 5-15s who go online rely on any three of the four mediation strategies (31%) with fewer relying on any two of the four (21%). About one in three parents of 3-4s rely on any three approaches (35%) or any two approaches (34%).
- 7.13 There are no differences by gender within age or by household socio-economic group.

- 7.14 It is important to note that while 5% of parents of 5-15s fall into the category of “none of these” in Figure 22 below, around four in 10 of them (2% of all parents whose child goes online) had spoken to their child about managing online risks, but did so less frequently than every few months. Therefore, the remaining 3% of parents had never spoken to their child about managing online risks, did not supervise their child online and did not have technical mediation or any of the rules or restrictions in place.
- 7.15 This incidence is higher for 12-15s (6%) than for 5-7s (1%) or 8-11s (2%) but does not vary by gender or by household socio-economic group.

Figure 20: Combinations of online mediation strategies used by parents of 5-15s whose child goes online at home or elsewhere, by age, 2014



Base: Parents of children aged 3-15 whose child uses the internet at home or elsewhere (272 aged 3-4, 1402 aged 5-15, 300 aged 5-7, 523 aged 8-11, 579 aged 12-15).
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to June 2014

- 7.16 The 2012 qualitative study, while it is now several years old, provides useful contextual information to the quantitative data. It found that technical tools were viewed as a supplement to, rather than replacement for, hands-on parenting. Supervision and other forms of parental mediation were felt still to be needed to prevent all of the day-to-day issues as well as risks arising from children's internet usage.

Parental rules

- 7.17 The majority of parents of children (about 8 in 10) aged 3-15 have rules and restrictions in place for their child's use of mobile phones, gaming and the internet.

Parental rules for mobile phones

Most of the most frequently deployed rules and restrictions for mobile phones are focused on keeping down costs rather than the content children may be accessing

- 7.18 Figure 23 shows that most parents whose child has their own mobile phone have put in place at least one of the rules that was asked about. 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.

- 7.19 As in 2013, rules about mobile phone use were as likely for 12-15s as they were for 8-11s (72% vs. 69%).
- 7.20 In 2014, there is one rule that is more likely among parents of 8-11s whose child has their own mobile phone, compared to parents of 12-15s: only calls/texts to an agreed list of people (26% vs. 13%). There is also only one rule that is more likely among parents of 12-15s compared to 8-11s: that the child is responsible for paying for top-ups/bills (14% vs. 6%).
- 7.21 Parents of girls aged 12-15 are more likely than parents of boys to have the rule in place about only calling/texting an agreed list of people (17% vs. 9%), only sending pictures/videos to an agreed list of people (11% vs. 4%) and only being able to visit certain websites or apps on the phone (11% vs. 4%).
- 7.22 While the overall incidence of having rules is unchanged since 2013 for both 8-11s and 12-15s, there are two rules that are now more likely among parents of 12-15s than in 2013: regularly checking what the child is doing with the phone (22% vs. 14%) and only calling/texting an agreed list of people (13% vs. 7%).

Figure 23: Parental rules for mobile phones, by age: 2014

	Aged 8-11	Aged 12-15
Any rules or restrictions	69%	72%
Limit how often credit can be put on the phone	39%	37%
No calls to premium rate numbers	21%	28%
No texts to premium rate numbers	19%	27%
Regularly check what they are doing with the phone	27%	22% ↑ (+8)
No in app/ online purchasing (Added in 2014)	15%	18%
Only calls/ texts to an agreed list of people	26%	13% ↑ (+6)
Child is responsible for paying top-ups/ bills	6%	14%
No downloading of apps/ applications onto the phone	11%	8%
Only send pictures/ videos to an agreed list of people (Added in 2014)	11%	7%
Only to make/ receive voice calls or send texts, nothing else	11%	7%
Can only visit certain websites or use certain apps on the phone	9%	8%
No going online/ using apps to go online	9%	8%
App store password is not known by the child (Added in 2014)	7%	7%

QP60 – Do you have any of these rules or restrictions about the use that your child makes of his/ her mobile phone? (prompted responses, multi-coded)

Base: Parents of children aged 5-15 whose child has their own mobile phone (169 aged 8-11, 463 aged 12-15). Significance testing indicates any differences between 2013 and 2014.

Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to June 2014

Parental rules about playing games

The most frequently used rule for playing games is to only allow games with an appropriate age rating

- 7.23 Most parents whose child plays games on a gaming device³² say that they have rules or restrictions about the games their child plays. Figure 24 shows that rules are more likely to be in place for children aged 3-4 (84%), 5-7 (86%) and 8-11 (both 86%) than for those aged 12-15 (65%). Each individual rule is also less likely to be in place for 12-15s than for 3-4s, 5-7s or 8-11s.
- 7.24 More than half of parents of 3-4s, 5-7s and 8-11s have rules restricting the games played to those with an appropriate age rating (59% 64% and 61% respectively), but this is less common among parents of 12-15s (39%).
- 7.25 Rules regarding the type of content of the games played (i.e. no games with violence or drug use or nudity/sexual content) were broadly comparable for parents of 3-4s, 5-7s and 8-11s and were lower among parents of 12-15s. Parents of 3-4s were more likely to have rules in place about playing games only when supervised (36% for 3-4s vs. 24% for 5-7s, 16% for 8-11s and 4% for 12-15s).
- 7.26 While the overall incidence of rules about gaming has not changed since 2013 among parents of 3-4s, several rules are now more likely than in 2013, particularly rules regarding no games with violence (up 10 percentage points from 35% to 45%) and no games with swearing (up 9 percentage points from 34% to 43%).
- 7.27 The overall incidence of rules about gaming has increased among parents of 5-15s since 2013 (from 74% to 78%) with this increase attributable to parents of 8-11s (from 81% to 86%) and parents of 12-15s (from 58% to 65%). Figure 24 below highlights the individual rules that are now more likely compared to 2013, by the age of the child.

³² This could be a fixed or portable games console/computer/mobile phone or portable media player.

Figure 24: Parental rules for gaming, by age: 2013

	Aged 3-4	Aged 5-15	Aged 5-7	Aged 8-11	Aged 12-15
Any rules or restrictions	84%	78% ↑(+4)	86%	86% ↑(+5)	65% ↑(+7)
Only games with appropriate age rating	59%	54%	64%	61%	39%
No games after a certain time	45%	47% ↑(+13)	51% ↑(+11)	54% ↑(+15)	36% ↑(+11)
No games with violence	45% ↑(+10)	38% ↑(+6)	44%	42%	29% ↑(+10)
No games with drug use	42% ↑(+8)	37% ↑(+5)	40%	42%	30% ↑(+10)
No games with nudity/ sexual content	41% ↑(+8)	36% ↑(+4)	38%	42%	29% ↑(+9)
Regularly check on what they're playing	36%	35%	37%	39%	30% ↑(+9)
No games with swearing/ bad language	43% ↑(+9)	35% ↑(+4)	39%	40%	27% ↑(+8)
No online game playing	29% ↑(+7)	22% ↑(+7)	25%	26% ↑(+8)	15% ↑(+8)
No online game playing with people they don't already know	23% ↑(+8)	19% ↑(+5)	19%	23% ↑(+8)	15% ↑(+7)
No online chat or messaging	22%	17% ↑(+5)	21%	22% ↑(+6)	10% ↑(+5)
Can only play when supervised/ not on their own	36%	14% ↑(+3)	24%	16% ↑(+5)	4%
No multi-player games (Added in 2014)	19%	13%	16%	15%	8%
Only a game that an adult or parent has played/ tried first	21%	11%	17%	13%	5%

QP71 - Do you have any of these rules or restrictions about the games that your child plays at home or elsewhere – whether on a games console, a computer or any other device? (prompted responses, multi-coded)

Base: Parents of children aged 5-15 whose child ever plays games at home or elsewhere on any type of game playing device (359 aged 3-4, 1399 aged 5-15, 357 aged 5-7, 540 aged 8-11, 502 aged 12-15). Significance testing indicates any differences between 2013 and 2014

Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to June 2014

Parental rules about the internet

Four in five parents of 5-15s have rules about accessing the internet and online services

- 7.28 Four in five parents of children aged 5-15 who use the internet at home or elsewhere (82%) say they have put in place any of the internet rules about accessing the internet and online services that we asked about. These kinds of rules are more common for children aged 3-4 (87%), 5-7 (88%) and 8-11 (89%) than for those aged 12-15 (72%).
- 7.29 No single online rule is in place among the majority of parents of 3-4s. Many parents of 3-4s who go online at home have a rule about only visiting children's websites (43%), about using the internet only when supervised (43%), about regularly checking what the child is doing online (36%) or about not buying from websites (20%).
- 7.30 There is no single rule in place for a majority of 5-7 year old internet users. Forty-four per cent of parents of 5-7s have a rule about not going online after a certain time, with four in 10 saying they regularly check what their child is doing online (41%). More than one in three parents of 5-7s say their child can only use children's websites (37%) or can go online only when supervised (35%).

- 7.31 The rules regarding only going online to visit children’s websites and only going online when supervised are more likely for 3-4s and 5-7s than for 8-11s or 12-15s.
- 7.32 The rule relating to the parent regularly checking what their child is doing online is in place among half of all parents of an 8-11 year-old child (50%). There are no other rules in place among the majority of parents of 8-11s. Parents of 8-11s are more likely than parents of 5-7s and 12-15s to have this rule in place (50% for 8-11s vs. 41% for 5-7s and 38% for 12-15s) and about only going online for homework (12% for 8-11s vs. 7% for 5-7s and 4% for 12-15s).
- 7.33 There is no single rule in place for the majority of 12-15s who go online and no single rule is more likely to be in place for 12-15s compared to younger children.
- 7.34 Parents of 3-4s are more likely than in 2013 to regularly check what their child is doing online (36% vs. 25%), to have the rule regarding no purchasing from websites (20% vs. 10%) and to say their child can only go online for homework (4% vs. 0%).

Figure 25: Parental rules for the internet, by age: 2014

	Aged 3-4	Aged 5-15	Aged 5-7	Aged 8-11	Aged 12-15
Any rules or restrictions	87%	82%	88%	89%	72%↑(+7)
Regularly check what they’re doing online	36%↑(+11)	43%	41%	50%	38%
No internet after a certain time	34%	40% ↑(+8)	44%↑(+11)	45%↑(+9)	34%
No purchasing from websites	20%↑(+10)	30%	28%	32%	28%
PIN/ Password required to enter websites unless already approved	19%	25% ↑(+10)	28%↑(+11)	28%↑(+10)	22%↑(+11)
Only allowed to use the internet for a certain amount of time	20%	22%	21%	28%	17%
No social media websites or apps	15%	20%	24%	29%	11%
Only children’s websites	43%	20%	37%	25%	7%
Can only use when supervised/ not on their own	43%	20%	35%	23%	9%
Only talk/ chat with friends/ people they already know	7%	18% ↑(+5)	13%	21%	17%↑(+7)
No Instant Messaging/ MSN	13%	12%	17%	17%	5%
Only websites stored in their Favourites list	12%	8%	13%	11%	3%
Only use for homework	4%↑(+4)	8% ↑(+3)	7%	12%↑(+5)	4%

QP30 Do you have any of these rules or restrictions about the access that your child has to the internet on any device? (prompted responses, multi-coded)

Base: Parents of children aged 3-15 whose child uses the internet at home or elsewhere (272 aged 3-4, 1402 aged 5-15, 300 aged 5-7, 523 aged 8-11, 579 aged 12-15).

Significance testing shows any difference between 2013 and 2014.

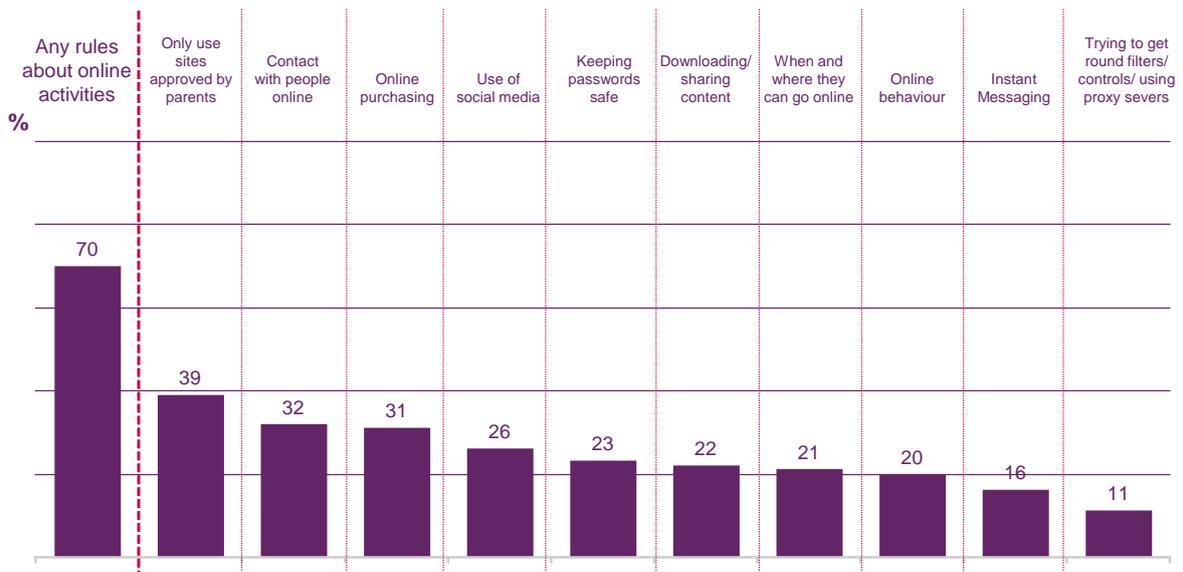
Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to June 2014

Rules about children's online activities

Seven in 10 parents of 5-15s have rules about their child's online activities and behaviour

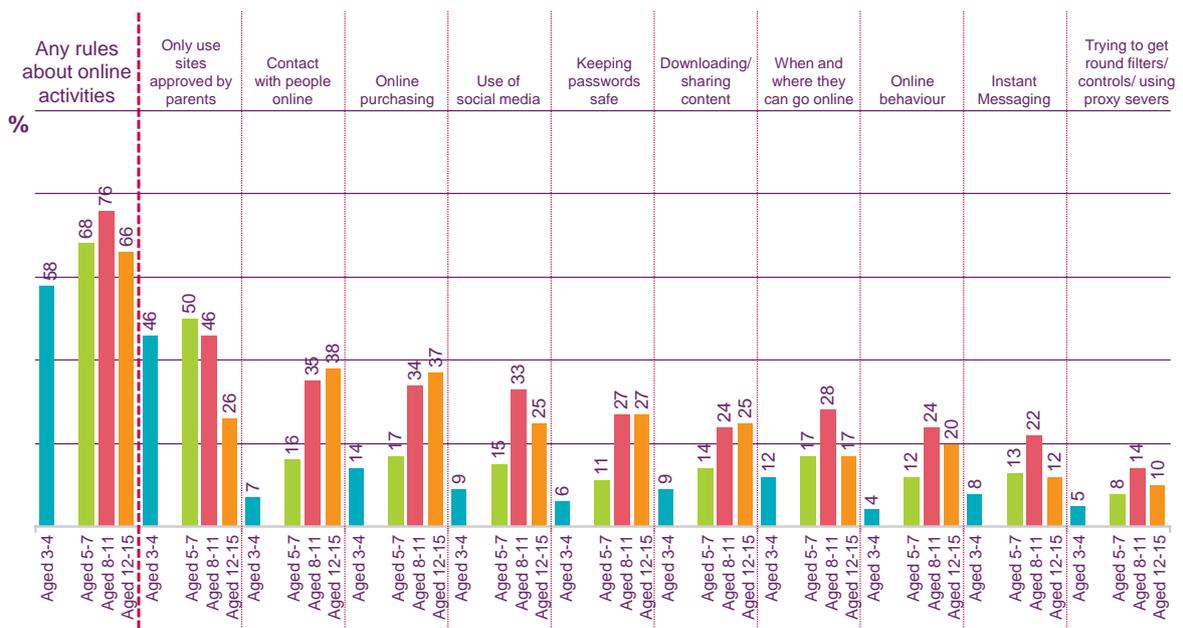
- 7.35 The rules shown in Figure 25 include rules about access to and use of the internet. To provide a more granular insight into parents' mediation of online services and content, in 2014 we asked parents of 3-15s who go online about rules they might have in place to mediate their child's online activities and behaviours. Figure 26 shows the results among parents of 5-15s, while Figure 27 breaks these results out by age.
- 7.36 Seven in 10 parents of 5-15s have one or more of these rules in place (70%). No single rule is in place among a majority of parents; three types of rule are in place among three in 10 parents or more: only use websites approved by parents (39%), rules relating to contact with people online, e.g. no contact with strangers, no sharing of personal information etc (32%), and rules about online purchasing (31%). One in four parents has rules in place relating to use of social media (26%). All other rules are in place among one in four parents of 5-15s or fewer.
- 7.37 A majority of parents of 3-4s who go online have one or more of these rules in place (58%). One rule is more likely to be used, compared to any of the other rules that were asked about: only using websites approved by parents (46%). One in seven parents of 3-4s who go online have the rule about online purchasing (14%), with slightly fewer having rules about when and where the child can go online, e.g. time of day, amount of time online and device used to go online (12%). All other rules are used by fewer than one in 10 parents of 3-4s.
- 7.38 Parents of 8-11s are more likely than parents of 5-7s or 12-15s to have any of these rules in place about their child's online activities (76% for 8-11s vs. 68% for 5-7s and 66% for 12-15s). This is also true for three specific rules: relating to the use of social media (33% for 8-11s vs. 15% for 5-7s and 25% for 12-15s), about when and where they can go online (28% for 8-11s vs. 17% for 5-7s and 17% for 12-15s) and relating to instant messaging (22% for 8-11s vs. 13% for 5-7s and 12% for 12-15s).
- 7.39 Parents of 5-7s and 8-11s are more likely than parents of 12-15s to have the rule in place regarding only using websites approved by parents (50% for 5-7s and 46% for 8-11s vs. 26% for 12-15s). With the exception of the rule about not trying to bypass filters or controls, all other rules are as likely to be in place for 8-11s as for 12-15s, and are more likely to be in place than for 5-7s.
- 7.40 Parents of girls aged 12-15 are more likely than parents of boys aged 12-15 to have rules in place about contact with people online (44% vs. 32%), about use of social media (30% vs. 20%) and about online behaviour, e.g. to behave as you would in real life (24% vs. 16%).

Figure 26: Rules about child's online activities among parents of 5-15s: 2014



QP31 – 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 of children aged 5-15 who go online at home or elsewhere (1402 aged 5-15)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to June 2014

Figure 27: Rules about child's online activities among parents of 5-15s, by age: 2014



QP31 – 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 of children aged 3-4 or 5-15 who go online at home or elsewhere (272 aged 3-4, 300 aged 5-7, 523 aged 8-11, 579 aged 12-15)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to June 2014

Parental supervision

Parental supervision of the internet

Parents are more likely to supervise 3-4s and 5-7s in person, while asking about what they've been doing online and checking the browser is more likely for 8-11s and 12-15s

- 7.41 In 2014, parents of children aged 3-4 and 5-15 who go online were prompted with four possible responses relating to ways in which they supervise their child online and were asked whether they usually supervised their child in any of these ways when they went online using any type of device.
- 7.42 Among parents of 5-15 (Figure 28), more than four in five (84%) said they supervised their child's online access and use in any of these four ways. Half of parents (50%) said they are usually nearby when their child goes online and regularly check what they are doing, with four in 10 (40%) saying they usually ask their child about what they are doing/have been doing online. Three in 10 parents say they usually sit beside their child and watch or help them when online (30%) or that they supervise their child's online access and use by checking the browser/device history after they have been online (30%).
- 7.43 Parents of 3-4s, 5-7s and 8-11s are more likely to use any of these means of online supervision compared to parents of 12-15s (94% for both 3-4s and 5-7s, 91% for 8-11s vs. 72% for 12-15s). Nearly all parents of 3-4s say they use at least one of these approaches (97%), which is comparable to the level seen among parents of 5-7s (94%) (Figure 29).
- 7.44 As might be expected, the likelihood of parents supervising their child by sitting beside them and watching/helping them decreases with age and this is the most popular way of supervising a child aged 3-4, undertaken by seven in 10 parents (71%) and least likely for parents of 12-15s (12%). A majority of parents of 3-4s (57%), 5-7s (60%) and 8-11s (62%) say they supervise their child by being nearby and regularly checking what they do. Around one in three parents of 12-15s also adopt this approach (35%).
- 7.45 Parents of 8-11s (46%) and 12-15s (40%) are more likely than parents of 3-4s (27%) or 5-7s (30%) to rely on asking their child what they have been doing online. Parents of 8-11s and 12-15s are also more likely than parents of 3-4s and 5-7s to say they check the browser/device history after their child has been online (34% for 8-11s and 33% for 12-15s vs. 14% for 3-4s and 17% for 5-7s).
- 7.46 There is one difference by gender among parents of 12-15s; parents of girls are more likely than parents of boys to supervise their child online by asking about what they have been doing online (46% vs. 34%). Among all 5-15s, parents of girls are more likely than parents of boys to say they sit beside their child and watch or help them when they are online (33% vs. 28%).

Figure 28: Types of parental supervision when child goes online at home or elsewhere, among parents of 5-15s: 2014

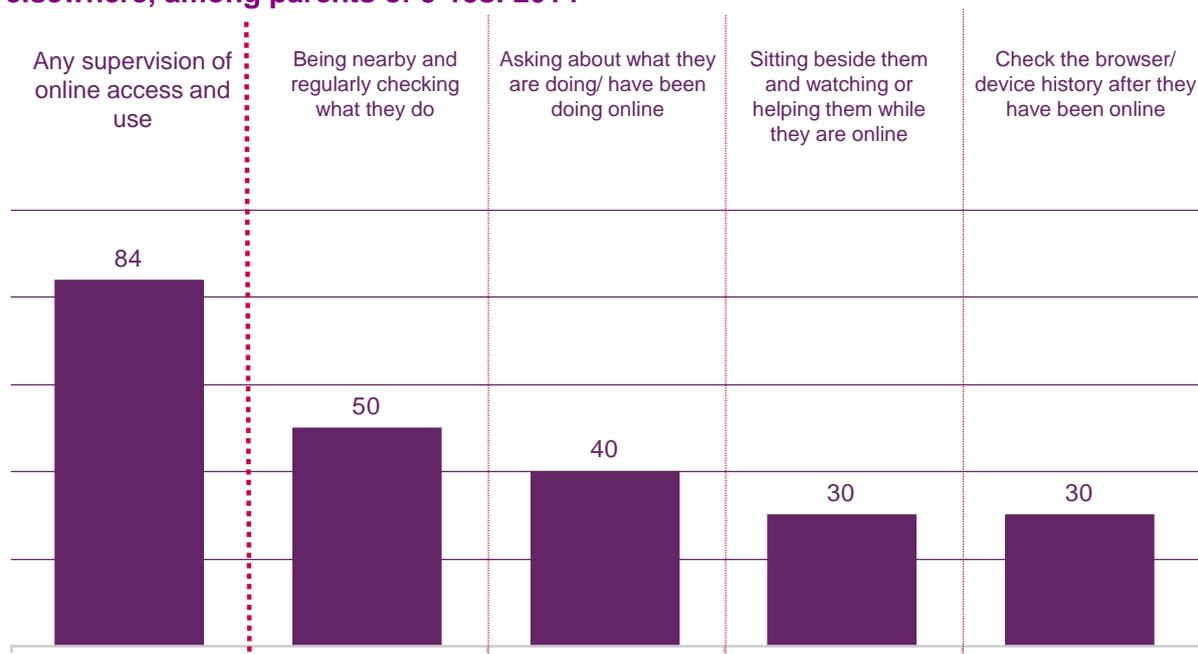
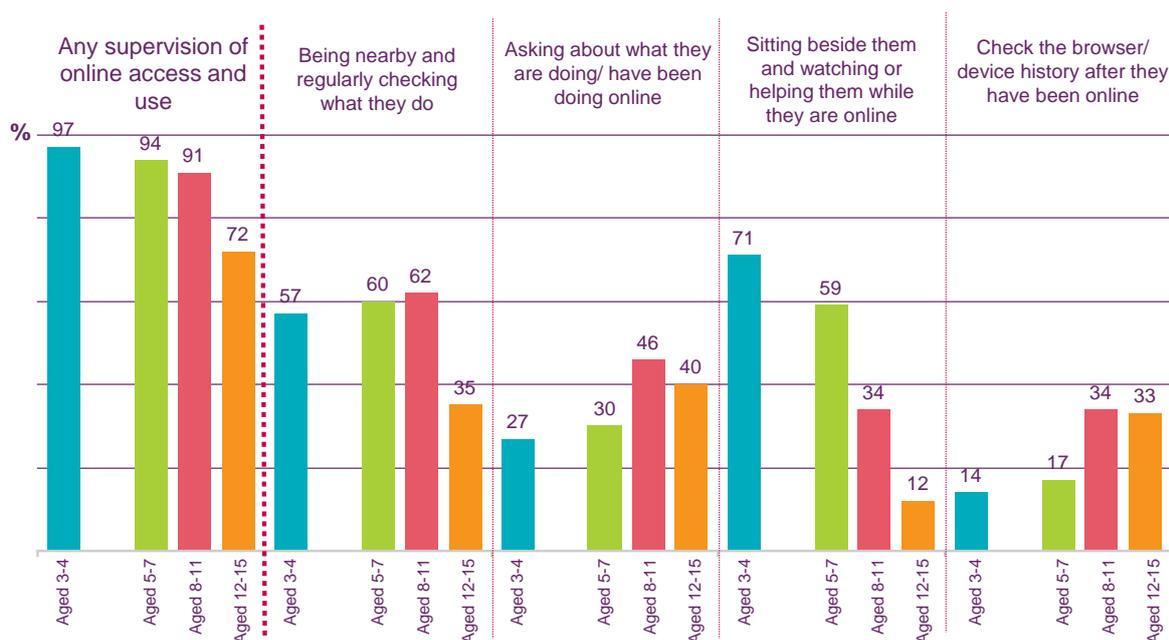


Figure 29: Types of parental supervision when child goes online, by age: 2014



QP32 – 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 of children aged 3-4 or 5-15 who go online at home or elsewhere (272 aged 3-4, 300 aged 5-7, 523 aged 8-11, 579 aged 12-15)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to June 2014

Six in 10 12-15s say they spend most of their internet time on their own

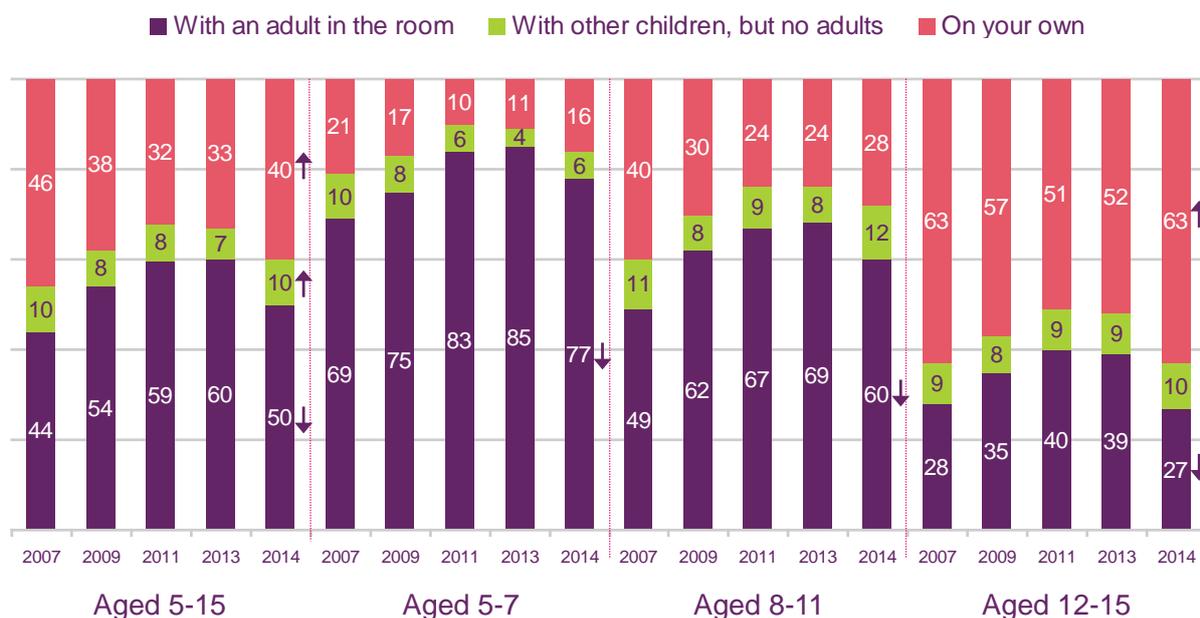
7.47 As well as asking parents about how they supervised their child’s internet use, children³³ who use the internet were asked to say if anyone is with them most of the time they go online and whether this is an adult or other children. Figure 30 shows

³³ As this question is asked of children rather than parents, there are no data for children aged 3-4.

that the majority of 5-7s and 8-11s said they spent most of the time going online with an adult in the room (77% and 60% respectively).

- 7.48 The proportion of children spending most of their internet time on their own increased with each age group, accounting for around one in 10 internet users aged 5-7 (11%), around one-quarter aged 8-11 (28%) and six in 10 of those aged 12-15 (63%).
- 7.49 There appears to have been a decrease since 2013 in the proportion of children who mostly go online with an adult in the room. This decrease is evident for 5-15s (50% vs. 60%), 5-7s (77% vs. 85%), 8-11s (60% vs. 69%) and 12-15s (27% vs. 39%). As with some of the other changes in this report, this may be due to the change in the survey to include internet use outside the home.
- 7.50 In 2014, girls aged 5-15 are more likely than boys to say they mostly go online with an adult in the room (54% vs. 46%), with this difference evident among 12-15s (32% girls vs. 22% boys). Across all 5-15s, boys are more likely than girls to say they mostly go online on their own (44% vs. 37%), but this difference is not evident for any particular age group. There is one difference by gender among parents of 12-15s; parents of girls are more likely than parents of boys to supervise their child online by asking about what they have been doing online (46% vs. 34%). Among all 5-15s, parents of girls are more likely than parents of boys to say they sit beside their child and watch or help them when they are online (33% vs. 28%).

Figure 30: Who is with the child using the internet at home (2007, 2009, 2011, 2013) or elsewhere (2014), by age



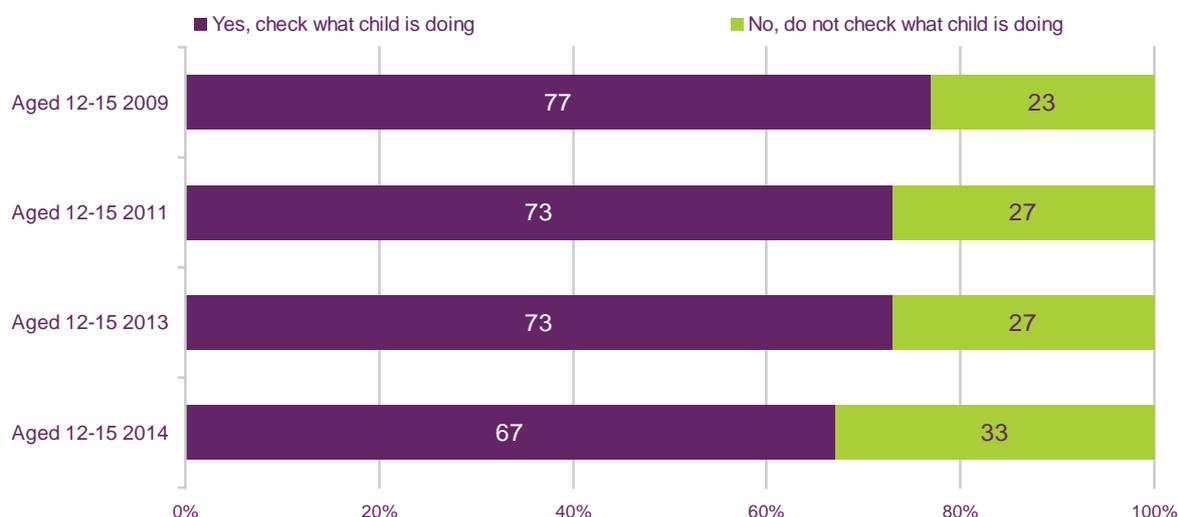
QC13 – Thinking about when you’re going online, do you spend most of the time using... (prompted responses, single coded)
 Base: Children aged 5-15 who use the internet at home or elsewhere (477 aged 5-7 in 2007, 340 aged 5-7 in 2009, 396 aged 5-7 in 2011, 381 aged 5-7 in 2013, 300 aged 5-7 in 2014, 875 aged 8-11 in 2007, 582 aged 8-11 in 2009, 496 aged 8-11 in 2011, 497 aged 8-11 in 2013, 528 aged 8-11 in 2014, 104 5 aged 12-15 in 2007, 645 aged 12-15 in 2009, 529 aged 12-15 in 2011, 548 aged 12-15 in 2013, 584 aged 12-15 in 2014). NB In 2007-2013 children were asked about using the internet at home whereas in 2014 they were asked about going online. Significance testing shows any change between 2013 and 2014
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to June 2014

Parental supervision of social media activity

Two thirds of parents of 12-15s check what their child is doing when visiting social media sites or apps

- 7.51 Parents of 5-15s³⁴ whose child has a profile on a social media website were asked whether they check what their child is doing online when visiting these types of sites or apps.
- 7.52 As shown in Figure 31, two in three (67%) parents of children aged 12-15 check what their child is doing when visiting social media sites. This incidence has not changed since 2013. Unlike in 2013, when there was no difference by gender, parents of girls aged 12-15 are more likely than parents of boys to say they check what their child is doing (73% vs. 61%).

Figure 31: Parental checking of social media site activity among children aged 12-15 who go online at home (2009, 2011, 2013) or elsewhere (2014)



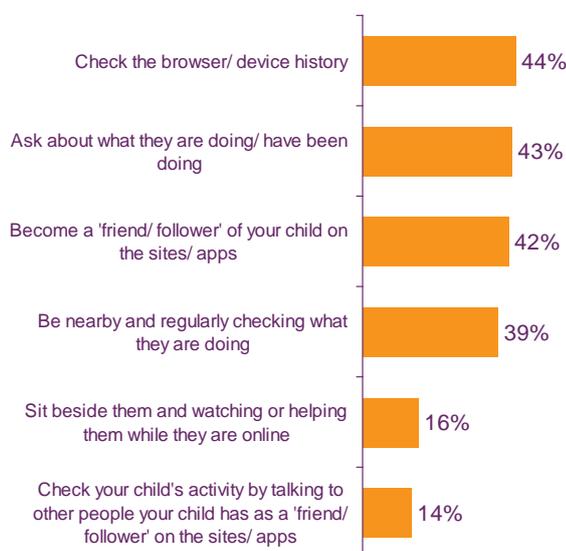
QP47 – Do you tend to check what they are doing when they are visiting these types of social media sites or apps? – NB QUESTION WORDING CHANGED AFTER 2009– In 2009 it asked about visits to sites that can be used to ‘chat to other users’ Prior to 2014 it asked about social networking sites rather than social media sites or apps. This question was also asked of internet users (with a social media profile) who go online at home or elsewhere while in previous years it was only asked of those that go online at home
 Base: Parents of children aged 5-15 with a social media profile (440 aged 12-15 in 2009, 398 aged 12-15 in 2011, 368 aged 12-15 in 2013, 408 aged 12-15 in 2014) – Significance testing shows any differences between 2013 and 2014.
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to June 2014

- 7.53 In 2014, parents who said they tended to check what their child was doing when visiting social media sites or apps were prompted with a list of possible ways in which they might mediate their child’s activities when using these sites/apps and were asked to say which applied. Figure 32 below shows the results among parents of 12-15s³⁵.
- 7.54 No single method of supervision is undertaken by a majority of parents of 12-15s. Four methods of supervision are, however, undertaken by around four in 10 parents: checking the browser/device history (44%), asking the child about what they are doing/have been doing online (43%), becoming a “friend/follower” of the child on the sites/apps (42%) or being nearby and regularly checking what they are doing (39%).

³⁴ Low base sizes prevent analysis among 5-7s and 8-11s.

³⁵ Low base sizes prevent analysis among 5-7s and 8-11s.

Figure 32: Methods of supervising/ checking 12-15 year old child's use of social media sites or apps: 2014



QP48 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 (282 aged 12-15)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to June 2014

Key findings: Parental confidence, awareness and take up of tools

- Overall, 84% of parents of 5-15s with home broadband are aware of at least one of the eight technical tools we listed as available to manage their children's access to and use of online content. Well over half (56%) use them.
- Looking at the two different kinds of content filters, 50% are aware of network level filters and 21% use them and 50% are aware of parental controls software and use it.
- Almost all parents who use network-level filters think that they are useful (93%) and about three quarters think that they block the right amount of content (73%). A similarly high proportion of parents who use parental control software think that it is useful (89%) and 76% say that they block the right amount of content.
- A minority of parents, but a substantial one, considered their children could bypass content filters provided by the ISP (24%), parental control software set up on a specific computer or device (24%) and safe search settings (24%).
- Just over a third of parents of 5-15s (34%) whose child uses a smartphone or tablet are aware of tools asked about and 15% of parents use any of these three tools
- Among parents whose child has a mobile phone that can be used to go online, only four in 10 parents of 8-11s (41%) and three in 10 parents of 12-15s (31%) say their child's phone has a bar on adult content in place.

Technical tools

Awareness and use of parental controls

Most parents are aware of the technical tools we asked about and over half use at least one of these

- 7.55 As technology has changed so has the range and functionality of the technical tools available to parents to manage their child's access 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 for managing internet access and use and were asked whether they were aware of them, and if so, whether they used any of them³⁶. Parents who said they did not use a particular tool were asked whether they had previously used it and had stopped.
- 7.56 Figure 33 shows awareness and use of eight specific tools among parents of 5-15s who have a broadband internet connection at home, ranked according to use. The eight tools that parents were asked about are:
- Content filters in the form of home network level filtering provided by the broadband ISP (e.g. BT, TalkTalk, Sky and Virgin Media) that 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 (e.g. Net Nanny, McAfee Family Protection, Open DNS FamilyShield), whether 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

³⁶ Parents were given descriptions of 13 technical tools and were asked whether they were aware of them and, if so, whether they used any of them. These included eight types of 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.

They also included three tools that relate specifically to app installation and use: 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.

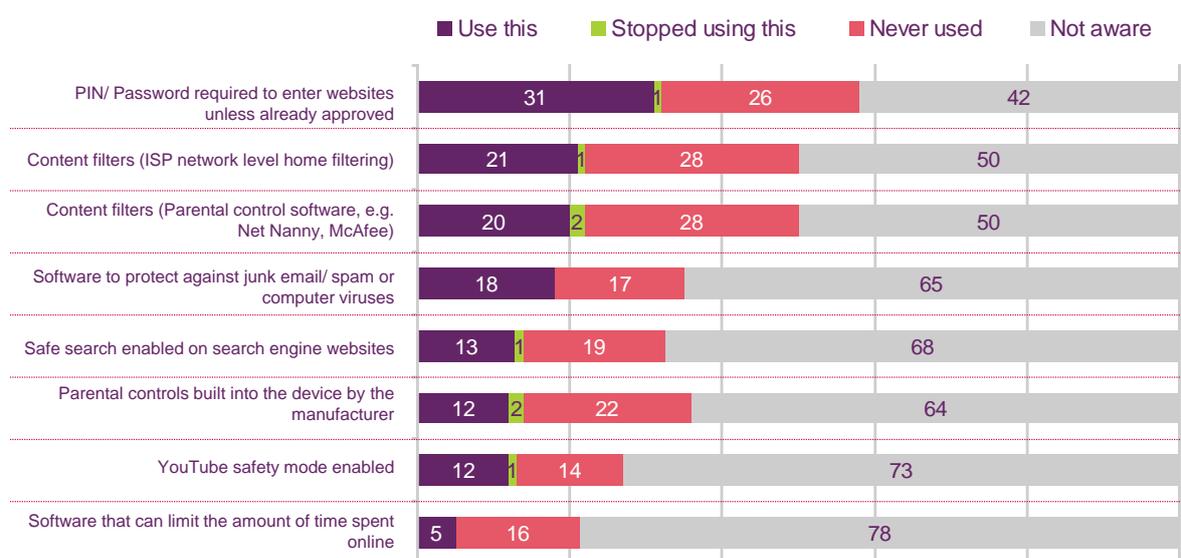
Finally they also included two types of tools that are specific to a mobile phone: content filters to block adult or 18+ content for mobile phones, provided by the telephone network provider— e.g. O2, Vodafone, EE and Software to locate, lock or wipe mobile phones.

- Software to protect against junk email/spam or computer viruses.
- 7.57 Eighty four per cent of parents of 5-15s with home broadband were aware of one or more of the eight technical tools shown in Figure 33 and more than half used any of them (56%).
- 7.58 Awareness and use did not vary by the age of the child, nor by gender, but awareness was higher among parents in AB households (90%) and lower among parents in DE households (76%).
- 7.59 Two thirds of parents (65%) with a broadband internet connection at home were aware of content filters (either home network level filters provided by ISP or parental control software set up on a particular device used to go online such as Net Nanny or MacAfee Family protection) and one third (32%) used them.
- 7.60 Looking at the tools individually, about half of parents of 5-15s with a home broadband internet connection were aware of three specific tools: PIN/passwords required to enter websites (58%), home network level filters provided by the ISP (50%) and parental control software set up on a specific computer or device used to go online, e.g. Net Nanny (50%). A minority of parents is aware of the remaining five tools.
- 7.61 The three tools that parents of 5-15s with a broadband internet connection at home are most aware of are also the three most commonly-used tools. These are used by at least one in five parents: PIN/passwords to enter websites unless already approved (31%), home network level filters provided by the ISP (21%) and parental control software on a particular computer or device used to go online (20%). All other tools are used by one in five (or fewer) parents.
- 7.62 Few parents of 5-15s have stopped using any of these tools.
- 7.63 More than one in five parents of 3-4s with a fixed broadband connection used home network level filters provided by the ISP (23%) or PIN/password controls (22%). Fewer than one in five used parental control software set up on a particular computer or device used to go online (17%) with one in eight (13%) using parental controls built into the device by the manufacturer. All other technical tools were used by around one in 10 parents of 3-4s, or fewer.
- 7.64 There were some differences by age. Parents of 5-7s were more likely than those of 8-11s and 12-15s to say they had never used both Safe Search (26% for 5-7s vs. 14% for 8-11s and 19% for 12-15s) and YouTube safety mode (21% for 5-7s vs. 10% for 8-11s and 14% for 12-15s).
- 7.65 Parents of 8-11s and 12-5s were more likely than parents of 5-7s to say they used software to protect against junk email/spam or computer viruses (12% for 5-7s vs. 19% for 8-11s and 19% for 12-15s).
- 7.66 There are no differences by gender within age groups. Parents of 5-15s with a broadband connection in AB households were more likely than all parents to be aware of six tools: PIN/passwords (67% vs. 58%), content filters provided by the ISP (62% vs. 50%), parental control software set up on a particular computer or device used to go online (59% vs. 50%), safe search enabled on search engine websites (41% vs. 32%), parental controls built into the device by the manufacturer (44% vs. 36%) and software that can limit the amount of time spent online (31% vs. 22%). This

increased awareness did not, however, encourage use: none of these eight tools was more likely to be used by parents of 5-15s in AB households compared to all parents.

7.67 There were two tools that parents in DE households were less likely to be aware of: home network level filters provided by the ISP (39% vs. 50%) and software to protect against junk email/spam or computer viruses (27% vs. 35%). Parents in DE households were also less likely to use home network level filters provided by the ISP (14% vs. 21%), while those in C1 households were more likely to use software to protect against junk email/spam or computer viruses (23% vs. 18%).

Figure 33: Parents of 5-15s with a home broadband connection: use and awareness of technical tools: 2014



QP36A-H 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)/ QP37A-H 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)/ QP38A-H 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 of children aged 5-15 with a broadband internet connection at home (1272). Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to June 2014

Awareness and use of technical tools on a smartphone or tablet

Awareness and use of tools specific to tablets and mobile phones is lower than for the other tools we asked about

7.68 In addition to asking about the eight technical tools set out above, parents were asked about their awareness and use of tools that relate specifically to app installation and use. These specific tools are:

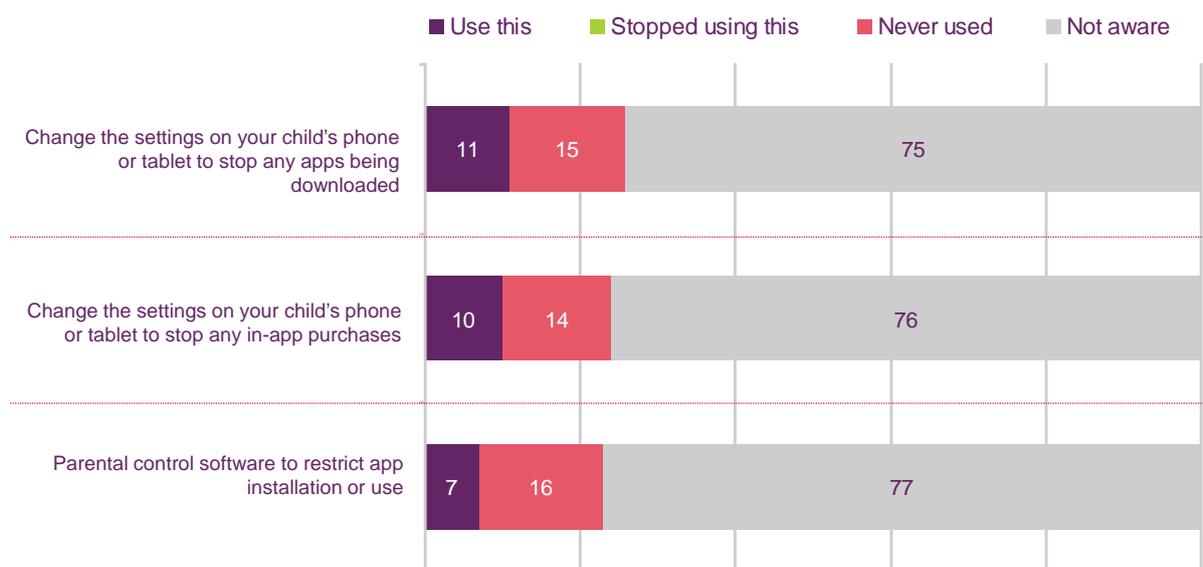
- Changing the settings on a phone or tablet to stop apps being downloaded;
- Changing the settings on a phone or tablet to prevent in-app purchases; and
- Parental control software to restrict app installation or use.

7.69 Just over a third of parents of 5-15s (34%) whose child uses a smartphone or tablet were aware of any of the three tools asked about that can be used to restrict app

installation or use, and 15% of parents used any of these three tools (Figure 34 below).

- 7.70 Around three in four parents of 5-15s whose child uses a smartphone or tablet were unaware of each of these tools and a minority used them. One in 10 said they had changed the settings on their child’s phone or tablet to prevent apps being downloaded (11%) or to prevent in-app purchases (10%). Fewer parents (7%) said they used software to restrict app installation or use.
- 7.71 For each type of control, no parents said they have stopped using them.
- 7.72 There were no differences in the levels of awareness and use for each of these types of technical tools among parents of 3-4s whose child uses a smartphone or tablet, compared to parents of 5-15s.
- 7.73 Parents of 5-15s in AB households were also more likely than all parents whose child uses a smartphone or tablet to be aware of each tool: changing the settings on the phone or tablet to stop apps being downloaded (32% vs. 25%), changing the settings to stop in-app purchases (31% vs. 24%) and software to restrict app installation or use (30% vs. 23%).

Figure 34: Parents of 5-15s whose child uses a smartphone or tablet computer - use and awareness of technical tools for these devices: 2014



QP36J-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)/ QP37J-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)/ QP38J-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 (1175). Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to June 2014

Awareness and use of the bar on adult content on mobile phones

A majority of parents of 5-15s whose child has their own mobile phone are unsure of whether the bar on adult content is in place

- 7.74 In 2014 parents of 3-4 and 5-15s with their own mobile phone were prompted with the following information: “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". These parents were then asked whether they were aware of this bar on adult content.

- 7.75 Half of parents of 5-15s said they were aware of this bar on adult content (49%) with slightly fewer saying they were not aware (45%) and around one in 20 being unsure (6%). These results do not vary by age (among 8-11s and 12-15s)³⁷.
- 7.76 Parents whose child's mobile phone can be used to go online were then asked whether this bar on accessing adult content was set up on their child's phone or had been deactivated. A majority of parents of 5-15s whose child has their own mobile phone was unsure whether the bar was in place (52%) with around one in three saying it was in place (34%) and around one in seven (14%) saying it had been deactivated. These results do not vary by age.

Awareness and use of parental controls on games consoles

Between a fifth and a quarter of parent have installed parental controls on their child's games console

- 7.77 Parents whose child 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 onto each 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.
- 7.78 Among parents of 5-15s around one in five with handheld/portable games consoles (20%) and one in four with fixed games consoles (26%) said they had parental controls. The incidence of controls on a handheld/portable gaming device or a fixed games console does not vary by the age of the child.
- 7.79 Children aged 3-4 were as likely as 5-7s to have controls on a handheld games player (21% vs. 23%) and on a fixed games console (25% vs. 25%).

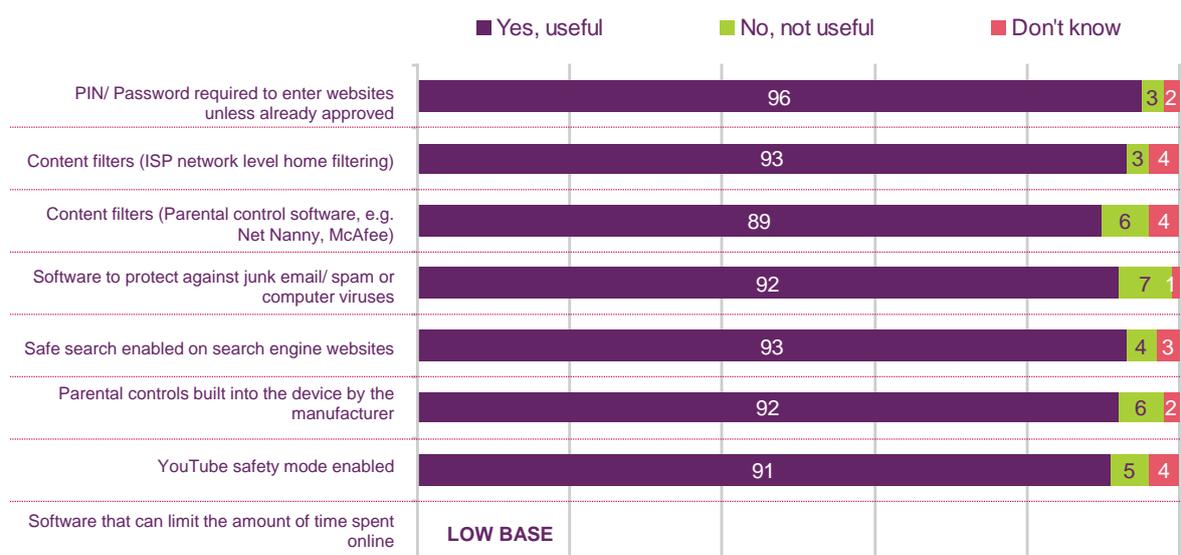
Parental attitudes around the effectiveness of parental controls

Around nine in 10 parents who use technical controls say they find them useful

- 7.80 Parents who use each of the eight technical tools described above were asked whether they felt these tools were useful. The results are shown in Figure 35.
- 7.81 Around nine in 10 parents who use each tool considered them useful. Ninety-six per cent of parents who use PIN/password controls considered them useful, compared to 89% of parents who use parental control software on a particular computer or device.
- 7.82 Very few parents of 5-15s who use each tool said they did not consider the tools useful (around 5% or fewer for each measure).

³⁷ Low base sizes prevent analysis among parents of 3-4s and 5-7s.

Figure 35: Parents of 5-15s who use each tool: usefulness of technical tools: 2014



QP39A-H Do you find this tool useful? (Spontaneous responses, single coded)

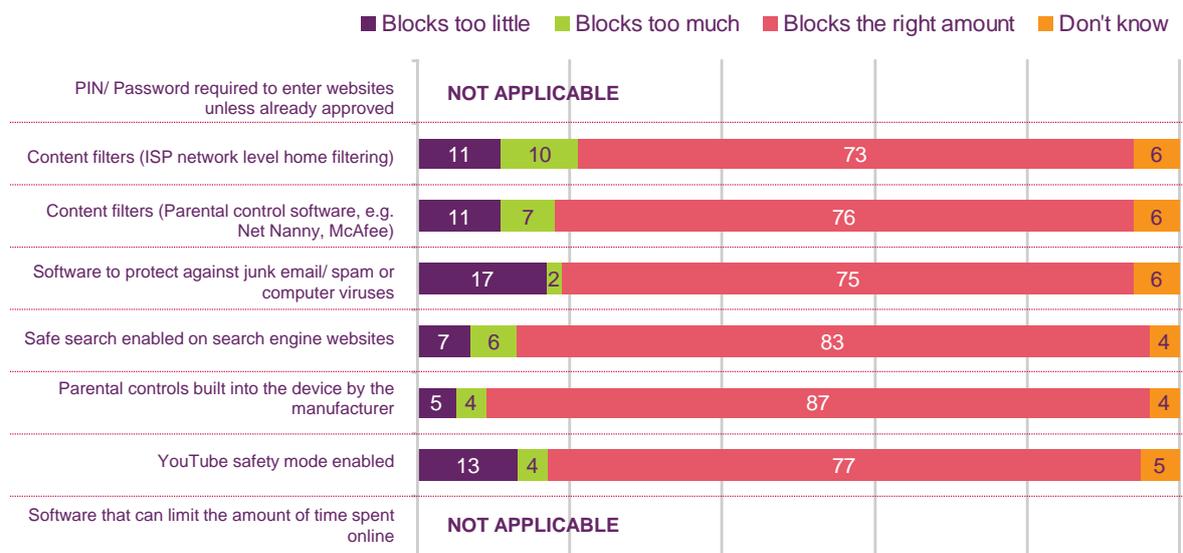
Base: Parents of children aged 5-15 with a broadband internet connection at home and who use each technical tool or control (Variable base)

Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to June 2014

A quarter of parents think their child is able to bypass the technical controls they use

- 7.83 Parents who use each of the tools were asked whether they felt these tools blocked too much, too little or the right amount of content. The results are shown in Figure 36.
- 7.84 Around three in four parents who use each tool said it blocked the right amount of content, while around one in five parents of 5-15s who use each tool said they blocked too much or too little content. One in six parents of 5-15s who use software to protect against junk email/spam or computer viruses said it blocked too little content (17%), while one in 20 who use parental controls built into the device by the manufacturer said this tool blocked too little (5%).

Figure 36: Parents of 5-15s who use each tool - perception of technical tools blocking too much / too little: 2014

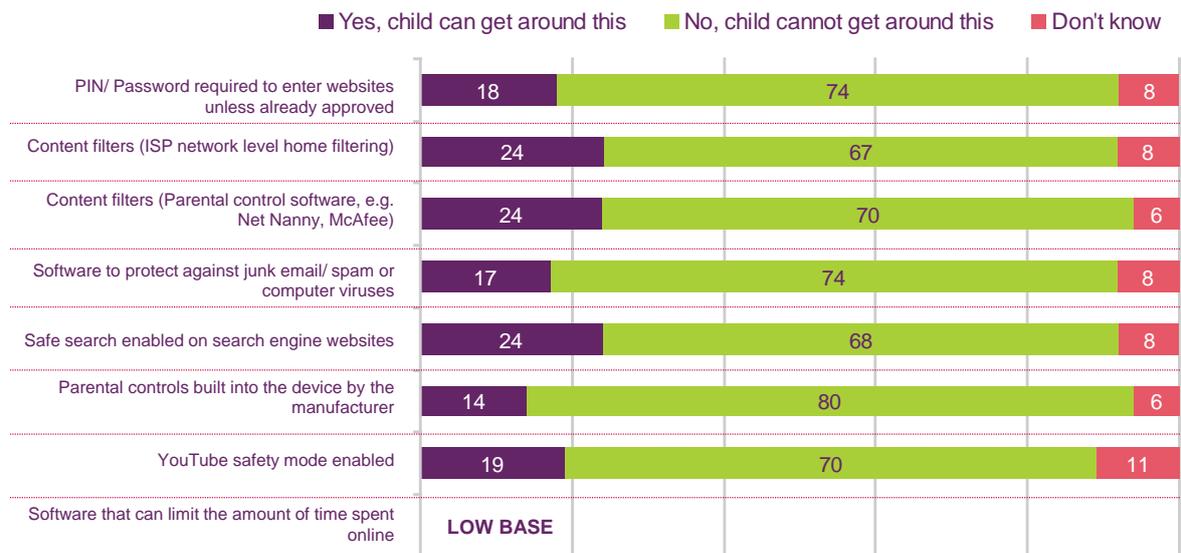


QP40A-H Do you think they block too much content or too little content? (Spontaneous responses, single coded)
 Base: Parents of children aged 5-15 with a broadband internet connection at home and who use each technical tool or control (Variable base)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to June 2014

Most parents who used them also thought tools to control app installation and use were useful, and fewer thought their child could bypass these

- 7.85 Parents who use 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 37.
- 7.86 Around one in four parents of 5-15s who use each tool felt their child was able to bypass the tool. Three tools stood out, in that parents were more likely to say their child could bypass them: content filters provided by the ISP (24%), parental control software set up on a specific computer or device (24%) and safe search settings (24%). About one in 10 parents of 5-15s who use each tool said they were unsure whether their child could bypass it.

Figure 37: Parents of 5-15s who use each tool: perception of child’s ability to bypass technical tools: 2014

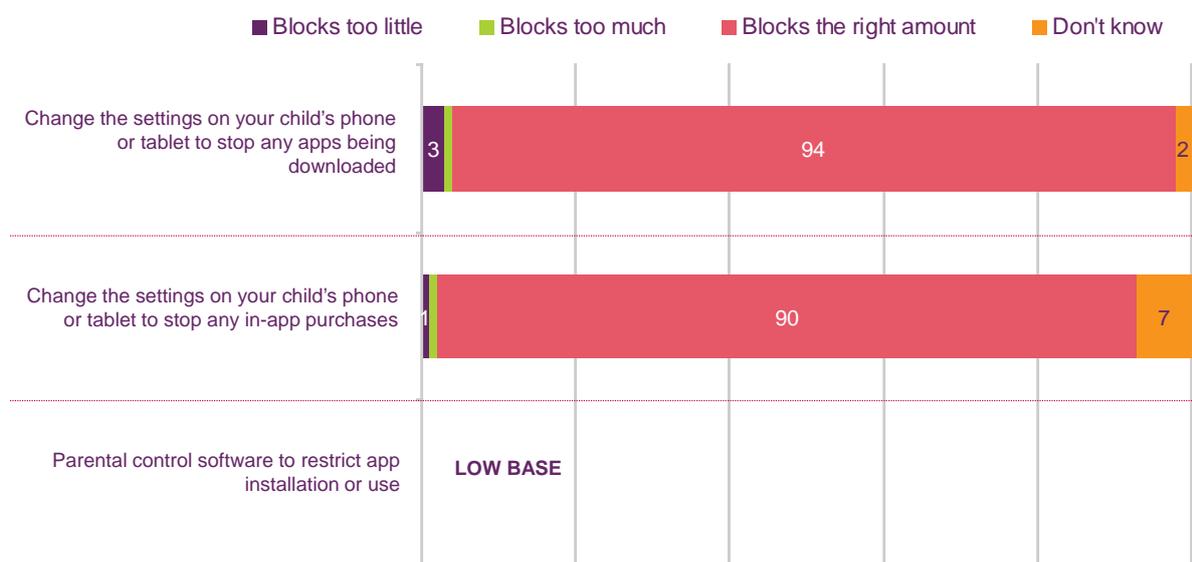


QP41A-H Do you think your child can get around them? (Spontaneous responses, single coded)
 Base: Parents of children aged 5-15 with a broadband connection at home and who use each technical tool or control (Variable base)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to June 2014

7.87 Parents who used any of the tools that relate specifically to app installation and use on a smartphone or tablet were also asked whether they considered them useful. As shown in Figure 38, more than nine in 10 parents of 5-15s who used each of the tools considered them useful³⁸.

³⁸ It is not possible to conduct any further analysis among parents of 5-15s who use parental control software to restrict app installation or use because of low base sizes. Neither is it possible to conduct further analysis by age, gender or socio-economic group among parents of 5-15s who use each type of tool. Low base sizes prevent analysis among parents of children aged 3-4 who use of any of these tools.

Figure 38: Parents of 5-15s who use each tool - technical tools for smartphones/tablets blocking the right amount of content: 2014



QP40J-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).
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to June 2014

7.88 Parents who use each of these tools were asked whether they thought their child was able to bypass these tools. Around one in seven parents of 5-15s who have changed the setting on their child's phone or tablet to stop apps being downloaded (15%) thought that their child was able to bypass this tool, while around one in 10 parents (11%) felt the same about the tool that prevents in-app purchases.

Talking to children about managing online risks

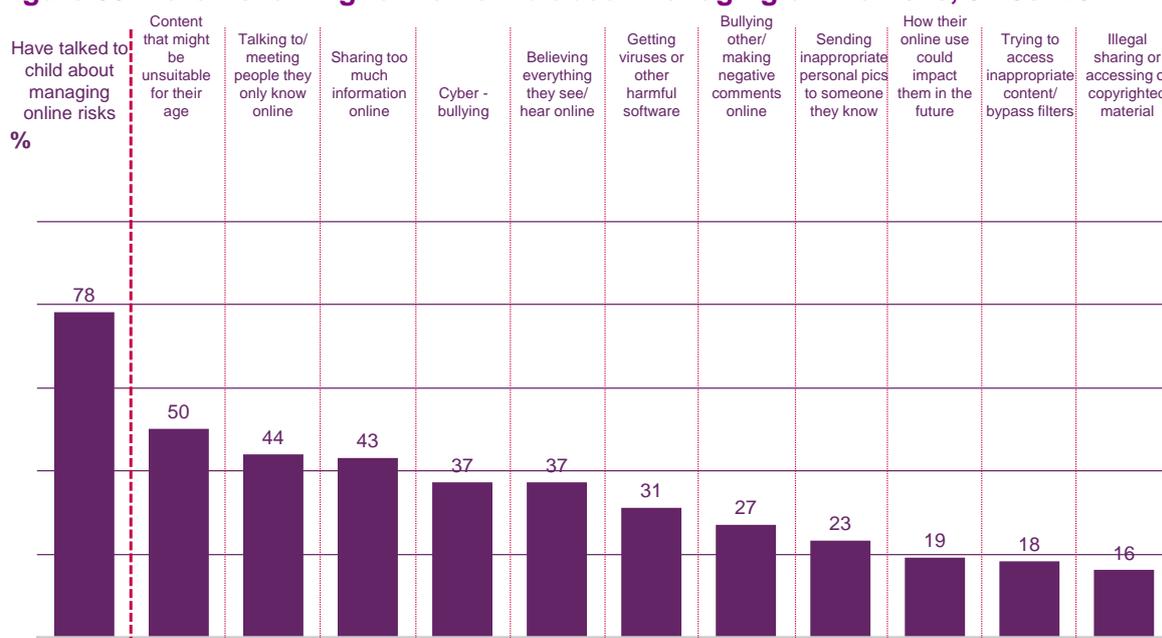
Nearly eight in 10 parents of 5-15s have ever talked to their child about managing some kind of online risk, with the likelihood increasing with age

7.89 Parents of 5-15s who go online were prompted with 11 possible online risks and asked whether they had ever talked to their child about any of them.

7.90 Figure 39 shows that nearly eight in 10 parents of 5-15s (78%) had ever talked to their child about managing at least one of these online risks. Half of parents (50%) had talked to their child about content on sites or apps that might be unsuitable for their age, with more than four in 10 talking to their child about the risks involved with talking to/meeting people they only know online (44%) or sharing too much information online (43%). More than one in three parents had ever spoken with their child about them being bullied online/cyberbullying (37%) or about believing everything they see or hear online (37%), with three in 10 parents talking to their child about downloading viruses or other harmful software as a result of what they do online (31%).

7.91 Around one in four had spoken to their child about them bullying others online or making negative comments about other people online (27%) or about sending inappropriate personal pictures to someone they know (23%). All other potential online risks had been discussed by fewer than one in five parents.

Figure 39: Parents talking to their child about managing online risks, 5-15s: 2014

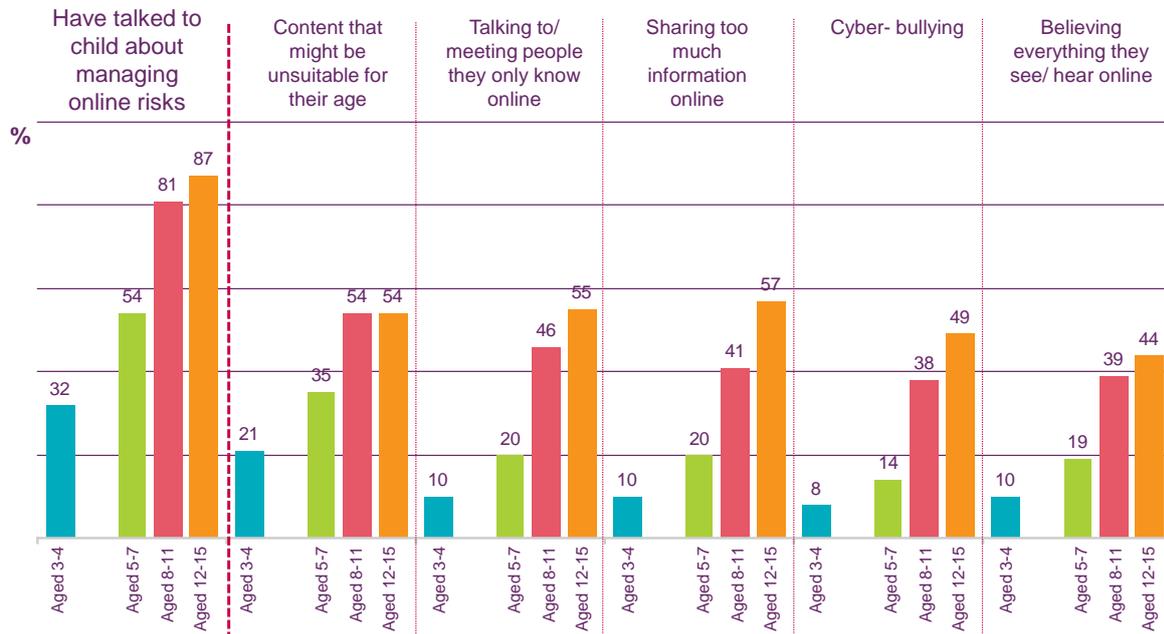


QP33 – Have you ever talked to your child about any of the following things that could happen online? (prompted responses, multi-coded)
 Base: Parents of children aged 5-15 who go online at home or elsewhere (1402 aged 5-15)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to June 2014

- 7.92 Figures 40 and 41 show how this overall incidence breaks down by age, for parents of children aged 5-7, 8-11 and 12-15 as well as among parents of 3-4s.
- 7.93 The likelihood of having talked to their child about managing any of the risks increases with the age of the child, as shown in Figures 40 and 41, rising from one in three parents of 3-4s (32%) to more than half of parents of 5-7s (54%), eight in 10 parents of 8-11s (81%) and close to nine in 10 parents of 12-15s (87%).
- 7.94 There is one risk that parents of 3-4s were most likely to have talked to their child about: content on sites or apps that might be unsuitable for their age (21%). The next most common online risk they had discussed is downloading viruses or other harmful software as a result of online activity (12%). All other online risks had been discussed by one in 10 or fewer parents of 3-4s.
- 7.95 Similarly, there was no individual risk that the majority of parents of 5-7s had ever discussed with their child. A majority of parents of 8-11s had discussed content on sites or apps that might be unsuitable for their age group (54%) while a majority of parents of 12-15 had discussed three risks: age-inappropriate content on sites or apps (54%), talking to or meeting online-only contacts (55%) and sharing too much information online (57%).
- 7.96 Parents of 8-11s and 12-15s were more likely than parents of 5-7s to have spoken to their child about all 11 online risks, while parents of 12-15s were more likely than parents of 8-11s to have spoken to their child about seven of the risks. The four risks that parents of 8-11s and 12-15s were equally likely to have spoken to their child about are: age-inappropriate content on sites or apps (54% for 8-11s and 54% for 12-15s), believing everything they see or hear online (39% vs. 44%), bullying online or making negative comments about other people (31% vs. 32%) and trying to access inappropriate content/bypass filters (20% vs. 23%).
- 7.97 Among parents of 12-15s; parents of girls are more likely than parents of boys to say they have ever talked to their child about talking to or meeting people they only know

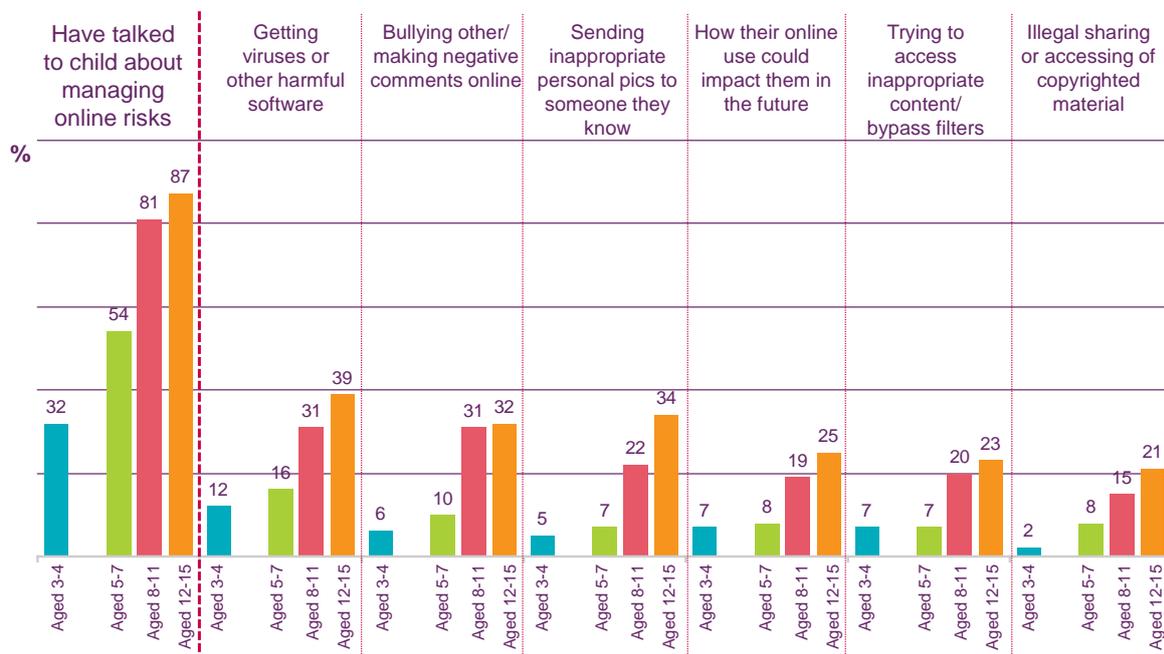
online (60% vs. 51%), about being bullied online/cyberbullying (55% vs. 42%) or about sending inappropriate personal pictures to someone they know (38% vs. 29%).

Figure 40: Parents talking to their child about managing online risks, by age: 2014/ 1



QP33 – Have you ever talked to your child about any of the following things that could happen online? (prompted responses, multi-coded)
 Base: Parents of children aged 3-4 or 5-15 who go online at home or elsewhere (272 aged 3-4, 300 aged 5-7, 523 aged 8-11, 579 aged 12-15)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to June 2014

Figure 41: Parents talking to their child about managing online risks, by age: 2014/ 2

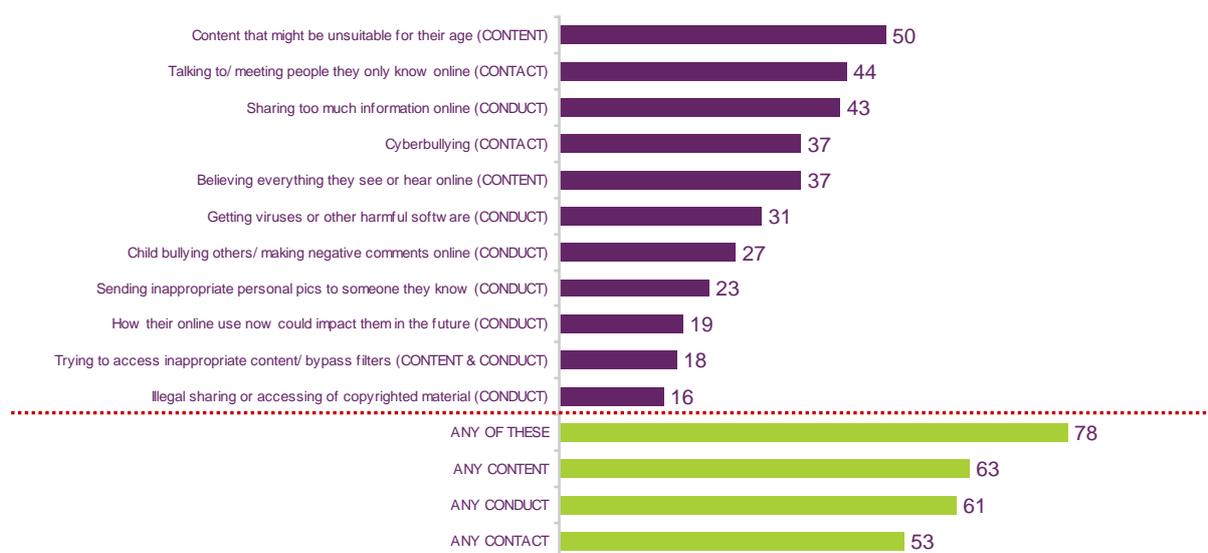


QP33 – Have you ever talked to your child about any of the following things that could happen online? (prompted responses, multi-coded)
 Base: Parents of children aged 3-4 or 5-15 who go online at home or elsewhere (272 aged 3-4, 300 aged 5-7, 523 aged 8-11, 579 aged 12-15)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to June 2014

7.98 Figure 42 looks at the same 11 online risks that parents of 5-15s who go online may have discussed with their child, but assigns each of these to one or more of three types of risk: conduct (seven of the 11), content (three of the 11) or contact (two of the 11).

7.99 As mentioned above, around eight in 10 (78%) parents of 5-15s have discussed any of the 11 online risks with their child. As with this overall incidence, the likelihood of talking to their child about any conduct- or contact-related risks increased with the age of the child (34% for 5-7s, 63% for 8-11s and 74% for 12-15s for conduct-related risks and 24% for 5-7s, 54% for 8-11s and 67% for 12-15s for contact-related risks). Parents of 8-11s (66%) and 12-15s (70%) were both more likely than parents of 5-7s (45%) to have spoken to their child about content-related risks. Among 12-15s, parents of girls are more likely to have spoken to their child about contact-related risks (72% vs. 62%).

Figure 42: Summary of parents talking to their child about managing online risks, 5-15s: 2014



QP33 – Have you ever talked to your child about any of the following things that could happen online? (prompted responses, multi-coded)
 Base: Parents of children aged 5-15 who go online at home or elsewhere (1402 aged 5-15)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to June 2014

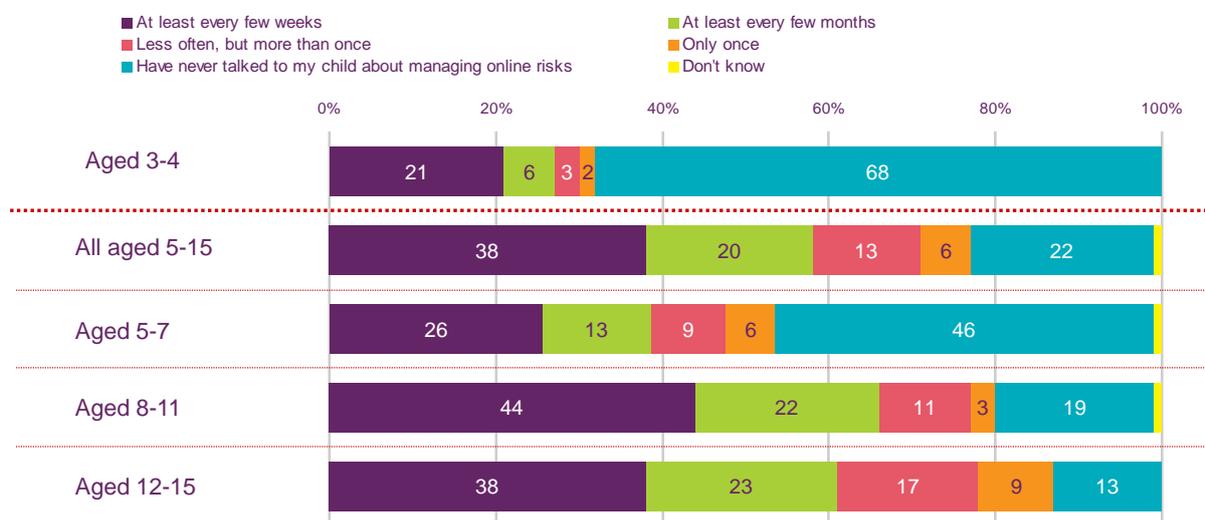
Close to four in 10 parents of 5-15s who go online (38%) say they talk to their child about managing these online risks at least every few weeks

- 7.100 In 2014, parents who said they had ever spoken to their child about any of the 11 online risks were then asked how often they talked to their child about managing these types of risk are shown in Figure 43.
- 7.101 As discussed above, the likelihood of not having spoken to their child about managing online risks decreased with the age of the child. Two in three parents of 3-4s (68%) had never spoken to their child about managing any of the 11 online risks, while one in five parents (21%) talked to their child at least every few weeks. A further 6% of parents said they did this at least every few months.
- 7.102 Close to four in 10 parents of 5-15s who go online (38%) said they talk to their child about managing these online risks at least every few weeks; this was more likely for 8-11s (44%) and 12-15s (38%) than for 5-7s (26%). A further one in five parents of 5-15s (20%) who go online said that although they did not speak to their child every few weeks, they did speak to them every few months. Therefore, a majority of parents of 5-15s (58%) speak to their child at least every few months; the incidence

is higher among parents of 8-11s (66%) and 12-15s (61%) and lower among parents of 5-7s (39%).

7.103 In 2014, parents of boys aged 12-15 were more likely than parents of girls to say they had only spoken to their child once about managing online risks (11% vs. 6%).

Figure 43: Frequency of talking to children about managing online risk, by age: 2014



QP34 – Which of these best describes how often you talk to your child about these things? (single coded)
 Base: Parents of children aged 3-4 or 5-15 who go online at home or elsewhere (272 aged 3-4, 1402 aged 5-15, 300 aged 5-7, 523 aged 8-11, 579 aged 12-15)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to June 2014

The main reason given for not discussing online risks is because the child is too young for this type of conversation

7.104 Parents who said they had never talked to their child about any of the 11 risks were asked why they had not done so. Figure 44 shows the responses among parents of 5-15s and Figure 45 shows this by age group, including parents of 3-4s³⁹.

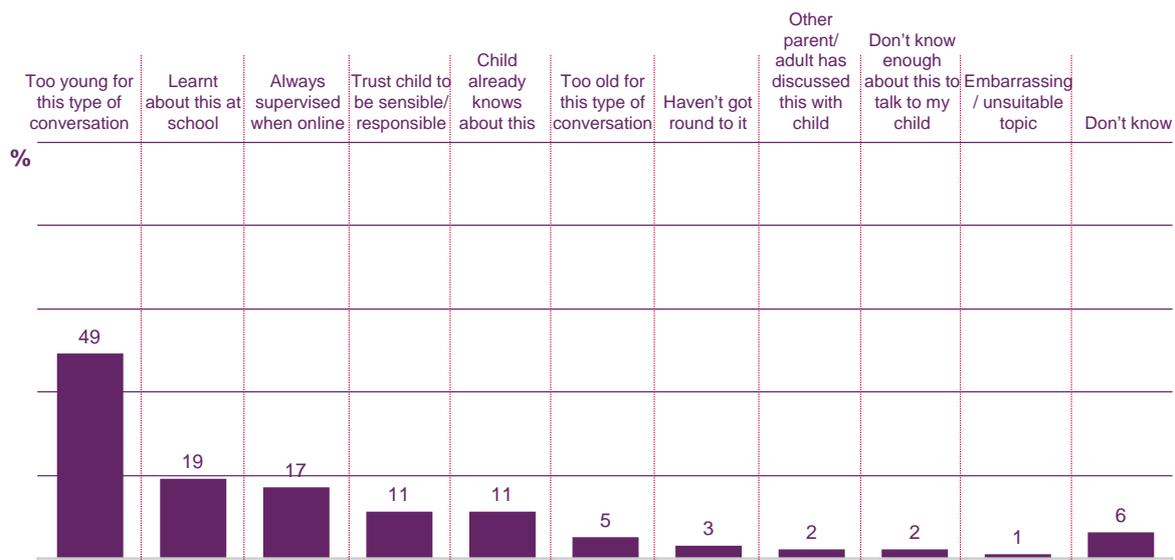
7.105 The main reason given by parents of 5-15s who had never spoken to their child about online risks was that their child was too young for this type of conversation (49%). Around one in five parents of 5-15s said it was because their child learnt about managing online risks at school (19%), with a comparable proportion of parents saying it was because they were always supervised when online (17%). One in 10 parents (11%) said they trusted their child to be sensible/responsible or that their child already knew about this (11%).

7.106 As shown in Figure 44, parents of 3-4s (85%) and 5-7s (78%) were much more likely than parents of 8-11s (42%) to say that the child was too young for this conversation. In contrast, parents of 8-11s were more likely to say it was because they had learnt about online risks at school (21% for 8-11s vs. 1% for 3-4s and 7% for 5-7s).

7.107 Among all 5-15s, parents of boys were more likely than parents of girls to say that they had not talked to their child about managing online risks because their child was always supervised when online (22% vs. 12%) or because their child already knew about this (14% vs. 7%).

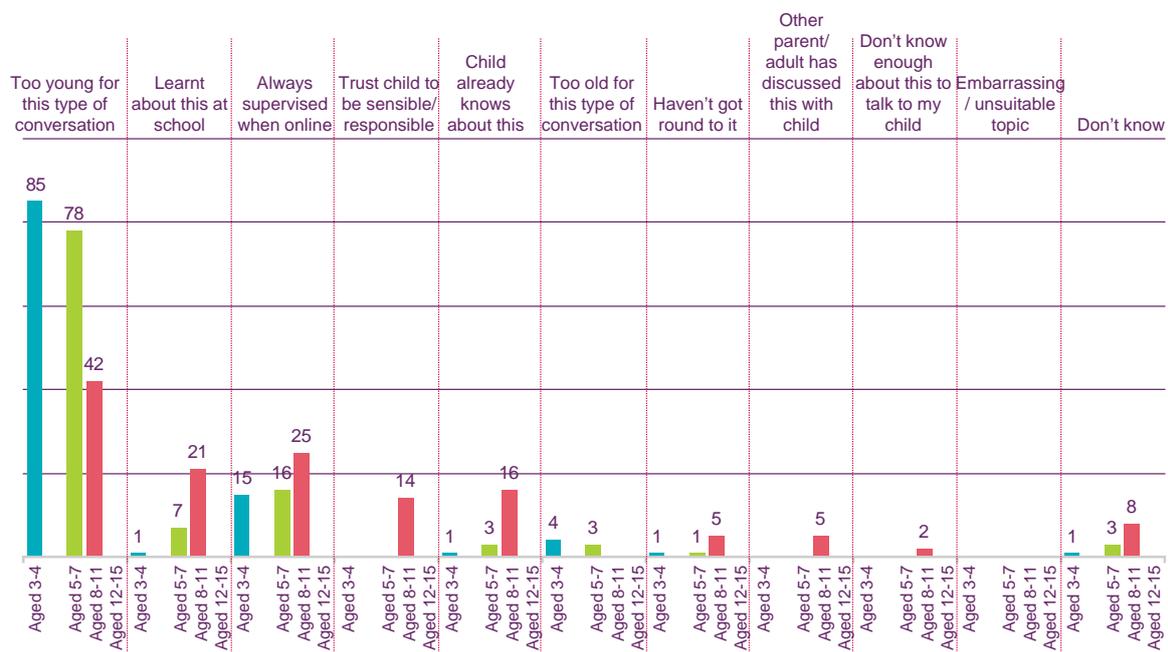
³⁹ Because the likelihood of parents having spoken to their child about online risks increases with age, children aged 3-4 and 5-7 are more widely represented in the group of parents who have never spoken to their child about online risks.

Figure 44: Reasons for not having talked to child about managing online risks, 5-15s: 2014



QP35 – 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 (336 aged 5-15)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to June 2014

Figure 45: Reasons for not having talked to child about managing online risks, by age: 2014



QP35 – 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 3-4 or 5-15 who have not talked to their child about managing online risks (197 aged 3-4, 149 aged 5-7, 112 aged 8-11, 75 aged 12-15) *Base too low for 12-15s
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to June 2014

Section 8

Safety measures on sites regularly visited by children

Key findings

- Two in three (67%) parents of children aged 12-15 check what their child is doing when visiting social media sites, unchanged since 2013.
- The most popular websites visited by 6-14 year olds in 2014 were Google and YouTube. Safe Search, available on Google and other search engines, is used by 13% of parents of 5-15s with a home broadband connection. The YouTube safety mode has been enabled by 12% of parents of 5-15s.
- Around one in five (20%) of parents of 5-15s who say their child watches TV programmes through catch-up services (on a TV or other online-enabled device) are not aware of the guidance labels for programmes and around one in four (24%) have set up a PIN/password on all of the catch-up services their child uses, with a further one in seven (14%) having set them on some of the catch-up services.

Supervision of social media

Two in three parents of 12-15s check what their child is doing when visiting social media sites

- 8.1 Social media sites and apps are popular among older children. One in five who go online aged 8-11 (20%) and seven in 10 who go online aged 12-15 (71%) have a social media profile
- 8.2 As we saw in section five above two in three (67%) parents of children aged 12-15 check what their child is doing when visiting social media sites and this incidence has not changed since 2013. Around four in 10 parents also check the browser/device history (44%), ask the child about what they are doing/have been doing online (43%), become a 'friend/follower' of the child on the sites/apps (42%) or are nearby and regularly check what they are doing (39%).

Technical controls on Google and YouTube

Thirteen per cent of parents of 5-15s use Safe Search on a search engine and 12% have the YouTube safety mode enabled

- 8.3 In 2014 the two most commonly visited websites by children aged 6-14 were Google and YouTube⁴⁰. Google has a safe search facility on its site and YouTube offers a safety mode. As we saw in section five above, Safe Search on a search engine is used by 13% of parents of 5-15s with a home broadband connection. An additional 1% had used it previously but have now stopped. Over two thirds (68%) of parents of 5-15s were not aware of this measure.

⁴⁰ comScore MMX, May 2014, home and work panel, children aged 6-14

8.4 The YouTube safety mode had been enabled by 12% of parents of 5-15s, 1% had stopped using it and almost three quarters (73%) were not aware of it. As noted above, these two measures were also among the few where there was a difference by age. Parents of 5-7s were more likely than those of 8-11s and 12-15s to say they had never used both Safe Search (26% for 5-7s, vs. 14% for 8-11s and 19% for 12-15s) and YouTube safety mode (21% for 5-7s vs. 10% for 8-11s and 14% for 12-15s).

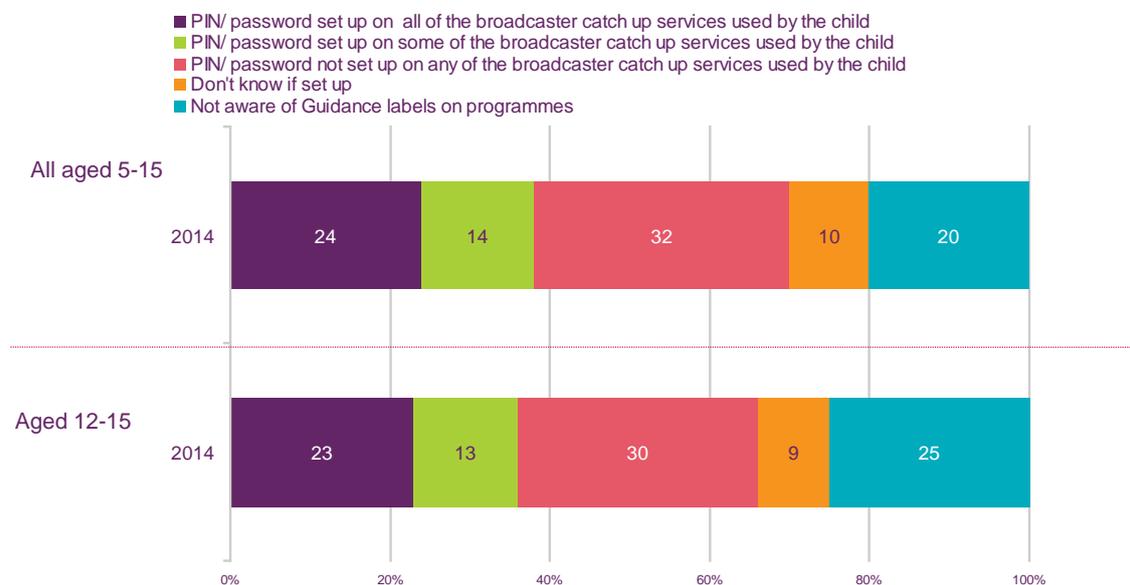
Awareness and use of PIN controls on catch-up services

Close to four in 10 parents of 5-15s have set up PIN/passwords on at least some of the TV catch up services their child uses

8.5 In 2014, parents of children aged 3-4 and 5-15 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.

8.6 As shown in Figure 46 around one in five (20%) of these parents of 5-15s were not aware of the guidance labels for programmes and around one in four (24%) had set up a PIN/password on all of the catch-up services their child uses, with a further one in seven (14%) having set them on some of the catch-up services. As such, close to four in 10 (38%) had set up PIN/passwords on at least some of the catch-up services, rising to close to half (47%) among those who were aware of guidance labels.

Figure 46: Awareness and use of PIN controls on catch-up services, by age: 2014



QP50/ 51 – 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 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 through catch up services on a TV or other online enabled device (280 aged 5-15, 149 aged 12-15)

Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to June 2014

Section 9

Why parents choose not to apply parental control tools

Key findings

- Around two in five parents of 5-15s with broadband at home, who do not use any particular technical tools to manage their child's access and use, say that this is because they talk to their child and use other types of mediation; a similar proportion say it is because they trust their child.
- Close to half of parents who do not use tools to manage app installation and use say this is because they trust their child to be sensible/responsible, with around a third saying that this is because they prefer talking and other forms of mediation.
- The main reason given by parents for not installing parental controls on a games console was that they trust their child, followed by the fact that their child is always supervised.

Reasons for not using tools that manage online access and use

A preference for talking to the child and using other forms of mediation is the main reason for not using technical tools

- 9.1 In 2014 we asked about a range of technical tools that parents can use to manage children's online access and use. Of these, there were five types of tools for which parents who said that they were aware of but did not use them were prompted with some possible reasons for not using these technical tools and were asked to say whether these reasons applied.
- 9.2 Figure 47 below shows the results for five tools that parents of 5-15s were asked about, expressed as a proportion of those with a broadband internet connection at home. These five tools are ranked according to the proportion of parents who are aware of but do not use each feature.
- 9.3 Across all five tools, the top three reasons for not using each tool are consistent. Around four in 10 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 a similar proportion say it is because they trust their child to be sensible/responsible. Around one in five parents (20%) who are aware of each tool but do not use it, said this was because the child was always supervised/there is always an adult present. All other reasons for not using each tool were mentioned by around one in 10 parents of 5-15s or fewer.
- 9.4 Parents of 12-15s with a home broadband internet connection were more likely than parents of 8-11s to say they did not use each type of tool because they trust their child to be sensible/responsible. In contrast, parents of 8-11s were more likely than parents of 12-15s to say they did not use each tool because their child was always supervised/there was always an adult present.

- 9.5 Among all 5-15s, parents of girls were more likely than parents of boys to say that they had not enabled safe search on search engine websites because their child was always supervised (26% vs. 14%).
- 9.6 Those in ABC1 households were more likely than those in C2DE households to say they did not use parental controls built into the device by the manufacturer because they trust their child to be sensible/responsible (44% vs. 28%).

Figure 47: Parents of 5-15s with a home broadband connection who are aware of each tool – reasons for not using each type of online technical tool: 2014

All aged 5-15	Content filters (Parental control software e.g. Net Nanny, McAfee) (n=388)	Content filters (ISP network level home filtering) (n=353)	Parental controls built into the device by the manufacturer (n=312)	Safe search enabled on search engine websites (n= 254)	YouTube safety mode enabled (n=186)
% of those with BB at home who are aware of but do not use this feature	30%	29%	23%	20%	15%
I prefer to talk to my child and use supervision and rules	43%	42%	38%	40%	39%
Trust my child to be sensible/ responsible	40%	38%	38%	41%	33%
Child is always supervised/ always an adult present	21%	19%	18%	20%	20%
Too complicated/ time consuming to install/ administer	6%	3%	6%	3%	3%
Child learns how to be safe on the internet at school	6%	11%	7%	8%	7%
Don't know how to do this/ didn't know this was possible	5%	6%	6%	7%	6%
Filters block too much/ get in the way	4%	7%	2%	3%	2%
Wouldn't work / They would find a way round the controls	2%	3%	1%	3%	5%

QP44 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 with a broadband internet connection at home and are aware of but who do not use each technical tool or control (variable base)

Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to June 2014

Reasons for not having parental controls set for smart phones or tablets

The main reason parents give for not using tools to manage app installation and use is because they trust their child to be responsible

- 9.7 Figure 48 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 tablet. Close to half of parents (45%) did not use this tool because they trust their child to be sensible/responsible; around one in three (35%) said they prefer to talk to their child and use supervision and rules. Around one in seven (15%) did not use the tool

because their child is always supervised. All other reasons were mentioned by fewer than one in 10 parents.

Figure 48: Parents of 5-15s who use a smartphone or tablet aware of each tool – Reasons for not using each type of online technical tool: 2014

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	16%
Trust my child to be sensible/ responsible	45%
I prefer to talk to my child and use supervision and rules	35%
Child is always supervised/ always an adult present	15%
Child learns how to be safe on the internet at school	6%
Don't know how to do this/ didn't know this was possible	4%
Too complicated/ time consuming to install/ administer	4%
Filters don't block enough	2%
Wouldn't work / They would find a way round the controls	2%
Filters block too much/ get in the way	1%

QP44 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).

Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to June 2014

Reasons for not having parental controls set on games consoles

The main reason given by parents for not installing parental controls on a games console was that they trust their child, followed by the fact that their child is always supervised.

- 9.8 Those parents who did not have parental controls set on games consoles were asked to say why. One third (33%) of parents of 5-15s whose child uses a handheld or portable games console said this was because they trust their child to be sensible/responsible, as do two in five (41%) of parents whose children use a fixed games console. Thirty one per cent of parents whose child uses a handheld console and 25% of parents whose child uses a fixed console said it was because their child is always supervised. Around one in 10 or more said it was because the child is too young for this to be a problem (15% for handheld/ portable games consoles and 11% for fixed games consoles).
- 9.9 Some parents do not use parental controls because they do not 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 around one in five parents of 5-15s who do not have parental controls in place (21% for handheld/ portable games consoles and 17% for fixed games consoles).

Qualitative reasons for not having parental controls set

- 9.10 While a few years old the qualitative research mentioned above provides more nuanced reasons for not installing parental controls than are possible in the quantitative research. This found that there were additional barriers caused by a reluctance or inability among parents to engage with technology and the fact that the risks of the internet were not necessarily top of mind for parents. Combined with the challenges of managing day to day life, this meant that parents often did not get round to installing parental controls.

Annex 1

DCMS letter



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6 November 2013

Dear Ed

Reporting on internet safety measures

As you know, in the speech the PM gave, on 22 July, on internet safety measures Ofcom was asked to carry out a reporting function. This followed a number of conversations at official level and this letter seeks to formalise those discussions.

To this end, I am requesting that Ofcom provide me with:

I. Report on internet safety measures

- A report, in December 2013, measuring the take-up, awareness of and confidence of parents in relation to parental controls. I would also like this report to: cover the broader strategies parents may adopt to improve children's online safety; the 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, as far as it is available, any research into why parents may choose not to apply parental control tools.
- A follow up report in December 2014 so that we can track developments on the range of measures outlined above.

II. Report on ISP commitments to offer Parental Controls

- A report in Spring 2014 on the measures put in place by BT, Sky, TalkTalk and Virgin Media to meet commitments to implement network level filtering for new customers by the end of 2013. These ISPs have committed to: delivering family-friendly network level filters for all new customers by the end of December 2013. This means a commitment that all new customers, on setting up their new



broadband service with these providers, will receive a prompt inviting them to set up family-friendly filters and, should customers not engage with this process by, for example clicking next, that filters should be applied. Where the filters are in place, these will apply to all devices in the home which connect to that internet connection and, in order to verify that the person setting the filters is aged 18 or over, that a closed-loop email system of notification will be applied.

I recognise that Ofcom's ability to fulfil these requests is contingent on the cooperation by ISPs, and therefore, we will formally ask ISPs for their cooperation, and to provide you with the necessary information. I also understand you are content that you are able to deliver these requests within your current budgets. Lastly, I would ask that, over the longer term, you consider incorporating relevant data captured in these reports into the annual Children and Parents: Media Use and Attitudes Report.

My officials will keep in regular contact as this work progresses. You should not hesitate to raise any questions with them regarding this direction, or any other aspect of this work.



Rt Hon Maria Miller MP
Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport
and Minister for Women and Equalities

Annex 2

Regulatory context

- A3.1 Section 3 of the Communications Act 2003 (“the Act”) sets out Ofcom’s principal duties in carrying out its functions which are to further the interests of citizens in relation to communication matters and to further the interests of consumers in relevant markets, where appropriate by promoting competition. In carrying out these duties, Ofcom must have particular regard, amongst other matters, to the vulnerability of children and of others who appear to Ofcom to put them in need of special protection.
- A3.2 Ofcom has statutory duties to regulate broadcast television and radio services and “tv-like” video on demand services⁴¹ both online and on TV platforms like cable. We also have duties in relation to providers of internet access, as part of our regulation of electronic communications markets in the UK. Finally, we have a statutory duty to promote media literacy.
- A3.3 The promotion of media literacy is a responsibility placed on Ofcom by Section 11 of the Act⁴², and informs three of Ofcom’s strategic purposes: to promote opportunities to participate; to protect consumers from harm; and to contribute to and implement public policy as defined by Parliament.
- A3.4 Media literacy enables people to have the skills, knowledge and understanding they need to make full use of the opportunities presented both by traditional and by new communications services. Media literacy also helps people to manage content and communications, and protect themselves and their families from the potential risks associated with using these services. The key objectives of Ofcom’s research into children and parents’ media literacy are:
- to provide a rich picture of the different elements of media literacy across the key platforms: the internet, television, radio, games and mobile phones;
 - to identify emerging issues and skills gaps that help to target stakeholders’ resources for the promotion of media literacy; and
 - to provide data about children’s internet habits/opinions and parents’ strategies to protect their children online, to inform the work of UKCCIS, which brings together over 200 organisations to help keep children and young people safe online, and other stakeholder organisations such as Get Safe Online.

Ofcom’s regulatory duties in respect of video on demand services

- A3.5 As the United Kingdom’s independent regulator for the communications sector, Ofcom’s principal duty in carrying out our functions (set out in section 3(1) of the Communications Act 2003) is:
- a) to further the interests of citizens in relation to communications matters; and

⁴¹ Further details of Ofcom’s statutory powers in relation to online video on demand programming can be found at annex 1e.

⁴² Under Section 14 (6a) of the Act we have a duty to make arrangements for the carrying out of research into the matters mentioned in Section 11(1).

- b) to further the interests of consumers in relevant markets, where appropriate by promoting competition.
- A3.6 In carrying out this duty, Ofcom must have particular regard, amongst other matters, to the vulnerability of children and of others who appear to Ofcom to put them in need of special protection.
- A3.7 The Communications Act makes provisions for the regulation of on demand programme services (ODPS), which are essentially services whose principal purpose is the provision of programmes the form and content of which are comparable to the form and content of programmes normally included in television services, i.e. TV-like video on demand (VOD) services. These services can be made available on any platform and are subject to a notification scheme if the editorial control of the service is generally based in the UK. Notified ODPS must comply with minimum content standards under the AVMS Directive, which has been implemented in the UK by Part 4A of the Communications Act 2003.
- A3.8 Ofcom has formally designated the Authority for Television On Demand (ATVOD) as the co-regulator for editorial content⁴³, and the ASA as the co-regulator for advertising content. Ofcom remains ultimately responsible for ensuring that providers of on demand services observe relevant standards.
- A3.9 ATVOD has published Rules and Guidance to ensure compliance of all notified ODPS with certain minimum standards.⁴⁴ Rule 11 of the ATVOD Rules reflects section 368E(2) of the Communications Act and states that, “if an on demand programme service contains material which might seriously impair the physical, mental or moral development of persons under the age of eighteen, the material must be made available in a manner which secures that such persons will not normally see or hear it”.
- A3.10 ATVOD has adopted a precautionary approach to its interpretation of the wording of the Act and includes R18 material (or material equivalent to content classified in that category) as “material that might seriously impair”.
- A3.11 In the past year Ofcom has imposed financial penalties on three ATVOD notified ODPS for a breach of Rule 11. These sanctions were imposed on the services ‘Playboy TV’⁴⁵, ‘Demand Adult’⁴⁶ and ‘Strictly Broadband’⁴⁷ after these services provided R18 equivalent material without adequate measures in place – a content access control system – to ensure that those under 18 would not normally see or hear it.
- A3.12 ATVOD has no rules to regulate abusive content on notified ODPS, i.e. content that is not considered to be hate speech or material likely to incite crime, or does not amount to R18 equivalent material.

⁴³ <http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/binaries/broadcast/tv-ops/designation180310.pdf>.

⁴⁴ Under the AVMS Directive, which has been implemented in the UK by Part 4A of the Communications Act 2003.

⁴⁵ http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/binaries/enforcement/vod-services/Playboy_TV_Sanction.pdf

⁴⁶ http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/binaries/enforcement/vod-services/Demand_Adult.pdf

⁴⁷ <http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/binaries/enforcement/vod-services/Strictly-Broadband.pdf>

Other Online Services

A3.13 Ofcom's role in relation to the wider array of internet services is much more limited. As noted above, we regulate audio visual content delivered over the internet through notified ODPS when they are established in the UK; but we have no statutory powers to regulate any other online content.