

Emerging Trends in Media Use

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Ofcom Report Round-Up 2022

Communications regulator Ofcom has released its latest study looking at the recent online trends and attitudes of internet users in for children and parents across the UK. Our online safety experts have rounded up six key trends for safeguarding professionals, teachers, parents, and carers.

The report provides a clear snapshot of parents, children, and young people's current media habits that can help us understand the emerging trends, risks, and threats. Our online safety experts have identified six key trends from the report that that will shape online safety conversations at school and at home.

Ofcom
making communications work for everyone

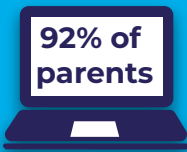
Read the full article [here](#)

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1 ONLINE SAFETY KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICE

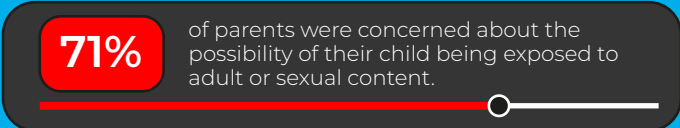


The Ofcom report showed that online safety is a growing topic in households. Despite parents, children, and young people being more knowledgeable about the tools available to keep them safer online, this knowledge is not being put into practice.

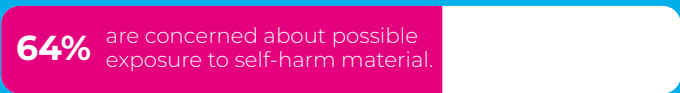


had rules in place to safeguard children online, including spending rules, gaming rules and who they can talk to online.

9 IN 10 parents were aware of safety-promoting tools and controls on platforms but only **7 IN 10** reported using them.



of parents were concerned about the possibility of their child being exposed to adult or sexual content.



are concerned about possible exposure to self-harm material.



are worried that their child may encounter extreme views online (such as extreme religious or political ideologies).

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Nearly all children know how to carry out at least one safety-promoting function online (such as changing privacy settings).



of young people aged 12 to 17 reported using measures that put them at more risk of seeing harmful content.



However, only 14% had used a reporting or flagging feature online.

4 GAMING

Gaming remains a popular hobby for children and young people and a growing opportunity to engage with others socially. However, there are concerns around the engagement of young people with strangers in online gaming.



6 IN 10 children and young people reported playing games online, this is more common for boys over girls.

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2/3 reported playing alone.

1/3 play against strangers.

The likelihood of chatting with strangers in game increased with age

25% of 8-11s to

45% of 16-17s

Three quarters of 8-17s chatted with other players during a game.

12-17s were the more likely to play with strangers but

31% of 8-11s &

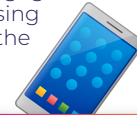
22% of 5-7s

reported doing the same.

2 MULTI-SCREENING

The report showed that children and young people are consuming media in more formats simultaneously which can make it challenging for families to create and maintain healthy screen time habits.

Children and young people are more likely to engage in 'multi-screening' (using multiple devices at the same time).



They report being unable to concentrate on one task at a time.

Devices in multi-screening are used for different purposes (such as watching a TV show on a television screen, using a laptop for a school assignment, and scrolling through TikTok on their phone).

3 CHANGING LANDSCAPE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

The way in which children and young people are using social media platforms is changing. Underage children and young people are using social media with parental approval, there appears to be less posting overall and more focus on controlling what family and friends can see.

12-17s are more likely to be on Instagram but TikTok is more popular with 8-11s (despite them being below the age of 13).



44% of parents of children aged between 11-12 were fine with their child having an account on social media despite being underage.

1/3 of parents reported being aware of minimum age requirements for social media.

8-11s were more likely (**46%**) to have a separate account for family to see.



40% of **16-17s** reported having a private account for closest friends and a public account for everyone else.

5 DIGITAL MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

The report showed an increase in children and young people seeking support online through a wide range of sources including influencers, dedicated apps, and videos.

8 IN 10 CHILDREN aged between **3 and 17** used online services to support their mental well-being.

1 IN 5 went online to follow fitness programmes, health trackers or when feeling sad, anxious, or worried.

Girls were more likely than boys to access online support when looking up health symptoms or feeling negative emotions.

Online therapy services were used by **1 in 10** children and young people.



To keep up to date with online threats, trends and risks and practical advice on making children and young people safer online, **sign up to our safeguarding hub today!**