

The Dudley Cybersurvey 2016



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safe & sound

Dudley's Community Safety Partnership

Foreword

Dear Colleagues,

I am pleased to share with you the results of the 2016 Dudley Cybersurvey, commissioned by Dudley's Clinical Commissioning Group in partnership with Safe and Sound, Dudley's Community Safety Partnership. This report has been compiled following the scrutiny of data from a questionnaire undertaken by over 2000 children and young people across Dudley borough.

Internet use by children and young people continues to grow for a number of reasons including increased access to Wi-Fi, both at home and in public spaces, the availability of mobile devices such as smartphones, tablets and cheap mobile contracts including data bundles. The advantages of the internet are vast, but with this also comes possible significant risks.

Nationally there have been a number of well publicised online incidents, some with tragic consequences for children and young people. These incidents include sexting, grooming and cyber bullying among other forms of online abuse. This report gives us an insight into Dudley children and young people's online lives; the way they communicate and who with, the material they are viewing (intentionally or accidentally) and the subsequent risks they may face.

The results of this survey, together with other data, will inform the ongoing development of Dudley's E-safety work plan and contribute to the content of the training available to those working with children and young people in Dudley, which in turn will help us to focus on the relevant issues our children and young people may face in relation to their online behaviour.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those children and young people who have contributed to the survey, as well as all those adults who worked to make this possible. This information will continue to help us in our work to keep our children and young people safe online.

Katriona Lafferty



Community Safety Officer (Reducing Vulnerability) – DMBC Community Safety Team
Chair of E-safety Sub Group - Dudley Safeguarding Children Board

<http://www.dudleysafeandsound.org/online-safety.html>

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About the Cybersurvey

The Cybersurvey online questionnaire by Youthworks has run annually for nine years in various local authority areas. This report represents data collected in Dudley in autumn 2016.

Respondents are anonymous, but a code, IP address and other identifying characteristics allow safeguarding measures to be provided if someone reveals an issue of concern. Alerts are sent to the local authority if any respondents appear unsafe or have written a distressed message in an open question. They follow up with the school using the school code, the IP address, date and time of the entry, the gender and age of the respondent.

Questionnaire Development and youth participation

The Cybersurvey was developed in 2008 with extensive consultation involving professionals in Dudley, Solihull, Birmingham and Oxfordshire. Young people in youth participation groups or advisory groups to the Dudley MBC were involved from the start, (Dudley Decision Makers and Dudley Youth Shadow Safeguarding Group) with support from the Youth Participation Team. This phase was followed by a pilot run in Essex with 158 young people. Wording of the questions was tested with young people to ensure good understanding of terms and they were encouraged to suggest questions.

Among the professionals from the four local authorities were safeguarding leads, e-safety champions, anti-bullying co-ordinators, community safety police officers and an educational psychologist. Youthworks manages the continuing development process, consultations, edits and reports annually. To date over 35,000 young respondents have contributed over nine years.

Each year, some questions have been modernised. The fast changing nature of the online environment and arrival of exciting new devices means that there is a need to evolve. The 2014 version, broadened out from cyberbullying to look at a wider range of online scenarios. The schools inspectorate, Ofsted announced the wider concept 'online safety', the following autumn. They drew 'attention to the need to reflect a widening range of issues associated with technology and user's access to content, contact with others and behavioural issues.' There had been several high profile suicides in the country linked with cyberbullying during 2013-2014 and rates of self-harm among teenagers have been rising steadily in recent years. Local government and schools wished to respond and include a wider range of issues in the Cybersurvey.

Workshops with students maintain the pupil involvement input. A research programme is now analysing the data in depth and resulting in papers, books, briefings and CPD training.

The Cybersurvey represents the experiences and views of young people. The aim is to improve practice, encourage evaluation of strategy and inform frontline staff and professionals. Please feel free to use the data in schools and youth settings as material for discussions and explorations on how online safety education could improve.

Executive Summary

2138 valid responses were collected in Dudley during autumn 2016. The largest cohort is 12 years old. The sample includes young people with various difficulties or responsibilities.

Emotional health

52% of our young people are happy and confident most of the time. Emotional health is considered throughout this report as a factor associated with online behaviour or reactions to online experiences. Those who are not confident, or feel they are not good enough most of the time, emerge as a group of young people whose depression or 'worrying feelings' appear to worsen after spending time online. These findings do not prove cause and effect but there is a strong association – those who feel bad about themselves in general, are more likely to report ways in which the Internet left them feeling edgy and nervous, depressed or sleepy and how it created difficulties with family or friends or affected schoolwork. Their emotional health appears to override any education on safety and their feelings appear to motivate them to seek fulfilment of their needs or compensatory friends and experiences online. Young people with hearing impairments emerge this year as a new group we are concerned about. Research points to depression in adolescents with hearing loss.¹

Access

Smartphone ownership has increased 5% in Dudley since Spring 2014 to 86%.

Tablet ownership has increased 13% to 81%. As many as 79% of 9 year olds use one.

Two diverging pathways

While the majority are relatively safe online - able to solve problems, knowing how to report problems or deal with situations, there is a sizeable minority who are cause for concern. This is because their online lives are diverging from their peers so markedly. This pattern is not unique to Dudley but is being found in several different Cybersurvey samples. This report identifies children in or leaving care, those with learning difficulties, emotional health concerns, mental health difficulties, speech or hearing impairments and young carers.

Understanding risks differently

16% of the total sample use chatrooms. These have often been thought to be a risky environment, but many children are telling us that these are frequently tied to a club or some interest group in which they chat to like-minded people. This can be a support group for children and young people with a special need or long term illness for example.

22% said they have met up with someone they only knew online. For most of them the meeting was fairly safe as they were planning to meet someone they partly knew or a friend knew. Some had met at a sports event before then followed up online.

- 72% told someone what they were going to do
- 65% took someone with them when they went to meet up
- 84% met up with someone who was about the same age as they were

¹ Theunissen, S.C.P.M., Tieffe, C., Kouwenberg, M., Soede, W. Vraire, J.J. & Frijns, J.H. (2011) Depression in hearing impaired children. *International Journal of Pediatric Otorhinolaryngology*. 75, 1313-1317

Support is needed for those who are meeting up with people not their age, who travel a long way or out of county and do not tell anyone or take anyone along. Young people in care and those who 'never feel I am good enough' appear to be taking genuine risks.

7% are involved in sexting. Among these people, the majority say that nothing bad happened after they shared images or videos. This can make teenagers doubt the advice given in online safety education, unless that advice is adjusted. There is a need to address the motivation that led them to do this, rather than simply warn against it. Some were pressured into it, others chose to do it. Those who say nothing happened may not realise that their images can be harvested and misused without their knowing of it.

There is a sharp rise in potential online risk between age 11 and 14, suggesting that suitable age-appropriate online safety education should be developed to engage this age group.

Risk is present in content

16% of our young people are viewing pro anorexia sites, 12% have viewed sites encouraging self-harm or even suicide. Vulnerable groups are more likely to view these sites.

Risk is present in excessive online time.

21% of the young people spend five or more hours per day online. While not a risk in itself, excessive screen time, when coupled with a number of other factors, can be an indicator that a young person is having problems in their online life. Young people should always be asked about their time spent online when they have reported an internet enabled problem. 48 % of depressed teenagers say they spend more than five hours per day online.

Bullying and aggression online

23% have been cyberbullied. In contrast, among those who are identified as vulnerable, the rates are far higher. The percentage this year appears lower than in 2014 but the results vary across age groups. Age 10-11 shows a significant drop in cyberbullying since 2014.

11% have experienced racist aggression or bullying online. 5% have experienced homophobic aggression or bullying online. People with disabilities are disproportionately experiencing both of these types of aggression.

Online safety education

Only 73% say they were taught how to stay safe online at school or college. This is low in comparison to other Cybersurvey areas. 53% always follow the advice they were taught. Very few say their school provides tablets for learning. Their out-of-school life knows no boundaries between online or offline, yet in school they do not seem to be using digital skills for learning, or gaining enough digital literacy.

58% of parents show their children how to stay safe, but parental advice and support decrease sharply after age 11 so that by age 15, less than half say parents showed them how to stay safe online. 27% try and limit time spent online by their children, 33% check games ratings and 37% check downloaded films and TV content are age appropriate.

26% of young people have been able to help a friend in trouble with an online problem.

Recommendations

1. Emotional health and online safety are associated.

When working with young people who have emotional or mental health difficulties it is of the utmost importance to explore their online lives and provide support. Equally, if working to help a young person with an online safety problem, attention should be paid to their emotional and mental health to ensure that they do not repeat the high risk activity or experience adverse impacts such as exposure to pro-anorexia sites, sites encouraging self-harm or even suicide.

- Ask: Thinking about your life and future, how do you feel most of the time?
- Develop understanding of the vulnerable groups identified in the report.
- If multiple factors are present consider this person to be vulnerable.²

2. Address the online safety needs of younger children who access the Internet on tablets.

79% of 9 year olds are using tablets and 49% a smartphone yet 43% of this age group say parents have not taught them to be safe online.

- Support and encourage parents to teach young children to be safe online
- Advise parents on steps they can take re: settings and parental controls
- Inform parents about games and film or TV content ratings plus age limits for Apps

3. Increase the online safety education being delivered by schools of all phases.

- Aim to raise the percentage who were taught online safety at school
- Encourage schools to start delivering to younger age groups
- Avoid issuing blanket safety 'rules'. Not all chat rooms are harmful and not all 'meet ups' are high risk. Advice and instructions should be adapted for the age group.
- Ensure the age group 11-14 is given a planned online safety education curriculum that develops each year, is adapted to their online lives and relevant.
- Aim to close the gap between young people's out of school digital lives and the lack of computers/tablets used for learning.

4. Online aggression, racism and homophobia.

- Efforts to address online racism and homophobia among Dudley's young people is bearing fruit and should be continued.
- Work to reduce cyberbullying is needed.

5. Develop age appropriate online safety advice with and for mid-teens

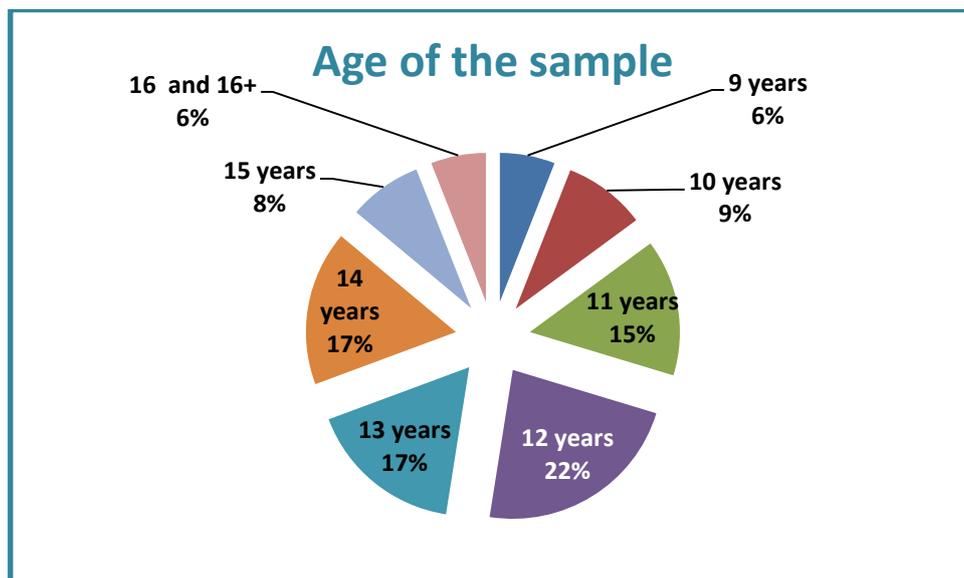
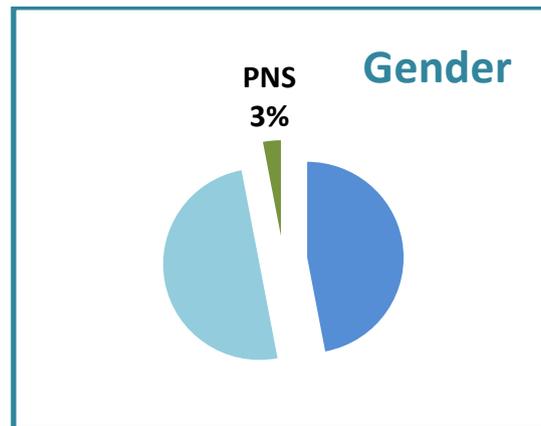
- Young people express a desire for autonomy, self-help and helping others.
- Assist teens to take responsibility for their online lives by providing a new level of support focusing on: recognising risk; problem solving; knowing how to report a problem; relationship skills and emotional health.
- Avoid rigid rules at this age. If they ignore one, they tend to ignore others

² Consider using our screening tool to help identify vulnerable individuals.

About the sample

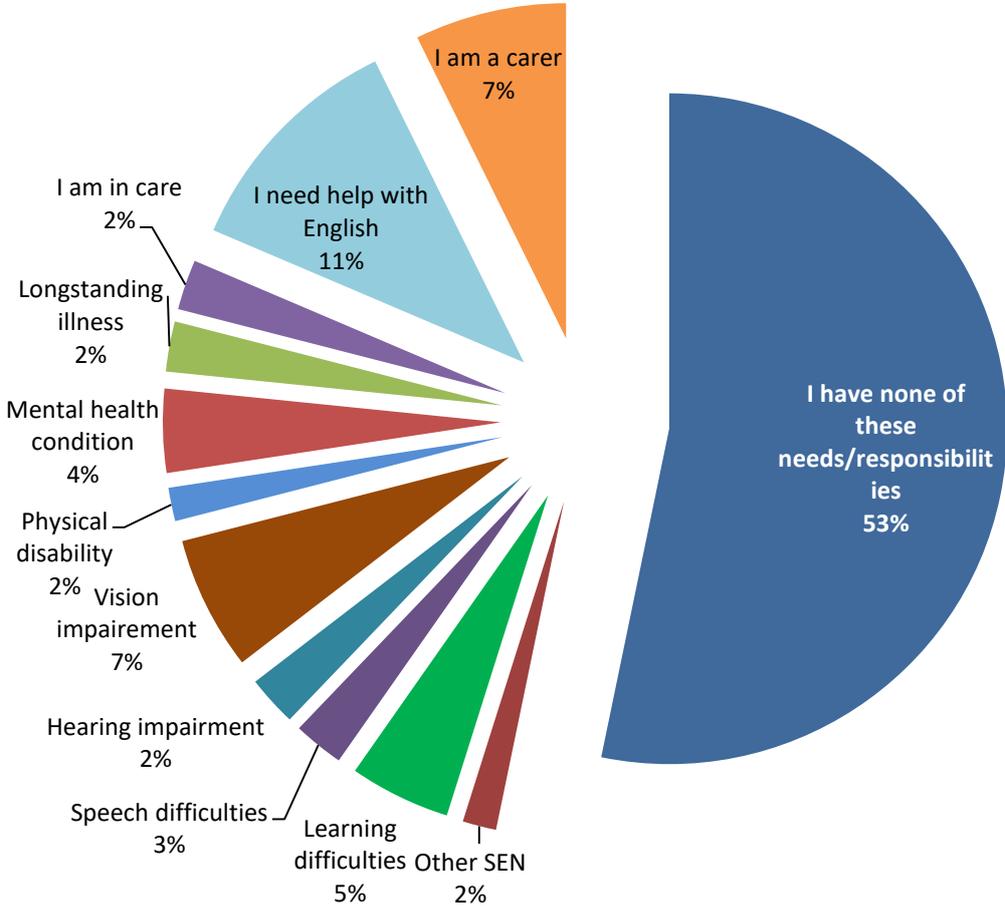
We achieved 2138 respondents after cleaning the data. 47% are boys, 50% girls and there are 3% who prefer not to state their gender (PNS).

The largest cohort is 12 years old (22%) while ages 13 and 14 each account for 17% of the sample. 11 year olds make up 15% and 10 year olds 9%, while there are 6% of 9 year olds and a further 6% are made up of 16 year olds and older respondents.



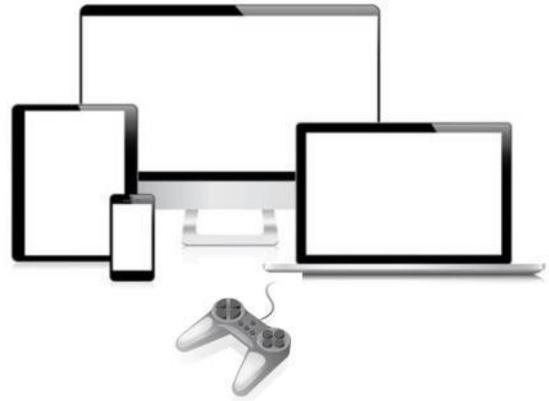
The sample was explored by age, gender and by a range of factors indicating a need for support or a possible vulnerability online. Our research programme has identified several groups of young people who are significantly more at risk online than their peers. Each year we gather data that feeds into this work in order that we may provide information to frontline services. Vulnerable groups include Young Carers, LAC, those with Learning Difficulties or other forms of SEN; those with Hearing Impairment, those who have a Mental Health difficulty, or an Emotional Health problem; Speech or language difficulties.

About you



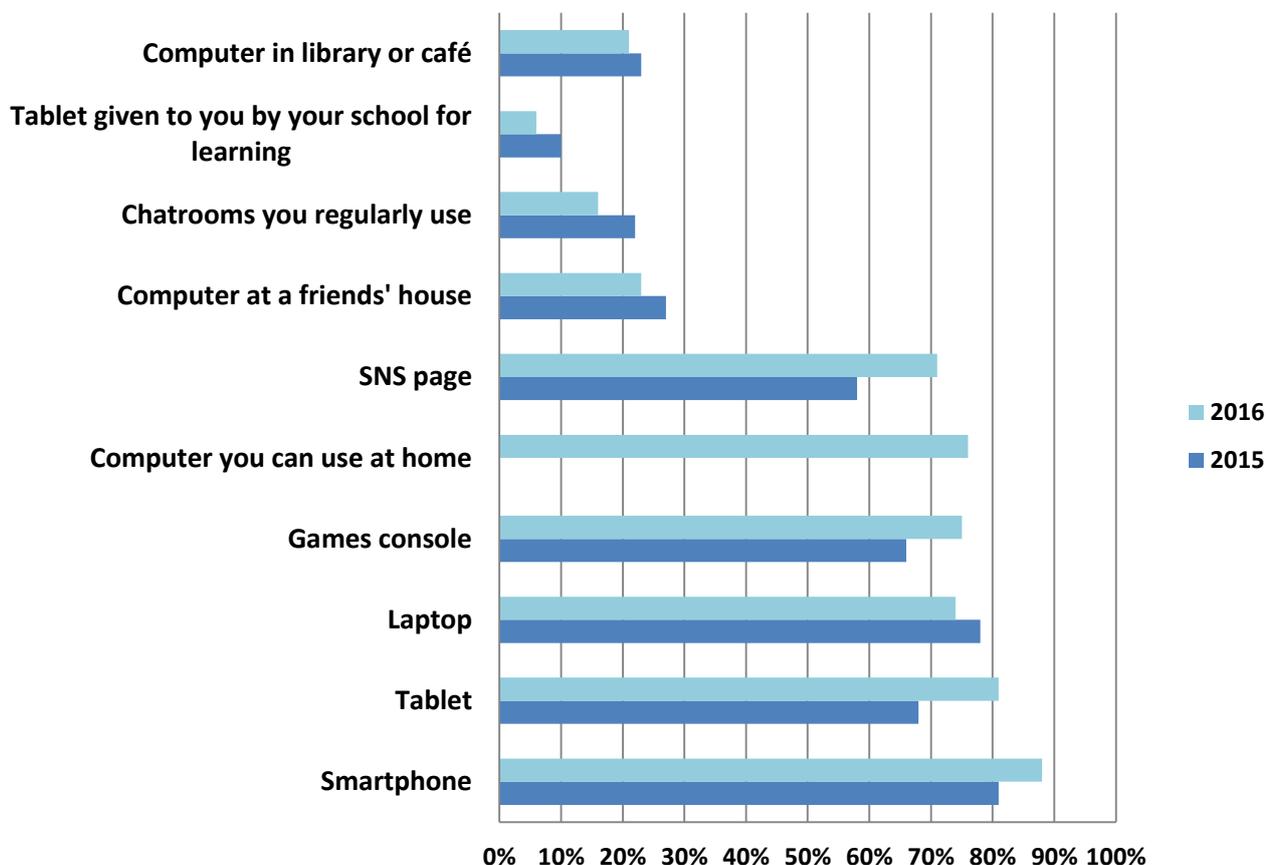
Access to the Internet

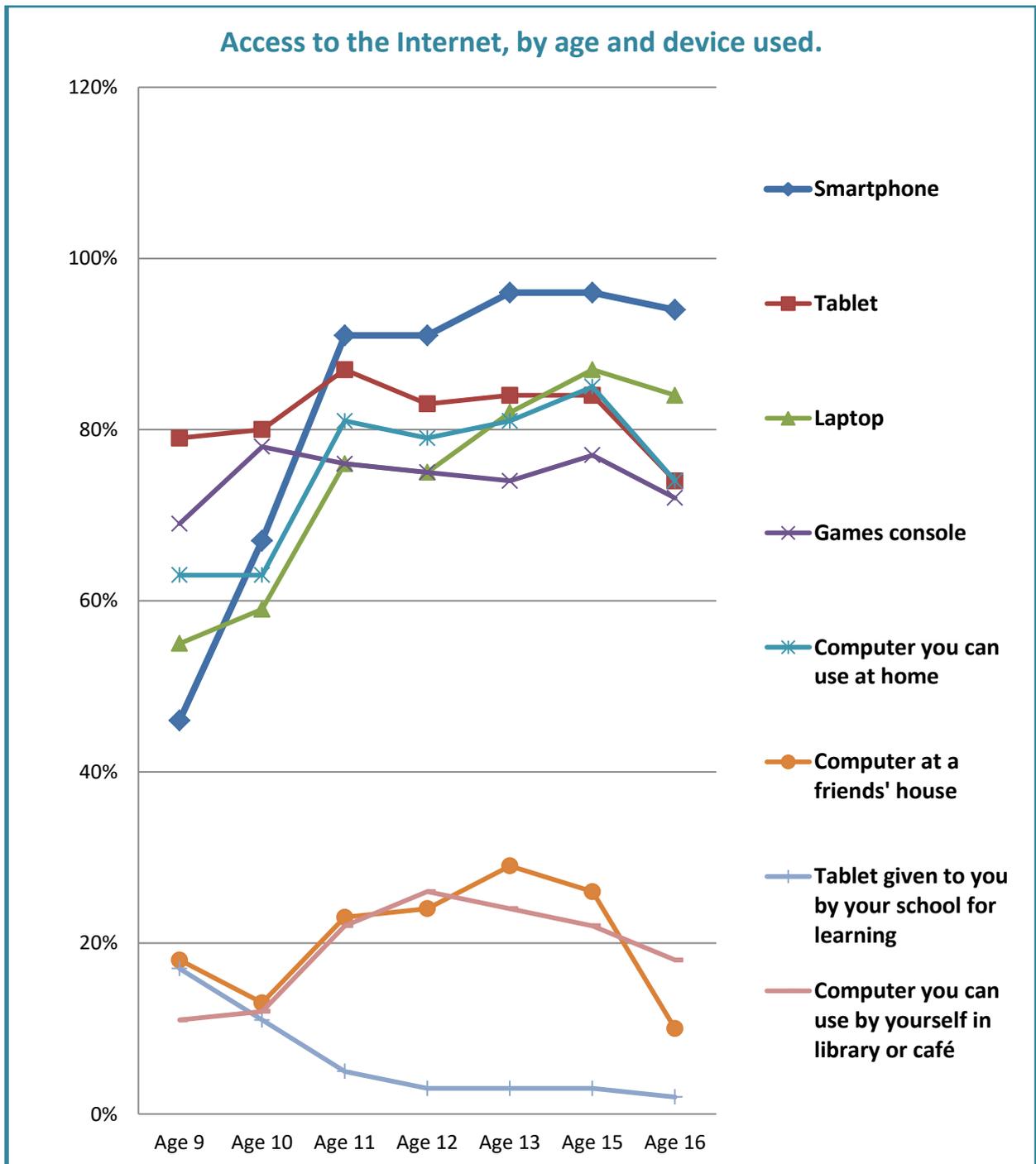
Since the last Cybersurvey was undertaken in Dudley in autumn 2014 and reported in spring 2015, there has been a marked growth in the use of Tablets and an increase in younger children having access to the Internet. Despite the fact that the 2016 sample contains children as young as 9 years old, and 30% of the sample is aged under 12 years old, there is an increase in the use of social media pages. Smartphone ownership continues to rise, games consoles are increasingly popular. 23% use a computer without an adult present when they are a friend's house. 21% use a computer in a library or Internet café.



Schools are less likely now to issue pupils with tablets for learning, in sharp contrast to their digital lives outside the classroom. *(There was no statistic for computers in the home in 2014 as this was not asked).*

Access; Changing devices over 18 months.





Very few children and young people use a tablet issued by school for learning, in sharp contrast to their digital lives outside the classroom. There is a slight increase in school tablets among the younger age groups: 17% of 9 year olds use one, but after age 12, this figure drops to 3% and remains at this low level. (They do not mention using their own devices in school for learning in any of the open questions).



Smartphone ownership is high among a younger cohort.

46% of 9 year olds own a Smartphone and ownership doubles rapidly to 91% of children aged 11. Teaching on safe use of Smartphones should be delivered between 8 and 9 years of age and then re-focused each year to be age- appropriate and in line with their current online and mobile behaviour. Only a few years ago 11 years was the age at which children were given their first Smartphone. This is now clearly starting at a younger age.

Tablet ownership is high and peaks for those aged 11 when they report that 87% live in a household that has one. 29% of 13 year olds use a computer without an adult present at a friend's house while considerable numbers of children use computers at clubs, libraries or internet cafes, for example 26% of 12 year olds do this. This is a timely reminder that advice on going online in a public place is needed for them, while parents need to talk to the parents of their child's friends to ensure there is filtering in place at their home and some agreed rules about Internet use, viewing TV or film content and age appropriate games.

Nine year olds in 2016.

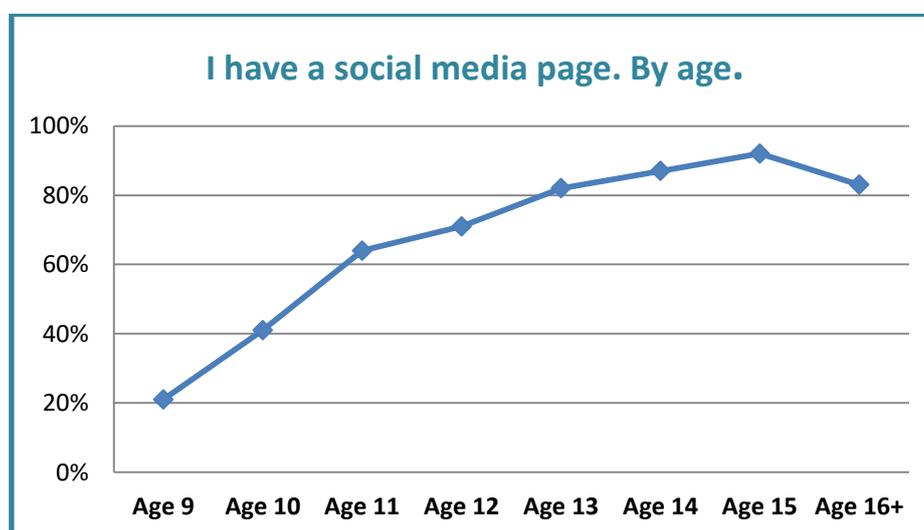
There is a marked increase in access via tablets which has brought 9 year olds online:

- 79% use a tablet
- 69% use a games console
- 63% use a PC at home
- 55% use a laptop
- 46% of 9 year olds own a Smartphone
- 21% of 9 year olds say they have a social networking page
- 17% use a tablet given to them by school for learning
- 13% use a computer at a friend's house without adults
- 12% use a computer in a library, club or café.

Changing patterns with age show us when guidance is needed

The age at which a child gets a social networking page is a useful indicator of whether there is adult advice and some parental boundaries in place. One in five of the 9 year olds claimed to have a SNS page. It is possible that some of the younger children in this sample have SNS pages in appropriate sites or online clubs intended for under 13 year olds, but sites for young children were not mentioned by children in the open question. It is apparent then that younger age groups are moving into social networking on sites intended for ages 13 and over. 15 years old is the peak age for social networking (92%).

Over the age of 16 the use of SNS pages appears to dwindle. 90% of 16 year olds are on social media while only 76% of over 16 year olds reported having a SNS page. *We have collapsed the respondents aged 16 together with those aged 16+ to create a suitable group.*

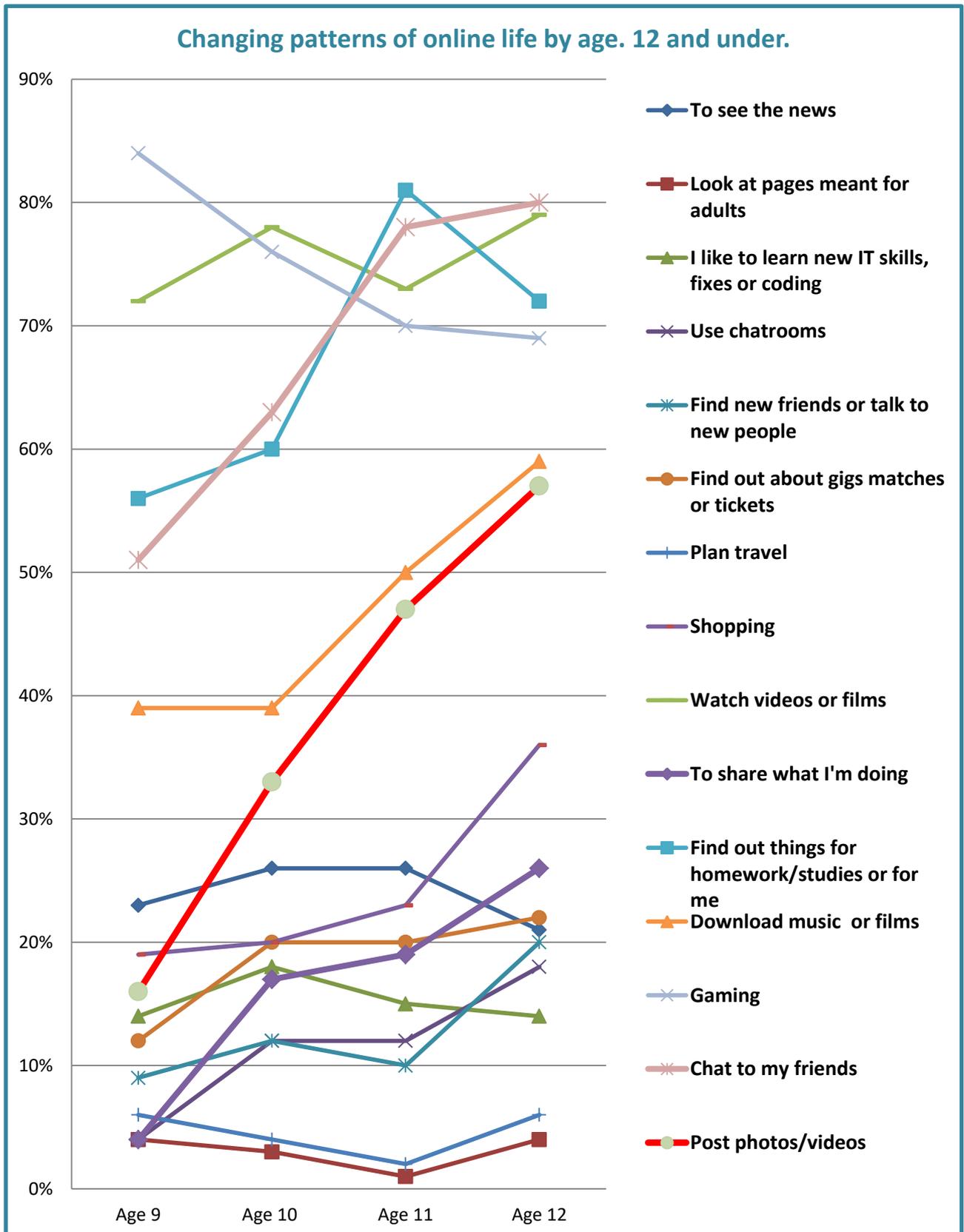


Key teaching moments

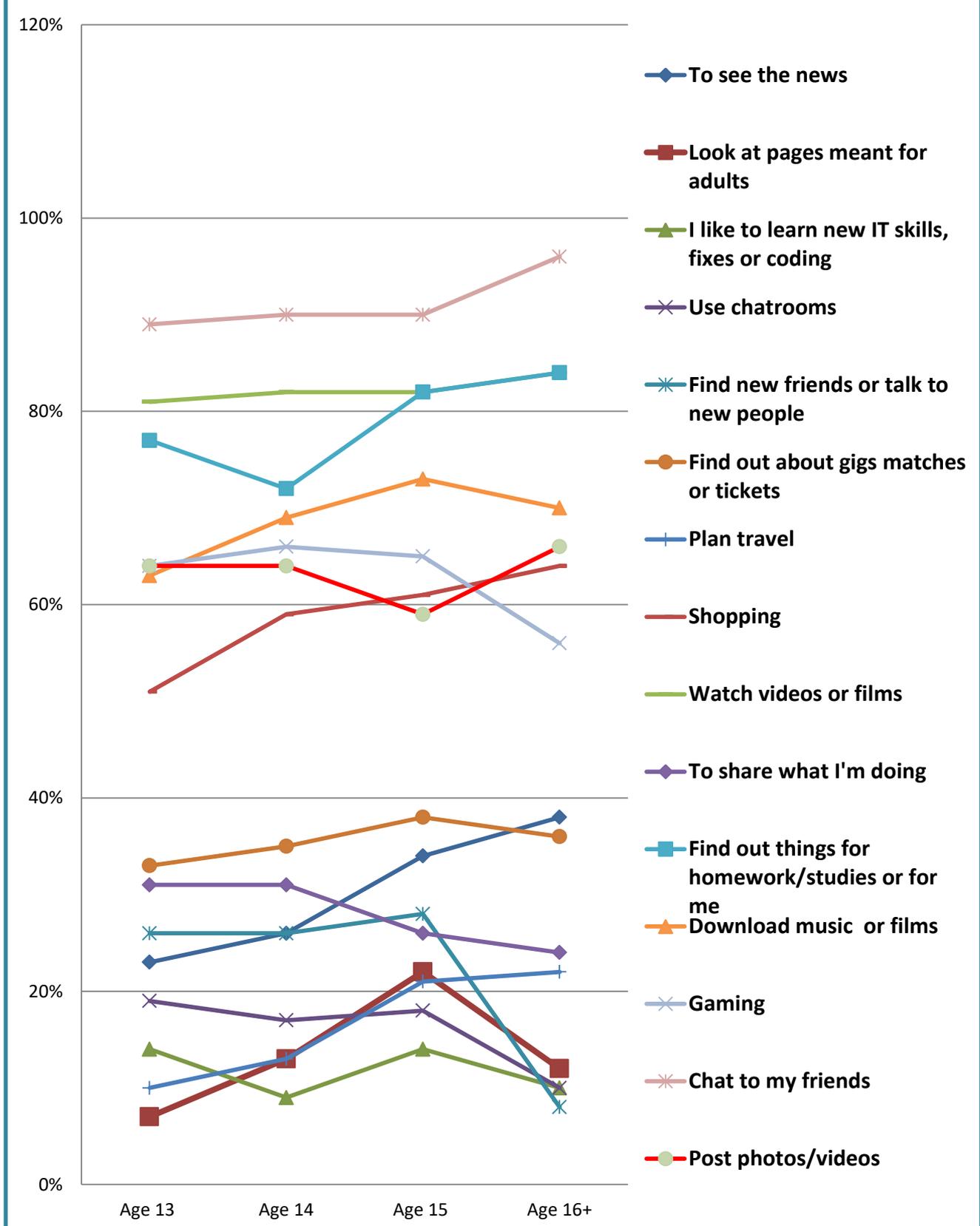
By looking at the changing patterns of online behaviour by age group, it is possible to identify key moments at which to teach specific online safety messages.

- 9 year olds are the most active gamers.
- By the time they are 10, respondents watch 5% more videos and films, they increasingly chat to friends, moving from 51% doing so to 63% in one year. Only 16% are posting photos and videos at age 9, but by one year later at age 10, 33% are doing so.
- By the age of 12 years, 57% are posting photos and videos.
- While only 4% of 9 year olds are 'sharing what I am doing,' by the age of 10, as many as 17% are doing so. This four-fold increase within twelve months is clearly a moment to reinforce messages on safe uploading and sharing as well as GPS location settings.
- The use of chatrooms grows from 4% to 12% in the year from age 9 to 10 years old. Constant sharing of everything a child is doing can be a risk if privacy is not maintained and GPS switched off.

In the chart below it is possible to trace the growth of various activities by the age of the respondents. For example downloading music or film rises 20% in two years after age 10.



Changing patterns of online life. Age 13 and over.



13-14 year olds are posting photos and videos. 15 year olds are planning their travel, and finding out about events, or about their studies. The use of Chatrooms is reducing overall. Many researchers have found links with sexual exploitation and the regular use of chatrooms, so this is welcome news. But worryingly 19% of 13 year olds are using chatrooms. This should be addressed in online safety education.

Time spent online.

From the age of 12 onwards a group of young people emerges, who begin to spend more than five hours per day online. The age group most likely to be spending more than five hours per day online are the 14 year olds when 44 % are spending lengthy periods online daily. While not in itself a sign of risk, when lengthy daily online time is combined with other factors, this can be an indicator of risk.

For example among the younger respondents there are 17% of 10 year olds who say they spend more than five hours a day online. When combined with other factors such as depression, having a mental health difficulty, being in care, being cyberbullied, looking at high risk content such as pro-anorexia sites or content encouraging self-harm, a profile can be developed which shows the young person is likely to be at risk. Generally, four or more of these factors present together, indicate risk.ⁱ

How much time do you spend online in a day?

'Once I get back pretty much every minute'

'7-8 hrs on weekends'

'I spend more time on the Internet when I do not have school'

'Depends if I'm at my mom's(2 Hours 5 time a week) or dads(6 hours'

'10 hours on a weekend'

'25 hours'

'Sometimes all day'

'Much much much more than 5 hours'

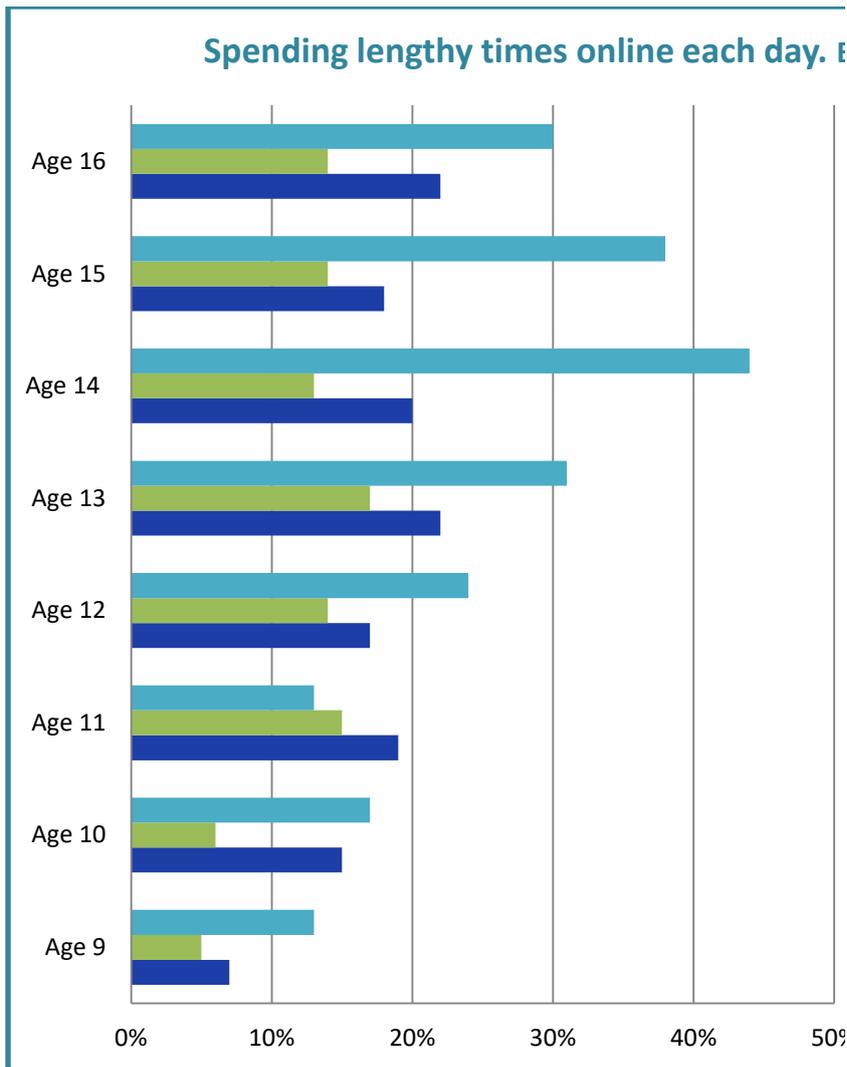
'i go on my tablet 5-8 hours'

'Most of the week end. 5 hours every week day'

'1 and a half hours at morning, at lunch and 2 and a half hours at afternoon to evening but I take breaks every half an hour'

'About 18 hours a day on a good day'





'Being able to find people who I can relate to'

What do they go online to do?

Facebook New People YouTube Videos FIFA
 Snapchat Netflix Chatting Finding Videos
 Texting Talking Shopping
 Games Youtube Homework
 Playing with friends News Music
 Speaking Social Media Able Doing Stuff Xbox

What do you enjoy online?

It is all too easy to be caught up in the concerns about safeguarding and to overlook the fact that the majority of children and young people are enjoying the opportunities offered by the Internet and the new connectivity. Many are relatively safe and skilful. The enthusiasm and obvious enjoyment they get from it is shown in their answers below. Those who are very digitally active may combine formal education with nutrition and viewing adult content.

'Snapchat: to see my friends stories (what they upload) and to post my own uploads (selfies etc) Instagram: similar to snapchat, to like and comment on my friends' uploads then they like and comment back on yours, also just to see any excitement.'

'Forgetting about my life.'

'I enjoy talking to my friends on snapchat and using social media. I like to let people know what I'm doing.'

'Talking and messing about with my friends'

'Watching reaction videos and funny videos online, watching Netflix and all my favourite TV shows, sending ugly/funny pictures of myself and things to my friends.'

'YouTube funny cat videos'

'Watching JoJos Bizzare Adventure'

Making Powerpoints

'Talking to my mates on group chats and sharing photos and videos to my account'

'Playing Games, watching YouTube and meeting new people (BUT I NEVER GIVE AWAY ANYTHING).'

'Sum dog You Tube Wikipiedia, google and copying pictures for slideshows'

'I enjoy talking to my friends and posting pictures about my life'

'I mostly enjoy talking to friends and posting things so people can see'

Being my own person without having people in real life judge me. When I'm online I am a different person

'Watching videos on YouTube because they make me happy'

'Talking to friends (Snapchat streaks etc.), Playing games and mostly just having fun on there.'

'Talking to my friends and playing games with them, normally to do some homework that has been set for me to do over the weekend.'

'Watching videos and listening to music also finding people with the same interests as me.'

'Talking to my friends and playing online games with them as its one of the most exciting things that I do.'

'You can talk to your friends and see what's going on'

'Chatting to people I know and sharing photos with close friends'

Snapchat - the fact you can do anything you want. I also like how you can post things on snapchat and people can see it. I don't like it when random people add me though so I always decline them.

'TO GET AWAY FROM SCHOOL AND CHAT TO FRIENDS'

'Everything'.

'The amazing amount of content shared to us, the public.

Messaging too, I guess. porn innit, and exercise techniques and nutritional diets'

'To talk to my friends I only mainly post pictures of my dogs and it's a kids' game loads of people post pictures and I love talking to my friends and Shannon plays it so I talk to her. Shannon in our class , and it's fun to play.'

'I enjoy these games, minecraft, racing games'

'WATCHING you tube pokemon go'

'I mostly enjoy Sumdog and Music.ly.'

'It opens a whole new world to people and can educate us in many ways. You can also share things and learn about others.'

'Playing games watching videos go on musically and going on sites for home work to Skype my friends and watch movies.'

'WHO WHAT WHAT WHAT WHERE'

'Looking at what my friends are up to and finding out what my favourite celebrities are doing.'

'Watching videos and surfing into the web, I have been to the deep web'

'Going on Bitesize and studying'

'Enjoy talking to different people what don't go to my school and what I don't see often'

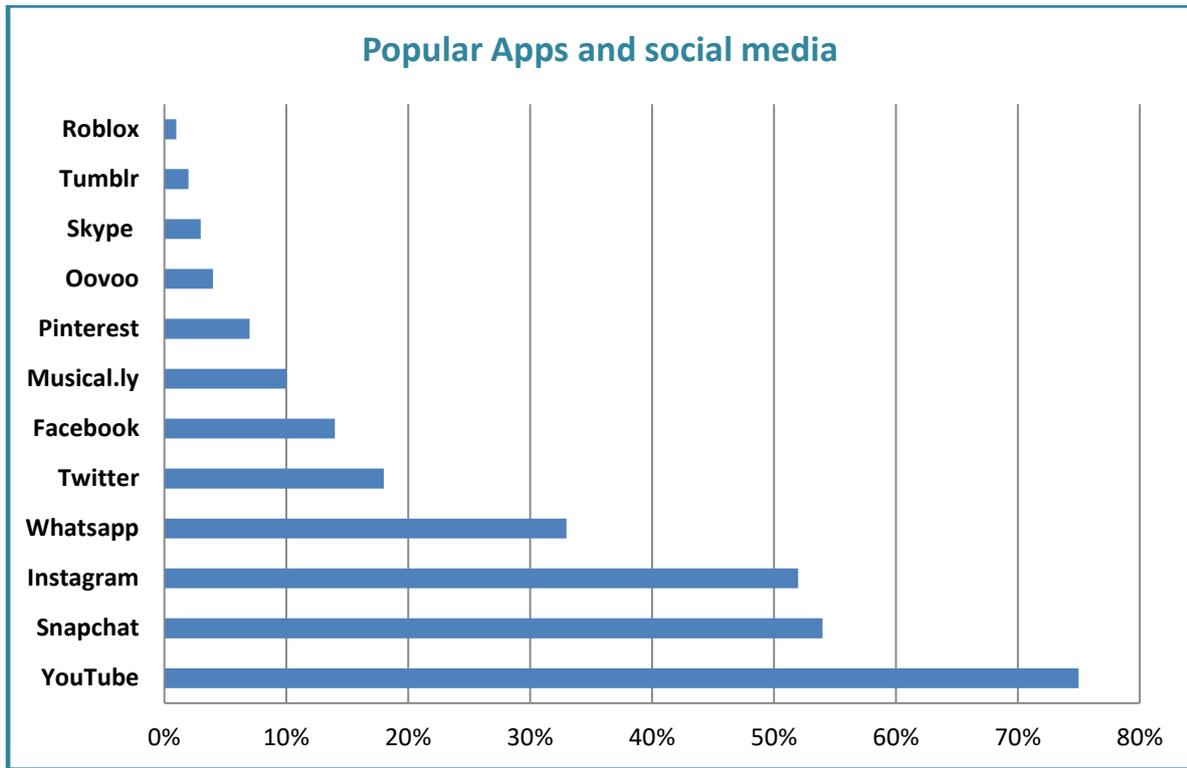
'I enjoy searching up new places and talking to random people and getting to know the other side of the world but I don't really like stepping out of my comfort zone'

'Looking at the stuff happening around us'

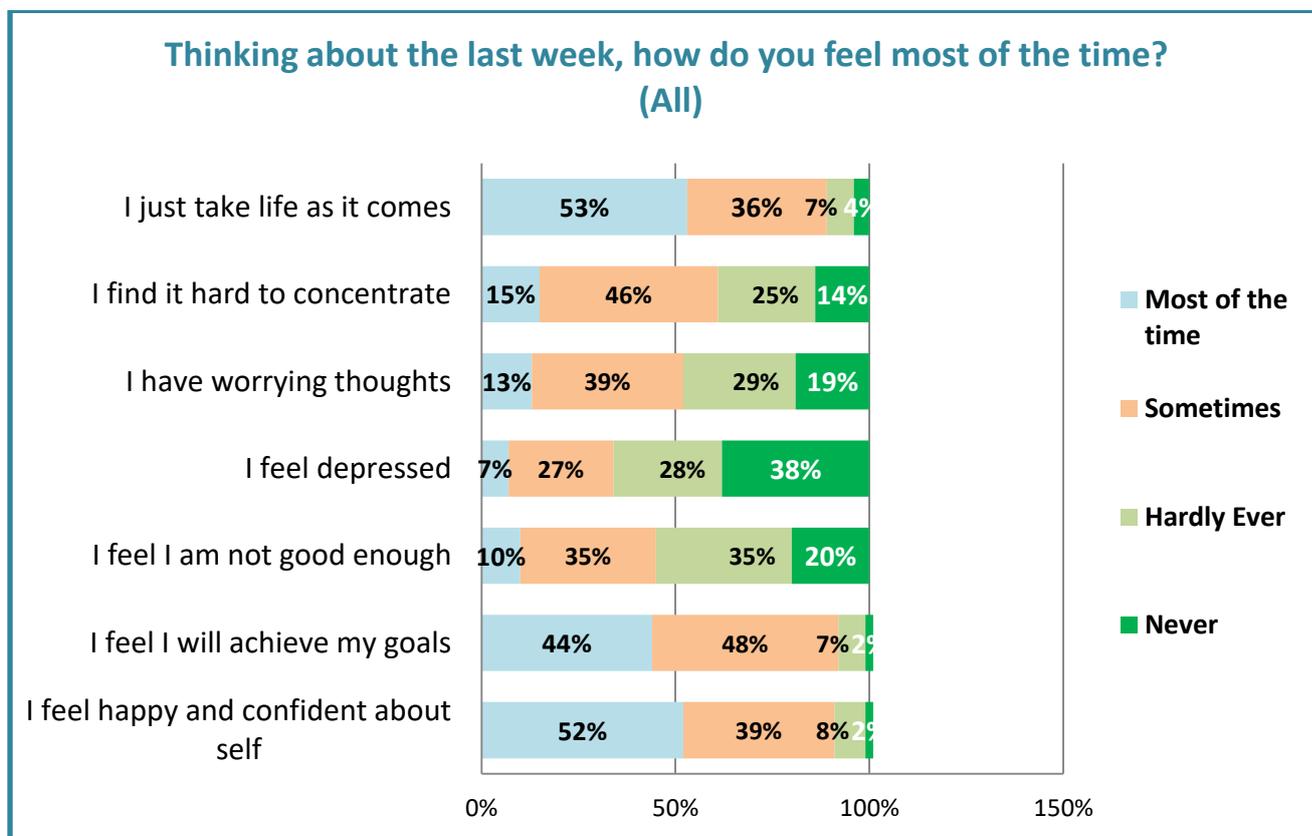


© Kjpgarter | Dreamstime.com - <https://www.dreamstime.com/stock-images-group-young-people-image352704#res6638397>>Group Of Young People Photo

Popular sites games and apps



Emotional Health



Most of the time:

- 52% feel happy and confident about themselves
- 44% believe I will achieve my goals
- 10% feel I am not good enough
- 7% feel depressed
- 13% have worrying thoughts
- 15% find it hard to concentrate
- 53% just take life as it comes.

In many situations a child's emotional health influences the decisions they make about their life online. If they are very motivated to be liked or admired this can make them overlook the knowledge they may have about staying safe and lead them to share photos or talk to people they do not know.

➤ 48% of depressed teens say they are online for more than 5 hours a day.

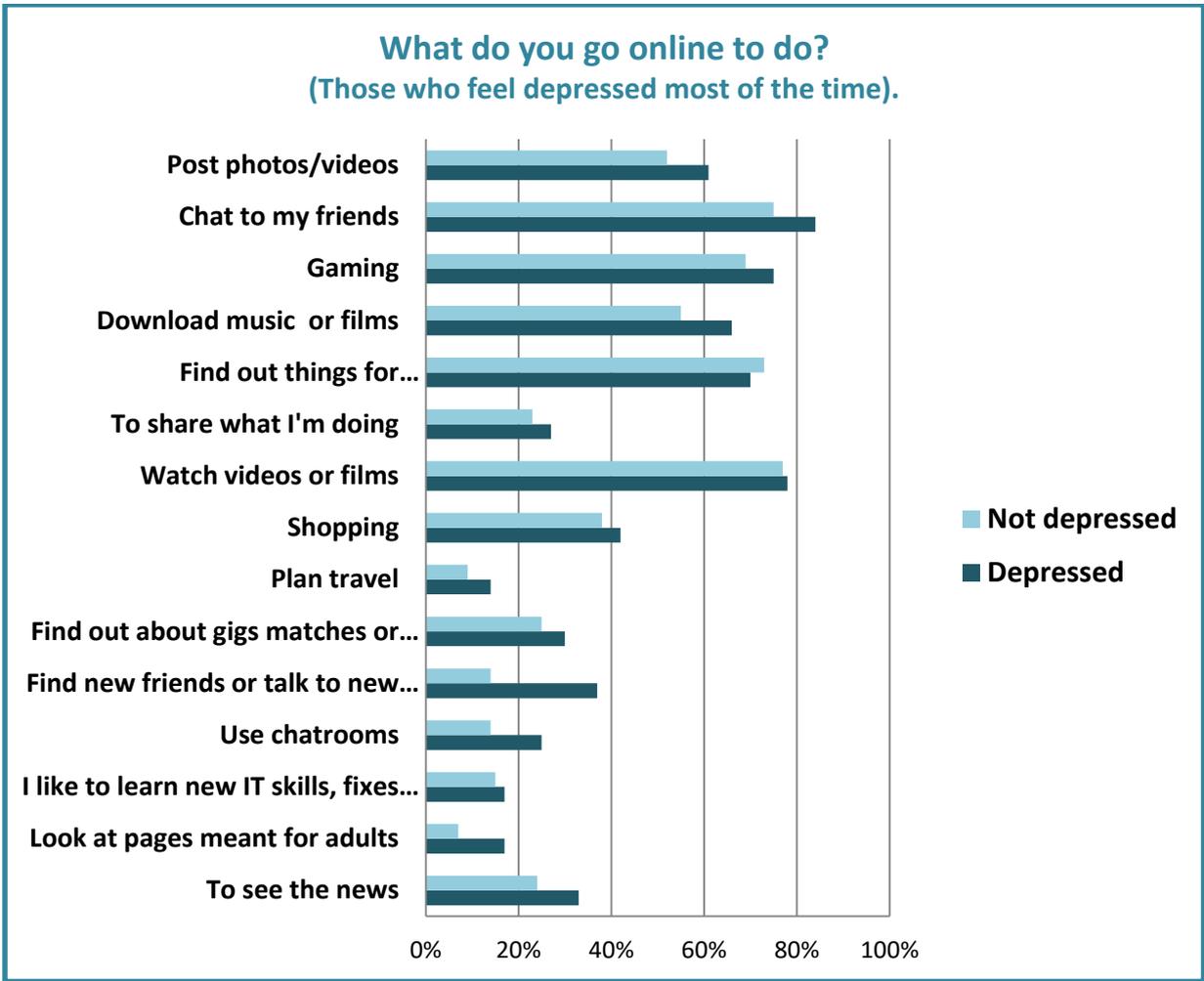
9 year olds are the happiest age group while 11 year olds are the age group most confident that they will achieve their goals. The age of 14 is when our young people are most likely to feel 'I am not good enough.' Depression is highest among the 16 year olds but between 13 and 15 years, young people are saying they have 'worrying thoughts.'

Girls are more likely than boys to feel depressed most of the time. 54% compared to 31%

Thinking about your life and future, how do you feel most of the time?



36% of those who prefer not to state their gender (PNS) say they are depressed most of the time.

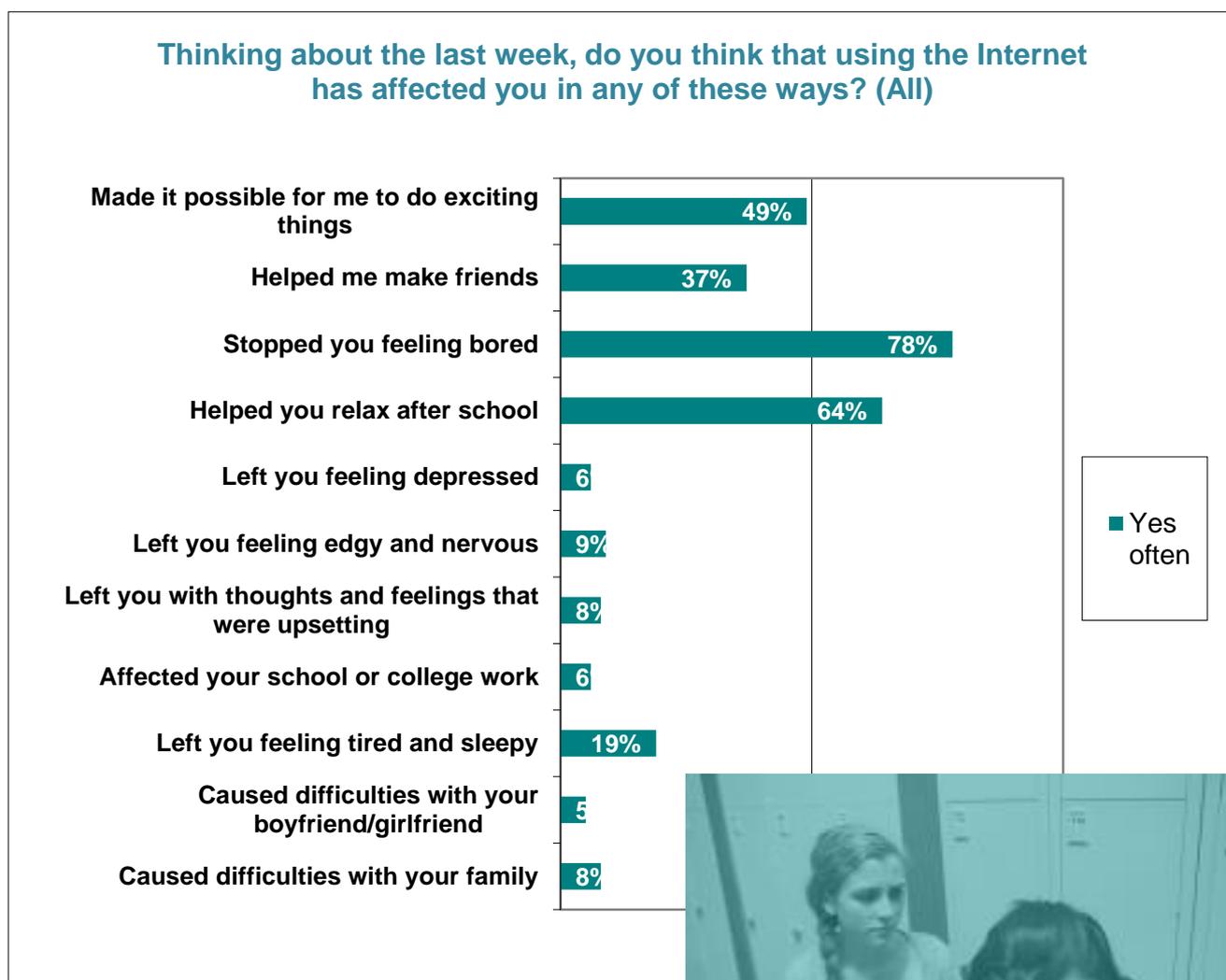


➤ Depressed teenagers are more than two and half times more likely to be seeking new friends or people to talk to online than their counterparts who are not depressed, they are more than twice as likely to look at pages meant for adults. They share what they're doing and post more photos/videos than their counterparts.

Impacts of the Internet

Young people were asked the following: Thinking about the last week, do you think the Internet has affected you in any of these ways? They could answer 'yes, often, sometimes or never'. This chart shows those who selected 'Yes Often'.

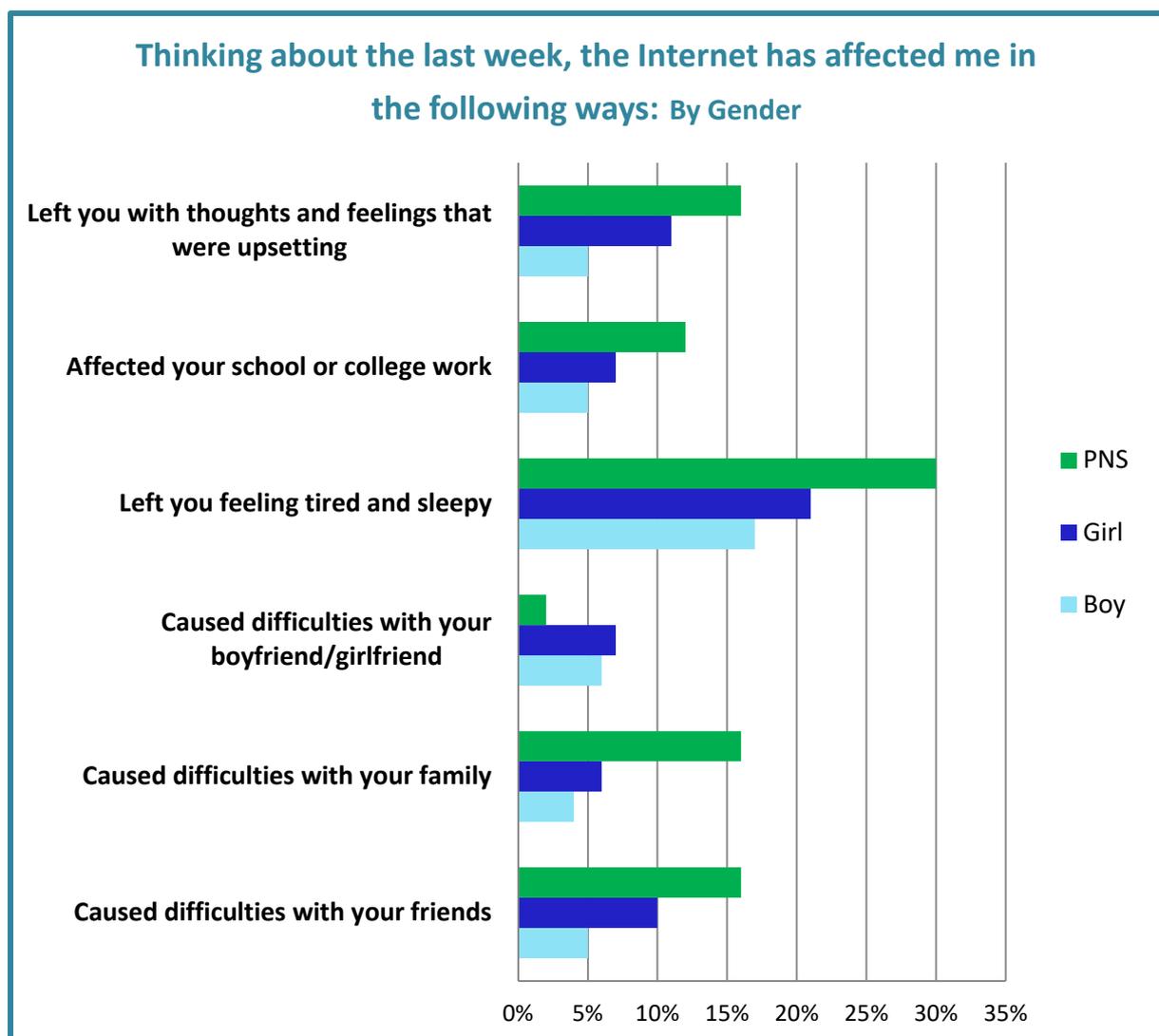
While it is necessary to focus on risks, it is easy to overlook the way that young people are enjoying the Internet, using it to relax, to fend off boredom and to do exciting things. In the graph below we see how many of them enjoy it compared to the few who have difficulties resulting from their Internet use.



Gender

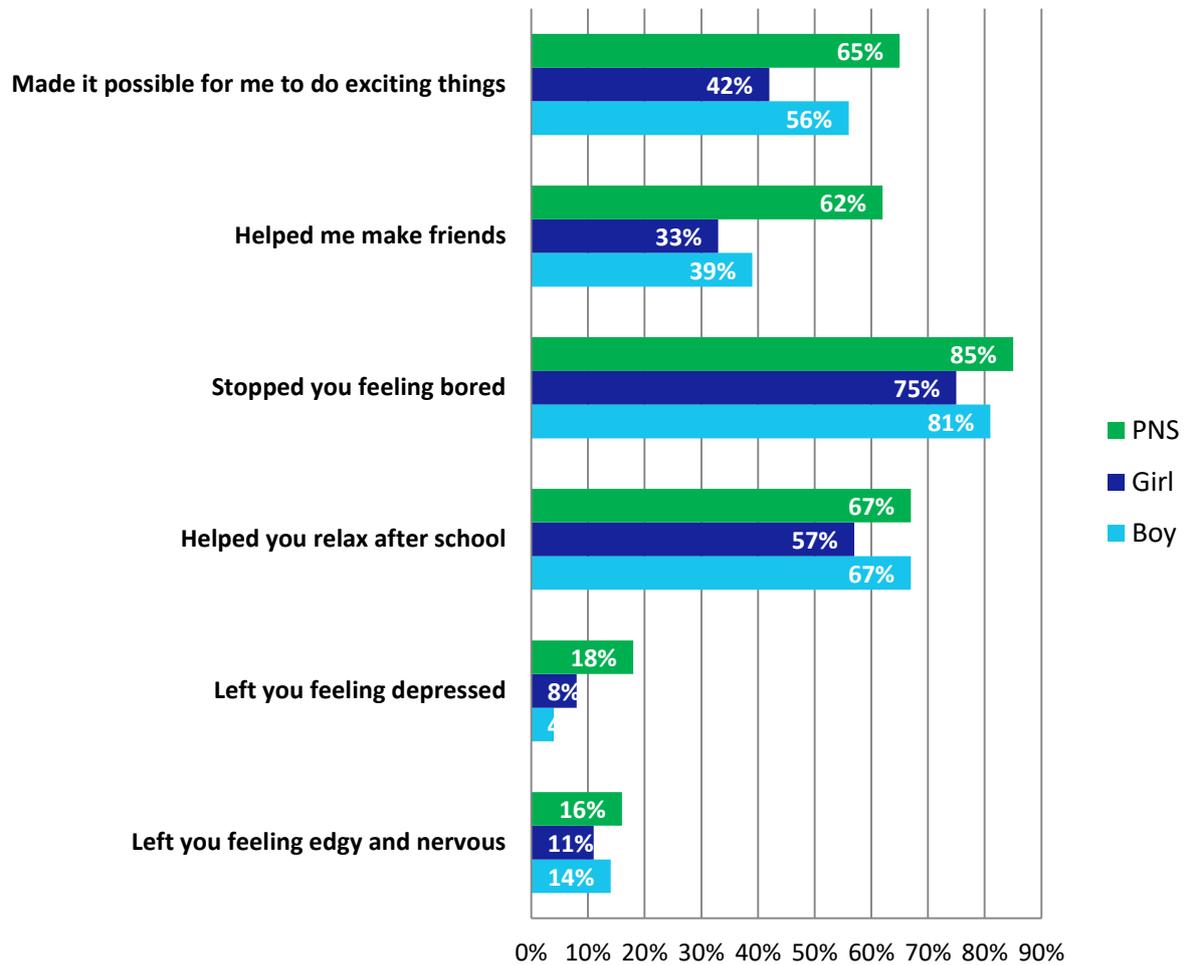
Exploring responses by gender reveals some interesting differences. In particular it highlights the plight of young people who prefer not to state their gender. On every item but one they are more likely to experience this difficulty. (The only exception is 'The Internet caused difficulties with girlfriend/boyfriend').

From being left with thoughts and feelings that were upsetting, to difficulties caused with family and friends or being left feeling tired and sleepy; depressed or edgy and nervous; these young people are more likely than their peers to experience this impact. They also take advantage of the Internet to make new friends, avoid boredom and relax. They are the group most likely to say 'the Internet made it possible for me to do exciting things'.



**PNS = Prefer not to say (gender)*

Thinking about the last week: the internet has affected my in the following ways: 2. By Gender



*PNS = Prefer not to say (gender)

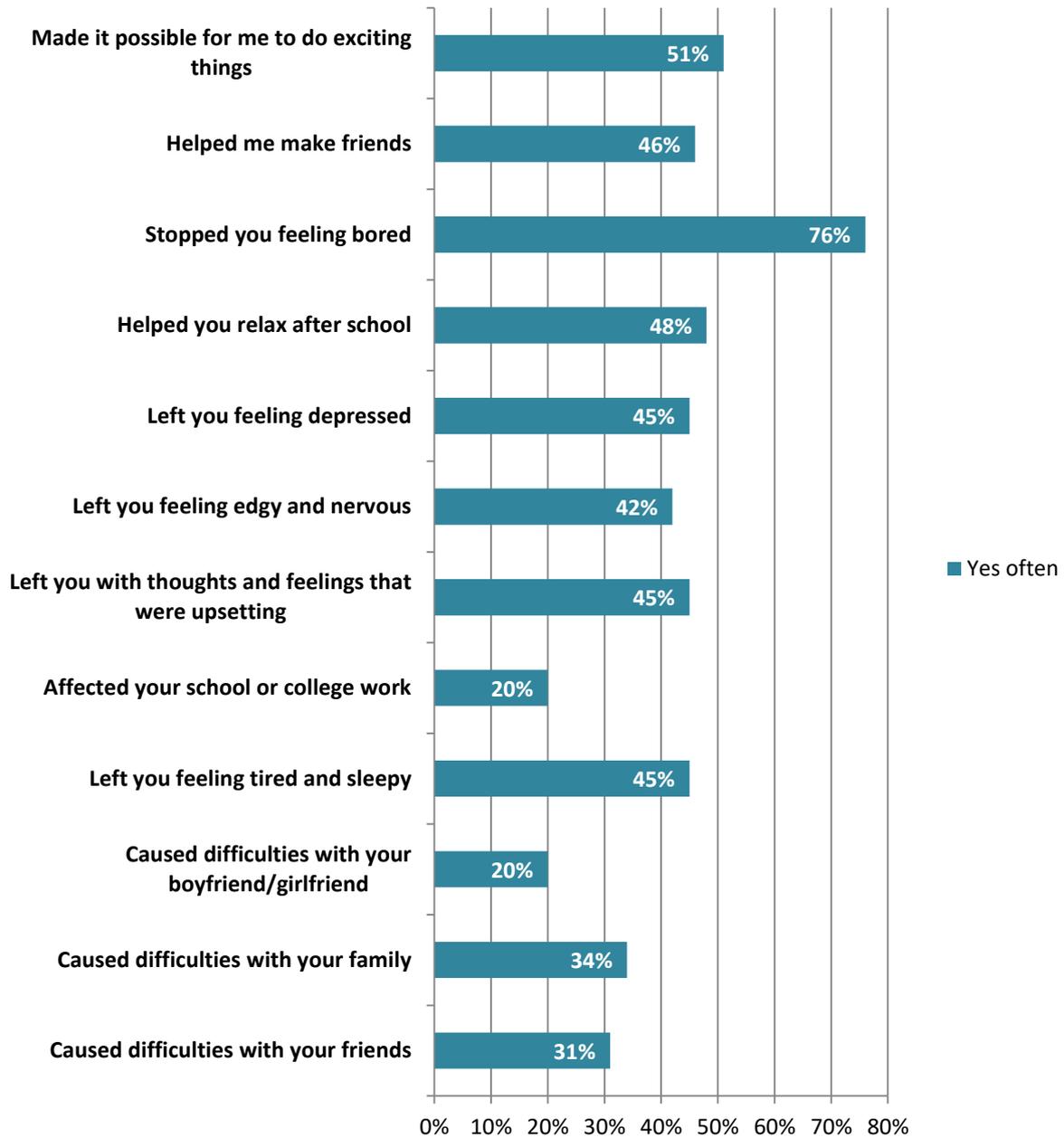
Emotional health and the impact of the Internet

The reported impacts vary greatly when we focus on young people who say 'I never feel I am good enough.' Compared to their peers, they are:

- 7.5 times more likely to say the Internet leaves them 'feeling depressed'
- 5 times more likely to say it leaves them 'feeling edgy and nervous'
- Over 5 times more likely to say 'it left them with upsetting thoughts and feelings'
- Over 4 times more likely to say 'it caused difficulties with my family'
- Over 3 times more likely to say 'it affected my school or college work'

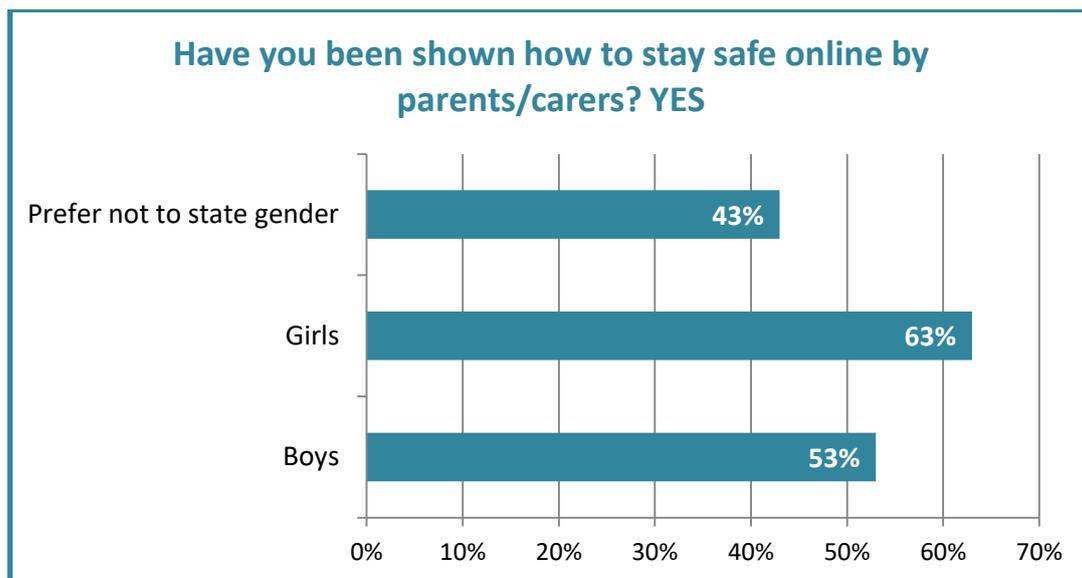
This illustrates how vital it is to take into account the young person's emotional health – how they feel about their life and future - when dealing with online cases.

**Thinking about the last week: the Internet has often affected me in the following ways...
By those who say 'I never feel I am good enough'.**

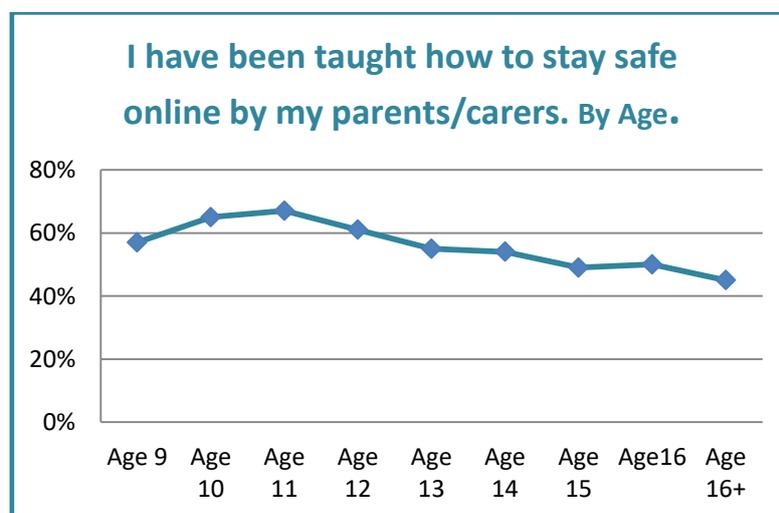


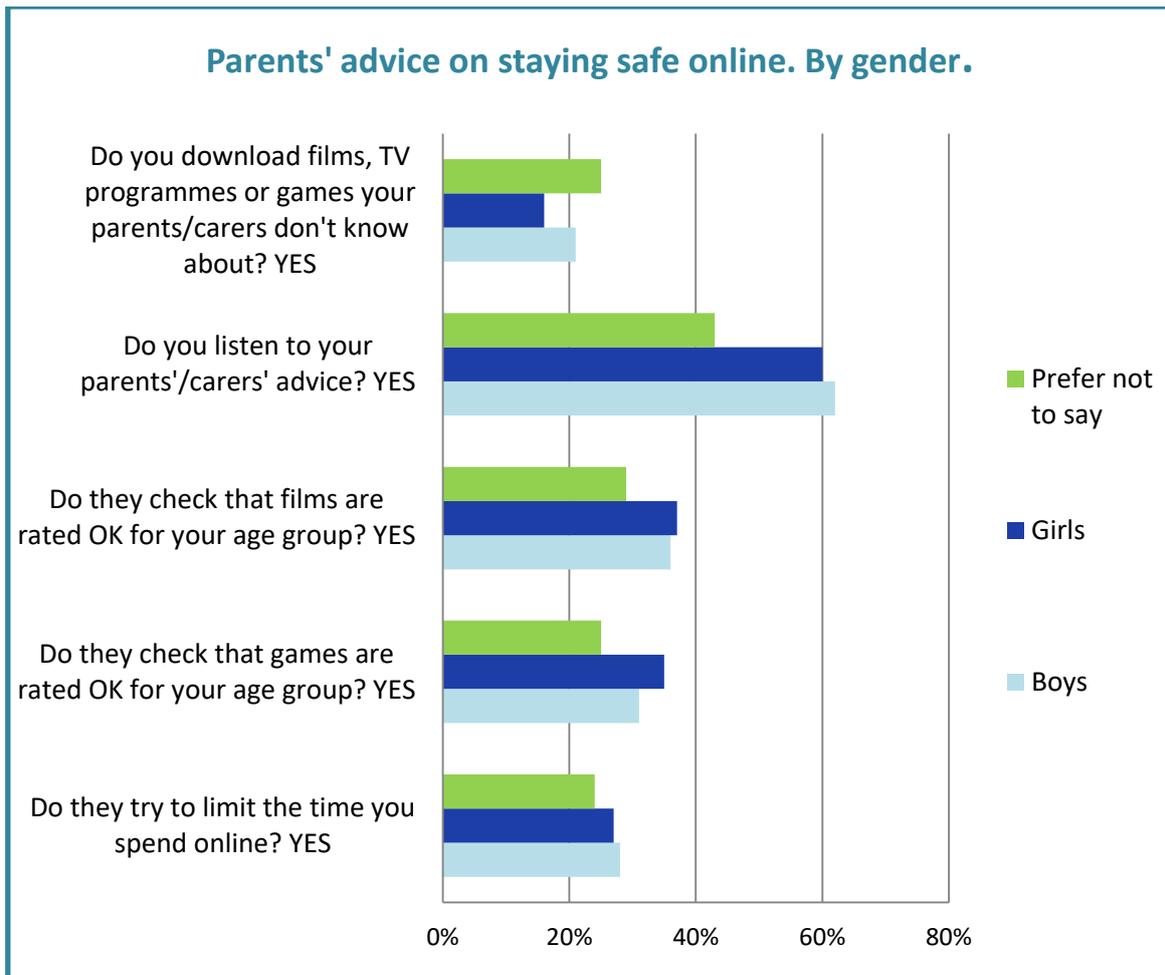
Parental advice on staying safe online

- Only 58% of all our respondents were taught to stay safe online by their parents or carers. But not all children are given the same parental support.
- Parents deliver more online safety advice to daughters and considerably less to sons. Children and young people who chose not to state their gender were least likely to be given online safety advice by parents or carers.



- Parents are most likely to give online safety advice to eleven year olds, but after this age, their input falls away until fewer than half of fifteen year olds receive parental input, despite the fact that they are at the highest risk of online problems.
- Eleven year olds are the age group most likely to listen to parents' advice and fourteen year olds admit that they are least likely to listen, although 48% do.



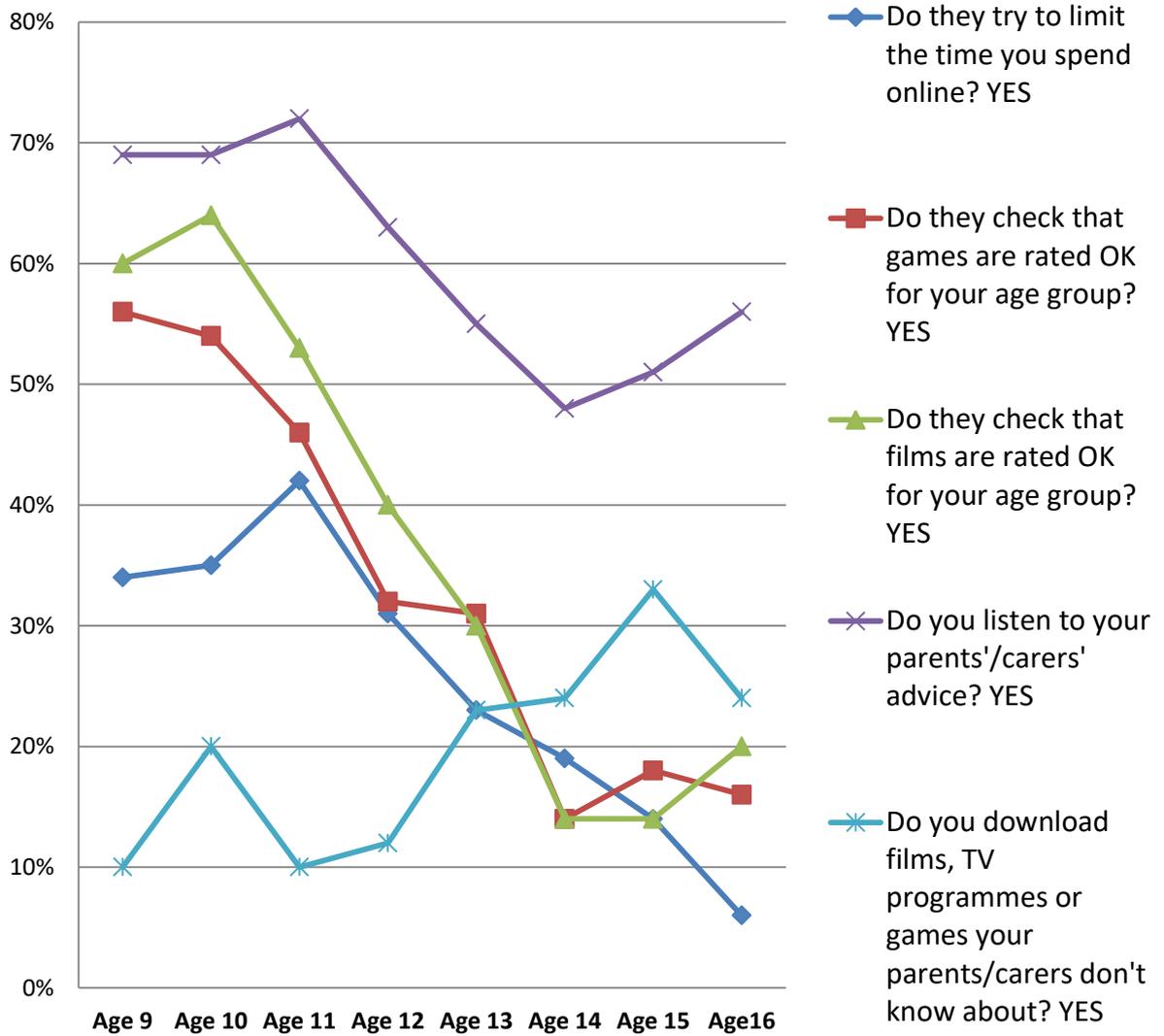


- A majority of young people say they do listen to their parents' advice therefore it is unfortunate that so few parents are actually offering support on staying safe online.
- A little over one quarter of parents try to limit the time their child spends online.
- Parents check ratings for games used by daughters more than they check ratings for games played by sons.
- Children who prefer not to state their gender report less parental input.

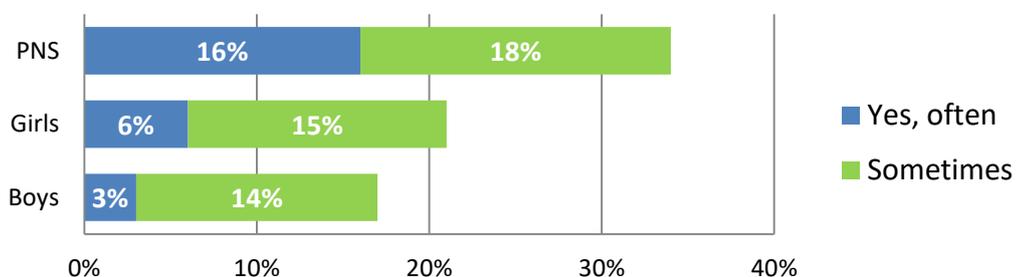
In the chart below we can see the sharp and sudden withdrawal of parental input after the age of eleven. But parental absence starts earlier –

- Only 34% of parents of 9 year olds try to limit the time they spend online and just over half, 56% check that computer games are suitable for children of 9 years old.
- 60% of parents of 9 year olds check that films watched online are age appropriate.
- At age 14 fewer than one in five respondents says their parents or carers try to limit the time they spend online.
- 30% of 13 year olds say their parents check that films are suitable for their age.

Advice from parents. By age.

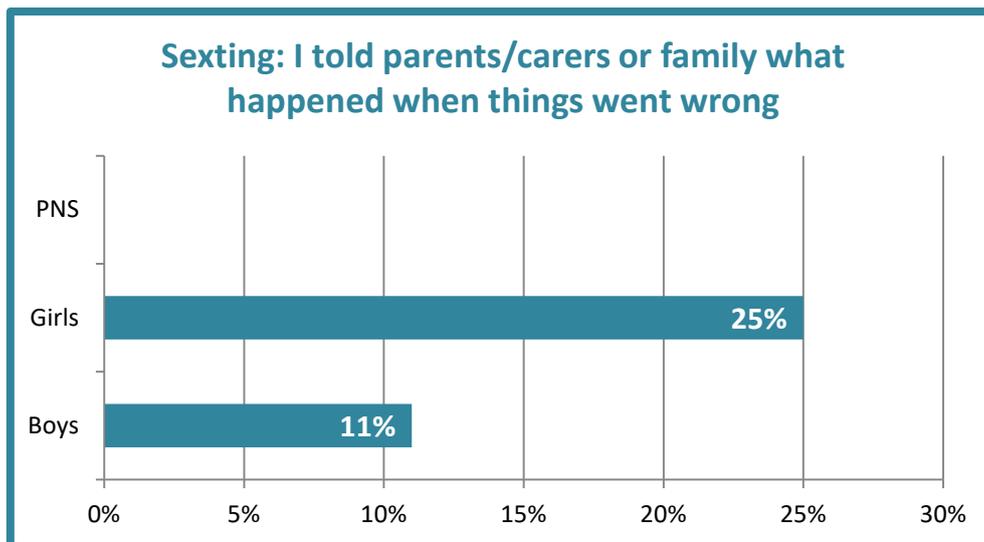


Thinking about the last week: the Internet caused difficulties with my family



Girls were more likely than boys to report that ‘the Internet caused problems with my family’ in the last week, but it is the children and young people who preferred not to state their gender who are most in conflict with family over issues connected to their Internet life.

Being able to turn to a parent or carer when things go wrong is a vital for the safeguarding of children and young people. Among those who were involved in sexting, girls are more than twice as likely as boys to tell a parent or carer or another relative about something that has gone wrong after sharing a self-generated intimate image. Boys are very unlikely to tell their parent/carer about what has happened. Young people who prefer not to state their gender are not talking to their parents at all about things that go wrong online.



The Internet is exciting but not always safe

Certain children and teenagers appear less safe online than their peers.

- There is an association between emotional health and these online experiences. It is not described as a cause/effect relationship because the complexity of this is not known.
- Young people with hearing impairments emerge throughout this report as a vulnerable group we have not reported before.

	I am in or leaving Care	I cannot hear very well or at all	I have learning difficulties	I feel I am not good enough most of the time	None of these difficulties
Ever had my social media account hacked or stolen	22%	14%	16%	31%	20%
Ever visited online gambling sites	6%	14%	13%	12%	6%
Ever had credit card details stolen and used	3%	2%	3%	5%	3%
Ever Been tricked into paying for something online I did not want to buy	8%	8%	6%	10%	7%
Ever Been tricked into buying fake goods	3%	4%	4%	8%	5%
Ever Tried to hack someone's account on site	3%	6%	5%	11%	7%
Fake solicitation (person not who they said they were)	8%	6%	9%	17%	8%
Ever been able to look after myself online	53%	48%	41%	85%	85%

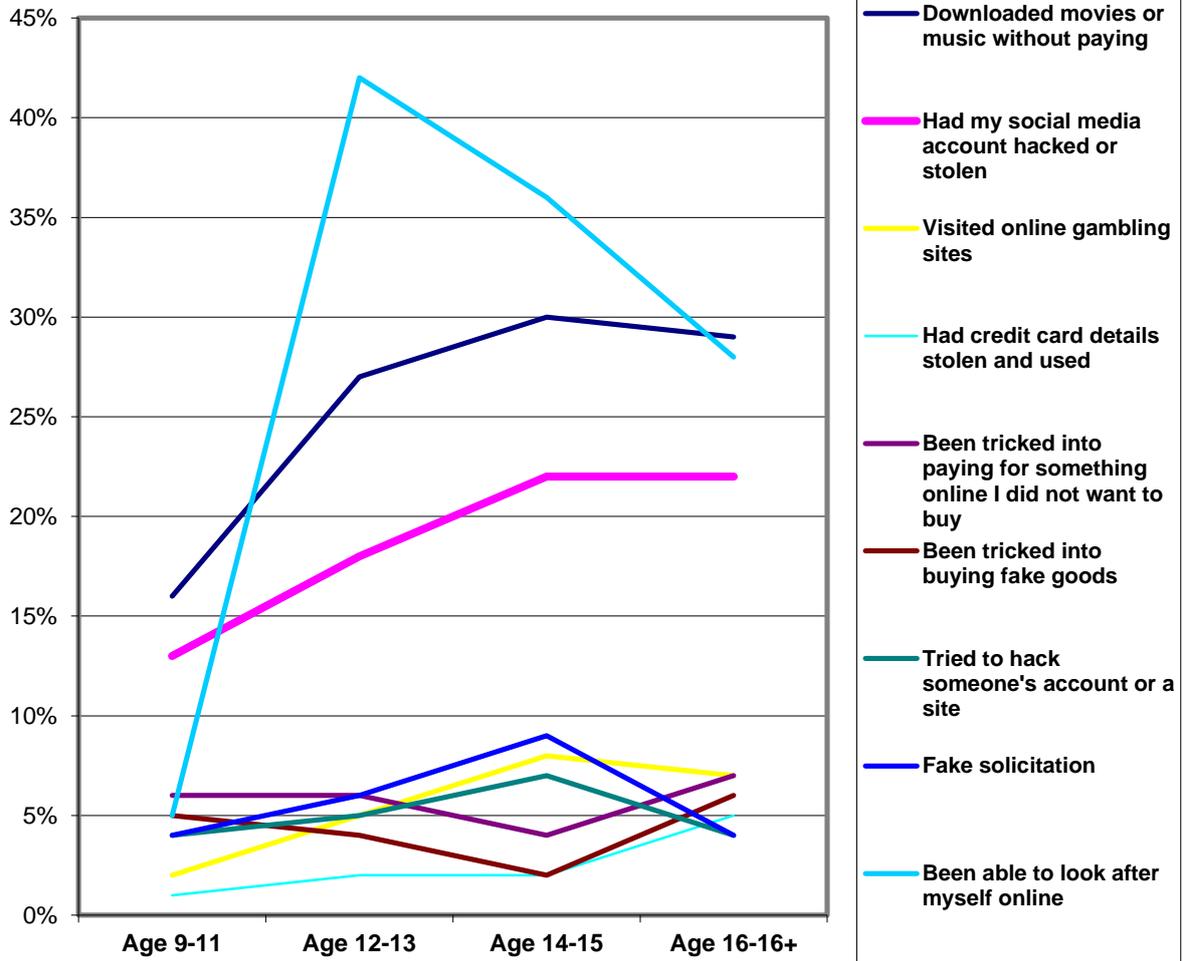
Gender

- When responses are compared by gender, young people who prefer not to state their gender (PNS) appear to be both at risk and doing risky things. They are more likely to visit gambling sites, hack others or be tricked into paying for something they did not want.
- Boys are twice as likely as girls to visit gambling sites.

Age

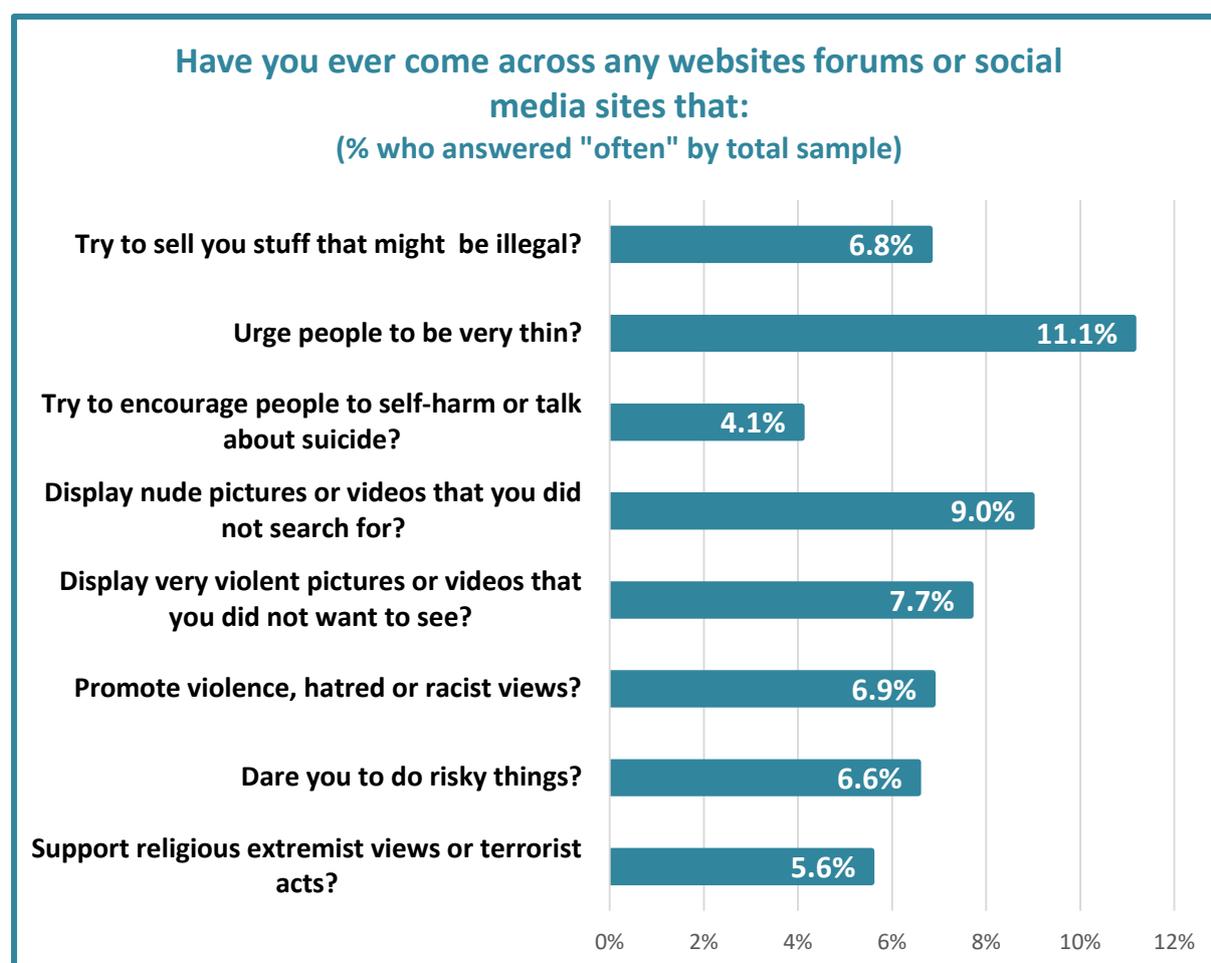
- Between nine and twelve years old, confidence rises sharply as children say they have been able to look after themselves online. But after ages 12-13 it plummets as they possibly experience more complex online problems. This suggests there is a need to re-calibrate the advice given after age thirteen and present age appropriate support to mid-teens.

The Internet is exciting but not always safe, please tell us about your experiences
By age



Exposure to high risk content

In this question young people were asked if they had 'come across' sites with this type of content – in order to avoid any suggestion of blame, or suggesting it was their conduct which was being judged. Chart X shows those who answered 'often' on the basis that most teenagers could have seen something once or twice out of curiosity or by accident, but viewing a site 'often' suggests an intentional return to the site.



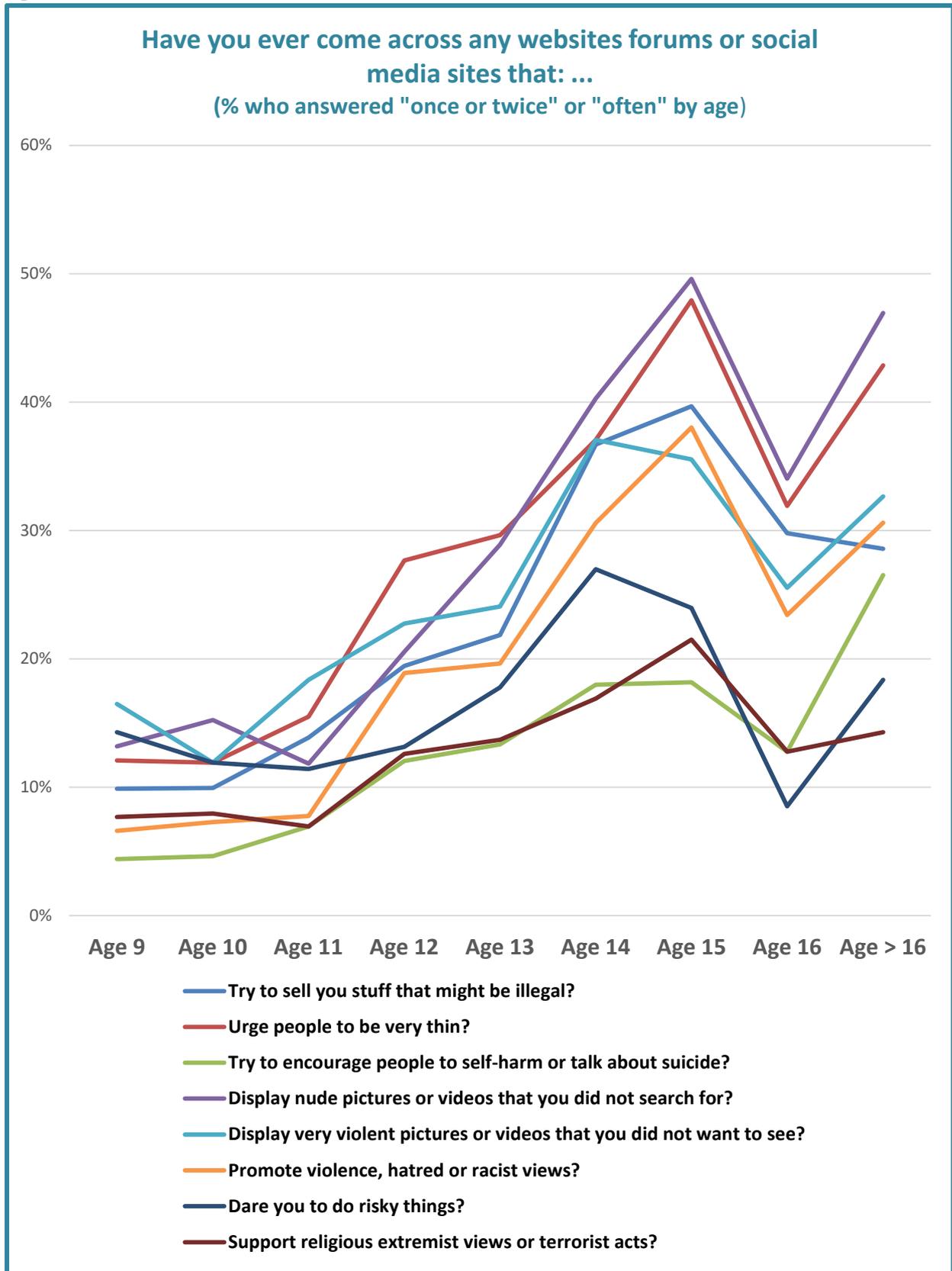
Among the content risks listed in the question, young people in our total sample reveal:

- Pro-anorexia sites are mentioned most. They were viewed often by 11%
- Nude images and violence were seen often by 9% and 8% respectively
- Religious extremist content has been seen 'often' by 6%

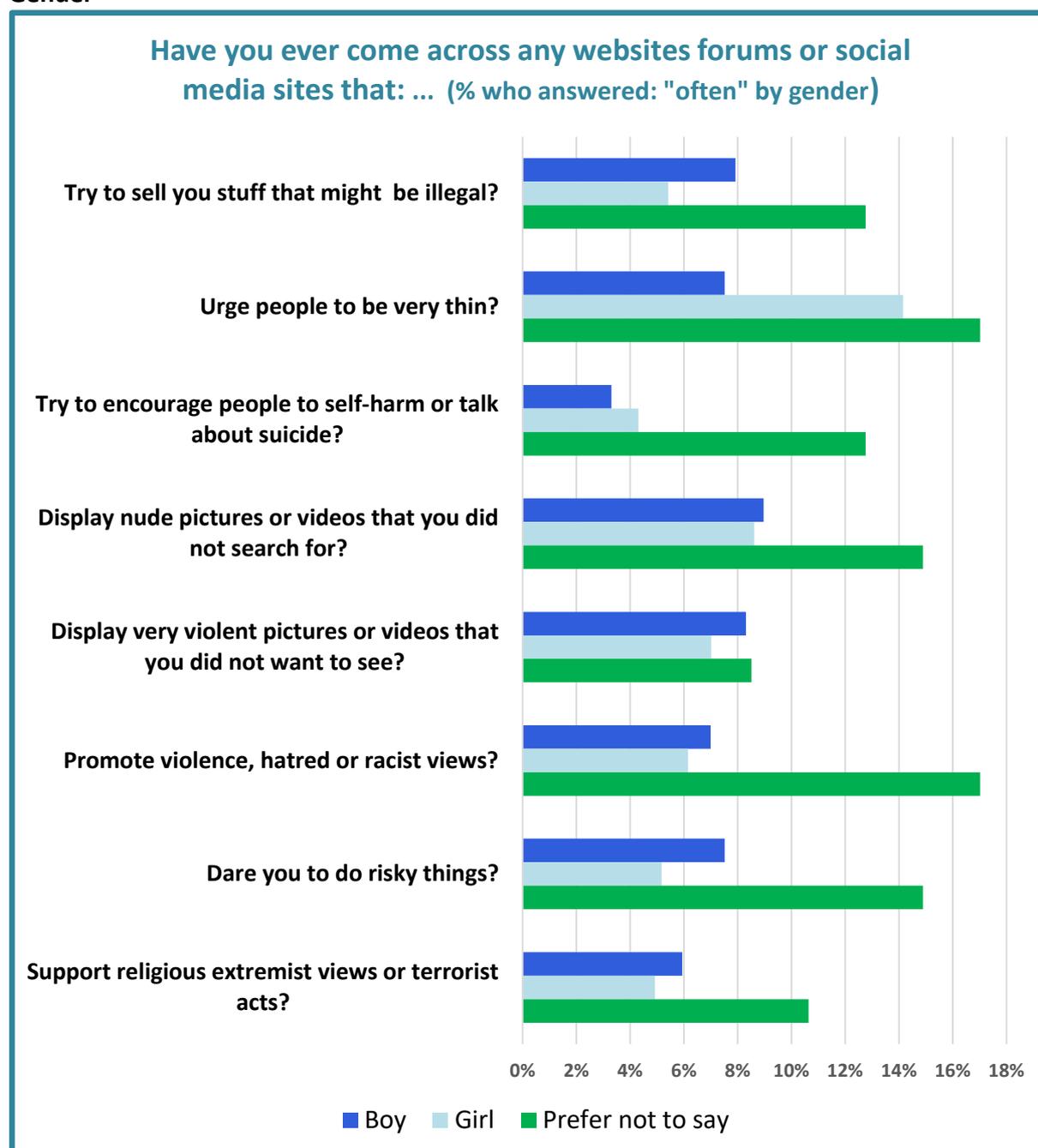
The effect of age

In the chart below we explore the ages at which young people come across types of high risk content. This gives a useful indication of how age-appropriate online safety education could target specific issues at the optimum age. These responses show whether they 'ever' came across the content. The marked increase at age eleven and the peak of multiple risks at age 14-15 are clear indications of when to approach the issue of high risk content, to prepare children before they encounter these risks but not so early as to be irrelevant.

Age



Gender



- Young people who prefer not to state their gender emerge here as a very vulnerable group. They are twice as likely to say they have seen content that promotes violence, hatred or racist views, content that dares them to do risky things; sites that encourage self-harm or suicide and sites that support religious extremism. They are viewing every type of high risk content listed, far more frequently than their peers. A limitation of this sample is that they are not a large group (67 people).

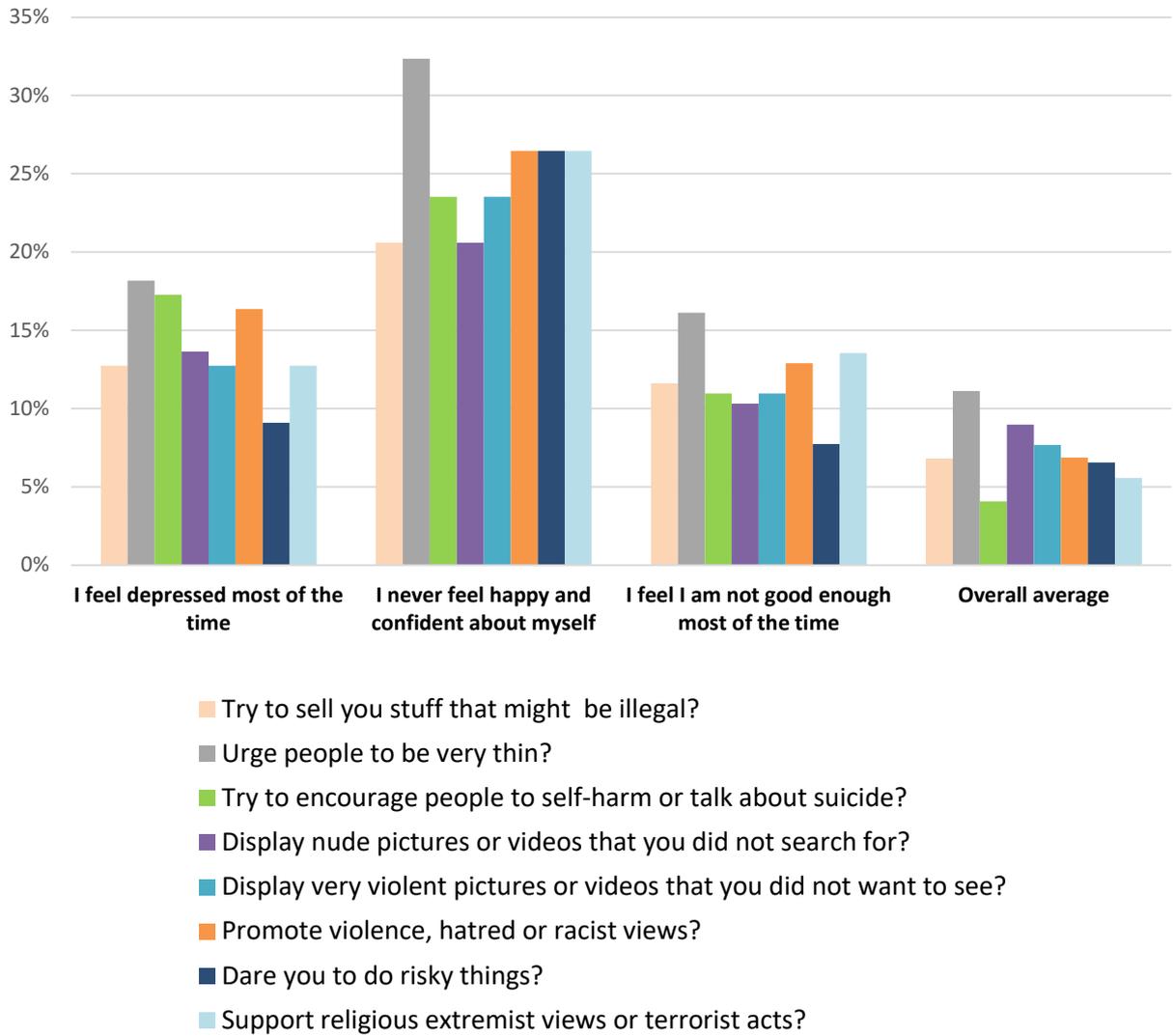
- Although some boys view pro anorexia sites, girls are twice as likely to do so. More boys than girls see sites selling illegal goods or sites urging the viewer to do risky things.

Emotional Health

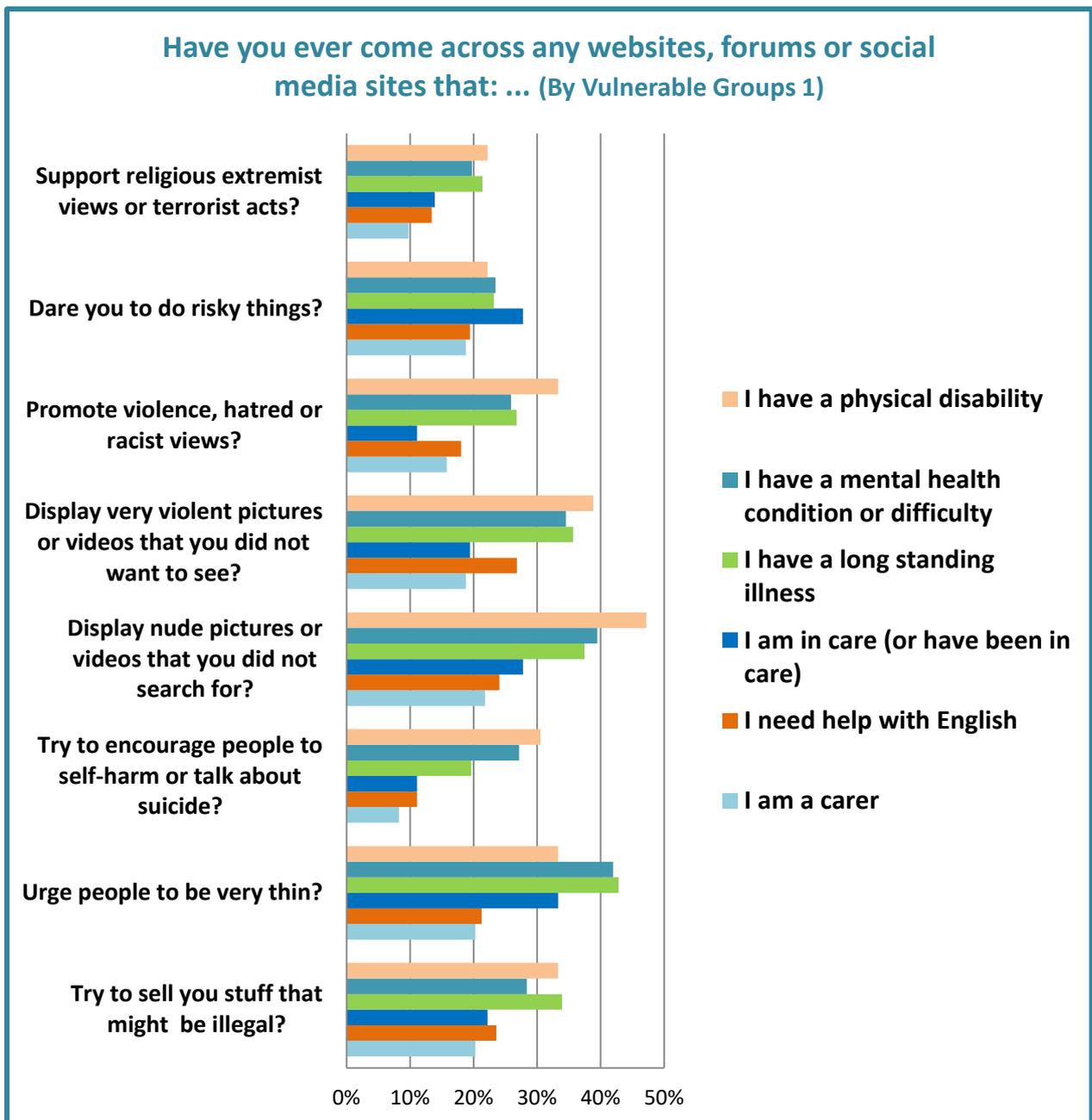
There are however other influences that are seen – emotional health is strongly associated with patterns in young people’s online lives.

- For example, consider the responses of young people who say ‘I never feel happy and confident about myself’: 26% are visiting websites that support religious extremism. 32% are viewing sites that urge people to be very thin. 24% are viewing content that encourages self-harm and even suicide. 26% are viewing sites that promote hatred and racist views.
- People who feel depressed most of the time are twice as likely to visit sites promoting extremism (14%) when compared to the sample as a whole (6%). They are four times as likely as their peers in the total sample to say they are viewing sites encouraging self-harm and suicide (4% vs 17%).

Have you ever come across any websites forums or social media sites that: (By Emotional Health)

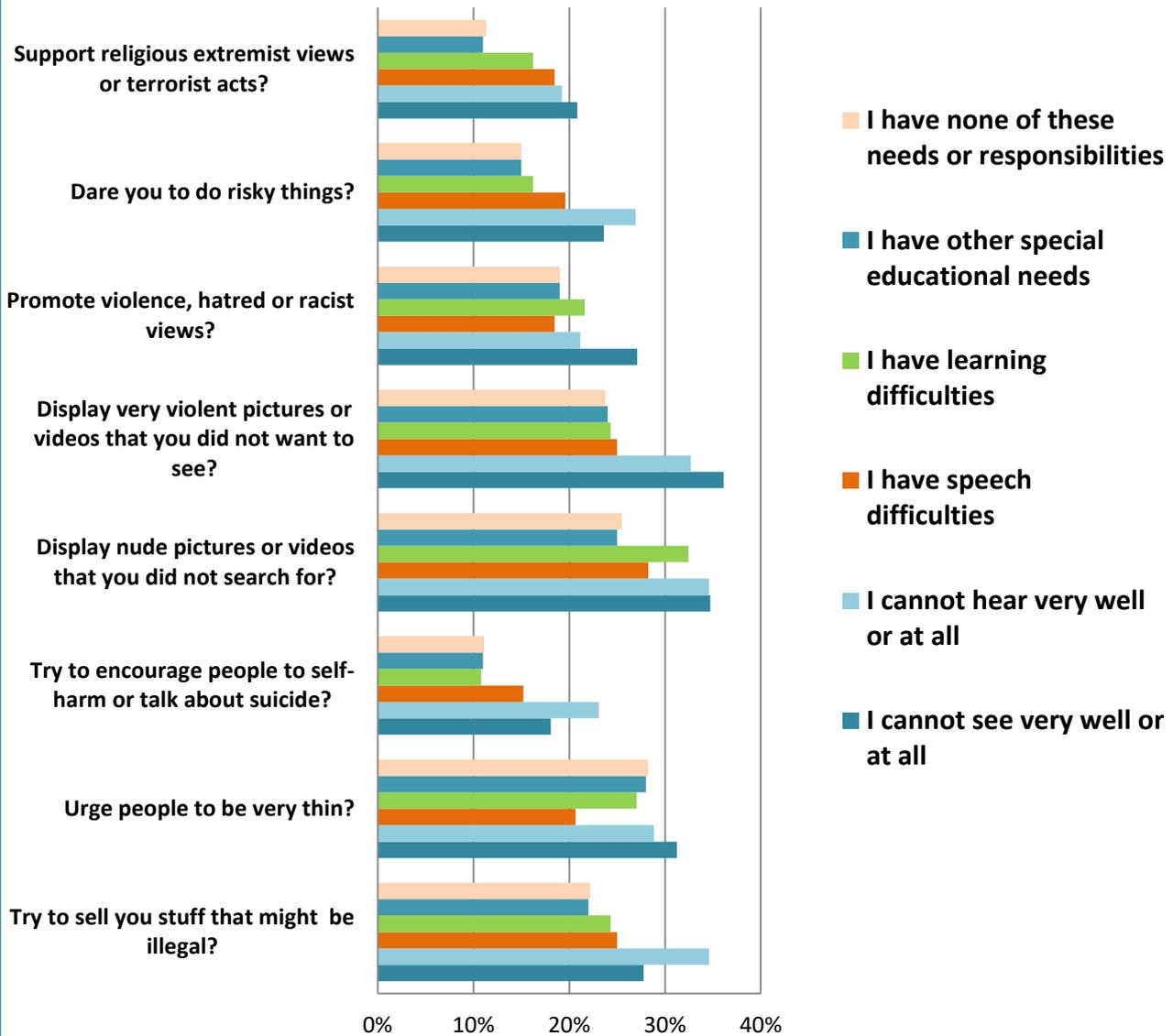


Vulnerable groups



- Children and young people with physical disabilities are more likely than their counterparts to view nude pictures/videos or violent images or videos and in addition, pages promoting violence, hatred or racist views. They view sites selling illegal goods
- People with a long standing illness tend to report seeing pro-anorexia sites that urge people to be very thin; they also see sites selling illegal goods. More than 1/3 of them see sites displaying very violent images or videos.
- Young people who have a mental health difficulty are more likely than peers to view pro-anorexia sites.
- Young people in care are the group most likely to view sites that dare you to do risky things.

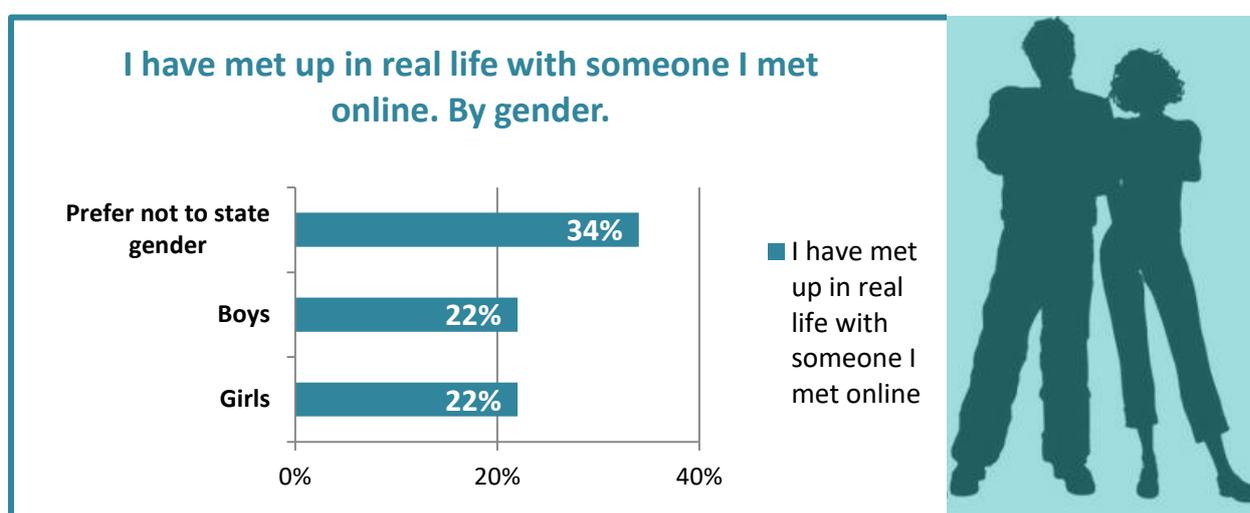
Have you ever come across any websites, forums or social media sites that: ...
(By Vulnerable Groups 2)



- Hearing impaired young people are emerging as a group of concern in several questions of this survey. Here they are the group most likely to view sites selling illegal goods, or nude images or videos. 1/3 has seen sites displaying ‘very violent images or videos’ and 27% say they view sites ‘daring you to do risky things.’
- Along with people who have vision difficulties, the young people with a hearing impairment are viewing sites that support religious extremist views, 21% and 18%.
- 36% of young people who cannot see very well are viewing very violent pictures or videos, nude images, 35%, sites that promote violence, hatred or racist views, 27% and pro-anorexia sites, 29%

Meeting up with someone you only know online

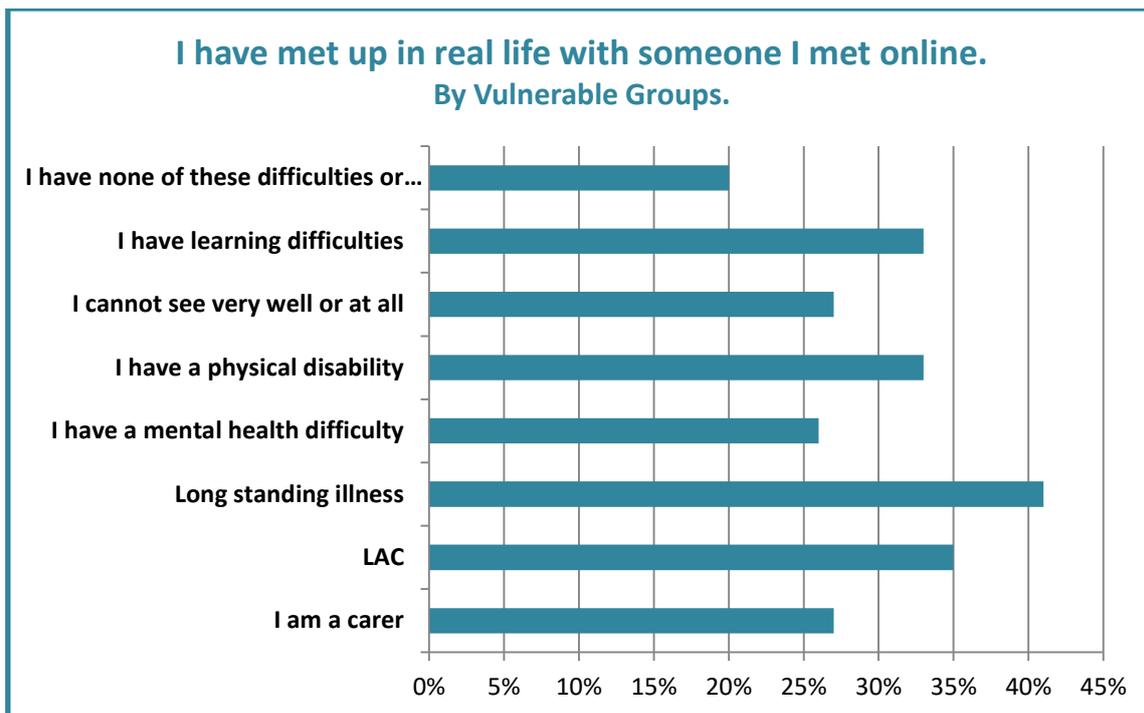
- 22% of our young people have met up with someone they only knew online.
- Those who prefer not to state their gender are more likely than boys or girls to do so.
- 72% told someone what they were going to do
- 65% took someone with them when they went to meet up
- 84% met up with someone who was about the same age as they were
- 18% have travelled a long distance to meet
- 5% met outside the county
- 36% told someone if they were worried about something that happened at the meet up



‘i told my mom that i was meeting somebody and one of my mates came with me and my mom took us there.’

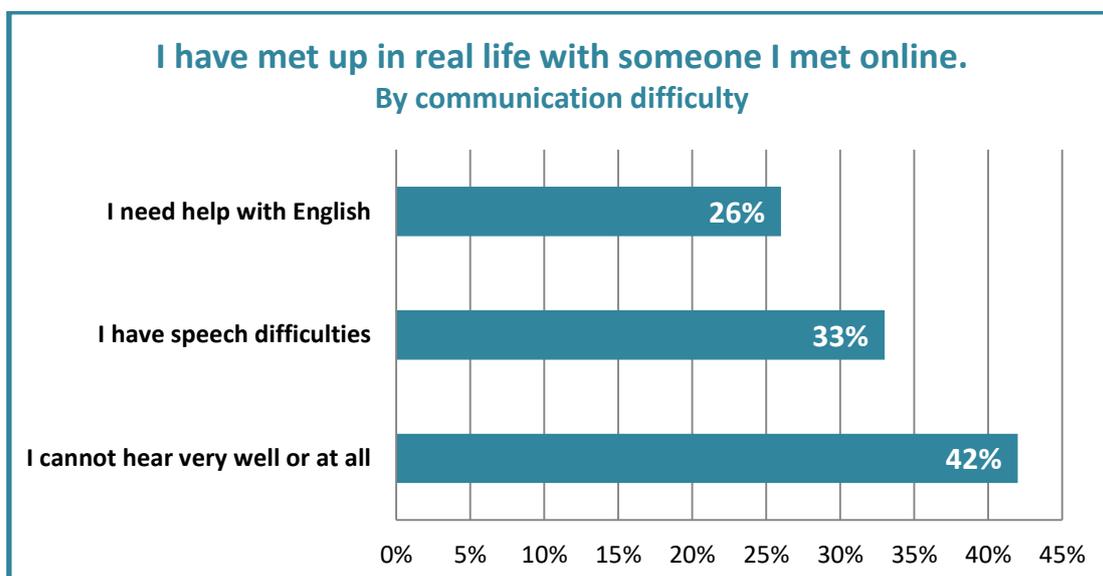
‘i meet them on holiday’

‘i told them to meet me at the park’



Do more vulnerable children and young people meet up with someone they first met online?

- Young people who have a chronic or longstanding illness were most likely to meet someone they had met online. They are twice as likely to do this compared to young people with no difficulties or caring responsibilities. This could indicate that they are possibly meeting other sufferers through online support groups.
- 35% of young people in or leaving care are meeting up with people known only online.
- 33% of those with learning difficulties say they have met up with someone.
- 33% of those with physical disabilities say they have met up with someone.
- 42% of those with hearing impairments met up with someone known online.



Emotional health: young people who feel ‘I am not good enough most of the time’.

Young people who say they feel they are not good enough most of the time tend to meet up with people they only know online rather more than their peers. 29% said they did so compared to 22% of the total sample. 80% of them did tell someone what they were going to do. They told friends and family but some considered that telling the person they were meeting was enough.

While most of these respondents wrote that they spent a few hours together, several chose to joke about being ‘kidnapped’ or spending ‘25 years’ with this person when asked how long they spent together. Some mention that they are now good friends with this person and meet regularly.

‘It was my mate’s friend and I went with others because I knew who the girl was’

‘2 hours at a park we had met once before’

‘Ages because she was friends with my friends’

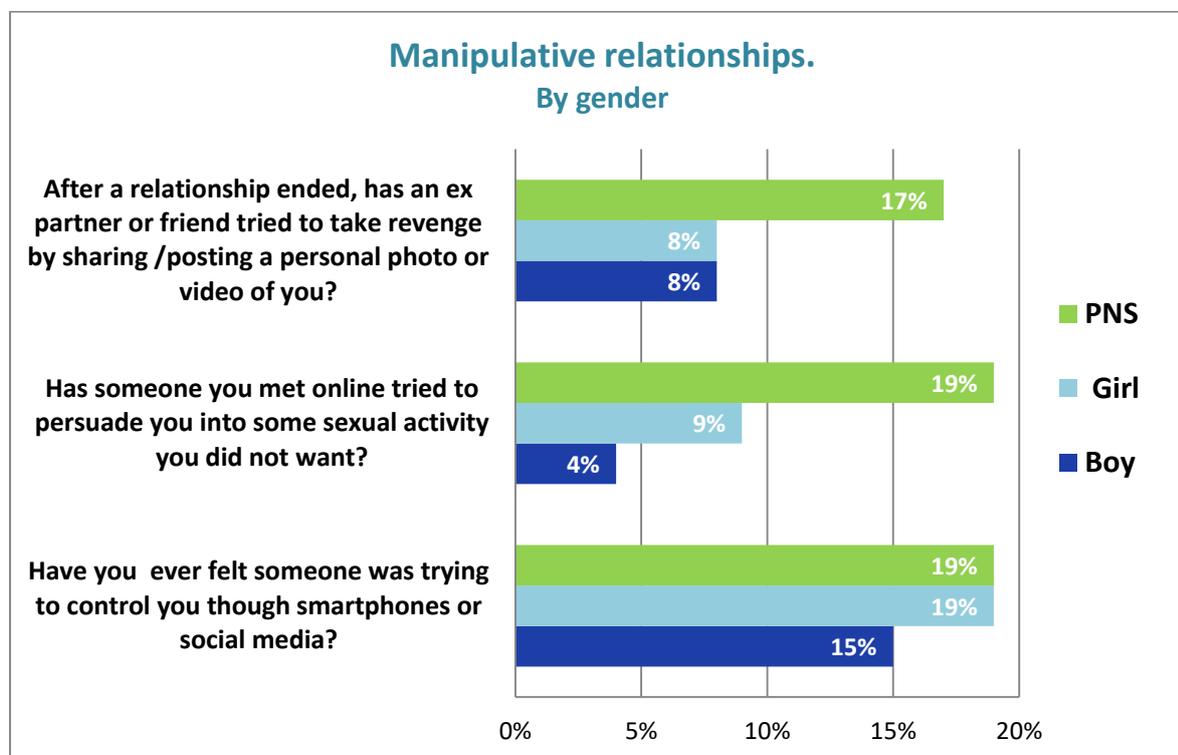
‘No (nothing happened that worried me) because we became friends in real life as well as in our online friendship’

‘No, I was so happy.’

- 80% told someone what they were going to do
- 63% took someone along with them when they went to meet this person
- 80% met with someone roughly their age group but 17% did not and 3% said ‘I don’t know’
- 35% travelled a long distance to meet
- 9% met outside the county
- 44% told some about something that happened that they were worried about.



Manipulative relationships and sexting

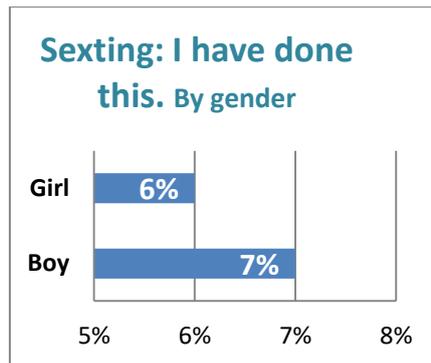


- 57 boys (8%) said that they had been made to feel uncomfortable or scared by someone they met online who tried to make them give their personal details. This also happened to
 - 76 girls (10%) and 8 people (17%) who preferred not to state their gender
 - 9 (19%) of those who did not state their gender had someone try to persuade them into sexual activity they did not want. 8 (17%) had images shared in revenge.

Are there ways in which the Internet helped you make a good relationship with someone?

	Once or twice	Often	Never
Boys	28%	12%	59%
Girls	5%	3%	92%
Prefer not to say	30%	28%	43%

- Girls do not find the Internet helps them make a good relationship with someone, which is unexpected as they are involved in chat and sharing to a great extent.



3 people who preferred not to state their gender had been involved in sexting. Out of over 2000 respondents, 59 boys and 49 girls are involved in sharing explicit or intimate images. This suggests that sexting is not as widespread as is often thought. In other local authority areas the Cybersurvey has found similarly low numbers. However although the survey is anonymous it is possible that young people do not want to admit this. On the other hand it is useful to bear in mind the candour with which they describe many other difficult scenarios such as meeting up with someone, manipulative relationships or hacking others.

- The majority did not experience a bad outcome.

The reasons they gave for doing this:

I was pressured or blackmailed to do it	6 boys	9 girls
I did not want to but felt I had to	9 boys	11 girls
I was tricked into doing it	7 boys	7 girls
I was in a relationship and I wanted to	23 boys	24 girls
I was in a relationship and felt it was expected	12 boys	12 girls
I just tried it for fun	14 boys	16 girls
I wanted to see what reaction I'd get from the person	15 boys	13 girls
I thought I looked good	15 boys	18 girls



After the young people posted or shared these photos or videos:

Nothing happened to me	87%
I was bullied	10%
I felt humiliated	8%
I was blackmailed and told I must send more photos/videos or they would send them to family/friends	4%
I was not prepared for what happened when it got shared with others	7%

What happened when you shared these images?

'She sent one back'

'I was in a relationship with a boy and he shared pictures I sent to him because I upset him and most of the school found out.'

'I pulled 69 girls at the same time'

'Just a small case but it got dealt with by me'

'Everyone thought I looked sexy'



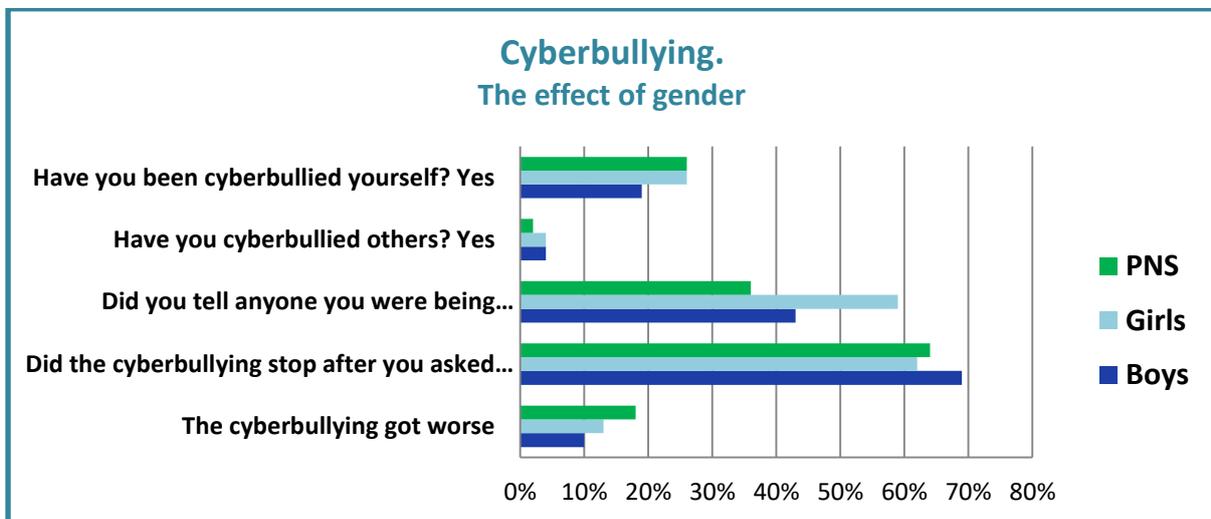
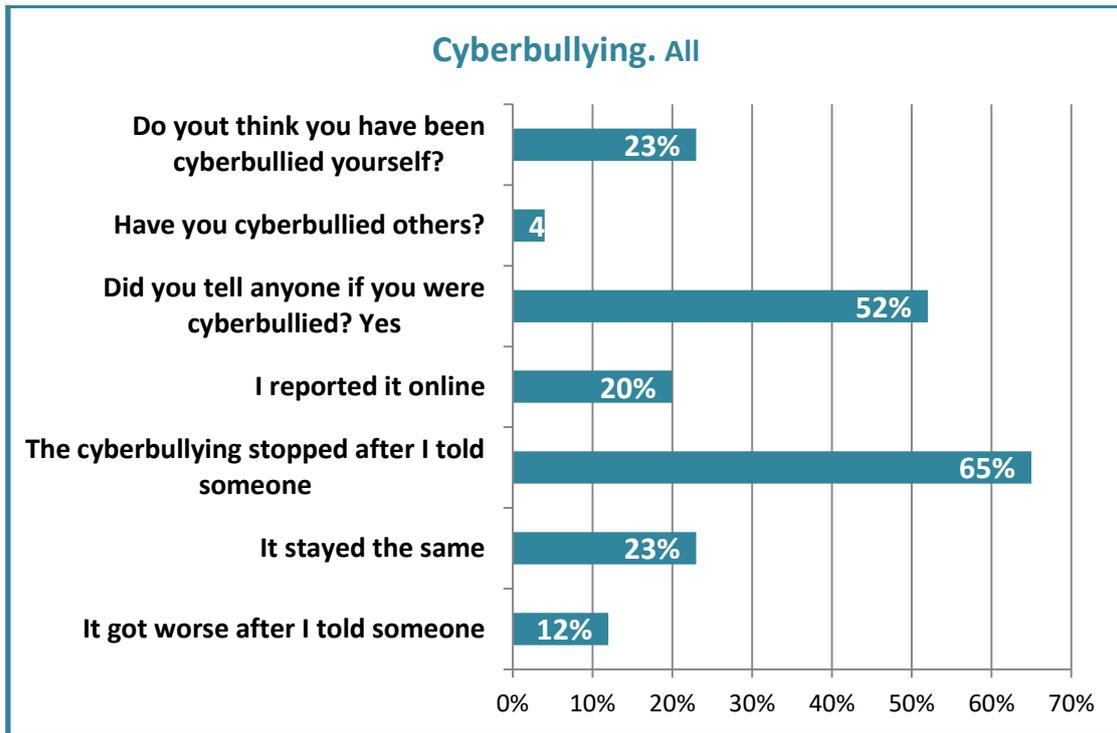
Motivation

In order to help young people, it is vital to understand what motivates them to share intimate self-generated images. Simply instructing them not to do it is not powerful enough to hinder those who are really motivated to do it. Another aspect educators must acknowledge is that for the majority who have shared these images, no negative outcome followed (that they know of). This means that some go on to do it 'lots of times' or their friends can believe it will have no negative consequences for them either. They do not consider that images might be harvested by unknown people. Their levels of confidence and happiness should be taken into account.

Emotional health

There are 42 people in this survey who said they never feel happy and confident about themselves. Among them, 5 people have been involved in sexting. 2 felt pressured or blackmailed into it. 2 said they were tricked into it. 3 were in a relationship and wanted to share it. 3 said they felt it was expected in a relationship. 3 'thought I looked good.'

Cyberbullying



I have been cyberbullied

2014	2016
28%	23%

- 23% of all young people were cyberbullied.
- Boys are least likely to have been cyberbullied and good at getting help
- Girls are most likely to tell someone.

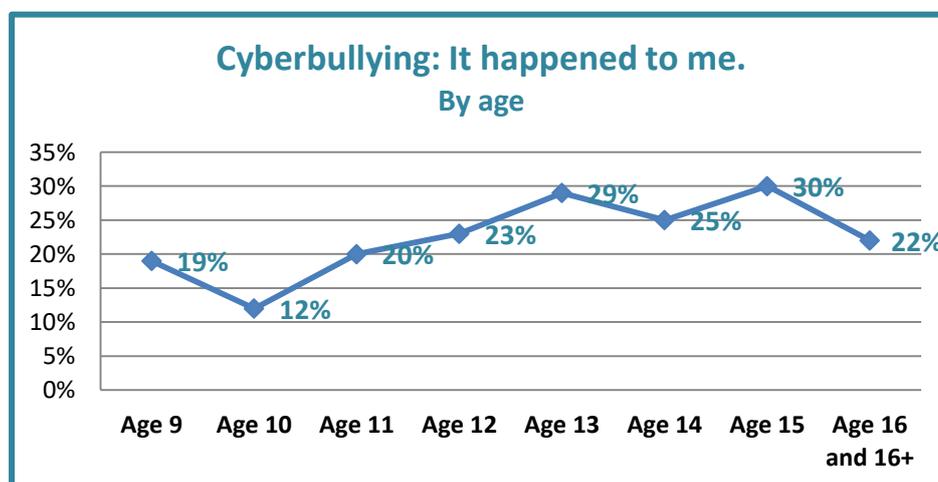
Age

Cyberbullying appears to have decreased since 2014 with from 28% to 23%. However this should be looked at by age group, because we know that samples vary in the make-up of their age cohorts and also because cyberbullying is more prevalent in the mid- teens than among nine year olds who were added to the survey this year. Therefore the lower percentage of children and young people who have been cyberbullied could be due to the presence of these younger children in the sample.

- Young people aged 13 and those at age 15 report the highest levels of cyberbullying at 29% and 30% respectively.
- Children aged 10 report the lowest level of cyberbullying at 12%
- At age 16 and over, we see a decrease in cyberbullying.
- The sharp rise between the age of 10 and the age of 13 indicates how prevention work needs to be focussed strongly at ages 10,11, 12 and 13. By the time students are 14 or 15 years old it is late to address prevention, but more suitable for work on relationships, problem solving and emotional health.
- In 2014 there were two cyberbullying peaks observed – these were ages 10-11 years old and 14-15 years. Cyberbullying was running at over 30% in each of these groups. There is a marked decrease among 10-11 year olds this year and a small decrease among 14-15 year olds. It is possible that the cohort who were aged 10-11 in 2014 are now aged 12-13 as this age group reports a higher rate of cyberbullying this year than in 2014.

I have been bullied, analysed by age groups 2014 - 2017

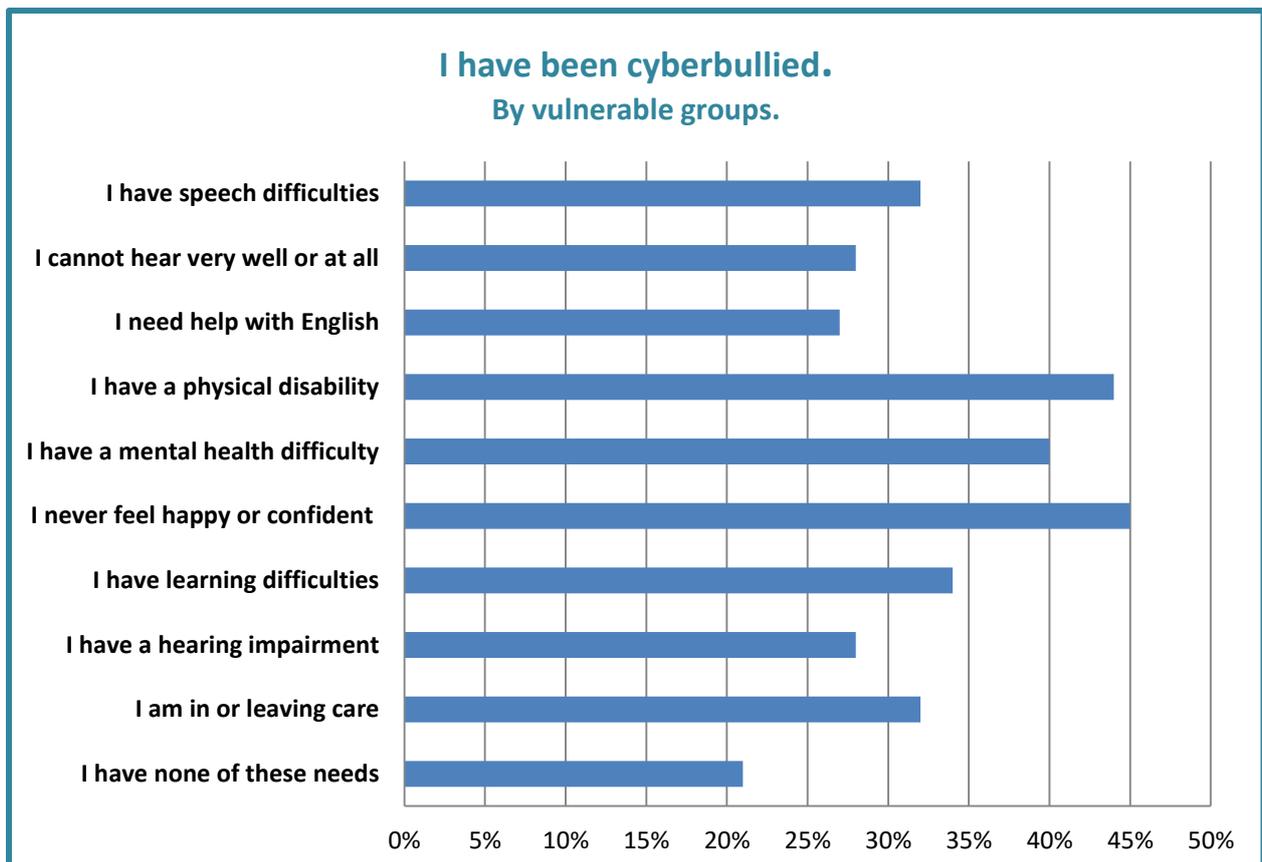
Cyberbullying 2014	Cyberbullying 2016
Age 10-11 31%	Age 10-11 16%
Age 12-13 24%	Age 12-13 26%
Age 14-15 32%	Age 14-15 28%
Age 15-16 24%	Age 15-16 26%



Vulnerable groups

Cyberbullying and bullying of all types are known to be experienced by certain young people disproportionately. We explore these differences so that schools and services can intervene appropriately and do preventative work. In the chart below, the different experiences of those who have special needs and those who are vulnerable in other ways becomes evident.

- People with physical disabilities and those who never feel happy or confident are singled out for cyberbullying the most.
- Inclusion work is needed to reduce the cyberbullying experienced by children with speech or learning difficulties and those with hearing loss.
- Young people with mental health difficulties are very vulnerable, 40% experienced cyberbullying compared to 21% of their peers with none of these difficulties.



Emotional health and vulnerabilities

Emotional health emerges as most important factor. It is of course unclear whether young people who say they 'never feel happy and confident' are feeling this way because they have been cyberbullied, or whether they were cyberbullied because they lacked this confidence in the first place. What is likely is that less confident people are cyberbullied and this has a strong impact, making them increasingly unhappy and less confident than before. In this way a cycle is created which reinforces the lack of confidence.

Outcomes when they reported being cyberbullied

65% of people who had been cyberbullied told someone about this. However for 23% of these people the situation stayed the same after they told someone, and for 12% it actually worsened. This hints at the complexity of successful interventions and the need to ensure any adult help is skilful and followed up, to avoid cases of retaliation or further threats.

Staff training in e-safety has been found lacking in the past by both Ofsted and in a [new report](#) in 2017 by British Educational Suppliers Association. The British Association of Social Workers found that they too lacked confidence in recognising or dealing with online cases.³

Furthermore this reveals that the 35% of young people who '*told nobody*' are not being supported.

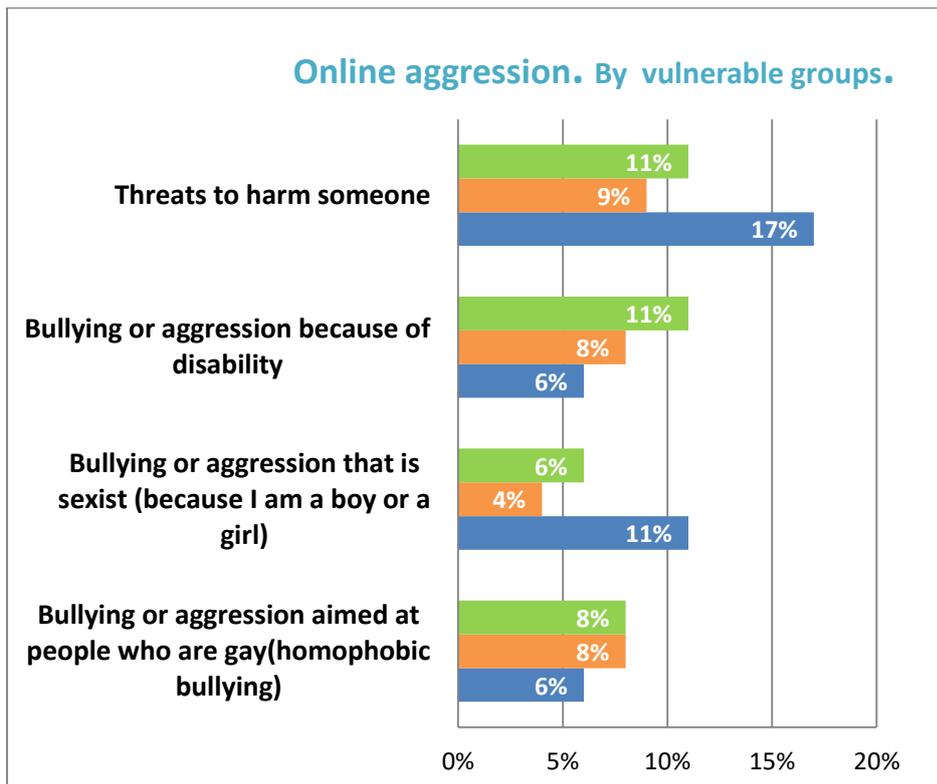


³ BASW and NSPCC Report <https://www.basw.co.uk/news/article/?id=556>

Aggression

There are other forms of aggression online such as homophobia and racism.

- Young people in care experienced a great deal of online aggression including ‘threats to harm me’, and sexism. They also suffer through racist aggression online.
- Young people with learning difficulties are experiencing aggression and bullying online directly targeting their disability.



Homophobic and sexist aggression online

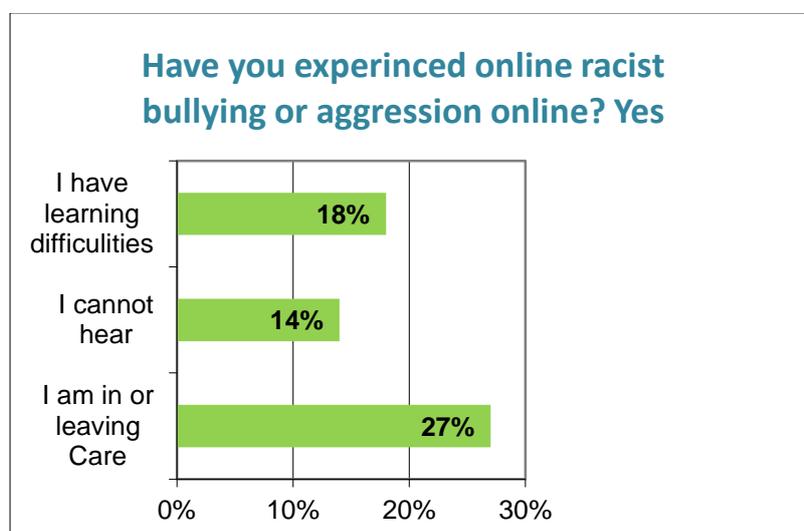
- 5% of all our young people experienced homophobic aggression or bullying online while 29% have seen it happening to other people.
- 5% report sexist aggression aimed at them personally and 21% have seen it happen to other people.
- People with learning difficulties and those with hearing loss report higher levels of homophobic aggression than our total sample.

5% of our young people have experienced homophobic aggression or bullying online. 12% experienced racism.

Racist aggression online

Among all our respondents, 12% have experienced racist aggression or bullying personally while 28% have seen it happen to others. Using this as a benchmark it is clear that those in care are more than twice as likely to suffering racist aggression and those with learning difficulties are one and a half times as likely to be subjected to it.

- 5% said it was about my religion
- 13% said it was about my background or race
- 6% said it was about people from a country my family came from originally



Young people who are in or leaving care are more than 2 x as likely to experience online racist aggression or bullying.

The environment – witnessing racism.

Thinking about what they see around them, our respondents told us that 17% of what they witness is about religion, 32% is about background or race and 8% about people from the country of origin. 41% listed other reasons, of which most concerned anti Muslim language.

‘Banter taken too seriously by people with no sense of humour’

Banter taken too far’

Basically, a person online was mocking someone for their colour and saying racist slangs. I managed to stop it.

*Someone called a person a n*****

‘That all Muslims come from ISIS’

‘Saying they were terrorists’

‘They made fun of my Jewish friend’

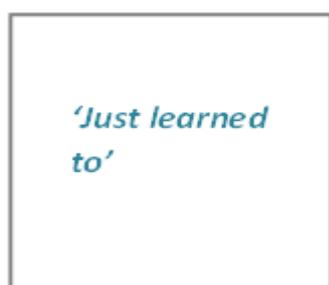
Online safety education

'My big brother is a big computer nerd so he taught me'

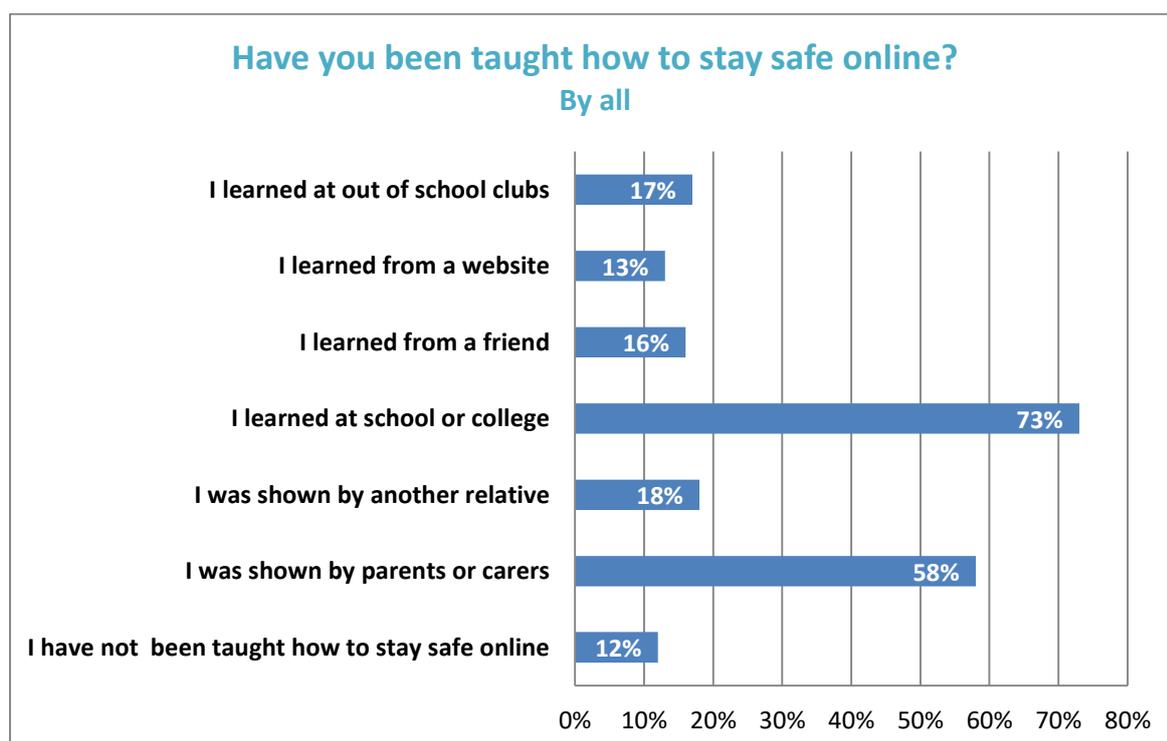
'i am a thinking reasoning human who knows how to act on the internet i was not taught by anyone'

'But i know anyway out of common sense and knowledge of the behaviour of people on the internet.'

I learnt myself because I'm a genius.



- 73% learned at school or college
- 58% were shown by parents
- 12% have not been taught
- 53% always follow it
- 33% sometimes follow it
- 10% do not follow it



53% said it was very good

41% said it was quite good

2% said it was not good enough and 3% said it was useless.

Are we delivering the right messages in the right way?



Researchersⁱⁱ are increasingly questioning the quality of the e-safety education widely given and also the methods of delivery. Some argue that e-safety education is not based on either research or evaluation.

They suggest that scare tactics coupled with imparting knowledge have not been shown to work in health or substance abuse messaging and that there is no evidence that this method works for e-safety.

The messages in this report from young people suggest that a more nuanced approach that is not only age appropriate but also targeted at specific groups who are more vulnerable than others would be helpful. The targeted work would run alongside a comprehensive universal Relationships, Sex Education and Digital Literacy programme.

We have also learned that parents need to be helped to sustain their advice and guidance to their children rather than giving up in the teenage years.

Targeted work should be provided for:

- Children and young people in or leaving care
- Those accessing mental health services
- Anyone with emotional health problems such as lack of confidence, unhappy most of the time, depressed, never feels good about self.
- Those with physical disabilities especially speech difficulties and hearing loss
- Those with SEN especially learning difficulties or dyslexia who may not be able to read terms and conditions or other online instructions.
- Victims of persistent or severe bullying on or offline
- Those who are often absent such as young carers who may miss out on e-safety education yet need it more than most.

Teaching Digital Literacy should begin at younger ages. It should be broken into small sections and frequent re-caps offered before moving to new information.



Scare tactics are putting primary aged girls off using the Internet with potentially negative consequences for their skills. One of the most common worries is about being hacked leading to them being 'found' then hurt.

Confidence to get help or help others

13% of our respondents would not know where to report something if they needed to.

14% do not think anything helps

34% would tell a friend and a similar percentage would tell a sibling or other relative

68% would tell a parent or carer

56% would tell a trusted adult

45% would tell the police

29% would report it on the website

16% would tell another student or peer mentor

13% would seek an online support group

26% of our young people say they have managed to help someone else.

'I told them to tell their parents and get them to tell the police and I blocked the person that was being mean'

'I made them feel better about themselves'

'I told them everything would be OK. I screenshot it and showed a teacher (who did nothing)'

'I told adults'

'I guided them to a website or person that would help them'

'I gave them advice and sites that they could go to for help and I was there for them whenever they needed me.'

'I helped them by persuading them to tell an adult what was happening'

'...stopped somebody getting a friends credit card details'

'My friend wasn't sure what to do when a random person started following her online and I told her to block him'

'A close friend recently received inappropriate images over Snapchat, but didn't have the courage to contact someone. I simply acted as a confidential support for her while getting her to alert teachers and the police of the image.'

ⁱ El Asam, A. & Katz, A. 2017 An Emerging Digital Divide: Vulnerable Young People and Online Risk (in preparation).

ⁱⁱ Jones, L.M., Mitchell, Kimberly J., & Walsh, W.A. (2014). A Systematic Review of Effective Youth Prevention Education: Implications for Internet Safety Education. Durham, NH: Crimes Against Children Research Center (CCRC), University of New Hampshire.