Children and parents:
media use and attitudes report

2020/21

Making sense of media

Overview

This report looks at media use, attitudes and understanding among children and young people aged 5-15, as well as media access and use by young children aged 3-4.

It also includes findings on parents' views about their children's media use, and how they monitor and manage it. It is intended to provide a comprehensive picture of children's media experiences in 2020/21 as a reference for industry, policymakers, academics and the general public.

The Communications Act 2003 places a responsibility on Ofcom to promote, and to carry out research into, media literacy. This report forms part of our wider Making Sense of Media programme.

What we have found

Online access and digital exclusion

- In 2020, **nearly all children aged 5-15 went online.** Laptops, tablets and mobiles were the most used devices for going online, used by seven in ten of these children.

- Ofcom's Technology Tracker 2021[1] research showed that **two per cent of school-age children relied on internet access via a smartphone only,** and **one in five children** who had been home schooling **did not have access to an appropriate device[2] for their online home-learning needs** all of the time.

Content consumption and online activities

- **Children were twice as likely to watch TV programmes on video-on-demand (VoD) than live TV**. Almost all children (96%) watched any type of VoD compared to just over half (56%) watching live TV.

- **Children in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland were less likely than children in England to feel there were enough programmes that showed children from the same part of the country as them:** 33% in Scotland, 34% in Wales and 25% in Northern Ireland, compared to 45% in England.

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[1] This research was conducted via a CATI methodology on the Technology Tracker survey, therefore is separate from that of the media literacy findings. School-age children in this research was based on 4-18 year-olds.

[2] Interpretation of what was an 'appropriate device' was down to the parents answering the relevant question (see Digital exclusion section for further details).

- **Children's use of video-sharing platforms (VSPs) was nearly universal,** with a majority using VSPs more during the coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic than before.

- **Seven in ten 5-15s played games online in 2020.** This was more prevalent among boys than girls (78% vs. 64%). Boys were also more likely, than girls, to use gaming to connect with their friends.

- **Just over half of 5-15s used social media sites or apps,** rising to 87% of 12-15s. The range of sites and apps used remains diverse; around a third of 5-15s used Instagram, Snapchat and Facebook.

Online knowledge and understanding

- **Just under half of children aged 8-15 who used search engines could correctly identify adverts on Google searches,** and about half realised that some sites within a search engine's results could be trusted and some couldn't.

- **Two-thirds of 12-15s recognised that vloggers and influencers might be sponsored** to say good things about products or brands. Children in our Children's Media Lives study found this helpful as it showed them products and services that were in line with their interests.

Staying safe online

- **Just over half of 12-15s have had some form of negative online experience[3].** The most common type of these was being contacted by someone they did not know who wanted to be their friend, which happened to almost a third of children in this age group.

- **Awareness of reporting functions was high** (70% of children aged 12-15), but only 14% of 12-15s have ever reported content.

Parental attitudes and mediation strategies

- **Parents found it harder to control their child's screen time during the Covid-19 pandemic** and up to half of parents of children aged 5-15 said they had to relax some rules about what their child did online during 2020. However, parents also recognised the value of the internet in helping their child stay connected with their friends.

- **Awareness of various technical tools and controls among parents was high** (around six in ten), but only a minority actually used any of them (around a third of parents).

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[3] The negative experiences question was asked of 12-15s only, and asked about: *being contacted online by someone you don't know who wants to be your friend, accidentally spending money online that you didn't mean to, seeing or receiving something scary of troubling online like a scary video or comment, seeing something of a sexual nature that made you feel uncomfortable, feeling under pressure to send photos or other information about yourself to someone.*

Media use by age in 2020: a snapshot

5-15 year olds

61% have their own tablet, and 55% their own smartphone

To go online - 70% use a tablet, 69% a laptop, and 65% a smartphone

56% watch live broadcast TV, and 91% watch video-on-demand content*

71% play games online

55% use social media apps/sites
65% use messaging apps/sites
97% use video-sharing platforms (VSP)
45% use live streaming apps/sites

5-7 year olds

57% have their own tablet, and 14% their own smartphone

To go online - 77% use a tablet, 51% a laptop, and 40% a smartphone

48% watch live broadcast TV, and 88% watch video-on-demand content*

50% play games online

30% use social media apps/sites
33% use messaging apps/sites
96% use video-sharing platforms (VSP)
33% use live streaming apps/sites

8-11 year olds

66% have their own tablet, and 49% their own smartphone

To go online - 76% use a tablet, 72% a laptop, and 62% a smartphone

58% watch live broadcast TV, and 91% watch video-on-demand content*

78% play games online

44% use social media apps/sites
64% use messaging apps/sites
96% use video-sharing platforms (VSP)
39% use live streaming apps/sites

40% are aware of ad placements in search engines
(8-11s who go online and use search engines)

27% have seen worrying or nasty content online
(8-11s who go online)

12-15 year olds

59% have their own tablet, and 91% their own smartphone

To go online - 87% use a smartphone, 80% a laptop, and 60% a tablet

61% watch live broadcast TV, and 92% watch video-on-demand content*

80% play games online

87% use social media apps/sites
91% use messaging apps/sites
99% use video-sharing platforms (VSP)
60% use live streaming apps/sites

65% are aware of potential vlogger endorsements
(12-15s who go online)

49% are aware of ad placements in search engines
(12-15s who go online and use search engines)

31% have seen worrying or nasty content online
(12-15s who go online)

* Video-on-demand content includes subscription services such as Netflix, broadcast catch-up services such as BBC iPlayer, recorded TV, websites like Vimeo and YouTube, blu-rays/DVDs, and renting online such as from Google Play Store

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[4] Figures within the 'Media use snapshot: by age' graphic above are taken from Ofcom's Children's and Parents' Media Literacy Tracker and are based on all children within each age group for ease of comparison (unless noted otherwise), whereas within the body of the report the bases may change according to the topic (e.g. online users, or users or social media, etc.).

Media use among 5-15s in 2020 by nation

England

60% have their own tablet and 55% their own smartphone

To go online - 70% use a laptop, 70% a tablet, and 65% a smartphone

57% watch live broadcast TV, and 90% watch video-on-demand content*

71% play games online

56% use social media apps/sites
65% use messaging apps/sites
97% use video-sharing platforms (VSP)
45% use live streaming apps/sites

64% are aware of potential vlogger endorsements (12-15s who go online)

44% are aware of ad placements in search engines (8-15s who go online and use search engines)

29% have seen worrying or nasty content online (8-15s who go online)

Scotland

65% have their own tablet and 60% their own smartphone

To go online - 73% use a laptop, 66% a tablet, and 66% a smartphone

52% watch live broadcast TV, and 94% watch video-on-demand content*

74% play games online

58% use social media apps/sites
66% use messaging apps/sites
98% use video-sharing platforms (VSP)
50% use live streaming apps/sites

67% are aware of potential vlogger endorsements (12-15s who go online)

51% are aware of ad placements in search engines (8-15s who go online and use search engines)

28% have seen worrying or nasty content online (8-15s who go online)

Wales

62% have their own tablet and 62% their own smartphone

To go online - 70% use a laptop, 67% a tablet, and 67% a smartphone

48% watch live broadcast TV, and 90% watch video-on-demand content*

69% play games online

51% use social media apps/sites
65% use messaging apps/sites
98% use video-sharing platforms (VSP)
38% use live streaming apps/sites

71% are aware of potential vlogger endorsements (12-15s who go online)

49% are aware of ad placements in search engines (8-15s who go online and use search engines)

30% have seen worrying or nasty content online (8-15s who go online)

N Ireland

67% have their own tablet and 56% their own smartphone

To go online - 71% use a tablet, 69% a smartphone, and 65% a laptop

59% watch live broadcast TV, and 94% watch video-on-demand content*

75% play games online

53% use social media apps/sites
65% use messaging apps/sites
92% use video-sharing platforms (VSP)
48% use live streaming apps/sites

73% are aware of potential vlogger endorsements (12-15s who go online)

42% are aware of ad placements in search engines (8-15s who go online and use search engines)

33% have seen worrying or nasty content online (8-15s who go online)

* Video-on-demand content includes subscription services such as Netflix, broadcast catch-up services such as BBC iPlayer, recorded TV, websites like Vimeo and YouTube, blu-rays/DVDs, and renting online such as from Google Play Store [5]

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[5] Figures within the 'Media use snapshot: by nation' graphic above are taken from Ofcom's Children's and Parents' Media Literacy Tracker and are based on all children within each UK nation for ease of comparison (unless noted otherwise), whereas within the body of the report the bases may change according to the topic (e.g. online users, or users or social media, etc.).

Sources

The report draws largely on Ofcom's quantitative *Children's and Parents' Media Literacy Tracker*[6]*,* which has been running since 2005, and is supported by other Ofcom research: our qualitative *Children's Media Lives*[7] research, our *Life in Lockdown* study[8] our quantitative *News Consumption Survey*[9], and a CATI[10] omnibus survey conducted to provide Ofcom with key statistics on digital exclusion.

We also have insight and data from the UK's television audience measurement body, *BARB*[11], and this year we have also included further insight from research agencies *CHILDWISE*[12] and *The Insights Family*[13].

All elements of Ofcom's media literacy research (apart from *Life in Lockdown*) took place over autumn 2020 and winter 2020/21 (see timetable below).

Methodology: Ofcom's Children's and Parent's Media Literacy Tracker

In previous years, our quantitative *Children's and Parents' Media Literacy Tracker* has been conducted face-to-face, in-home, using CAPI.[14] In 2020, due to the Covid-19 pandemic – and in common with other Ofcom tracking studies with an element of in-home interviewing – it was not possible to conduct the research in this way. Instead, the survey was transitioned to two online methodologies: post-to-web[15] and online panels. To adapt the survey to be suitable for a child's self-completion, it was necessary to split it into two shorter surveys. Survey 1, conducted via both methodologies, asked about device and online access, online benefits, TV consumption, gaming, negative experiences and online safety, children's critical understanding, and parental attitudes, concerns, rules, and mediation. Survey 2, completed wholly via online panels, focused on social media, messaging, video-sharing platforms, live streaming, and other online activities. Full details of these methodologies can be found in the technical reports accompanying this report.[16]

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[6] Questionnaires, data tables and technical reports can be found here: Statistical release calendar 2021 - Ofcom

[7] Ofcom's latest Children's Media Lives report: Children's Media Lives: Year 7 findings

[8] Life in Lockdown was a Covid-19 specific wave of Ofcom's Children's Media Lives research: Children's Media Lives: Life in Lockdown report

[9] Covid-19 news and information: consumption and attitudes report: Covid-19 news and information: consumption and attitudes - Ofcom

[10] CATI = Computer Assisted Telephone Interview

[11] BARB data based on the full year of 2020: BARB | Broadcasters Audience Research Board

[12] CHILDWISE data based on fieldwork conducted September-November 2020, among 1976 children aged 5 to 16 years: CHILDWISE: http://www.childwise.co.uk/

[13] The Insights Family data based on fieldwork conducted October-December 2020: https://theinsightsfamily.com/solutions/kids-insights

[14] CAPI = Computer Assisted Personal Interview

[15] With the post-to-web methodology, letters are sent at random to UK households, inviting parents of children aged 3-15 to conduct the survey online. This survey was topped up with respondents from online panels to achieve the sample sizes needed for analysis.

[16] Children's and Parents' Media Literacy Tracker: Technical Report Survey 1 and Survey 2.

Impact on trend data

As a result of this substantial shift in methodology, direct comparisons between the current and previous waves are not possible. Where feasible, we refer to substantial changes or trend direction, if we are confident that the changes reflect a genuine shift in behaviour[17]. The measures may also have been affected by the fact that the fieldwork was conducted during the Covid-19 pandemic; this is likely to have had a significant impact on use, behaviour, and attitudes, among both parents and children. Lastly, some changes may have been driven by the methodology change; we also include commentary on changes that we believe are driven primarily by this.

To place our research in context, the graphic below shows the timing of our fieldwork (both quantitative and qualitative) against the various stages of the national restrictions across 2020 and 2021.
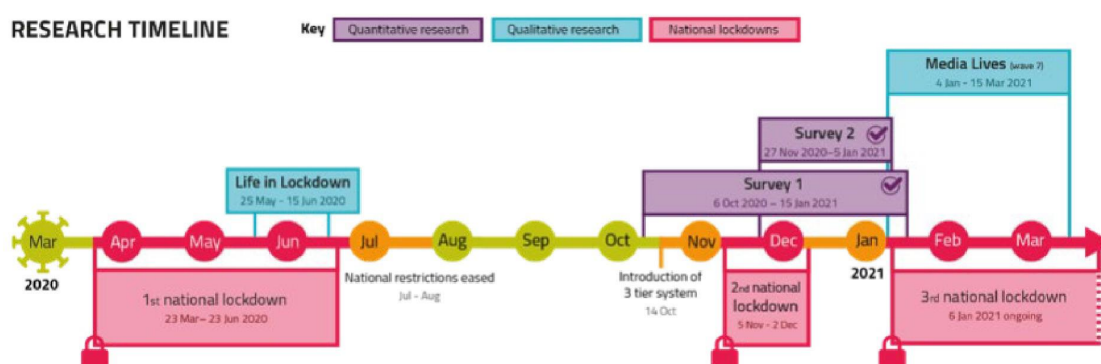
Nations

Analysis of the UK nations will also focus on the 2020 data and will not include commentary on trends over time. As with the UK overall, the change in methodology may have affected the results. Analysis is included in those sections only where there are differences between the nations.

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[17] Variations in data compared to previous years may be a permanent shift and part of a trend that continues over time, which may be reflected in future waves of fieldwork when lockdowns are not in place.

DEVICES USED TO GO ONLINE

| 70% Tablet | 69% Laptop/notebook | 65% Mobile phone | 41% Games console/player | 37% Smart TV | 28% Desktop computer |
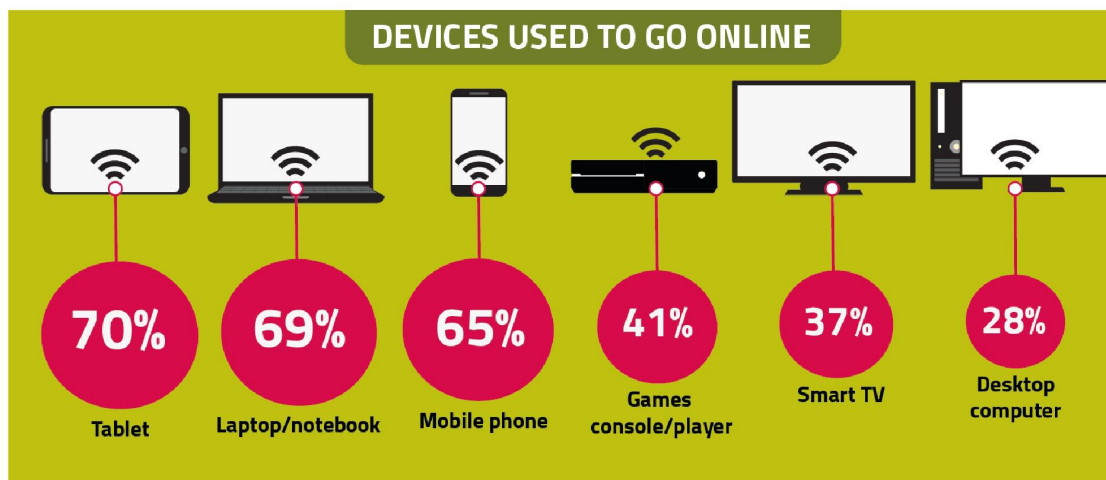
These figures indicate a shift in the principal device for going online in 2020. In 2019, the tablet was the device most likely to be used to go online among 5-15s, higher than a laptop or mobile phone. However, use of a tablet to go online remained stable in 2020, while use of laptops, mobile phones, gaming devices, smart TVs and even desktops increased among each age group. The increased use of laptops and desktops, in particular, was probably due to the need for online home learning during 2020.

Digital exclusion

Two per cent of school-age children relied on smartphone only internet access

Our Technology Tracker 2021 research found that nearly all UK households with school-age children (between 4 and 18 years old) had internet access in the home (less than 1% did not have access at home).[27] However, 4% of these only had mobile access (that is, via a smartphone, tethering or dongle/USB, but with no fixed broadband). This decreased to 2% of those with only smartphone access (no tethering).

Children in the 'most financially vulnerable' households (MFV[28]) were more likely than those in the 'least financially vulnerable' (LFV) households to have mobile-only access (5% vs. 2%), or smartphone-only internet access (3% vs. 1%).

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[27] Fieldwork conducted 12 February – 5 March 2021.

[28] The base size for households with school-age children and classed as 'most financially vulnerable' was 87. Any data with a base size under 100 should be treated with caution.

One in five children who had been home schooling did not have access to an appropriate device for their online home-learning needs all of the time

The Technology Tracker research also found that among school-aged children (aged 4-18), eight in ten had access all of the time to an appropriate device[29] at home, to enable them to connect to the internet for online home-schooling or online learning as needed. Of the remainder, 13% had access some of the time; while 2% rarely had access, and 2% never had access.[30]

The likelihood of having access to appropriate devices increased with the age of the child: around nine in ten children aged 12-18[31] had access all the time, compared to 64% of 4-7 year-olds.

During the most recent wave of our qualitative Children's Media Lives research, we saw that some children's schooling was limited by their access to the internet or certain devices. An example of this when Nathan, 14, described having an old laptop that would sometimes die when he needed it for lessons:

> "It's kind of annoying because if your internet's not working properly sometimes you don't attend… It [the internet] doesn't drop out; it's just the laptop is quite faulty… it overheats quickly"
>
> *Nathan aged 14*

Among children considered to be vulnerable, those in MFV households were more likely than those in LFV households to be affected by a lack of access to an appropriate device, according to the Technology Tracker research. While more than seven in ten children from MFV households had access *all* the time (72%), this was lower than the proportion of children in LFV households (86%).

Children in households where the parent or guardian had an impacting or limiting condition were less likely to have access to appropriate devices *all* the time: 72% compared to 82% of children where the parent had no condition.

Two-thirds of children without full-time access to appropriate devices at home shared a device to manage home schooling, while 3% were unable to do their schoolwork

Of those without access to an appropriate device all the time, device sharing was the most common method for managing this, with two-thirds of children doing so.[32] This was followed by children carrying out another educational activity such as watching an educational programme (26%).

Fifteen per cent of these children had to postpone their learning until a device was available, 9% borrowed a device, and 6% used a device that was less appropriate. Three per cent of children without access to an appropriate device all the time had to leave their schoolwork, or that it just wasn't possible.

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[29] Parents were asked: *'To what extent do the children in your household have access at home to appropriate devices based on their schooling requirement, to enable them to connect to the internet for online schooling or online learning as needed?'*

[30] A further 3% of children said they had not been home schooling.

[31] 89% of 12-15 year-olds, and 91% of 16-18 year-olds.

[32] Note there were no differences in how to manage device access between MFV and LFV households.

Content consumption

Research from CHILDWISE[33] showed that children spent more time watching content (programmes, video and short clips) in 2020 than they did before (from 2 hours 54 minutes in 2019 to 3 hours 18 minutes in 2020).

This section of our report focuses on the various forms of content available: video-sharing platforms (VSPs), live streaming, live TV, and on-demand content.

Children's use of VSPs to watch content was nearly universal, with a majority using VSPs more during the Covid-19 pandemic than before

The consumption of content via VSPs[34] was omnipresent among children, with 97% of 5-15s doing this in 2020. Covid-19 increased this behaviour; seven in ten children aged 8-15 said they had used VSPs *more* during the Covid-19 pandemic than before. In line with this, research by The Insights Family[35] revealed that at the end of 2020, two of the top three favourite apps among children aged 5-15 were VSPs (YouTube and TikTok).[36]

Ofcom's media literacy research found that YouTube was the most-used VSP among children aged 5-15 for watching content in 2020 (87%). And research by CHILDWISE highlights YouTube's sizeable presence in children's daily lives: 58% of children said that they used YouTube every day, spending on average almost two and a half hours a day doing so.[37]

Our research also found that almost half of 5-15s used TikTok to watch content in 2020, and around a third watched content on Instagram, Facebook and Snapchat. A minority of 5-15s used Go Noodle (6%), Vimeo (6%), Dailymotion (4%) and Dubsmash (4%).

While use of YouTube (to watch content) was consistent across ages, TikTok (65%), Instagram (65%), Facebook (50%) and Snapchat (53%) were more likely to be used by 12-15s. Among this age group, girls were more likely than boys to use TikTok and Snapchat, but no differences by gender were seen in use of the other sites/apps.

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[33] CHILDWISE: http://www.childwise.co.uk/

[34] Video-sharing platforms: Ofcom's research explored a range of sites and apps used by children to watch and share videos online. Although the term 'video-sharing platforms' (VSPs) is used, this research does not seek to identify which services will fall into Ofcom's regulatory remit, nor to pre-determine whether any particular service would be classed as a VSP under the regulatory definition. The platforms included in this research operate at different scales which should be taken into consideration when comparing results from users of smaller VSPs against those from users of larger platforms.

[35] The Insights Family: https://theinsightsfamily.com/solutions/kids-insights

[36] The other favourite app in the top three among children was Roblox.

[37] CHILDWISE: http://www.childwise.co.uk/

Our Life in Lockdown[38] study, conducted in May-July 2020, showed that early on in the Covid-19 pandemic TikTok was hugely popular with our participants. William (then aged 16) said:

> "You go on it for five minutes, and then you end [up] scrolling for two hours. It's just addicting [sic] – once you get scrolling you just keep on doing it – I don't know what it is about it"
>
> *William aged 16*

And it continued to be the dominant media platform (in terms of time spent) in the most recent wave of Children's Media Lives, conducted in early 2021.

Funny videos and pranks were the most-watched content, but this varies by age

Among all 5-15s, 80% nominated funny videos, jokes, pranks, and challenges. However, popularity of other types of content differed by age; 5-7s were more likely to nominate cartoons, animations, and mini-movies or songs, whereas 8-15s were more likely to choose music videos.

A number of other types of video content were watched by smaller, but still significant, proportions of 5-15s:
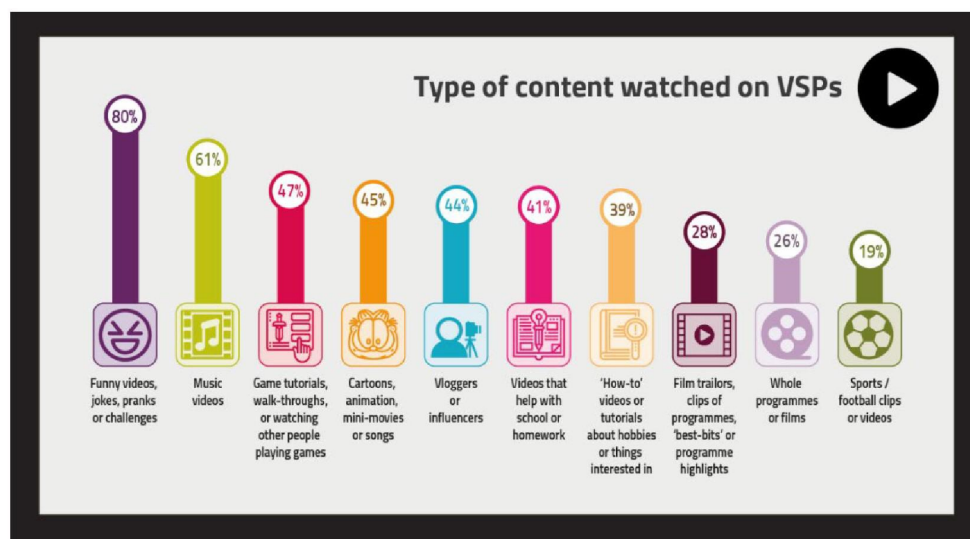
Up to half of children said they watched vloggers or YouTube influencers; this was more likely among 8-11s (47%) and 12-15s (49%) than among younger children aged 5-7 (34%). According to The Insights Family[39] the choice of vlogger varied by gender; KSI and PewDiePie were the favoured among the older boys (aged 12-15), while Zoella was the clear favourite among girls this age.[40]

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[38] Life in Lockdown was an ad-hoc study, commissioned by Ofcom, to assess the Children's Media Lives participants' experience of lockdown that took place over six weeks between May and July 2020: https://www.ofcom.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0024/200976/cml-life-in-lockdown-report.pdf

[39] The Insights Family: https://theinsightsfamily.com/solutions/kids-insights

[40] Vlogger profile information from Wikipedia: KSI provides vlog and comedy style videos via his two YouTube channels. As of March 2021, he had over 34 million subscribers and over 8 billion video views. (continued)

Some of our Children's Media Lives participants followed particular influencers to whom they felt they could relate. In the 2019 wave of the study, we saw that participants were following an increasing number of peer-to-peer or local influencers alongside big-name stars. And in this most recent wave we found that many of the children in the study were seeking content from influencers they found 'relatable'.

For example, when reflecting on why she liked content posted by British YouTubers Summer XO and Amelia-Mae Pritchard, Shaniqua, 16, intimated they were more similar to her than some of the more famous YouTubers. In similar vein, Peter, 15, who followed body-sculpting and weightlifting influencers like Mike Thurston and Eddie Hall, said that he found them aspirational and relatable:

> "[Seeing their content] motivates you to keep going, because they all started off the same as you"

And in relation to Mike Thurston specifically:

> "I think he's having fun and being himself…He's really relatable"
>
> *Peter aged 15*

Three-quarters of older children posted or shared content on VSPs

Over half of 5-15s said they posted or shared content[41] on VSPs during 2020, ranging from 39% of 5-7s to 75% of 12-15s. Given this, making videos was one of the online creative activities that children were most likely to do in 2020; six in ten 5-15s overall who went online said they did this, rising to seven in ten children aged 12-15.[42]

No single platform was used by a majority of children for posting or sharing content; similar proportions (around a quarter) of 5-15s said they used TikTok, YouTube, Instagram, or Snapchat for posting or sharing content. Among older children (aged 12-15), around four in ten used TikTok, Instagram and Snapchat for posting or sharing; a quarter said they used YouTube.
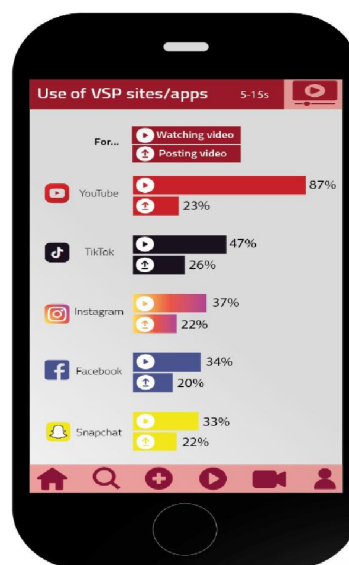
PewDiePie provides vlogs, comedy, and music videos. As of March 2021, his YouTube channel had over 109 million subscribers and over 27 billion views.

Zoella is a vlogger, businesswoman and author, with a range of beauty and homeware products. As at March 2021, she had 11.1 million subscribers to her main videos, and 4.86 million to her vlogs

[41] Our survey asked which sites or apps were used to post videos online or to share videos; we do not ask about other active engagement such as commenting on other people's videos. We also do not specify whether the videos are the child's own or sharing others' content.

[42] The same proportion (almost six in ten) said they made or drew pictures online, more prevalent among 5-11s.

Although there was no difference overall between boys' and girls' likelihood of posting or sharing content via VSPs, boys aged 5-15 were more likely to choose YouTube for this activity, while girls were more likely to choose TikTok and Snapchat.

Using filters to alter their appearance when posting content had become pretty much ubiquitous among the participants of the 2021 wave of Children's Media Lives, and for most of them there was a desire for these changes to look natural or 'not too obvious'.

We also saw evidence that for some, the 'copy-catting' behaviour that we first saw in the 2019 wave (where users emulate content that other people have posted) was a way of using the online space to 'try on' different identities, or work out how they wanted to present themselves. For example, both Shriya, 16, and Freya, 17, followed accounts on Instagram to gain inspiration for their own posts and often copied others' posts in order to create and promote their own online identities.

Up to a fifth of children posted or shared content via live streaming platforms

Some platforms also allow users to livestream (videos streamed by users in real time). In 2020, almost half of children aged 8-15 said they had used live streaming services to watch other people's live streams and live videos; this was more likely among 12-15s (50%) than among 8-11s (40%). The older age group were also more likely to say they had 'gone live' themselves, by sharing their own videos with others (17% vs. 8% of 8-11s).

Among the older age group, Instagram Live and YouTube Live were the sites or apps most likely to be used (38% and 32% respectively among 12-15s), followed by a quarter using Facebook Live. While YouTube Live was also the most likely to be used by 8-11 year-olds (by 30%), around one in ten used Instagram Live or Facebook Live.

Meanwhile, Twitch, one of the leading streaming platforms for gamers, was used by 7% of 5-15s overall.

We also saw an increase in engagement with live streaming among some of our Children's Media Lives' participants, who were either viewing streams or attempting to become streamers themselves.

There were different motivations for this engagement. Nathan, 14, enjoyed feeling as if he was part of the action while others felt it was a way of sharing their interests (especially if they happened to be interested in gaming).

However, as in previous waves, several participants recognised that streaming could be an opportunity to both gain attention and make money for themselves. For example, William, 17, was earning money by helping fellow players of Destiny 2 to 'level up'[43] in the game, as well as through streaming his gaming via his Twitch account, and saw earning money as the prime motivation for his streaming.

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[43] 'Level up' means to progress to the next level of player character stats and abilities. William was working for Best Destiny Carries, an American company, that allows Destiny players around the world to pay for 'Sherpas' (players like William) to complete objectives they're unable to themselves.
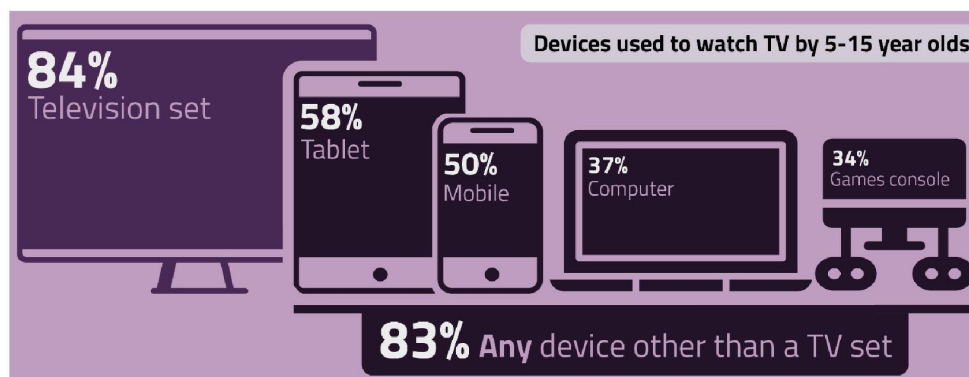
The Covid-19 pandemic has hastened the trend towards alternative devices for watching TV programmes

It is clear that during 2020 children were keeping themselves entertained by watching, and sometimes sharing, video content online. Watching TV programmes was also a key form of entertainment, with 98% of 5-15s doing this.

However, during 2020 there was a change in how children watched TV programmes. For the first time, children were as likely to watch TV programmes on any device other than a TV set, as to watch on a TV set. This was due to a rise in the use of other devices and the decline in the proportion of children using a TV set since 2019.

Of the alternative devices used, 58% of children aged 5-15 watched TV programmes on a tablet in 2020, while 50% watched on a mobile phone. More than a third of children watched on a laptop or desktop, or on a games console or player.

Boys were more likely than girls to use a games console or player to watch TV content (42% vs. 26%), while girls were more likely to use a desktop computer or laptop than boys (40% vs. 33%).

Devices used to watch TV by 5-15 year olds

84% Television set
58% Tablet
50% Mobile
37% Computer
34% Games console
83% Any device other than a TV set

Children were also 'multi-screening' while watching TV. According to The Insights Family, up to a quarter of children aged 5-15 used their mobile phone or tablet at the same time as watching TV – increasing to almost four in ten 12-15s.[44]

We have seen 'multi-screening' among the participants of Children's Media Lives since 2018, and by the latest wave this had become part of everyday life for the majority of them. For the most part, this was to browse social media on their phones while also watching content, gaming, or learning on another device. Peter, 15, suggested that this felt similar to group activities that he might be doing if he was not in lockdown:

> "I feel like it doesn't distract me from my work… I just respond to my messages and put it down. In a normal classroom you don't sit in silence - you still have to speak to your friends"
>
> *Peter aged 15*

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[44] The Insights Family: https://theinsightsfamily.com/solutions/kids-insights

Two-thirds of 12-15s can recognise vlogger sponsorship

More than four in ten children aged 5-15 said they watched vloggers or influencers on video-sharing platforms, with the likelihood increasing with age: from 34% of 5-7s to 49% of 12-15s. In some cases, these vloggers or influencers are paid or sponsored to endorse products or a service. When we asked children aged 12-15 why vloggers or influencers might say good things about products or brands, two-thirds correctly recognised that they might be being paid by the company or brand to promote the product or service (65%).

A third thought that they were saying nice things about the product or service because they either wanted to share the information with their followers, or they thought the product or service was cool or good to use.

The participants in our Children's Media Lives study understood that influencers were paid to promote content. Rather than annoying them, some reported finding this helpful as it showed them things that were in line with their interests. And, Peter, 15, indicated that he understood and accepted that his favourite fitness influencers promoted their own products or products from sponsors. Reflecting on a post by MattDoesFitness in collaboration with MyProtein (a fitness nutrition company) he said:

> "It's his stuff… so I understand he needs to promote it"
>
> *Peter aged 15*

News consumption

Children were more sceptical about the news during the second lockdown than during the first

Our Children's News Consumption Survey asked 12-15 year-olds about their use of, and attitudes towards, news content across different platforms during two periods in the Covid-19 pandemic: April 2020 (during the first lockdown) and November-December 2020 (during the second lockdown). [67]

More than six in ten children aged 12-15 agreed that they found it hard to know what was true and what was false about Covid-19 during the second lockdown (November-December 2020) - a higher proportion than had felt this during the first lockdown (April 2020: 52%).

Just over half of 12-15s agreed during the second lockdown that there was too much in the news about the Covid-19 pandemic – up from 43% in April. But overall, more than nine in ten said they had accessed news and information about Covid-19 in 2020; albeit with a slightly smaller proportion doing so in November-December (93%) than during April (96%).

As the year went on, 12-15s used on average fewer news sources than they had earlier in the Covid-19 pandemic (3.7 in November-December, compared to 4.5 in April). Friends and family became the most-used sources for news and information about Covid-19, although this decreased from 67% in April to 56% in November-December 2020. Lower proportions also said they used BBC TV (27% in

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[67] Covid-19 news and information: consumption and attitudes - Ofcom

November-December compared to 49% in April) and ITV (used by 17% in November-December compared to 30% in April).

'School or teacher' was the only source to see an increase in use – from 17% in April to 37% in November-December. This increase is understandable; during April[68] the majority of children were home learning[69], whereas during November-December only those who were self-isolating stayed at home.

This chimes with the findings from our Life in Lockdown and more recent Children's Media Lives study. Following a peak in interest at the beginning of the pandemic, in 2021 nearly all the participants had reverted to being disengaged with TV and radio news. In most cases the news the children heard was consumed passively; sometimes from a parent but more often via social media – for example, through Snapchat's explore feed or viral videos on TikTok. Moreover, most of the children in the study did not appear to question whether what they saw via these feeds was true or accurate, and when asked, some struggled to reflect on how they would do this.

Freya, 17, tended to look for a quantity of corroborating sources rather than questioning the quality, and was reassured if she could find several articles referencing a topic she had seen discussed in a TikTok video. Zak, 11, relied on his mum to help him understand what he should and should not believe:

> "I don't really watch the news much, I just hear it from my mum, and she will know if the news is real or fake, so I just listen to what she says"
>
> *Zak aged 11*

Staying safe online

More than half of 12-15s said they had experienced some form of negative online experience

To measure the levels of any negative online experiences among children, we gave children aged 8-15 the option of answering questions about problems they might have experienced when using mobile phones or when online. Among the 12-15 year olds who opted to answer these questions[70], 55% said they had experienced some form of negative online experience, from a list they were prompted with.

Among these negative experiences, the most likely to be cited was *"being contacted by a stranger online who wanted to be their friend"* (30%). However, three-quarters of 12-15s knew how to block messages on social media from someone they didn't want to hear from; more than half had done this (55%).

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[68] The fieldwork period overlapped with the Easter holidays, when children may not have been home learning.

[69] Except key workers' and vulnerable children, who attended school premises where possible.

[70] Nine in ten 12-15 year-olds agreed to answer these questions. 8-11s were not asked all of the questions about the problems they might have experienced when using mobile phones or when online.

About a fifth of 12-15s said they had accidentally spent money online that they didn't mean to, or seen or received something scary/troubling, or seen something of a sexual nature that made them feel uncomfortable.

Although there were no significant differences in the individual experiences compared to 2019, the overall proportion claiming to have experienced any of these (55%) was larger than reported in our 2019 study, which could be due to various factors including methodological changes and increased time online due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Awareness of reporting functions was high, but only a minority of 12-15s have ever reported content

On seeing worrying or upsetting content online, children have the option of reporting this direct to the platform, using the reporting function available on many sites, apps and games.[71]

Overall, seven in ten children aged 12-15 were aware of reporting functions. Fourteen per cent said they had ever reported something they had seen online, while a smaller proportion (9%) said they had seen something that worried them but hadn't reported it, despite being aware of the reporting function.

Just under one in ten 12-15s said they often saw 'hateful content' online

For the purposes of our survey, we described 'hateful content' as anything that had been directed at a particular group of people based on, for instance, their gender, religion, disability, sexuality, or gender identity. Overall, half of 12-15s said they had encountered this type of content online in the past year[72], with 8% saying that they had seen it often.

Children had adopted different strategies for dealing with hateful content. Six in ten 12-15 year-olds said they had taken some action on seeing it. But some, depending on their actions, might have inadvertently shared the content further. Around a fifth said they had responded to the post/video/comment by 'disliking' it or commented on it to say they thought it was wrong, or shared it with their friends, saying it was wrong. Doing this brings the risk that their action will appear in their own social media feed, which is then seen by others, inadvertently further sharing the content.

Meanwhile, 25% chose to block the person who shared or made the comments, while 22% reported it to the website.

Although girls aged 12-15 were more likely than boys to inadvertently share the content by disliking the post/comment/video (27% vs. 13%), they were also more likely than boys to take constructive action in reporting the content to the website (33% vs. 10%).

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[71] A reporting function can be in the form of a button, link, email address or online form through which the user can point out the worrying content or report the person who posted or forwarded the content.

[72] As fieldwork for this research was conducted October 2020-January 2021, children's recollection will be based on the year before that.

Almost all children have received online safety advice and said they would tell someone if they saw something worrying online

Another way for children to deal with seeing worrying or nasty content online is to tell someone about it. Nine in ten children aged 8-15 who went online said they would tell someone, with six in ten saying they would *always* tell someone. A minority said they would not tell anyone (4%) or were unsure if they would (5%).

Overall, among those who would tell someone, telling a parent was the clear overriding choice, stated by nine in ten 8-15s. Friends, brothers and sisters, or teachers were next in line – although by a much smaller proportion; about three in ten children. However, this is where we see differences by age; older children were more likely than the younger ones to tell a friend (41% of 12-15s, compared to 25% of 8-11s), whereas the younger were more likely to tell a teacher (36% of 8-11s, compared to 20% of 12-15s).

Almost all children aged 8-15 who went online said they had received some sort of information or advice about online safety. Among the older children, aged 12-15, comparable proportions had received this from either a parent or teacher (around eight in ten); while those aged 8-11 were more likely to have had advice from their parent (87% vs. 80% teacher).

Parental attitudes and mediation strategies

Parents found it harder to control their child's screen time during the Covid-19 pandemic…

Our research showed that six in ten parents of 5-15s felt that their child had a good balance between screen time and doing other things. Parents of older children were less likely to agree (51% of parents of 12-15s) than parents of younger children (70% of parents of 5-7s).

However, fewer parents overall than in 2019 felt their child had a good balance – probably a consequence of children's increased reliance on being online for home learning and entertainment in 2020.

In line with this, four in ten parents of 5-15s found it hard to control their child's screen time. Parents of both 5-7s (32%) and 8-11s (45%) were more likely to feel this than in 2019.

This is perhaps unsurprising given that the children in the most recent wave of our Children's Media Lives study were spending a large portion of their time online. Many of the activities that they might previously have done in person (for at least part of the time) – socialising, entertainment, learning and exploring the world – were almost entirely being done online.

…and were more concerned than before about nearly all aspects of their child's online use

We asked parents how concerned they were about nine aspects of their child's online use. Compared to 2019, parents of children who went online were more likely to be concerned about seven of these – driven mainly by the parents of younger children aged 5-7.

The most common concerns were about: companies collecting information about what their child does online (57%); their child seeing content that might encourage them to hurt or harm themselves (54%); their child being bullied online (54%); and how much time their child spends online (53%). Half of parents were concerned about their child giving out details to inappropriate people and

online content, with just under half concerned about the pressure on their child to spend money online.

Higher proportions of parents in Northern Ireland had concerns and rules about some aspects of their child's online use, than parents in the other UK nations

Concerns

Parents in both England (77%) and Wales (80%) were more likely than those in Northern Ireland (69%) to agree that they felt they knew enough to help keep their child safe online (parents in Scotland were comparable to the other nations, at 76%). And parents in Northern Ireland were more likely to have concerns about certain aspects of their child's online use, such as:

- their child being bullied (64%, compared to 53% of parents in England);

- their child damaging their reputation, whether now or in the future (51% vs. 42% in England);

- their child seeing content which might encourage them to hurt or harm themselves (66% vs. 53% England and 55% Scotland).

However, one concern showed a different picture: the pressure on their child to spend money online. Parents in Northern Ireland were the most likely to be 'not very' concerned about this (28%), compared to England (19%), Wales (18%) and the UK average (19%).
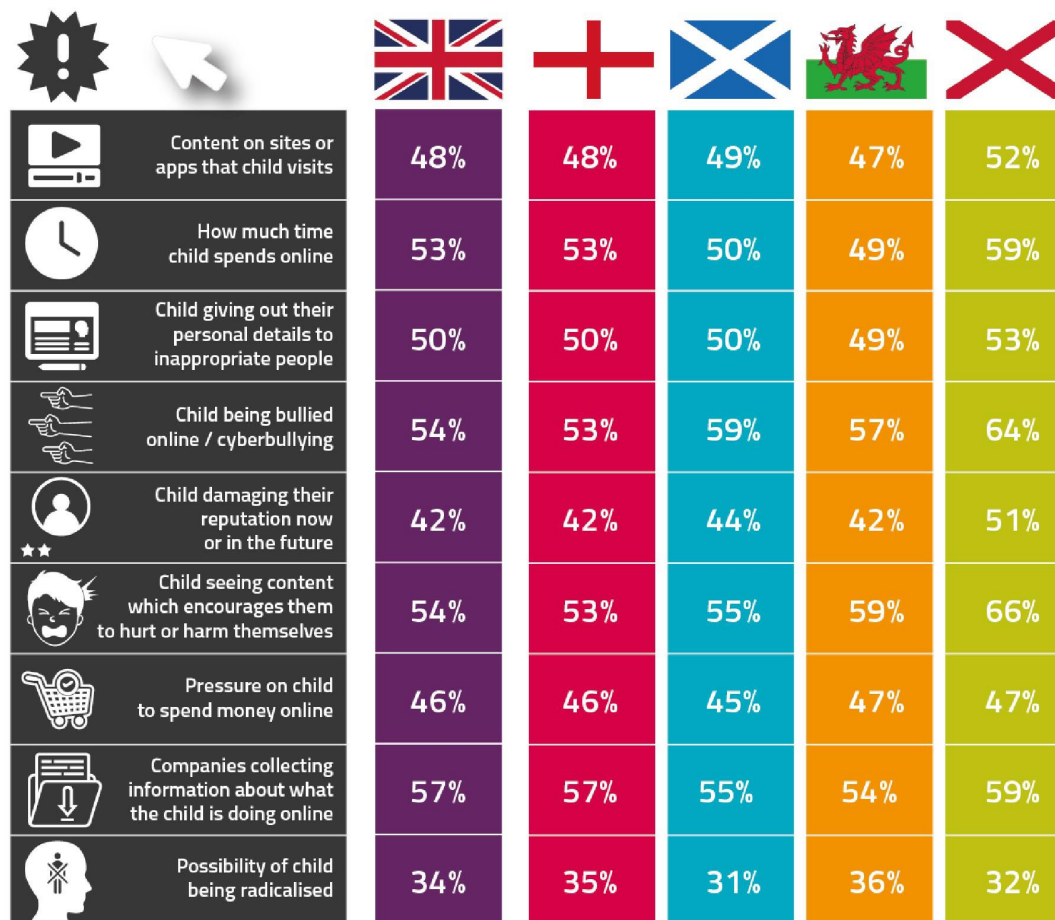
Rules

These higher levels of concern among parents in Northern Ireland may explain why they were also more likely to have certain rules in place for their children's online activities – in particular, compared to parents in Wales.

Parents in Northern Ireland were more likely to have rules in place for:

- who their child could contact when online (72% vs. 61% in Wales);

- the information that their child could share online (66% vs. 54% in Wales);

- when their child could go online (54% vs. 42% in Wales).

Levels of concern among parents about their child's online activities

	UK	England	Scotland	Wales	N. Ireland
Content on sites or apps that child visits	48%	48%	49%	47%	52%
How much time child spends online	53%	53%	50%	49%	59%
Child giving out their personal details to inappropriate people	50%	50%	50%	49%	53%
Child being bullied online / cyberbullying	54%	53%	59%	57%	64%
Child damaging their reputation now or in the future	42%	42%	44%	42%	51%
Child seeing content which encourages them to hurt or harm themselves	54%	53%	55%	59%	66%
Pressure on child to spend money online	46%	46%	45%	47%	47%
Companies collecting information about what the child is doing online	57%	57%	55%	54%	59%
Possibility of child being radicalised	34%	35%	31%	36%	32%

Parents recognised the value of the internet in helping their child stay connected with their friends during the Covid-19 pandemic

Although some parents found it hard to control their child's screen time in 2020, half of parents whose child went online felt that the benefits of the internet for their child outweighed any risks.[73] [74]

When considering specific benefits, 80% felt that being online helped their child with their schoolwork or homework, more than six in ten thought it helped their child learn a new skill or develop creative skills, and 47% thought it helped their child to build or maintain friendships.

Parents were more likely in 2020 to think that being online helped their child build and maintain friendships. The proportions thinking this increased with the age of the child – from 20% of parents of 5-7s to 64% of parents of 12-15s. With the lockdowns and restrictions meaning many children

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[73] Just under two in ten parents disagreed (18%), while 31% were unsure – a small increase since 2019.

[74] Views from parents in the nations: Overall, parents in the nations were equally likely to feel that the benefits of the internet outweighed the risks for their child. Parents in Wales were more likely to strongly agree with this (23%) than those in either Scotland (14%) or Northern Ireland (12%).

could not see their friends face to face, these findings demonstrated the value that parents placed on the internet for facilitating their children's friendships.

And this was echoed by the older children (12-15 year-olds); generally, attitudes towards the benefits of being online are similar among 12-15s and their parents. However, they were more likely than their parents to feel that being online helped them to build or maintain friendships (72% vs. 64%) – again, exhibiting their reliance on this medium to connect with their friends during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Nearly all parents of children who went online adopted some form of mediation of their child's online use

More than three-quarters of parents of children aged 5-15 who went online felt they knew enough to help keep their child safe when online.

The vast majority of parents with children who went online adopted some form of mediation of their child's online use (98%) – whether technical or in person. A minority of parents had no mediation in place at all (2%), more likely among parents of 12-15s (5%).

Overall, half of parents of 5-15s who went online adopted *all four* of the mediation types we specified in our survey[75]. A further three in ten said they had three of the four types in place, 12% had two, and 6% had one mediation type in place. Below, we look further into the various types of mediation adopted (or not) by parents.

Awareness of technical tools and controls among parents was high, but only a minority used them

While around six in ten parents of 5-15s, who had fixed broadband at home and a child who went online, were aware of certain technical tools and controls, around half of these actually used the tools and controls available.

More than six in ten said they were aware of either *content filters by the ISPs*[76] (61%) or *content filters via parental control software*[77] (66%), but just 35% and 29% respectively said they actually used them. For parents of the older children, aged 12-15, this might be partly due to the fact that 16% of this age group said they knew how to bypass the controls designed to stop them visiting certain sites.

Almost six in ten were aware of *parental controls built into the device by the manufacturer*; 32% said they used them.[78]

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[75] Within our survey we asked about: *supervising their child, having rules in place, technical controls*, or *talking to their child about online safety.*

[76] Content filters provided by ISPs where the filters apply to all devices using the home broadband service (also known as home network filtering).

[77] Parental control software set up on a particular device used to go online, such as Net Nanny, McAfee Family Protection, Open DNS FamilyShield.

[78] Parental controls built into the device by the manufacturer, such as Windows, Apple, Xbox, PlayStation, etc

Half were aware of technical controls that allowed them to *restrict access to inappropriate online content*, for example Google SafeSearch, YouTube Restricted Mode, or TikTok Family Safety Mode[79]; but again, just three in ten had adopted them to manage their child's online use.

Among parents of children who used smartphones or tablets, more than half were aware that settings could be changed on the device to *stop apps being downloaded* or to *stop in-app purchases* , while a third said they had used these settings.[80] Just under half were aware of parental control software, setting or apps that could be used on a phone or tablet to restrict access to content and manage use of the device, and a quarter said they used these.

Half of parents talked to their child about online safety every few weeks

Talking to children about online safety is another key mediation strategy, and nine in ten parents of children who went online said they had ever done this. Within this group, half talked to their child at least every few weeks; this was more likely among parents of the younger children aged 5-7 and 8-11, than among parents of 12-15s. A further three in ten spoke to their child every few months, comparable between each age group. Fewer than one in five said they did it less often than this but had done so more than once.

Parents also sought or had received advice about online safety; the child's school was the most-used source of information or advice for this (used by two-thirds of parents of children who went online), followed by family and friends (31%). Around a fifth used websites, ISPs, government or local authorities, and the same proportion asked their child.

Supervising their child was another mode of mediation, adopted by nine in ten parents of children who went online. The most likely way was to do this was by asking the child what they were or had been doing online (59%), followed by being nearby and regularly checking what the child was doing (52%), or checking the browser or device history (33%). However, four in ten 12-15s said they knew how to delete the history from sites they had visited, or to use 'incognito' or privacy mode.[81]

A fifth of parents said they sat with their child and watched what they were doing online, or helped them while online, although the proportion doing this had decreased since 2019. This may be due to the increase in children's online use in 2020 and the increased demands on parents' time, such as managing home learning.

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[79] Google Safe Search: Safe Search for Kids - Internet Filtering by Google | Kid Safe (safesearchkids.com); YouTube Restricted Mode: How to turn Restricted Mode on and off - YouTube; TikTok Family Safety Mode: Introducing Family Safety Mode and Screentime Management in Feed | TikTok Newsroom.

[80] Prior to 2020, this question was split into two, therefore trend cannot be reported on.

[81] Incognito mode hides the browsing history on a device so others cannot see the sites a user has visited, but it does not stop others, such as advertisers, knowing which sites have been visited.

Parents felt the need to relax some of the rules about their child's online use during the Covid-19 pandemic

Overall, more than nine in ten parents of children who went online had one or more rules in place about their child's online use – higher than in 2019. But, in 2020, half agreed with the statement *"As a result of my child being at home more than usual, I have had to relax some of the rules about what my child does online",* with 15% (more often parents of boys than girls) strongly agreeing with this.

Although three in ten said they did not feel they had to relax their rules, this was more likely among parents of the younger age group of 5-7s than among parents of 8-11s or 12-15s.

This echoes some of the findings from our Life in Lockdown study, where several parents talked about relaxing some of their normal rules around routines and online activities, in recognition that lockdown was a difficult experience for their children.

For example, 12-year-old Ben's mum said:

"If my child does their five pieces of schoolwork each day, then do you know what? If they stay up a bit late, and they watch a bit of TV and they do a bit more gaming, then we're not going to kill ourselves"

Ben's (aged 12) mum

In addition, 15-year-old Shriya's mum was worried she would affect her daughter's wellbeing negatively if she imposed too many rules, as she knew her children were not maintaining the social contact they would usually have with their friends:

> "I am giving them more space because I don't know how else to deal with it without her feeling agitated or upset"
>
> *Shriya's (aged 15) mum*

Vulnerable children

Children and young people can be vulnerable due to a variety of factors, and because vulnerability is about circumstances, it can change over time. Our research provides us with data on two groups of children who may be considered to be vulnerable, and how their vulnerability may influence their media use, attitudes and understanding. These two groups are children who:

- had a **health issue, condition or disability which impacted or limited their daily activities** (named as having an 'impacting/limiting condition' throughout this section); and/or
- were in households considered to be **most financially vulnerable** (named 'MFV' throughout this section).

There are overlaps between these groups, but for clarity, and because there are different themes in their attitudes and experiences, we have kept them separate within our findings.

We note that this research has not been specifically designed to provide robust analysis on vulnerable children of any specific category. However, following analysis of the data and the response rates to existing survey questions, we are confident that we can provide insight into these two categories.

Children with an impacting or limiting condition

Almost one in five children in each of our surveys had any impacting or limiting condition

In both of the surveys for our Children's and Parents' Media Literacy Tracker[82] we asked parents to state whether their child had any impairment or condition that impacted or limited their daily activities. Parents were given a list of conditions to choose from, grouped into social/behavioural, mental abilities, mental health, mobility, dexterity, eyesight, hearing, breathing, or other. Therefore, sample sizes in this category were purely determined by the perception of the parent.[83]

Based on this definition, children across the UK with any of these conditions in our sample represented almost one in five 5-15s within both surveys[84], with a smaller proportion for 3-4s[85]

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[82] As mentioned in the introduction to the report, the 2020 survey was split into two (Survey 1 and Survey 2) to accommodate moving to online methodologies.

[83] The full list of codes can be found in the Annex: https://www.ofcom.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0023/217823/children-and-parents-media-use-and-attitudes-annex-2020-21.pdf

[84] Survey 1 – 18%, Survey 2 – 19%; weighting was not applied on this question which is why the surveys are not exactly equal.

[85] Some types of conditions are not as apparent or diagnosed at an earlier age (for example, mental health conditions) and so this may explain the difference in prevalence between the age groups.

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(11%-13%[86]). The change in the data collection method in 2020 resulted in a different way of questioning in this area, so it is not possible to directly compare the incidence or analysis year on year.[87]

	Survey 1	Survey 2
Proportion of children with an impacting or limiting condition which affected their daily activities	**18%**	**19%**
Proportion of children with no condition	74%	75%
Proportion who preferred not to say, or did not know	8%	6%

For this analysis we have compared (where relevant) the data for children aged 5-15 with an impacting/limiting condition, to those without; that is, those who were not reported as having any conditions.[88] We have only reported where there were statistically significant differences.

Children with an impacting or limiting condition:

… were more likely to own their own laptop or desktop computer

Children aged 5-15 with an impacting/limiting condition were more likely than those without to personally own a laptop or desktop (46% vs. 37%) or smart TV (33% vs. 24%). However, there were no differences in overall use or availability in the household.

… were less likely to feel represented on TV

Children aged 8-15 with an impacting/limiting condition were less likely than those without to feel represented in TV programmes. Although half felt that there were enough programmes showing children who looked like them, this was lower than the proportion of children without a condition who felt this (64%).

A majority (59%) felt there were enough programmes for children their age, but this was, again, lower than the proportion of children without a condition agreeing with this (75%). Three in ten disagreed (31%), while 10% were unsure.

… may be at more risk of online harms

Seven in ten children aged 12-15 with an impacting/limiting condition[89] claimed to have experienced at least one of the negative experiences listed in our survey, compared to half of those without a condition. In particular, they were more likely to have been contacted online by someone they didn't

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[86] Survey 1 – 11%, Survey 2 – 13%, weighting was not applied on this question, which is why the surveys are not exactly equal.

[87] The Department of Education (DfE) published a report in July 2020 stating that 15.4% of children in schools in England received some kind of SEN support (special educational needs) either on the register or through an ECHP (education, health and care plan), which compares reasonably to our figure of 18% across the UK: Special educational needs in England, Academic Year 2019/20 – Explore education statistics – GOV.UK (explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk)

[88] The comparison does not include children whose parents were unable or preferred not to say if their child had a listed impact/ limit to their daily activities.

[89] Who opted to answer the questions about problems they may encounter when using mobile phones or being online.

know who wanted to be their friend (45% vs. 27%), and to feel under pressure to send photos or other information about themselves to someone (14% vs. 4%).

Children aged 8-15 with an impacting/limiting condition were more likely to say that they had experienced some form of bullying (46% vs. 26% without).[90] The most common form of bullying for children with an impacting/limiting condition was face to face (65%), but there were also several services where this happened: social media (46%), text or messaging apps (45%), online games (40%), video calls (9%), and other sites/apps (8%). All of these instances were comparable to children without a condition.

More children aged 8-15 with an impacting/limiting condition, who used social media or messaging sites and apps, than those without a condition, had difficulties managing certain aspects of social media. While they were as likely as those without a condition to feel the pressure to be popular on social media apps or sites (85%), almost all children with an impacting/limiting condition (99%) felt that people can be mean or unkind to each other on these sorts of sites and apps (compared to 92% of those without).

… were more likely to use the internet to connect with and support friends and family

More than eight in ten children who had an impacting/limiting condition used video calls such as Zoom, HouseParty and Skype (84%), a higher proportion than those without a condition (75%). Almost six in ten of this group of children who used social media and messaging apps said they had sent supportive messages, comments, or posts to friends via these sites and apps, if they thought their friend was having a hard time, compared to 45% of those without a condition.[91]

Parents of children with an impacting or limiting condition found some aspects of the online environment more concerning and found management of screen time more of an issue

Parents' views of the internet, in terms of the risks, benefits and concerns relating to their child with an impacting/limiting condition, were often similar to those of other parents. However, a greater proportion of parents of children with a condition were concerned about their child seeing self-harm content (62% vs. 52%) or possibly being radicalised (41% vs. 32%).

Screen time was more likely to be a concern for parents of children with an impacting/limiting condition. One in five agreed 'a lot' with the statement "*I find it hard to control my child's screen time*", compared to 12% without. This differential perhaps explains why parents with children with a condition were less likely than other parents to agree that their child had a good balance between screen time and other activities (49% vs. 62%).

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[90] The survey question specified: 'People can be nasty or hurtful. It could be behind someone's back, to their face, through calls or texts. It could be by being nasty through social media, games or other websites. It could be by calling people names, leaving them out, or through sharing photos or videos that upset them. It could be threatening to hurt or actually hurting them. It could be done on purpose or as a joke that goes too far. Has this ever happened to you?'

[91] Overall, children aged 12-15 are more likely to use social media or messaging apps/ sites for this purpose and they are better represented in the 'impacting/limiting condition' sample compared to those without, which could explain some of this difference.