

Warning!



HGJS Parents Online Safety Meeting



TALKING TO YOUR CHILD ABOUT LIFE ONLINE

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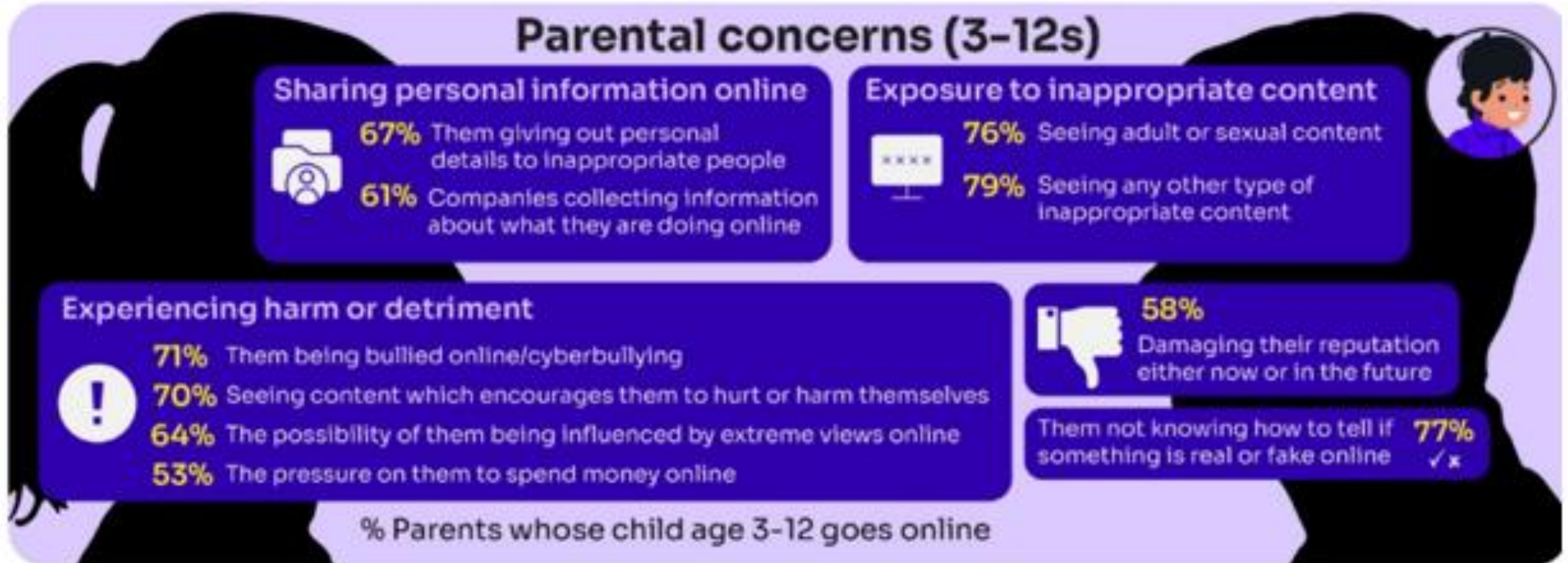


What are you most **WORRIED** about when your child is **ONLINE**?



Summary of parental concerns (3 – 17 yr-olds)

Source: Children and parents: media use and attitudes report 2025



YOU don't need to be an **EXPERT ... be a PARENT**



- **It's your choice** – don't let others dictate when the right time is to use tech.
- **Stay involved** – make time to communicate, talk about what they are doing. What do they enjoy? What makes them laugh?
- **Don't quiz them** – have regular conversations. What's their favourite app? What is the best site to learn new things from?
- **Join in** – watch them play a game and join in. Who are they playing with? Do they know the other players?
- **'Show me how...'** – ask their advice to help you with your privacy settings, who you should add as a friend, are there any risks?
- **Lead by example** – children learn as much from watching as they do from being told not to do something, so model good behaviour
- **Reassure them** – tell them that they won't get in trouble and that you are always there to help



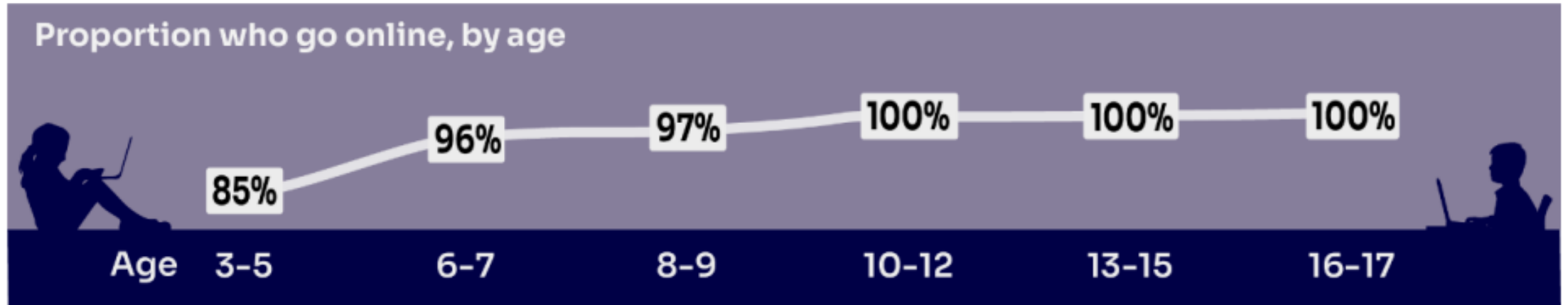
DEVICE USE AND OWNERSHIP

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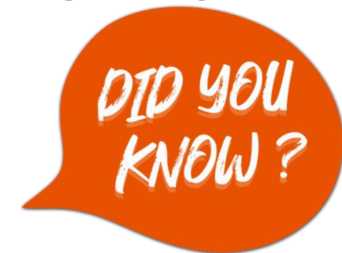


HOW MUCH DO YOU KNOW about your child's life online?



Almost all children (96%) aged 3 – 17 went online in 2024, highlighting the centrality of the internet in their lives:

- Younger children commonly use **tablets** to go online
- Older children are more likely to use **mobile phones**

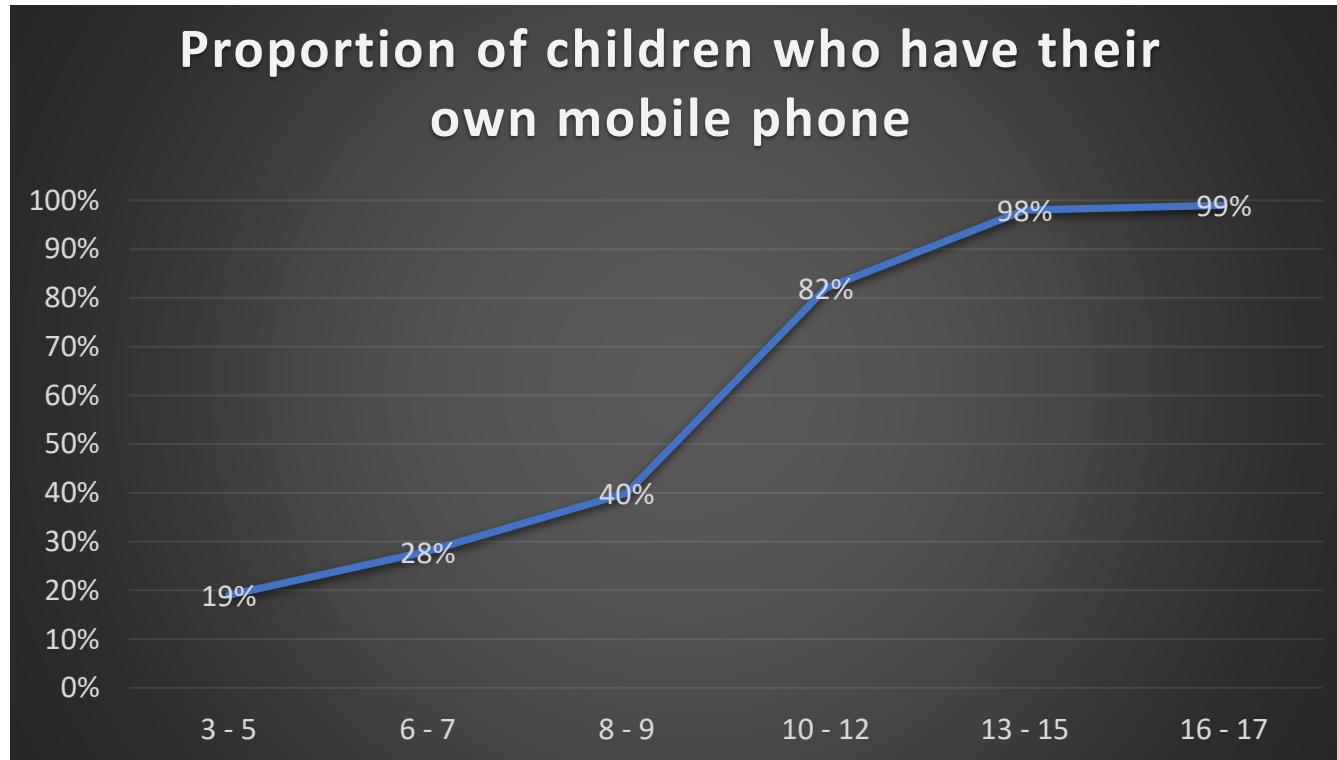
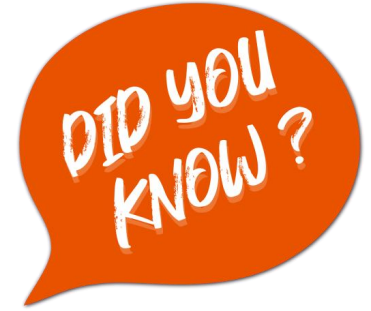


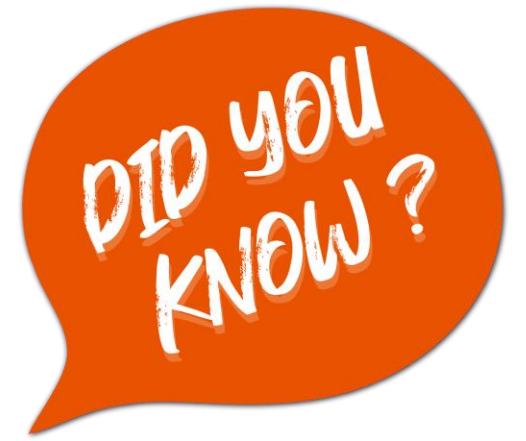
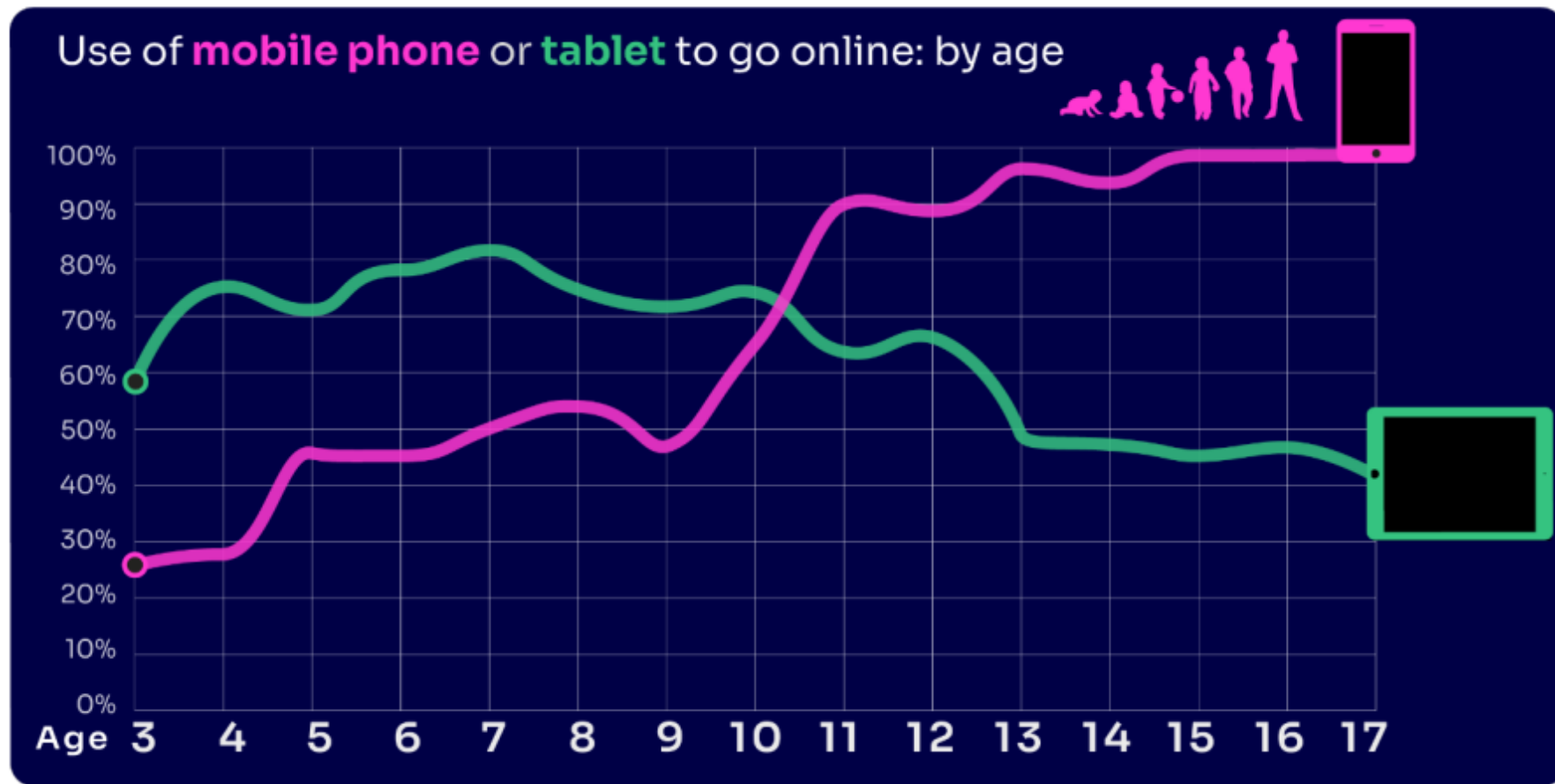


Does your child have their **OWN MOBILE PHONE?** If so, is it a **SMART PHONE?**



What **AGE** do you think is appropriate?





- **By age 11, nine in ten children own their own mobile phone, distinct from using a family device**
- This correlates with **transition from primary to secondary school.**



SUPERVISION AND PARENTAL CONTROLS

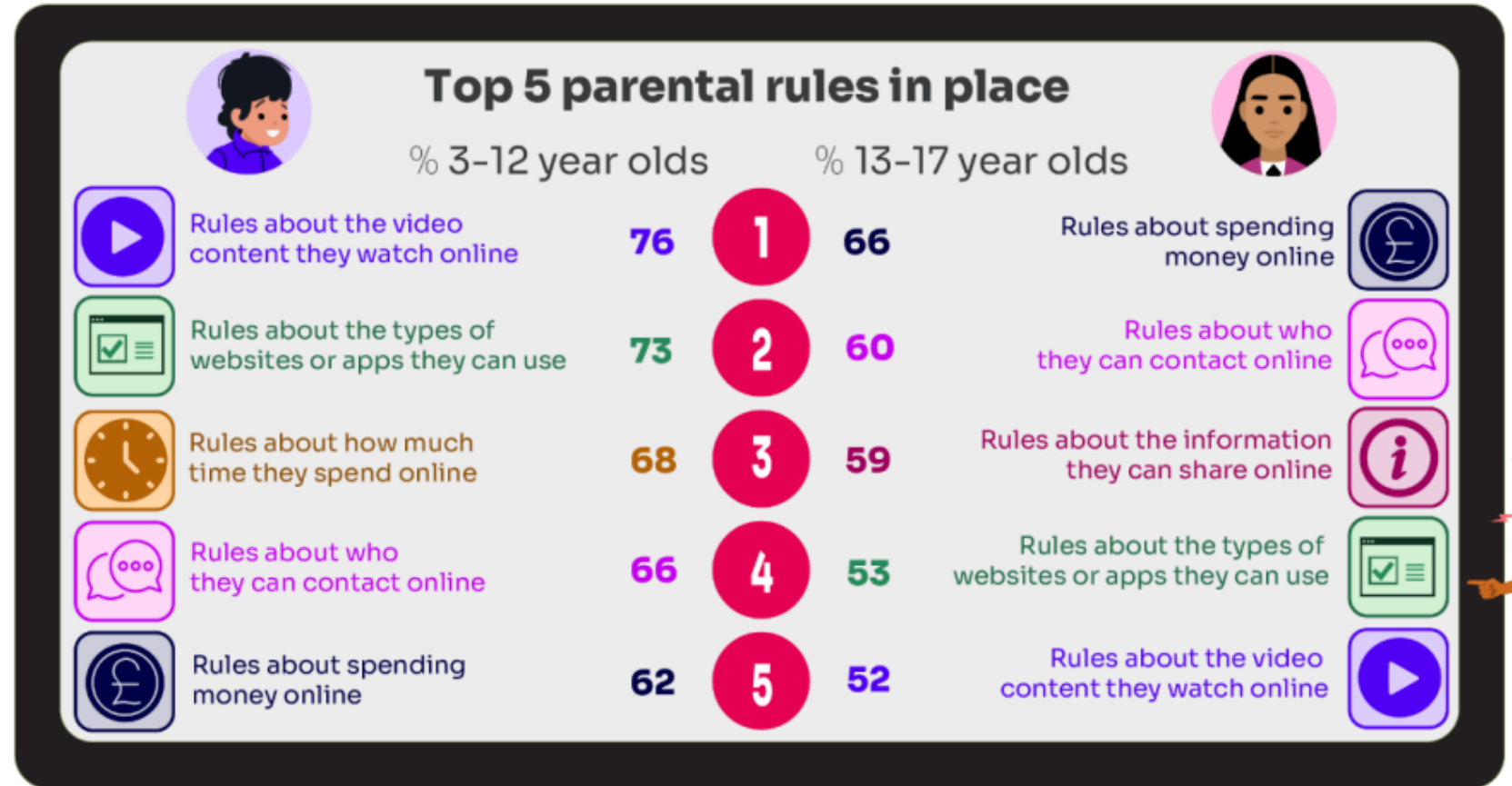
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What **RULES** do **YOU SET** about being online? What do you do that **WORKS**?

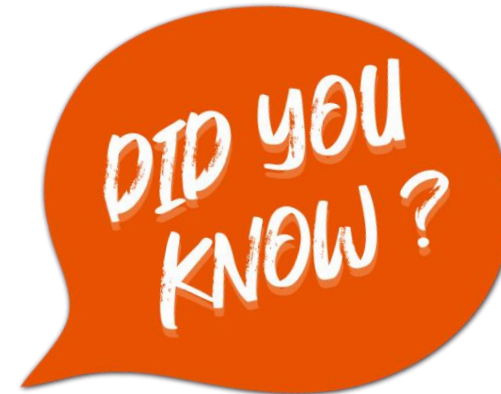
While parental concerns in some areas have increased considerably, their **enforcement of rules appears to be diminishing**, partly due to parents' **resignation** about their **ability to intervene** in their children's online lives.





Do you **RESTRICT** their **MOBILE PHONE USE**?

If so, have you found it **CHALLENGING**?



Primary

93% have restrictions at home

- 74% when in bed at night time
- 65% when having meals
- 61% when doing homework
- 39% when spending time with family



Secondary

81% have restrictions at home

- 55% when having meals
- 54% when in bed at night time
- 36% when doing homework
- 33% when spending time with family





Why not have a family agreement to:

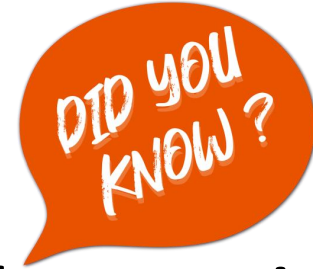
- **clarify** what is allowed...or not
- **establish** ground rules like no phones at the table or in the bedroom at night-time
- **agree** shared expectations to reduce arguments and keep everyone safe & healthy



Download it at parentsafe.lgfl.net/digital-family-agreement



Have you set up parental **CONTROLS/PRIVACY SETTINGS** for **ALL DEVICES** and **NETWORKS**?



- Controls need to be set up on both the **broadband connection** **AND** each individual device
- These **do not come as standard** so it's worth checking

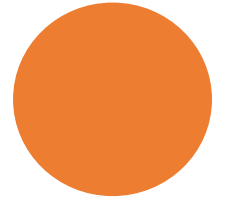
They are important because they allow you to:

- **Block and filter** upsetting or inappropriate content or sites
- **Plan what time and how long** your child can go online for



REMEMBER

- As children get older, restrictions and controls you use will change, but only at a pace you feel is appropriate for your child, not pressure from your child *“because everyone else is allowed”*
- Content filters are never 100% effective, at some point your child may come across inappropriate or upsetting content, so *make time to talk regularly*



SCREENTIME

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WORRIED about their **SCREENTIME**? How do you **MANAGE** this?
 Know **HOW LONG YOUR CHILD SPENDS** online daily?

DID YOU KNOW?

Parents of 3-17-year-olds

"I've been told is that when I get off my screen, I'm less fun to be around. ..And like I can also feel angrier for like no reason."

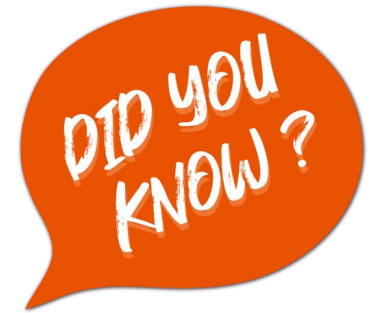


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- Children spent an average **3 hours 5 minutes per day** accessing the internet via smartphones/tablets/computers
- **Four in ten (39%)** parents of children aged 3-17 report finding it **hard to control their child's screentime**



How does your child feel about **YOUR SCREENTIME vs THEIRS?**



“ When I grow up, I want to be an iPhone so my mum will talk to me ”

~ London pupil

Download me again from safe posters.lgfl.net

MAKES YOU THINK...

Talk to your child about their device use, but remember yours, too



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52% of 8-11s feel that their parents' screentime is too high

33% of 8-17s feel that their own screentime is too high

Source: Children and parents: media use and attitudes report 2025



SOCIAL MEDIA AND GAMING

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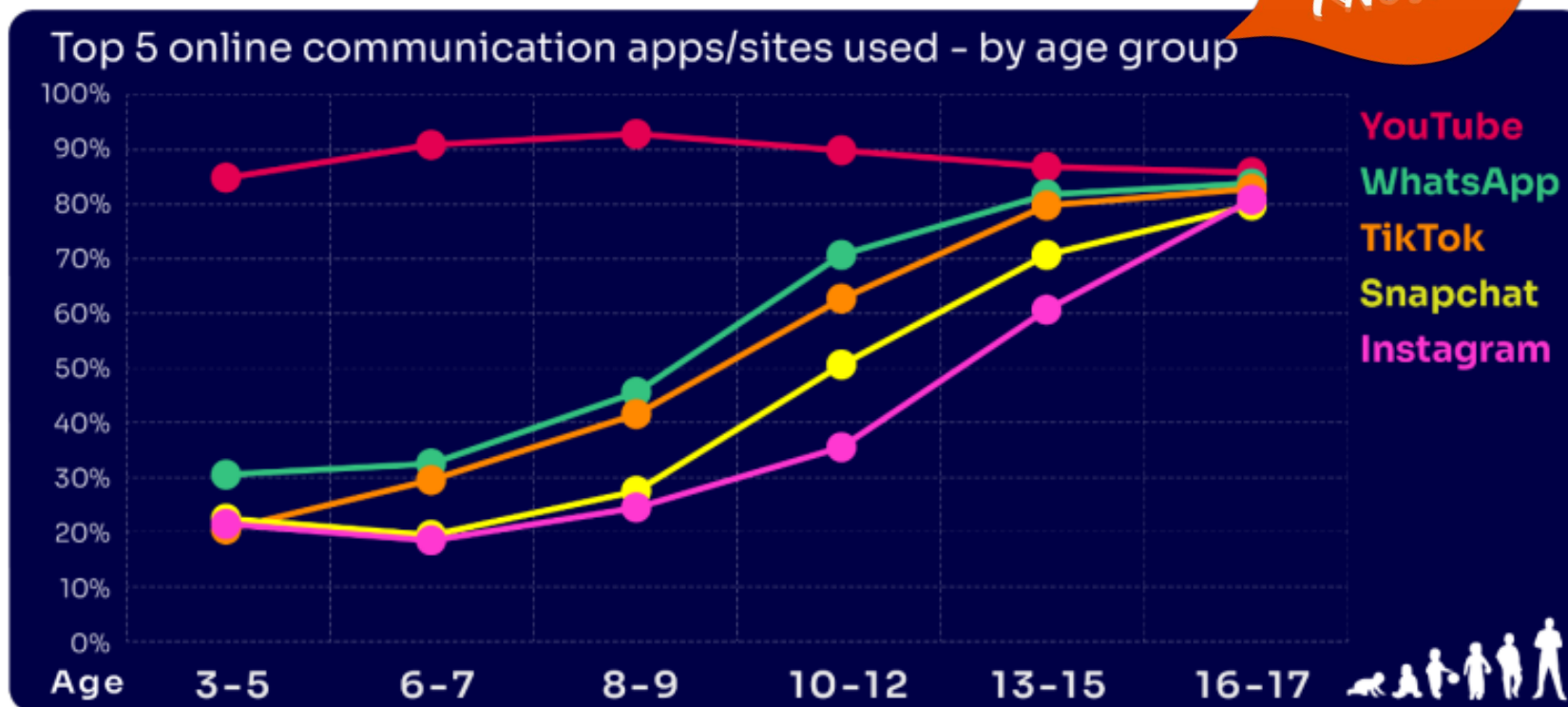
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Are you **FAMILIAR WITH THE APPS** and **GAMES** your child is on?

YouTube is the most popular, but the appeal of many social media platforms varies by age

DID YOU KNOW?



- The two most popular apps for 3 – 7 yr-olds are **WhatsApp** (2 in 10) and **Snapchat** (3 in 10)

- The proportion of 8-9s with an **Instagram** profile increased from 8% in 2023 to 14% in 2024

- 13-17s are most likely to have profiles on **WhatsApp** (62%), **Snapchat** (62%) or **TikTok** (61%)



WHY DOES THIS MATTER?

Young people can **get around age restrictions** on apps and websites, increasing the risk of them coming to harm online

Addictive algorithms can make it harder to take a break and maintain a healthy balance between time on and offline



Algorithms can also **target content** similar to what you've already selected/liked/shared

This can prevent you from finding new ideas and perspectives, create **misinformation** and **reinforce stereotypes**



What about **WHATSAPP?**

Do you know the **minimum age** to use this? What are the **risks**?



Unwanted contact

to contact somebody on WhatsApp, all you need is their phone number, which could expose you to unwanted messages or calls

Inappropriate content

messages are end-to-end encrypted which means that the content cannot be monitored. This means that your child could see or hear harmful or upsetting content e.g. pornography or violence.

Location sharing

live location feature means that your child could reveal their current location to others

Cyberbullying

children could be bullied, feel left out or deliberately excluded or removed from groups

Oversharing

privacy features, such as disappearing and 'view once' messages, might mean that your child feels safe to reveal private or risky information or images. However, there is always a risk that this could be copied and shared



What can you do?

WhatsApp
safety guide for parents

internet matters.org

13+	58%	37%
WhatsApp's minimum age in the UK	Kids aged 3-17 who use WhatsApp	Kids under 13 who use WhatsApp

5 tips to keep kids safe on **WhatsApp**

- 1 Review privacy settings** WhatsApp has a range of privacy and security settings to keep users safe. Customise groups, app access, live location and more.
- 2 Customise contacts** Show your child how to report and block unwanted contacts. Then, work with them to add their friends and family. Review and talk about their contacts regularly.
- 3 Talk about personal information** Make sure your child understands what personal information is. Talk about the importance of keeping that information private on WhatsApp.
- 4 Show them where to get support** If something goes wrong or they see something worrying on WhatsApp, make sure they know to come to you, and talk about other sources of support.
- 5 Check in regularly** Once you've done all of the above, check in with them regularly to review settings and how they use WhatsApp.



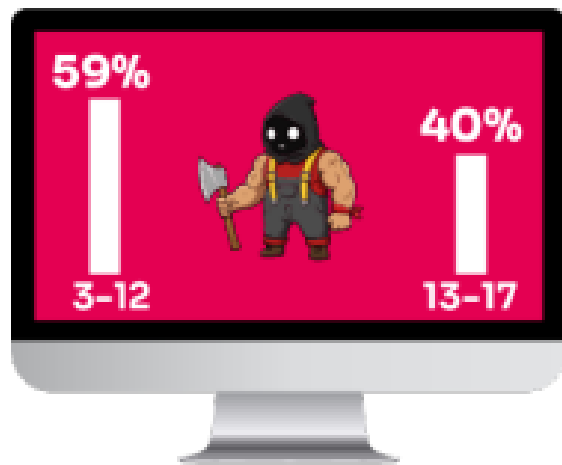
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Visit <https://www.internetmatters.org/resources/whatsapp-safety-a-how-to-guide-for-parents/#whatsapp-safety-tips> for advice for parents



What are **YOU** most **WORRIED** about?

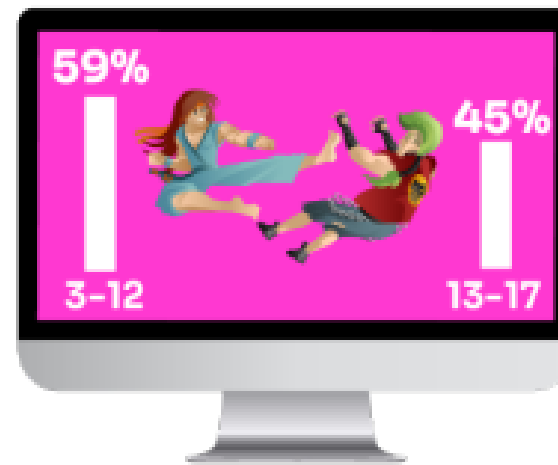
Parental concerns about gaming (% of parents of children who game)



The content of the games like violence, bad language, disturbing content, etc



Pressure to make in-game purchases, e.g. access to upgrades, skins, loot-boxes, in-game currency, etc



The possibility of them being bullied by other players



The possibility of them talking to strangers while gaming (within the game or via chat)

Research finds children's online spaces "saturated" with **gambling-like** content and advertising:

"They make it look like a game, it does not look like gambling."

DID YOU KNOW?

Risks are not understood by children due to the blurred lines between gambling and gambling-like activity such as loot boxes



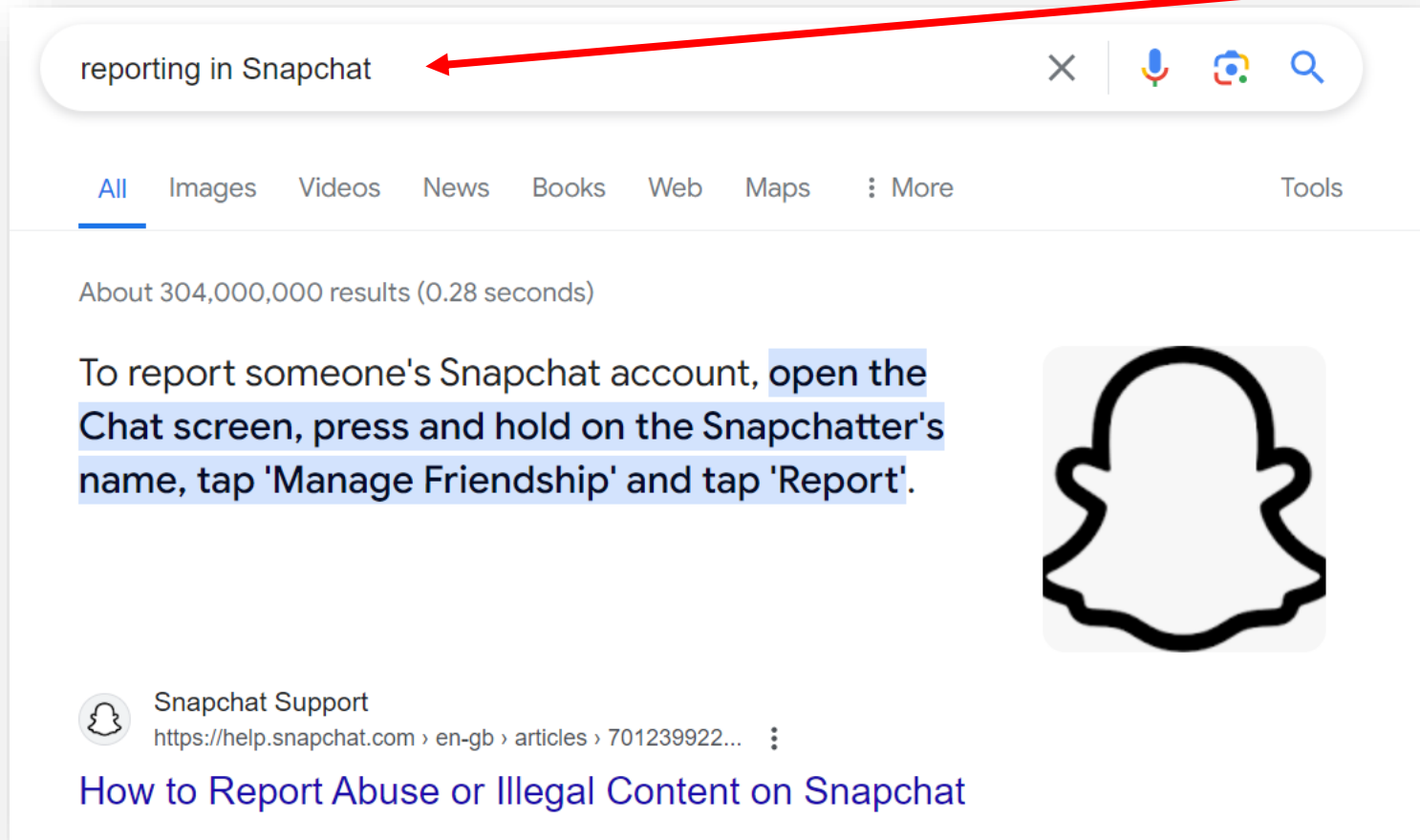
Do you **DISCUSS THIS** when you talk about **MONEY** to your children and how gambling is made to **LOOK ATTRACTIVE** and likely that you would **WIN**?

https://www.gambleaware.org/media/hbcp3qgd/exploring-the-lived-experience-and-views-of-gambling-among-children-and-young-people_final_0.pdf

How can **YOU GET INVOLVED?**



- **ASK** what type of games your child enjoys – are they **age-appropriate**?
- **PLAY** games together - keep the tech in **shared spaces** rather than bedrooms
- **TALK** about **who they are playing** with - what **information** are they sharing?
- **EXPLAIN** what is/isn't **appropriate to share**, e.g. personal details to identify them/location
- **AGREE** how they will spend their **money** online
- **DISCUSS** what they would do if they were **bullied** online, and what steps to take
- **DECIDE** **how long is appropriate** to play in one session - how many sessions a day
- **SETUP** these restrictions in **parental settings** with your child



A simple **Google search** with the site name, e.g. **'reporting in Snapchat'** will bring up the steps to take and signpost to the reporting page

Remember!



- ✓ Before signing up to any app/site, **check that your child meets the minimum age** requirement for the platform to understand the risks
- ✓ Remind your child to be **cautious about accepting friend requests** - a real friend is someone they/you know in real life, not a 'friend' they met gaming or in a chat room. Encourage them to **ask you for advice** if they are unsure.
- ✓ Stress the importance of **not sharing personal information** with online 'friends'
- ✓ Keep **passwords confidential**
- ✓ **Check their privacy settings**, emphasising the importance of not sharing personal information with strangers, and emphasising the confidentiality of passwords are all important steps
- ✓ You can **report any content**, e.g. a post, image or harmful, misleading or damaging comment
- ✓ Remember that **reporting doesn't guarantee immediate** removal, as platforms assess reported content based on their respective rules and policies

UK Reporting Helplines and Services for Children and Young People

Call 101 or 999 if there is an immediate risk of harm to your child



NCA

Young people can report concerns about child sexual abuse and exploitation to NCA



Nude image of you online?
We can help take it down.

Report Remove

A free tool that allows children to report nude or sexual images and videos of themselves that they think might have been shared online



ChildLine

A free, private and confidential service where CYP can talk about anything to a trained counsellor, online or on the phone



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Go to reporting.lgfl.net to find out more



RESOURCES AND SUPPORT

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Visit parentsafe.lgfl.net for tips and ideas to help parents:

- Manage **screen time**
- Set controls and **settings**
- Understand **apps and games**
- Talk to children about **risk** - from bullying & sharing content, to extremism & gangs

parentsafe.lgfl.net



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Most parents & carers think their children and young people spend too much time on devices. **DON'T FEEL BAD!** Lots of it is perfectly healthy anyway. Instead, follow these tips to keep them safe, happy and healthy.

Don't worry about screen time; aim for screen quality

Scrolling through social media isn't the same as making a film or story, or video calling Grandma. Use the Children's Commissioner's 'Digital Five A Day' to plan or review each day together.



Check the safety settings are turned on



Whether it's your home internet, mobile devices, consoles, apps or games, there are lots of settings to make them safer. The key ones are - can they chat to strangers, can they video chat or 'go live', are their posts public? What about safe search and Youtube? See parentsafe.lgfl.net for more.

Get your children to show you their apps and games



You don't need to know all about the latest app or game, but if your child shows you what they are doing and with whom, you'll probably see if it's appropriate or not. Remember 18 games are not more advanced - they are harmful to children! For parent guides to apps, including recommendations for kidsafe apps and video platforms, search for **Common Sense Media** reviews.

Don't try to hide news about scary things in the news



If you don't talk about it, your children might read inappropriate pages, believe scare stories or simply catastrophise in their heads. Why not watch **Newsround** together and talk about how they feel - there is guidance from **Childline** to help you.