## Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Executive summary</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children’s take-up of media</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children’s use of media</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge and understanding of media among 8-15s</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents’ and children’s concerns and attitudes</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents’ rules and controls</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Section 1

Executive summary

Our 2012 Children and Parents: Media Use and Attitudes report provides detailed evidence of media use, attitudes and understanding among children and young people aged 5-15. For the first time it also provides indicative information about the access to, and use of, media among children aged 3-4.

Our report also includes findings relating to parents’ views about their children’s media use, and the ways that parents seek – or not – to monitor or limit such use.

The report also includes results from the following research studies and analysis:

- Annex 1: New qualitative research on parents’ use of, and attitudes to, parental controls on internet-enabled devices.
- Annex 2: Analysis of children’s television viewing habits sourced from BARB, the UK’s television measurement panel.

The promotion of media literacy, and the carrying out of research, is a responsibility placed on Ofcom by the Communications Act 2003. Our media literacy research informs three of Ofcom’s strategic purposes: to provide appropriate assurance to audiences on standards; to help communications markets work for consumers; and to contribute to and implement public policy as defined by Parliament.

Summary of key themes

This year’s report shows that:

- Children are using a wide range of media devices, and internet access is not confined to the desktop PC, laptop or netbook. Those aged 12-15 in particular are spending more time online, are more likely to go online using their mobile phone and are more likely to say that their mobile phone is the device they would miss the most.

- For the first time this report contains indicative data on the media habits of 3-4 year olds. This indicates that many in this age group are using a range of different media devices, including over a third who are going online using a desktop PC, laptop or netbook and 6% who are going online via a tablet computer.

- These trends have implications for how we consider children’s media literacy, as the requirement for media literacy skills begins at a young age, and the types of devices children need to be proficient on, and the opportunities for them to encounter media content, increase.

- Children, particularly 12-15s, are prolific social networkers with large numbers of friends – an average of 92 friends for 8-11s and 286 for 12-15s. This has implications for how children protect and share personal information, given that personal data available to “friends” on social networking sites is likely to be shared with large numbers of people.
• A minority of children have had some kind of negative experience online or on their mobile phone, although 12-15s are more likely to have had such experiences than other age groups. The findings show that confidence online is not always accompanied by due caution, particularly in relation to online social networking.

• While most children would tell someone if they encountered something inappropriate, a minority were unsure or would not tell anyone. This suggests that some parents and children may need support and advice in dealing with these kinds of incident.

• Parents’ concerns about content online and on TV are decreasing, and most parents are taking some sort of action to mediate their children’s media use. However, lack of confidence in using the internet is an issue for a number of parents, and the risks of, for instance, grooming, cyber-bullying or access to inappropriate content are not always front-of-mind for many parents.

• When considered against the backdrop of the early age at which children start to use the internet, the proliferation in the types of device children are using to access the internet, and the fact that many parents feel that their children are more proficient users of the internet than they are, these findings suggest that some parents may need support to fully assess the risks and take informed steps to protect their children in the way they feel is most appropriate.

Overview of key themes

New ways of consuming content

Older children are spending more time online, and are more likely to go online alone
While children aged 5-15 continue to spend most time watching TV, children aged 12-15 are spending more time online (rising from 14.9 hours a week in 2011 to 17.1 in 2012) and now spend as much time in a week using the internet as they do watching television. They are also more likely than they were in 2011 to mostly use the internet in their bedrooms (43% in 2012 vs. 34% in 2011). Children who use the internet mostly alone comprise one in seven internet users aged 5-7 (14%), one in four aged 8-11 (24%) and over half of those aged 12-15 (55%).

Children are going online via a wider range of devices
Internet access via a PC, laptop or netbook is increasingly being supplemented by access via other devices. All age groups are more likely in 2012 to go online using a tablet computer, and children aged 5-7 and 12-15 are also more likely to go online using a mobile phone. Children aged 5-7 are also less likely than in 2011 to go online using a PC, laptop or netbook (58% vs. 65% in 2011).

Media multi-tasking is popular, particularly among 12-15s
One in three 8-15s (34%) with a mobile phone, who watch television and who go online at home, say they undertake some form of cross-media multi-tasking “most times” when using these media; for example, texting or browsing the internet while watching TV. This is more likely for 12-15s than for 8-11s (44% vs. 14%). Children aged 8-11 are more likely than they were in 2011 to watch/ download user-generated content online.
Smartphones are becoming more widespread...
Since 2011 smartphone ownership has increased among all children aged 5-15 (28% vs. 20% in 2011), primarily driven by a 21 percentage point increase among children aged 12-15 (62% in 2012 vs. 41% in 2011). From age 12 onwards smartphone ownership outstrips ownership of other mobile phones.

... and more important to children
Half of all 12-15s with a smartphone (52%) say that of all regularly-used media, they would miss using their mobile phone the most, with the next most-missed medium being using the internet (18%). Children are using their smartphones more than they did last year, and 15% of girls aged 12-15 say their phone is the device they most often use to go online at home.

There has also been growth in the use of tablets
The growth in tablets is less marked but still significant. Around one in seven (14%) of all children aged 5-15 use a tablet computer (such as an iPad) at home, a threefold increase since 2011 (5%). Use of a tablet computer has increased for 5-7s (11% vs. 2%), 8-11s (13% vs. 6%) and 12-15s (17% vs. 6%). For a small number of internet users this has become their main means of accessing the internet, with children in each age group more likely than in 2011 to mostly use a tablet computer to go online at home (4% for 5-7s, 3% for 8-11s and for 12-15s).

The role of television

Television is still important for children
Television continues to play an important role in children’s lives, particularly for younger children. It continues to be the media activity that the most children in all age groups say they do almost every day, and the medium that children aged 5-7 and 8-11 say they would miss the most.

And live broadcasts dominate
Analysis of BARB data in Annex 2 finds that the vast majority of children’s viewing is still to live broadcasts (86% among all children aged 4-15). This has not changed significantly since 2007. It also suggests that children’s viewing may be increasing after a period of stability between 2005 and 2009, although comparisons must be made with caution due to the introduction of a new BARB measurement panel in January 2010.

One in five children are watching alone after the watershed
One in five (21%) children are watching television between 21:00-22:00 alone. Among the younger age group (4-9) this figure is 14%; among the older group (10-15) it is a quarter (25%).

The majority of parents are happy with the amount of regulation on television
Analysis of data from Ofcom’s Media Tracker (Annex 4) finds that three-quarters of parents (77%) agree that there is about the right amount of television regulation. It also finds that 13% of parents say they have seen content they perceive to be harmful to children, more likely than non-parents (10%), with violence the most prevalent type of content (10%), followed by sexual content (8%) and bad language (5%).
Media use among 3-4 year-olds

Over one in three 3-4 year-olds use the internet
This year, for the first time, we looked at media use among 3 and 4 year-olds[2]. The findings indicate that 37% use the internet via a PC, laptop or netbook, 6% via a tablet computer, and 3% via a mobile phone. Two per cent use a games console or games player to go online and 2% use a portable media player, while 5% of this group have ever played games online. In terms of other devices, 44% use a games console or player and 9% use a tablet computer (including the 6% who use this to go online).

3 and 4 year-olds watch TV on a range of devices
The majority (97%) of 3-4 year-olds watch television programmes on a TV set, but 18% have also watched TV programmes on a device other than a TV set, including 12% on a PC, laptop or netbook, 7% on a games console or player and 6% on a tablet computer. 11% have also used on demand services. The data also suggest that a third (33%) of 3-4 year-olds have a television in their bedroom and 53% use a DVR.

Keeping children safe

Older children are prolific social networkers
Slightly more than one in five 8-11s (22%) say they have a profile, as do four in five 12-15s (80%). One in four 12-15s (26%) say they have set up a Twitter profile. Data from Nielsen (in Annex 3) show that Facebook is among the top ten most-visited websites for 5-7s, 8-11s and 12-15s.

In 2012 we asked children for the first time how many friends they had on their social networking profile. Children aged 8-11 have an average of 92 friends and children aged 12-15 say they have, on average, 286 friends. Children aged 8-11 estimate that they have not met around one in eight (12%) of these friends in person (an average of 11 people per child) while 12-15s say they have not met around one in four (25%) - an average of 72 people per child.

Confidence online is not always accompanied by due caution
Children express high levels of confidence online: 83% of 8-11 year olds and 93% of 12-15s say that they are confident that they know how to stay safe online, and this has remained stable over time. However, confidence and due caution do not necessarily go hand in hand - for example, using social networking sites to communicate with people not directly known to the child is more likely now than in 2011, both for 8-11s (25% vs. 12% in 2011) and 12-15s (34% vs. 24% in 2011).

Children’s dislikes about inappropriate content have not changed
8-11s continue to be more likely than 12-15s to have dislikes about inappropriate content across the range of media that children use. Dislikes tend to be higher for television and online content than for mobile and have not changed since 2011; 23% of 8-11s say they dislike inappropriate content online, as do 15% of 12-15s.

Girls are more likely than boys to be bullied online
Around one in twenty 8-11s (4%) and 9% of 12-15s who use the internet say they have had experience of being bullied online in the past year. As with bullying through a mobile phone, this incidence has not changed for 8-11s or 12-15s since 2011. Girls aged 12-15 are more likely than boys to say they have been bullied online in the past year (13% vs. 5%)

[2] The base of interviews for parents of 3-4 year-olds is relatively low (190) and is unweighted and should therefore be treated as indicative only.
Parents’ concerns about TV and the internet have fallen significantly
Levels of parental concern vary across the different media their children use. The highest levels of concern are about TV, with 23% of parents of 5-15s saying they are very, or fairly, concerned about content on TV. Data from the Media Tracker (Annex 4) also found that 13% of parents said they had seen what they considered to be television content that was harmful for children in the past year (compared to 10% of non-parents).

Concerns about internet and mobile content are lower than for TV, with 17% of parents very, or fairly, concerned. Concerns about TV and the internet have fallen since 2011: from 31% to 23% for TV and from 23% to 17% for the internet. Concerns about mobile, radio and gaming content have remained steady since 2011, although concerns about gaming have fallen since 2009.

Most parents mediate their child’s media use to some extent
The majority of parents have rules in place for their child's use of television, internet, mobile phones and gaming, and data from the Media Tracker found that 97% of parents believed that parents have some responsibility to ensure children do not see unsuitable television programming. A smaller number of parents have installed technical controls: 50% of parents of 5-15s have parental controls installed on their multichannel television service; 46% of parents whose child goes online at home have any of the four specific types of online controls asked about installed on their PC, laptop or netbook at home; 31% of parents of 12-15s with a phone that can be used to go online have mobile phone ‘filters’ in place; 14% of parents of 5-15s have parental controls in place on handheld/portable games consoles and 16% on fixed consoles.

For internet mediation, parents use a combination of approaches
These include some or all of the following techniques: regularly talking to their children about staying safe online, technical controls, and rules relating to parental supervision. Eighty-five per cent of parents use at least one of these approaches, with 20% using all three. In addition, parents are more likely than in 2011 to use the ‘history’ function to see the websites that their child has visited (42% vs. 32%).

But a small number of parents do nothing
Of the 15% of parents who do not use any of these elements, 8% have talked to their children about staying safe online but don’t do this regularly, and 7% do none of the things asked about.

Parents cite trust and supervision as reasons for not having parental controls
The most frequent reason given by parents of younger children (aged 5-11) for not having technical controls is that their child is always supervised, while for parents of older children (12-15) it is because they trust their child. Lack of awareness of the availability of controls or understanding of how to install or activate them is also an issue, cited by 10% of parents of 5-15s in relation to PCs, laptops or netbooks (increasing to 15% who said they were not aware when specifically prompted on the issue), 21%-25% of parents for controls on fixed/mobile games consoles and 35% of parents of 12-15s for controls on mobile phones.

Perceptions of risk and confidence online affect engagement with parental controls
The qualitative research provides a more nuanced picture of the reasons parents do not install parental controls. It found that managing the day-to-day impact of the internet on family life (for instance, the need to create family time away from the computer, enforce bedtimes or encourage physical activity) were front-of-mind for parents, rather than the risks of, for instance, grooming, cyber-bullying or access to inappropriate content.

The qualitative research also found that levels of awareness of parental controls and what they can do tended to be low, and that the process of selecting and installing parental
controls was seen to be complex and time-consuming, particularly for parents with lower levels of confidence about technology.

This combination of factors resulted in a lack of engagement with parental controls.

**Approaches to mediation and children’s potentially risky behaviour online are not necessarily connected**

Analysis of children with rules relating to personal supervision shows that they are less likely to access the internet in their bedroom, or via a mobile, than those without such rules. They spend less time online, and are less likely to carry out a number of different online activities. They are more likely to have a critical understanding of search engine results pages. However, they are no less likely than children without supervision-related rules to undertake various types of potentially risky behaviour online.

Analysis of children with any type of technical mediation in place shows that they are more likely to live in AB households, and more likely to have other types of mediation, such as talking to the child, or rules about parental supervision, than those without such technical controls in place. They spend less time online, and while they are more likely to carry out some internet activities, they are less likely to carry out others. In terms of critical understanding, they are more likely to think that search engine results must be truthful because they are provided by the search engine. They are no less likely than children without technical mediation to undertake potentially risky behaviour online.

**Supervising ‘digital natives’ can be difficult**

Forty-six per cent of parents agree with the statement: “My child knows more about the internet than I do”. Agreement increases with each age group, with 22% of parents of a 5-7 year-old agreeing, 35% of parents of an 8-11 year-old and 67% of parents of 12-15s. In addition, 54% of 12-15s say that they know how to delete their online history and 26% say they have done this in the last year. Twenty-two per cent say they know how to disable any online filters or controls, while 8% say they have done this in the last year.
## Table of figures

Figure 1: Availability of key platforms in the home, by age and socio-economic group: 2007, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012 ........................................................................................................ 19
Figure 2: Availability of key platforms in the home, by age and socio-economic group: 2007, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012 ........................................................................................................ 20
Figure 3: Availability of key platforms in the home, by age and socio-economic group: 2007, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012 ........................................................................................................ 21
Figure 4: Smartphone and mobile phone ownership, by age and gender: 2011 and 2012 ........................................................................................................ 22
Figure 5: Smartphone and mobile phone ownership, by socio-economic group: 2011 and 2012 ........................................................................................................ 23
Figure 6: Smartphone ownership, by age of child: 2012 ........................................................................................................ 23
Figure 7: Media in children's bedrooms, among 5-15s: 2007, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012 ........................................................................................................ 26
Figure 8: Media in children's bedrooms, among 5-15s: 2007, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012 ........................................................................................................ 26
Figure 11: Media used by children aged 5-15 at home: 2007, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012 ........................................................................................................ 30
Figure 12: Media used by children aged 5-15 at home: 2007, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012 ........................................................................................................ 30
Figure 13: Media used by children at home, by age: 2007, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012 ........................................................................................................ 31
Figure 14: Media used by children at home, by age: 2007, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012 ........................................................................................................ 31
Figure 15: Devices ever used to watch television programmes at home, by age: 2012 ........................................................................................................ 33
Figure 16: Use of on-demand television services, by age, gender and socio-economic group: 2011 and 2012 ........................................................................................................ 34
Figure 17: Regular media activities undertaken: 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012 ........................................................................................................ 35
Figure 18: Regular media activities undertaken: 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012 ........................................................................................................ 36
Figure 19: Radio listening at home, by age: 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012 ........................................................................................................ 37
Figure 20: Devices ever used by children aged 5-15 to go online at home: 2010, 2011 and 2012 ........................................................................................................ 39
Figure 21: Devices ever used by children to go online at home, by age: 2010, 2011 and 2012 ........................................................................................................ 39
Figure 22: Devices used ‘mostly’ by children to go online at home, by age: 2011 and 2012 ........................................................................................................ 41
Figure 23: Devices used ‘mostly’ by children to go online at home, by socio-economic group: 2011 and 2012 ........................................................................................................ 42
Figure 26: Who is with the child when using the internet at home, by age: 2010, 2011 and 2012 ........................................................................................................ 44
Figure 29: Devices used for gaming, by age: 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012 ........................................................................................................ 48
Figure 30: Devices used for gaming, by age: 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012 ........................................................................................................ 48
Figure 31: Online gaming, by age: 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012 ........................................................................................................ 50
Figure 32: Types of online game playing undertaken by children, by age: 2011 and 2012 ........................................................................................................ 51
Figure 33: Estimated weekly hours of media consumption at home among users, by age: 2012 ........................................................................................................ 53
Figure 38: Weekly hours of game playing, by age: 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012 ................................................................. 60
Figure 40: Estimated weekly hours of radio consumption, by age: 2007-2012 ................................................................. 62
Figure 41: Estimated weekly hours of radio consumption, by socio-economic group: 2007-2012 ................................................................. 63
Figure 42: Weekly calls made, text messages sent and instant messages sent by users, by age: 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012 ................................................................. 64
Figure 43: Weekly calls made, text messages sent and instant messages sent by users, by gender within age: 2012 ................................................................. 65
Figure 44: Weekly calls made and text messages sent by 12-15s with a smartphone and another type of mobile phone: 2012 ................................................................. 66
Figure 45: Media activity children aged 5-15 would miss the most: 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012 ................................................................. 67
Figure 46: Media activity children would miss the most, by age: 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012 ................................................................. 67
Figure 47: Media activity children would miss the most, by gender within age: 2012 ................................................................. 68
Figure 48: Media activity mobile phone users aged 12-15 would miss the most, by type of mobile phone owned: 2012 ................................................................. 69
Figure 49: Media activity mobile phone users and smartphone users aged 12-15 would miss the most, by gender: 2012 ................................................................. 70
Figure 50: Incidence of multi-tasking when watching television, going online or using a mobile phone, by age, gender and socio-economic group: 2012 ................................................................. 71
Figure 51: Top ten mobile phone activities ever carried out by owners, by age: 2012 ................................................................. 72
Figure 52: Top ten mobile phone activities ever carried out by owners aged 12-15, by gender: 2012 ................................................................. 73
Figure 53: Top ten mobile phone activities carried out at least once a week by owners, by age: 2012 ................................................................. 74
Figure 54: Top ten mobile phone activities carried out at least once a week by owners aged 12-15, by gender: 2012 ................................................................. 75
Figure 55: Top ten mobile phone activities carried out at least once a week, by children aged 12-15 with a smartphone, and by children aged 12-15 with another type of mobile phone: 2012 ................................................................. 76
Figure 56: Types of use of the internet by users at least weekly, by age and socio-economic group: 2012 ................................................................. 77
Figure 57: Top ten internet activities carried out at least once a week by 5-15s: 2012 ................................................................. 79
Figure 58: Top ten internet activities carried out at least once a week, by age: 2012 ................................................................. 80
Figure 59: Top ten internet activities ever carried out by 5-15s: 2012 ................................................................. 81
Figure 60: Top ten internet activities ever carried out, by age: 2012 ................................................................. 81
Figure 62: Experience of creative and civic online activities by children aged 8-11: 2009-2012 ................................................................. 84
Figure 63: Experience of creative and civic online activities by children aged 8-11: 2009-2012 ................................................................. 85
Figure 64: Experience of creative and civic online activities by children aged 12-15: 2009-2012 ................................................................. 86
Figure 65: Experience of creative and civic online activities by children aged 12-15: 2009-2012 ................................................................. 87
Figure 66: Incidence of children with an active social networking site profile, by age: 2009-2012 ................................................................. 88
Figure 67: Social networking websites where children aged 8-15 currently have an active profile: 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012 (of those with an active profile)............. 89
Figure 68: Proportion of children who use the internet at home with an active profile on Facebook/ Bebo/ MySpace, by individual age: 2012 ................................................................. 90
Figure 69: Awareness of minimum age requirements for having a profile on Facebook: 2012 ................................................................. 91
Figure 70: Estimated number of friends across social networking sites used: 2012 ............ 92
Figure 71: Whether a parent is listed as a friend of their child on any social networking sites: 2011 and 2012........................................................................................................ 93
Figure 72: Parental checking of social networking site activity, by age: 2009 - 2012 .......... 94
Figure 73: Types of use of social networking sites, by age: 2009-2012 ......................... 95
Figure 74: 8-11s’ confidence in their use of the internet: 2010, 2011 and 2012 ................. 98
Figure 75: 12-15s’ confidence in their use of the internet: 2010, 2011 and 2012.............. 99
Figure 76: Children’s belief in television content, by genre: 2011-2012 .......................... 100
Figure 77: Children’s belief in websites used for school/ homework and for social networking, by age: 2010-2012 ......................................................................................... 102
Figure 78: Children’s belief in websites used for news and for information purposes, by age: 2010-2012 ........................................................................................................ 102
Figure 79: 12-15s’ understanding of results listed by search engines: 2009-2012 ........ 104
Figure 80: Awareness of advertising being shown in results listed by search engines, among 12-15s who use search engines: 2012 ............................................................ 105
Figure 81: Awareness of personalised advertising among 12-15s: 2012 ......................... 106
Figure 82: Attitudes to personal advertising among 12-15s aware of this type of advertising: 2012 ................................................................. 107
Figure 83: 8-15s’ experience of visiting websites they haven’t visited before: 2010-2012 .. 108
Figure 84: Checks made by 12-15s when visiting websites they haven’t visited before: 2010-2012 .................................................................................................................. 109
Figure 85: Visibility of social networking site profiles, by age: 2011 and 2012 .............. 110
Figure 86: Personal information that children aged 12-15 are willing to share online: 2011 and 2012.................................................................................................................. 111
Figure 87: Attitudes towards online copyright infringement among 12-15s: 2009-2012 .... 112
Figure 88: Children’s preferences for learning about using digital technology: 2009-2012 ................................. 113
Figure 91: Parental concerns about media content, among users of each media, by age: 2012 ...................................................................................................................... 119
Figure 92: Parental concerns about media content, among parents of 5-15s using each media type: 2009-2012 ................................................................................. 120
Figure 93: Parental concerns about television content, by age: 2009-2012 .................. 121
Figure 94: Parental agreement – “I trust my child to use the internet safely”, by age: 2010-2012 ................................................................................................................. 122
Figure 95: Parental agreement – “The benefits of the internet for my child outweigh any risks”, by age: 2010-2012 ..................................................................................... 123
Figure 96: Parental agreement – “My child has been taught at school how to use the internet safely”, by age: 2010-2012 ..................................................................................... 124
Figure 97: Parental agreement – “My child knows more about the internet than I do”, by age: 2010-2012 ..................................................................................... 125
Figure 98: Parental agreement – “My child helps me using the internet”, by age: 2012 .... 126
Figure 99: Parental concerns about online content, by age: 2010-2012 ........................ 127
Figure 100: Parental concerns about who their child may be in contact with online, by age: 2010-2012 ............................................................................................................. 127
Figure 101: Parental concerns about their child giving out personal details online to inappropriate people, by age: 2010-2012 ........................................................................ 128
Figure 102: Parental concerns about their child and cyber-bullying, by age: 2010-2012 ... 129
Figure 103: Parental concerns about their child bullying others online, by age: 2012 ...... 130
Figure 138: Reasons for not having controls in place for multichannel television, by age: 2010-2012 ................................................................. 166
Figure 139: Parental rules for radio, by age: 2012 ................................................................. 167
Figure 140: Parental rules for mobile phones, by age: 2012 ............................................... 169
Figure 141: Use of filters for mobile phone content among parents of 12-15s: 2011-2012 170
Figure 142: Parental rules for gaming, by age: 2012 .......................................................... 171
Figure 143: Use of parental controls on games consoles, by age: 2011-2012 .................. 172
Figure 144: Reasons for not having parental controls on the handheld/ portable games console among parents of 5-15s: 2011 – 2012 .................................................. 173
Figure 145: Reasons for not having parental controls on the fixed games console among parents of 5-15s: 2011 – 2012 ................................................................. 174
Figure 146: Reasons for not having parental controls on the handheld/ portable games console, by age: 2011 – 2012 ................................................................. 174
Figure 147: Reasons for not having parental controls on the fixed games console, by age: 2011 – 2012 ................................................................. 175
Figure 148: Parental rules for the internet, by age: 2012 ................................................... 176
Figure 149: Parental rules for the internet, by age: 2007-2012 ........................................... 177
Figure 150: Internet rules and restrictions relating to parental supervision: 2012 ........... 178
Figure 151: Types of parental controls installed on the PC/ laptop/ netbook the child uses at home, by age: 2012 ................................................................. 179
Figure 152: Internet controls/ filtering software loaded, by age: 2007 - 2012 ............... 180
Figure 153: Unprompted reasons for not having parental controls installed on the PC/ laptop/ netbook that the child uses at home among 5-15s: 2010-2012 ........................ 181
Figure 154: Unprompted reasons for not having parental controls installed on the PC/ laptop/ netbook that the child uses at home, by age: 2010 - 2012 ................................................. 182
Figure 155: Unprompted reasons for not having parental controls installed on the PC/ laptop/ netbook that the child uses at home, by age: 2010 - 2012 ................................................. 183
Figure 156: Reasons for installing parental controls on the PC/ laptop/ netbook that the child uses at home, by age: 2012 ................................................................. 184
Figure 157: Parental agreement with statements about the parental controls installed, by age, 2012................................................................. 185
Figure 158: Online security measures in place, by age: 2011-2012 .................................... 186
Figure 159: Use of Safety Mode on the YouTube website, by age: 2010 -2012 ................. 187
Figure 160: Watching television programmes and films online, by age: 2009 - 2012 ......... 188
Figure 161: Awareness and use of PIN controls on broadcasters’ websites, by age: 2011-2012 ................................................................. 189
Figure 162: Use of software to protect against junk email or computer viruses, by age: 2011-2012 ................................................................. 190
Figure 163: Parents who have spoken to their child about staying safe online, by age and gender: 2012 ................................................................. 191
Figure 164: Frequency of speaking to child about staying safe online, by age, gender and socio-economic group: 2012 ................................................................. 192
Figure 165: Parents who feel they know enough about how to help their child to stay safe online, by age and socio-economic group: 2012 ................................................................. 193
Figure 166: Parents stating they have looked for or received any information or advice about how to help their child to stay safe online, by age: 2012 ................................................................. 194
Figure 167: Parents stating they have looked for or received any information or advice about how to help their child to stay safe online, by age: 2012 ................................................................. 194
Figure 168: Children stating they have been given any information or advice about staying safe online, among 8-15s: 2010 - 2012 ................................................................. 196
Figure 169: Children stating they have been given any information or advice about staying safe online, by age: 2010 - 2012 ................................................................. 196
Figure 170: Types of technical methods of mediation in place in households where a child aged 5-15 uses the internet at home: 2012 ................................................................. 197
Figure 171: Types of non-technical mediation in place in households where a child aged 5-15 uses the internet at home: 2011 - 2012 ................................................................. 198
Figure 172: Combinations of online mediation strategies used by parents of 5-15s who use the internet at home, by age: 2012 ........................................................................ 199
Section 2

Introduction

Background

The promotion of media literacy is a responsibility placed on Ofcom by Section 11 of the Communications Act 2003. Under Section 14(6)(a) of the Act we have a duty to make arrangements for the carrying out of research into the matters mentioned in Section 11(1).

Our media literacy research informs three of Ofcom’s strategic purposes: to provide appropriate assurance to audiences on standards; to help communications markets work for consumers; and to contribute to and implement public policy as defined by Parliament.

Media literacy enables people to have the skills, knowledge and understanding they need to make full use of the opportunities presented both by traditional and by new communications services. Media literacy also helps people to manage content and communications, and protect themselves and their families from the potential risks associated with using these services.

Ofcom’s definition of media literacy is:

"the ability to use, understand and create media and communications in a variety of contexts".

This report is designed to give an accessible overview of media literacy among children and young people aged 5-15 and their parents/carers, as well as an indicative view of media use by children aged 3-4. It is based mainly on survey research conducted in spring 2012. Where possible, within the sample of children aged 5-15 and their parents, demographic analysis is conducted by age (of the child interviewed), by gender and by household socio-economic group.

The key objectives of this research are:

- to provide a rich picture of the different elements of media literacy across the key platforms: the internet, television, radio, games, and mobile phones;

- to identify emerging issues and skills gaps that help to target stakeholders’ resources for the promotion of media literacy; and

- to provide data about children’s internet habits/opinions and parents’ strategies to protect their children online to inform the work of the UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS), which brings together over 180 organisations to help keep children and young people safe online.

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1 References to children in this report are used to refer to children and young people.
2 References to parents in this report are used to refer to parents and carers.
Research methodology and analysis

This report provides an update to the *Children’s Media Literacy Audits* published in 2006, 2008, 2010 and 2011\(^3\). It draws on the following surveys:

**Media Literacy Tracker with children and parents:** a quantitative tracking survey conducted in 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012. In March 2012 1,717 in-home interviews with parents and children aged 5-15 were conducted, with 1,717 in-home interviews conducted in March/April 2011. In April/May and September/October 2010, 2,071 in-home interviews with parents and children aged 5-15 were conducted. In April/May and September/October 2009, 2,131 in-home interviews with children aged 5-15 and their parents/carers were conducted.

**Young People’s Media Usage survey:** a quantitative tracking survey, conducted in 2007 and 2008, which was devised to provide Ofcom with continued understanding of children’s behaviour in the UK communications markets. 3,696 interviews with parents and children aged 5-15 were conducted during 2007, with 2,066 interviews with parents and children aged 5-15 conducted during 2008. All interviewing was done in the home.

**Media Literacy Audit:** a quantitative survey that involved 1,536 in-home interviews with parents and children aged 8-15 from June to August 2005, and 2,068 in-home interviews among the same demographic from October to December 2007.

In some instances, we make comparisons between this research, the *Media Literacy Tracker* in 2009 and either the *Young People’s Media Usage survey*, conducted in 2007 and 2008, or the *Media Literacy Audits* conducted in 2005 and 2007.

Significance testing at the 95% confidence level was carried out. This means that where findings are commented on in the report, there is only a 5% or less probability that the difference between the samples is by chance\(^4\). Statistically significant findings are indicated in the figures in the report by circles or arrows.

Where possible, findings are shown for 5-15s as well as for the particular age groups (5-7, 8-11 and 12-15). However, some questions in earlier surveys, as well as particular questions in the current survey, were not asked of all age groups of children.

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3. [www.ofcom.org.uk/medialiteracyresearch](http://www.ofcom.org.uk/medialiteracyresearch)

4. If a finding is not statistically significant it may be referenced in the report as being unchanged or that it does not differ when compared to another measure (i.e. when comparing, for example, boys aged 12-15 to girls aged 12-15). In some instances, the two percentages compared could differ by as much as fifteen percentage points, but due to low base sizes for one (or both) of these groups the difference is not registering as statistically significant.
The report also includes results from the following research studies and analysis:

**Qualitative research on parents’ use of, and attitudes to, parental controls on internet-enabled devices**: Ofcom commissioned qualitative research among parents of children aged between 5-15 to explore their use of, and attitudes to, parental controls, included as Annex 1.

**BARB analysis**: analysis of children’s television viewing habits sourced from BARB, the UK’s television measurement panel, included as Annex 2. Findings are provided for children aged 4-15 as well as the subgroups aged 4-9 and 10-15.

**UKOM/Nielsen**: data on most-accessed websites by children aged 5-15 are included as Annex 3. The data are derived from UKOM/Nielsen's UK panel of households comprising 45,239 individuals (aged 2+), as of March 2012. The data are weighted to be representative of the UK’s home internet population.

**Media Tracker findings**: data on parents’ views on programme standards and regulation, included as Annex 4.
Section 3

Children’s take-up of media

This section looks at children’s take-up of media devices. It documents the access children have via household devices, and the personal use that they make of such devices. It includes an examination of whether such media devices are in the child's bedroom.

Key findings

- For the first time since this survey began, children’s access to the internet at home has not increased and nor has the proportion of children who use the internet at home.
- PC/laptop/netbook internet use at home ranges from 58% of 5-7s to 87% of 8-11s and 95% of 12-15s; a decrease for the youngest group since 2011 (65%). Data from 3-4 year-olds also suggest that 37% of this group use the internet via a PC, laptop or netbook.
- Children aged 12-15 are more likely to own a smartphone than any other type of mobile phone, and use of a mobile phone to go online at home has increased among children aged 5-7 (5% vs. 2%) and 12-15 (44% vs. 29%).
- Each age group is more likely than in 2011 to use a tablet computer to go online at home, accounting for around one in twenty 5-7s (6% vs. 1%) and one in ten 8-11s (9% vs. 3%) and 12-15s (11% vs. 3%).
- Data suggests 9% of 3-4s use a tablet, 6% of them using a tablet to access the internet.
- Around one in five children aged 8-11 (18%) and one in four children aged 12-15 (27%) go online at home using a games console/player.
- Since 2011, children aged 12-15 are more likely to mostly use the internet in their bedrooms (43% in 2012 vs. 34% in 2011).
- 9% of 5-15s do not use the internet at all, in any location, unchanged since 2011.
- 97% of 5-15s live in a household with a digital television service and 77% with a DVR; up since 2011. Findings from parents of 3-4 year-olds suggest that 53% use a DVR.
- Over half of children aged 5-15 have a television in their bedroom, and findings suggest that this is also the case for a third (33%) of 3-4 year olds. But since 2007 the incidence of having a television in the bedroom among 5-15s has fallen, from 69% to 59%.
- Between 2011 and 2012 there has also been a fall in the number of children with digital television (25% vs. 30%) and games console/players in their bedroom (56% vs. 62%).
- One in three (34%) children ever watch television programmes at home using a device other than a TV set; most commonly through a PC, laptop or netbook. Findings among 3-4 year-olds suggest that 18% of this group ever watch television programmes at home using a device other than a TV set.
- One in four (28%) children aged 5-15 use on-demand TV services.
- Most children use gaming devices; most commonly, games consoles connected to a TV or handheld games players. Findings from parents of 3-4 year olds indicate that 44% use a games console or player.
- One in three boys who play games online do so against people not known to them.
Household ownership of media devices

For the first time, home internet access is unchanged for children aged 5-15

This initial section looks at whether children have access to particular devices within the home, with subsequent sections moving on to address children’s actual use of these devices. This enables us to look at ownership of platforms/devices within the home, and see how this translates into use of these devices.

Households with children aged 5-15 have high levels of ownership of digital television, internet, games consoles\(^5\) and radio.

Nearly all children (97%) live in a household with a digital television service. Access to digital television has increased since 2011 (from 95%). This has been driven by an increase among children aged 12-15 and children in socio-economic group C1 (both 98% vs. 95%). No particular age group or socio-economic group is more or less likely to have a digital television service.

Nine in ten children (91%) live in a household with access to the internet through a PC, laptop or netbook\(^6\). For the first time in this survey, access to the internet at home through a PC, laptop or netbook has not increased for any particular age group or socio-economic group. Home internet access for children in DE households continues to be lower than the levels across all other socio-economic groups (81%). As in 2011, internet access at home in AB and C1 households is close to universal (98% and 97% respectively).

Nine in ten children (90%) live in a household with a fixed or portable games console, also unchanged since 2011. Boys aged 5-15 are more likely than girls to live in households with a games console, and this is evident among 5-7s (91% boys vs. 81% girls) and 12-15s (97% boys vs. 85% girls). No particular socio-economic group is more or less likely to have a fixed or portable games console.

\(^5\) Either those that are connected to a television or handheld/portable games players.
\(^6\) Before 2010, parents were only asked about access to the internet through a PC/laptop, with netbooks being added to this definition since 2010.
Figure 1 below shows results for digital video recorder (DVR) and radio ownership in the home. Access to a smart TV\(^8\) in the household was covered on the survey for the first time in 2012, with results also shown in Figure 2.

Three in four children (77%) now have a DVR\(^3\) at home. Take-up has increased across all three age groups since 2011 (77% in 2012 vs. 65% in 2011 for 5-7s, 74% vs. 65% for 8-11s and 80% vs. 68% for 12-15s). This increase in take-up of DVRs among households with children aged 5-15 is evident across three of the four socio-economic groups (AB, C1 and DE), with the greatest percentage point increase among AB (87% vs. 71%) and C1 households (85% vs. 70% in 2011). Children in DE households continue to be less likely to have access to a DVR, compared to all children aged 5-15 (63% vs. 77%).

More than four in five (83%) children have access to a radio set (either DAB or AM/FM) within the home. Since 2011, access has remained the same for each age group and each socio-economic group.

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\(^3\)At the time the interviewing was conducted (March 2012) digital switchover was not completed in four UK TV regions (Meridian, London, Tyne Tees and Ulster).

\(^8\)Defined as ‘new types of TV that are connected to the internet and can stream video directly onto your television screen, without the need for a computer, set-top box or games console’.

\(^9\)In 2011 the question used to establish household access to a digital video recorder was amended to reflect a shorter definition of DVR functionality. The question was also streamlined to reflect the way in which access/ use/ ownership of all key media in the study is established and, as such, was moved forward in the questionnaire.
One in ten (10%) children have access to a smart TV at home. Children in DE households are less likely to have access to a smart TV, compared to all children aged 5-15 (6% vs. 10%), while those in AB households are more likely (15% vs. 10%).

Figure 2: Availability of key platforms in the home, by age and socio-economic group: 2007, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012

Figure 3 below shows results for DVD players/DVD recorders/Blu-ray recorders and portable media players (like an iPod Touch or Archos) and for tablet computers. Nine in ten children (90%) now have a DVD player/DVD recorder/Blu-ray recorder at home. Take-up does not vary by the age of the child, although 5-15s in AB households are more likely to have access to this device, compared to all children (95% vs. 90%). Since 2011, take-up has increased among 5-7s (91% vs. 86%) and 8-11s (92% vs. 87%). This increase in take-up of DVRs among households with children aged 5-15 is evident only among AB households (95% vs. 90%).

More than two in five (43%) children have access to a portable media player within the home. In 2012, parents of 12-15s (53%) are more likely than parents of 5-7s (33%) or 8-11s (39%) to have this device in the home. Compared to all 5-15s, children in AB households are more likely to have access to portable media players (53% vs. 43%) while those in DE households are less likely (30% vs. 43%). Since 2011, access has remained the same for each age group and each socio-economic group.

10 Before 2010 parents were only asked about DVD players/recorders. Blu-ray recorders were included from 2010.
11 Portable media players have been included in the study since 2009.
12 Tablet computers have been included in the study since 2010.
One in five children (20%) aged 5-15 have a tablet computer in the home, with no variation in household ownership by the age of the child. As with portable media players, those in AB households are more likely than all children, to have access to tablet computers (38% vs. 20%) while those in DE households are less likely (8% vs. 20%). Since 2011, household ownership of tablet computers has increased for all age groups of children and for AB, C1, and C2 socio-economic groups.

Figure 3: Availability of key platforms in the home, by age and socio-economic group: 2007, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012

Mobile phone ownership

Three in five children aged 12-15 now have a smartphone, with ownership higher among girls

Figures 4 and 5 show that half of all children aged 5-15 have a mobile phone (49%) and one in four (28%) children aged 5-15 have a smartphone. The likelihood of owning a smartphone increases with the age of the child, with just 1% of 5-7s, around one in seven 8-11s (15%) and three in five 12-15s (62%) owning one.

Compared to 2011, the overall incidence of smartphone ownership has increased among all children aged 5-15 (28% vs. 20%). This has been driven by a 21 percentage point increase

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QP3K/G/E – I’m going to read out a list of different types of equipment that you may or may not have in your home, and which your child may or may not use (prompted responses, single coded)* Prior to 2010 parents were only asked about a DVD player/ recorder, Blu-ray has been included since 2010


Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012

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13 The question (to parents) established smartphone ownership in the following way: “You mentioned that your child has their own mobile phone. Is this a smartphone? A smartphone is a phone on which you can easily access emails, download files as well as view websites and generally surf the internet. Popular brands of smartphone include Blackberry, iPhone and HTC”.
in smartphone ownership among children aged 12-15 (62% vs. 41%). Smartphone ownership has also increased among children in C1 (34% vs. 20%) and C2 households (31% vs. 21%).

In 2012 overall ownership of any type of mobile phone does not differ by gender, but girls are more likely than boys to own a smartphone (31% vs. 26%). This difference across all children is due to girls aged 12-15 being more likely than boys in this age group to own a smartphone (68% vs. 55%).

While overall levels of ownership of any type of mobile phone have not changed since 2011, ownership has declined among girls aged 8-11 (43% in 2012 vs. 53% in 2011) and among children in DE households (44% vs. 54%). As levels of smartphone ownership are unchanged since 2011 among these groups of children, this decline relates to ownership of non-smartphone mobile phones.

Figure 4: Smartphone and mobile phone ownership, by age and gender: 2011 and 2012

QP3F/QP4 - I’m going to read out a list of different types of equipment that you may or may not have in your home, and which your child may or may not use (prompted responses, single coded) You mentioned that your child has their own mobile phone. Is this a Smartphone? A Smartphone is a phone on which you can easily access emails, download files as well as view websites and generally surf the internet. Popular brands of Smartphone include BlackBerry, iPhone and HTC. (spontaneous responses, single coded)


Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012
Figure 5: Smartphone and mobile phone ownership, by socio-economic group: 2011 and 2012

Figure 6 below shows how ownership of a mobile phone increases each year from age 5 to age 15: from 2% to 92%. Levels of ownership of a smartphone are very low among those aged from 5 to 8 and start to rise from age 9. Children aged from 5 to 11 are more likely to own another type of mobile phone rather than a smartphone, but from age 12 onwards smartphone ownership outstrips ownership of other mobile phones

Figure 6: Smartphone ownership, by age of child: 2012

QP3F/QP4 - I’m going to read out a list of different types of equipment that you may or may not have in your home, and which your child may or may not use (prompted responses, single coded). You mentioned that your child has their own mobile phone. Is this a Smartphone? A Smartphone is a phone on which you can easily access emails, download files as well as view websites and generally surf the internet. Popular brands of Smartphone include BlackBerry, iPhone and HTC (spontaneous responses, single coded).
Children and parents: media use and attitudes report

Devices in the child's bedroom

Since 2007, children are now less likely to have television or a games console/player in their bedrooms

In order to understand more about children’s and young people’s media habits, it is useful to know the various types of media activity that take place in a child’s bedroom. Figures 7 and 8 below show results among all children aged 5-15, while Figures 9 and 10 show how the results vary by each of the three age groups of children: 5-7, 8-11 and 12-15.

Our results show that virtually all children aged 5-15 (99%) have access to a television at home. The incidence of having a television in the bedroom, however, increases with each age group; accounting for more than two in five 5-7s (43%), three in five 8-11s (58%), and three in four 12-15s (73%). While the incidence of having a television in the bedroom is unchanged since 2011, there is a significant downward trend since 2007; falling from 52% to 43% for 5-7s, from 69% to 58% for 8-11s and from 81% to 73% for 12-15s.

Games consoles/games players (either fixed or portable) are the second most common type of medium present in children’s bedrooms, accounting for two in five 5-7s (38%), and three in five 8-11s (60%) and 12-15s (64%). Compared to 2011, children aged 5-15 are now less likely to have a games console/player in their bedroom (56% vs. 62%), with this decrease driven by 8-11s (60% vs. 69%), in particular girls aged 8-11 (56% vs. 65% in 2011).

DVD players/recorders or Blu-ray recorders are the third most common type of medium present in children’s bedrooms, accounting for one in three children aged 5-15 (32%). The incidence increases with each age group of children, accounting for one in five 5-7s (24%), three in ten 8-11s (31%) and two in five 12-15s (41%). Compared to 2011, children aged 5-15 are less likely to have DVD players/recorders/Blu-ray recorders in their bedroom (32% vs. 36%) but this decrease is not apparent for any particular age group of child.

While many children have a television, a minority in each age group have a digital television service\(^{14}\) in their bedroom. Again, the incidence increases with each age group, accounting for more than one in ten 5-7s (14%), one in five 8-11s (21%), and two in five 12-15s (37%).

Compared to 2011, children aged 5-15 are now less likely to have digital television in their bedroom (25% vs. 30%), with this decrease driven by 8-11s (21% vs. 30%). Previous waves of this research have consistently shown that many of the TVs in children’s bedrooms are used for purposes other than viewing TV content; such as playing games through a console or viewing DVDs. The decline in having a digital TV in the bedroom does not appear to be related to children watching TV content on an alternative device, as those using an alternative device are no less likely to have a digital TV in their bedroom.

Although most children aged 5-15 have PC/laptop/netbook-based internet access in the household (91%), fewer have access to the internet in their bedroom. The incidence increases with each age group; accounting for less than one in twenty 5-7s (3%), one in seven 8-11s (14%), and two in five 12-15s (39%).

\(^{14}\)At the time the interviewing was conducted (March 2012) digital switchover was not completed in four UK TV regions (Meridian, London, Tyne Tees and Ulster). While we are not able to tell from the data the extent to which those children with non-digital television services in their bedrooms are in areas which have not yet completed switchover, the low numbers with digital television services in their bedrooms suggest that many of these sets are not being used for television viewing.
One in five children (19%) have a radio in their bedroom, with this incidence increasing with the age of the child, accounting for more than one in twenty 5-7s (7%), one in five 8-11s (19%) and three in ten 12-15s (30%). Compared to 2011, children are less likely to have a radio set in the bedroom (19% vs. 24%) driven by a decrease among 8-11s (19% vs. 25%).

One in ten children (10%) have a DVR in their bedroom, with this being more likely for 12-15s (14%) than for 8-11s (8%) or 5-7s (6%).

In 2012, boys are more likely than girls to have a fixed or portable games console in their bedroom (62% vs. 49%) while girls are more likely to have internet access in their bedroom (22% vs. 18%).

Children in AB socio-economic groups are less likely than all children to have a television in their bedroom (46% vs. 59%) or a DVD player/DVD recorder/Blu-ray recorder (25% vs. 32%). Children in C2 households are more likely than all children to have a television in their bedroom (70% vs. 59%).

No particular socio-economic group is more or less likely to have PC/laptop/netbook-based internet access in the child’s bedroom.

Figure 8: Media in children’s bedrooms, among 5-15s: 2007, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Internet (PC/ laptop/ netbook based)</th>
<th>Radio set (DAB or AM/FM)</th>
<th>Digital Video Recorder (DVR)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

QP3C/J/B – I’m going to read out a list of different types of equipment that you may or may not have in your home, and which your child may or may not use. (prompted responses, single coded)


Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>TV in bedroom</th>
<th>Games console in bedroom</th>
<th>DVD player/ recorder/ Blu-ray recorder</th>
<th>Digital TV in bedroom</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aged 5-7</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aged 8-11</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aged 12-15</td>
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<td>62</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aged 5-7</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aged 8-11</td>
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<td>71</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
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<td>Aged 12-15</td>
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<td>69</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aged 5-7</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aged 8-11</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aged 12-15</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

QP3A/H/K – I’m going to read out a list of different types of equipment that you may or may not have in your home, and which your child may or may not use (prompted responses, single coded)


Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012

15 Before 2011, it is not possible to show whether the child has a DVR in their bedroom, as the question previously established only whether a DVR was owned by the household.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Internet (PC/ laptop/ netbook based)</th>
<th>Radio set (DAB or AM/FM)</th>
<th>Digital Video Recorder (DVR)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Media in bedrooms of children aged 3-4

33% TV
17% DVD player/recorder/Blu-ray recorder
15% games console/ player
8% digital TV
4% DVR
3% radio set
1% internet through PC/ laptop/ netbook

Base: Parents of children aged 3-4 (190)
Children’s media use in the home

Four in five children use the internet at home, rising to more than nine in ten among 12-15s

So far, we have reported on the extent to which certain media have been taken up in households with children aged 5-15 (see Figures 1, 2 and 3) and the extent to which mobile phones are owned by children (see Figures 4, 5 and 6). Parents were also asked about their child’s use of the various media within the home, regardless of whether the media devices were owned by the child or more generally by the household16. Figures 11 and 12 show this for all children, while Figures 13 and 14 show this among 5-7s, 8-11 and 12-15s.

Close to nine in ten children now use a fixed or portable games player at home (86% using either, 78% using a games console connected to a TV, 69% using a handheld/ portable games player). Children aged 8-11 (91%) and 12-15 (87%) are more likely than 5-7s (79%) to use these devices, as in previous surveys. And as in previous years, there are differences between boys’ and girls’ use of games consoles. Boys in each age group are more likely than girls to use a fixed or portable games player; whether 5-7s (85% vs. 75%), 8-11s (94% vs. 88%) or 12-15s (97% vs. 77%).

Four in five of all children aged 5-15 (82%) use the internet at home through a PC, laptop or netbook. Among the different age groups, three in five children aged 5-7 (58%), close to nine in ten 8-11s (87%) and more than nine in ten 12-15s (95%) use the internet at home through a PC, laptop or netbook. Since 2011 no age group is more likely to use the internet at home through a PC, laptop or netbook, but 5-7s are now less likely to do so (58% in 2012 vs. 65% in 2011). As detailed later in Figure 28, overall use of the internet in any location among 5-7s is unchanged since 2011.

Around four in five children in each age group use a DVD/ Blu-ray player/ recorder at home (78% of 5-7s, 84% of 8-11s, 82% of 12-15s), with no change since 2011.

Figures 11 and 13 also show the proportion of children aged 5-15 who use a DVR17. As shown previously in Figure 2, access to a DVR in the household has increased since 2011. Use of a DVR in the home has also increased for each age group; accounting for close to seven in ten children aged 5-7 (66%) and 8-11 (69%) and four in five aged 12-15 (78%).

Children’s use of a mobile phone includes circumstances in which the child may be using a mobile phone that belongs to someone else in the household. Since 2011, mobile phone use has not changed for 5-7s or 12-15s, while children aged 8-11 are now less likely to use one (52% in 2012 vs. 61% in 2011), following an increase in 2011.

Slightly less than half of all 5-15s (46%) use a radio at home. Both 8-11s (50%) and 12-15s (53%) are more likely than 5-7s (33%) to use a radio at home. Use of a radio set at home has decreased since 2011 for all 5-15s (46% vs. 50%), but this decrease is not apparent for any particular age group.

Around one in three children aged 5-15 (32%) use a portable media player at home. Use increases with each age group, accounting for one in eight 5-7s (12%), three in ten 8-11s

16 It is not possible to show data for use of smart TVs within the household, as the question asked only about household ownership rather than use.

17 In 2010, parents of children aged 5-15 with digital television were asked whether they had a digital video recorder (DVR) and, if so, whether their child ever watched TV programmes that have been recorded on the DVR. The 2010 figure reported here has been re-based to show a DVR usage figure among all children. From 2011 onwards, the question was streamlined to match the way in which access/ use/ ownership of all key media in the study is established.
(30%) and one in two 12-15s (50%). Compared to 2011, 5-15s are less likely to use a portable media player (32% vs. 36%), but again, this decrease is not evident within any particular age group of child.

Around one in seven (14%) of all children aged 5-15 use a tablet computer (such as an iPad) at home, which represents a threefold increase since 2011 (5%). Use of a tablet computer has increased for 5-7s (11% vs. 2%), 8-11s (13% vs. 6%) and 12-15s (17% vs. 6%).

Compared to all children aged 5-15, children in AB households are more likely to use the internet at home through a PC, laptop or netbook (87% vs. 82%), to use a DVR at home (83% vs. 71%), a portable media player (39% vs. 32%) or a tablet computer (24% vs. 14%). In contrast, children in DE households are less likely to use the internet (73% vs. 82%), DVRs (57% vs. 71%), portable media players (22% vs. 32%) or tablet computers (7% vs. 14%). This reflects the lower levels of household take-up of these media devices in DE households.
Figure 11: Media used by children aged 5-15 at home: 2007, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012

Figure 12: Media used by children aged 5-15 at home: 2007, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012

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QP3F/C/H/I—‘I’m going to read out a list of different types of equipment that you may or may not have in your home, and which your child may or may not use. (prompted responses, single coded) *Question wording changed in 2011 for DVR Base: Parents of children aged 5-15 (3696 aged 5-15 in 2007, 2131 aged 5-15 in 2009, 2071 aged 5-15 in 2010, 1717 aged 5-15 in 2011, 1717 aged 5-15 in 2012). Significance testing shows any change between 2011 and 2012. Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012

QP3B/J/G/E—‘I’m going to read out a list of different types of equipment that you may or may not have in your home, and which your child may or may not use. (prompted responses, single coded) Base: Parents of children aged 5-15 (3696 aged 5-15 in 2007, 2131 aged 5-15 in 2009, 2071 aged 5-15 in 2010, 1717 aged 5-15 in 2011, 1717 aged 5-15 in 2012). Significance testing shows any change between 2011 and 2012. Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012
Children and parents: media use and attitudes report

Figure 13: Media used by children at home, by age: 2007, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012

Games console/ Games player

Internet – PC/ laptop/ netbook based

DVD/ Blu-ray player/ recorder

Digital Video Recorder (DVR)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Equipment Type</th>
<th>Aged 5-7</th>
<th>Aged 8-11</th>
<th>Aged 12-15</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Games console/ Games player</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet – PC/ laptop/ netbook based</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DVD/ Blu-ray player/ recorder</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital Video Recorder (DVR)*</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

QP3F/C/H/I – I’m going to read out a list of different types of equipment that you may or may not have in your home, and which your child may or may not use. (prompted responses, single coded) *Question wording changed in 2011 for DVR


Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012

Figure 14: Media used by children at home, by age: 2007, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012

Mobile phone

Radio set (DAB or AM/FM)

Portable Media Player

Tablet computer

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Equipment Type</th>
<th>Aged 5-7</th>
<th>Aged 8-11</th>
<th>Aged 12-15</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mobile phone</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio set (DAB or AM/FM)</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portable Media Player</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tablet computer</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

QP3B/G/E – I’m going to read out a list of different types of equipment that you may or may not have in your home, and which your child may or may not use. (prompted responses, single coded) *Question wording changed in 2011 for DVR


Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012
### Media used at home by children aged 3-4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Device Type</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DVD/ Blu-ray player/ recorder</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital video recorder/ DVR</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Games console/ player</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet through a PC, laptop or netbook</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio set</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile phone</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portable media player</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tablet computer</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: Parents of children aged 3-4 (190)

### Three in ten children ever watch television programmes at home on an alternative device to a TV set

In 2012, parents of children were asked which devices their child ever used to watch television programmes at home. As shown in Figure 15, virtually all children aged 5-15 (99%) ever watch TV programmes on a TV set. Three in ten children aged 5-15 (34%) ever use an alternative device to watch television programmes at home. The likelihood of using an alternative device to watch television programmes increases with the age of the child, with one in five 5-7s (18%), three in ten 8-11s (33%) and over two in five 12-15s (46%) doing so.

For each age group, the alternative device most likely to be used to watch TV programmes at home is a PC, laptop or netbook (26% of all 5-15s), followed by a games console/ games player (12% of all 5-15s). One in ten children aged 12-15 (10%) ever watch TV programmes using a mobile phone, but this device is used by very few 5-7s or 8-11s (1% and 3%).

Use of an alternative device to watch TV programmes at home does not differ between boys and girls and is not more or less likely for any particular socio-economic group.
Figure 15: Devices ever used to watch television programmes at home, by age: 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Devices</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Aged 5-10</th>
<th>Aged 5-7</th>
<th>Aged 6-8</th>
<th>Aged 7-8</th>
<th>Aged 8-9</th>
<th>Aged 9-10</th>
<th>Aged 10-11</th>
<th>Aged 11-12</th>
<th>Aged 12-13</th>
<th>Aged 13-14</th>
<th>Aged 14-16</th>
<th>Aged 15-16</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PC/ laptop/ netbook</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Games console/ player</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile phone</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tablet computer</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portable media player</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any device other than a TV set</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

QP5 – Does your child EVER use any of these devices to watch television programmes at home? (prompted responses, multi-coded)
Base: Parents of children aged 5-15 (570 aged 5-7, 575 aged 8-11, 572 aged 12-15)
Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012

**Devices ever used to watch television programmes at home by children aged 3-4**

- 97% TV set
- 12% PC/ laptop/ netbook
- 7% games console/ player
- 6% tablet computer
- 2% mobile phone
- 2% portable media player
- 18% any device other than a TV set

Base: Parents of children aged 3-4 (190)

**12-15s are now more likely to use on-demand television services**

Parents of children with digital television services were asked whether their child ever watches on-demand television services on their television set. Figure 16 shows that, when re-based to represent all children aged 5-15, one in four children aged 5-15 (28%) use these services, unchanged since 2011.

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18See footnote within Figure 16 for the question asked about the child's use of on-demand TV services.
Children and parents: media use and attitudes report

Use varies by age, with 8-11s and 12-15s both being more likely than 5-7s to use on-demand television services. While use of on-demand television has not changed since 2011 across all 5-15s, it has increased among 12-15s (40% vs. 32%) and among children in AB households (41% vs. 28%).

As in 2011, children in DE households are less likely to use on-demand services compared to all children aged 5-15 (19% vs. 28%). While access to digital television in DE households matches that for all households, DE households are more likely to have their service through Freeview (40% vs. 32%), where on-demand services would need to be accessed through a smart TV set rather than the TV service itself.

Figure 16: Use of on-demand television services, by age, gender and socio-economic group: 2011 and 2012

Use of on-demand television services by children aged 3-4

10% ever use on demand services

Base: Parents of children aged 3-4 (190)

Regular media activities

Television continues to be the most popular regular media activity among children of all ages

Children aged 5-15 were asked to choose, from a list of media activities, which, if any, they do regularly (defined in this research as “almost every day”) as shown in Figures 17 and 18.

19 In this context, ‘regular’ refers to an activity which the child states they do almost every day.
Television continues to be the most popular regular media activity. Over nine in ten children from each group say they watch television almost every day. As has been the case each year since 2009, television, and watching videos or DVDs, are the two activities that are undertaken daily by children in each age group to a similar degree, whereas regular use of the internet, mobile phones and MP3 players increases with the age of the child.

Since 2011 there have been some changes in the patterns of regular media use among 5-7s and 8-11s. Children aged 5-7 are less likely to say they regularly watch DVDs or videos (49% vs. 56%) or listen to an MP3 player (7% vs. 11%), 8-11s are also less likely to say they regularly watch DVDs or videos (46% vs. 56%) or listen to an MP3 player (19% vs. 25%) and are less likely to say they regularly listen to radio (22% vs. 28%). Regular media use has not changed since 2011 among children aged 12-15.

Boys in each age group are more likely than girls to say they regularly play computer or video games (62% vs. 45% for 5-7s, 73% vs. 50% for 8-11s, 77% vs. 36% for 12-15s). Among 12-15s, girls are more likely than boys to use a mobile phone almost every day (86% vs. 77%), and to read magazines, comics or newspapers (46% vs. 32%).

There are also differences in regular media use by household socio-economic group. Children in DE households are less likely than all children to say that they regularly use the internet (57% vs. 65%) or listen to an MP3 player (17% vs. 22%). Children in the C1 socio-economic group are more likely than all children to say they regularly use the internet (71% vs. 65%).

Figure 17: Regular media activities undertaken: 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Watch TV</th>
<th>Use the internet</th>
<th>Play computer or video games</th>
<th>Watch videos/DVDs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aged 5-15</td>
<td>Aged 5-7</td>
<td>Aged 8-11</td>
<td>Aged 12-15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

QC54- Which of the following do you do almost every day? (prompted responses, multi-coded)
Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter -Base in March 2012.

20 Media use will differ to the figures shown earlier at Figures 11-14, as those data showed ‘any use’ as opposed to ‘regular use’. Data in Figures 11-14 were obtained from a parent, while ‘regular media use’ was obtained from the child.

21 As this question is asked of children rather than parents, there are no data for children aged 3-4.
Radio listening, by device

No change in radio listening at home since 2011

Parents were asked about their child’s radio listening within the home, and the types of radio used.

Around two in five children (42%) listen to the radio at home, with the likelihood of listening increasing with the age of the child (32% of 5-7s, 42% of 8-11s and 49% of 12-15s). There has been no change in the incidence of children listening to radio since 2011, either overall or for any particular age group.

One in five children aged 5-15 (19%) listen to any type of digital radio, at home, with a similar proportion of 5-7s (12%) and 8-11s (17%) listening in this way, and around one in four 12-15s (27%). As with broader radio listening, compared to 2011 there has been no change in digital radio listening, either overall or for any particular age group.

One in five children aged 5-15 listen only through a traditional radio set (20%) and this has decreased since 2011 for 12-15s (18% vs. 24%).

In 2012 there are some differences by socio-economic group. Children in AB households are more likely than all children to listen to any type of radio (48% vs. 42%), to digital radio (25% vs. 19%), and to a DAB radio (12% vs. 8%). There are also some differences by gender, with girls more likely than boys to listen to any type of radio (46% vs. 38%), in particular through a traditional radio set (31% vs. 23%).

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

Either through a DAB radio set, through their digital TV service or over the internet.
Figure 19: Radio listening at home, by age: 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012

- **Radio listening at home by children aged 3-4**
  - 33% any radio listening at home
  - 19% only listen through traditional radio
  - 14% any digital radio listening
  - 67% do not listen to radio at home
  
  **Base:** Parents of children aged 3-4 (190)

- **Internet use, by device**

  **Children aged 12-15 are increasingly likely to go online at home through a mobile phone, and all ages are more likely to go online using a tablet computer**

  Parents were asked whether their child ever uses devices other than a PC/laptop/netbook to go online at home (Figures 20 and 21).

  While slightly more than four in five children (82%) go online at home through a PC, laptop or netbook, one in five go online via a mobile phone (22%), one in five go online via a fixed or portable games console/ games player (18%), one in ten through a tablet computer (9%) and one in twelve through a portable media player like an iPod Touch (8%).

  The incidence of children going online through any of these devices increases with age. Compared to 2011, use of a PC, laptop or netbook to go online has decreased for 5-7s (58% vs. 65%), while children in this age group are now more likely to go online through a tablet computer (6% vs. 1%) or via a mobile phone (5% vs. 2%). Children aged 8-11 are also more
likely to now go online through a tablet computer (9% vs. 3%). Those aged 12-15 are more likely to go online via a mobile phone (44% vs. 29%) or through a tablet computer (11% vs. 3%). A majority of parents of children aged 5-15 with a smartphone say that their child ever goes online through their mobile phone (61%), compared with a minority of parents of children whose mobile phone is not a smartphone (9%).

Accessing the internet at home through a fixed or portable games player/console has not changed since 2011; accounting for around one in twenty 5-7s (6%), around one in five 8-11s (18%) and three in ten 12-15s (27%). In 2012 children aged 12-15 who ever go online through a fixed or portable games console were asked whether this was mostly to play games online or to visit websites, with nine in ten of these children (91%) saying that they mostly play games online, as in 2011.

Boys aged 8-11 are more likely than girls of this age to ever access the internet at home via a fixed or portable games console/games player (24% vs. 12%), as are boys aged 12-15 compared to girls of this age (40% vs. 14%). Girls aged 12-15 are also more likely to go online at home through a mobile phone compared to boys (49% vs. 39%). In 2012, there are some differences by socio-economic group. Children in AB households are more likely to go online through a PC, laptop or netbook (87% vs. 82%) or through a tablet computer (14% vs. 9%). Children in DE households are less likely to go online through most of the devices, including a PC, laptop or netbook (73% vs. 82%), a tablet computer (4% vs. 9%), a portable media player (3% vs. 8%), or across any of the devices as a whole (75% vs. 83%).

The proportion of children in each age group that access the internet at home through any of these devices is nearly identical to the proportion accessing the internet via a PC, laptop or netbook. This shows that accessing the internet at home through other devices is very much in addition to accessing it through a PC, laptop or netbook. While not shown in Figure 20 below, 1% of all 5-15s use only a device other than a PC, laptop or netbook to go online at home, with no particular age group or socio-economic group more or less likely to use only an alternative device.
Figure 20: Devices ever used by children aged 5-15 to go online at home: 2010, 2011 and 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Uses any of these devices to access the internet at home</th>
<th>PC/laptop/netbook</th>
<th>Games console/player (fixed or portable)</th>
<th>Mobile phone</th>
<th>Portable media player</th>
<th>Tablet computer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

QP3C/QP27A – I’m going to read out a list of different types of equipment that you may or may not have in your home, and which your child may or may not use / including any ways you may have already mentioned, does your child ever use any of the following devices to go online at home? (prompted responses, single coded) – NB The question wording changed at Wave 2 2010 – responses from wave 1 and wave 2 2010 have however been combined
Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012

Figure 21: Devices ever used by children to go online at home, by age: 2010, 2011 and 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Uses any of these devices to access the internet at home</th>
<th>PC/laptop/netbook</th>
<th>Games console/player (fixed or portable)</th>
<th>Mobile phone</th>
<th>Portable media player</th>
<th>Tablet computer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aged 5-7</td>
<td>67.6%</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aged 8-11</td>
<td>87.6%</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aged 12-15</td>
<td>91.7%</td>
<td>92.5%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

QP3C/QP27A – I’m going to read out a list of different types of equipment that you may or may not have in your home, and which your child may or may not use / including any ways you may have already mentioned, does your child ever use any of the following devices to go online at home? (prompted responses, single coded) – NB The question wording changed at Wave 2 2010 – responses from wave 1 and wave 2 2010 have however been combined
Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012
Devices ever used by children aged 3-4 to go online at home

- 37% any device used to go online at home
- 37% PC/ laptop/ netbook
- 6% tablet computer
- 3% mobile phone
- 2% games console/ player
- 2% portable media player

Base: Parents of children aged 3-4 (190)

Device mostly used to go online at home

Laptops/ netbooks continue to be the device mostly used by children to go online at home

Parents whose child uses the internet at home were asked to say which device the child most often uses to go online at home, as shown in Figures 22 and 23.

At an overall level, children aged 5-15 who use the internet at home are more likely to mostly use a laptop/ netbook rather than a desktop PC (58% vs. 27%). Since 2011, no particular age group or socio-economic group is more or less likely to mostly use a laptop to go online at home, but desktop PCs are less likely to be the device mostly used by 8-11s (33% vs. 40%), and by those in C1 households (26% vs. 36%).

The incidence of mostly using other devices remains low, but children in each age group are now more likely to mostly use a tablet computer to go online at home (4% vs. 0% in 2011 for 5-7s, 3% vs. 1% for 8-11s and for 12-15s). Mostly using a tablet computer to go online has also increased among children in C1 and C2 households (both 4% vs. 1% in 2011).

Mobile phones are now the third most popular device, after laptops/netbooks and desktop PCs, to be mostly used to go online at home (6% vs. 3% in 2011), with this increase in use driven by 12-15s (11% vs. 5%) and those in C1 (4% vs. 1%) and C2 households (7% vs. 3%). Children in C2 households are now also more likely to mostly use a games console connected to a TV to go online at home (7% vs. 3%).

There are some differences by gender among children aged 12-15. Girls in this age group are more likely to mostly use a mobile phone to go online at home (15% vs. 7%) while boys are more likely to mostly use a games console connected to a TV (8% vs. 0%).
Figure 22: Devices used ‘mostly’ by children to go online at home, by age: 2011 and 2012

QP27B – And when your child goes online at home, which device do they mostly use? (prompted responses, single coded)


Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012

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24 The base of interviews with parents of children aged 3-4 who go online at home is too low for further analysis (71).
Where in the home the internet is accessed

**More children aged 12-15 are mostly using the internet in their bedroom**

Children who use the internet at home were asked where in the house they most often used it, as shown in Figures 24 and 25.

The living room continues to be the most frequently-mentioned location for internet use, for children aged 5-15.

Less than one in twenty 5-7s (4%) and around one in ten 8-11s (12%) said they mostly used the internet in their bedroom, with no change since 2011 for these age groups. Among internet users aged 12-15, two in five said they mostly used the internet in their bedroom, an increase since 2011 (43% vs. 34%), with no difference by gender within 12-15s.

Children in DE households are more likely to mostly use the internet in the living room (71% vs. 64%), but no particular socio-economic group is more likely to mostly use the internet in the bedroom.

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**Figure 23: Devices used ‘mostly’ by children to go online at home, by socio-economic group: 2011 and 2012**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Portable/ Handheld games player</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portable media player</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tablet computer</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Games console connected to a TV</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile phone</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desktop PC</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laptop/ netbook</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

QP27B – And when your child goes online at home, which device do they mostly use? (prompted responses, single coded)


Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012

QC9B – in which room do you use the internet most often at home (spontaneous responses, single coded)
Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012


QC9B – in which room do you use the internet most often at home (spontaneous responses, single coded)
Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012
Over half of children aged 12-15 use the internet on their own most of the time

Children who use the internet at home were asked to say if anyone was with them most of the time they used the internet, and whether this was an adult or other children.

Figure 26 shows that the majority of 5-7s and 8-11s say they spend most of the time using the internet with an adult in the room (80% and 69% respectively). However, the incidence of children who spend most of the time using the internet on their own increases with each age group. Those who mostly use the internet on their own account for one in seven internet users aged 5-7 (14%), one in four aged 8-11 (24%) and over half of those aged 12-15 (55%).

The overall picture of who children are with when they use the internet at home is unchanged since 2011, with no differences by gender. Children aged 5-15 in AB socio-economic group are more likely to use the internet on their own (44% vs. 35%) while those in DE households are less likely to (27% vs. 35%).

**Figure 26: Who is with the child when using the internet at home, by age: 2010, 2011 and 2012**

Internet use in any location

One in eleven children do not use the internet at all, in any location

While the main focus of our analysis is upon children’s use of the internet at home, we are also interested in whether children use the internet anywhere else (for example, at school, at a library, at the houses of relatives or friends) on any device. Figure 27 shows where the internet is used (on any device) among children aged 5-15 overall, and how this has changed over time, while Figure 28 breaks this down among 5-7s, 8-11s and 12-15s.
Four distinct groups are shown: those who use the internet at home (and may also use it elsewhere); those who use it elsewhere (and may also use it at school but not at home); those who use it only at school; and those who don’t use it at all.

The incidence of using the internet at all, in any location and on any device, has not changed for any age group since 2011, and accounts for three in four 5-7s (74%), nearly all 8-11s (95%) and all 12-15s (100%).

There has been an increase in the proportion of 5-7s who use the internet elsewhere but not at home (5% vs. 2%). As noted above, there has also been a decrease in use at home among this group. The overall proportion of 5-7s who use the internet at all remains unchanged since 2011. The picture of where the internet is used, by 8-11s and by 12-15s, has not changed since 2011, whereas each previous survey noted an increase in the proportion of children in these age groups who use the internet at home.

The incidence of using the internet only at school has not changed for any age group since 2011, accounting for one in twenty 5-15s (5%).

One in eleven (9%) of all 5-15s do not use the internet at all, in any location. This has not changed since 2011.

Children in DE households are more likely than all children aged 5-15 to use the internet only elsewhere and not at home (6% vs. 3%) or to use the internet only at school (8% vs. 5%). No particular socio-economic group is more likely not to use the internet at all.


QP3C/QP27A/QC31 – SUMMARY OF WHERE THE INTERNET IS USED (prompted responses, single coded)
Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012
Where the internet is used by children aged 3-4

37% use at home
1% use elsewhere but not at home
4% only use at nursery
57% do not use at all

Base: Parents of children aged 3-4 (190)

Devices used to play games

One in three boys who play games online do so against people who are not known to them

We asked parents and children a number of questions to find out about the devices they use to play games at home. The results are shown in Figures 29 and 30.

Most children in each of the three age groups use at least one of the devices we asked about to play games; accounting for four in five 5-7s (83%), and around nine in ten 8-11s (91%) and 12-15s (86%). The overall proportion of children aged 5-15 who use devices to

---

25 Before 2011, we asked about devices used to play games at home or elsewhere. Since 2011, these and subsequent questions were re-worded to focus specifically on at home use.
play games at home has increased since 2011 (90% vs. 87%) although this is not attributable to any particular age group.

Games consoles connected to a television and handheld/portable games consoles are the most commonly-used devices for gaming; used by at least half of all children in each age group. Compared to 2011, however, children aged 8-11 are now less likely to play games on handheld consoles (67% vs. 77%). In comparison to these main devices for games playing, fewer children ever play games using a computer, laptop or netbook: around three in ten 5-7s (33%), two in five 8-11s (40%) and around two in five 12-15s (46%). Compared to 2011, children aged 8-11 are also less likely to play games on a computer, laptop or netbook (40% vs. 48%).

Around one in ten 5-7s (13%), one in five 8-11s (18%) and three in ten 12-15s (34%) play games using a mobile phone. The proportion of 12-15s who ever play games using a mobile phone has increased since 2011 (34% vs. 23%). This is likely to be due to the increased uptake of smartphones among 12-15s, as two in five children with a smartphone ever play games on their phone (44%) compared to one in five with another type of mobile phone (20%).

While less than one in ten children in any age group play games on a tablet computer, the proportion using this device for gaming has increased for each age group since 2011 (6% vs. 1% for 5-7s, 8% vs. 3% for 8-11s, 8% vs. 4% for 12-15s). The proportion of children playing games using a portable media player (such as an iPod Touch) is unchanged since 2011.

Boys are more likely than girls to use any of the devices for gaming that we asked about among 5-7s (90% vs. 76%), 8-11s (94% vs. 88%) and 12-15s (98% vs. 74%). There has been a decline in gaming among girls aged 5-15 (80% vs. 86%). This overall decline since 2011 among girls is driven by the decline in gaming among girls aged 12-15 (74% vs. 85%).

Much of the overall difference in gaming between boys and girls aged 5-15 continues to be due to the higher use by boys of games consoles connected to a television (84% boys vs. 62% girls). Boys are also more likely than girls to play games on a portable games console (64% vs. 59%) and on a computer, laptop or netbook (43% vs. 37%).

Across the socio-economic groups, children in AB households (where take-up of tablet computers is higher) are more likely than all children to use a tablet computer for gaming (13% vs. 7%), while use of a portable media player for gaming is higher than the average among children in C2 households (13% vs. 9%), despite there being no difference in take-up of portable media players among this group. Children in DE households are less likely than all children to use three devices for gaming: a computer, laptop or netbook (34% vs. 40%), a tablet computer (3% vs. 7%) and a portable media player (5% vs. 9%).

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20 Figures 29 and 30 show six out of the eight devices we asked about, the two devices not shown (PDA and MP3 player) are only ever used by under 4% of all children aged 5-15.
Figure 29: Devices used for gaming, by age: 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012

Games console connected to a TV

Hand held games console

Computer, laptop or netbook

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Aged 5-15</th>
<th>Aged 5-7</th>
<th>Aged 8-11</th>
<th>Aged 12-15</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

QP72– Does your child ever play games at home in any of these ways? (prompted responses, multi-coded) – only showing responses by 4% or more ** Prior to 2011 the question asked about playing games on a computer or laptop only


Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012

Figure 30: Devices used for gaming, by age: 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012

Mobile phone

Tablet (added in 2010)

Portable media player

None/Do not play games at home

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Aged 5-15</th>
<th>Aged 5-7</th>
<th>Aged 8-11</th>
<th>Aged 12-15</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

QP72– Does your child ever play games at home in any of these ways? (prompted responses, multi-coded) – only showing responses by 4% or more **


Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012
Devices used for gaming by children aged 3-4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Device Type</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hand held games console</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Games console connected to a TV</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PC/laptop/netbook</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile phone</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tablet computer</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portable media player</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do not play games at home on a gaming device</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: Parents of children aged 3-4 (190)

Parents of children aged 5-15 who use any of the devices for gaming were also asked whether their child ever plays games at home over the internet. A significant minority of children who play games have ever played online; one in five 5-7s (18%), three in ten 8-11s (29%) and slightly more than two in five 12-15s (46%).

Following an increase in 2011, children aged 8-11 who play games at all are less likely to play games online at home (29% in 2012 vs. 36% in 2011). There is no change for 5-7s or 12-15s.

Among those children who ever play games, playing online is more likely among boys, with this difference driven by boys aged 12-15, who are more likely than girls to play in this way (57% vs. 32%). Online gaming does not differ across the socio-economic groups, however.

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27 In 2010 the question referred specifically to single or multiplayer games over the internet, but these references were removed from 2011 onwards.
Parents of children aged 5-15 who ever play games online at home were asked about the ways in which their child played these games online: playing games on their own against the computer or games player, playing against someone else in the same room as them, playing against someone else they know personally who is playing elsewhere, or playing against one or more people they do not know personally who are playing elsewhere.

Figure 32 shows that the majority of children in each age group who play games online play on their own/against the computer or games player, accounting for over four in five 5-7s (85%), close to seven in ten 8-11s (66%) and seven in ten 12-15s (72%). This type of online gaming has decreased for 8-11s since 2011 (66% vs. 77%).

Playing against someone elsewhere who is known personally to the child increases with the age of the child, with this type of gaming undertaken by one in ten 5-7s (13%), two in five 8-11s (38%) and three in five 12-15s (58%). There is less difference across the age groups in the incidence of playing against someone in the same room; accounting for one in five 5-7s (23%), three in ten 8-11s (31%) and two in five 12-15s (44%).

A minority of parents of children who play games online at home say their child plays against one or more other people playing elsewhere, whom they do not know personally. This type of online gaming is ever undertaken by one in ten 5-7s (11%), one in five 8-11s (19%) and three in ten 12-15s (34%). Since 2011, 8-11s who play games online are more likely to play games against people they do not know personally (19% vs. 10%)
Boys and girls aged 5-15\textsuperscript{28} are equally likely to play games online on their own. Boys who play games online are, however, more likely than girls to play against someone known to them playing elsewhere (52\% vs. 34\%), against someone in the same room (41\% vs. 30\%), and against someone not known to them who is playing elsewhere (31\% vs. 17\%).

Figure 32: Types of online game playing undertaken by children, by age: 2011 and 2012\textsuperscript{29}

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure32}
\caption{Types of online game playing undertaken by children, by age: 2011 and 2012}
\end{figure}

QP76– When your child plays games at home over the internet, which of these describes how they are playing?

\begin{tabular}{llllllllllll}
 & \multicolumn{2}{c}{Aged 5-15} & \multicolumn{2}{c}{Aged 8-11} & \multicolumn{2}{c}{Aged 12-15} & \multicolumn{2}{c}{Aged 5-15} & \multicolumn{2}{c}{Aged 8-11} & \multicolumn{2}{c}{Aged 12-15} \\
\hline
2011 & 74 & 66 & 77 & 59 & 36 & 31 & 72 & 58 & 38 & 26 & 45 & 28 \\
2012 & 72 & 71 & 72 & 58 & 38 & 31 & 72 & 59 & 38 & 26 & 44 & 28 \\
\end{tabular}

Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012

\textsuperscript{28} Due to low sample sizes it is not possible to look at differences by gender within each age group.

\textsuperscript{29} The base of interviews with parents of children aged 3-4 who play games online at home is too low for further analysis (9).
Section 4

Children’s use of media

This section describes the use that children make of different media, along with a snapshot of the affinity that children have for each medium. It details the self-reported levels of consumption for each medium, and the types of activities carried out, including any social networking activity.

Key findings

- At an overall level, children aged 5-15 continue to spend most time watching TV. Estimated weekly consumption of television has not changed since 2011.
- However, an increase in estimated time spent using the internet by 12-15s in 2012 means this group now spend as much time using the internet as they do watching television (17.1 hours for the internet vs. 17.3 hours for television).
- 12-15s continue to have higher mobile phone consumption than 8-11s, and both age groups say they make more phone calls and send more text messages than they did in 2011.
- Children with a smartphone send more messages and make more calls per week than children with another type of mobile phone, and also tend to use their phone for a broader range of activities.
- 12-15s are now twice as likely to say that, of all the media they use regularly, they would most miss their mobile phone (39%) compared to the next most-missed media of using the internet (21%) or watching television (20%). This rises to half (52%) of 12-15s with a smartphone.
- 14% of 8-11s and 44% of 12-15s with a mobile phone, who watch television and go online at home, say they undertake some form of cross-media multi-tasking “most times” when using these media, such as texting or browsing the internet while watching TV.
- In 2012 8-11s are more likely than they were in 2011 to watch/download user-generated content online.
- 22% of 8-11s and 80% of 12-15s say they have an active social networking profile, unchanged since 2011. 26% of 12-15s say they have set up a Twitter profile.
- Among parents of children aged 8-15 with a profile on Facebook, 72% are aware that there is a minimum age requirement, and 24% are aware that the child needs to be 13 years old.
- Using social networking sites to communicate with people not directly known to the child is more likely than in 2011, both for 8-11s (25% vs. 12%) and 12-15s (34% vs. 24%).
- On average, 8-11s with an active social networking site profile say they have 92 friends, with 12-15s having three times as many; 286 friends. Children aged 8-11 estimate that they have not met around one in eight (12%) of these friends in person (an average of 11 people per child) while 12-15s say they have not met around one in four (25%) - an average of 72 people per child.
- Three in four 12-15s (75%) with an active social networking site profile are aware of the function for reporting worrying, nasty or offensive content (that they don’t like) to the website.
Media consumption

Children aged 12-15 now spend as much time using the internet as they do watching television

We asked parents of younger children (aged 5-11) and older children themselves (aged 12-15) to estimate the hours spent using television, radio, internet and games players/ consoles at home on a typical school day and on a typical weekend day.\(^{30}\)

Figure 33 shows that overall, children spend more time watching television than using other media. This is driven by children aged 5-7 and 8-11. Among children aged 12-15 there has been an increase in the time spent using the internet in 2012 (17.1 vs. 14.9 hours in 2011). This increase means that 12-15s now spend as much time using the internet as watching television.

As has been the case each year since 2009, children aged 5-7 spend more hours per week gaming than using the internet. Children aged 8-11 now spend less time gaming than in 2011 (8.0 vs. 9.8 hours in 2011), with the time spent gaming now matching the time spent using the internet.

Figure 33: Estimated weekly hours of media consumption at home among users, by age: 2012

\(^{30}\)Estimates of hours shown are not based on all children, but on all children who use each of the media at home. Because these estimates are self-reported it is likely that a degree of under- and over-reporting will be present and the estimates should be taken as indicative only.
**Estimated weekly hours of media consumption at home by children aged 3-4**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Media Type</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Television</td>
<td>15.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaming</td>
<td>6.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: Parents of children aged 3-4 whose child ever watches television (186) or plays games on any device at home (101)

**Time spent watching television at home has remained consistent among 5-15s since 2007**

Figures 34 and 35 show the weekly hours of estimated television consumption since 2007.

In 2012, the estimated time spent watching television increases by age group. Parents of children aged 5-7 state that their child watches 14.6 hours of television per week, lower than the estimated volume for those aged 8-11 (15.7 hours), which in turn is lower than the estimated volume for those aged 12-15 (17.3 hours). The volume of television watched in 2012 has not changed for any age group or socio-economic group.

In 2012 there are no differences by household socio-economic group and time. spent watching television also does not differ between girls and boys in any age group.

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31 The base of users aged 3-4 is too low to report on consumption for internet (71) and radio (63).

32 BARB television viewing data gives higher average viewing per week – see text box below and Annex 2. While the age-groups are not directly comparable, in 2011 4-15s watched an average of 17 hours and 9 minutes each week, 4-9s watched 17 hours and 34 minutes, and 10-15s watched 16 hours and 31 minutes.

QP11A-B/ QC3A-B – How many hours would you say he/she spends watching TV on a typical school day/on a weekend day? (spontaneous responses, single coded)
Base: Parents of children aged 5-11 who watch TV at home and children aged 12-15 who watch TV at home (VARIABLE BASE). Significance testing shows any difference between 2011 and 2012
Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012

QP11A-B/ QC3A-B – How many hours would you say he/ she spends watching TV on a typical school day/ on a weekend day? (spontaneous responses, single coded)
Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012.
**Children’s viewing behaviour**

Using BARB data, the following summarises background information about children’s viewing behaviour. A detailed chart pack is available in Annex 2.

**Time of day and quantity of viewing**

In 2011 children aged 4 to 15 watched an average of 17 hours and 9 minutes of television per week, slightly down on 17 hours and 34 minutes per week in 2010 but up 1 hour and 24 minutes from 2005.

Children’s viewing peaks between 8pm and 8.30pm, and the majority of children’s total viewing takes place before the 9pm watershed.

Looking at post-watershed viewing, specifically 9pm to midnight, the proportion of children watching television during this time has remained steady since 2010 at 14%. In 2007 the figure was 12%. Among 4-9 year-olds the figure rose from 8% in 2007 to 9% in 2011. Among the 10-15 age group it was 15% in 2007, increasing to 18% in 2010 and returning to 15% in 2011.

**Location and supervision of viewing**

The proportion of viewing attributed to the television set in the child’s bedroom has increased from around 3% of total viewing among all children in 2007 to 5% in 2011. Older children are more likely than younger children to watch in their bedrooms.

Among children aged 4-15 over a fifth (21%) watch television alone in the hour immediately after the watershed (between 21:00-22:00). Among 4-9s this figure is 14%; among 10-15s it is a quarter (25%).

**Type of viewing**

Over two-thirds (67%) of total viewing takes place in ‘adult’ airtime and this has remained fairly stable since 2005. This varies significantly by age, increasing to 80% among 10-15 year-olds. A third (33%) of viewing is attributed to children’s programming, with the majority (22%) attributed to commercial children’s airtime and 11% attributed to non-commercial children’s airtime.

**Live and time-shifted viewing**

The vast majority of time is spent viewing live broadcasts (86% among all children aged 4-15). This has changed little since 2007. Older children (10-15) time-shift a higher proportion of their viewing (16%) compared to younger children aged 4-9 (13%).

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33 Note that on 1 January 2010 the new BARB measurement panel of 5,100 homes went live. Any comparison between trend data based on the old panel with that based on the new panel should therefore be made with caution.

34 This consists of all the main terrestrial channels (BBC One, BBC Two, ITV1, Channel 4 and Channel 5) excluding the slots when children’s programmes are shown, combined with all digital channels except for the dedicated children’s channels.
12-15 year-olds and those in AB and C1 households spent more time online than in 2011

The estimated weekly volume of internet use at home increases with the age of the child (6.0 hours for 5-7s, 8.1 hours for 8-11s and 17.1 hours for 12-15s). The estimated time spent online at home by 12-15s has increased since 2011 (17.1 hours in 2012 vs. 14.9 in 2011). There has also been an increase in the estimated weekly volume of internet use at home among children in AB (11.0 vs. 9.2 hours) and C1 (12.1 vs. 10.5 hours) households. Compared to all children aged 5-15, no particular socio-economic group has a higher estimated volume of use in a typical week. However, those in C2 households have lower estimated use, spending 10.3 hours online, compared to 11.5 hours for all children.

Time spent using the internet at home does not differ between girls and boys in any age group.

**Figure 36: Estimated weekly hours of internet consumption, by age: 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012**

QP29A-B/ QC13A-B – How many hours would you say he/ she spends using the internet at home on a typical school day/ on a weekend day? (spontaneous question, single coded)
Base: Parents of children aged 5-11 who use the internet at home and children aged 12-15 who use the internet at home (VARIABLE BASE).
Significance testing shows any differences between 2011 and 2012.
Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012

35 Further information about the types of online activities that may have contributed to this uplift in time spent online are discussed in the next section (Figures 56-61).
8-11 year olds spent less time gaming than in 2011

As with television viewing and use of the internet, the estimated weekly hours spent gaming at home increases with the age of the child (6.6 hours for 5-7s, 8.0 hours for 8-11s and 11.0 hours for 12-15s).

While 2011 saw an increase in the time spent gaming by each age group, this has not continued in 2012. There has been no change in the estimated time spent gaming by 5-7s and 12-15s since 2011, and there has been a decrease among 8-11s (8.0 hours in 2012 vs. 9.8 in 2011).

In 2012, no particular socio-economic group is estimated to spend more or less time gaming in a typical week. There has been no change in the estimated weekly hours spent gaming for any socio-economic group since 2011.

Boys spend more time than girls game-playing in a typical week, across all 5-15s (10.8 vs. 6.2 hours), and within each age group.

QP73A-B/ QC45A-B – How many hours would you say he/she spends playing these games on a typical school day/ on a weekend day?

Base: Parents of children aged 5-11 whose child plays games on a games console, PC or laptop etc and children aged 12-15 (VARIABLE BASE).

Significance testing shows any change between 2011 and 2012.

Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012

QP73A-B/ QC45A-B – How many hours would you say he/she spends playing these games on a typical school day/ on a weekend day?  
Base: Parents of children aged 5-11 whose child plays games on a games console, PC or laptop etc and children aged 12-15 (VARIABLE BASE).  
Significance testing shows any change between 2011 and 2012  
Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012
Time spent listening to the radio does not differ by age

Unlike other media used at home, there is no difference in the estimated time spent listening to radio at home across the three age groups, or across the socio-economic groups. Girls aged 5-7 spend more time listening to radio at home compared to boys (6.7 hours vs. 4.6 hours).

Figure 40: Estimated weekly hours of radio consumption, by age: 2007-2012

QP22A-B/ QC8A-B – How many hours would you say he/she listens to the radio on a typical school day/ on a weekend day?
Base: Parents of children aged 5-11 who listen to the radio at home and children aged 12-15 who listen to the radio at home (VARIABLE BASE).
Significance testing shows any difference between 2011 and 2012
Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012
Parents of children aged 5-7, and children aged 8-11 and 12-15, were also asked about the volume of calls made and text messages sent through their mobile phone in a typical week. Those with a smartphone were also asked about the number of instant messages (IM) sent using their phone in a typical week.

Mobile phone consumption (voice calls, text messages and instant messaging) is greater for children aged 12-15 than for 8-11s.

Since 2011, the estimated volume of calls made using a mobile phone in a typical week has increased, both for 8-11s (10 vs. 6 calls in 2011) and for 12-15s (21 vs. 16 calls). Girls and

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36 Since 2011 children aged 8-11 have been asked to estimate the volume of calls they make and text messages they send, rather than asking these questions of their parents.
37 Figure 42 shows only data relating to 8-11s and 12-15, as there were too few 5-7s with their own mobile phone to report on (40).
38 In 2011 children and parents were asked to include any messages that were sent via any instant messaging (IM) applications such as Ping or BlackBerry Messenger (BBMs) in their estimates of text messages, whereas in previous years the wording of the questions referred only to text messages. In 2012 the question regarding text messages asked users to exclude instant messaging from estimates, with a separate question about the volume of instant messages asked of those with a smartphone.
boys in each age group make a similar number of calls in a typical week, and no particular socio-economic group makes a higher or lower volume of calls.

Since 2011 the estimated volume of text messages sent has almost doubled for 8-11s (41 vs. 23 texts in 2011) and more than doubled for 12-15s (193 vs. 91 texts). This increase since 2011 in the volume of text messages sent applies to both boys and girls in each age group.

Among those aged 12-15 with a smartphone, an estimated 187 instant messages (IM) are sent in a typical week. This volume of instant messages is equivalent to the volume of text messages sent by all 12-15s with a mobile phone (193 texts) and the volume of text messages sent by all children with a smartphone (195 texts).


As in 2011, girls aged 12-15 send more messages in a typical week than boys (221 vs. 164 texts in 2012). This gender difference is not seen among 8-11s, and no particular socio-economic group sends a higher or lower volume of texts.

Girls and boys with a smartphone send a similar number of instant messages in a typical week, and no particular socio-economic group has a higher or lower volume of instant messaging.

This increase in the number of text messages sent between 2011 and 2012 is apparent even though in 2011 parents of 5-11s and children aged 12-15 with a smartphone were asked to include in their estimates messages sent through instant messaging applications, and in 2012 were asked to exclude these types of messages in their estimate.
Figure 43: Weekly calls made, text messages sent and instant messages sent by users, by gender within age: 2012

Those with a smartphone aged 12-15 make more calls in a typical week than those with another type of mobile phone (24 vs. 15 calls). They also send a higher volume of text messages in a typical week (230 vs. 98). Increased ownership of smartphones appears to be driving an increase in the volume of text messages sent. This could be due to smartphones being more likely than other types of phone to be on a post-pay tariff with inclusive text bundles.
Affinity with media activities

12-15s are now twice as likely to say they would miss using a mobile phone compared to the next most-missed media

Television continues to be the medium that children aged 5-15 say they would miss the most, out of all the activities undertaken regularly. However, there are differences by age: 5-7s are most likely to say they would miss television (53%), as are 8-11s, representing an increase since 2011 for the 8-11 age group (46% in 2012 vs. 39% in 2011).

Children aged 12-15 are most likely to say they would miss their mobile phone, with an increase since 2011 for this age group (39% vs. 28%). Children aged 12-15 are now twice as likely to say they would miss their mobile phone, compared to the next most-missed media of using the internet (21%) or watching television (20%).

It seems likely that the increase in affinity with mobile phones among 12-15 year olds in 2012 is due to the increase in uptake of smartphones for this age group, shown earlier in Figure 4.

Affinity with media activities does not vary by socio-economic group.
Figure 45: Media activity children aged 5-15 would miss the most: 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012


QC55 – Which one of the things you do almost every day, would you miss doing the most if it got taken away? (Prompted responses, single coded)
Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012

QC55 – Which one of the things you do almost every day, would you miss doing the most if it got taken away? (Prompted responses, single coded)
Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012
As shown in Figure 47, when comparing by gender, boys in each age group are more likely than girls to say they would miss playing computer games (33% vs. 13% for 5-7s, 32% vs. 11% for 8-11s and 26% vs. 3% for 12-15s). In contrast, girls aged 5-7 and 8-11 are more likely to miss watching television (58% vs. 47% for 5-7s, 52% vs. 40% for 8-11s). Girls aged 5-7 are also more likely to miss reading magazines, comics or newspapers (7% vs. 1%) while girls aged 8-11 are more likely to miss listening to an MP3 player like an iPod (3% vs. 0%). Girls aged 12-15 are twice as likely as boys to miss using a mobile phone (53% vs. 24%).

Figure 47: Media activity children would miss the most, by gender within age: 2012

Figure 48 looks at the most-missed media among 12-15s by the type of mobile phone they have. Half of those with a smartphone (52%) say they would miss using a mobile phone the most, compared to one in five of those with another type of mobile phone (19%). In contrast, those with another type of mobile phone are more than twice as likely to miss watching television (33% v. 12%).
More than half of girls aged 12-15 with a mobile phone (58%) say they would miss their mobile phone the most, compared to around one in four boys (27%). Boys aged 12-15 with a mobile phone are more likely to miss playing computer or video games (27% vs. 2%).

This difference by gender is even greater when looking at 12-15s with a smartphone. Half of all 12-15s with a smartphone (52%) say they would miss using a mobile phone the most, with the next most-missed medium being using the internet (18%). Mobile phones are the most-missed medium for both boys and girls aged 12-15 with a smartphone, but girls are almost twice as likely to say this (66% vs. 35%). Boys aged 12-15 with a smartphone are more likely than girls to say they would miss playing computer games (30% vs. 2%). Just one in ten (12%) 12-15s with a smartphone say they would miss watching television the most.

It is not possible to analyse within gender among 12-15s with another type of mobile phone due to low base sizes for boys (83) and girls (58).
Figure 49: Media activity mobile phone users and smartphone users aged 12-15 would miss the most, by gender: 2012

Cross-media multi-tasking

More than one in three girls aged 12-15 multi-task across media ‘most times’ when watching television

In 2012, children aged 8-15 who watch television at home were asked to say whether they go online (using any type of device) or use their mobile phone to talk or send messages when they watch television at home on a TV set. Children aged 8-15 who go online at home where subsequently asked whether they watch television or use a mobile phone (to talk or send messages) when they go online. To complete the picture, children aged 8-15 with a mobile phone were also asked whether they watch television or go online at home when using their mobile. These questions were added to the study to understand the extent to which children multi-task across the media they use. One in three 8-15s (34%) with a mobile phone, who watch television and go online at home, undertake any type of cross-media multi-tasking ‘most times’ when using these media. This is more likely for 12-15s than for 8-11s (44% vs. 14%). There are no differences by gender within each age group or by household socio-economic group.

Figure 50 shows that one in four children (25%) aged 8-15 who use a mobile phone, watch television and go online at home, multi-task ‘most times’ when watching TV. A similar

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41 Children were also asked how frequently they multi-tasked, so whether they did this most times, sometimes or not at all. We are reporting on ‘most times’ rather than ‘ever’ as we want to establish the extent to which multi-tasking is an inherent part of their media consumption experience.
proportion multi-task when going online at home (23%). Both these types of multi-tasking are more likely than any multi-tasking ‘most times’ when using a mobile phone.

As with the incidence of any cross-media multi-tasking, each type of multi-tasking is more likely among 12-15s than among 8-11s (32% vs. 10% ‘most times’ when watching TV, 31% vs. 7% ‘most times’ when going online and 22% vs. 5% ‘most times’ when using a mobile phone).

There is only one difference by gender within age; girls aged 12-15 are more likely than boys to multi-task ‘most times’ when watching television (37% vs. 27%). There are no differences by socio-economic group.

**Figure 50: Incidence of multi–tasking when watching television, going online or using a mobile phone, by age, gender and socio-economic group: 2012**

![Figure 50: Incidence of multi–tasking when watching television, going online or using a mobile phone, by age, gender and socio-economic group: 2012](image)

QC56 QC41 QC53 – Thinking about when you watch TV at home on a TV set, do you ever (watch TV…. Thinking about when you watch TV at home on a TV set, do you ever …./ Thinking about when you use your phone for calls, texts or instant messages at home, do you ever…. (prompted responses, single coded)

Base: Children aged 8-15 who use a mobile phone and watch television and go online at home (710 aged 8-15, 228 aged 8-11, 482 aged 12-15, 110 boys aged 8-11, 118 girls aged 8-11, 239 boys aged 12-15, 243 girls aged 12-15, 123 AB, 202 C1, 168 C2, 217 DE) – significance testing shows any differences by gender within age or by socio-economic group compared to all 5-15s

Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012

**Types of activity carried out on a mobile phone**

**Children aged 12-15 with a mobile phone are now more likely to use their phone at least weekly for taking or sharing photos or for taking videos**

Children aged 8-15 with their own mobile phone were prompted with a range of types of use and were asked to say which they ever do with their mobile phone.

In 2012 the majority of 8-11s have ever used their phone for making or receiving calls (91%), sending or receiving texts (91%) and taking photos (61%). Half have ever used their mobile phone to play games (50%) or to listen to music (48%). Three mobile phone activities ever
undertaken by a minority of 8-11s are more likely since 2011: sending/ receiving photos (44% vs. 33%), taking videos (43% vs. 29%) and visiting websites (20% vs. 12%).

Among 8-11s with a mobile phone, girls are more likely than boys to say they have ever used their phone for sending or receiving texts (95% vs. 86%).

Among 12-15s with a mobile phone, there are nine activities that a majority have ever used their mobile phone for, and several of these have increased in popularity since 2011. These are: making or receiving calls (97%), sending or receiving texts (97%), taking photos (86%, an increase from 74% in 2011), listening to music (76% vs. 66% in 2011), sending/ receiving photos (65% vs. 57%), playing games on the phone (62% vs. 53%), taking videos (63% vs. 55%), visiting social networking sites (55% vs. 35%) and visiting websites (53% vs. 31%). Close to half of 12-15s ever use their phone for sending/ receiving video clips, and this is also more likely since 2011 (47% vs. 34%).

The types of activity do not vary by socio-economic group in 2012.

Figure 51 shows the proportion of children aged 8-11 and 12-15 who have ever carried out the top ten of the 19 activities with their mobile phone. The remaining nine activities ever undertaken by mobile phone users aged 8-11 and 12-15 are: use instant messaging applications (12% 8-11, 44% 12-15), download apps/ applications (14%, 39%), look at videos or clips posted by other people on sites like YouTube (13% 8-11, 37% 12-15), play games over the internet using your phone (11%, 27%), send or receive emails (8%, 28%), watch TV programmes or clips (9%, 26%), update your location on a service like FourSquare or Facebook Places (3%, 27%), put photos or videos on sites like YouTube for others to see (3%, 22%), and send or receive Twitter updates using your phone (2%, 20%).
As shown in Figure 52, among 12-15s with a mobile phone, boys are more likely than girls to say they have ever used their phone for playing games (68% vs. 56%). There are three activities that girls aged 12-15 are more likely to have ever undertaken: visiting social networking sites (61% of girls vs. 49% of boys), visiting websites (58% vs. 47%), and using instant messaging (50% vs. 38%).

Figure 52: Top ten mobile phone activities ever carried out by owners aged 12-15, by gender: 2012

Children were also asked to say how often they do these activities. The three most popular regular activities undertaken on their mobile phone among both 8-11s and 12-15s are: sending/ receiving text messages (65% 8-11s, 89% 12-15s) making/ receiving calls (54% 8-11s, 78% 12-15s) and listening to music (35% 8-11s, 60% 12-15s). The results in Figure 53 show that 12-15s are more likely to use their phone regularly for a wider range of activities compared to 8-11s.

Regular activities among 8-11s are broadly unchanged since 2011, but they are now more likely to visit websites using their phone (12% vs. 4% in 2011) and to use instant messaging (10% vs. 2%).

12-15s are now more likely than in 2011 to use their mobile phone regularly for several activities: listening to music (60% vs. 51% in 2011), taking photos (55% vs. 44%), visiting social networking sites (49% vs. 27%), playing games on the phone (42% vs. 30%), visiting websites (37% vs. 19%), using instant messaging (37% vs. 15%), taking videos (27% vs. 17%), and sending/ receiving photos (26% vs. 16%).

There are few differences by socio-economic group: children aged 8-15 in AB households are more likely than all children aged 8-15 to use their phone on a regular basis to send/
receive texts (89% vs. 81%) while children in DE households are more likely to use their phone to take videos (31% vs. 23%).

Figure 53 shows the proportion of children aged 8-11 and 12-15 who carry out the top ten of the 19 activities with their mobile phone at least once a week.\(^{45}\)

**Figure 53: Top ten mobile phone activities carried out at least once a week by owners, by age: 2012**

![Top ten mobile phone activities chart](chart.png)

In 2012, there are several differences by gender. Girls aged 8-11 are more likely than boys to use their mobile phone on a regular basis to send/receive text messages (72% vs. 57%). Differences between boys and girls are more evident among 12-15s with a mobile phone, as shown in Figure 54. Girls are more likely to use their phone on a regular basis to take photos (62% vs. 48%), visit social networking sites (58% vs. 41%), visit websites (43% vs. 30%), use instant messaging (43% vs. 32%), and send/receive Twitter updates (20% vs. 11%). Boys aged 12-15 are more likely than girls to use their phone on a regular basis to play games loaded on the phone (50% vs. 34%) and to watch TV programmes or clips (16% vs. 8%).

\(^{45}\) Figure 53 shows weekly use of the top ten of the 19 activities that we asked about. The remaining nine activities undertaken at least weekly by mobile phone users aged 8-11 and 12-15 are: look at videos or clips posted by other people on sites like YouTube (5% 8-11, 27% 12-15), download apps/applications (5%, 23%), play games over the internet using your phone (4%, 16%), send or receive emails (4%, 15%), update your location on a service like FourSquare or Facebook Places (2%, 16%), send or receive Twitter updates using your phone (0%, 16%), watch TV programmes or clips (2%, 12%), send or receive video clips (4%, 12%), put photos or videos on sites like YouTube for others to see (1%, 12%).
Children aged 12-15 with a smartphone use their phone for a much broader range of activities

Figure 55 shows the top ten weekly activities undertaken by children aged 12-15 with a smartphone, compared to those aged 12-15 with another type of mobile phone. Smartphone users are more likely to undertake 18 of the 19 activities that we asked about at least weekly.

In terms of online activities undertaken by smartphone users aged 12-15, social networking is the most popular, with 65% doing this at least weekly. This is followed by 50% saying they use instant messaging and 48% saying they visit websites in general.

Where it is possible to make a comparison, since 2011, 12-15s with a smartphone are more likely to use their phone at least weekly for 13 activities: visiting social networking websites (65% vs. 50%), using instant messaging (50% vs. 27%), playing games loaded on the phone (49% vs. 34%), visiting websites (48% vs. 34%), looking at videos or clips posted by other people on sites like YouTube (36% vs. 23%), taking videos (31% vs. 21%), sending/receiving photos (30% vs. 19%), updating their location of a service like FourSquare (22% vs. 12%), playing games online (20% vs. 13%), sending/receiving Twitter updates (20% vs. 10%), putting photos or videos on sites like YouTube for others to see (17% vs. 9%).

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46 It is not possible to also compare those aged 8-11 with a smartphone to those aged 8-11 with another type of mobile phone due to low base sizes among 8-11s with a smartphone (87 children).

47 The one activity undertaken by a similar proportion is: send or receive video clips (13% aged 12-15 with a smartphone vs. 9% aged 12-15 with another type of mobile phone).

48 It is not possible to make comparisons between 2011 and 2012 for downloading apps/applications (including games) as this was added to the questionnaire in 2012.
watching TV programmes or clips (16% vs. 5%), and sending video clips (13% vs. 7%). In contrast, 12-15s with another type of mobile phone are no more likely to undertake any of the activities they were asked about, compared to 2011. Any increased weekly use of mobile phones among 12-15s is therefore being driven by their use of smartphones.

**Figure 55: Top ten mobile phone activities carried out at least once a week, by children aged 12-15 with a smartphone, and by children aged 12-15 with another type of mobile phone: 2012**

![Bar chart showing top ten mobile phone activities carried out at least once a week, by children aged 12-15 with a smartphone, and by children aged 12-15 with another type of mobile phone: 2012](chart.png)

**Breadth of internet activities carried out at home in a typical week**

Children who use the internet at home were prompted with a range of internet activities and asked to say which they ever do online, and how often they do them. In 2012, children were asked about 21 different internet activities. These individual uses have been grouped into 11 types of use, to assess breadth of use of the internet and to enable comparison. These 11 types of use are:

- **Schoolwork/homework.**
- **Information** – relates to general surfing/browsing/looking around the internet, going to the Wikipedia website, visiting blogs.
- **Games** – relates to playing games on websites or online.
- **Watch audio-visual content** – relates to watching or downloading TV programmes or films on websites like BBC iPlayer, 4OD, ITV Player or Sky Player, watching or downloading videos made by people/the general public like on YouTube, watching or downloading music videos.

These activities do not represent an exhaustive list of all the potential activities that children can undertake online.

In 2012 all children who use the internet at home were asked about all activities, regardless of their age. In 2011 children aged 5-7 were asked about 11 of a possible 19 activities.
• Social networking – relates to going to social networking websites like Facebook, Bebo, MySpace or Hi5, sending or receiving Twitter updates.
• Other communication – relates to sending or receiving emails, instant messaging, making or receiving telephone calls using a webcam over the internet, using services like Skype.
• Music – relates to downloading or playing music.
• Avatar sites – relates to going to websites where users can create or play with a character in the online world, like Club Penguin, Moshi Monsters, Habbo, Stardoll or Gaia.
• News – relates to going to sites about news and what is going on in the world.
• Radio – relates to listening to radio over the internet.
• Transactions – relates to buying things online or selling things online.

Younger children are most likely to use the internet for games, while older children are most likely to use it for homework, information or social networking

Figure 56 shows the proportion of internet users who participate in each of the categories above at least weekly.

Among 5-7s, games are the most commonly-mentioned internet activity carried out at least weekly (47%), followed by schoolwork/homework (38%) and avatar sites (33%). Among 8-11s, schoolwork/homework is the most commonly-mentioned internet activity carried out at least weekly (67%), followed by games (51%) and then information (46%). Among 12-15s, schoolwork/homework is the most commonly-mentioned internet activity (82%), followed by information (79%) and social networking (76%).

The only type of use which is equally likely across each age group is games (47% for 5-7s, 51% for 8-11s, 47% for 12-15s). None of the 11 types of use are more likely among 5-7s than among 8-11s, but both 5-7s and 8-11s are more likely than 12-15s to use avatar sites (33% for 5-7s, 36% for 8-11s vs. 15% for 12-15s).

Internet users aged 8-11 are more likely than 5-7s to carry out eight of the 11 types of use at least weekly. The two types of use with the greatest difference between 8-11s and 5-7s are schoolwork/homework (67% vs. 38%) and information (46% vs. 18%).

Internet users aged 12-15 are more likely than 8-11s to carry out nine of the 11 types of use at least weekly. The five types of use with the greatest difference between 12-15s and 8-11s are social networking (79% vs. 19%), other communication (62% vs. 26%), music (53% vs. 19%), information (79% vs. 46%), and watching audio-visual content (70% vs. 37%).

There are a number of differences between boys and girls. Girls aged 5-7 are more likely than boys to use avatar sites (39% vs. 27%) and this is also true of girls aged 8-11 (42% vs. 30%). Girls aged 12-15 are more likely than boys to use the internet at least weekly for schoolwork/homework (87% vs. 76%). Boys aged 12-15 are more likely to use the internet at least weekly for games (60% vs. 34%), but this difference is not found among younger children.

51 Since 2010 the wording used for some of the internet activities has been amended, and some new activities have been added. As a result Figure 56 does not show comparable findings from previous years. Analysis relating to changes over time in those activities undertaken online at least weekly is shown in Figures 57-58.
There are a few differences by socio-economic group in the types of use made of the internet at least weekly. Children in C1 households are more likely than all internet users to use the internet at least weekly for schoolwork/homework (75% vs. 68%), those in AB households are less likely to use the internet at least weekly for social networking (32% vs. 40%), and those in C2 households are less likely to use avatar sites at least weekly (20% vs. 27%).

Figure 56: Types of use of the internet by users at least weekly, by age and socio-economic group: 2012

8-11s are now more likely to watch user-generated videos (on sites like YouTube) at least weekly, while 5-7s are more likely to visit avatar websites

Figure 57 shows the top ten individual internet activities undertaken at least weekly by 5-15s in 2012. Figure 58 then breaks this down among 5-7s, 8-11s and 12-15s, and shows any changes since 2011 for those activities where comparisons are possible.

Since 2011, internet users aged 5-7 are almost twice as likely to use the internet at least weekly for avatar websites (33% vs. 18%). The incidence of the other individual internet activities carried out at least weekly among 5-7s is unchanged since 2011.

Among 8-11s, users are now more likely to use the internet at least weekly to watch/download videos ‘like on YouTube’ (25% vs. 19%). The incidence of the other individual internet activities carried out at least weekly among 8-11s is unchanged since 2011.

As noted in Figure 58, 5-7s were not asked about the activity marked * in 2011.
Five of the top ten individual activities are more likely in 2012 than in 2011 for users aged 12-15: schoolwork/homework (82% vs. 75%), general surfing/browsing (71% vs. 61%), watching/downloading videos 'like on YouTube' (56% vs. 46%), downloading or playing music (53% vs. 45%), and going to a TV channel’s website or TV programme website (28% vs. 20%).

While not shown in Figure 58 (as they fall outside of the top ten online activities), there are a further three online activities that children aged 12-15 are more likely to undertake on a weekly basis than in 2011: watch or download music videos (40% vs. 28%), go to sites about news and what is going on in the world (21% vs. 13%) and make or receive telephone calls using a webcam over the internet using services like Skype (13% vs. 7%). In 2012 there are, therefore, eight online activities that are more likely to be undertaken on a weekly basis by 12-15s, with some of these activities experiencing growth of 10 percentage points or more. This could explain the increase in hours spent online per week in the corresponding time period, shown in Figure 36.

Figure 57: Top ten internet activities carried out at least once a week by 5-15s: 2012

Table showing percentages of activities carried out at least weekly by children aged 5-15.

Aged 5-15

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Schoolwork/homework</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Playing games online</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General surfing/browsing</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social networking websites</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watch/download videos made by people/generic public (YouTube)</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downloading or playing music</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avatar websites</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TV channel/programme website</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go to the Wikipedia website</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instant Messaging</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

QC14A-U: When you’re at home, do you use the internet to do any of these things? Please think about using the internet on any type of computer, mobile phone, games player or media player (prompted responses, single coded) – PERCENTAGES SHOWN REFLECT THOSE THAT UNDERTAKE ACTIVITY AT LEAST WEEKLY.

Base: Children aged 5-15 who use the internet at home (1424 aged 5-15).
Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012.

It cannot be categorically stated that these two measures are related, as an increased likelihood of undertaking an activity online on a weekly basis may not always equate to spending more time online per week.
Figure 58: Top ten internet activities carried out at least once a week, by age: 2012

Figure 59 shows the top ten individual internet activities ever undertaken by 5-15s. Figure 60 then shows this broken out by age and also shows, for the nine individual activities where comparisons are possible, any change since 2011, within age.

The top three activities ever undertaken by 5-15s are the same as the top three weekly activities shown in Figure 57: schoolwork or homework, playing games, and general surfing/browsing. While emailing does not feature in the most popular weekly activities, it is the seventh most popular activity ever undertaken, among users aged 5-15.

Among internet users aged 5-7, two of the top ten individual internet activities ever carried out are more likely than in 2012: avatar websites (46% vs. 38%) and sending/receiving emails (13% vs. 8%). Among 8-11s, users are more now likely to have ever watched/downloaded videos made by people, like on YouTube (45% vs. 38%). There are no changes since 2011 for users aged 12-15 for any of the top ten individual internet activities ever carried out.
Figure 59: Top ten internet activities ever carried out by 5-15s: 2012

- Aged 5-15
- School work/homework
- Playing games online
- General surfing/browsing
- Watch/download videos made by people/general public (YouTube)
- Social networking websites
- Downloading or playing music
- Avatar websites
- Send/receive email
- Go to the Wikipedia website
- TV channel/programme website

QC14A-U- When you’re at home, do you use the internet to do any of these things? Please think about using the internet on any type of computer, mobile phone, games player or media player (prompted responses, single coded) – PERCENTAGES SHOWN REFLECT THOSE THAT EVER UNDERTAKE ACTIVITY AT LEAST WEEKLY
Base: Children aged 5-15 who use the internet at home (1424 aged 5-15).
Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012

Figure 60: Top ten internet activities ever carried out, by age: 2012

- Aged 5-7
- Aged 8-11
- Aged 12-15

QC14A-U- When you’re at home, do you use the internet to do any of these things? Please think about using the internet on any type of computer, mobile phone, games player or media player (prompted responses, single coded) – PERCENTAGES SHOWN REFLECT THOSE THAT EVER UNDERTAKE THE ACTIVITY *Not asked of 5-7s in 2011. **Wording amended in 2012 so cannot compare to 2011.
Base: Children aged 5-15 who use the internet at home (376 aged 5-7, 495 aged 8-11, 553 aged 12-15). Significance testing shows any change between 2011 and 2012.
Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012
There has been an increase in the incidence of watching/ downloading user-generated content online among 8-11s

Since 2011, internet users aged 8-11 and 12-15 have been more likely to watch or download music videos (28% vs. 21% for 8-11s, 58% vs. 51% for 12-15s). Those aged 8-11 are now also more likely to watch or download videos made by people/ the general public, like on YouTube (45% vs. 38%). Close to three in ten 8-11s (28%) and half of 12-15s (51%) say they watch or download TV programmes or films from broadcasters’ websites. 54

As in 2011, there are no differences in the likelihood of ever having undertaken each of these activities by gender within age (when comparing boys aged 8-11 to girls aged 8-11 and boys aged 12-15 to girls aged 12-15) or by household socio-economic group.


Creative and civic activities undertaken online

Four in five of 12-15s with the internet at home have set up a social networking profile, with one in four having set up a profile on Twitter

Children aged 8-11 and 12-15 who use the internet at home were prompted with various types of creative and civic activities associated with digital technology. For each type of activity, they were asked if they had already done it, were interested in doing it, or were not interested in doing it. Figures 62 and 63 show the findings for 8-11s, while Figures 64 and 65 show the findings for 12-15s.

54 The change of wording for this question in 2012 means that the findings are not comparable with those in previous surveys.
No single activity has yet been undertaken by the majority of 8-11s. The most popular activity for this age group is creating an avatar (48%), followed by setting up a social networking profile (23%) and uploading photos to a website (12%).

The majority of 12-15s have set up a profile on a social networking site (81%), making this the most popular creative activity. This is followed by uploading photos to a website (56%). A sizeable minority of 12-15s have experience of creating an avatar that lives or plays in the online world (34%), making a short video and uploading it to a website (22%), and setting up their own website (12%).

Signing an online petition has been undertaken by relatively few 8-11s (2%) and 12-15s (9%). Expressing views online about political or social issues has been undertaken by around one in ten 12-15s (9%).

Before 2012, Twitter had been included in the definition of the ‘other social networking websites’ that were asked about. However, in 2012, children who use the internet at home were asked specifically whether they had set up their own profile on Twitter. While relatively few 8-11s (3%) have done this, one in four 12-15s (26%) have set up a Twitter profile. 12-15s are also more likely to be interested in doing this, compared to 8-11s (16% vs. 11%).

Since 2011, there has been no change in the likelihood of 8-11s undertaking each of the creative or civic activities, although 8-11s are now more likely to say they are interested in setting up a social networking site profile (25% vs. 19%). In 2012, 12-15s are more likely to have expressed views online about political or social issues (9% vs. 5%) and are more likely to be more interested in uploading photos to websites (15% vs. 10%) and setting up websites (26% vs. 20%).

In 2012, there are differences by gender, but only among children aged 12-15. In 2011, girls aged 12-15 were more likely than boys to have set up a social networking site profile. While this is no longer the case, in 2012 they are more likely than boys aged 12-15 to have set up a profile on Twitter (31% vs. 20%). Boys, in contrast, are more likely to say they are not interested in doing this (61% vs. 50%). As in 2011, girls continue to be more likely than boys to have uploaded photos to a website (61% vs. 50%); with 33% of boys saying they are not interested, compared to 23% of girls.

There are few differences when comparing by household socio-economic group. While no more likely to have set up their own website, children aged 8-15 in C1 households are more likely than all aged 8-15 to be interested in doing so (31% vs. 24%).

---

55 This particular activity was only asked of children aged 12-15.
Figure 62: Experience of creative and civic online activities by children aged 8-11: 2009 - 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Done this</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Set up your own page or profile on a website like Facebook, Bebo, MySpace, Tumblr or Hi5</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uploaded photos to a website</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create a character (or avatar) for yourself that lives or plays in the online world</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Set up your own website</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interested in doing this</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Set up your own page or profile on a website like Facebook, Bebo, MySpace, Tumblr or Hi5</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uploaded photos to a website</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create a character (or avatar) for yourself that lives or plays in the online world</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Set up your own website</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not interested</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Set up your own page or profile on a website like Facebook, Bebo, MySpace, Tumblr or Hi5</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uploaded photos to a website</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create a character (or avatar) for yourself that lives or plays in the online world</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Set up your own website</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Don't know</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Set up your own page or profile on a website like Facebook, Bebo, MySpace, Tumblr or Hi5</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uploaded photos to a website</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create a character (or avatar) for yourself that lives or plays in the online world</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Set up your own website</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

QC21 – I’d like to read out a number of things people might do. For each one, could you please tell me if you’ve done it, you’d be interested in doing it, or not interested? (prompted responses, single coded) * Prior to 2012, Twitter was not asked about separately, hence there is no trend data available, instead it was included in the definition of social networking sites.


Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012.
Figure 63: Experience of creative and civic online activities by children aged 8-11: 2009 - 2012

**Made a short video and uploaded it to a website**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Done this</th>
<th>Interested in doing this</th>
<th>Not interested</th>
<th>Don't know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Set up your own weblog/blog**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Done this</th>
<th>Interested in doing this</th>
<th>Not interested</th>
<th>Don't know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Signed an online petition**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Done this</th>
<th>Interested in doing this</th>
<th>Not interested</th>
<th>Don't know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Set up your own Twitter profile**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Done this</th>
<th>Interested in doing this</th>
<th>Not interested</th>
<th>Don't know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

QC21 – I’d like to read out a number of things people might do. For each one, could you please tell me if you’ve done it, you’d be interested in doing it, or not interested? (prompted responses, single coded) * Prior to 2012, Twitter was not asked about separately, hence there is no trend data available, instead it was included in the definition of social networking sites


Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Set up your own page or profile on a website like Facebook, Bebo, MySpace, Tumblr or Hi5</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uploaded photos to a website</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create a character (or avatar) for yourself that lives or plays in the online world</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Set up your own website</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

QC21 – I’d like to read out a number of things people might do. For each one, could you please tell me if you’ve done it, you’d be interested in doing it, or not interested? (prompted responses, single coded) * Prior to 2012, Twitter was not asked about separately, hence there is no trend data available, instead it was included in the definition of social networking sites.


Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012.
Social networking profiles

Overall children aged 12-15 are no more likely to have a social networking site profile in 2012, although there has been an increase among boys aged 12-15

Questions relating specifically to children’s use of social networking sites have been included in Ofcom’s media literacy research since 2007. Figure 66 shows the proportion of children aged 5-15, 5-7\textsuperscript{56}, 8-11 and 12-15 who use the internet at home (on any type of device) and who currently have an active profile on any social networking websites.

Less than one in twenty parents of children aged 5-7 who use the internet at home (2%) say their child has a social networking site profile. Slightly more than one in five 8-11s (22%) say they have a profile, as do four in five 12-15s (80%).

Compared to 2011, there has been no increase in the proportion of children aged 5-7, 8-11 or 12-15 with an active social networking site profile.

\textsuperscript{56} Since 2010 parents of children aged 5-7 were asked whether their child had a profile on a social networking site, but all subsequent questions about children’s use of social networking sites were asked only of children aged 8-11 or 12-15 or their parents.
In 2011, when comparing by gender, girls aged 12-15 were more likely than boys of this age to have an active social networking site profile (80% vs. 70% in 2011). In 2012 this is no longer the case; 79% of boys have an active profile, compared to 82% of girls aged 12-15.

Figure 66 also shows that three in ten children aged 8-12 who use the internet at home say they have a profile on Facebook, Bebo or MySpace (30%). This group of children is of particular interest, as there is a minimum age restriction for setting up a profile (13 years of age) on these three sites. Nearly all the children in this particular group have a profile on Facebook (99%). There has been no change in this incidence since 2011.

**Figure 66: Incidence of children with an active social networking site profile, by age: 2009 - 2012**

Nearly all 8-15s with a social networking site profile have one on Facebook, with growth in the use of Twitter and Tumblr since 2011 for 12-15s

Figure 67 shows that among those with an active social networking site profile, nearly all 8-15s now use Facebook (98% for both 8-11s and 12-15s).

Since 2011, those aged 8-11 and 12-15 with an active social networking profile are less likely to have a profile on Bebo (0% vs. 7% for 8-11s and 8% vs. 14% for 12-15s). In contrast, 12-15s are now more likely to have a profile on Twitter (25% vs. 14%) or on Tumblr (6% vs. 1%).

As a proportion of all children (as distinct from those who use the internet at home), 2% of all 8-11s and 20% of all 12-15s use Twitter. The comparable figures for Facebook show that one in five of all 8-11s (18%) and three-quarters of all 12-15s (76%) have a Facebook profile.
Figure 67: Social networking websites where children aged 8-15 currently have an active profile: 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012 (of those with an active profile)

As a proportion of all children (2012)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facebook</th>
<th>Twitter</th>
<th>YouTube</th>
<th>Google +</th>
<th>Bebo</th>
<th>MySpace</th>
<th>Tumblr</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012

Figure 68 shows the incidence of having an active social networking site profile, on any of Facebook/ Bebo/ MySpace, among home internet users for each year group from age 8 to age 15. While 21% of children aged 10 who use the internet at home have a profile on any of Facebook/ Bebo or MySpace, this incidence doubles to 42% among children aged 11, potentially in line with the move from primary to secondary school. This then increases by a further twenty percentage points: 64% of children aged 12 who use the internet have a profile on one of these three sites.
While over seven in ten parents whose child has a Facebook profile know there is a minimum age requirement, just one in five know what that age is

In 2012, an additional question was added to the survey to establish whether parents were aware of the minimum age requirement for using the Facebook website. Figure 69 shows that of those parents whose child has an active profile on Facebook, around seven in ten (71% for 8-11s and 72% for 12-15s) are aware that there is a minimum age requirement. However, only one in five parents (22% for 8-11s and 24% for 12-15s) are aware that the minimum age for having a profile is 13 years old.

Among parents of children with an under-age profile on Facebook (children aged 8-12), 28% are unaware that there is a minimum age requirement for using Facebook. Twenty-nine per cent think that their child needs to be older than 13 to have a profile.

Awareness of the minimum age does not differ between parents of boys and girls aged 12-15, or between parents of 5-15s in the ABC1 socio-economic group compared to C2DEs. However, ABC1 parents are more likely than C2DE parents to believe that the minimum age requirement is less than 13 years of age (16% vs. 8%).

While not shown in Figure 69, awareness that there is a minimum age requirement for Facebook is higher among parents of 5-15s (whose child has an active profile on Facebook) who have any online parental controls set on the PC/laptop or netbook that their child uses at home, than among parents who do not have such controls in place (79% vs. 68%). Parents with online controls set are also more likely to know that the minimum age is 13 years old (31% vs. 18%).

57 Given that nearly all children aged 8-15 with an active social networking profile have one on Facebook (98%), this question was asked specifically about Facebook.
58 Low base sizes prevent analysis by gender among 8-11s.
Figure 69: Awareness of minimum age requirements for having a profile on Facebook: 2012

12-15s have never met, in person, one in four of the friends they have listed on their social networking site profiles.

In 2012, children aged 8-15 with an active social networking site profile were asked to estimate how many people they have listed as friends across any social networking sites that they use, and were then asked to estimate how many of these friends they had met in person. Figure 70 shows the mean number of friends. Children aged 8-11 have an average of 92 friends, and children aged 12-15 say they have, on average, 286 friends. There are no differences by gender among children aged 12-15,59 or among children aged 8-15 by socio-economic group when comparing those in ABC1 households to those in C2DE households60.

Children aged 8-11 estimate that they have not met around one in eight (12%) of these friends in person (an average of 11 people per child) while 12-15s say they have not met around one in four (25%) - an average of 72 people per child.

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59 Low base sizes prevent analysis by gender among 8-11s.
60 Low base sizes prevent analysis by all four socio-economic groups among 8-15s.
Among children who have a social networking profile, two in three parents are friends with their child on that site

Ninety-six per cent of parents of a child aged 8-15 with an active social networking site profile are aware that their child has such a profile. Slightly more than nine in ten (94%) parents of a child aged 8-12 with a profile on Facebook/ Bebo/ MySpace (sites with a minimum age requirement of 13) are aware of their child's profile. These measures have not changed since 2011.

Since 2011 parents of children aged 8-15 whose child has a social networking site profile (and who were aware of this profile) were asked whether they themselves had a profile on any of the same sites. If so, they were asked whether they were listed as a friend of the child's on any of these sites.

In 2012, one in four (25%) of these parents do not have a social networking site profile, with a further 3% having a profile on a site that is not used by their child. Across all of these parents, therefore, seven in ten (71%) have a profile on the same social networking site as their child.

As shown in Figure 71, the incidence of the parent being listed as a friend of their child is very high: accounting for 67% within the 71% where the parent and child use the same social networking site (or 94% of the possible cases where the parent could be listed as a friend).
In 2012 there are no differences by gender among 12-15s or among 8-15s by the socio-economic groups shown\textsuperscript{61}.

Since 2011, parents of children aged 12-15 are more likely to be listed as a friend of their child (67\% vs. 59\%). This growth is driven by parents of boys aged 12-15 (68\% vs. 57\%). Compared to 2011, ABC1 parents are now more likely to be listed as a friend (69\% vs. 59\%).

**Figure 71: Whether a parent is listed as a friend of their child on any social networking sites: 2011 and 2012**

Parents of 8-15s who are aware that their child has a profile on a social networking website were asked whether they check what their child is doing online when visiting these types of sites.

As shown in Figure 72, parents of children aged 8-11 are more likely than parents of children aged 12-15 to check what their child is doing on social networking sites (89\% vs. 76\%). There are no differences in whether checks are made by the child’s gender or by the household socio-economic group.

Nine in ten parents of children aged 8-12 with a profile on either Facebook/ Bebo/ MySpace also check what their child is doing when visiting these sites.

\textsuperscript{61} Low base sizes prevent analysis by all gender with age among 8-11s or by all four socio-economic groups among 8-15s.
Those parents who are listed as a friend of their child on any social networking site are more likely than other parents to say that they check what their child is doing when visiting these sites (86% vs. 65%).

There has been no change in the proportion of parents who make checks since 2011, for either 8-11s or 12-15s, in spite of parents of 12-15s now being more likely to be listed as a friend of their child.

**Figure 72: Parental checking of social networking site activity, by age: 2009 - 2012**

Social networking activities

Children aged 8-15 with a social networking site profile are more likely than in 2011 to talk to people who are not directly known to them

Children aged 8-15 with an active social networking site profile were prompted with a list of activities that they could undertake when visiting these types of website. Figure 73 shows the responses for two specific activities: contact with people who are friends of friends, and contact with people they have never met in person. We focus on these two responses in particular, as they both represent potential contact with people who are not directly known to the child.

Both 8-11s and 12-15s are more likely to use social networking sites for contact with friends of friends than for contact with people they have never met. One in five (20%) 8-11s and three in ten (29%) 12-15s contact friends of friends in this way, compared to 7% of 8-11s and 15% of 12-15s who say they contact people they have never met. In 2012 there are no
differences by gender among 12-15s. There are also no differences by household socio-economic group.

Compared to 2011, children aged 8-11 and 12-15 are now more likely to contact people who are friends of friends (20% vs. 9% for 8-11s and 29% vs. 20% for 12-15s). Children aged 12-15 are also more likely to contact people who they have never met in person (15% vs. 8%).

By combining the responses of the children who said they used social networking sites for contact with friends of friends, or people they had never met in person, around one in four 8-11s (25%) and one in three 12-15s (34%) are in contact with people who are potentially not directly known to them. Compared to 2011, both 8-11s and 12-15s are now more likely to use social networking sites for contact with people potentially not known to them (25% vs. 12% for 8-11s and 34% vs. 24% for 12-15s).

When looking at the responses for children aged 8-12 with an active profile on Facebook/ Bebo/ MySpace, more than one in four of these children talk to people who are potentially not directly known to them (22%), which is not statistically significantly different to the figure in 2011 (15%).

Figure 73: Types of use of social networking sites, by age: 2009-2012

A new question was included in the survey in 2012, asking children aged 12-15 with an active social networking site profile whether they were aware of the function for reporting worrying, nasty or offensive content (that they didn’t like) to the website. Three in four 12-15s (75%) are aware of this function on social media websites, and results do not vary by gender or by socio-economic group.

62 It is not possible to analyse by gender among 8-11s due to low base sizes for boys (55) and girls (54).
Section 5

Knowledge and understanding of media among 8-15s

This section looks at the extent to which older children (aged 8-15) understand their media environment. It looks at children’s confidence in using media and their understanding of different types of television and online content. It assesses their understanding of how search engines operate, their awareness of and understanding of personalised advertising and whether they restrict access to their social networking profiles.

It also looks at their opinions about downloading content, about posting personal information online and the types of checks they make when visiting new websites. It examines children’s preferences for learning about digital technology and their experience of this type of learning through school.

Due to potential comprehension issues, some of these questions were not asked of the youngest children (aged 5-7). A smaller number were not asked of children aged 8 -11. All of the questions were asked of children aged 12-15.

Key findings

- 8-15s feel confident in using the internet for a variety of purposes, including 83% of 8-11 year olds and 93% of 12-15s who say that they are confident staying safe online and 72% of 12-15s who are confident that they can judge whether websites are truthful.
- The majority of 8-11s and 12-15s continue to be able to differentiate between the truthfulness of different types of television and online content.
- 45% of 12-15s who ever use search engines make a critical judgement about search engine results, thinking that some of the sites returned will be truthful and some won’t be. 31% believe information on a website listed by a search engine must be truthful.
- 70% of 12-15s who use search engines are aware that advertisements are sometimes included in the results.
- 45% of 12-15s, after being provided with a description of online personalised advertising, said they were aware of this practice, although there was no consensus as to whether this is a good or a bad thing.
- 56% of internet users aged 8-15 say that in most weeks they only visit websites they have visited before. This is more likely among 8-11s (65%) than among 12-15s (47%).
- 66% of 12-15s say they make checks on websites they have not visited before.
- A substantial minority of 8-11s (17%) and 12-15s (22%) with an active social networking site profile have one which is either open to anyone, or open to friends of friends, potentially including people not directly known to them.
- Children aged 8-12 with a social networking profile on Facebook/ Bebo or MySpace (under-age users of these sites) are now more likely to say their profile can be seen only by their friends (83% vs. 74% in 2011).
- 59% of 12-15s say they would not share their home address details online with anyone, 35% say they would provide it to “friends”, and 5% that they would share it either with friends of friends or with anyone.
Confidence in using the internet

Children aged 8-11 and 12-15 feel confident using the internet for a variety of purposes

Home internet users aged 8-11 and 12-15 were asked how confident they were using a search engine and knowing how to stay safe online. 12-15s were also asked about their confidence in finding what they want when they go online, using the internet to do creative things (like making blogs, sharing photos or uploading videos), judging whether websites they use are truthful, and about their overall confidence as an internet user. Figure 74 shows the findings for 8-11s while Figure 75 shows the findings for 12-15s.

8-11s feel confident using a search engine, with close to half (48%) saying they are very confident. A similar proportion of 8-11s are also very confident in knowing how to stay safe online (47%).

Nearly all 12-15s say they are confident using a search engine or in finding what they want when they go online, with three in four (76%) being very confident using a search engine and three in five (62%) being very confident in finding what they want online. Nearly all 12-15s also feel confident they know how to stay safe online, with more than half feeling very confident (57%).

While 12-15s are less likely to feel confident overall in using the internet to do creative things, slightly more than one in three 12-15s are very confident in using the internet for this purpose (36%). One in ten 12-15s (10%) say they are not confident in judging whether websites they use are truthful, although nearly three times as many feel very confident (27%). Overall, therefore, more than nine in ten internet users aged 12-15 consider themselves confident internet users and more than three in five (63%) feel very confident.

Since 2011, there has been no change in confidence for the two measures asked of 8-11s. 12-15s are more likely to feel very confident in using the internet to do creative things (36% vs. 25%) and in judging whether websites they use are truthful (27% vs. 21%).

In 2012, there is only one difference by gender. Girls aged 12-15 are less likely than boys to say that they are not confident in using the internet to do creative things (13% vs. 20%). There are no differences by socio-economic group among children aged 8-15.
## Figure 74:8-11s’ confidence in their use of the internet: 2010, 2011 and 2012

### Confidence in using a search engine

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Very confident</th>
<th>Fairly confident</th>
<th>Neither/ Don’t know</th>
<th>Not confident</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Confidence that you know how to stay safe when you are online

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Very confident</th>
<th>Fairly confident</th>
<th>Neither/ Don’t know</th>
<th>Not confident</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

QC20A/E – I’m going to read out some questions about confidence using the internet, for each one please say which of the options on the card applies to you (prompted responses, single coded).


Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012.
Children feel able to differentiate between the truthfulness of different types of television content

Children aged 8-11 and 12-15 who watch television at home were asked, for various genres of television programmes, whether they believed that what they were watching reflected a true picture of what really happened. The aim of these questions was to understand whether they accepted television content at face value or applied some degree of ‘critical understanding’ to filter the information shown in such programmes.

Children were asked whether they felt that reality TV programmes (like X-Factor), TV documentary programmes (like wildlife programmes) or news programmes (like Newsround) showed a true picture of what really happened.
The results are shown in Figure 76. Children in both age groups are more likely to believe that documentary or news programmes show a true picture of what really happened than they are to believe that reality TV programmes show a true picture.

More 12-15s (47%) than 8-11s (28%) say that reality TV programmes do not give a true picture of what really happened. Conversely, those aged 8-11 are more likely than 12-15s to say that they do give a true picture of what really happened (48% vs. 41%) and they are twice as likely to be unsure (24% vs. 12%).

Over three-quarters of both age groups believe that documentary or news programmes show a true picture of what really happened. However, 12-15s are more likely than 8-11s to say that news programmes do not show a true picture of what really happened (12% vs. 6%).

The only change since 2011 is that 12-15s are now more likely than they were in 2011 to say that TV documentaries do not show a true picture of what really happened (12% in 2012 vs. 6% in 2011). This means that 12-15s are now more likely to say this than 8-11s (7%).

Girls aged 12-15 are more likely than boys aged 12-15 to say that news programmes show a true picture of what really happened (83% vs. 71%) and boys are more likely to be unsure (13% vs. 7%). There are no other differences by gender for these questions.

There is only one difference by household socio-economic group. Children aged 8-15 in AB households are more likely than all 8-15s to say that documentary programmes show a true picture (87% vs. 80%).

**Figure 76: Children’s belief in television content, by genre: 2011-2012**

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QC4B-D - Here are some questions about how you feel about TV. Could you give me a Yes or No for each one please? (spontaneous responses, single coded)

Base: Children aged 8-15 who watch TV at home (Base varies) - NB EXCLUDES THOSE WHO DO NOT WATCH EACH TYPE OF PROGRAMME – Significance testing shows any difference between 2011 and 2012

Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012

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63 The data shown in Figure 76 for both age groups exclude those children who said they do not watch each type of television programme.
Critical understanding of online content

8-15s apply a level of ‘critical understanding’ regarding the truthfulness of online content

Children aged 8-15 who use the internet at home were asked how frequently they visited certain types of websites. Children who had ever visited four particular types of websites (those used for schoolwork/homework, social networking sites, those used for news purposes and the Wikipedia website64) were asked whether they believed that all of the information, most of the information or some of the information on these types of site was true. Figure 77 shows the findings for websites used for schoolwork/homework or social networking and Figure 78 shows the findings for websites used for news purposes and the Wikipedia website.

Around nine in ten 8-11s (87%) and 12-15s (92%) who use the internet at home have ever visited websites for schoolwork/ homework. Those aged 12-15 are more likely than those aged 8-11 to believe that all or most of the information on these websites is true (89% vs. 79%). There are no differences by gender or by household socio-economic group and there has been no change in these measures since 2011.

Three in ten 8-11s (29%) and four in five 12-15s (82%) who use the internet at home have ever used the internet to visit social networking sites. 12-15s are no more likely than 8-11s to believe that all or most of the information on social networking sites is true (31% for 8-11s and 35% for 12-15s). As with responses for schoolwork/homework, there are no differences in response by gender or by socio-economic group, and no change in any of these measures since 2011.

Three in ten 8-11s (30%)65 and more than two in five (46%) 12-15s who use the internet at home have ever visited sites about news and what is going on the world. Four in five of these 8-11s (80%) and close to nine in ten 12-15s (86%) believe that all or most of the information is true. There are no differences in response by gender or by household socio-economic group, and again there has been no change since 2011.

Two in five (41%) 8-11s and three in five 12-15s (62%) who use the internet at home say they have ever visited the Wikipedia website. 12-15s are less likely to feel that all or most of the information on these types of sites is true (61%), compared to 8-11s (71%). There are no differences in response by gender or by socio-economic group.

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64 Before 2012 the question asked about websites where user-generated content is posted (such as blogs or sites like Wikipedia). In 2012, the question was amended to ask specifically about the Wikipedia website and it is therefore not possible to show comparable data for previous years.

65 It is not possible to show data for 8-11s in 2010 and 2011 due to the low base of respondents.
Figure 77: Children’s belief in websites used for school/ homework and for social networking, by age: 2010-2012

### On websites used for school work/ home work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Aged 8-11</th>
<th>Aged 12-15</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 78: Children’s belief in websites used for news and for information purposes, by age: 2010-2012

### On sites about news and what is going on in the world

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Aged 8-11</th>
<th>Aged 12-15</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### When visiting the Wikipedia website

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Aged 8-11</th>
<th>Aged 12-15</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

QC15B/A– When you use the internet to visit [TYPE OF WEBSITE] Do you believe that all of the information you see is true, most of it is true or just some of it is true? (prompted responses, single coded)

Base: Children aged 8-15 who use the internet to visit relevant websites (VARIABLE BASE). Significance testing shows any difference between 2011 and 2012

Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012

QC15C/D– When you use the internet to visit [TYPE OF WEBSITE] Do you believe that all of the information you see is true, most of it is true or just some of it is true? (prompted responses, single coded)

*Where data is not shown for children aged 8-11, this is because of low effective sample sizes.

This question was amended in 2012 to ask specifically about the Wikipedia website, trend data is therefore not available.

Base: Children aged 8-15 who use the internet to visit relevant websites (VARIABLE BASE). Significance testing shows any difference between 2011 and 2012

Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012
Critical understanding of search engines

Over two in five 12-15s who use search engines understand how they operate

Children aged 12-15 who ever use search engines (92% of all home internet users) were asked about the truthfulness of information that was returned by the search engine. Children were asked to say which of the following statements was closer to their opinion:

- “I think that if they have been listed by the search engine the information on the website must be truthful.”
- “I think that some of the websites in the list will show truthful information and some will show untruthful information.”
- “I don’t really think about whether or not they have truthful information, I just use the sites I like the look of.”

More than two in five children aged 12-15 (45%) make some type of critical judgement about search engine results, thinking that some of the sites returned will be truthful while others may not be. Three in ten 12-15s (31%) believe that if a search engine lists information then it must be truthful, and close to one in five (17%) don’t consider the veracity of results but just visit the sites they like the look of. Less than one in ten 12-15s (7%) are unsure. There has been no change since 2011.

There is only one difference by gender; boys aged 12-15 are more likely than girls to be unsure (10% vs. 3%). There is no difference between the socio-economic groups shown in Figure 79.
In 2012 an additional question was added to the survey in order to further understand children’s critical understanding of how search engines operate. Children aged 12-15 who use search engines were asked: “When you use a search engine, are there ever ads (or advertisements) shown in the results?” Figure 80 shows that seven in ten 12-15s (70%) stated that there are, one in five (20%) said that there are not, with one in ten (10%) unsure. Boys aged 12-15 are more likely than girls to think that advertisements are not shown in search engine results (24% vs. 16%) while girls are more likely to be unsure (14% vs. 7%). There are no differences by socio-economic group when comparing children aged 12-15 in ABC1 households to those in C2DE households.

66 In some instances the percentages may add to slightly more or less than 100% due to data rounding.
Figure 80: Awareness of advertising being shown in results listed by search engines, among 12-15s who use search engines: 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Aware of advertising in search engine listings</th>
<th>Not aware</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aged 12-15</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boys 12-15</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls 12-15</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABC1</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C2DE</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

QC30 When you use a search engine, are there ever ads or advertisements shown in the results? (spontaneous response, single coded)
Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012

Awareness of, and attitudes towards, personalised advertising

Close to half of internet users aged 12-15 are aware of personalised advertising – with no consensus on whether this is a good or bad thing

Children aged 12-15 who use the internet at home or elsewhere were provided with a description of personalised online advertising⁶⁷ and were asked whether they were aware that websites could use their data/information in this way.

Figure 81 shows that slightly less than half of 12-15s (45%) are aware of personalised advertising, with a similar proportion (46%) saying they are not aware that websites can use information in this way. There are no differences by gender. Children aged 12-15 in the C2DE socio-economic group are more likely than those in the ABC1 socio-economic group to be unsure (12% vs. 5%).

⁶⁷The description provided was: Some websites use information about what you have been looking at or searching for online, or information about what you have clicked that you ‘like’ online to show advertising that is personalised to you. For example, if you had been looking at a particular t-shirt on a website, or clicked that you ‘liked’ a product, a different website that you visit later could show you an advert for that item.
Children aged 12-15 who use the internet at home or elsewhere were then asked how they felt about websites using information about what they look at or ‘like’ online to show them personalised advertising. They were prompted with four possible responses and asked to say whether they thought it was a good thing, a bad thing, neither good nor bad, or they were unsure. Figure 82 shows that close to one in four (23%) think it is a good thing, one in three (33%) think it’s a bad thing, one in four think it’s neither good nor bad (24%) and one in five (21%) are unsure. While more children say that it is a bad thing than a good thing (33% vs. 23%) there is a high degree of uncertainty, suggesting no strong consensus of opinion.

There are no differences by gender or by the socio-economic groups shown in Figure 82.
Visiting new websites

8-11s are more likely than 12-15s only to visit websites that they have visited before

Children aged 8-15 who use the internet at home were asked to say whether, in most weeks, they only visited sites that they had visited before, or visited one or two sites that they hadn’t visited before, or visited lots of sites they hadn’t visited before.

A majority of 8-11s (65%) say they only visit websites they’ve visited before, compared to slightly less than half of 12-15s (47%). 12-15s are more likely than 8-11s to say they visit lots of websites they haven’t visited before (9% vs. 4%) and are also more likely than 8-11s to say they visit one or two websites they haven’t visited before (41% vs. 26%).

There are no differences by gender among 8-11s. Among 12-15s, boys are more likely than girls to say they are unsure (4% vs. 0%). There are no differences by socio-economic group. Compared to 2011, there has been no change in children’s experience of visiting websites among 8-11s or 12-15s.

Figure 82: Attitudes to personal advertising among 12-15s aware of this type of advertising: 2012

QC40 – How do you feel about websites using information about what you look at or ‘like’ online to show you personalised advertising? (prompted responses, single coded)

Base: Children aged 12-15 who are aware of personalised advertising (248 aged 12-15, 129 boys aged 12-15, 119 girls aged 12-15, 113 ABC1, 135 C2DE – significance testing shows any differences between boys and girls aged 12-15 and between ABC1 and C2DE socio-economic groups

Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012
Two in three internet users aged 12-15 make checks when visiting websites they have not visited before

Children aged 12-15 who use the internet at home were shown a list of types of checks that could be made when visiting websites for the first time (either when looking for information online or when buying/selling things online), and were asked to say which, if any, of these checks they would make.68

Close to two in three 12-15s (66%) said they would check at least one of the things on the list. Just over one in ten (13%) 12-15s who use the internet said that they do not make any of these checks. As in 2011, no single check is made by the majority of 12-15s.

There are no differences by gender. 12-15s in ABC1 households are more likely than those in C2DE households to check the general look and appearance of the site (34% vs. 22%) or to check which country the site is from (18% vs. 10%)

Since 2011 there has been no change in the overall incidence of 12-15s making either any of these checks, or any of the individual checks.

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68 The question was amended in 2011 to: “Thinking about the websites that you visit that you haven’t visited before, either when you’re looking for information online or if you’re buying or selling things online. Which, if any, of these things would you check?” In addition a “don’t know” option was also included, which had not been included in previous years. To ensure comparability over time, those stating “don’t know” in 2011 and 2012 have been removed from the analysis.
Among those children aged 12-15 who say that, in most weeks, they visit either lots of, or one or two, websites that they haven’t visited before, the five most popular checks are: checking the general appearance and look of the site (37%); checking to see if there is a padlock or other symbol (31%); asking someone else if they have been to the website (30%); comparing information across a number of sites to see if it’s correct (23%); and seeing whether it is a company that they have heard of (22%).

**Social networking profile settings**

**As in 2011, around one in twenty children aged 8-15 have a social networking profile that can be seen by anyone**

As in 2011, most children aged 8-11 and 12-15 with an active social networking profile say that their profile can be seen only by their friends (82% for 8-11s and 75% for 12-15s), while around one in twenty in each age group say it can be seen by anyone (4% for 8-11s and 5% for 12-15s).

Since 2011, the questionnaire has also asked whether a child’s profile could be seen only by “my friends and their friends”. In 2012 a similar proportion of 8-11s (12%) and 12-15s (17%) say this.

By combining the responses of children who say their profile can either be seen by anyone, or by friends and their friends, it is possible to show the incidence of children who may be contacted through their social networking profile by people who are not directly known to

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69 In 2009, the following option was also shown to children: “If I have heard of the site on TV/ radio/ in a newspaper/ magazine”. This option was removed in 2010, and the data for 2009 have therefore been adjusted accordingly.
them. This accounts for slightly less than one in five 8-11s (17%) and more than one in five 12-15s (22%).

Boys aged 12-15 are more likely than girls aged 12-15 to have a profile that is visible to anyone (8% vs. 2%)\(^{70}\).

There are no differences by socio-economic group among 8-15s.

Four in five children with an under-age profile on Facebook, Bebo or MySpace (those aged 8-12) say their profile can be seen only by friends (83%) – an increase since 2011 (from 74%) - with less than one in twenty saying their profile is visible to anyone (3%).

**Figure 85: Visibility of social networking site profiles, by age: 2011 and 2012**

![Figure 85](image)

**Attitudes towards sharing personal information online**

12-15s differentiate between types of personal information that can be shared online, preferring to keep contact details private

Children aged 12-15 who use the internet at home or elsewhere were prompted with a list of information types that people could show on the internet, and were asked how they would feel about who could see each type of information\(^{71}\). As in 2011, there is variation in the types of information that children aged 12-15 are happy for people to see online. 12-15s are less inclined to share personal details such as their home address, their mobile number or their email address with anyone, and are more inclined to share information about how they are feeling or what they are doing, or to share photos online.

\(^{70}\) Due to small base sizes it is not possible to look at any differences between boys and girls aged 8-11.

\(^{71}\) The response options for children at this question were amended in 2011, so it is not possible to compare responses with previous surveys.
The majority of 12-15s would either want nobody, or only their friends, to see each type of information that was asked about. Less than one in twenty 12-15s would be happy for anyone to see their home address (2%) mobile phone number (2%) or email address online (4%).

There are some differences by gender. Girls aged 12-15 are more likely than boys to say they would want only friends and their friends to see their holiday photos (16% vs. 8%) or photos of being out with friends (21% vs. 12%), while for both of these types of information, boys are more likely to say that they would be happy for anyone to see this information (8% vs. 3% for holiday photos and 10% vs. 3% for photos with friends). Girls are also more likely to want only friends and their friends to see information about what they are doing (15% vs. 6%), with boys being more likely not to want anyone to see information about how they are feeling (31% vs. 21%).

There are no differences by household socio-economic group.

There has been no change in the extent to which 12-15s are willing to share personal information online for any of these measures since 2011.

Figure 86: Personal information that children aged 12-15 are willing to share online: 2011 and 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information Type</th>
<th>2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Home address</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would not want anyone to see this</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would only want my friends to see this</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would only want my friends/their friends to see this</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't know</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile phone number</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would not want anyone to see this</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would only want my friends to see this</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would only want my friends/their friends to see this</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't know</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Email address</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would not want anyone to see this</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would only want my friends to see this</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would only want my friends/their friends to see this</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't know</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information about how you are feeling</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would not want anyone to see this</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Would only want my friends/their friends to see this</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Information about what you are doing</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would not want anyone to see this</td>
<td>35</td>
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<tr>
<td>Would only want my friends to see this</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would only want my friends/their friends to see this</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't know</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photos from your holidays</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would not want anyone to see this</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would only want my friends to see this</td>
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<tr>
<td>Would only want my friends/their friends to see this</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Don't know</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Email address</td>
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<td>53</td>
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<tr>
<td>Would only want my friends/their friends to see this</td>
<td>74</td>
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<tr>
<td>Don't know</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Information about how you are feeling</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Don't know</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Information about what you are doing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would not want anyone to see this</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would only want my friends to see this</td>
<td>62</td>
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<tr>
<td>Would only want my friends/their friends to see this</td>
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<td>Don't know</td>
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<tr>
<td>Photos from your holidays</td>
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</tr>
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<tr>
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<td>Photos from being out with your friends</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would not want anyone to see this</td>
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<td>Would only want my friends to see this</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would only want my friends/their friends to see this</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't know</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

QC32A-G - I'm going to read out some types of information that people can show on the internet. For each one I'd like you to say which one of the statements on this card best describes how you feel about who could see each type of information (prompted responses, single coded).


Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012

It is worth bearing in mind that, while this question does not focus specifically on social networking, some children could be referring to ‘friends’ in the widest possible terms, as shown in Figure 70, rather than a smaller number of more personal or close friends.
Attitudes towards downloading music and films

Nearly half of 12-15s think downloading shared copies of music and films for free should not be illegal

Children aged 12-15 were given information about downloading music and films from the internet and asked whether they thought that sharing music and films in this way should be illegal.

Slightly less than half of 12-15s (46%) think that downloading in this way should not be illegal, around one in three (35%) think that it should be illegal, and around one in five (19%) are unsure whether it should be illegal.

In 2011, results differed by gender, with girls aged 12-15 more likely than boys to believe that downloading in this way should be illegal, while boys were more likely to say that it should not be illegal. In 2012, there are no differences by gender or by household socio-economic group.

Since 2011, children aged 12-15 are no more or less likely to say that sharing music or films should be illegal. Attitudes have been consistent among 12-15s since 2009 with regard to downloading shared copies of music and films.

Figure 87: Attitudes towards online copyright infringement among 12-15s: 2009-2012

QC33 Music and films can be downloaded from the internet in two main ways, by paying at an online shop like iTunes, or Tesco.com or by downloading for free from a site where someone else has shared their copy of the music or the film. Sharing content in this way is often illegal. Do you think that sharing music and films in this way should be illegal? (spontaneous response, single coded) – NB question wording amended in 2011. Before 2010 it asked 'Do you think that downloading music and films for free in this way should be illegal?'


Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012

73 Children were provided with the following description: 'Music and films can be downloaded from the internet in two main ways – by paying at an online shop like iTunes or Tesco.com or by downloading for free from a site where someone else has shared their copy of the music or the film. Sharing content in this way is often illegal.'
Learning about digital technology

Children prefer to learn about digital media through a variety of sources – with 12-15s now more likely to prefer to learn from school or through friends

Children aged 8-15 were shown a list of possible ways to learn about digital technology such as the internet, mobile phones and digital television, and were asked to say which, if any, they preferred.

Figure 88 shows that children in both of the age groups prefer to learn through a variety of sources. For 12-15s in particular, only one source is preferred by the majority (school; 57%). In 2012, as in 2011, children aged 8-11 are more likely than 12-15s to say they prefer to learn from their parents (59% of 8-11s vs. 47% of 12-15s), while 12-15s are more likely than 8-11s to prefer to learn from friends (45% of 12-15s vs. 23% of 8-11s), to be self-taught (26% vs. 10%), to learn from manuals (12% vs. 4%) or from suppliers/shops (9% vs. 2%).

There are some differences by gender; girls aged 8-11 are more likely than boys to prefer to learn from parents (64% vs. 54%) while boys aged 12-15 are more likely than girls of this age to say they are not interested in learning about digital technology (5% vs. 1%).

In 2011, there were no differences by household socio-economic group. However, in 2012, children aged 8-15 in AB households are more likely than all children aged 8-15 to prefer to learn from friends (42% vs. 34%) or from suppliers/shops (12% vs. 6%) while those in DE households are less likely to prefer to learn from parents (46% vs. 53%).

Compared to 2011, children aged 8-11 are less likely to prefer to learn from school (51% vs. 58%) and 12-15s are now more likely to prefer to learn from school (57% vs. 49%), from friends (45% vs. 38%) and from the manual (12% vs. 8%).

Figure 88: Children’s preferences for learning about using digital technology: 2009 - 2012

QC62 – Which if any, of these ways would you prefer to learn about using the internet, mobile phones, digital TV and so on? (prompted responses, multi-coded)


Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012
8-11s and 12-15s are more likely to receive lessons at school about the internet than they are to learn about television

Children aged 8-15 were asked whether they have any lessons at school about television or about the internet.

As shown in Figure 89, a minority of children say they have learnt about television in school: slightly more than one in five children aged 8-11 (23%) and two in five children aged 12–15 (45%). Since 2011, there has been no change in learning about television across either age group of child.

The majority of 8-11s (67%) and 12-15s (90%) have experience of learning about the internet at school. As with television, this is more likely among 12-15s than 8-11s. Since 2011, 12-15s are more likely to say they have lessons about the internet (90% vs. 82%).

QC05/ 66– Do any of your lessons at school teach you about the Internet? (prompted responses, single coded)
Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012
Section 6

Parents’ and children’s concerns and attitudes

This section looks at parents’ attitudes towards their children’s use of television, radio and the internet, and the extent to which they have specific concerns about television programmes, the internet, mobile phones and any games that their children play. It also documents children’s attitudes to their use of media.

This section concludes by looking at 12-15s’ negative experiences of using the internet or mobile phones, their experience of potentially risky online behaviour and ‘safe’ and ‘risky’ online activities that they may have undertaken.

Key findings

Parents’ concerns and attitudes

• In 2012, parents of 5-15s are less likely to be concerned about television (23% vs. 31% in 2011), online content (17% vs. 23% in 2011), and about who their child may be in contact with online (20% vs. 24% in 2011).

• Less than one-third of parents say they are very, or fairly, concerned about: their child being bullied online/ cyberbullying (27%); their child giving out personal details to inappropriate people (26%); who their child is in contact with online (20%); any illegal downloading (14%); or that their child may bully others online (14%).

• Parents’ concerns regarding the child’s mobile phone use, any gaming content or with whom their child plays online games are also relatively low: around one in four or fewer parents are concerned.

• Most parents of 5-15s trust their child to use the internet safely (84%), feel that the benefits of the internet outweigh the risks (70%), and say that their child has been taught at school how to use the internet safely (80%).

• Around half of parents (46%) say their child knows more about the internet than they do and around one in three parents (37%) say their child helps them to use the internet.
Children and parents: media use and attitudes report

Children’s dislikes and experiences

- Across the different media that children use, dislikes about inappropriate content (seeing things that are either too old for them or things that make them feel sad, frightened or embarrassed) have not changed since 2011. 8-11s continue to be more likely to have these dislikes than 12-15, and they tend to be higher for television and online content than for mobile.

- 23% of 8-11s say they dislike inappropriate content online, as do 15% of 12-15s.

- Compared to 2011, boys aged 8-11 and girls aged 12-15 are more likely to say they have seen anything online in the past year that is worrying, nasty or offensive (12% vs. 6% for boys aged 8-11 and 21% vs. 13% for girls aged 12-15).

- 12-15s are much more likely than 8-11s to say that they forget about safety rules when using the internet (13% vs. 6%).

- Looking at bullying and other negative experiences (either online or through a mobile phone), 20% of 12-15s report having any of these experiences. Girls aged 12-15 are more likely than boys of this age to have experienced any of these negative activities (including bullying) in the past 12 months (28% vs. 13%).

- 7% of 8-15s with a mobile phone say they have had personal experience of being bullied through a mobile in the past year, with this being more likely for 12-15s than for 8-11s (8% vs. 3%).

- 4% of 8-11s and 9% of 12-15s have experience of being bullied online in the past year. Neither bullying through a mobile or online have changed since 2011.

- 38% of 8-11s with a social networking profile say they dislike the fact that people sometimes get bullied on these sites, with 34% being concerned that strangers may find out information about them.

- 17% of 12-15s say they personally have had a negative experience, other than bullying, of online or mobile phone activity in the past year, where the most likely experience is gossip being spread (12%).

- 8% of internet users aged 12-15 said they had taken the contact details of someone they had only had contact with online, and 6% said they had sent personal information to someone they had only had contact with online. These activities are more common for those 12-15s with social networking profiles which may be visible to people not known to them than those whose profiles are visible only to their friends.

- Internet users aged 12-15 are more likely in 2012 than in 2011 to have blocked messages from someone they did not want to hear from, or to have changed the settings on their social networking site profile in some way. They are also more likely to have deleted the history records of the websites they have visited.
Parents’ concerns about media

A minority of parents express concerns about the media content their child has access to

Parents were asked specific questions about their child’s use of different media, in order to gauge the extent to which they are concerned about their child’s exposure to potentially harmful or inappropriate content. Figure 91 summarises parental concern about the content their child encounters or engages with, to show how the level of concern varies for each medium.74

As in 2011, parents are most likely to be concerned about television content, compared to each of the other media. Concern about television content varies by the age of the child, with parents of 5-7s more likely than parents of 8-11s and 12-15s to state that they are not concerned (74% for 5-7s vs. 65% for 8-11s and 68% for 12-15s). In 2012, as in 2011, concerns about television content do not vary by gender within age (when comparing boys to girls in each age group - 5-7s, 8-11s and 12-15s) or by household socio-economic group.

Parents of 5-7s who use each medium are as likely to be concerned about radio content as they are about online or gaming content. In contrast, parents of 8-11s who use each medium are most likely to be concerned about television content, least likely to be concerned about radio content and equally likely to be concerned about mobile, online and gaming content. Parents of 12-15s are equally likely to be concerned about television, online, mobile and gaming content and less likely to be concerned about radio content.

74 The comparisons are drawn between users of each medium, as opposed to being based on all parents irrespective of whether their child uses that medium.
Figure 91: Parental concerns about media content, among users of each media, by age: 2012\textsuperscript{75}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>TV</th>
<th>Internet</th>
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<th>Games</th>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>17%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
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<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>22%</td>
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<tr>
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<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
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<td>16%</td>
<td>22%</td>
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<tr>
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\textsuperscript{75} There are no data shown for children aged 5-7 for mobile phones, due to the low base of children of this age with a mobile phone.

Parents are less likely now than in 2011 to be concerned about television and online content

Figure 92 shows trends over time with regard to concerns about media content among parents of users aged 5-15 of each media type. Compared to 2011, parents of 5-15s are less likely to be concerned about television (23% vs. 31%) and online content (17% v. 23%). Since 2009, parents overall are less likely to be concerned about television, online, and gaming content, with the biggest decline in concern being for online and television content.

\textsuperscript{76} The base of users aged 3-4 is too low to report on concerns about internet (71) and radio (63).
In comparison, numbers of parents saying they are very or fairly concerned about mobile and radio content have been relatively consistent over this time period.

Figure 92: Parental concerns about media content, among parents of 5-15s using each media type: 2009-2012

Parental concerns about television content

Parents of 5-15s are now less likely to be concerned about television content

Figure 93 shows that since 2011 parents of 5-7s, 8-11s and 12-15s are all less likely to be concerned about the television content that their child watches (20% vs. 26% for 5-7s, 27% vs. 34% for 8-11s and 22% vs. 30% for 12-15s). Results do not vary in 2012 by gender within age or by household socio-economic group.
Parental attitudes towards the internet

Parents of children aged 5-15 who use the internet at home were asked about the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with a range of statements about their child’s use of the internet. One new statement was included in the study in 2012: “My child helps me using the internet” (Figure 98), so this statement does not show any trend analysis.

Most parents trust their child to use the internet safely

Figure 94 shows that the majority of parents continue to agree with the statement: “I trust my child to use the internet safely” (84%). Slightly less than one in ten parents of all 5-15s (8%) disagree. Parents’ agreement that they trust their child increases with each age group, as was the case in 2010 and 2011.

In 2012, as in 2011, there are no differences in agreement levels by gender within age, or by socio-economic group.

Compared to 2011, parents of 5-15s who use the internet at home are now less likely to disagree that they trust their child to use the internet safely (8% vs. 12%); this is driven by a decrease in disagreement among parents of 5-7s (12% vs. 18%).
The majority of parents continue to feel that the benefits of the internet outweigh the risks

The majority of parents of 5-15s agree with this statement (70%), with parents of children aged 12-15 being more likely to agree with it than parents of 5-7s (75% vs. 64%) or 8-11s (75% vs. 67%). More than one in ten parents of children aged 5-15 (13%) disagree with the statement. Compared to 2011, parents of 5-15s are more likely to agree with it (70% vs. 65%); this is driven by parents of 12-15s now being more likely to agree (75% vs. 69%).

In 2012, there are no differences in the extent of agreement by gender within age or by household socio-economic group.
Most parents say that their child has been taught at school how to use the internet safely

Four in five parents of children aged 5-15 (80%) agree with this statement and parental agreement increases with each age group. One in ten parents of children aged 5-15 (9%) disagree that their child has been taught at school how to use the internet safely, with parents of 5-7s more likely to disagree (17%) than parents of either 8-11s (8%) or parents of 12-15s (5%).

Since 2011 parents of children in any age group are no more or less likely to agree (or disagree) with this statement.
Close to half of parents say that their child knows more about the internet than they do

Close to half of parents of a child aged 5-15 (46%) agree with the statement: "My child knows more about the internet than I do". Agreement increases with each age group, with one in five parents of a 5-7 year-old agreeing (22%), compared to around one in three parents of an 8-11 year-old (35%) and two in three parents of 12-15s (67%).

Compared to 2011, parents of 8-11s are less likely to agree (35% vs. 43%) and more likely to disagree (54% vs. 45%).

In 2012, there are no differences by gender within age. As in 2011, parents of children aged 5-15 in AB households are less likely to agree, compared to all parents (36% vs. 46% in 2012). In 2012, however, parents in C2 households are more likely than all parents to agree (55% vs. 46%).

Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012
More than one in three parents say their child helps them use the internet

Slightly more than one in three parents of a child aged 5-15 (37%) agree with the statement: "My child helps me using the internet", rising to more than half of parents of 12-15s (53%). Agreement increases across each age group of child, as disagreement decreases.

There are no differences by gender within age. Parents of children aged 5-15 in AB households are more likely to disagree, compared to all parents of 5-15s (62% vs. 54%).
Parents are less likely to be concerned about aspects of their child’s internet use

Parents of children aged 5-15 who use the internet at home were asked about the extent of their concerns relating to online content, and their concerns about who their children were in contact with online, as shown in Figures 99 and 100.

Less than one in five parents of 5-15s (17%) are concerned about the content of the websites their child visits, with a similar proportion concerned about who their child is in contact with online (20%). While concerns about online content do not vary by the age of the child, concerns about with whom the child is in contact are lower among parents of 5-7s (11%) than among parents of 8-11s (20%) or 12-15s (24%).

Concerns about online content do not vary by gender within age, nor are there any differences by household socio-economic group. There is only one difference by gender with regard to concerns about with whom their child may be in contact; parents of girls aged 5-7 are more likely than parents of boys (16% vs. 6%) to be concerned.

Compared to 2011, parents of 5-15s are less likely to be concerned about the content of the websites that their child visits (17% vs. 23%), driven by parents of 8-11s (18% vs. 25%) and 12-15s (17% vs. 24%) being less likely to say they are concerned. Parents of 5-15s are also less likely to be concerned about who their child is in contact with online (20% vs. 24%), driven by parents of children aged 12-15 being less concerned (24% vs. 30%).
Parents of 5-15s who use the internet at home were also asked how concerned they were about their child giving out personal information online to inappropriate people, as shown in Figure 101.
One in four parents (26%) of children aged 5-15 who use the internet at home are concerned that their child may be giving out personal details to inappropriate people. Concern increases with the age of the child (16% for 5-7s, 24% for 8-11s and 33% for 12-15s). However, the majority of parents continue not to be concerned (69%).

There has been no change in the level of concern since 2011 for any age group of children. In 2012, there are no differences by gender within age, or by household socio-economic group.

Levels of parental concern about cyber-bullying are similar to parental concerns about their child giving out their personal details online: two in three parents of 5-15s are not concerned (67%), while around one in four (27%) are concerned. Concern also increases with the age of the child, accounting for one in six parents of 5-7s (16%), one in four parents of 8-11s (25%) and one in three parents of 12-15s (33%).

There is only one difference by gender: parents of 5-7 year old girls are more likely than parents of boys to be concerned about their child being bullied online (22% vs. 11%). There are no differences by household socio-economic group. There has been no change in the level of concern about cyber-bullying since 2011.
In 2012, a new question was added to the survey in order to establish the extent to which parents were concerned about the possibility of their child bullying others online. One in seven (14%) parents of 5-15s who use the internet at home said they were concerned, with parents of a 12-15 year old being more concerned than parents of a child aged 5-7 (17% vs. 9%). There are no differences by gender within age, or by household socio-economic group.

Broadly speaking, parents of children in each age group are twice as likely to be concerned about their child being bullied online than they are about their child bullying others online.
Parents of 5-15s who use the internet at home were asked how concerned they were about their child illegally downloading content or downloading copyrighted material, with parents of 12-15s (17%) more likely to be concerned than parents of 5-7s (10%).

Overall, one in four parents (25%) say they are concerned about their child downloading or getting viruses or other harmful software installed on the PC. Concern is higher among parents of 8-11s (24%) and 12-15s (30%) than among parents of 5-7s (16%).

As with most of the other areas of online parental concern that we asked about, a majority of parents in each age group say they are not concerned about either of these measures.

There are no differences in the level of parental concern by the gender of the child or by the household socio-economic group for either of these measures.

There has also been no change in the level of parental concern for either measure among any group of child, compared to 2011.
Figure 104: Parental concerns about their child and illegal downloading, by age: 2010-2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>All aged 5-15</th>
<th>Aged 5-7</th>
<th>Aged 8-11</th>
<th>Aged 12-15</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 105: Parental concerns about their child downloading viruses, by age: 2010-2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>All aged 5-15</th>
<th>Aged 5-7</th>
<th>Aged 8-11</th>
<th>Aged 12-15</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012
Figure 106 below summarises the various concerns parents of 5-15s who use the internet at home were asked about. Among all parents, around one in four are concerned about their child being bullied (27%), their giving out personal details to inappropriate people (26%) or about their downloading viruses (25%). One in five parents, or less, are concerned about who their child may be in contact with online (20%), the content of the websites their child visits (17%), their child potentially being a cyber-bully (14%) or about any illegal downloading or downloading of copyrighted material (14%).

Figure 106: Parental concerns about aspects of their child’s internet use among 5-15s: 2012

Parental concerns about mobile phones

A minority of parents express concerns relating to their child’s mobile phone use

Parents of children aged 5-15 with their own mobile phone were asked about a range of concerns relating to their child’s use of their mobile phone. No data are shown for children aged 5-7 for mobile phones as there were only 47 children of this age with their own mobile phone in 2010, 50 in 2011 and 40 in 2012.

Figure 107 shows that the proportion of parents who are concerned about what their child sees or reads on their mobile phone is relatively low for each age group; accounting for 15% of parents of an 8-11 year old and 19% of parents of a 12-15 year old.

A similar proportion of parents of 8-11s (17%) and 12-15s (20%) express concern about who their child may be in contact with, as shown in Figure 107.

There are no differences by gender within age. Compared to all parents of an 8-15 year old child with a mobile, for both measures parents in AB households are less likely to say they
are not at all concerned (32% vs. 42% for mobile content and 34% vs. 45% for who they are in contact with). In contrast, parents in C2 households are more likely to be not at all concerned about what their child sees or reads on their mobile phone (52% vs. 42%).

Compared to 2011 there has been no change, for either measure, in the proportion of parents who say they are or are not concerned.

Figure 107: Parental concerns about mobile phone content and who their child is in contact with via their mobile, by age: 2010-2012

As shown in Figure 108, parents of children aged 12-15 with a smartphone are more likely than parents whose child has another type of mobile phone to be concerned about both these aspects of their child’s mobile phone use.
Parents of children aged 5-15 with their own mobile phone were asked about the extent of any concerns about their child being bullied via calls/texts/emails to their mobile phone.

Figure 109 shows that one in five parents of 8-11s (20%) and slightly less than three in ten parents of 12-15s (27%) say they are concerned about this aspect of their child’s mobile phone use. Parents of 8-11s are more likely than parents of 12-15s to say they are not at all concerned (52% vs. 39%). There are no differences by gender within age. Parents of 8-15s in C2 households are less likely than all parents of 8-15s to say they are not at all concerned about this aspect of their child’s mobile phone use (41% vs. 52%).

There has been no change since 2011 in the levels of concern among parents of 8-11s, while parents of 12-15s are now less likely to say they are not at all concerned (39% vs. 46%).

In 2012, parents whose child has a mobile phone were asked whether they were concerned about the possibility of their child bullying others or making negative comments about other people via their mobile phone. Figure 109 also shows these findings. One in ten parents (10%) of a child aged 8-11 and around one in six (16%) parents of a 12-15 year old child say they are concerned. Parents of 8-11s are, however, more likely than parents of 12-15s to say they are not at all concerned about their child bullying others in this way (62% vs. 48%).

Parents of children aged 8-15 with a mobile phone in AB households are less likely than all parents of 8-15s to say they are not at all concerned about this aspect of their child’s mobile phone use (41% vs. 52%). There are no differences by gender, within age.

Parents of 8-11s and 12-15s are more likely to be concerned about their child being bullied through their mobile phone than the possibility of their child bullying others in this way.

Neither of the concerns shown in Figure 109 varies among parents of children aged 12-15 with a smartphone compared to children with another type of mobile phone.
An identical proportion of parents who are concerned about their child being bullied through their mobile phone are concerned about their child giving out personal details to inappropriate people, as shown in Figure 110 (20% for 8-11s and 27% for 12-15s).

There are no differences by gender within age, but in 2012 parents with children aged 8-15 in C2 households are less likely to be concerned, compared to all parents (14% vs. 24%), while AB parents are less likely to say they are not at all concerned, compared to all parents (31% vs. 43%). Results do not vary by smartphone ownership.

There has been no change since 2011 in the proportion of parents saying they are concerned, or not concerned, about this aspect of their child’s mobile phone use.
Parental concerns about gaming

A minority of parents whose child plays games are concerned about the content of the games the child plays

Parents of children who ever play games through a gaming device were asked how concerned they were about the content of the games that their child played. Less than one in five parents (16%) of children aged 5-15 whose child ever plays games are concerned about the content of the games that the child plays. Parents of 5-7s are less likely to be concerned (12%) than parents of 8-11s (17%) or parents of 12-15s (19%). A majority of parents of 5-7s (56%) and 8-11s (68%) say they are not at all concerned, with slightly fewer parents of 12-15s (48%) saying this.

Given that boys in each age category are more likely regularly to play games, it is perhaps not surprising that there are some differences in parental concern by the gender of the child. Parents of boys aged 8-11 and 12-15 are more likely to be concerned than are parents of girls of these ages (21% vs. 13% for 8-11s and 24% vs. 12% for 12-15s). There are no differences by household socio-economic group.

There have been no changes in levels of parental concern about the games their child plays since 2011.
Parents of children who ever play games through a gaming device were also asked how concerned they were about who the child may be playing online games with through the games player. Around one in eight parents of a 5-15 year old child (12%) say they are concerned about who their child is playing online games with through the games player. Four in five parents (80%) say they are not concerned by this aspect of their child’s game playing. Concern does not vary by the age of the child; parents of 12-15s are as likely to say they are concerned (13%) as parents of 8-11s (12%) and parents of 5-7s (9%). Parents of boys aged 12-15 are more likely to be concerned than parents of girls of this age (17% vs. 8%). There are no differences by household socio-economic group, and no change in the overall levels of parents saying they are concerned or not concerned since 2011.

The question about with whom their child plays online games, through their gaming device, allowed a "not applicable" option, in case their child did not use the gaming device/ games player to game online. Those parents who answered “not applicable” have therefore been excluded from the base.
Figure 112: Parental concerns about who their child is gaming with through the games player, by age: 2010-2012\textsuperscript{78}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Very/ fairly concerned</th>
<th>Neither/ Don't know</th>
<th>Not very concerned</th>
<th>Not at all concerned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>All aged 5-15</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>All aged 5-15</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>All aged 5-15</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Aged 5-7</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Aged 5-7</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Aged 5-7</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Aged 8-11</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Aged 8-11</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Aged 8-11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Aged 12-15</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Aged 12-15</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Aged 12-15</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{78} It is not possible to show the data for concerns among parents of children aged 3-4, due to the low base of parents who were able to answer this question once the NA responses had been excluded (53).
Children's dislikes about different media

A sizeable minority of children dislike seeing inappropriate content across the media that they use

Parents’ attitudes and concerns relating to various kinds of media are one side of the coin; the other is how children and young people feel about, and react to, different types of media content. This section examines dislikes about different platforms, children's opinions about different types of situation that may occur online or via a mobile phone, and what they say they would do in such situations.

Children aged 8-15 who use each of the relevant media were prompted with a list of possible things that they might not like about television, mobiles, using the internet and game-playing over the internet, and were asked to nominate which, if any, applied to them. The aim of these questions was to establish children’s views in two key areas: accessing content that made them feel sad, frightened or embarrassed; and accessing content that they felt was too old for them.79

It is useful to remind ourselves at the outset of the extent to which children feel confident about their online activity. Nearly nine in ten (88%) of 8-15s (83% for 8-11s and 93% for 12-15s) who use the internet at home feel that they know how to stay safe online, and 97% of 12-15s feel confident as an internet user.

Around three in ten 8-11s say they dislike seeing things on television that are too old for them or that make them feel sad, frightened or embarrassed

For television, the most common dislike among the majority of both 8-11s and 12-15s, as in 2011, is that there are too many adverts. Children aged 12-15 are more likely than 8-11s to dislike this (67% vs. 54%). Slightly more than one in five 8-11s (22%) dislike seeing things on television that make them feel sad, frightened or embarrassed; this is significantly higher than for 12-15s (14%). 8-11s are also more likely than 12-15s to dislike seeing things that are too old for them (16% vs. 7%).

Three in ten children aged 8-11 (29%) say they have at least one of these key concerns, as do slightly less than one in five (18%) 12-15s. Neither 8-11s nor 12-15s are more likely to be concerned about either of these aspects than they were in 2011.

In 2012, across either of the key dislikes, there are no differences by socio-economic group or by gender within age.

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79 The aim of these questions was to establish the extent to which children may have these specific concerns about the media that they engage with. As this is a sensitive area, the questions were designed to prevent upset or distress to children by using language that focused on possible dislikes rather than getting them to focus specifically on actual concerns that they may have.
Figure 113: Children’s dislikes about television, by age: 2010 - 2012

Around one quarter of 8-11s say they dislike seeing things online that are too old for them or that make them feel sad, frightened or embarrassed

Children aged 8-15 who use the internet at home were prompted with a list of nine things they might not like about using the internet, and were asked to specify which, if any, applied to them. These are shown in Figures 114 and 115.

Children aged 8-11 and those aged 12-15 are most likely to identify “websites that take too long to load” as the issue that they dislike the most (42% for 8-11s and 43% for 12-15s). Around one in six 8-11s dislikes seeing things that are too old for them (17%), or things that make them feel sad, frightened or embarrassed (16%). 12-15s are less likely than 8-11s to have concerns about seeing things that are too old for them (9% vs. 17%) or seeing things that make them feel sad, frightened or embarrassed (10% vs. 16%). When looking at the proportion of children that have either of these key concerns, 23% of 8-11s and 15% of 12-15s dislike seeing things online that are too old for them or that make them feel sad, frightened or embarrassed.

In 2012, as in 2011, there are no differences across either of these key concerns by gender within age, or by household socio-economic group. Since 2011, there has been no change in the reported incidence of these key concerns among children aged 8-11 or 12-15.

In 2012, children aged 8-15 were prompted with two new possible online dislikes. A similar proportion of 8-11s and 12-15s are concerned about feeling pressure from friends or others to go online (5% for 8-11s and 3% for 12-15s) or about people pretending to be them online (8% for 8-11s and 10% for 12-15s).
Figure 114: Children’s dislikes about the internet, by age: 2010-2012

Figure 115: Children’s dislikes about the internet, by age: 2010-2012
Children aged 8-11 and 12-15 with an active social networking profile on any social networking site were prompted with a list of nine things that they might dislike about social networking sites, as shown in Figures 116 and 117.

The most common dislikes among 8-11s are either “sometimes people get bullied on these sites” (38%) or “strangers might find out information about me” (34%). In contrast, 12-15s say they are equally concerned about “sometimes people get bullied on these sites” (33%), “people can send hurtful messages to other people” (33%), “strangers might find out information about me” (29%), “people can get a bad name from other people posting comments about them” (29%) or “I sometimes spend too much time on them” (28%).

A similar proportion of 8-11s and 12-15s, around one in five, are concerned that someone might pretend to be their age and get to know them (18% for 8-11s and 21% for 12-15s).

As with dislikes about the internet, in 2012 children aged 8-15 were also prompted with two new possible dislikes regarding their use of social networking sites.

A similar proportion of 8-11s as 12-15s are concerned about “people pretending to be me online” (17% for 8-11s and 11% for 12-15s) or “feeling under pressure from friends/ others to go on these sites” (4% for 8-11s and 3% for 12-15s).

When comparing children aged 8-15 by gender, girls are more likely than boys to dislike the possibility that sometimes people can send hurtful messages to other people (39% vs. 21%) or that someone might pretend to be their age and get to know them (25% vs. 16%). Boys are more likely than girls to say that any of the things don’t worry them (44% vs. 33%). There are two differences between children aged 8-15 in ABC1 households and those in C2DE households: those in ABC1 households are more likely to be concerned about strangers finding out information about them (35% vs. 26%) or about people getting a bad name from other people posting comments about them (32% vs. 23%).

There has been one change since 2011: 8-11s are now less likely to say they dislike spending too much time on social networking sites (10% vs. 21%).

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80 Due to base sizes it is not possible to look at 8-11s with an active social networking site profile by gender; we therefore look at all children aged 8-15 by gender.
81 Due to base sizes it is not possible to look at 8-15s with an active social networking site profile by each of the four socio-economic groups.
QC25 – Which of these things, if any, are things that you don’t like about social networking sites?

Base: Children aged 8-15 who have a social networking site profile that is currently active (153 aged 8-11 in 2010, 125 aged 8-11 in 2011, 109 aged 8-11 in 2012, 507 aged 12-15 in 2010, 403 aged 12-15 in 2011, 446 aged 12-15 in 2012) – Significance testing shows any difference between 2011 and 2012

Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012
Around one in five children aged 8-15 say they dislike the fact that people can send hurtful messages or can be bullied on their mobile phone

When looking at dislikes about mobile phones, Figures 118 and 119 show that cost issues prevail, with slightly more than two in five 8-11s (43%) and half of 12-15s (52%) stating cost as a dislike. A similar proportion of 8-11s and 12-15s dislike the possibility that people can sometimes be bullied via the mobile phone (19% vs. 18%) or that people can send hurtful messages to others (13% for 8-11s and 17% for 12-15s). Dislikes about seeing things on their phone that are too old for them do not vary by age (7% for 8-11s vs. 6% for 12-15s) while 8-11s are more likely than 12-15s to be concerned about seeing things on the phone that make them feel sad, frightened or embarrassed (10% vs. 5%). Around one in ten children aged 8-11 (12%) with a mobile phone have one or both of these key dislikes, as do a similar proportion of 12-15s (8%).

In 2012 there are no differences by gender, within age or by socio-economic group for each of the individual concerns. Boys aged 12-15 are, however, more likely than girls to say that “these things don’t worry me” (44% vs. 30%). There have been no changes in dislikes for either age group since 2011.

In 2012, the only dislike that is more prevalent among smartphone users aged 12-15 compared to those with another type of mobile phone is “slow access to the internet over the phone” (17% vs. 8%).

**Figure 118: Children’s dislikes about mobile phones, by age: 2010-2012**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Aged 8-11</th>
<th>Aged 12-15</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It costs too much money</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes people get bullied on them</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People can send hurtful messages to other people</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slow access to the internet over the phone</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeing things on the phone that are too old for me</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**QC52** - Which of these things if any, are things you don’t like about mobile phones?
Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012
Figure 119: Children’s dislikes about mobile phones, by age: 2010-2012

Around one fifth of 8-11s dislike the possibility that someone might try to befriend them when playing games online

Children who ever play games online through a gaming device were prompted with a list of seven possible dislikes about online game playing and asked which, if any, applied to them (Figures 120 and 121).

For six of the seven dislikes, 8-11s are as likely as 12-15s to say they are concerned about this aspect of online game playing. The only dislike which is more likely among 12-15s is “I sometimes spend too much time on them” (27% vs. 14%). One in four 8-11s (24%) are concerned that strangers might find out information about them, as are around one in five 12-15s (21%). Eighteen per cent of 8-11s and 13% of 12-15s are concerned that “someone might pretend to be my age and get to know me”.

Among all 8-15s82 there are no differences by gender. There are, however, some differences when comparing children who play games online in ABC1 households to those in C2DE households.83 Those in ABC1 households are more likely to be concerned that strangers might find out information about them (27% vs. 18%), that players can pick on other players through playing the game (24% vs. 12%), or that people can say hurtful things about how other people play games (23% vs. 13%). Those in C2DE households are more likely to say that these things don’t worry them (55% vs. 40%).

There has been no change since 2011 in children’s dislikes about online game playing.

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82Due to the relatively low number of interviews conducted with girls who ever play games online, it is not possible to look at any differences by gender within age.
83Due to sample sizes it is not possible to look at any differences in each of the four socio-economic groups.
Figure 120: Children’s dislikes about online gaming, by age: 2010-2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strangers might find out information about me</th>
<th>Sometimes spend too much time on them</th>
<th>Having to pay to upgrade or extend a game in order to play more (ADDED IN 2012)</th>
<th>Players can pick on other players through playing the game (Added in 2011)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

QC46 – Which of these things if any, are things you don’t like about playing games over the internet?
Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012.

Figure 121: Children’s dislikes about online gaming, by age: 2010-2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>People can say hurtful things about how other people play games (Added in 2011)</th>
<th>Players can exclude other players from the game on purpose (Added in 2011)</th>
<th>Someone might pretend to be my age and get to know me</th>
<th>These things don’t worry me (Excluding those added in 2011 and 2012)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

QC46 – Which of these things if any, are things you don’t like about playing games over the internet?
Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012.
Reporting online content that is nasty, worrying or offensive

Close to one in ten 12-15s would not tell someone if they find something online that is worrying, nasty or offensive

Children aged 8-15 who use the internet at home were asked whether they would tell anyone if they saw something online that they found worrying, nasty or offensive in some way. If they would tell someone, they were asked to say who that person would be.

As in 2011, 8-11s are more likely than 12-15s to say they would tell someone, accounting for nearly all 8-11s (94%) and close to nine in ten 12-15s (87%)\(^{84}\). The majority of both age groups would tell a family member (parent/ sibling or other), with younger children more likely to do this than older children (88% vs. 73%). Older children would be more likely than younger children to tell a friend (19% vs. 7%).

Children aged 12-15 are more likely than 8-11s to be unsure about whether they would tell someone (4% vs. 2%). A significant minority of children aged 12-15 (13%) would therefore not necessarily tell someone if they saw something online that they found to be worrying, nasty or offensive.

Girls aged 8-11 are more likely than boys to tell family members (92% vs. 85%), while girls aged 12-15 are more likely than boys to tell a teacher (22% vs. 14%). There are no differences by household socio-economic group.

There has only been one change since 2011: children aged 12-15 are now more like to report the content to the website themselves (6% vs. 3%).

\(^{84}\) Included in this group are the 2% of 8-11s and 4% of 12-15s who said they were unsure who they would tell.
Figure 122: Reporting online content that is considered by the child to be worrying, nasty or offensive, by age: 2010 - 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family member (parent/sibling/other)</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Friend</th>
<th>The websites themselves</th>
<th>Police</th>
<th>Unsure who I would tell</th>
<th>Don’t know if I would tell someone</th>
<th>Would not tell anyone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010 Aged 8-11</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010 Aged 12-15</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011 Aged 8-11</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011 Aged 12-15</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012 Aged 8-11</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012 Aged 12-15</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

QC34 – If you saw something online that you found worrying, nasty or offensive in some way, would you tell someone about it? IF YES – Who would you tell? (Shows spontaneous responses from > 1% of all internet users aged 8-15) (spontaneous responses, multi-coded)


Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012

Children’s attitudes towards the internet

One in eight 12-15s say they forget about the safety rules when using the internet

Children aged 8-11 and 12-15 who use the internet at home were prompted with a series of statements about the internet and were asked which ones, if any, they agreed with (Figure 123).

Children aged 12-15 are more likely than those aged 8-11 to agree with each of these statements. 12-15s are more than three times more likely to agree that “It’s easier to talk about personal things on the internet” (27% vs. 8%) and around twice as likely to agree “It’s fun being silly or rude on the internet” (16% vs. 6%), “I find it easier to be myself online than when I am with people face to face” (35% vs. 18%) and “When I’m on the internet I forget about the safety rules” (13% vs. 6%).

There are some differences by gender. Boys aged 8-11 are more likely than girls of this age to disagree that it’s easier to keep things secret or private on the internet than in real life (66% vs. 56%). Girls aged 12-15 are more likely to disagree that they find it easier to be themselves online than when they are with people face to face (64% vs. 53%) or that they forget about the safety rules when online (87% vs. 79%). Boys aged 12-15 are more likely to agree with this statement (17% vs. 10%).

There are no differences by household socio-economic group for any of the statements.

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85 This is not because younger children are more likely to disagree, but are more likely to be unsure.
Since 2011, 12-15s are more likely to say that it’s easier to talk about personal things on the internet (27% vs. 19%).

**Figure 123: Children’s opinions of the internet, by age: 2012**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>8-11/% Agree</th>
<th>8-11/% Disagree</th>
<th>12-15/% Agree</th>
<th>12-15/% Disagree</th>
<th>% change ‘Agree’ since 2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I find it easier to be myself online than when I am with people face to face</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>59</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s easier to keep things secret or private on the internet than in real life</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>67</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s fun being silly or rude on the internet</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>79</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s easier to talk about personal things on the internet</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>88</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When I’m on the internet I forget about the safety rules</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>83</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel more confident on the internet than I do in real life</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>68</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

QC16 – Here are some things that people have said about the internet. Which ones do you agree with? (prompted responses, multi-coded)
Base: Children aged 8-15 who use the internet at home (495 aged 8-11, 553 aged 12-15)
Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Savile Rossiter-Base in March 2012

**Incidence of negative experiences on the internet or on mobile phones**

Close to two in five 12-15s say they have seen something online in the past year that is worrying, nasty or offensive

Parents of children aged 5-15 whose child uses the internet at home, and children aged 8-11 and 12-15 who use the internet at home, were asked whether, in the past year, they / their child had seen anything online that is worrying, nasty or offensive. Figures 124 and 125 show the responses for both parents and children, by age and by gender within age.

Parents of 12-15s (14%) are more likely than parents of 5-7s (6%) or 8-11s (8%) to think that their child has seen any online content that is worrying, nasty or offensive. One in ten children aged 8-11 who use the internet at home (11%) say they have seen something online in the past year that is worrying, nasty or offensive, with 12-15s being more likely to say this (18%).

In 2012, there are no differences by gender within age for either the parents’ estimates or among the responses given by children aged 8-15. However, the gap between the parents’ and the children’s responses is highest for girls aged 12-15 (eight percentage points). There are no differences by household socio-economic group for either the parents’ estimates, or among the responses given by children aged 8-15.

Parents of children aged 8-11 are now less likely than in 2011 to say that their child has seen something worrying, nasty or offensive (8% vs. 13%), with no corresponding change in the child’s estimate. While parents of boys aged 8-11, in particular, are less likely to think their child has seen anything of this nature online (8% vs. 18%), the reverse is actually true;
boys aged 8-11 are now more likely to say they have seen something worrying, nasty or offensive online (12% vs. 6%).

There has been no change in parents’ estimate of whether their child aged 12-15 has seen any content of this nature. But children aged 12-15 are more likely to say they have seen something worrying, nasty or offensive online (18% vs. 13%), driven by an increase among girls aged 12-15 (21% vs. 13%).

Figure 124: Parent's estimate of, and child's claimed experience of, having seen any online content in the last year that is considered worrying, nasty or offensive, by age: 2011 and 2012

QP61/ QC35 – In the last year, do you think your child has seen anything online that is worrying, nasty or offensive in some way? And in the last year, have you seen anything online that you found worrying, nasty or offensive in some way? (Prompted responses, single coded)


Significance testing shows any difference between 2011 and 2012

Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012
Figure 125: Parent’s estimate of, and child’s claimed experience of, having seen any online content in the last year that is considered worrying, nasty or offensive, by gender within age: 2011 and 2012

A minority of children say they have personal experience of being bullied through a mobile phone

Children aged 8-11 and 12-15 with a mobile phone were asked whether they knew of anyone who had been bullied, through someone being nasty or hurtful to them through their mobile phone, in the past year. This question was followed by asking the child whether they themselves felt they had been bullied by anyone being nasty or hurtful to them through their mobile phone in the past year.

Figure 126 shows that 3% of 8-11s and 8% of 12-15s feel they have experienced bullying through a mobile phone in the past 12 months.

Girls aged 12-15 are more likely than boys to know of someone who has been bullied through a mobile phone (38% vs. 18%) and to say they have experienced bullying in this way.

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86 It was important to ensure that these questions about bullying and the potentially harmful side of mobile phone and internet use did not distress the child. The questions were placed at the end of the questionnaire, options for declining to answer were always provided, and the questions used show-cards, allowing the child to read out the letter relating to the particular response they wanted to give.

87 Children were provided with the following explanation in advance of asking the question relating to bullying through a mobile phone: “I’m now going to ask you just a few questions about some of the things that can be more difficult about mobile phones. Sometimes, children or teenagers can say or do things to other children that can be quite nasty or hurtful. This type of behaviour is known as bullying. Children or teenagers can bully others using their mobile phone, by making nasty calls or sending nasty or hurtful text messages or video clips.”
way (12% vs. 5%). Girls aged 8-11 are also more likely than boys to say they have experienced bullying through a mobile phone (6% vs. 0%).

Children aged 8-15 with a mobile phone in AB households are less likely than all children aged 8-15 to say they have experienced bullying through a mobile phone (1% vs. 7%).

Compared to 2011, boys aged 8-11 are less likely to say they have experienced bullying through a mobile phone in the past year (0% vs. 4%).

Figure 126: Experience of bullying through a mobile phone, by age and gender: 2012

Nearly one in ten internet users aged 12-15 say they have personally experienced bullying online in the past 12 months

Children aged 8-11 and 12-15 who use the internet at home or elsewhere were asked similar questions about whether they knew anyone, or had personally experienced, being bullied through someone being nasty or hurtful to them online in the past year.

Figure 127 shows that over twice as many 12-15s as 8-11s say they have been bullied online in the past 12 months, accounting for 4% of 8-11s and 9% of 12-15s.

12-15s are also more likely than 8-11s to know of someone who has been bullied online (26% vs. 10%) and within the 12-15 group, girls are more likely than boys to know someone who has been bullied online (33% vs. 19%).

As with bullying through a mobile phone, girls aged 12-15 are more likely than boys to have personal experience of being bullied online (13% vs. 5%).

In addition to the definition of bullying that was provided for mobile phones, children were also told that “Sometimes children or teenagers can bully others online, perhaps by sending hurtful messages or video clips”.

QC56A/B: In the last year, do you know of anyone who has been bullied by someone being nasty or hurtful to them through their mobile phone?/ In the last year, do you feel you have been bullied by someone being nasty or hurtful to you through your mobile phone? (Prompted responses, single coded)
Base: Children aged 8-15 with a mobile phone (238 aged 8-11, 493 aged 12-15, 115 boys aged 8-11, 123 girls aged 8-11, 245 boys aged 12-15, 248 girls aged 12-15) - significance testing shows any change between 2011 and 2012
Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012
There are no differences in personal experience of, or knowing someone who has been bullied online, by household socio-economic group. There has also been no change in either of these incidences for any age group since 2011.

**Figure 127: Experience of being bullied online, by age and gender: 2012**

- **Half of 12-15s know someone with experience of negative online/mobile phone activity**
  
  In addition to asking children about their experience of being bullied, children aged 12-15 were asked whether they personally knew anyone who, in the past year, had experienced, online or through a mobile phone, any of a range of negative experiences. They were also asked if they had themselves experienced any of these in the past 12 months.

  Figure 128 shows that half of all children aged 12-15 (52%) say they know of someone who has experienced any of the negative experiences. Close to one in five 12-15s (17%) say they have personally experienced at least one of these in the last 12 months. Gossip being spread is the most likely personal experience, at just over one in ten (12%) 12-15s. Each of the other experiences we asked about has been experienced by around one in twenty children aged 12-15 (5%) or less. Two per cent of children aged 12-15 say they have seen something of a sexual nature, either online or on their mobile phone, rising to 8% saying that someone they know has seen this.

  Personal experience does vary by gender. Girls aged 12-15 are more likely to have experienced any of these activities, compared to boys (23% vs. 10%), due to them being more likely to have experience of gossip being spread about them online or through texts (18% vs. 6%) and embarrassing pictures being posted or sent to other people against their wishes (8% vs. 2%). Results do not vary by household socio-economic group.

89 Given the face-to-face nature of the survey, together with the topic, it is possible that some children were not comfortable in giving a direct answer to this question.
Since 2011, 12-15s are more likely to know someone who has had gossip spread about them online or through a text message (43% vs. 36%) but are less likely to have personal experience of another person pretending to be them online (3% vs. 6%) or of being picked on by other players in online games (0% vs. 2%).

**Figure 128: Experience of negative types of online/ mobile phone activity, among children aged 12-15: 2012**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>2012 %</th>
<th>2011 %</th>
<th>% Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gossip being spread about someone online or though a text message</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>-31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Embarrassing pictures being posted of someone online or sent to other people against their wishes</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>-16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Another person pretending to be them online</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>-14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Another person using their password to get at their information</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>-13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Someone being picked on by other players in online games</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>-9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeing something of a sexual nature online or on a mobile phone</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>-6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Someone being cheated out of money online</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>+5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any of these</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>-35%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

QC58/QC59 – Please take a look at the list of things shown on this card and think about whether you know anyone who has experienced any of these things in the last year, either online or on a mobile phone./ Again, please just read out the letters from the card if you yourself have experienced any of these things in the last year. (Prompted responses, multi coded)

Base: All children aged 12-15 (572 aged 12-15) – significance testing shows any difference between 2011 and 2012

Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012

By including those 12-15s with a mobile phone, and those using the internet who say they have had personal experience of being bullied in the last 12 months, the 17% of 12-15s experiencing any of these negative experiences, shown in Figure 128 above, rises to 20%. Girls aged 12-15 are more likely than boys of this age to have experienced any of these negative activities (including bullying) in the past 12 months (28% vs. 13%).

**Risky and safe online behaviour**

More than half of internet users aged 12-15 know how to delete the history record of websites they have visited and one in five know how to unset controls or filters that are in place to prevent them visiting certain websites.

Children aged 12-15 who use the internet at home or elsewhere were asked, from a prompted list, whether they had undertaken any of the types of potentially risky online behaviour in the past year.

Figure 129 shows that around one in seven home internet users aged 12-15 (13%) have done any of these potentially risky things in the past year. Slightly less than one in ten children aged 12-15 (8%) have taken the contact details for someone they have only met online, and around one in twenty (6%) have sent personal information to a person they’ve
only had contact with online. There are no differences by gender or by household socio-economic group. There has been no change in any of these measures compared to 2011.

Among children aged 12-15 with an active social networking profile, children with more open profiles (i.e. their profile is set to be seen by anyone or by friends of friends) are more likely than children with more private profiles (that can be seen only by their friends) to have added people to their friends that they have only had contact with online (17% vs. 8%), or to have sent personal information to a person they have only had contact with online (12% vs. 4%).

Figure 129: Experience of potentially risky online behaviour among children aged 12-15: 2011 - 2012

12-15s who use the internet at home or elsewhere were also prompted with a list of online behaviours and were asked to say whether they knew how to do any of them and whether they had done any of them in the past year.

Figure 130 groups the behaviours we asked about into ‘safe’ and ‘risky’ groups.

A majority of 12-15s say they know how to block messages from someone they don’t want to hear from (68%), and to change settings relating to who can see their social networking site profile (56%). Less than half know how to block junk email or spam (48%) or block pop-up adverts (44%). Girls are more likely than boys to have changed the settings on their social networking site profile (42% vs. 31%). There are no differences by socio-economic group.

Compared to 2011, children are more likely to have blocked messages from someone they don’t want to hear from (42% vs. 34%) or to have changed their social networking profile settings (36% vs. 29%).

While this activity has been classified as ‘safe’ on the assumption that children are changing their social networking site profile from the default open settings to more private settings, we cannot say for certain. Some children may be changing their settings to be less private and more open.
In 2012, internet users aged 12-15 are more likely to know how to delete history records (54% in 2012 vs. 41% in 2011) and to have done this in the past year (26% vs. 20%). Around one in five (22%) know how to unset any online filters or controls, but considerably less (8%) have done this in the past year. There are no differences by gender or by household socio-economic group.

**Figure 130: Experience of ‘safe’ and ‘risky’ online measures among children aged 12-15: 2012**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Block messages...</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>-12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Block junk email...</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>+14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Block pop-up...</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>-12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delete history...</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>-19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unset filters...</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>-14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

QC61A/B– Please take a look at the list of things shown on this card and think about whether you know how to do any of these things online. Please read out the letters on the card if you know how to do this. And are there any things on this list that you personally have done online in the last year? (Prompted responses, multi coded)

Base: Children aged 12-15 who use the internet at home or elsewhere (568 aged 12-15) – Significance testing shows any difference between 2011 and 2012

Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012
Section 7

Parents’ rules and controls

This section examines the types of rules and restrictions that parents put in place for their children across various media. It looks at the type of ‘technical’ controls and filters that are in place, and the levels of guidance provided by parents in helping their child stay safe online.

Key findings

- Most parents of 5-15s have rules in place for their child’s use of television (83%), internet (79%), mobile phones (72%) and gaming (76%).

- Children in households with a multichannel television service are now more likely to have access controls through a PIN or password than in 2011 (50% vs. 44%). Findings among parents of 3-4s also indicate that 40% have these controls.

- When prompted with a list of possible parental controls that can be used on a PC, laptop or netbook, 46% of parents say they have such controls in place.

- Among parents of 12-15s whose child has a mobile phone that can be used to go online, 31% have applied filters to exclude websites aimed at over-18s.

- Parental controls are less likely to be in place for handheld games players (14%) or games consoles connected to a television (16%).

- Parents use a combination of approaches to mediate their child’s internet use, including: regularly talking to their children about staying safe online; technical controls and rules relating to parental supervision. 85% of parents use at least one of these approaches and 20% use all three. 15% do none of the things asked about.

- 61% of parents of 5-15s say they have at least one of: safe search settings on search engine websites, parental controls installed on the PC/ laptop/ netbook used by the child, YouTube Safety Mode enabled, software to limit the time spent online or PIN/ passwords set on broadcasters’ websites.

- Compared to 2011, parents of 5-7s, 8-11s and 12-15s are now more likely to use the ‘history’ function within their browser to see which websites their child has visited. Parents of 12-15s are less likely to use safe search settings on search engine websites (40% vs. 48%).

- 8% of parents with parental controls on their PC, laptop or netbook installed them as a result of a member of the household seeing something inappropriate online, while 43% installed them as a precautionary measure.

- 79% of parents of 5-15s who use the internet at home have spoken to their child about staying safe online, a fall since 2011 (83%). 44% of parents talk to their child about this at least once a month.

- 52% of parents agree strongly that they know enough to help their children stay safe online and 54% have looked for or received information or advice about how to do this.

- Analysis of children with rules relating to personal supervision shows that they are no less likely than children without such rules to undertake various types of potentially risky behaviour online. Similarly, analysis of children with any type of technical mediation in place shows that they are no less likely than children without such technical mediation to undertake potentially risky behaviour online.
Parents’ rules about media

The majority of parents have rules in place for their child’s use of television, internet, mobile phones and gaming

Parents of children aged 5-15 were prompted with a list of rules and restrictions relating to each of the key media platforms (television, radio, internet, games consoles/players, and mobile phone) that their child used, and were asked to say which rules they had in place for their child. Detail on the particular types of rules in place for each of the key media platforms is shown later in this section. Figure 131 shows the extent to which cross-media rules are in place for children who use each medium at home.

The majority of parents have rules in place concerning access to, and use of, each of the platforms apart from radio. For all platforms, with the exception of mobile phones, younger children (aged 5-7 and 8-11) are more likely than older children (12-15) to have rules in place.

In 2012, there is only one difference by household socio-economic group: rules about mobile phones are less likely in C2 households compared to all households with children aged 5-15 with their own mobile phone (63% vs. 72%).

There are differences by gender within age for two platforms. As in 2011, parents of boys aged 12-15 are more likely than parents of girls to have rules in place for gaming (67% vs. 56% for 2012) while parents of girls aged 8-11 are more likely than parents of boys to have rules about mobile phones (83% vs. 70%).

Compared to 2011, there has been no change in the incidence of parental rules for users of any of the five media at an overall level (among all 5-15s) or within each age group of child (5-7s, 8-11s, 12-15s).

Figure 131: Parental rules about use of media, by age: 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% point change since 2011</th>
<th>Television</th>
<th>Internet</th>
<th>Gaming</th>
<th>Mobile phone</th>
<th>Radio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aged 5-7</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aged 5-15</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aged 8-11</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aged 12-15</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

QP12/ QP23/ QP30/ QP67/ QP74 – Do you have any of these rules or restrictions about the (MEDIA) that your child watches/ listens to/ uses?
Base: Parents of children aged 5-15 who use each medium at home (VARIABLE BASE) – significance testing shows any change between 2011 and 2012
Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012
Parental rules about use of media among parents of children aged 3-4

91% of parents have rules about television
84% of parents have rules about gaming

Base: Parents of children aged 3-4 whose child ever watches television (186) or plays games on any device at home (101)

Summary of parental controls

Parents are more likely to have parental controls installed on their TV or on the PC/ laptop/netbook used at home than on games consoles or mobile phones

In addition to asking about parental rules regarding the use of media within the home, parents of children aged 5-15 were also asked about the parental controls they had installed on the media their child uses.

Parents of children aged 5-15 in multichannel television households were asked whether parental controls are set to stop certain programmes, films or channels being viewed on the television until a PIN or password is entered.

Parents whose child uses either a PC/ laptop or netbook to go online at home were prompted with four specific types of online parental controls and asked whether these were installed on the PC/ laptop/ netbook that their child uses: parental controls in place that were provided by their internet service provider (ISP); parental controls provided by the computer’s operating system (e.g. Windows, Mac etc.); parental controls purchased by someone in the household or downloaded via an app onto the computer (e.g. Net Nanny); parental controls installed but unsure of the specific type of controls.

Parents whose child uses a portable/ handheld games console were asked whether they had parental controls installed on the console, as were those whose parent plays games on a games console connected to a television.

Parents whose child has a mobile phone that can be used to go online were asked whether access to the internet on their child’s phone is limited to exclude websites that are aimed at people aged 18 or over91. More details about each of these types of individual controls, on a per-platform basis, can be found later in this section of the report. Figure 132 below shows the extent to which controls are in place across media.

Half of parents of 5-15s (50%) say they have parental controls installed on their multichannel television service, with this being more likely for 8-11s (55%) than for either 5-7s (46%) or 12-15s (48%). Forty-six per cent have any of the four specific types of online controls installed on their computer at home, with this being more likely for 5-7s (49%) and 8-11s (51%) than for 12-15s (40%).

Three in ten children aged 12-15 whose phone can be used to go online (31%) have mobile phone ‘filters’ in place.

Controls are much less likely to be in place on handheld/ portable games consoles (14%), or on fixed consoles (16%) with no variations by the age of the child for either type of console.

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91 It is only possible to show the data among children aged 12-15 due to a low base for 5-7s whose mobile phone can be used to go online (10) and 8-11s (89).
**Rules about television viewing**

Rules about television viewing have remained consistent since 2011

As in previous years, household rules for television viewing are more likely to be in place for 5-7s (94%) and 8-11s (90%) than for 12-15s (67%). As in 2011, this is also true for nine of the ten individual rules that parents were prompted with, the exception being the rule relating to PIN/ password controls to watch certain channels/ films.

There is only one rule in place relating to television viewing for the majority of 5-7s, which relates to no TV after a certain time (62%). This rule is also in place for the majority of 8-11s (59%), as is the rule about no programmes with nudity /sexual content (52%). There is no single rule in place across the majority of 12-15s.

While there are no differences in the overall incidence of rules for television by household socio-economic group, there are two differences relating to specific rules. Parents of children in AB households are more likely than all parents to have the rule regarding regular checking of what the child is watching (50% vs. 42%) and the rule about requiring a PIN or password to watch certain channels/ or rated films (29% vs. 22%).

Although the overall incidence of rules about television have not changed since 2011 for any age group, 5-7s are less likely to have the rule about no programmes with violence (44% vs. 51%), and are more likely to have a rule in place that requires a PIN or password to watch certain channels/ or rated films (23% vs. 17%). 8-11s are more likely, since 2011, to have a rule in place about only watching children’s TV programmes or channels (30% vs. 20%).

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**Figure 132: Summary of parental controls in place, by platform: 2012**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parental controls set on multichannel television service</th>
<th>Parental controls installed on PC/ laptop/ netbook that the child uses at home</th>
<th>Parental controls set on portable/ handheld games console</th>
<th>Parental controls set on fixed games console</th>
<th>Mobile phone filters set up (where phone can be used to go online)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aged 5-15</td>
<td>Aged 5-7</td>
<td>Aged 8-11</td>
<td>Aged 12-15</td>
<td>Aged 5-15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
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<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: Parents of children aged 5-15 who watch multichannel TV at home/ Parents whose child aged 5-15  uses a PC/ laptop/ netbook to go online at home/ Parents of children aged 5-15 with a portable games console/ Parents of children aged 5-15 with a fixed games console/ Parents of 12-15s with a mobile phone that can be used to go online - Significance testing shows any change between 2011 and 2012

Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012
There has been no change in the incidence of individual rules about television among parents of 12-15s.

**Figure 133: Parental rules for television, by age: 2012**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rule</th>
<th>Aged 5-15</th>
<th>Aged 5-7</th>
<th>Aged 8-11</th>
<th>Aged 12-15</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Any rules or restrictions</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No TV after a certain time</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No programmes with nudity/ sexual content</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regularly check on what they are watching</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No programmes with swearing/ bad language</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No programmes with violence</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only DVDs/ videos with an appropriate age rating</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only children’s TV programmes/ children’s channels</td>
<td>26% ↑</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>30% ↑</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need a PIN/ password to watch certain channels/ certain movie ratings</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>23% ↑</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only DVD/ video that an adult or parent has watched first</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can only watch when supervised/ not on their own</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

QP12 – Do you have any of these rules or restrictions about the TV, videos and DVDs that your child watches? (prompted responses, multi-coded)


Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012

**Parental rules for television among parents of children aged 3-4**

Any rules or restrictions – 91%

Only children’s TV programmes/ children’s channels – 59%

No TV after a certain time – 50%

Regularly check on what they are watching – 46%

Only DVDs/ videos with an appropriate age rating – 45%

No programmes with nudity/ sexual content – 45%

No programmes with violence – 44%

No programmes with swearing/ bad language – 44%

Can only watch when supervised/ not on their own – 24%

Only a DVD/ video that an adult or parent has watched first – 16%

Need a PIN/ password to watch certain channels/ certain movie ratings – 16%

Base: Parents of children aged 3-4 whose child ever watches television (186)
Technical controls on television

Parents are now more likely to have set access controls on their digital television service

As well as having rules relating to their child’s use of different media, parents may also employ more technical measures to control their child’s access and use. As noted earlier, almost all 5-15s (97%) live in a household with a multichannel television service. Parents of children in these households were asked whether they had any controls on their service so that their child could only watch particular channels or types of programmes once a PIN number or password had been entered.

Half of households with a multichannel television service have set these controls (50%), with parents of 8-11s more likely to have these in place (55%) than parents of either 5-7s (46%) or 12-15s (48%). Since 2011 there has been an increase in the incidence of setting access controls for multichannel television services among households with children aged 5-15 (50% vs. 44%). This increase is driven by households with children aged 8-11 (55% vs. 47%).

Access controls are more likely to be set in households with a satellite (60%) or cable television service (63%), and are considerably less likely to be set in households with Freeview (30%)92. Since 2011, there has been an increase in the incidence of using access controls for cable services (63% vs. 51%).

Unlike in 2011, when there were no differences in the incidence of access controls by household socio-economic group, in 2012 AB households are more likely than all parents to have parental controls in place (60% vs. 50%). DE households are less likely to have them in place (43% vs. 50%), compared to all parents of 5-15s. This is partly attributable to the fact that DE households are more likely to have Freeview television services (40% vs. 32%).

There are no differences by gender within age.

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92 This could be because parental control functionality is not universal for set-top boxes or digital televisions that offer Freeview television services.
Parents who said they had controls in place on their multichannel television service were prompted with four types of control and were asked to select which specific controls they had in place at home. Figure 135 shows their responses.

As in 2011, households with children aged 5-7 or 8-11 are more likely to have the control to prevent specific channels being viewed after a specific time, or after 8pm, compared to households with children aged 12-15 (18% for 5-7s and 8-11s vs. 11% for 12-15s), but the incidence of controls does not otherwise vary by age or gender.

There is only one difference by socio-economic group: AB households are less likely to block specific channels from being viewed at any time of the day compared to all parents of 5-15s (16% vs. 26%).

Parents with a DVR with television controls enabled were asked about a further access control that can be used with a DVR: ensuring that a PIN is required to view a recording that was originally broadcast after 9pm. Seven in ten of this group (73% for 5-7s, 65% for 8-11s and 67% for 12-15s) have this control. Since 2011 this control has been more likely in households with children aged 5-7 (73% in 2012 vs. 63% in 2011).

93 The base of users aged 3-4 is too low to report on consumption for internet (71) and radio (63).
94 The access control “require a PIN to view a recording originally broadcast after 9pm” was only asked of those with television controls and a DVR.
Parents with access controls in place were also asked whether their child knows the PIN or password necessary to override the television access controls. The responses are shown in Figure 135. Knowledge about how to override these access controls increases with the age of the child, accounting for less than one in twenty 5-7s (3%), one in ten 8-11s (11%) and one in four 12-15s (24%). Knowledge of overriding controls has not changed for 5-7s, 8-11s or 12-15s since 2011.

Figure 135: Types of access controls in place among parents with controls set on their multichannel television, by age: 2010 - 2012

Among those without access controls set, one in seven parents are unaware of them or did not know how to set them.

Those parents who do not have any access controls set up for their multichannel television service were asked to say why (Figure 136). Figure 136 looks at reasons for not having controls in place for multichannel television given by all parents of children aged 5-15, while Figures 137 and 138 look at this among parents of 5-7s, 8-11s and 12-15s.

The reasons given by parents tend to differ depending on the age of the child. Parents of older children (12-15s) are more likely to say that they trust their child to be sensible/responsible, or that their child is too old to require these controls, while parents of younger children (5-7s and 8-11s) are more likely to say it is because their child is supervised, or that the child is too young for a lack of controls to be a problem.

Some parents responded that they did not know how to set access controls, or did not know that these settings were possible. Being unaware of access controls in either of these ways accounts for 14% of all parents of children aged 5-15 who do not have these settings in

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95 It is not possible to show the data for parents of 3-4s due to the low base with controls set on their television service (72).
place, and is no more common among parents of 5-7s, 8-11s or 12-15s. As in previous surveys, those in households with a Freeview service are more likely to be unaware of access controls in either of these ways (21% vs. 14%).

Reasons for not having access controls set up for multichannel television do not vary by the gender of the child. Parents of children aged 5-15 in AB households without controls set are less likely than all parents to say it is because they did not know it was possible (3% vs. 9%), while parents in DE households are more likely to give this reason (15% vs. 9%).

There has been no change in awareness of access controls, or in any of the other reasons shown in Figures 137 and 138, since 2011.

*Figure 136: Reasons for not having controls in place for multichannel television, among parents of 5-15s: 2010 - 2012*

QP14 – Can you tell me why that is? (spontaneous responses, multi-coded) – only responses shown where >5% of all parents have given that answer  
Base: Parents of children aged 5-15 who have multi-channel TV in the household and no controls set (1273 aged 5-15 in 2010, 869 aged 5-15 in 2011, 802 aged 5-15 in 2012) - significance testing shows any difference between 2011 and 2012  
Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012
Figure 137: Reasons for not having controls in place for multichannel television, by age: 2010-2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trust child to be sensible/responsible</th>
<th>Child is supervised</th>
<th>Child too young for this to be a problem</th>
<th>Child too old for controls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aged 5-7</td>
<td>Aged 8-11</td>
<td>Aged 12-15</td>
<td>Aged 5-7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

QP14 – Can you tell me why that is? (spontaneous responses, multi coded) – only responses shown where>5% of all parents have given that answer
Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012

Figure 138: Reasons for not having controls in place for multichannel television, by age: 2010-2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Did not know was possible</th>
<th>Don’t know how to do this</th>
<th>UNAWARE HOW (Did not know was possible/Don’t know how to do this)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aged 5-7</td>
<td>Aged 8-11</td>
<td>Aged 12-15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

QP14 – Can you tell me why that is? (spontaneous responses, multi coded) – only responses shown where>5% of all parents have given that answer
Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012
Reasons for not having controls set among parents of children aged 3-4

- Child is too young for this to be a problem - 65%
- Child is always supervised/ always an adult present – 31%
- Didn’t know this was possible – 7%
- Don’t know how to do this – 5%
- Trust my child to be sensible/ responsible – 3%
- Child too old for setting these controls - 3%
- TOTAL UNAWARE HOW – 11%

Base: Parents of children aged 3-4 who have multichannel TV in the household and no controls set (105)

Rules about radio listening

A minority of parents have rules in place about radio

As with television, rules relating to radio are more likely to be in place for 5-7s (31%) and 8-11s (24%) than for 12-15s (15%) who listen to the radio at home. The most common rule among parents of 8-11s (12%) and 12-15s (8%) relates to not listening after a certain time of day. This rule is also popular among parents of 5-7s (13%), as is regularly checking on what they are listening to (10%), and rules about no music with swearing or bad language (11%).

Rules do not vary by gender or household socio-economic group. The overall incidence of rules has not changed for any age group of child since 2011. 5-7s are however now more likely to listen only to children’s radio stations or shows, (3% vs. 0%).

Figure 139: Parental rules for radio, by age: 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rule</th>
<th>Aged 5-15</th>
<th>Aged 5-7</th>
<th>Aged 8-11</th>
<th>Aged 12-15</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Any rules or restrictions</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No radio after a certain time</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regularly check on what they’re listening to</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No music with swearing/ bad language</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only certain radio stations/ shows</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can only listen when supervised / not on their own</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only children’s radio stations/ shows</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

QP23: Do you have any of these rules or restrictions about radio that your child listens to? (prompted responses, multi-coded)

Base: Parents of children aged 5-15 whose child listens to the radio at home (691 aged 5-15, 185 aged 5-7, 220 aged 8-11, 280 aged 12-15).

Significance testing indicates any differences between 2011 and 2012.

Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012
It is not possible to show any data relating to parental rules for radio among parents of 3-4s who listen to the radio at home, due to a low base size (63).

**Parental rules for mobile phones**

The majority of parents of 8-11s and 12-15s have rules in place about their child’s mobile phone use

Most parents whose child has their own mobile phone have put in place at least one of the rules that we asked about.

As in 2011, many of the rules and restrictions for mobile phone use relate to the cost associated with using the phone rather than the possibility of encountering inappropriate or potentially harmful content.

In 2011 rules about mobile phone use were more likely among parents of 8-11s than among parents of 12-15s. In 2012, this is no longer the case; rules are as likely among 8-11s as 12-15s (77% vs. 71%). There are, however, five rules that are more likely among parents of 8-11s whose child has their own mobile phone, compared to parents of 12-15s: regularly check what they are doing with the phone (28% vs. 18%); only calls/texts to an agreed list of people (28% vs. 11%); only to make/receive voice calls or send texts, nothing else (19% vs. 9%); no going online/internet sites/WAP browsing (14% vs. 7%); and no downloading of apps/applications onto the phone (14% vs. 7%).

Unlike in 2011, when the overall incidence of rules about mobile phone use and each of the individual rules that we asked about did not vary by the child’s gender within each age group or by the household’s socio-economic group, there are some differences in 2012. Parents of girls aged 8-11 are more likely than parents of boys aged 8-11 to have any rules in place (83% vs. 70%), driven by parents of girls of this age being more likely to have the rule in place about no calls to premium rate numbers (28% vs. 15%). Parents of girls aged 12-15 are more likely than parents of boys to limit how often credit can be put on the phone (45% vs. 32%).

Parents of children aged 5-15 with a mobile phone in C2 households are less likely than all parents to have rules in place (63% vs. 72%), which is due to parents in C2 households being less likely to limit how often credit can be put on the phone (28% vs. 38%).

Parents of children aged 12-15 are now more likely to say they regularly check what their child is doing with the phone, compared to 2011 (18% vs. 10%). Otherwise, the overall incidence of having rules, and the incidence of each of the individual rules, has not changed since 2011.

While the overall incidence of rules is no different among parents of 12-15s with a smartphone than among parents of children with another type of mobile phone (69% and 75% respectively), those aged 12-15 with another type of mobile phone are more likely to have the rule about only making/receiving calls or texts and nothing else (22% vs. 4%) and are more likely to have the rule about calls/texts only to an agreed list of people (20% vs. 7%).
Figure 140: Parental rules for mobile phones, by age: 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rules or restrictions</th>
<th>Aged 8-15</th>
<th>Aged 8-11</th>
<th>Aged 12-15</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Any rules or restrictions</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limit how often credit can be put on the phone</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No calls to premium rate numbers</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regularly check what they are doing with the phone</td>
<td>21% ↑</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>18% ↑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No texts to premium rate numbers</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only calls/ texts to an agreed list of people</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child is responsible for paying top-ups/ bills</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only to make/ receive voice calls or send texts, nothing else</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No going online/ internet sites/ no WAP browsing</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No downloading of apps/ applications onto the phone</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can only visit certain websites on the phone</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Parental controls for mobile phones

Three in ten parents of a 12-15 year old with a mobile phone that can be used to go online have limited their child’s access to the internet

Parents whose children have their own mobile phone which can be used to get onto the internet were asked whether access to the internet on their child’s phone is limited to exclude websites aimed at people aged 18 and over.96

Three in ten (31%) parents of 12-15s with a mobile phone that can be used to go online say that their child’s phone is limited to exclude these websites.97 In most of these cases (21%) this was activated when the phone was purchased rather than by someone in the household (10%). Responses do not vary between those aged 12-15 with a smartphone and those with another type of mobile phone (32% vs. 28%).

There has been no change since 2011 in the incidence of children aged 12-15 having access on their phone limited to exclude websites that are aimed at people aged 18 and over.

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96 The question wording was amended in 2011 (to reflect the overall incidence of the child’s mobile phone being limited to exclude websites aimed at people aged 18 and over, as distinct from whether a parent or other responsible adult had set this up) and so we cannot show comparable findings from previous years.

97 Low base sizes mean that we cannot report on 5-7s (10) or 8-11s (89) with a mobile phone that can be used to go online.
Those parents responding that their child's phone does not have filters for mobile phone content were asked to say why. Across all parents of 12-15s the main reason given is that they trust their child to be responsible (58%). However, a significant minority (30%) respond that they are not aware that this is possible or don’t know how to do it (5%). Close to one in ten parents of a 12-15 year old (8%) say it is because the child is too old for setting controls.

**Rules about playing games**

**Rules about game playing have remained consistent since 2011**

As in 2011, most parents whose child plays games on a gaming device\(^98\) say that they have rules or restrictions about the games their child plays. Rules are more likely to be in place for children aged 5-7 (87%) and 8-11 (81%), than for those aged 12-15 (62%). Each individual rule is also less likely to be in place for 12-15s than for 5-7s or 8-11s.

More than half of parents of 5-7s and 8-11s have rules restricting the games played to those with an appropriate age rating (65% and 58%), but this is less common among parents of 12-15s (33%). More than two in five parents of 5-7s, and a similar proportion of 8-11s, have rules about the type of content of the games played (43% for 5-7s and 40% for 8-11s for no games with nudity/sexual content, 43% and 37% for both no games with drug use and no games with violence, and 42% and 37% for no games with swearing/bad language). These rules are considerably lower among parents of 12-15s (24% for no games with nudity/sexual content, 21% for no games with drug use, 19% for no games with violence and 19% for no games with swearing/bad language).

When comparing by gender, as in 2011, the overall incidence of having rules in place is higher among parents of boys aged 12-15 than girls (67% vs. 56%), but this difference is not evident for 5-7s or 8-11s. This gender difference among 12-15s is because boys are more likely to have the rule for no games after a certain time (29% vs. 15%).

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\(^98\) This could be a fixed or portable games console, computer, mobile phone or portable media player.
In 2011, when comparing by household socio-economic group, rules were less likely overall in DE households (69% vs. 75%). However, in 2012 there are no differences by household socio-economic group in the overall incidence of rules or for any individual rules.

Compared to 2011, at an overall level, rules are no more or less likely to be in place among any age group of child. There has also been no change in the incidence of parents having any of the individual rules in place for 5-7s, 8-11s or 12-15s.

**Figure 142: Parental rules for gaming, by age: 2012**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rule Description</th>
<th>Aged 5-15</th>
<th>Aged 5-7</th>
<th>Aged 8-11</th>
<th>Aged 12-15</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Any rules or restrictions</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only games with appropriate age rating</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No games with nudity/ sexual content</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No games with drug use</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No games with violence</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No games with swearing/ bad language</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regularly check on what they’re playing</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No games after a certain time</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No online game playing</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No online game playing with people they don’t already know</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only a game that an adult or parent has played/ tried first</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can only play when supervised/ not on their own</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*QP74 - Do you have any of these rules or restrictions about the games that your child plays at home – whether on a games console, a computer or any other device? (prompted responses, multi-coded)*

*Base: Parents of children aged 5-15 whose child ever plays games at home on any type of game playing device (1506 aged 5-15, 489 aged 5-7, 524 aged 8-11, 493 aged 12-15). Significance testing indicates any differences between 2011 and 2012*  
*Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012*
No online game playing – 23%
No online game playing with people they don’t already know – 15%
Base: Parents of children aged 3-4 whose child plays games on any device at home (101)

Few games consoles have parental controls set

Parents whose child aged 5-15 plays at home on a handheld/ portable games console, or a fixed games console connected to a television, were asked whether any parental controls are loaded onto each type of console, either to stop their child playing games that are above a certain age rating or to restrict or prevent their child from going online using the games console.

As shown in Figure 143, around one in seven handheld/ portable games consoles (14%) and fixed games consoles (16%) have parental controls. The incidence of controls on either type of gaming device does not vary by the age of the child. Responses also do not vary by the gender of the child or the household’s socio-economic group. There has been no change in the incidence of parental controls on either gaming device since 2011.

Figure 143: Use of parental controls on games consoles, by age: 2011-2012

Those parents who do not have parental controls set on the handheld/ portable games console, or on the fixed games console that is connected to a television, were asked to say why. Figure 144 looks at reasons for not having parental controls on the handheld/ portable games console among parents of children aged 5-15, while Figure 145 looks at reasons for not having parental controls on the fixed games console that is connected to a television.

As with the reasons for not having controls for multichannel television, the reasons given by parents tend to differ by the age of the child, as shown in Figures 146 and 147.

The main reason given by parents of 5-7s and 8-11s is that their child is always supervised. Among parents of 12-15s, the majority say they trust their child to be responsible, with one in five or less stating that they do not have parental controls because their child is always supervised.

99 It is not possible to show the data for children aged 3-4 due to the low base size for those that play games on a handheld games console (66) or on a games console connected to a television (59%).
Some parents do not use parental controls on the handheld/ portable games console, either because they don’t know how to do this, or are not aware that it is possible. Being unaware of parental controls in either of these ways accounts for more than one in five of parents of 5-15s who do not have parental controls in place (25% for handheld/ portable games consoles and 21% for fixed games consoles), and this is comparable across each of the three age groups of children.

There are no differences in the reasons for not having parental controls in place for either the portable/ handheld or the fixed games player by the gender of the child, and only one difference by household socio-economic group: parents of children aged 5-15 in DE households are less likely than all parents to say they do not have rules in place for the portable games player (24% vs. 32%) or the fixed games player (28% vs. 34%) because they trust their child to be sensible/ responsible.

There are differences compared to 2011. Parents of 8-11s are now less likely to say that controls on the handheld/ portable games console are not in place because they don’t know how to do this (2% vs. 6%) while parents of 12-15s are now more likely to say that controls on the fixed games console are not in place because the child is always supervised (20% vs. 11%).

**Figure 144: Reasons for not having parental controls on the handheld/ portable games console among parents of 5-15s: 2011 – 2012**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason for Not Having Controls</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trust child to be sensible/ responsible</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child is always supervised</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not know was possible</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child too young for this to be a problem</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know how to do this</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child is too old for setting these controls</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNAWARE HOW (Did not know was possible/ Don’t know how to do this)</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**QP79 – And can you tell me why that is? (spontaneous responses, multi-coded)**


Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012
Figure 145: Reasons for not having parental controls on the fixed games console among parents of 5-15s: 2011 – 2012

<table>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trust child to be sensible/responsible</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child is always supervised</td>
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<tr>
<td>Did not know was possible</td>
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<tr>
<td>Child too young for this to be a problem</td>
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<tr>
<td>Don’t know how to do this</td>
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<tr>
<td>Child is too old for setting these controls</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNAWARE HOW (Did not know was possible/Don’t know how to do this)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

QP78 – And can you tell me why that is? (spontaneous responses, multi-coded)
Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012

Figure 146: Reasons for not having parental controls on the handheld/portable games console, by age: 2011 – 2012

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trust child to be sensible/responsible</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>544</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child is always supervised</td>
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<tr>
<td>Did not know was possible</td>
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<td>Child too young for this to be a problem</td>
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<tr>
<td>Don’t know how to do this</td>
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<tr>
<td>Child is too old for setting these controls</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNAWARE HOW (Did not know was possible/Don’t know how to do this)</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

QP79 – And can you tell me why that is? (spontaneous responses, multi-coded)
Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012
Figure 147: Reasons for not having parental controls on the fixed games console, by age: 2011 – 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trust child to be sensible/responsible</th>
<th>Child is always supervised</th>
<th>Did not know was possible</th>
<th>Child too young for this to be a problem</th>
<th>Don’t know how to do this</th>
<th>Child is too old for setting these controls</th>
<th>UNAWARE HOW (Did not know was possible/Don’t know how to do this)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Aged 5-7</td>
<td>Aged 8-11</td>
<td>Aged 12-15</td>
<td>Aged 5-7</td>
<td>Aged 8-11</td>
<td>Aged 12-15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust child to be sensible/responsible</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child is always supervised</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not know was possible</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child too young for this to be a problem</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know how to do this</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child is too old for setting these controls</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNAWARE HOW (Did not know was possible/Don’t know how to do this)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

QP80 – And can you tell me why that is? (spontaneous responses, multi-coded)
Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012

Rules about the internet

Four in five parents have rules in place about their child’s internet use

Four in five parents of children aged 5-15 who use the internet at home (79%) say they have put in place any of the internet rules that we asked about. Rules about the internet are more common for children aged 5-7 (91%) and 8-11 (86%) than for those aged 12-15 (67%).

The rule relating to the parent regularly checking what their child is doing online is in place among half of all parents of a 5-7 year-old child (47%) or an 8-11 year-old child (54%), compared to 41% of parents of 12-15s. While a majority of parents of 5-7s have a rule about only children’s websites (53%) this is less likely for 8-11s (30%) and 12-15s (3%).

There are no other rules in place among the majority of parents of children in any age group.

Six of the twelve rules are more likely to be in place for children aged 5-7 or 8-11 than for 12-15s: only children’s websites; only allowed to use the internet for a certain amount of time; can only use when supervised/not on their own; no social networking websites; no instant messaging/MSN; and only websites stored in their Favourites list.

There is one difference by gender. Parents of boys aged 12-15 are more likely than parents of girls to have the rule relating to a PIN or password being required to enter websites unless already approved (18% vs. 10%).

Neither the overall incidence of having rules in place, nor the incidence of any individual rule for home internet use, varies according to the household socio-economic group.
There are few differences compared to 2011. Parents of 5-7 year old children are now less likely to have a rule in place relating to allowing them to use the internet only for a certain amount of time (24% vs. 32%), while 12-15s are less likely to have a rule about no social networking websites (5% vs. 9%).

**Figure 148: Parental rules for the internet, by age: 2012**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rule</th>
<th>Aged 5-15</th>
<th>Aged 5-7</th>
<th>Aged 8-11</th>
<th>Aged 12-15</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Any rules or restrictions</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regularly check what they’re doing online</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No internet after a certain time</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No purchasing from websites</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only children’s websites</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only allowed to use the internet for a certain amount of time</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can only use when supervised/ not on their own</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No social networking websites</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PIN/ Password required to enter websites unless already approved</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only talk/ chat with friends/ people they already know</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Instant Messaging/ MSN</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only websites stored in their Favourites list</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only use for homework</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

QP30 Do you have any of these rules or restrictions about the access that your child has to the internet on any device? (prompted responses, multi-coded)
Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012

Figure 149 below shows the incidence of having any of these internet rules in place, since 2007.

There has been no change between 2011 and 2012 among parents of 5-7s, 8-11s and 12-15s, and the overall trend for internet rules between 2007 and 2011 among all three age groups of children continues to be relatively stable.
Figure 149: Parental rules for the internet, by age: 2007-2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Aged 5-15</th>
<th>Aged 5-7</th>
<th>Aged 8-11</th>
<th>Aged 12-15</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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


Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012

Rules about parental supervision of the internet

Figure 150 shows the proportion of parents who say they either have the rule about regularly checking what their child is doing online, or the rule that their child can only use the internet when supervised and not when they are on their own. By combining the responses of parents who have either of these rules, it is possible to show an overall measure for rules relating to parental supervision.

Just under half (47%) of all parents of 5-15s say they regularly check what their child is doing online. Parents of 8-11s (54%) are as likely to do this as parents of 5-7s (47%) and more likely than parents of 12-15s to do this (41%). As in 2011, the rule regarding children using the internet only when supervised and not on their own is in place for one in five 5-15s (19%) and decreases with age, with one in three (35%) parents of 5-7s having this rule, compared to 28% of 8-11s and one in twenty (5%) 12-15s.

Combining these responses shows that more than half of parents of 5-15s (54%) supervise their child in some way when online, with parents of 5-7s (63%) and 8-11s (63%) being more likely to do so than parents of 12-15s (42%).

There are no differences by gender within age or by household socio-economic group for each of the individual rules about online parental supervision, nor for the overall measure of parental supervision.

There are no differences in the incidence of any of these rules by any age group of child compared to 2011.
Parental controls on the internet

46% of parents have any type of parental controls installed on the PC/ laptop/ netbook that their child uses at home

In 2012, additional questions were added to the Media Literacy survey in order to better understand parents’ use of, and attitude towards, online controls.

Parents whose child uses either a PC, laptop or netbook to go online at home were prompted with four specific types of online parental controls and asked whether these were installed on the PC/ laptop/ netbook that their child uses: parental controls in place that were provided by their internet service provider (ISP); parental controls provided by the computer’s operating system (e.g. Windows, Mac etc.); parental controls purchased by someone in the household or downloaded via an app onto the computer (e.g. Net Nanny); parental controls installed but unsure of the specific type of controls. The results are shown in Figure 151.

Close to half of parents of 5-15s (46%) have any of these types of controls installed. Parents of 5-7s (49%) and 8-11s (51%) are more likely than parents of 12-15s (40%) to have any of these in place.

The most commonly-installed parental controls among parents of 5-15s who use a PC, laptop or netbook to go online at home were those provided by their internet service provider (ISP), with one in four (25%) claiming to have this. Parents of 8-11s are more likely to have this type of parental control installed, compared to parents of 12-15s (30% vs. 22%). Parental controls provided by the computer’s operating system (e.g. Windows, Mac etc.) are the next most popular type of parental control, with 16% of parents of 5-15s having these installed. This incidence does not vary by the age of the child. Less than one in ten parents (7%) have controls installed that were purchased by someone in the household or downloaded via an app onto the computer (e.g. Net Nanny). Around one in twenty parents
(6%) say that they have controls installed but are unsure of the specific type of controls, while one in ten parents (10%) say they are unsure whether they have parental controls set up/installed.

While there are no differences by household socio-economic group, there are some differences by gender. Parents of girls aged 5-7 are more likely than parents of boys to have controls installed that were provided by their ISP (29% vs. 18%). Parents of boys aged 12-15 are more likely than parents of girls to have parental controls installed that are built into the computer’s operating system (17% vs. 11%).

Figure 151: Types of parental controls installed on the PC/ laptop/ netbook the child uses at home, by age: 2012

This ‘new’ measure for use of online parental controls within the home is different to the historic, unprompted measure used in previous years (shown in Figure 152 below)\(^\text{100}\). In previous years parents of children who use the internet at home provided unprompted answers when asked whether any controls are set, or any software loaded, to stop their child viewing certain types of websites? (prompted responses, multi-coded)

Analysis of this historic measure of online parental controls finds that two in five (41%) of all parents of 5-15s who use the internet at home have these controls in place. This is more likely among parents of 5-7s (42%) and 8-11s (47%) than among parents of 12-15s (35%).

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\(^{100}\) These differences are not attributable to the different subset of parents that were asked the two questions. When the data in Figure 152 are re-run on the same base as the data in Figure 151 (parents whose child uses a PC/ laptop or netbook at home) the incidences do not change – as there are few children that only use devices other than a PC/ laptop/ netbook to go online.

\(^{101}\) The new question came after this original question, and the wording was “Just to check, do you have any of these types of ‘parental controls’ loaded or put into place and working on the PC/ laptop/netbook that your child uses at home, to prevent them viewing certain types of websites?” (prompted responses, multi-coded).
The likelihood of having controls set or software loaded does not vary by the household socio-economic group. However, in 2012, parents of girls aged 5-7 are more likely than parents of boys (52% vs. 33%) to have controls.

Using this measure, there has been no change in this incidence of having internet controls or filtering software since 2011.

**Figure 152: Internet controls/ filtering software loaded, by age: 2007 - 2012**

Further analysis shows that the five percentage point increase in the ‘new’ figure for parental controls among all 5-15s (from 41% to 46%) is attributable to parents who said they did not have controls installed (at the earlier ‘historic/ generic’ question) and then realised that they had, when prompted with the different types of parental controls at the supplementary question.

Given that this ‘new’ measure is a more considered response to the question(s) about online controls/ filtering software, it is therefore a more accurate measure of the use of parental controls within the household. As such, any subsequent analysis that refers to online parental controls/ filters will reference this measure (46% for all 5-15s) and will be referred to as ‘Parental controls installed on the PC/ laptop/ netbook that the child uses at home’

**Reasons for not having parental controls installed on the PC/ laptop/ netbook that the child uses at home**

The reasons for not having parental controls installed at home differ considerably by the age of the child

Those parents who do not have parental controls installed on the PC/ laptop/ netbook that the child uses at home were asked to say why.
Figure 153 below looks at reasons for not having parental controls installed on the PC/laptop/netbook that the child uses at home, among children aged 5-15

The reasons given tend to vary by the age of the child, as shown in Figures 154 and 155. The main reason given by nearly two in three parents of 5-7s and 8-11s (both 63%) is that their child is always supervised when using the internet. Among parents of 12-15s, two in three (67%) say they trust their child to be responsible, with around one in four (23%) stating that they do not set internet controls because their child is always supervised. Trusting their child to be sensible/responsible is considerably lower among parents of 5-7s (7%) and 8-11s (32%) than among parents of 12-15s (67%).

One in ten (10%) parents say they do not have parental controls installed on the PC/laptop/netbook either because they don’t know how to do this, or are not aware that it is possible. This is comparable across each of the three age groups of children. There are no differences in reasons for not having internet controls in place by household socio-economic group. Parents of girls aged 12-15 are more likely than parents of boys aged 12-15 to say it is because they trust their child to be sensible or responsible (74% vs. 59%)\(^{102}\).

Reasons given by parents for not having these controls in place are mostly consistent with responses given in 2011. However, parents of 5-7s and 8-11s are now more likely to say it is because their child is always supervised (63% vs. 49% for 5-7s and 63% vs. 50% for 8-11s).

**Figure 153: Unprompted reasons for not having parental controls installed on the PC/laptop/netbook that the child uses at home among 5-15s: 2010-2012**

\(^{102}\) Bases for parents of boys and girls aged 5-7 and 8-11 are too low for analysis.
Figure 154: Unprompted reasons for not having parental controls installed on the PC/ laptop/ netbook that the child uses at home, by age: 2010 - 2012

Figure 154 shows responses given by 5% or more of all parents of 5-15s without parental controls set on the PC/ laptop/ netbook the child uses at home.
In 2012, after parents had been asked for their spontaneous reasons for not having parental controls installed on the PC/laptop/netbook that their child uses at home, they were prompted with a list of possible reasons for not having controls installed, and asked to say which, if any, applied. This list included an option for parents to say they had previously used controls but had now stopped using them, and was included to allow us to identify lapsed users of parental controls. Less than one in twenty parents of 5-15s without controls installed gave this response (3%), accounting for 0% of parents of 5-7s, 4% of parents of 8-11s and 4% of parents of 12-15s. This does not vary by household socio-economic group or by the child’s gender. There are also no differences by gender within age.

Parents who said they do not have parental controls installed on the PC/laptop/netbook that their child uses were also directly asked: “Before today, were you aware that it is possible to have parental controls set on a PC or laptop”. Fifteen per cent of these parents said they were not aware; this incidence does not vary by the age of the child (13% for 5-7s, 14% for 8-11s and 17% for 12-15s). There are no differences by household socio-economic group or by the child’s gender, within age. When comparing this response to the equivalent spontaneous response given (“I did not know this was possible”) there are no differences for any age group of children.
Experience of parents with controls installed on the PC/ laptop/ netbook that the child uses at home

Parents are more likely to install controls on the PC/ laptop/ netbook as a precautionary measure rather than as a result of someone seeing something inappropriate online

In 2012, parents with controls installed on the PC/ laptop/ netbook that the child uses at home were prompted with a list of possible reasons for putting parental controls in place on the computer and asked to say which one applied.

Figure 156 shows that less than one in ten (8%) parents of 5-15s say that the controls were installed as a result of someone in the household seeing something inappropriate online. Just under half of parents of 5-15s say the controls were pre-installed (46%) or that they were installed as a precautionary measure (43%).

Figure 156: Reasons for installing parental controls on the PC/ laptop/ netbook that the child uses at home, by age: 2012

[Graph showing distribution of reasons for installing parental controls by age group]

QP34 - Please look at the reasons shown on this card. Which one of these describes why the parental controls were put in place? (prompted responses, single coded)
Base: Those parents with any parental controls on the PC, laptop or netbook mostly used by their child to go online at home (650 aged 5-15, 186 aged 5-7, 248 aged 8-11, 216 aged 12-15)
Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012

The majority of parents with parental controls believe their child is safer as a result

Parents with controls installed on the PC/ laptop/ netbook that the child uses at home were asked the extent to which they agreed with three statements about these controls.
A majority of parents in each age group agreed strongly that: “I am confident that the parental controls that we have in place are effective” with parents of 5-7s being more likely to agree strongly than parents of 12-15s (72% vs. 61%). A majority of parents, overall (65%) and in each age group, also agree strongly that: “I feel my child is safer as a result”. For both of these statements, parents of girls aged 8-11 are more likely to agree strongly, compared to parents of boys. There are no differences by socio-economic group.
However, one in four parents (23%) of 5-15s agree (either strongly or slightly) that: “The parental controls get in the way of what I or other family members want to access online”.

**Figure 157: Parental agreement with statements about the parental controls installed, by age, 2012**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Aged 5-7</th>
<th>Aged 8-11</th>
<th>Aged 12-15</th>
<th>Aged 5-15</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am confident that the parental controls that we have in place are effective</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slightly agree</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither/ don’t know</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slightly disagree</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel that my child is safer as a result</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slightly agree</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither/ don’t know</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slightly disagree</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The parental controls get in the way of what I or other family members want to access online</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slightly agree</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither/ don’t know</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slightly disagree</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Compared to 2011, parents are now more likely to use the ‘history’ function online to see which websites their child has visited

Parents of children aged 5-15 who use the internet at home were asked whether three other online security measures were in place in the household. Close to half (46%) of parents say they use safe search settings, more than two in five (42%) use the ‘history’ function on the computer to see which websites their child has visited and one in ten (10%) have software installed to limit the amount of time their child can spend on the internet. Two in three (67%) parents have any of these three measures in place.

Parents of 5-7s (48%) and 8-11s (52%) are more likely to use safe search settings than parents of 12-15s (40%). Use of the history function or using software to limit time spent online does not vary by the age of the child, and responses do not vary by gender within age. There is only one difference by socio-economic group; those in AB households are also more likely to use the ‘history’ function to see which websites their child has visited (50% vs. 42%).

Compared to 2011, parents of children (across all three age groups) are now more likely to use the ‘history’ function to see the websites that their child has visited (40% vs. 29% for 5-7s, 44% vs. 36% for 8-11s, 41% vs. 30% for 12-15s). Parents of 12-15s are, however, less likely to use safe search settings on search engine websites (40% vs. 48%). As such, while parents of 5-7s (66% vs. 57%) and 8-11s (72% vs. 63%) are now more likely to use any of these online security measures, there has been no change for parents of 12-15s.
Around one quarter of parents whose child uses YouTube have the Safety Mode set

Parents of children aged 5-15 who use the internet at home were asked whether their child visits the YouTube website. Three in five children (60%) visit YouTube, with the likelihood increasing with the age of the child, accounting for three in ten 5-7s (30%), half of 8-11s (54%) and four in five 12-15s (79%).

Parents of children who visit this site were then asked whether they had enabled YouTube’s Safety Mode to prevent their child viewing some videos. Figure 161 shows that one in four parents (25%) of a 5-15 year old who visits the YouTube website have Safety Mode set. Parents of 5-7s (34%) and 8-11s (29%) are more likely to have Safety Mode enabled, compared to parents of 12-15s (21%).

There are no differences in having Safety Mode enabled by gender within age, or by socio-economic group, and these measures have not changed since 2011.
Parents of children who use the internet at home were asked whether their child ever downloads or watches TV programmes or films over the internet. One in three children aged 5-15 (33%) now watch television content via UK television broadcasters’ websites, according to their parents, and the incidence increases with age, accounting for close to one in five (17%) aged 5-7, three in ten (29%) aged 8-11 and more than two in five (43%) aged 12-15. Responses do not vary by the gender of the child or the household’s socio-economic group. There has been no change since 2011.

One in five parents whose child watches/downloads content from UK television broadcasters’ websites use parental controls on these sites

Compared to the responses given by children (as shown in Figure 61), parents of 12-15s appear to be less likely to say that their child ever watches TV programmes or films online; 43% of parents vs. 51% of children. Children were asked to respond to internet activities shown on a list while parents were asked a direct question about how their child ever watched TV programmes or films.
Parents of children aged 5-15\textsuperscript{106} whose child watches/downloads content from UK TV broadcasters’ websites were asked whether they were aware that these sites show guidance labels for programmes which may include content unsuitable for young audiences. These parents were also asked whether they had set a PIN or password on any UK broadcasters’ websites that their child uses to watch or download TV programmes or films\textsuperscript{107}.

Slightly less than three in ten (27%) parents of 5-15s whose child watches/downloads content from UK TV broadcasters’ websites are not aware of the guidance labels for programmes, and around one in five (20%) have set up a PIN/ password on all (14%) or some (6%) of the websites their child uses. As such, around one in five of the parents who are aware of the guidance labels have set up a PIN or password to be used before viewing programmes that have a guidance label (20% of the 73% aware of guidance labels).

Results do not vary by age, gender or household socio-economic group. There has been no change in awareness of or use of PIN controls since 2011 among those parents whose child watches/ downloads content from UK TV broadcasters’ websites.

\textsuperscript{106} Figure 161 does not show data for 5-7s because of the low base of 66 parents of children aged 5-7 in 2012 and 69 in 2011.

\textsuperscript{107} The question wording was changed in 2011 and so we cannot show comparable findings from previous years.
Two in three parents of 5-15s have software installed to protect against junk email or computer viruses

An interesting comparison with those parents who have installed parental controls is the number of parents who have software installed to protect against junk email/spam or computer viruses. Two in three parents of children aged 5-15 (68%) say they have this software installed (compared to 46% of parents who have parental controls installed). The incidence does not vary across the three age groups of children (5-7, 8-11 or 12-15) nor are there any differences by gender within age.

As in 2011, those in AB socio-economic groups are more likely than all parents to say they use anti-spam/ virus software (75% vs. 68%). In 2012, parents of children aged 5-15 in DE households are less likely to have this software installed (60% vs. 68%).

Compared to 2011, there has been no change in the incidence of having this software installed for any age group of children.
Parental guidance about online safety

More than two in five parents talk to their child at least monthly about staying safe online

Since 2011, parents of children aged 5-15 who used the internet at home were asked: “Have you talked to your child about staying safe when they are online?” In 2012, parents who said they had talked to their child about staying safe online were asked how frequently they talked to their child about this. Results are shown in Figures 163 and 164.

Figure 163 shows that four in five parents of 5-15s who use the internet at home (79%) say that they have spoken to their children about staying safe online. This overall incidence is more common among parents of 8-11s (82%) and 12-15s (86%) than among parents of 5-7s (53%). Responses do not vary by the gender of the child within each age group or by the household’s socio-economic group. Compared to 2011, parents of 12-15s are less likely to say they have spoken to their child about staying safe online (86% vs. 93%) and this is less likely both for parents of boys aged 12-15 (85% vs. 92%) and parents of girls aged 12-15 (88% vs. 94%).
More than two in five parents (44%) of children aged 5-15 who use the internet at home have spoken to their child about staying safe online at least once a month, with this being more likely for parents of 8-11s (49%) and 12-15s (44%) than of 5-7s (33%). A further three in ten parents (29%) have spoken to their child more than once, but not as frequently as monthly. While there are no differences by household socio-economic group, parents of girls aged 8-11 are more likely to have talked to their child at least monthly compared to parents of boys (55% vs. 42%), as are parents of girls aged 12-15 (50% vs. 39%).
The majority of parents agree strongly that they know enough to help their child to stay safe online

In 2012, parents of children aged 5-15 who use the internet at home were asked the extent to which they agreed that: “I feel I know enough to help my child to stay safe when they are online”. Figure 165 shows that a majority of parents of 5-15s (52%) agree strongly with this statement, with parents of 5-7s (62%) and 8-11s (57%) being more likely to agree strongly than parents of 12-15s (42%).

Around one in seven (14%) parents of 5-15s disagree (either strongly or slightly) that they know enough to keep their child safe online, rising to one in five (20%) parents of 12-15s.

There are no differences in the extent of agreement by gender within age, or by household socio-economic group.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>At least monthly</th>
<th>Less often</th>
<th>Only once</th>
<th>Have not talked to my child</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>All aged 5-15</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>44%</td>
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<td></td>
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<td><strong>Aged 5-7</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td></td>
<td>34%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Aged 8-11</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>49%</td>
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<td><strong>Aged 12-15</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>44%</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Boys aged 5-7</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>31%</td>
<td></td>
<td>13%</td>
<td></td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Girls aged 5-7</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td></td>
<td>34%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Boys aged 8-11</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>42%</td>
<td></td>
<td>16%</td>
<td></td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Girls aged 8-11</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>33%</td>
<td></td>
<td>24%</td>
<td></td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Boys aged 12-15</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>39%</td>
<td></td>
<td>39%</td>
<td></td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Girls aged 12-15</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>42%</td>
<td></td>
<td>31%</td>
<td></td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

QP57 Have you talked to your child about staying safe when they are online? QP58 Which of these best describes how often you talk to your child about staying safe when they are online? (prompted responses, single coded)


Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012.
Figure 165: Parents who feel they know enough about how to help their child to stay safe online, by age and socio-economic group: 2012

In 2012, parents of children who use the internet at home or elsewhere were also asked whether they have ever looked for, or received, information or advice about how to help their child stay safe online. They were prompted with nine possible sources, with the option of nominating other sources. Figures 166 and 167 show the responses given by parents.

A majority of parents of children aged 5-15 (54%) have looked for or received information/advice from any source, and this is more likely for parents of 8-11s (59%) and 12-15s (54%) than for parents of 5-7s (45%).

The most popular source of information is the child’s school (31% for 5-7s, 42% for 8-11s and 37% for 12-15s). Information from family/friends is the next most common source of information, chosen by a sizeable minority of parents (16% of all parents of 5-15s, rising to 19% among parents of 12-15s). One in ten parents of 5-15s (11%) looked for or received information from ISPs. No other sources were used by more than one in ten parents. Around one in twenty parents of 5-15s (4%) say they have received information from their child.

Figure 167 also shows that sources other than family, friends or the child themselves account for the vast majority of information received about how to help their child stay safe online - with these sources mostly consisting of information provided by the child’s school. While results do not vary by the gender of the child, parents in AB households are more likely than all parents to say they have looked for or received information from any source (62% vs. 54%).

Where more than 1% of parents gave that response.
Figure 166: Parents stating they have looked for or received any information or advice about how to help their child to stay safe online, by age: 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANY information looked for/ received</th>
<th>From child’s school</th>
<th>From family/ friends</th>
<th>From ISPs</th>
<th>From TV, radio, newspapers, magazines</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aged 5-15</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>54</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aged 5-7</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>37</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aged 8-11</td>
<td>38</td>
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<td>16</td>
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<td>Aged 8-11</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aged 12-15</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
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QP60 – Have you looked for or received information or advice about how to help your child to stay safe when they are online, from any of these sources or in any other way? (prompted responses, multi-coded) – only responses shown where >1% of all parents have given that answer
Base: Children aged 5-15 who use the internet at home (1424 aged 5-15, 376 aged 5-7, 495 aged 8-11, 553 aged 12-15)
Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012

Figure 167: Parents stating they have looked for or received any information or advice about how to help their child to stay safe online, by age: 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>From websites</th>
<th>Manufacturers/ retailers selling product</th>
<th>From child</th>
<th>From government or local authority sources</th>
<th>Any source other than family/ friends/ child</th>
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<td>Aged 5-15</td>
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<td>Aged 5-7</td>
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<td>Aged 12-15</td>
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</table>

QP60 – Have you looked for or received information or advice about how to help your child to stay safe when they are online, from any of these sources or in any other way? (prompted responses, multi-coded) – only responses shown where >1% of all parents have given that answer
Base: Children aged 5-15 who use the internet at home (1424 aged 5-15, 376 aged 5-7, 495 aged 8-11, 553 aged 12-15)
Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012

Nine in ten children aged 8-15 say they have been given information about staying safe online

194
Children aged 8-15 who use the internet at home or elsewhere were asked whether they had ever been given any information or advice about staying safe online, shown in Figures 168 and 169. Those who said they had were asked who had given them the advice. Around nine in ten children aged 8-11 (88%) or 12-15 (91%) recall receiving such advice.

For both age groups this information is most likely to be recalled as being from a teacher, (67% for 8-11s and 72% for 12-15s). Around two-thirds in each age group recall receiving this information from a parent\(^{109}\) (64% for 8-11s, 63% for 12-15s). Other sources of this information are nominated by less than one in ten children in either age group, with 12-15s more likely than 8-11s to recall receiving information or advice from friends (9% vs. 4%).

Around one in ten children or less say they have not been given any information or advice (10% for 8-11s, 8% for 12-15s).

There are no differences in the overall incidence of receiving any advice, or in the sources of advice, when looking at the child’s gender by age. Unlike in 2011, when children aged 8-15 in DE households were less likely to recall receiving advice from a parent, in 2012 there are no differences by household socio-economic group.

Compared to 2011, children aged 8-11 and 12-15 are less likely to recall receiving information from any source (88% vs. 92% for 8-11s and 91% for 96% for 12-15s). While no individual information source has changed for 8-11s, 12-15s are less likely to say they have been given information or advice from a teacher (72% vs. 78%).

In 2012, children were also asked whether they had been given any information or advice in the past year about how to stay safe online. While not shown in Figure 168, four in five 8-15s (79%) said they had. This incidence does not vary by age, gender or by household socio-economic group. This compares to 90% of 5-15s saying they have ever been given information or advice about staying safe online.

\(^{109}\) These incidences are lower than those reported at Figures 166 and 167. This could be attributable to the different way in which the question was asked of parents (through a prompted list of responses) and of children (through unprompted/ spontaneous responses).
Figure 168: Children stating they have been given any information or advice about staying safe online, among 8-15s: 2010 - 2012

QC36 – Have you ever been given any information or advice about how to stay safe when you are online? (spontaneous responses, multi-coded)
Base: Children aged 8-15 who use the internet at home or elsewhere (1435 aged 5-15 in 2010, 1113 aged 5-15 in 2011, 1107 aged 5-15 in 2012).
Significance testing shows any difference between 2011 and 2012.
Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012

Figure 169: Children stating they have been given any information or advice about staying safe online, by age: 2010 - 2012

QC36 – Have you ever been given any information or advice about how to stay safe when you are online? (spontaneous responses, multi-coded)
Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in March 2012
Overview of types of parental mediation for the internet

Three in five parents use any type of technical online control

Parents can rely on several types of mediation to help their child to stay safe online. Figure 170 below summarises each of the technical methods of mediation that have been covered in this section, based on all parents of 5-15s whose child uses the internet at home. This is followed by Figure 171 which summarises the other types of mediation which a parent may use.

Figure 170 shows that as previously reported, less than half have any of the individual technical online controls in place. Across all of the different technical methods of mediation three in five (61%) parents of children aged 5-15 have at least one type in place.

In addition, more than two in five (42%) parents of 5-15s who use the internet at home use the history function to view the websites their child has visited, and this is more likely now than in 2011 (32%).

In 2012, a similar proportion of parents of 5-15s who use the internet at home have rules about their internet use as say they have ever talked to their child about staying safe online (both 79%). As such, nearly all parents (94%) use either of these types of personal mediation, and it is more common among parents of 8-11s (97%) than among parents of 12-15s (92%).

In some instances the data have been re-based to reflect the incidence among all children who use the internet at home. This explains why the proportion of children who have parental controls installed on the PC/laptop/netbook that their child uses at home is 45% rather than the 46% reported earlier (when based on all parents whose child uses a PC/laptop/netbook to go online at home).

The full list of rules relating to the child’s use of the internet is shown in Figure 148.
Compared to 2011, parents are less likely to have ever\textsuperscript{112} talked to their child about staying safe online (79\% vs. 83\%) and, as such, are less likely to use either of these measures (94\% vs. 97\%).

**Figure 171: Types of non-technical mediation in place in households where a child aged 5-15 uses the internet at home: 2011 - 2012**

One in five parents use technical mediation measures, \textit{and} have rules relating to parental mediation, \textit{and} talk to their child about staying safe online at least monthly.

Figure 172 shows the relationship between three types of mediation that parents may choose to use at home with regard to their child’s use of the internet, and shows the interplay of supportive guidance (talking to their child about staying safe online at least monthly), mediation through technical tools\textsuperscript{113} and rules or restrictions relating specifically to parental supervision\textsuperscript{114}.

One in five (20\%) parents use all three of these types of mediation; they use technical mediation, have rules relating to parental supervision, and have talked to their child about staying safe online at least monthly. This is more likely among parents of 8-11s (24\%) than parents of 5-7s or 12-15s (both 17\%).

\textsuperscript{112} As shown earlier, while 79\% of parents of 5-15s whose child uses the internet at home have ever talked to their child about staying safe online, 44\% talk to their child at least monthly. Parents were only asked the frequency with which they talked to their child in 2012 and there is therefore no data for monthly talking in 2011.

\textsuperscript{113} Use at least one of the five types of technical mediation tools shown in Figure 170. – Safe search settings, parental controls, YouTube Safety mode, software to limit the time spent online or PIN/passwords set up on broadcasters’ websites.

\textsuperscript{114} These relate to the two specific online rules: “Regularly check what they are doing online” and “can only use when supervised and not on their own”, as shown in Figure 150.
In contrast, around one in seven parents (15%) do not use any of these three elements, higher for 12-15s (22%) than for 5-7s (11%) and 8-11s (9%). A similar proportion (16%) have rules relating to parental supervision and use technical mediation but do not talk to their child at least monthly about staying safe online, with this being more likely for 5-7s (21%) and 8-11s (19%) than for 12-15s (11%).

One in twenty parents of 5-15s (5%) only talk to their child at least monthly about staying safe online; higher for 12-15s (8%) than for 5-7s (2%) or 8-11s (4%). Only having rules relating to parental supervision is higher for 5-7s (18%) than for 8-11s (11%) or 12-15s (8%).

There is only one difference by household socio-economic group. Parents in AB households are more likely than all parents to have rules relating to parental supervision and technical mediation but not to talk to their child at least monthly (21% vs. 16%).

It is important to note that while 15% of parents fall into the category of ‘none of these’ in Figure 172 below, around half of these (8%) do talk to their child about staying safe online, but they do so less frequently than monthly. Therefore, the remaining 7% of parents have never spoken to their child about staying safe online, nor have rules about parental supervision, nor have technical mediation in place.

**Figure 172: Combinations of online mediation strategies used by parents of 5-15s who use the internet at home, by age: 2012**

The relationship between rules about online parental supervision and children’s attitudes and behaviours

Having looked in more detail at the types of online mediation strategies adopted by parents and the interaction between them, it is useful to examine whether a relationship exists between rules about parental supervision or technical methods of mediation, and the child’s online behaviour and attitudes.
In order to do this it is first necessary to look at any demographic differences that may exist between children with rules about online supervision and those without\textsuperscript{115}.

All children aged 5-15 with rules about online supervision have a comparable household socio-economic group profile, although at a sub-group level 5-7s with rules about online supervision are more likely than those without these rules to live in AB households (31% vs. 20%). There are no other differences by demography.

**There are differences in the ways in which children with and without rules access the internet**

There are some differences in the way in which children with and without rules about online supervision access the internet. Children aged 5-15 with rules about supervision are less likely than those without rules to have PC/ laptop/ netbook-based internet access in their bedroom (18% vs. 32%), with this being driven by those aged 12-15 (31% vs. 48%).

Children aged 5-15 with rules are also less likely to ever access the internet at home through a mobile phone (23% vs. 30%) and are less likely to mostly use a mobile phone (4% vs. 8%).

However, 5-15s with rules about online supervision are more likely to ever access the internet at home through a tablet computer (13% vs. 8%), with this being particularly likely among 8-11s (12% vs. 5%). Moreover, children aged 5-15 with rules about online supervision are more likely to mostly use a desktop PC to go online (30% vs. 24%), with this difference not being apparent among any specific age group.

Children aged 5-15 with rules also spend less time online in a typical week (10.2 hours vs. 13.1 hours), driven by 12-15s (15.7 hours vs. 18.1 hours).

**Children with rules are less likely to undertake some online activities**

There are differences in the online activities undertaken at least weekly; children aged 5-15 with supervision rules are less likely than those without rules to undertake 13 of the 21 activities they were asked about:

- general surfing (45% vs. 51%),
- social networking (31% vs. 50%),
- watching or downloading videos made by the general public on sites like YouTube (31% vs. 40%),
- play/download music (25% vs. 38%),
- Instant Messaging (19% vs. 29%),
- watch or download music videos (19% vs. 28%),
- send or receive emails (19% vs. 27%),
- listen to radio over the internet (7% vs. 11%),
- make/receive telephone calls over the internet using services like Skype (6% vs. 11%),
- send or receive Twitter updates (3% vs. 7%),
- go to photo sharing websites (2% vs. 5%),
- buy things online (1% vs. 3%),
- sell things online (0% vs. 1%).

For the vast majority of these online activities undertaken weekly, no particular age group drives this difference. However, for visiting social networking sites, those aged 12-15 with

\textsuperscript{115} For incidences of rules about parental online supervision by age please refer to Figure 150.
rules are less likely than those without rules to undertake this activity weekly (69% vs. 80%). This is also true for selling things online among 12-15s (0% vs. 2%).

Children aged 8-11 with rules about online parental supervision are less likely to say they visit lots of websites that they haven’t visited before (2% vs. 8%).

There appears, therefore, to be a relationship between the presence or absence of rules relating to parental supervision and the ways in which the child accesses the internet at home and the activities undertaken online.

12-15s with rules are less likely to say they are very confident internet users

5-15s with rules about supervision are less likely to say they would miss the internet (13% vs. 18%) or their mobile phone (15% vs. 24%) the most if they were taken away.

12-15s with rules about supervision are less likely to say they are very confident in several aspects of their internet use:

- using search engines (70% vs. 80%);
- finding what they want when they go online (53% vs. 69%);
- using the internet to do creative things (28% vs. 42%)
- judging whether a website is truthful (20% vs. 32%)
- feeling very confident as an internet user (55% vs. 69%).

In contrast, 8-11s with rules about parental supervision are more likely to say they are very or fairly confident that they know how to stay safe when they are online (86% vs. 78%). They are less likely to agree that: “It’s fun being silly or rude on the internet” (4% vs. 11%).

Analysis does not indicate a relationship between rules and potential risky behaviour online

Children aged 12-15 without rules relating to online parental supervision are no more likely to have:

- added people to their contacts with whom they’ve only had contact online;
- sent people they only know online personal information, photos or videos;
- set their social networking site profiles to be more visible; or
- contacted people through their social networking profiles who may not be known to them.

This suggests that there is no relationship between rules about online supervision and the child’s likelihood to undertake some types of potentially risky behaviour online.

Incidence of harm

In terms of risks relating to online content, children aged 8-11 or 12-15 with rules about online parental supervision are no less likely to say that they have seen something online in the past twelve months that they consider to be worrying, nasty or offensive. Children aged 12-15 with rules relating to personal supervision are also no less likely to say that they have seen something of a sexual nature, either online or on a mobile phone.

However, children aged 12-15 with rules relating to personal supervision are more likely to say they have been bullied online in the last 12 months (13% vs. 6%).
Children with rules are more likely to have some types of concerns about the internet

8-11s with rules about personal supervision are more likely than those without rules to be concerned about people pretending to be them online (10% vs. 4%), while 12-15s with these rules are more likely to be concerned about seeing things that make them feel sad, frightened or embarrassed (14% vs. 8%).

Among children aged 12-15 with a social networking site profile, those with these rules are more likely than those without to feel concerned about people sometimes being bullied through social networking sites (41% vs. 28%). They are also more likely to be concerned about people getting a bad name from other people posting comments about them (36% vs. 25%) or about someone posting photos of them on their page (20% vs. 9%). They are, however, no more likely to be concerned that strangers might find out information about them or that someone might pretend to be their age and get to know them.

Critical understanding

In terms of children’s critical understanding of online content, children aged 12-15 with rules in place who use search engines are more likely than those without rules in place to say that search engine results sometimes list truthful information and sometimes show untruthful information (53% vs. 39%). Children with rules about parental supervision are, however, no more likely to be aware that advertisements are sometimes shown in the search engine’s results. Children aged 12-15 with rules are also no more likely to be aware of websites using information to show personalised advertising to visitors.

The relationship between technical methods of mediation and children’s attitudes and behaviours

It is first necessary to examine any demographic differences that may exist between children with any technical methods of mediation in place and those without. Children aged 5-15 with any of the technical methods of mediation in place are more likely to live in AB households than those without (24% vs. 19%), with this being attributable to 12-15s in particular (26% vs. 16%). There are no other differences by demography.

It is also relevant to look at the interplay between technical methods of mediation and the existence of other types of online mediation. Parents of 5-15s with any types of technical mediation are more likely than those without to have rules in place about online parental supervision (58% vs. 48%), again driven by parents of 12-15s (50% vs. 33%). Parents of 5-15s with technical mediation in place are also more likely than those parents without to talk to their child about staying safe online at least monthly (50% vs. 34%), with this being evident for all three age groups (40% vs. 21% for 5-7s, 53% vs. 40% for 8-11s and 52% vs. 34% for 12-15s).

There are differences in the ways in which children with and without technical mediation access the internet

There are some differences in the ways in which children with and without technical mediation access the internet.

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116 For the incidences of the five types of technical methods of mediation (safe search settings on search engine websites, parental controls installed on PC/ laptop/ netbook child uses at home, YouTube Safety Mode enabled, software to limit the time spent online, PIN/ passwords set on broadcasters’ websites) please refer to Figure 172.
Children aged 8-11 with technical mediation are more likely than those without technical mediation to have PC/laptop/netbook-based internet access in their bedroom (19% vs. 10%), although this difference is not apparent for 5-7s or 12-15s.

Children aged 5-15 with technical mediation are more likely to ever access the internet at home through a laptop/netbook (80% vs. 74%) with this being more apparent among 8-11s (78% vs. 67%). 8-11s with technical mediation are more likely to ever access the internet at home through a tablet computer (12% vs. 5%).

5-7s with technical mediation are more likely to access the internet through a desktop PC (47% vs. 32%) and more likely to mostly use a desktop PC (39% vs. 25%).

5-15s with technical mediation are less likely to ever access the internet through a mobile phone (24% vs. 30%).

Unlike rules about online parental supervision, there are no differences by the room where the child mostly uses the internet at home, when comparing children of any age who have any technical mediation in place against those who do not.

Children aged 5-15 with any technical mediation in place spend less time online in a typical week (10.9 hours vs. 12.6 hours), driven by 12-15s (16.0 hours vs. 18.3 hours).

There are differences in the online activities of children with technical mediation

There are differences in the online activities undertaken at least weekly. Children aged 5-15 with technical mediation in place are more likely than those without any mediation to undertake four activities at least weekly: schoolwork/homework (71% vs. 63%), playing games on websites or online (51% vs. 44%), going to avatar websites (31% vs. 20%) and going to TV channels/TV programme websites (26% vs. 21%).

In addition, 5-7s with technical mediation in place are also more likely than those without such mediation to visit the Wikipedia website (6% vs. 1%), while 8-11s with technical mediation are more likely to watch/download TV programmes or films on catch up services like iPlayer (17% vs. 9%).

There are five activities that children aged 5-15 with technical mediation in place are less likely to undertake at least weekly:

- social networking (36% vs. 46%),
- playing or downloading music (27% vs. 37%),
- watching or downloading music videos (21% vs. 27%),
- making or receiving telephone calls over the internet using services like Skype (6% vs. 11%),
- sending or receiving Twitter updates (3% vs. 8%)

In terms of particular age groups, four of these five activities are less common among 12-15s with technical mediation in place, compared with those without such mediation: social networking (70% vs. 81%); playing/downloading music (48% vs. 59%); making/receiving telephone calls (9% vs. 19%); and sending/receiving Twitter updates (8% vs. 15%). There appears, therefore, to be a relationship between the presence or absence of technical mediation and the ways in which the child accesses the internet at home and activities undertaken online.
There does not appear to be a relationship between technical mediation and children's attitudes towards their internet use, likelihood of undertaking potentially risky behaviour or having negative experiences online

5-15s with technical mediation are less likely to say they would miss their mobile phone if it were taken away (17% vs. 23%) although this is not attributable to any particular age group. The internet is more likely to be missed the most by 8-11s with technical mediation in place (14% vs. 5%).

There are no differences for 8-11s or 12-15s in their confidence in using the internet or in their attitudes towards the internet for the various elements we asked about, when comparing those with technical mediation in place to those without. This suggests that there is no relationship between technical mediation and the child's attitudes towards their internet use.

Children aged 12-15 without technical mediation are no more likely to have:

- added people to their contacts with whom they’ve only had contact online;
- sent people they only know online personal information/photos or videos;
- set their social networking site profiles to be more visible; and
- contacted people through their social networking profiles who may not be known to them.

This suggests that there is no relationship between rules about online supervision and the child's likelihood to undertake some types of potentially risky behaviour online.

Children aged 12-15 with technical mediation in place are no less likely to say they have personal experience of being bullied online. Children aged 8-11 or 12-15 with technical mediation in place are no less likely to say that they have seen something online in the past twelve months that they consider to be worrying, nasty or offensive. However, both 8-11s and 12-15s with technical mediation in place are more likely to say that if they saw something worrying, nasty or offensive online they would tell someone (98% vs. 88% for 8-11s and 92% vs. 82% for 12-15s). Children aged 12-15 with technical mediation in place are also no less likely to say that they have seen something of a sexual nature, either online or on a mobile phone.

There are no differences in concerns about the internet among 8-11s or 12-15s with technical mediation compared to those without this type of mediation in place. There are also no differences relating to concerns about social networking sites among 12-15s with a social networking site profile.

In terms of children’s critical understanding of online content, children aged 12-15 with technical mediation in place, who use search engines, are more likely than those without such mediation to say that if a search engine lists a result then the information on that website must be truthful (39% vs. 21%). Children with technical mediation are no more likely to be aware that advertisements are sometimes shown in the search engine’s results. Children aged 12-15 with technical mediation in place are also no more likely to be aware of websites using information to show personalised advertising to visitors.