



KEMENTERIAN
PEMBERDAYAAN PEREMPUAN DAN PERLINDUNGAN ANAK
REPUBLIK INDONESIA



ONLINE KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICE OF PARENTS AND CHILDREN IN INDONESIA

A Baseline Study 2023



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Together with

Ministry of Women Empowerment and Child Protection of the Republic of Indonesia

BaKTI

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Foreword



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The rapid development of technology and the digital environment has become an inseparable part of our lives today, especially children who are the digital native generation, namely the generation born when the internet became a part of their lives. In line with this, children who use the internet admit that they like it, especially when it comes to finding friends and getting entertainment. The various ease of access and benefits that children get from the internet also present unexpected threats and need to be watched out for.

Spending 5 hours a day with their devices certainly has implications for children's eye health, and it is not uncommon for them to experience mental health problems at various levels, for example, addiction to online games or pornography. Apart from that, children with low digital literacy and over-sharing on social media also have the potential for their personal data to be

misused for crime. Children being influenced by culture or trends that can threaten themselves and the people around them is also a concern for us all. The unfortunate thing is that many children do not know where to seek help or do not want to report it, either to their parents or other authorities.

The role of parents as primary caregivers is the primary guardian for child protection. As role models for their children, there are still many parents who do not know how to use digital devices connected to the internet properly and safely and are weak in monitoring their children's activities in the online realm. Basic Data Study: Online Knowledge and Practices of Parents and Children in Indonesia 2023, targeting 3 locations, namely Central Java, East Java and South Sulawesi, is a valid source of information as a basis for all stakeholders to respond with preventive and response according to their responsibilities in their respective functions.

The most important part at this time is that we need to collaborate to build a positive ecosystem for a digital environment that is friendly and safe for children and, of course, involves children's participation to be heard and respect their opinions in their best interests. This digital environment can be built at home, at school and in the community. For this reason, all parties have the right to access training, technical assistance, and capacity building in other related fields, including parenting and victim assistance. Currently, together with UNICEF and other partners, we are preparing the training modules available. We hope that other related parties will also use these modules and expand the scope of training and assistance for victims.

We express our highest appreciation to UNICEF Indonesia, ECPAT Indonesia, the research team, the local government, and child and parent respondents who have collaborated with the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection in conducting the study and preparing the modules. We hope this will be our valuable contribution in the best interests of our children now and in the future.

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Acronyms

| | |
|----------|---|
| BaKTI | : Bursa Pengetahuan Kawasan Timur Indonesia |
| BRIN | : Badan Riset Dan Inovasi national |
| ECPAT | : End Child Prostitution in Asian Tourism |
| FGD | : Focus Group Discussion |
| KII | : Key Informant Interview |
| OCSEA | : Online Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse |
| OECD-DAC | : Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Development Assistance Committee |
| UNICEF | : United Nations Children's Fund |
| VPN | : Virtual Private Network |

Executive Summary

In order to mitigate the harmful effects of children's online interactions, it is essential to understand how children perceive the online world and how and why they engage with it. This is vital for developing a child online safety response that is informed by the experiences of children. Similarly, because of their developmental limitations, children require guidance and supervision when engaging with the Internet. As such, it is equally essential to determine how the parents or caregivers of children engage with their children about the online world and parents in this new environment. By exploring these two phenomena, it is believed that there will be a deeper understanding of how to protect children online in Indonesia.

To this end, an empirical study was undertaken by the Ministry of Women Empowerment and Child Protection, in partnership with UNICEF and local implementing organisations, namely, ECPAT, Yayasan Plato, Yayasan Setara and BaKTI in Indonesia. The purpose of the study was to undertake an in-depth investigation into the current online behaviours of children and their parents or caregivers in Indonesia in order to identify the needs of children in navigating the online environment.

The study was conducted in three provinces in Indonesia, namely Central Java, East Java and South Sulawesi. Five hundred and ten (510) children between the ages of 8 and 18 were interviewed, and 509 parents or caregivers between the ages of 21 and 70 were interviewed. There were relatively equal numbers of males and females interviewed (51.4% male and 48.6% female). Fifty-two children, comprising 10.2% of the children interviewed, had disabilities, which included mental, physical, sight, and hearing disabilities as well as developmental delays.

A young child with dark hair, wearing a blue long-sleeved shirt and light-colored shorts, is sitting and looking intently at a smartphone held in their hands. The child is positioned in the center-right of the frame, with a dark, textured wall behind them and a red vertical element on the left. The lighting is natural, highlighting the child's face and the phone.

*“I can see
the world
in my hand.”*

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Children love being online

Key findings from the interviews conducted with children showed, overwhelmingly, that the vast majority of children (99.4%) engage with the internet and for an average of 5.4 hours per day. The majority of the children access the internet at home. As digital natives, the internet has become the Indonesian child’s playground and developmental space.

Indonesian children enjoy being online, with 85.4% of them enjoying it 'a lot' and 'very much.' The top three reasons why they like going online include entertainment and games, access to information and communicating with friends. The children regard the internet as interesting, exciting and fun. The adjectives 'happy' and 'fun' were repeatedly used to describe it. It was seen as an integral part of children's lives. The children saw the internet as an entertaining and happy space where they could play and interact with their friends.

Online restrictions

Family rules about children's online activity focused mainly on the amount of time children spent online. Almost 70% of the children in the study had rules imposed by their parents about going online. Rules focused mainly on time restrictions with 86.7% of the children having rules related to the length of time they were allowed to be online. Only 8.2% of the children mentioned that they were not allowed to view negative or violent content, porn sites and adult sites. Nearly a quarter of the children (21.2%) did not obey these rules.

Online sharing and activities

In the majority of cases, children share their online activities primarily with their friends. The study did find, however, that children with good relationships with their parents share their activities with them too. The children chose to talk to their families because they felt more comfortable doing so, had good relationships with family members, were present in the house with them and received advice from them. Many of the children referred to the fact that they had close relationships with a particular parent, usually the mother. They described their parents as being good listeners, open to talk about the internet and fun to talk to.

The primary activity children engage in online is talking to their friends and family. Eighty-six percent (86%) of the children talk to their friends online. The second most common online activity for children is accessing entertaining content, such as online movies and videos. Children also use the internet for schoolwork and to play games online.

Online access and applications

Although few children make use of Virtual Private Networks (VPNs), those who do have them, use them primarily for gaming. Some children did disclose using VPNs to access pornography. The use of VPNs make children particularly vulnerable on the internet and this is an area largely ignored in educational programmes on online safety for children.

Of all the applications available online, WhatsApp is the most popular for the children, with 94% of all the children using this application and 83% saying that they used this application the most.

Family access to social media accounts

Most of the children allowed their family to 'friend' their accounts because they liked communicating with their families; they were close to their families; they had nothing to hide; they felt safe and had no secrets from their families. Those children who said that they did not allow their families to 'friend' their accounts stated that they did not want their families to see their online activities because they would be scolded. Thirteen percent (13.4%) of the children had accounts that were secret from their parents because they did not want their parents to see their online activities. Children also used the secret accounts as a fake profile to stalk others and so that they could post anything they liked.

Children who had good relationships with their parents and family were happy to allow them to access their accounts and tended not to have secret accounts.

Feeling safe online

Nearly sixty-one percent (60.6%) of the children said that they felt safe on the internet. They felt safe because they only saved the numbers of people that they knew; they limited the number of stories they posted; they used passwords; their parents monitored their accounts; they used the internet sparingly; they did not browse adult sites; they had privacy settings on their phones and played online at home.

Many of the children provided reasons for feeling safe that were very naive and trusting. They said that they just felt safe; that the internet was used by many people; they had never had a problem on social media; others use and see the same content so they must be safe; their safety was guaranteed online; they had never experienced anything to make them feel unsafe; they only use it on certain days and they were home alone when online.

The children naively believed that the main danger online emanated from hacking or compromising data and that, if they had a password on their phone, they would be safe. They did not seem to be aware of the real dangers lurking on the internet and many said that nothing had happened to them online thus far, so they believed that they were safe. A clear lack of understanding emerged of what it meant to be safe on the internet.

Perceptions of online dangers

Children do not fully understand the dangers that are online. The children in the study listed a wide range of possible dangers on the internet, but they were primarily concerned with hackers, hoaxes and encountering adult or inappropriate content. Only 2 children referred to the danger of a sexual exploitation nature. Bullying also featured repeatedly throughout the interviews, and particularly bullying in online games.

Information on how to keep safe online

Only 37.5% of the children had ever received information on how to be safe online. Most children received their information on how to be safe online from the internet itself on various applications and accounts i.e. Google, YouTube and TikTok. Only 22.6% of children received information from their school while 19.5% of children received information from friends.

Monitoring children's online activities

Some children's phones are monitored, but monitoring appears to be vague. Monitoring entailed parents checking the children's phones (56%); accompanying them while online (8.7%); and asking questions and advising (17.3%) them.

Online restrictions for children

Almost a third of the children have no restrictions online. Those who did have restrictions were prohibited from watching pornography or inappropriate content; limiting time spent online; watching violence or gambling; and sharing inappropriate photographs. Nearly eleven percent (10.9%) of these children said that they did the prohibited activities anyway. They did it secretly (pornography, prohibited games and inappropriate videos) when their parents were not home or asleep and switched activities when their parents appeared.

Children's perceptions of parents' online knowledge

Almost half of the children believe their parents have enough knowledge about online to help them. Of interest, however, the parents, themselves, did not believe they had enough knowledge to assist their children. Almost half of the children with disabilities, though, felt that their parents did not have sufficient knowledge about the Internet to assist them. This is a concern since these children are primarily dependent on their parents for assistance online.

How do children protect themselves online

Children use blocking accounts and removing contacts as the main way of protecting themselves online. A number of children linked rude messages to online gaming as people would become upset if they lost in the game. Online gaming is emerging as a prominent venue for bullying.

Accessing the dark web

A few children access the Dark Web, and do it mainly out of curiosity. The children reported watching murder videos and talking to people as their main activity on the Dark Web. A few of the children were frightened by what they found on the Dark Web and never went back. Children entering the Dark Web are very vulnerable to negative experiences and do not have information about what dangers they may encounter there.

Risky behaviour exhibited by children online

Children exhibit various forms of risky behaviour online. Nearly thirty-one percent (30.8%) of the children have added contacts they did not know personally and 32.1% of the children shared personal information with these people, including their real names and addresses. An important thread emerging relates to online gaming. Many of the children, who shared information, did so in online gaming. Almost a third of the children shared photographs and images with these contacts. The majority of the children shared photographs of themselves (selfies) and of their daily activities. Only one child (a 16-year-old male) admitted to sending pornographic images.

Almost a quarter (24%) of the children met someone in person whom they first met online. Two-thirds of the meetings took place in the 15-to-17-year age group range with the highest recorded in the 17-year-old group. The children felt either happy or indifferent about meeting the person with a few feeling embarrassed, shy or uncomfortable. The meetings appeared to be positive experiences for the children and the need to make friends was a key motivation. Nearly half (49.2%) of the parents knew about the meeting and almost half of them were indifferent about it while some were supportive. Only 3 parents asked a lot of questions and 1 reprimanded the child.

False names and profile pictures online were used by 41.2% of the children while 29.6% of the children had lied about their age online. Forty-seven percent of the children did not consider talking about sexual acts with someone online to be risky behaviour, because there was

nothing wrong with sharing knowledge and that it was usually with close friends.

An important finding related to the term 'friend.' Children meet strangers online and chat to them. These strangers are then regarded as friends so when they meet them offline, they do not regard it as meeting strangers but rather friends. The term 'friend' is something that will have to be clarified in online safety programmes. Finding friends was a key motivation for being online for adolescents.

Cyberbullying

Bullying online was the experience that bothered the children the most. Seventeen percent of the children said that they were upset by being bullied/insulted/mocked and ridiculed online. A number of participants mentioned that they were bullied about online games. They were sworn at, threatened and forced to play by friends via messenger. One child said that they were bullied online to such an extent that they dropped out of school. Bullying took the form of being ridiculed in WhatsApp groups or having their photos randomly edited and shared.

Almost half of the children have experienced some form of cyberbullying. Forty-eight percent of the children had been teased by other children. They were teased about physical attributes and disabilities, called stupid, their clothes were mocked and their parents were insulted. Twenty-seven percent of the children were embarrassed by being humiliated openly, body shamed, mimicked and mocked. Embarrassing photographs of them were posted and shared. One-fifth of the children had false stories spread about themselves, including that they were sexually active, were accused of stealing, watched pornography and the like. Almost 19% of the children had received nasty or scary messages. The children had numerous instances to share of nasty and scary messages they had received. These varied from horror and ghost messages to instances of bullying and sexual harassment. Most of the children ignored the bullying and blocked the person, while others told their parents or family members. Nine percent of the children admitted that they had bullied other children online.

Children's online sexual experiences

Children are experiencing sexual engagements online. A quarter of the children have received sexual messages on their social media accounts. The majority said that they felt shocked, annoyed and uncomfortable, but interestingly a number said that they felt indifferent and it did not bother them. Two children said that the messages made them feel happy. Some of the children had been asked for sexual information about themselves and a few had supplied the information, some unwillingly.

Half of the children have seen sexual images on social media, most of them on TikTok, Instagram and Facebook. Over a fifth of the children had been sent sexual images on their social media accounts, most of which were sent by friends and strangers. Some children had received requests on social media for photographs or videos of their private parts, mostly sent by strangers. Ten of the children had themselves asked somebody else to share a photo or video of their private parts. Only one child said that they had shared their photos with a stranger. Nine children had sexual images of themselves shared online by friends. Nobody reported it or asked for assistance, but just deleted and/or blocked the account. Nearly a quarter of the children admitted to having received a link to a pornographic site. These links were sent mostly by friends and by strangers with the majority of them being shared via WhatsApp. Two percent of the children had been threatened or blackmailed to engage in sexual activities, a third of whom were children with disabilities. Children were offered money or gifts to meet a person to do something sexual and some were offered money or gifts in return for sexual images or videos.

Reporting online sexual experiences

The children were not willing to report any sexual experiences they had online. They were too ashamed and embarrassed and afraid that they would be misunderstood so would deal with it themselves by blocking the person concerned. Those children who were prepared to report would do so mostly to their parents, particularly the mother. Two-thirds of the children said that they would not report the matter to the police because they were too scared. They were afraid of becoming the accused; of going to jail; of dealing with the police; of repercussions from the offender; and of bringing shame on their parents.

Online safety education

Children think that online safety education should be presented at school, presented as a separate subject or as part of life skills. They emphasised that the information should be interesting and easy to understand, and should include videos and posters, lots of examples and tutorials with group activities. The majority of children believed that the subject should be introduced at elementary school.

The children believed that the most important topic to be addressed was internet safety, followed by good internet behaviour. Other topics included were: excessive online use,

addiction and how to balance school and online; dangers of pornography; how to select what content to be viewed to avoid porn/violence and strange content; games ethics; game safety; game addiction; social media skills/ ethics; online sexual and non-sexual harassment; and cyberbullying.

Children with disabilities

Children with disabilities use the internet primarily for entertainment and communication. Some also noted the value of the internet for increasing their ability to communicate with others, which may otherwise have been limited by their disabilities. For example, children who are blind are able to voice chat with others, and those who are deaf can video chat.

Children with disabilities often require assistance to go online. The children tend to go online at home in most cases. The majority of children require someone to help them go online because of their disability.

Children with disabilities were unsure what risky behaviour online amounted to with many being unable to say what risky online behaviour is. Forty percent stated that meeting someone face-to-face whom you first met online was not risky behaviour.

The majority of the children with disabilities have experienced cyberbullying, predominantly related to their disability. Children with disabilities are particularly prone to negative sexual experiences online. A quarter have received sexual images on social media accounts, with the majority coming from strangers. However, the children were unwilling to report negative sexual experiences online and over 70% said they would not report any sexually inappropriate requests, threats, messages or images to the police. Of concern, more than 70% of the children with disabilities have received no online safety education. This increases the vulnerability of a group that is already vulnerable.

Girls and boys

The data from the study was further disaggregated into male and female to investigate whether there were any differences between the online usage and behaviour of boys and girls. There were slightly more boys (273 boys) than girls (237 girls) who participated in the study. The overall findings show that there were very few differences between boys and girls with respect to their online behaviour generally.

The boys in the study make far greater use of pornography than the girls and exchange pornographic material as well as share links much more frequently than girls.

Although girls are targeted online for sexual exploitation more frequently, boys themselves are also targeted. The concern is that boys respond to the requests more frequently. Boys are targeted more by people they know whereas girls are targeted by strangers.

Boys are more adventurous online in that more of them access the Dark Web and use VPNs.

Parents of children online

Like their children, parents in Indonesia use the internet a lot. Almost 99% of parents use the internet and most use it every day, spending an average of 5.3 hours per day on the internet. Parents are active on social media, with 98.4% using WhatsApp while other social media apps used frequently by parents include YouTube, Facebook and Instagram.

Parents allow their children to go online at a young age. Almost two-thirds of parents permitted their children to go online before the age of 11. Although the majority of parents impose rules about their children's internet usage, the majority of the rules relate to the time their children spend online. Children are also restricted in terms of access to certain sites and applications. From the parents' experiences, the rule the children broke the most was the one related to time restrictions and using their phones when they were not allowed to.

Not all parents know what their children are doing online. Just over half of them were 'friends' with their children on social media, which gave them some insight into what their children are doing online. Parents believe children are more knowledgeable about the internet, which is contrary to what their children think. And, in terms of knowledge about online safety, only a third of the parents had received information. Most of this information was received from friends, on WhatsApp groups, through other forms of social media, and from Google. The majority of the parents felt that they did not have enough knowledge about online safety to help their child stay safe online. The parents provided an extremely long list of the knowledge and techniques they needed to assist their children online. Although most of the requests focused on online skills and assisting their children to be safe, there were many requests for assistance with general parenting knowledge and skills.

As far as monitoring their children's online activities is concerned, the majority of the parents said that they do monitor their children. However, the monitoring methods were quite superficial. Methods used to monitor children online included the following: occasionally

observing their activities online; waiting for the child to talk about it; giving advice; communicating with the child, discussing their online activities and asking them questions; staying close when online; providing them with knowledge and religion; accompanying the child when they are on the phone; checking their history and directing them to positive things online. The parents' greatest concern around their children's online behaviour was that the children would view adult sites or pornography.

Some parents impose no restriction on their child's online activities and their reasons for this included, that they trust their children; their children are still young; they are mature enough; they as parents do not understand the internet and believe that prohibiting the child will engender curiosity; and the children are adults and learning to choose between good and bad. These reasons provided raise concern as they are based on the belief that the children themselves are able to distinguish between good and bad sites and are mature enough to make the right decisions.

The overwhelming majority of the parents believe that there are dangers online for children, which makes the weak monitoring of their children's online activities concerning. Parents considered access to pornographic images, videos and online games to be by far the biggest danger online for children. This was mentioned three times more than any of the other dangers. Online addiction, fraud, and negative trends were also identified as dangers.

Parents are worried about their children being online and mentioned a number of concerns in this regard, namely that parents could not monitor their children all the time; that their children would become addicted to online activities; that children would imitate violence; that children would secretly access harmful sites; that they would develop deviant behaviour; that it would interfere with their studies; that they would be exposed to pornography; and that they become less respectful.

Some children have disclosed unpleasant online experiences to their parents. Generally, however, parents cannot identify risky online behaviour, with 23.4% of parents not recognising that it was risky for their children to talk to strangers online; 20.6% of parents not recognising that it was risky for their children to meet someone face-to-face that they first got to know online; 24.2% of parents not recognising that it was risky for their children to share a photo or image with someone online; 82.7% of parents not recognising that it was risky for their children to talk to a particular family member a lot; 22.6% of parents not recognising that it was risky for their children to share personal information with someone they had never met face-to-face; 14.7% of parents not recognising that it was risky for their children to talk about

sexual acts with someone on the internet; and 12.2% of parents not recognising that it was risky for their children to send a sexual image or video to someone on the internet.

As with the children, a third of parents are unlikely to report negative online behaviour targeting their children to the police. Most of the parents regarded it as a family matter that had to be resolved by the family itself. They regarded the idea of reporting to the police as too extreme. Many of them were also confused by the reporting procedures and did not know how to go about reporting the matter. Parents felt that children were too afraid and ashamed to disclose online abuse. Parents also highlighted two other reasons as being important for non-disclosure: children don't realise that they are the victims of online abuse and they are unable to communicate with their families.

The majority of parents do not know the laws applicable to children and online behaviour, which impacts on their ability to guide their children's online activities within the law including, for example, the minimum age for opening social media accounts. Parents expressed the need to be provided with enough knowledge about the internet to be able to interact effectively with their children. This related to basic technical knowledge as well as basic knowledge of the internet, including safety and security, laws and dangers. They also expressed the need for information and support on how better to communicate with and parent their children. They wanted to know how to mentor their children; information on parenting; how to understand children in the online world; and activities that are useful for improving communication between children and parents. They would like to receive this information as part of socialisation and community activities, through face-to-face meetings and discussions.

The majority of parents also believe that online safety education should be presented to children at school. They gave suggestions about the format of the information presented and said that it should be practical, easy to understand with lots of examples. There should be leaflets or pamphlets with pictures that are attractive to capture children's attention. It should also be face-to-face and not online, and it should be introduced from an early age.

Recommendations

The findings of this study have highlighted the fact that children spend a great deal of time online and that it has become an integral part of their lives, a place where they are entertained, their development is taking place and they feel happy.

Children have online sexual experiences, both wanted and unwanted, and to ensure that they have the knowledge to adequately protect themselves, children need to have access to programmes that contain open discussions of appropriate sexual behaviour and how to keep safe online. Children's knowledge of risky behaviour is limited as is their awareness of the dangers that are inherent in online activities and they require more detailed information on how to protect themselves online against these dangers since many of them believe they are safe if they have a password on their devices.

The study also revealed that cyberbullying was the most prevalent negative online behaviour that children come into contact with. Most of the children have experienced it in some form and it has had severe impact in some cases. Children also had no idea of how to deal with this behaviour or protect themselves other than blocking accounts.

It is recommended that greater focus be placed on the dangers of pornography and its impact on individuals in online safety programmes as this appears to be a particular concern arising from boys' online activities. Programmes, both educational and media, should emphasise the fact that boys are as vulnerable as girls to online sexual exploitation and perhaps even more so since they are more inclined to respond to requests they receive.

Good relationships between parents and children are key to the child's safety and a greater focus needs to be placed on the methods of creating and nurturing these relationships. Since many children sought advice from parents and reported instances of negative online behaviour to them, it is very important that parents have access to programmes that provide them with the necessary knowledge and skills to assist their children online. The findings showed that parents had not received online safety education other than that which they gleaned from their friends and the internet. This is evident in their inability to identify risky behaviour and monitor their children effectively. In addition, many parents requested information on parenting skills and information on how to communicate better with their children which highlights strongly the need for programmes that focus on promoting an understanding of child development, adolescents and building healthy communication between parents and children.

Children with disabilities make great use of the internet for purposes of communication and meeting friends, yet over 70% of them have not received any online safety education, contributing significantly to their vulnerability, which has identified them as targets online both for sexual exploitation and cyberbullying. Many of these children did not have an understanding of the concept of risky behaviour which highlights the need for programmes on online safety geared specifically for children with disabilities and their parents.

Reporting of online abuse is problematic because parents and children do not have knowledge of the laws, the process of reporting and the procedures involved. This information is vital and must be included in online safety education.

The viability of including online safety education in school curricula should be investigated as the vast majority of parents and children believed that it would be best placed there.

Introduction

Technology has transformed human communication and relations in a fundamental way. Technology and social media have changed the way in which people share information, learn and engage. On the positive side, technology has enabled people to strengthen social relationships by providing a platform for interaction and has made it possible for individuals to connect with social support networks related to life challenges (abuse, loss), which would not have been as easily accessible (Saleh et al 2014). On the negative side, it has been argued that digital technology is responsible for isolating people and causing them to neglect each other's emotional needs and devalue personal interaction. It has even been argued that the internet may be responsible for alterations in the structure and functioning of the brain, making people more efficient in the consumption of information but compromising their ability to reflect more critically (Saleh et al 2014). As digital technology has increasingly become part of daily life, it has altered the norms, attitudes and behaviours of people, including those of adolescents and younger children.

The data is clear that digital technology is an integral part of the lives of children in Indonesia. To understand this within the context of children's behaviour, it is necessary to examine how digital technology influences the developmental experiences of children, like learning, developing identities and relationships (Saleh et al 2014). In terms of participatory culture, children become active agents of information, culture and knowledge, and the internet has provided a vehicle for achieving this. The internet has made it possible for children to establish and engage with online platforms to share ideas with a broader community. Any and all information can be sourced on the internet, and it has provided access to software for producing videos and music. This has provided children with immense opportunities to explore their own interests, to learn and to engage with society. Social media has played a dynamic role in shaping popular culture, by providing the tools for creating as well as the outlet for distributing content.

A good example of this would be YouTube, which not only has served as a source of entertainment and a way of disseminating content, but also shapes and reflects popular culture. The establishment and maintenance of peer relationships is core to the lives of children, and they have happily adopted social media as a means of social bonding and connection. It is often argued that texting and social media have substituted face-to-face interaction with the implication that friendships are more superficial. Saleh et al (2014) are, however, of the opinion that social media has not replaced face-to-face interactions but has rather augmented these relationships.

The majority of online interactions between children are with peers they know from school, religious events, clubs or sporting activities. By extending the opportunities for peer engagement, social media may alleviate some common anxieties felt by children about social relationships.

The Covid-19 pandemic has had an unprecedented impact on children's online activity. School closures during this period, which affected more than 1.5 billion children, forced children into the online environment. This environment became central to maintaining many children's learning, support and play, but at the same time exposed children to many risks for which many had not been adequately prepared.¹

As was established in the Disrupting Harm Study (UNICEF Office of Research Innocenti 2022), the use of the internet and digital media also affect the security and safety of children online. Children are at risk of being exposed to online content that is not suitable for their age, or they are being manipulated or groomed for sexual exploitation and abuse, as the statistics from the Disrupting Harm Study show. This report highlighted key insights:

- At the time of the study, at least 2% of children between the ages of 12 and 17 using the internet were victims of online sexual exploitation and abuse that included blackmailing children to engage in sexual activities, sharing their sexual images without permission, or coercing them to engage in sexual activities through promises of money or gifts. These findings were considered to be underreported.
- OCSEA (Online Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse) offenders are most often people already known to the child – often an adult friend, a peer or a family member.
- Children experienced OCSEA mainly through major providers such as WhatsApp, Facebook and Facebook Messenger.
- Children who were victims of OCSEA-related crimes tended to confide in people within their interpersonal networks, particularly their friends and siblings. Very few children turned to formal reporting mechanisms like hotlines, helplines or the police.

¹ End Violence Against Children. *Leaders call for action to protect children during COVID-19.*
[https://www.end-violence.org/articles/leaders-call-action-protect-children-during-covid-19-now-7-languages.](https://www.end-violence.org/articles/leaders-call-action-protect-children-during-covid-19-now-7-languages)

The Disrupting Harm Study provided the baseline for research on children’s online behaviour, activities and experiences, and offered a framework for more intensive research that would focus on the reasons why children behaved in certain ways and how they felt about their experiences. Greater focus was placed on the perspectives of children in the Our Lives Online Study (UNICEF 2020) which aimed to generate a snapshot of social media use among 11–18-year-olds in East Asia and the risks of child sexual exploitation and abuse online. This study also included children from lower-income families, marginalized children, children with disabilities, street children and refugee children. The shortcoming of this study related to the small sample size – seventy-seven children in Indonesia took part in the study - which did not provide statistically significant data.

Purpose of the research study

In order to mitigate the harmful effects of children’s online interactions, it is essential to understand how they perceive the online world and how and why they engage with it. This is vital for developing a response that is informed by their experiences. Similarly, because of their developmental limitations, children require guidance and supervision when engaging with the Internet. As such, it is equally essential to determine how the parents or caregivers of children engage with their children about the online world; in essence digital parenting. By exploring these two phenomena, it is believed that there will be a deeper understanding of how to protect children online in Indonesia.

Although the Disrupting Harm Study provided a baseline for children’s online activities and experiences, it was necessary to explore in greater depth the children’s feelings and thoughts about their online experiences. It is not only important to know what children are doing online but why they are doing it. It’s not enough to know whether, for instance, children disclose abuse. It is even more important to know why they do not disclose, what prevents them from doing so and, if they do disclose, to whom and why. Answers to these questions will enable us to have greater insight into understanding children’s online experiences and assisting us to develop mechanisms that respond effectively and enable us to design programmes that target the needs of children as identified by them.

In addition, it is necessary to consider also the context within which children employ online technologies to determine how this interacts with their adolescent developmental experiences such as cultivating an identity, pursuing independence, engaging with society and developing relationships.

This thinking formed the basis of the present study, the purpose of which was to undertake an in-depth investigation into the current online behaviours of children and their caregivers in Indonesia, building on the Disrupting Harm and Our Lives Online studies. The present study, therefore, aimed to investigate the following topics:

- Children’s online usage and activities
- Children’s online safety
- Online risks to which children are exposed
- Children’s online sexual experiences
- Children’s needs with respect to online safety education
- Parent’s online activities
- Parent’s understanding of their children’s online usage and activities
- Parenting in the online environment by parents in Indonesia.

An important element of the research was to identify the needs of children in navigating the online environment in order to develop education programmes that are evidence-based and address the lived experiences of children online so that they provide the necessary techniques and tools that children need to keep themselves safe online. A specific focus of the research was to explore the knowledge and experiences online of children with disabilities.

The findings of the research study are intended to inform child protection policies and programmes as they relate to OCSEA, based on the active engagements with Indonesian children and their caregivers on ways in which children can be protected from OCSEA and how parents and caregivers can be supported in the move towards digital parenting. The participation of children and their parents and caregivers was an essential aspect of this research and reflected the global trend towards direct participation of children in the development of child protection programmatic responses.

Methodology

Research principles

The research was guided by the principles of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability in accordance with the indicators of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC). In addition, the study prioritized gender, equity, disability and human rights as key criteria to be included throughout the research process. The findings of the research will comply with the OECD-DAC criteria of assessment for the project and will inform the overall SAFE4C project results framework.

The OECD-DAC criteria include:

- Relevance – the extent to which the project is suited to the needs, priorities, and policies of relevant government and other national and subnational stakeholders, beneficiaries, and donors
- Effectiveness – the extent to which the objectives will be achieved after project completion
- Efficiency – the extent to which the expected output and outcome results will be achieved when taking into consideration the project's economic resources/inputs (funds, expertise, time, etc.)
- Sustainability – the extent to which the expected changes and benefits of preventing and responding to OCSEA are likely to continue after external support ends
- Equity, gender equality, disability-inclusive and human rights – the extent to which the project integrates equity, gender equality, disability-inclusive and human rights.

Research approach and analysis strategy

A mixed-method research approach was used for this study. The research methodology involved a desktop research review, and qualitative and quantitative research methods through Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), the development of questionnaires and the undertaking of semi-structured interviews with research participants, namely children and parents/caregivers. The data from the discussions and interviews was captured and analysed. The qualitative aspect of the research applied to the narrative obtained from the research participants while quantitative research methods were used when calculating averages for certain responses to the questionnaire.

A phenomenological research analysis strategy was used for the qualitative data. Phenomenology is a form of qualitative research that focuses on the study of an individual's lived experiences within the world. The key word in phenomenological research is "describe" – the aim of the researcher is to describe as precisely as possible the phenomenon under study. The goal of a phenomenological approach is to identify and elucidate a phenomenon through how it is perceived by actors in a situation. Therefore, in terms of this study, the semi-structured interviews elicited input regarding the way children engage with the digital space and how parents or caregivers perceive children's online behaviour and respond to it.

The qualitative responses from the interviews with children and parents/caregivers were analysed using thematic analysis, which is a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns within data (Braun and Clarke 2006). An inductive (data-driven) approach was used, which generated themes that were strongly and consistently linked to the data. The themes were generated on a semantic level, focusing on the meanings of the words used in the responses. The process undertaken ensured a rigorous thematic analysis, which involved moving back and forth between the different responses to become familiar with the data, generate initial codes, search for themes, review and revise themes and check their fit with the original data, and define and name the themes. The analytical process, therefore, involved reading the data several times to identify meaningful units of text relevant to the research question, and creating primary ideas/codes about themes. Thereafter, these codes were attached to thematic response areas, such as, for example, 'family', 'it provides information', 'safety' and 'it is interesting, exciting and fun.'

Research process

Desktop research study

A comprehensive desk review of available documentation and secondary data was undertaken using an integrative literary review (Snyder 2019). The aim of this review was to assess, critique

and synthesise literature on the research topic in a way that enabled new perspectives to emerge. The purpose of such a review was to overview the knowledge base of a particular issue, to critically review and potentially reconceptualise and expand on the issues as the research developed. For this study, the literature review included various academic articles and studies, with particular emphasis on the Disrupting Harm in Indonesia study (UNICEF Office of Research Innocenti 2022) and the Our Lives Online study on children and adolescent's use of social media in East Asia (UNICEF 2020).

Semi-structured interviews with children and parents or caregivers

As explored above, a qualitative research methodology was identified as being appropriate for this project as it enabled the researchers to explore the research participants' experiences, impressions and perceptions of the issue under investigation. An interpretive research paradigm anchored in a phenomenological methodological approach with purposive sampling and the use of semi-structured interviews was deemed necessary to investigate the knowledge and practices of the participants (parents/caregivers and children) and to identify thematic areas. A qualitative research design was used because of the exploratory and descriptive nature of this study. The researchers interacted with research participants in order to obtain a direct and personal account of their perceptions and opinions of the internet and OCSEA. This data was expanded through the use of quantitative data obtained from statistical analyses of aspects of the interview responses.

Semi-structured interviews were deemed appropriate for this research project since they enable researchers to obtain in-depth information from research participants about particular topics. In addition, this method provided more flexibility to both parties as it allowed participants to speak freely and at length, using their own views, impressions, vocabulary and terminology. It gave the interviewer an opportunity to follow up a particular area of importance in the interview, while at the same time the participants were in a position to provide a more complete picture. This provided for increased quality in the data collected and resulted in the analysis providing a richer understanding of the data, particularly given the exploratory nature of this study.

Semi-structured interviews by their very name must have a degree of structure in their implementation. The semi-structured interview procedure that was used in this study involved the prior development of interview questionnaires, one for parents/caregivers and one for children, that assisted the interviewer to focus clearly on what the interview had to cover. This ensured that participants received the same questions during the interviews, although it also allowed the interviewer some measure of flexibility to make maximum use of the opportunities offered to enrich the data without changing the focus of the study. This means that interviewers were guided by the questions in the questionnaire, but were able to explore further ideas and concepts that were raised by the participants. Because of the need for an in-depth study and

the fact that the research made use of interviews, open-ended questions were used to introduce a topic. This is very important because, if a list of closed options is made available, there is the danger that information may become skewed as the participants may have been involved in online activities other than those listed in the options.

Two (2) questionnaires were developed, namely:

- A questionnaire for children aged 9-18 years – the focus of this questionnaire was on identifying their online usage in terms of time spent online, what applications they use, what they enjoy about being online, any negative experiences they may have encountered online, what they do to protect themselves online, and what information they disclose online.
- A questionnaire for parents/caregivers – the focus of this questionnaire was on their use of the internet and understanding of it, their level of supervision of their children’s online usage, what they regard as the positives and negatives of children online and how they protect their children from online harm.

The questions included in the questionnaires were informed by the desktop review as well as Key Informant Interviews (KIs) conducted with in-country experts. Respondents provided information on the context of OCSEA in Indonesia; the Roadmap and Guidelines for the private sector and industry on online safety; psycho-social support available; training conducted; and community service hubs and relevant organisations.

Research participants

The research participants were selected by in-country project partners from two (2) population groups, namely:

- Persons who were parents or caregivers of children
- Children in the 8 to 18 age group.

The group of children were further disaggregated into:

- Children without disabilities
- Children with disabilities; and
- Children out of school or in institutions.

In total, five hundred and ten (510) children were interviewed, of which fifty-two (52) were children with disabilities, and sixty-one (61) children who were not at school. Five hundred and nine (509) parents/caregivers were interviewed.

The participant sample for both the children and the parents/caregivers was selected randomly with the only criteria being that they had to have access to a cell phone or other device that is connected to the internet. There was no family relationship between child participants and parent/caregiver participants in the majority of the sample. Where there was a relationship, the child and their parent were interviewed in separate places. For each participant group, priority for selection was given to those who have engaged in some way with local project partners (NGOs). Some of the children with disabilities were interviewed alone, while others required assistance and, as such, were accompanied by a parent, teacher or the head of the residential care facility where the child resides. This was particularly necessary for the children with hearing disabilities because the interviewers required assistance for sign language interpretation. For some of the children with mental disabilities, the parent/caregiver requested to be present in case the child had difficulties understanding and responding to the questions. Children without disabilities were interviewed independently.

Research sites

The parent/caregiver and child participant samples were selected from three (3) research sites, namely, Central Java, East Java, and South Sulawesi. These locations were selected because they have higher population densities, as well as high internet penetration. Districts within these locations were identified by in-country project partners and included urban and rural settings. The field interviewers accessed participants through the following:

- Schools, including upper primary levels and high school;
- Children with disabilities networks and schools for children with disabilities;
- Parents/caregivers accessed through schools; and
- Non-governmental organisations working with children out of school and children in institutions.

The schools were randomly selected, with priority given to the schools assisted by local project partners.

Field interviewers

Field interviewers were selected by the Ministry of Women Empowerment and Child Protection to conduct the interviews with the parents/caregivers and children. The field interviewers were selected from project implementing partners, namely, ECPAT, Yayasan Plato, Yayasan Setara, and BaKTI. The interviewers were provided with training prior to the conducting of the interviews. The training included an intensive session on interviewing

techniques and building rapport with the children and parents/caregivers. Rapport building was essential due to the intimate nature of some of the questions. It was important that the children and parents/caregivers felt comfortable with the interviewers to encourage truthful responses to the questions. The training included the following topics:

- the purpose of the research
- the role of the interviewer, including building rapport with research participants
- the questionnaire
- the interview protocol, including consent forms
- issues arising from the interview, such as, disclosure or distress
- referral services.

The interviews were conducted in-person in the language preferred by participants. Thereafter, the interviews were translated for analysis.

Data capture

Interview responses were captured on an excel spreadsheet and included disaggregated data on:

- statistical overview of the quantitative responses from the children and the parents/caregivers
- responses by children per site
- responses by all children
- responses by children with disabilities; and
- responses by parents or caregivers.

Analysis

The analysis of the research is detailed in this report. Briefly, this involved analysing the responses to both questionnaires in terms of the quantitative and qualitative framework. Thematic areas were identified and statistics captured.

Ethics

Ethical clearance for this project was obtained from BRIN (National Research and Innovation Agency). A multi-sectoral reference group composed of both government and civil society representatives was established to review and guide the study, including the endorsement of the final recommendations.

Confidentiality and consent

The names of the participants were not recorded in the response data or by the interviewers. Participants were only identified in terms of the following personal data:

- age
- sex
- disability
- location.

Each interviewee was allocated a number. The interviewer wrote down all responses verbatim, which ensured response validity. These interview transcripts can be accessed for verification of the responses, if necessary.

Participants were informed about the purpose and method of the interview. They were informed about confidentiality, namely, that their names would not be recorded. They were provided with an informed consent letter to sign, either directly or through the schools. The content of the letters was discussed with each participant in order to ensure that they understood the research purpose and process and their rights.

Focus group discussions

Focus group discussions were held with provincial government stakeholders, educators, school children, service provider networks, parents, community facilitators, child forum activists and children with disabilities groups. The purpose of these focus group discussions was to gather information from these groups about the OCSEA programme (Strengthening SAFE4C To Prevent And Respond To OCSEA, which is the broader UNICEF programmatic response to online protection for children in Indonesia) and the activities that had taken place around awareness-raising and programme implementation. These discussions provided an opportunity to evaluate whether the SAFE4C programme aligns with the online behaviours and knowledge of Indonesian children for the purpose of strengthening the programme to accord with the research findings.

Key Findings

Children's online usage and activities

1. Children use the internet a lot and they love it!
2. Children talk to friends and family online, are entertained and do schoolwork.
3. WhatsApp is the most popular application.
4. Finding friends was a key motivation for being online for adolescents.
5. Children consider someone to be a friend if they have chatted to them online.
6. Children with good relationships with parents share their activities with them.
7. Almost half of the children believe their parents have enough knowledge about online to help them.
8. Some children have accounts online that are secret from their parents.
9. Some children use Virtual Private Networks (VPNs).

Children's online safety

10. Almost a third of the children have no restrictions online.
11. Family rules focused mainly on time spent online.
12. Some children's phones are monitored, but monitoring appears to be vague.
13. Most children feel safe on the internet but for naïve reasons.

14. Children do not fully comprehend the dangers that are online.
15. Children's knowledge of how to keep safe online is limited.
16. Children use blocking accounts and removing contacts as a way of protecting themselves online.
17. A third of children have received information on how to be safe online.

Online risks to which children are exposed

18. Some children access the Dark Web.
19. Children exhibit risky behaviour online.
20. Bullying was the online experience that bothered children the most.
21. Almost half of the children have experienced some form of cyberbullying.
22. Children have online sexual experiences.
23. Children are not keen to report online sexual experiences.

Online safety education

24. Children think that online safety education should be presented at school.

Children with disabilities

25. Children with disabilities use the internet for entertainment and communication.
26. Online has enabled children with disabilities to communicate, find friends and become part of communities.
27. Children with disabilities often require assistance to go online but do not believe their parents have enough knowledge to assist them online.
28. Children with disabilities are unsure what risky behaviour online is.
29. Children with disabilities are particularly prone to negative sexual experiences online.
30. Children with disabilities are unwilling to report negative sexual experiences online.
31. Children with disabilities are particularly vulnerable to cyberbullying.
32. Children with disabilities have received very little online safety education.

Disaggregation of data: girls and boys

33. The boys in the study make far greater use of pornography than the girls and exchange pornographic material as well as share links much more frequently than girls.
34. Although girls are targeted online for sexual exploitation more frequently, boys themselves are also targeted. The concern is that boys respond to the requests more frequently. Boys are targeted more by people they know whereas girls are targeted by strangers.
35. Boys are more adventurous online in that more of them access the Dark Web and use VPNs.

Parents' online usage and activities

36. Parents use the internet as much as their children.
37. Parents are active on social media.
38. Parents allow their children to go online from a very young age.

Parenting in the digital era

39. Rules for children's online behaviour focus mainly on time restrictions.
40. Some parents imposed no restrictions on their children's online activities.
41. Not all parents know what their children are doing online.
42. Parents believe children are more knowledgeable about the internet.
43. Techniques used by parents to monitor their children online are generally not effective.
44. Parents are concerned about their children being online.
45. Parents are mainly concerned about their children viewing pornography online.
46. Parents are aware that there are many dangers online for children.
47. Children have had unpleasant online experiences.
48. Not all parents were able to identify risky online behaviour.
49. A third of the parents would not report negative online behaviour targeting their child to the police.
50. Parents believe children are too afraid and ashamed to report online abuse.

Parents' online education

51. Only a third of the parents had received information on how to be safe online.
52. Parents want to know more about general parenting.
53. The majority of parents do not know the laws applicable to children and online behaviour.
54. Parents want information about the internet as well as assistance on how to better parent their children.
55. The majority of parents believe that online safety education should be presented at school.

Interviews with Children

“I can see the world in my hand.”

Demographics

- Five hundred and ten (510) children were interviewed and they ranged in age from eight (8) to eighteen (18).
- Nearly half of the children who participated in the study were between the ages of fifteen (15) and eighteen (18).
- The children were fairly evenly distributed in terms of gender with 46% female and 54% male.
- Ten percent (10.2%) of the children had a disability, and the disabilities included both those of a mental and a physical nature.
- Eighty eight percent (88%) of the children still attended school. Sixty-one (61) of the children did not attend school.
- Almost half of the children came from Central Java (49%); 30% from East Java and 21% from South Sulawesi.

Why not at school

Children did not go to school due to:

- Economic factors (31.2%)
- Disability (18%)
- Not happy at school (6.6%)
- Lack of interest (23%)
- Not coping (3.3%)
- Bullying (4.9%)
- Criminal conviction (1.6%)
- No reason (6.6%)
- Prefer to work (9.8%)
- Distance (1.6%)
- Family circumstances (4.9%)
- Marriage (1.6%)



Internet Usage

“Because in the current era of the internet, children are inseparable from the internet.”

Children in Indonesia are avid users of the internet and overwhelmingly positive about its role in their lives. The internet was perceived to be interesting, and exciting and offered lots of fun and games. The adjectives ‘happy’ and ‘fun’ were repeatedly used to describe it. As ninety-nine percent (99%) of the children interviewed used the internet, and most of them on a daily basis, it is clear that the internet is an integral part of their lives and this will have to be a consideration in every avenue of their lives. Adolescent stages of establishing identity and learning about

intimacy are predominantly taking place online and the children regard the internet as their source of information, entertainment and communication.

- Ninety-nine percent (99%) of the children use the internet.
- Eighty-nine percent (89%) use the internet on a daily basis and spend an average of 5.4 hours a day online while eight percent (8%) use it every week and access it on average 4.7 times per week.
- Most children use mobile phones (99.2%) and some also have access to laptops (9.5%), personal computers (6.1%) and tablets (3.1%).

Where do children access the internet?

- Almost all the children access the internet at home (98.6%) and nearly half of them (41.4%) have access to it at school.
- A large number of them access the internet in a public space (44.2%) and at a friend (42.4%).
- Other places where the internet is accessed include malls; internet cafes; homes of family members; boarding schools; neighbours; games centres; village offices; the Mosque and Al Quran learning centres and their workplaces.
- Roadside food carts and stalls were mentioned a number of times as a place where the children accessed the internet.

Children were asked where they accessed the internet the most, which was their favourite place to access the internet and why.

- The vast majority of the children (86%) accessed the internet at their home the most. This was followed by school (5.9%); at a friend (2.8%) and a public place (1.4%).
- Nearly eighty percent (78.9%) of the children said that their favourite place to go online was at home. The bedroom was identified as the most favourite place at home to go online.
- The next most favourite place to go online was at a friend (5.9%) followed by a public space (3.4%) and then school (2.8%).
- The children supplied various reasons for identifying certain places as their favourite spot to go online. These are captured in the table below:

Reasons for identifying certain places as favourite spots to go online

| | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Home | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Felt safe there • It was comfortable, calm and relaxed • There was more time to be online • They were always home • It was convenient • There were no disturbances there • Access to Wi-Fi • Fun being home • Parents were there • They use devices that are at home • Access to assistance • Weren't allowed to leave the house • Can play with friends there |
| Bedroom | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comfortable, calm and quiet • Private • Just used to it • No disturbance there |
| School/ Boarding School | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wi-Fi is available • There are no parents there • Friends are there • It's comfortable |
| Neighbour's House | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to Wi-Fi • Can play with friends |
| Friend's House | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wi-Fi is available • Less parental control • Can hang out with friends |
| Public Space | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Availability of free Wi-Fi • Can meet friends • Less parental control • Relaxing |

What do children like about the Internet?

“Children cannot be separated from the internet.”

The children love being able to access the internet, with 85% of them qualifying this as ‘a lot’ and ‘very much.’ They provided a myriad of reasons, twenty-six (26) in total, why they like going online. The main reason (42% of the children)² was the opportunity for entertainment and games, followed by the ability to access information (14% of the children)³. Other reasons included making friends, communicating with family, being creative, doing schoolwork and shopping. The internet offers them the ability to take part in all the activities that are important to them and they are overwhelmingly positive about the role it plays in their lives.

- The majority of the children interviewed (71.8%) said that they liked the internet a lot and 13.6% said they liked it very much. Seventy-four children (14.6%) said that they liked it only a little.

The establishment and maintenance of peer relationships is an integral part of adolescent development and adolescent well-being. Social media has, therefore, provided the perfect vehicle for connecting with friends and developing friendships. The children in the interviews said that they liked the Internet because it enabled them to communicate with family and friends, and a few of them mentioned that it was easier to communicate online as opposed to face-to-face. This accords with other research that has found that texting has become the normative form of communication for children (Saleh 2014: 33).

“It is easier to relate online.”

“It is easier to communicate through writing on chat.”



The internet also alleviated boredom, especially where children felt that they did not have alternative activities to occupy themselves with. A few of the children mentioned that they did not know how to occupy themselves when they were not online. This may be as a result of the fact that many children start using the internet as a source of entertainment from very young, as was evidenced in the interviews with the parents, and are not exposed to other forms of entertainment. This may be an important point to address in parenting programmes.

² n = 214

² n = 71

"Because I'm confused about what to do if I don't play on the internet." (15-year-old male)



A number of the children described the internet as an addiction and offered this as an explanation for why children like the internet so much, with a few of them admitting that they were addicted to it.

"Because it is quite addictive for children."

"Because I am addicted to the internet." (13-year-old male)

"Addicted to online games."

"Because they are addicted to watching movies."



- Entertainment was identified as the most popular reason for liking the internet.
- Children like the internet because:
 - It provides entertainment – they can play games, watch movies and videos, read books and comics, watch sport, listen to music and access interesting applications.
 - It makes information easily accessible.
 - They can use it for studying and assignments.
 - It makes communicating and sharing information with friends and family easier.
 - It provides them with an opportunity to make friends.
 - It enables them to explore their creativity - they can make videos and take photographs. It also provides them with inspiration and enables them to explore their hobbies.
 - They can follow the stories and statuses of their friends on social media. They can follow the popular news and trends.
 - It fills free time and alleviates boredom.
 - They have no alternative activities.
 - It is fun, interesting, practical and easy to use and looks cool.

- o It removes loneliness and improves their mood.
- o They can buy and sell online.
- o They can find work.
- o It has limitless possibilities in that it is possible to do almost anything online.

“Because the internet is never boring and there is always something new to discover.”

“Because the internet is sophisticated, intriguing and curious.”

“It provides information that I cannot obtain at school.”

“Because kids are cool when playing on cell phones.”

“It has become the norm since the Covid pandemic.”



Rules or limitations about online activities

“My cell phone holds my life.”

Nearly three quarters (70%) of the children interviewed said that their families had rules and limitations about going online. Most of the rules or limitations (86.7%), however, related simply to the length of time they were allowed to be online. Only 8.2% mentioned that they were not allowed to view negative or violent content, porn sites and adult sites while 1.1% said that they had rules relating to their behaviour. These included not posting negative photos or videos, being responsible and being careful.

Further restrictions included the following:

- There were restrictions on data usage (6 children).
- They were only allowed to use their devices at home (4 children).
- One child was not allowed to have a password on their phone.
- Some parents had put monitoring applications on the children’s phones and/ or checked their phones (14 children).

The time restrictions varied from half an hour online time to 6 hours per day. Some children were only allowed to access the internet over weekends and some were not allowed to use their phones during examinations. There were also time restrictions for the evenings. Children had to hand over their cell phones or go offline from generally between 7pm and 10pm at night while one had 12am as a limit and another 1am.

- Nearly eighty percent (78.8%) of the children who had family rules about online, said that they obeyed the rules.
- Those children, who did not obey the rules, did so because their phones were too important to them; they were bored and many said that they had been in the middle of a game, which they had to finish, or the game was too exciting to stop. Although a number said that they did not like the restrictions and did not consider them to be important, generally, the rules broken related to exceeding time limitations. One child admitted that they open negative sites that they are not allowed to while another stated that they break the rules by going online when their parents are asleep. They gave the following reasons for disobeying the rules:
 - o They did not like the limitations and restrictions and did not consider them to be important.
 - o The limitations made them upset, angry or annoyed.
 - o They got bored and wanted to go online.
 - o They needed more time to complete school assignments.
 - o They were influenced by friends.
 - o Sometimes they just lost track of time on their cell phones and broke the rules relating to time restrictions.
 - o Playing games was so much fun that they did not want to stop or they felt that they had not had enough time to play the game.

“My cell phone is my friend.”

“Because I can’t sleep, that’s why I play on my cell phone.”

“Because I feel addicted.”



A number of children said that they had difficulty sleeping and that the cell phone entertained them, so they would break the rules to do that. A child said that they could not sleep until they had played on their cell phone and they were not allowed to have their cell phone at night so they were forced to break the rules. A few children said that they broke the rules relating to time restrictions because they were addicted to their phones.

- The vast majority of children (90.7%) said that they agreed with the rules that their families had in place regarding their online activities.
- Those children (9.3%) who said that they did not agree with the rules that were imposed, provided the following reasons:
 - o The limitations were too great.
 - o The rules were not important.
 - o They did not want to be over-regulated and it made them angry and annoyed.
 - o The rules were not cool and it was more fun without them.

“Because, in my opinion, we cannot meet our respective needs with such a curfew. Because everyone has different needs and interests, it is impossible to compare them.”



Talking about online activities

“Close friends are good at keeping secrets.”

The children were asked whether they discussed their online activities with anyone, who they discussed it with, what they talked about and why they chose to speak to that specific person(s). About half of the children shared their online activity with someone, and most of them chose to speak to their friends. This is in line with adolescent development, where peer relationships become very important as adolescents try to become more independent. This finding has implications for the development of online safety programmes for children since they may themselves not be exposed to any negative online incidents, but may be approached by friends who have. They would then need to know how to deal with these situations.

- Fifty-one percent (51%) of the children did not talk to anyone about their online activity while 49% did.

- The children identified the following four (4) categories of persons as those with whom they shared their online activities:
 - o 33.7% talked to their parents (n = 84)
 - o 71.5% talked to their friends (n = 178)
 - o 6.8% talked to siblings (n = 17)
 - o 4% talked to other family members (n = 10).

Friends included close friends, classmates and neighbourhood friends, and one child specified that they spoke to an online gaming friend. A child with a disability said that they spoke to a friend who also had a disability.

What do they talk about?

The children identified various topics that they discussed online with friends and/or family and these have been broadly categorised into 6 groups:

- socialization
- dating
- online games
- schoolwork
- sharing knowledge about the internet
- other

Topics discussed

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| Socialisation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friendship matters • Gossip • Share interesting videos and movies • Share interesting and/ or funny information or articles they come across • Food • Talk about guys • Discuss daily life • Talk about music • Share recipes • Confide and share personal problems • Soccer • Discuss teachers • Clothing styles • Share news about natural disasters, kidnappings, accident information |
|----------------------|--|

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complain about how parents restrict and oversee use of cell phones • Topics like pregnancy out of wedlock • Arrange to meet • Anything that is trending or viral • Share online shopping activities |
| Dating | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chat with opposite sex |
| Online Games | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss different online games • Share knowledge of features in the games |
| Schoolwork | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss school lessons • Get help with assignments and homework • Find out information about lessons |
| Internet Knowledge | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk about safe internet procedures • Share knowledge about internet • Share tips on how to access certain information |
| Other | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss buying and selling of goods • Education plans • Getting employment |

The children identified family and friends as the two groups of people they discussed their online activities with. The children were then asked why they chose to talk to those particular people and their responses provided some insight into the kind of characteristics that promoted discussion. The key to being able to share with parents was a positive parenting relationship between child and parent.

Family

The children chose to talk to their families because they felt more comfortable doing so, had good relationships with family members, were present in the house with them and sometimes received advice. Many of the children referred to the fact that they had close relationships with a particular parent, usually the mother. Reasons forwarded included the following:

- Convenient because parents were available
- Close relationship with parents which involved communication and sharing
- Approachability of parents
- They felt safe going online with their parents around
- Their parents provided advice and assistance



"Because I'm close to my family."

"Because my mother often invites me to vent. My relationship with my mother is close."

"I trust her and she is my confidant." (mother)

"Mother is a good listener."

"Open to talk about the internet."

"Because my mother is always at home."

"Fun to talk to mother."

Friends

Children chose to speak to their friends because they felt comfortable doing so as they talked about the same things, had the same experiences and understood what was trending. Also, their friends were good at keeping secrets. They gave the following reasons for choosing to talk to their friends:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Common interests | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• They were able to discuss things in more detail with friends.• They could discuss topics (like filters) with friends because they had a common understanding of the subject matter.• They were able to discuss things that were cool and trending.• Friends understand more about the internet and can connect with each other more easily.• They played games together. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Close friendships | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Friends were important and their relationships were close, which meant that they could share secrets.• They could talk to friends about anything: "not things you can talk about to your parents." |

| | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trust | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They felt that they could talk to their friends because they trusted them • They felt safer talking to their friends because they were afraid of their parents scolding them. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interesting and fun to connect with friends | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They can chat about all kinds of topics: "it's nice to chat." • It was fun and good to share knowledge |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Availability of friends to talk | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friends were available whereas parents had a busy schedule. |

"We talk about the same things."

"Because friends tend to understand the topic being discussed"

"Because we are the same age and can understand each other."

"I trust my friends more."

"He can take care of a secret I don't dare tell parents."



Internet Activities

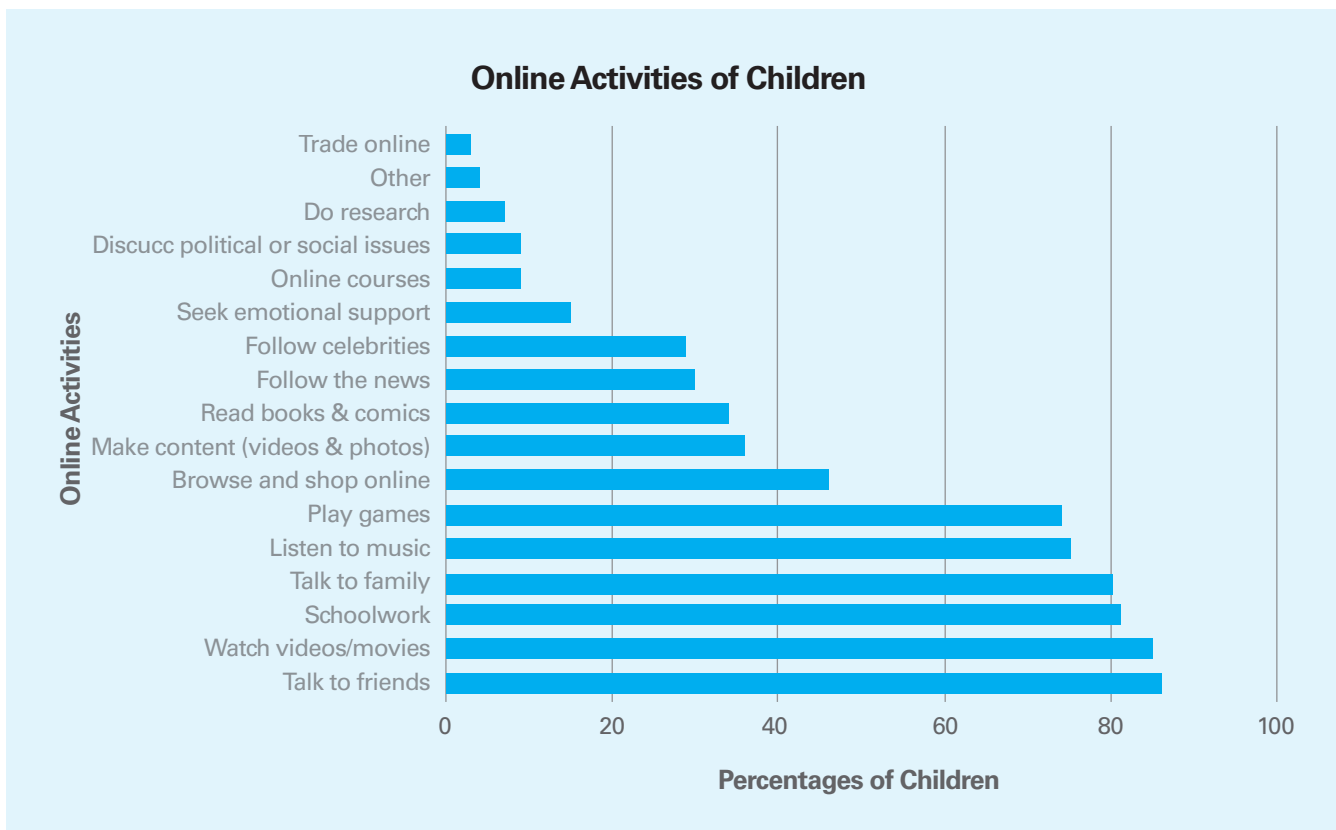
“It would be embarrassing if my mother or father were aware of my online activities.”

Children in Indonesia take part in all kinds of activities online. They identified talking to friends and watching movies or videos as their most popular activities, followed by schoolwork and talking to their families. They also used a variety of applications with WhatsApp, YouTube and Instagram being the most popular. A minority of the children (13.8%) used a virtual private network (VPN) and 13.4% had secret accounts.

Activities performed online

Except for physical activities, the children seemed to perform most of their other activities online. They talked to friends and family, watched videos and movies, listened to music, read books, studied, followed the news and sought emotional support. Once again, friendship and entertainment were the key focus of their online activities. Talking to and making friends are a priority for children, particularly adolescents, and it is this normal developmental occupation that makes children especially vulnerable online. The top 10 activities were:

- Talk to friends n = 435 (85.8%)
- Watch videos/ movies n = 431 (85%)
- Schoolwork n = 409 (80.7%)
- Talk to family n = 404 (79.7%)
- Listen to music n = 380 (75%)
- Play games n = 374 (73.8%)
- Browse and shop online n = 235 (46.4%)
- Make content (videos, photos) n = 181 (35.7%)
- Read online books and comics n = 170 (33.5%)
- Follow the news n = 150 (29.6%).



The children further added that they also made video calls and ordered food online. Two children mentioned that they also accessed Mitra Netra, which is a special application for blind people that assists them with school assignments.

Research

23 children have a blog or a website

Children did the following research online:

- Career opportunities (n = 90)
- Investigate further education opportunities (n = 214)
- Medical information (n = 78)
- Hobbies (n = 335)
- Other (n = 171)

The use of virtual private networks

A Virtual Private Network (VPN) is a connection method used to add security and privacy to private and public networks, like Wi-Fi Hotspots and the Internet. VPNs mask your internet protocol (IP) address so your online actions are virtually untraceable. VPN services establish secure and encrypted connections to provide greater privacy than even a secured Wi-Fi hotspot. The majority of this group was not aware of what a VPN was, how to use it or where to obtain one. However, seventy children (13.8%) in the study said that they used a VPN. They provided the following reasons for using a VPN:

- The main reasons supplied for having a VPN are related to online gaming. A VPN was needed in order to play certain games, and it was said to improve the network for playing games.

“Because there are games that are only released in certain countries, so a VPN is need to access and instal the game using foreign servers.”

“Used when gaming to access accounts that cannot normally be accessed.”

“To log into games in other countries so that you can get a prize.”



- A VPN enabled the children to open any website they wanted, to access the servers in other countries as well as blocked sites.

“So I can access applications beyond what the government allows.”

“It was used when there was a blocking of WhatsApp by government in 2022.”



- A VPN was also used by the children to access pornography as well as to meet people and date with videochat.

“To search for porn videos.” (17-year-old male)

“To access pornography sites.” (14-year-old male)



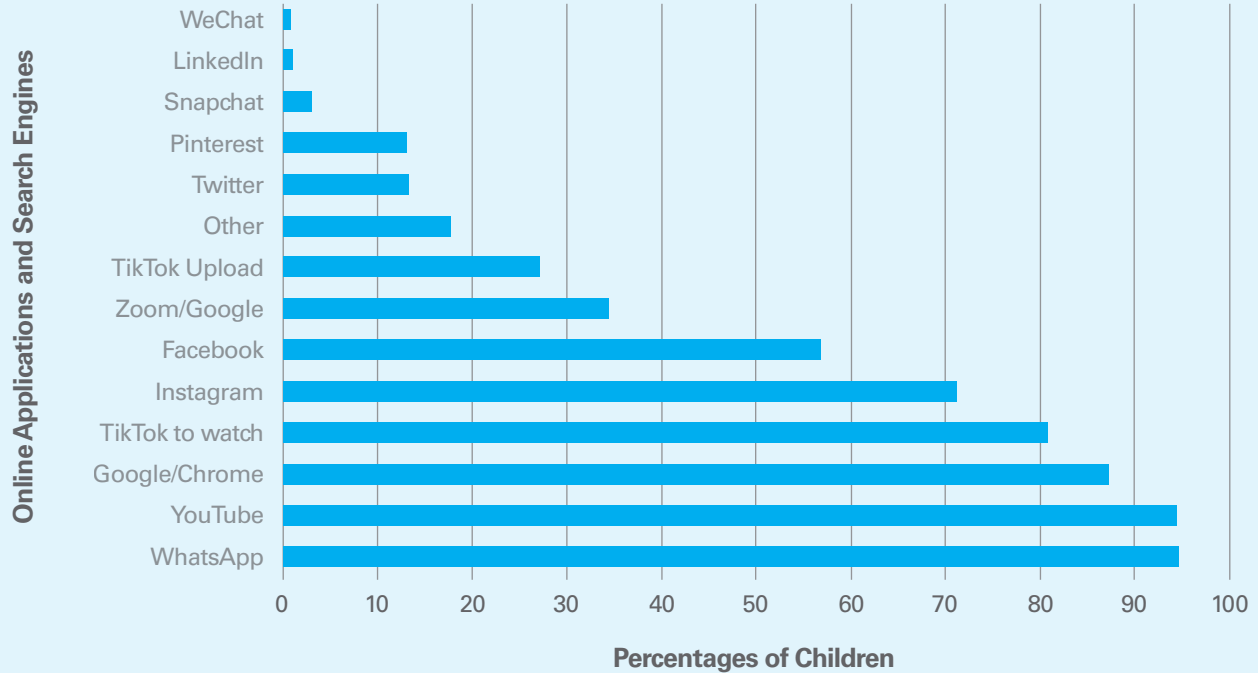
- A VPN was also used to improve the network connection generally as it stabilized the connection and made the internet smoother.
- A VPN was used by the children to hide their identity.
- They also used it to watch pirated videos and movies, including pirated anime movies.
- It was used to get free applications.
- It was also considered useful to keep friends private.

Those children who responded that they did not have a VPN said that they were prohibited from having one by their parents and that they did not need it as it was used for accessing adult content and pornographic sites.

Use of online applications and search engines

The children used a wide range of online applications, with WhatsApp and YouTube being the two that are used the most. Children’s use of online applications and search engines has been captured in the graph below.

Children's Use of Online Applications and Search Engines



The children were asked to identify which three applications and search engines they used the most, and WhatsApp was acknowledged as being by far the most popular application, followed by YouTube and watching TikTok.

| Application | Number of Children |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| WhatsApp | 437 |
| YouTube | 307 |
| TikTok to watch | 294 |
| Instagram | 232 |
| Facebook | 101 |
| Google/Chrome | 97 |
| Lain-lain | 42 |
| TikTok Upload Video | 21 |
| Twitter | 7 |
| Pinterest | 6 |
| Zoom/Google | 3 |

Allowing parents or family members to `friend` accounts

As children share their photographs, videos and activities on their social media accounts, it was interesting to find out whether they would allow members of their family to `friend` their accounts and thus have access to their communications.

Almost three-quarters (74.8%) of the children said that they allowed their families to `friend` their accounts and they supplied various reasons for so doing. These children explained that they had good relationships with their parents and saw it as a way of communicating with their families. They offered the following reasons for allowing parents and families to `friend` their accounts:

- It was a way to communicate with families and share posts, photos, news and activities and to be able to contact them, especially where they did not live with them.
- They had good relationships with their parents and families and did not have secrets to hide from them.

"It's fun with the family."

"Because family is close."

"There are no secrets between me and my mom, including my social media."

"There is nothing to hide from the family."



- Some of the children felt safe knowing that their parents were able to monitor their activities.

"So that you know someone is watching."

"Just in case, if you don't reply to family messages, they can monitor through WhatsApp and Instagram."



- Children were also required to do so by their families as their families monitored their accounts.

- Children were afraid that their parents would be angry if they did not allow them to `friend` their accounts.

“My brother monitors through social media.”

“So that it can be monitored and videos are not made carelessly using social media.”

“My parents always check on my social media.”



- Family members were added to increase the number of followers that the children had on their accounts.
- One child said that it provided the family with an opportunity to be more familiar with their friends as they did not meet them often face-to-face.

Those children who did not allow their families to `friend` their accounts, provided the following reasons for their refusal:

- Children did not want to be monitored by their families because they were afraid that they would get into trouble for various activities that they undertook both online and offline. They did not want their parents to see what activities they were doing. One child mentioned that he did not want them to monitor his motorbike videos on Facebook and another said that she did not want her parents to see that she was uploading images of Korean guys. A few of them did not want their parents to see that they had a boyfriend or a girlfriend.
- They were embarrassed that their parents would see their posts and photos, and it made them feel uncomfortable.

Secret accounts

Although children do allow their families to `friend` their accounts, there is the possibility that they may have secret accounts. Sixty-eight children (13.4%) disclosed that they had accounts that were secret from their families. They provided various reasons for creating secret accounts and these included the following:

- They did not want their parents or families to become aware of their online activities, because these included things that they were not allowed to do and they were afraid of getting into trouble. They did not want their families to see the photographs that they posted nor did they want them to see their statuses. A few of the children did not want

their parents to know that they watched Korean dramas, while others did not want their parents to find out that they had a boyfriend or a girlfriend.

“Want to be anonymous.”

“People who know me do not know that it is me.”

“To have fun because I can post anything.”



- They used the secret account as a fake profile for stalking others and did not want people to recognise them or know who they were online.

“For fear of being caught, I hid WhatsApp and Instagram from my parents.”

“It would be embarrassing if my mother or father were aware of my online activities.”

“Parents will be shy if they see their son’s behaviour on social media.”



- They used secret accounts to register for online games.
- It was a place where they could share secrets with their friends.

Those children who did not have accounts secret from their families said that they were forbidden to have them and that they were afraid that their parents would find the account and they would get into trouble. Some said that they did not need to create secret accounts as they had nothing to hide. A few said that they did not know how to create secret accounts.

“I can’t create an account without my mom’s permission.”

“I will be in trouble for keeping things secret.”

“Parents are always watching.”



“Never experienced anything to make me feel insecure.”

Feeling safe online

Almost two-thirds of the children said that they felt safe on the internet. However, on closer questioning, this belief appeared to be based on the naïve assumption that the main danger on the internet was fraud, hacking of accounts and compromising data, and that they would be safe if they had a password on their phone. They did not seem to be aware of the real dangers lurking on the internet and many said that nothing had happened to them online thus far, so they believed that they were safe. A few children did acknowledge that they did not know the dangers of the internet.

- Sixty-one percent (60.6%) of the children said they felt safe online.
- Thirty-one percent (31.4%) of the children did not feel safe online.
- Eight percent (8.1%) of the children did not know.

The children who said they felt safe online were asked what contributed to them feeling safe online, and they provided the following information:

- They only save the numbers of people that they know.
- They limit the number of stories that they post.
- They ensure that their cell phone has a password. Some increased security in the password section of their phones.
- Their accounts are monitored by their parents.
- They use trusted applications.
- They use the internet sparingly.
- They do not browse adult sites and strange or illegal sites.
- They only access the internet when their parents are around or at home.

- There are laws in place to regulate online behaviour.
- They lock their account.
- They use their parents' cell phone.
- They do not upload problematic content.
- One child mentioned that they had installed a security application.
- They do not friend unknown people.

Although the majority of the children said that they felt safe online, their responses highlight their lack of knowledge of both what it really means to be safe online as well as the risks involved in being online. Their reasons for feeling safe were innocent and trusting and completely unwise, as can be seen from the responses below.

"I don't know. I just feel safe." (14-year-old)

"Many people use it."

"Because I have never had a problem on social media."

"Others use and see the same content so I must be safe."

"It's safe because the network is stable."

"I have friends of the opposite sex so I feel safe." (18-year-old female)

"Never experienced anything to make me feel insecure."

"Because there is nothing strange on the internet."

"Safety is guaranteed."

"Safe because I only use it on Friday, Saturday and Sunday."

"It's safe because I am home alone."

"I feel safe because it is only for entertainment and fun."



Dangers on the Internet

The children who said that they did NOT feel safe on the internet (31.4%) were asked to elaborate about what dangers there were on the internet that made them feel unsafe. This group highlighted a number of possible dangers and were primarily concerned with hackers, hoaxes and inappropriate content. Only two (2) children referred to danger of a sexual nature. They identified the following dangers:

- Health risks relating to excessive internet usage
- Being contacted and harassed by unknown persons
- Interference with their focus on learning and schoolwork
- Hackers and false accounts
- Hoax news
- Leaking or theft of personal data
- Fraud
- Wiretapping and tracing of cell phones
- Kidnapping
- Phishing links and doxing where private information is disclosed
- Encountering adult or pornographic content
- Negative content like violence, advertisements for drugs and online gambling
- Defamation: "If you say something wrong on social media, you can be insulted and your name defamed."
- Sexual harassment/ sexual danger
- Inappropriate comments
- Bullying.

A number of comments made by the children highlighted a thread relating to online games. A lot of the bullying that was mentioned took place as a result of online gaming. There was bullying during the games as well as harassment afterwards.

“Harsh things being said while playing games.”
“Friends become angry and rude when losing games.”



Keeping safe on the Internet

Most of the children used a password to keep safe on the internet. This was followed by the use of privacy settings, behaving appropriately online, not opening dangerous sites and restrictions on the time spent online. Thirty-seven (7.3%) of the children said that they did not know how to keep safe online. The children identified the following methods they used to keep safe on the internet:

- Have a password (14.2%; n = 72)
- Use privacy settings (10.5%; n = 53)
- Behave appropriately (10.3%; n = 52)
- Don't open strange or dangerous sites (9.3%; n = 47)
- Limits on time (5.9%; n = 30)
- Don't know (7.3%; n = 37)
- Block or delete negative or inappropriate posts or people (3.6%; n = 18)
- Only make friends with people they know (3.4%; n = 17)
- Limit play or don't play social media (2.6%; n = 13)
- Only play safe entertainment, search for information and do homework (2.6%; n = 13)
- Feel safe; don't feel the need to do anything (1.8%; n = 9)
- Don't open or install inappropriate applications (1.6%; n = 8)
- Do not respond to posts, only watch and scroll (1.4%; n = 7)
- Activities are monitored (1.4%; n = 7)
- Don't share personal information (1.4%; n = 7)

- Parents accompany them on internet (1%; n = 5)
- Close or skip negative advertisements (0.8%; n = 4)
- Obey parents' rules (0.8%; n = 4)
- Tell family (0.8%; n = 4)
- Report negative content (0.8%; n = 4)
- Use a VPN (0.6%; n = 3)
- Learn about safety (0.4%; n = 2)
- Don't meet people face-to-face (0.4%; n = 2)
- Block unofficial/ unknown sites (0.4%; n = 2)
- Limiting posts (0.4%; n = 2)
- Stay at home (0.2%; n = 1)
- Do not use phone outside home (0.2%; n = 1)
- Just ignore it (0.2%; n = 1)
- Multiply outdoor activities (0.2%; n = 1)
- Don't post photos (0.2%; n = 1).

"Watch videos about online security."

"Just watch positive things so that the algorithm is good too."

"No problem, my account has never been hacked."

"Nothing is dangerous for now."

"I have no idea."

"Seldom share with other people, especially foreigners."

"Ask people who know better how to stay safe on the internet."



Information on how to keep safe online

Just over a third of the children (n = 190; 37%) said that they had received information on how to be safe online. They received this information mostly from the internet on various applications and accounts i.e. Google, YouTube and TikTok. They also received information from their school and from friends. Only 18 children said that they received information from their families. Information to be safe online was received from the following quarters:

- Internet: 99 children (52%)
 - o Google: 25 children (13.2%)
 - o YouTube: 23 children (12.1%)
 - o TikTok: 20 children (10.5%)
 - o Instagram: 13 children (6.8%)
 - o WhatsApp: 6 children (3.2%)
 - o Facebook: 4 children (2.1%)
 - o Social Media: 3 children (1.6%)
 - o Twitter: 3 children (1.6%)
 - o Online games: 2 children (1.1%)
- School: 43 children (22.6%)
- Friends: 37 children (19.5%)
- Family (11 parents): 18 children (5.1%)
- Civil Society Organisations/ Children’s Forum: 6 children (3.6%)
- Self-taught: 2 children (1.1%)
- Product itself (“policies of each application”): 2 children (1.1%)
- Religious leader: 1 child (0.5%).

The children identified a wide variety of topics relating to online safety that they had received information about. The main focus, however, was the use of passwords and privacy settings on their devices. The main information they received about the dangers of the internet related to

hacking of their accounts and fraud. A few of the children said that they could not remember the information they had received as it had been a long time ago. This may mean that information needs to be repeated regularly.

The children had received information about:

- How to use privacy settings, change passwords and lock accounts
- The dangers on the internet with the main dangers related to fraud, hacking with a mention of the dangers of online gaming
- Appropriate sites to access
- Online behaviour which related to posting stories wisely; communicating correctly; phone safety and social media ethics
- Choice of safe applications and their use
- Limiting time spent on the internet
- Safety on social media
- Appropriate content to post online
- How to block someone/negative content
- Information about VPNs
- Information about online bullying
- How to select friends online
- Viruses
- How to deal with pop-up advertisements
- How to report sites, like pornography
- Not to reply to private messages from strangers
- Hoax news.

Rules and monitoring of online activity

Just over half of the children (55%) said that their parents monitored their online activity. Parents monitored phones in various ways, with the majority of them checking the phones to monitor the child's activities or asking them about what they were doing online. They would look at the content the children were watching or monitor their WhatsApp interactions. The following monitoring took place:

- Check phones to monitor activity (56%) which sometimes included checking their phone history
- Parents would ask questions and offer advice (17.3%)
- Time restrictions were placed on the use of devices (9.4%)
- Parents would accompany children online (sit next to them) in the case of the younger children (8.7%)
- Other less mentioned methods of monitoring included:
 - Sharing the phone of a parent
 - Limiting sites ("no pornography")
 - Checking photographs that were posted
 - Insisting on access to passwords
 - Checking the child's status or stories
 - Checking their friends on social media.

Checking of phones took place at a variety of times, and children said that their phones were checked any time the parent decided; only sometimes; every day; routinely; or every night.

Sixty-nine percent (69%) of the children said that they were prohibited from doing certain things online. Watching pornography or accessing adult sites topped the list of things that children were not allowed to do online, and this was followed by not being allowed to watch sites with inappropriate content. The list of things that children were not allowed to do online can be seen in the table below:

| Activity Prohibited | Number of Children | Percentage |
|--|--------------------|------------|
| Watch pornography or adult sites | 158 | 45.4 |
| Watch inappropriate content | 62 | 17.8 |
| Spend excessive time online | 26 | 7.5 |
| Behave well online (no hate speech; rudeness; harassing or judging others) | 20 | 5.7 |
| Watch violence or gamble | 19 | 5.5 |
| Take photographs dressed inappropriately | 11 | 3.2 |
| Talk to strangers | 9 | 2.6 |
| Access illegal websites | 6 | 1.7 |
| Date online | 6 | 1.7 |
| Share personal information | 5 | 1.4 |
| Watch Facebook or Instagram | 5 | 1.4 |
| Spread hoax news | 5 | 1.4 |
| Shop online without parents | 4 | 1.1 |
| Download or watch dance videos | 3 | 0.9 |
| Make video calls | 1 | 0.3 |
| Share personal numbers | 1 | 0.3 |

Although the children disclosed that there were certain things that they were prohibited from doing, they were asked whether they would do them anyway, despite the prohibition. Thirty-eight of these children (10.9%) admitted that they would do these activities anyway. They were then asked how they managed to do these activities without their parents or caregivers finding out and they revealed a number of techniques they used to conceal online activities that they were not allowed to perform. The most common of these was simply to do it in secret and many used the privacy of their bedrooms to perform these activities. The follow methods were used by the children to avoid detection:

- They performed these activities secretly and when their parents were not at home. Activities here also included playing games when they were not allowed to and watching pornography and inappropriate videos. One child, who was not allowed to play on their phone at night, said “Pretend to sleep when my parents come close to me.”

“When my mother is sleeping, I take her phone and play games silently.”

“I used to play online gambling but lost continuously. I play it when my parents are not home.”

“Switch activities on the device when my parents come in.”



“I play on my cell phone in my room so my parents don’t know what I do.”



- The children went online in their bedrooms.
- They delete applications after they have used them. One child, who was not allowed to use Instagram or TikTok, deleted the application after they had used it.
- Some children use a VPN.
- They delete or archive their chats.
- They do not tell their parents what they are doing. A child who was not allowed to shop online explained that they did it anyway but did not tell their parents: “Sometimes if you want to buy it, just buy it. If you get scammed again, it’s just fate.”
- They go online at a coffee shop.
- They use their own cell phones.

One child made an interesting comment relating to inappropriate advertisements that pop up on their phones or computers when they are online. The child said that he did not search for inappropriate content online but did watch it if it appeared on his screen (“Don’t seek out inappropriate content – only watch it if it pops up”). This highlights the danger of inappropriate pop-up advertisements and requires further research.

Seeking help for unpleasant experiences online

- Forty-five percent (45%) of the children believed that their parents had enough knowledge about online to help them, but the majority preferred to seek assistance from friends.
- Thirty-two percent (32%) said that they had asked someone for help related to something unpleasant that had happened online.

What help was required

The children were asked what help they had required and, although this question emanated from the previous one (i.e. did you ask for help related to something unpleasant online), the children interpreted it to include any type of assistance they needed with their devices and did not focus on an unpleasant experience. The vast majority of children required technical assistance with their devices and help with performing certain actions and activities. These included:

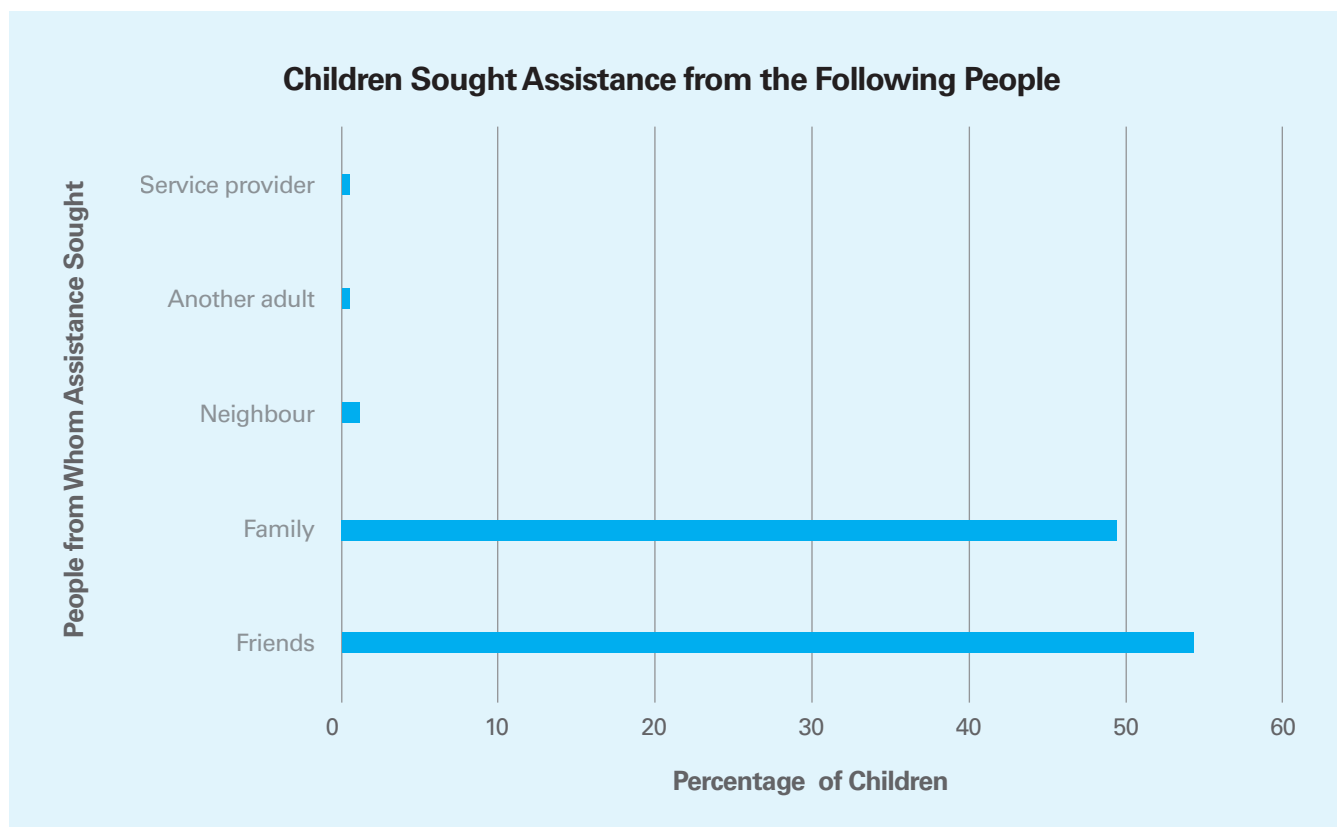
- Assistance with new applications and/or features of certain applications
- How to recover accounts
- How to use a device
- How to recover a password
- How to create an account
- How to get network connection
- Privacy settings
- How to change a phone number
- Security settings on device
- How to remove advertisements
- How to find information (sites and content)
- How to upload photos
- Help with viruses.

Very few of the children seemed to have asked for help with respect to keeping themselves safe online or dealing with problems online, although this may be due to the fact that the question was misinterpreted to mean what assistance they needed online as opposed to what assistance with an unpleasant experience did they require:

- How to block sites or accounts
- How to deal with online bullying and how to be safe
- How to prevent having their phone tapped
- Help with online friendships
- Tips to use the internet safely and wisely
- How to skip inappropriate content and sites
- How to deal with unknown numbers.

Who was asked for assistance

Children turned mostly to their friends (54.3%) for assistance and then to their families (49.4%). Families included relatives, brothers and sisters.



Reasons for choosing that specific person

Those children who responded that they had sought help were asked to supply reasons why they targeted those specific persons for assistance, and they highlighted the following qualities. The most important quality identified was capability, which was mentioned by ninety-nine (61%) children. The next most important quality was trust, which was mentioned by sixteen (9.9%) children.

The children identified the following reasons for choosing assistance from a specific person:

- Capable: 99 children (61%)
- Trustworthy: 16 children (9.9%)
- Close relationship: 14 children (8.6%)
- Felt comfortable: 13 children (8%)
- Accessible: 6 children (3.7%)
- Same interests: 2 children (1.2%).

Children said that they chose to talk to their friends because they were of the same age, they had the same interests, and their friends were better able to assist them. One child said that they did not have to worry about getting into trouble if they asked a friend. Some children felt more comfortable with talking to their parents and felt sure that their parents would be able to help them.

“He is also a hacker and understands the internet better.”

“Friends have abilities in that field.”

“Parents do not know the technology.”

“Feel comfortable with parents.”



Protecting themselves from negative online experiences

One hundred and seventy-four children (34.3%) said that they had performed certain actions to make themselves safer online in response to certain negative incidents. The vast majority of the children focused on having passwords and privacy settings in place to keep themselves safe online. They used strong passwords, had multiple passwords and kept their passwords secret for safety. The next two most common actions were to block people or accounts and to be careful with their choice of applications. They protected themselves in the following ways:

- Used passwords
- Used privacy settings
- Were careful with their choice of applications
- Blocked accounts and numbers
- Filtered/deleted/avoided links that were unclear or inappropriate
- Did not use their personal identity on social media
- Did not reply to messages from unknown persons
- Limited communication on social media and did not comment excessively
- Used a VPN
- Did not upload photographs carelessly
- Were more selective in making friends online
- Spoke to their parents
- Deactivated comments
- Locked their social media accounts
- Reduced unknown links
- Spoke to friends
- Did not open pornography sites
- Searched on Google how to make their account safe
- Prayed to keep safe
- Did not share their mobile number carelessly
- Reported inappropriate content

- Did not post anything
- Checked to see if information was true to prevent hoaxes.

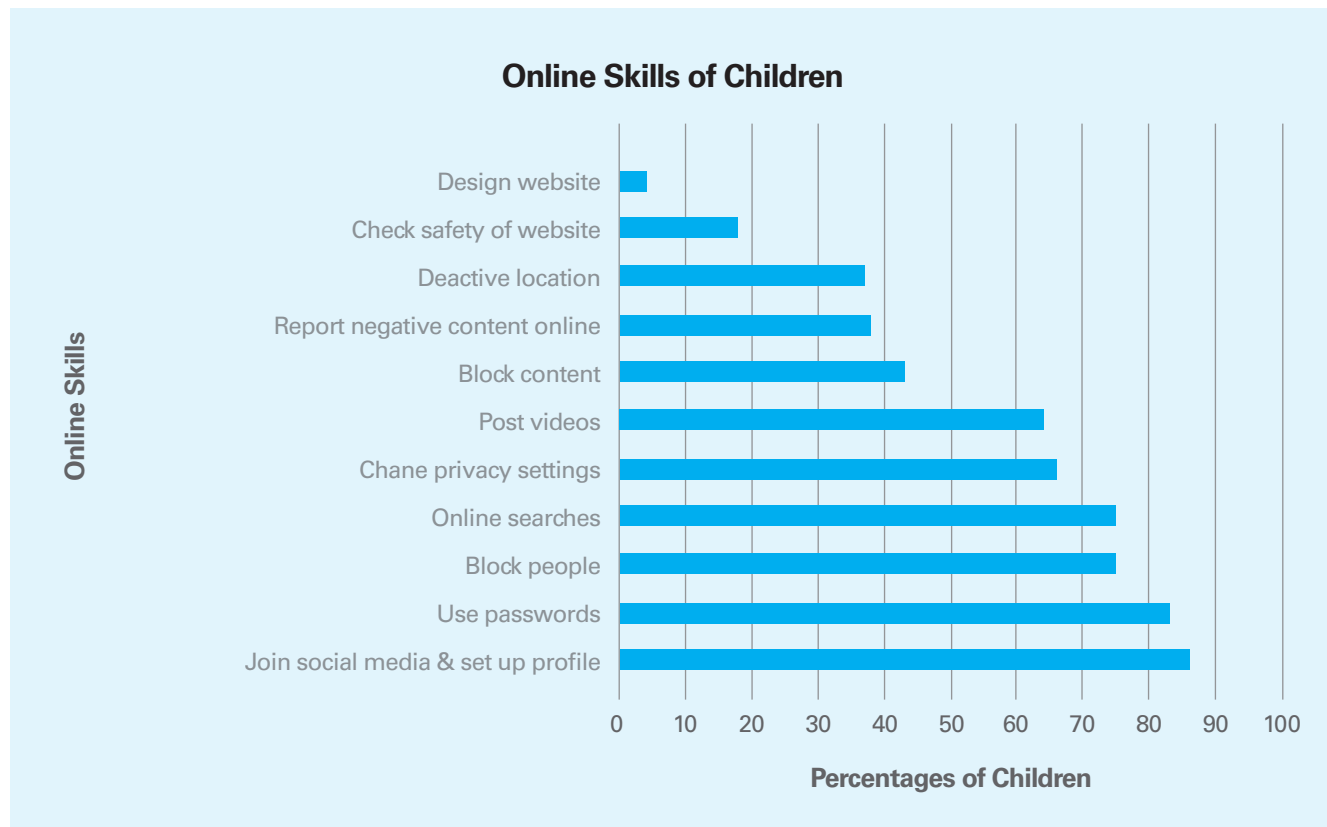
“Use a VPN when going to a porn site.”

“Put on a profile photo wearing a male helmet to make it look like a man so that I am protected from sexual harassment.”



Online skills

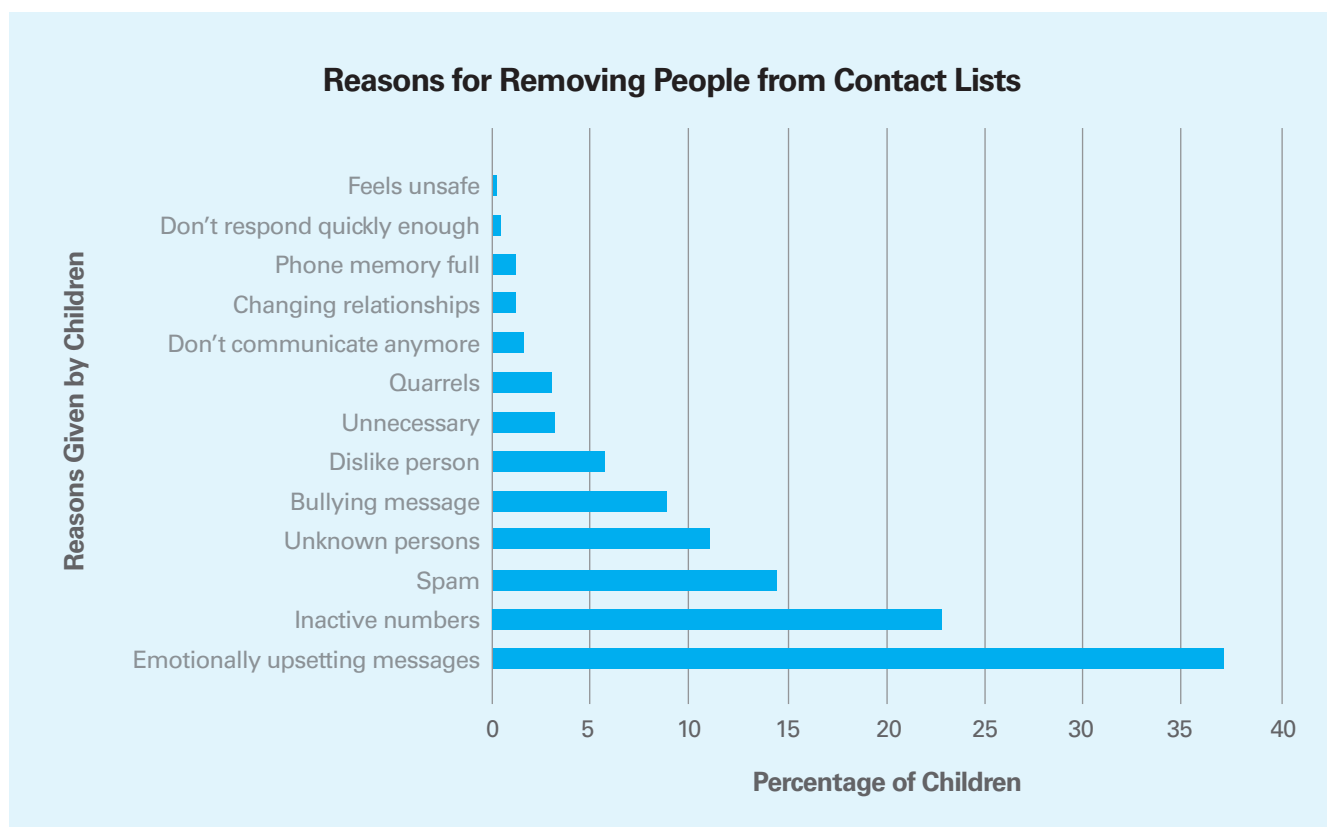
The children were asked to identify whether they were able to perform certain actions online. Most of them were able to use passwords, set up profiles, change privacy settings, block people, perform online searches and post videos they had made. Fewer of them, however, knew how to report negative content online and check whether a website could be trusted.



Removing people from contact lists

Seventy-three percent (72.8%) of the children had removed people from their contact lists. Over a third of them did so because the messages were emotionally upsetting. Emotionally upsetting messages included messages that were inappropriate, scary, disturbing, rude, angry, bothersome or late-night calls.

A number of the children linked rude messages to online gaming as people would become upset if they lost in the game, once again linking bullying to online gaming. Many children simply deleted numbers because they were no longer in use. Spam was one of the top three reasons why they deleted numbers from their contact lists.



Sharing images of themselves online

Images they would share

The children were asked what images of themselves they would share online, and the most prevalent responses related to their dress. They shared images where they were appropriately dressed and wore the hijab and images that were polite, stylish and positive. Twenty-three (4.5%) children said that they never shared photographs or images of themselves. The children provided the following list of images that they would share of themselves:

- Images where they were appropriately dressed
- Polite, appropriate, stylish, positive images
- Photos wearing the hijab
- Photos of daily activities, holidays, pets
- Selfies
- Photos with friends
- Photos of the face only
- Photos with family
- Interesting, cool or funny photos
- School-related activities
- Half-body photos
- Photos with face hidden
- Full-body photos
- Photos with filter
- Edited photos
- Only wearing school clothes
- Profile pictures.

Images they would not share

Naked photographs, pornographic images and inappropriate images were mentioned the most by the children. The following photographs or images were identified by the children as being the type of content that they would not share:

- Inappropriate images:
(sensitive, negative images including sexy images) 27.2%
- Naked photographs, photographs of exposed genitals or private parts: 26.4%
- Pornography: 17.8%
- Photos without a veil or hijab: 7.3%
- Embarrassing or humiliating photographs: 7.1%
- Don't know what would be inappropriate ("Parents haven't told me"): 5.1%
- Photographs wearing tight or inappropriate clothing: 3.7%
- Photos that violate privacy: 3.4%
- Images of violence and people fighting: 2%
- Photographs of faces or selfies: 1.6%
- Boring photos: 0.6%
- Bullying images: 0.6%
- Photos of family: 0.4%
- Racist and hate speech images: 0.4%
- Photos of daily activities: 0.2%

Negative things that can happen online

More than three quarters of the children (76.9%) said that there were negative things that could happen to children online. They identified a wide range of negative phenomena that children could come into contact with online. The four most prominent categories were:

- Pornography/adult content: 23.1%
- Exposure to inappropriate content:
(exposure to violence, crime and bad language) 12.4%
- Excessive use or internet addiction: 11%
- Hacking, hoaxes, fake accounts and deception: 8.5%

Other negative phenomena that could occur online included the following:

- Meeting unknown person, strangers, older persons online
- Dating
- Making friends with bad people or the wrong people
- Producing pornography
- Not spending time with friends offline
- Joining LGBTQ support sites
- Pranking
- Inappropriate trends
- Can damage health and is bad for one's eyes
- Causes laziness and affects schoolwork negatively
- Exposure to illegal or bad sites
- Bullying
- Sexual harassment, sexual exploitation, prostitution
- Online gambling
- Invasion of privacy
- Early sexualisation
- Organ trafficking
- Kidnapping
- Addiction to online gaming
- Viruses
- Video calls and sex chats
- Waste money on data

A number of children raised concerns about trends and said that inappropriate trends could influence children to imitate negative behaviour.

“Influenced by others through pictures and videos of violence, anger and hatred.”

“Children can imitate things that they should not know.”

“When they see porn videos, they will get carried away to do like that too.”



One child made the insightful comment that the internet was dangerous for children “Because the child is not able to distinguish between things that are good and what is true.” Although the majority of children are aware that there are negative things that can happen online, almost a quarter (23.1%) do not believe that there are negative things online and this accounts for a large number of Indonesian children who do not think they need to protect themselves online.

Advice to others on how to protect themselves online

The children were asked what advice they would give to others to protect themselves against negative things and they provided a myriad of responses on how children could protect themselves online with key advice focusing on behaving appropriately and being careful online, not opening adult content, not opening negative sites and limiting time online. The advice from the children was insightful and included the following:

- Protect your passwords
- Keep your accounts private and safe

“Don’t be too exposed, don’t show too much activities and feelings.”



- Maintain your privacy
- Use a VPN to be safe
- Be aware of the negative impacts as well as the benefits of the internet

"It's easy to be lied to."

"Don't easily believe in anyone on the internet."



- Be wary of strangers
- Don't open negative or 'weird' sites
- Don't watch negative content or interact with it
- Only access positive things
- Don't open adult content
- Be careful, use the internet wisely and don't behave badly
- Delete inappropriate content
- Don't open links with unclear sources
- Upload content carefully
- Obey age guidelines
- Don't make negative or careless comments
- Allow parents to monitor online activity and ask parents for advice and guidance
- Don't imitate everything you see online
- Don't share sexy or inappropriate photos or videos, like dancing videos
- Be careful of fraud and phishing scams
- Don't play games continuously
- Limit cell phone usage
- Remember study time
- Don't fall asleep with your cell phone
- Protect your eyes against excessive online usage
- Don't date online
- Be careful on social media and don't post photos and videos
- Don't post too often and don't post weird things
- Get involved in other activities so that you don't spend too much time online

“Go play games together outside.”

“Don’t play the internet, because life isn’t just the internet.”

“Go play football.”



- Choose online friends carefully
- Don’t spread inappropriate information about friends
- Don’t bully or mock anyone
- Don’t interfere in other people’s affairs
- Communicate politely

“Improve ways of talking to others on social media, the same in games.”



- Don’t easily believe the news (fake news)
- Don’t gamble
- Don’t hijack other people’s accounts
- Block pranksters
- Remember that the internet can be addictive.

“Must be able to take care of yourself if there are negative posts.”

“I will warn parents to continue to monitor their children when using cell phones.”





Risky Behaviour

The internet offers children a wonderful, easily accessible venue to learn, communicate with friends and find entertainment. However, although the internet offers so many opportunities for children, it also carries with it numerous risks. The open structure of the internet, the sheer impossibility of controlling its contents and the difficulty of supervising this environment increase the risks to which children are exposed, including cyberbullying, exposure to pornography and inappropriate content, invasion of privacy and online grooming. These risks are exacerbated by certain activities children perform online. Children look for friends online, meet these new-found friends, share intimate information and photographs and explore unknown links. In order to investigate the extent to which children in Indonesia are exposed to these risks, it was necessary to find out more about their online activities. A section on risky behaviour was included in the questionnaire to find out more information about the children's online activities and experiences.

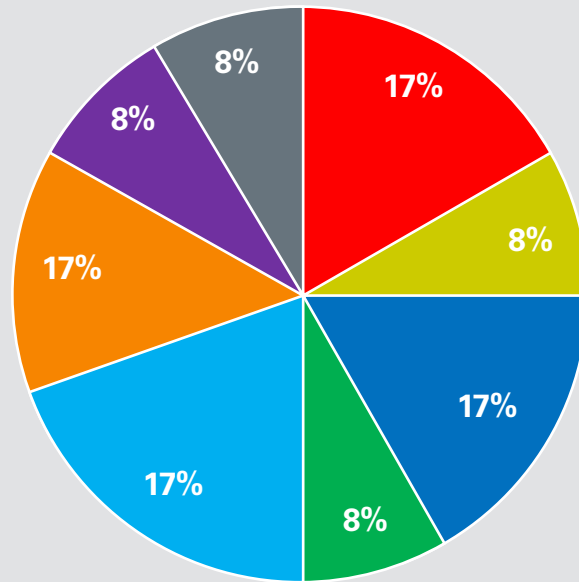
The dark web

The Dark Web, also known as the Dark Net or the Dark Internet, lies within the deepest layers of the Internet. Normally, when an Internet user visits any site that exists on the World Wide Web, they can be tracked via their Internet Protocol (IP) address, so to prevent this tracking, visitors to the Dark Web use specialised anonymity software, such as Tor, to mask their identity. This anonymity software masks identity, location, IP address and more (Sheils 2019). The Dark Web is used to remain anonymous, access hidden sites and for illegal activity.

The dangers that may be encountered on the Dark Web are similar to those that can be encountered on the internet generally. However, the Dark Web can be dangerous when users are naive and/or not careful with the contents. Children may easily fall victim to hackers, give away personal information without intention, or encounter illegal activity. A large number of sites on the Dark Web include a considerable amount of disturbing material that can be very distressing for children. Dangers range from identity theft and the drug trade to suicide chat rooms, violent material and child pornography. However, it is important to keep a sense of perspective as there are many positive reasons for using Tor, and it should not automatically be assumed that a child is doing something dangerous or illegal. Nevertheless, unless equipped with knowledge to protect themselves, children can be very vulnerable on the Dark Web.

The Indonesian children who took part in the study had very little knowledge of the Dark Web. Only sixty-four children (12.6%) knew what the Dark Web was and only twelve children (2.4%) admitted to going onto the Dark Web. Two (2) of those children accessed the Dark Web once, were disturbed by what they found and never went back. Some of the other children appear to use the Dark Web regularly.

Use of Dark Web



Once Several times Occasionally Twice Often Once a month No answer Rarely

Why did the children access the dark web

The majority of the children accessed the Dark Web because they were curious, tempted or mischievous. The children supplied the following reasons for accessing the Dark Web:

- Curiosity (5 children)
- Temptation (1 child)
- Mischievous (2 children)
- Tracking a hacker (1 child)
- Researching crimes online (1 child)
- To access sites not accessible on Open Web (1 child)
- No answer (1 child).

The children talked to people on the Dark Web, accessed dangerous applications, browsed and had a look around. They watched and read horror stories and other content while one child said that he had tracked a hacker onto the Dark Web.

"Visited it using a site on TikTok and there I found a murder video."

"Many things are not good."

"Just checking out what people are saying about the Dark Web."



The children, except for two (2), found the experience to be negative. They described it as terrifying, creepy, weird, risky and not good. One of the children, who found it to be positive, said that they had gained experience, like speaking skills and knowledge sharing, on the Dark Web.

"After opening it, I was scared because it contained a murder video and I will never open it again."

"The web is dangerous for children because they can access pornography and can imitate/get addicted to access."



Meeting people online

Since children said that one of their activities was finding friends online, it was important to explore how many contacts they made with strangers, whether they shared personal information and what information they shared.

- One hundred and fifty-six children (30.8%) said that they had added contacts of people whom they did not know personally. Thirteen of these children had disabilities.
- Thirty-two percent (32.1%) of these children said that they had shared personal information with these people.
- Children shared their ages, names, telephone numbers, home addresses, schools and grades with these people.

- Twenty-six percent (26%) of these children provided their real names.
- Twenty-two percent (22%) supplied their home addresses.
- Many of the children said that they shared personal information in online gaming.
- Forty-seven of these children (30.1%) shared photographs and images with the people they had met online. Six of these children had disabilities.
- The majority of the children shared photographs of themselves (selfies) and of their daily activities. Only one child (16-year-old male) admitted to sending pornographic images.

Children shared the following photographs with people they met online:

- Selfies and personal photographs
- Photographs of their activities at home, at school and outings (eating at restaurants)
- Travel and holiday photographs
- Goods they were selling
- Gameplay photographs and game screenshots
- Photographs of celebrities
- Photographs with friends and families

The term 'friend'

The concept of friend and friendship will have to be explored in greater depth. It became clear in the course of analysing the interviews of the children that the term 'friend' was interpreted differently by the children online. Children go online in order to make friends, one of their primary motivations. In order to do this, they meet strangers online. They chat, share photographs and become friends. When they meet this person face-to-face, they do not view this person as a stranger but rather a friend. Therefore, when children are warned not to meet strangers offline whom they have met online, they do not consider these people to be strangers. Friendship in this context will have to be explored to ensure that online safety programmes for children clarify this concept.

Meeting someone face-to-face after an online meeting

- One hundred and twenty children (24%) admitted to meeting a person face-to-face whom they had first made contact with online. Thirteen (13) of these children had disabilities.
- The vast majority of children (84.2%) met friends, both male and female, including those who later became girlfriends and boyfriends. The responses here reinforce the children's understanding of the concept of friend, as highlighted above. In response to the question of who they had met face-to-face after an initial online meeting, the children used the term 'friend,' despite the fact that they had never met these people offline before.
- The data here also highlights the fact that friendship, including the making of new friends, is a key online activity for children.
- The children said that they had met the following people face-to-face whom they had first made contact with online:
 - o Friends (101 children)
 - o Distant family members (2 children)
 - o Celebrities (3 children)
 - o Online purchases (12 children)

- o Online taxi (1 child)
- o People for work (1 child).
- An analysis of the data further revealed that almost double the number of boys as opposed to girls met someone in person that they had met online for the first time:
 - o Girls: n = 41 (34.2%)
 - o Boys: n = 79 (65.8%).
- A further extrapolation of the data revealed that two thirds of the meetings took place in the 15 to 17 age group range with the highest recorded in the 17-year-old group. Age groupings were as follows:

| Age Categories | Number of Children |
|----------------|--------------------|
| 9 | 2 |
| 10 | 0 |
| 11 | 1 |
| 12 | 3 |
| 13 | 13 |
| 14 | 17 |
| 15 | 21 |
| 16 | 18 |
| 17 | 40 |
| 18 | 5 |

- Forty-six (46) children said that they had met online, chatted and made an appointment to meet. One (1) child provided further information that they had met on Instagram and three (3) said that they had met on WhatsApp.
- Eight (8) children had met by accident, bumping into each other in a public place and recognising the person from their profile picture.

"I was picked up at school and I didn't see the person because I was blind but I heard his voice."

"Made appointment to meet at coffee stall and went alone."



- The majority of children met this person in a public place. Public places included the main square, terminal, reservoir, in the street, coffee shop, park, food stall, mall, stadium, restaurant, café, field and football field. Meetings also occurred at their home, at a friend's house and at school.
 - o Public venue or space: 73.3%
 - o Home: 12.5%
 - o School: 10.8%
 - o Work: 2.5%
 - o Friend's house: 0.8%
- The children were either happy or indifferent about meeting the person with a few mentioning that they felt embarrassed, shy or uncomfortable. Only one child (15-year-old female) reported feeling worried about the meeting ("Actually, it's normal, but there is fear because he can do strange things"). The meetings appeared to be positive experiences for the children and the need to make friends was a key motivation. Children expressed the following emotions:
 - o Happy: 50%
 - o Indifferent: 35.8%
 - o Other (surprised, uncomfortable, nervous, flustered): 14.2%.

"Happy, he is kind and nice to talk to."

"Nice to make new friends."

"It's embarrassing because it's the first time we met."

"Happy, now became friends."



- Sixty-three percent⁴ of the children told someone about the meeting.
- Forty-nine percent⁵ of the children told their parents about the face-to-face meeting.
- Almost half of the parents were indifferent about their children meeting someone face-to-face whom they had first met online. Others were supportive of the meeting and gave their permission with some restrictions. Only one child said that they had been reprimanded and three mentioned that their parents had asked a lot of questions. Restrictions imposed on the meetings included: that they had to be careful; they could only meet at home; they must behave; girls could only meet same-sex friends; and there were restrictions on time.
 - o Indifferent 42.4%
 - o Happy and supportive: 16.9%
 - o Simply allowed it: 32.2%
 - o Asked a lot of questions: 5%
 - o Reprimanded: 1.7%.

“Yes, you can and advised not to mess around.”

“It’s normal as long as you come home safe and sound.”

“Permissible, must be careful, polite, do not come into contact with men.” (13-year-old female)



⁴ 76 children

⁵ 59 children

Children's understanding of risky behaviour

In order to understand children's understanding of risky behaviour and whether they participated in behaviours considered to be risky, they were asked whether they performed any of the following activities and then asked to explain what they thought risky behaviour entailed. The following five (5) activities were presented to the children and, yet again, finding friends emerged as the children's key motivation for being online for.

- Looked for new friends on the internet: 80.9%
- Used a false name and profile picture: 41.2%
- Lied about their age online: 29.6%
- Sent a photo/ video of themselves to someone they have never met 15.8%
- Advertised on social media that they were looking for work: 5.3%.

The children were asked what they thought risky behaviour online was but the question caused difficulty for some of them. Twenty-eight percent⁶ said that they did not understand the question. Comments from the interviewers indicate that the term 'risky' was not understood by the children. However, the rest of the children provided insightful information about what they considered to be risky behaviour, which has been collated below. One child said that there were no risks online.

Risky online behaviour

- "Dangerous activities that can harm us in the real world"
- Fights between online gamers
- Imitating negative or inappropriate behaviour
- Taking pictures without permission
- "Strange viewing behaviour"
- Harassing people online, like posting bad photos of them
- Watching or doing things that are not age-appropriate
- Using random applications

⁶ 141 children

- Meeting strangers
- Clicking on random advertisements
- Spreading hatred
- Blasphemy
- Being online frequently or excessively
- Bullying
- Accessing negative, weird sites (“Open Dark Web and prohibited sites”)
- “Send and request photos or videos about sex by giving certain rewards”
- Dangerous or deviant behaviour online
- Invading privacy
- Addicted to playing games
- Swearing online
- Watching porn videos
- Accessing and/or spreading naked and sexy photographs
- Sending links containing pornographic sites
- Commenting rudely or negatively on posts
- Promiscuity
- Creating inappropriate content
- Watching fighting videos

Sending a sexual image or video to someone online

Most of the children thought that sending a sexual image or video online was risky behaviour.

- Four hundred and seventy-nine children (94%) said this was risky behaviour.
- The children regarded this as dangerous behaviour and were most concerned about the fact that these images or videos could be shared and could lead to harm.
- Twelve percent (12.2%)⁷ of the children believed that it was rude, sinful, vulgar and immoral to share these images.
- The children provided the following reasons why it was risky to share sexual images or videos with someone online:
 - o It could be shared with others: n = 76 (15%)
 - o It was immoral, sinful, wrong: n = 62 (12.2%)
 - o It could be abused or misused: n = 32 (6.3%)
 - o It was dangerous: n = 30 (5.9%)
 - o It could go viral: n = 29 (5.7%)
 - o It was harmful: n = 14 (2.8%)
 - o Will be shamed or embarrassed in society: n = 14 (2.8%)
 - o It is illegal and one can be imprisoned: n = 14 (2.8%)
 - o It's something private: n = 13 (2.6%)
 - o It can ruin someone's mind: n = 11 (2.2%)
 - o They would be punished: n = 5 (1%)
 - o Afraid of exploitation, sextortion and abuse: n = 5 (1%)
 - o Can damage the good name of the family: n = 4 (0.8%)
 - o Account can be blocked: n = 4 (0.8%)
 - o It leaves a digital trace: n = 4 (0.8%)
 - o Parents might see it: n = 2 (0.4%)
 - o Can be bullied: n = 1 (0.2%).

⁷ 62 children

“It can be used as a threat to send again.”

“Can be detected in the future so that it interferes with your career.”

“Because rape can occur.”



Sending personal information to someone met online

Children were asked whether they considered it risky to share personal information with someone they have never met face-to-face. Personal information here included their full name, address and phone numbers. Eighty-four percent⁸ of the children regarded this activity as risky.

Although the vast majority of children felt this activity was risky, their knowledge of the dangers of sharing personal information was very superficial. They knew that the information could be misused or they could be scammed, but did not seem to know in more detail how this could be accomplished.

They provided the following reasons why they considered this activity to be dangerous:

- Information could be abused or misused: n = 153 (30.2%)
- Fear of being deceived or scammed: n = 61 (12%)
- They could be traced to their homes: n = 52 (10.3%)
- They could be the victim of crime - crimes mentioned were rape, kidnapping, murder and being terrorized: n = 41 (8.1%)
- It is dangerous: n = 20 (3.9%)
- They were suspicious/afraid of the people they meet online: n = 19 (3.7%)
- Information could be shared with others: n = 13 (2.6%)
- It will enable people to find out things about them: n = 3 (0.6%)
- They can be pranked: n = 1 (0.2%).

⁸ 424 children

“Because they know the address, that person can suddenly come to the house (inviting a fight).”

“Actually risky but I do it often, sharing address or phone number.”



Kidnapping

The fear of being kidnapped was mentioned fourteen (14) times in the responses to the question whether it was risky to provide personal information to strangers online and is a threat that ran throughout the interviews.

The data was further extrapolated to examine what those, who did NOT consider this behaviour to be risky, had said. Sixteen percent (16.4%)⁹ of the children said it was not risky to share personal information online with someone they had never met face-to-face. Despite saying that this activity was not risky, 16.9% said that they did not know why it was not risky. Some were aware of the risks but were prepared to hazard them nevertheless in order to achieve their goals i.e. making friends. They had the following to say:

- Don't know (14 children)
- There is no risk (9 children)
- Use it for online buying/selling (8 children)
- It is the only way to meet new people (8 children)
- They only provided the information to people they trusted (7 children)
- Risky but do it often (6 children)
- It's not dangerous because the information is public (3 children)
- It's necessary (2 children).

⁹ 83 children

“Not risky as long as we know the limits and with whom to share information.”

“Already tried and it’s okay.”

“Only sent name and address, didn’t think it was a risk.”

“If that’s what you need to do, no problem.”



Face-to-face meetings with people who were first met online

Three hundred and fifty-eight (71%) children said that it was risky to meet someone face-to-face that they first got to know online, but twenty-nine of these did not know why it was risky. Only fifty-eight percent (58%) of the children with disabilities believed this activity was risky. The overwhelming concern that the children had was that they did not know the intention of the person they were meeting and that they may have bad intentions. There was also concern that person online might not be the same as the person offline. These meetings were considered to be risky for the following reasons:

- Person may have bad intentions: n = 145 (28.6%)
- Offline/online persona might not be the same: n = 77 (15.2%)
- They were scared/suspicious of strangers: n = 53 (10.5%)
- It was dangerous/unsafe: n = 25 (4.9%)
- They may cheat or defraud them: n = 17 (3.4%)
- They may follow/ stalk them: n = 4 (0.8%)
- They may threaten the child: n = 2 (0.4%)
- Meeting could go viral: n = 1 (0.2%)
- Parents would not allow it: n = 1 (0.2%).

“Don’t know what the real person is like.”

“It could also be that the photo is not the same as the person.”

“Depends on the person – if the intention is evil, it is dangerous.”



In discussing their concerns that the person they had connected with online might have bad intentions by meeting them, the children expressed fears that they could be mugged, killed, robbed, kidnapped or raped.

Kidnapping

Concern about being kidnapped was mentioned 78 times in the responses to the question whether meeting someone face-to-face was risky.

“Can be lied to or invited to do things that are ugly, weird (sexual).”

“It could also be that the photo is not the same as the person.”

“Afraid phone will be stolen.”

“Afraid person will bring a gun.”

“Kidnapped or raped.”

“To be raped, abused by strangers you haven’t met.”



The data was then used to examine the responses of those children, a hundred and forty-nine (149) in number, who did NOT think the behaviour was risky. The responses were very enlightening in terms of how they kept safe but also reflected the fact that their desire to make friends outweighed the possible risks involved. Some of the comments made by the children also indicate a false sense of security – they think that it is not a risk to meet someone whose profile picture they have seen, for instance. An important finding is that the children do not regard a person as a stranger if they have been chatting to them online, and, therefore, it is not risky to meet this person face-to-face because they are now a friend (“Because if you met each other online, that means you already become friends”).

- Already know them from the internet (30 children)
- Opportunity to make friends (15 children)
- Fine if purpose is simply to meet (11 children)

- No risk/normal/nothing wrong (10 children)
- Don't know (10 children)
- Use it for shopping (5 children)
- Can take care of themselves (2 children).

"Do it to make friends."

"It's okay for us to meet because I already know him or her from the internet."

"Since I have already seen his profile picture, I already know."

"Because the goal is just to meet and already know from the internet."

"Because he turned out to be a good person."

"If it's good online, it's also good if you meet."

"So far, so good."

"Depends on whether you know them well or not. If you already know them, then there is no risk."

"If we think he's good, then it's not dangerous."

"I frequently meet friends through Facebook."

"The people are normal, not weird."



Some of the children elaborated in their responses and gave information on how they kept safe during these meetings. Children provided the following advice:

- It was necessary to be accompanied by someone
- It was safe to meet if the person was a girl
- Use false personal data
- It depended on the person and the place
- Make sure that the person you want to meet is safe.
- First ask questions in the chat
- Check out their online profile.

Talking to strangers online

The children were divided as to whether this activity was risky or not. Just over half of them (53%) said that talking to someone on the internet whom they had not met face-to-face was risky. The children who said this behaviour was risky provided a number of reasons for their decision and these have been categorised into four main groups. Talking to strangers online was dangerous because:

- Possible negative consequences: n = 58 (11.4%)
- Person was a stranger: n = 49 (9.7%)
- It was dangerous: n = 32 (6.3%)
- Did not know the person's intention: n = 32 (6.3%).

Most of the children were concerned about the negative consequences that could emanate from talking to someone they had never met online. Possible negative consequences could include being influenced to do negative things; abused; hacked; bullied; scammed; deceived; fraud; seduced; kidnapped; sharing of bad videos; their chats could be shared and they could be hypnotised. A surprising number of children highlighted the danger of being hypnotised online: "Fear of being hypnotised as voice messages can also be used to induce hypnosis."

The mere fact that the person was a stranger was considered to be a risk as they said they did not really know who the person was and that this person could lie about their identity.

"Don't know what the real person is like."

"Could say they are a girl but be a boy."



The children who did NOT consider chatting to strangers online as risky argued that it was not harmful because that was the accepted way to make new friends. It was normal, common and there were no risks involved. It was also mentioned that this was the normal procedure in online games where game information was shared. They provided the following reasons for saying that this behaviour was not risky:

- They just want to make friends
- They just want to get to know each other better and it is only online, not face-to-face
- It was considered normal behaviour and was common
- Normal for online gaming

- They only talk
- It's necessary for buying and selling.

"Could be a new friend."

"Typically, people who search for new friends online have never actually met."

"It's usually done when looking for new friends on the internet."

"It's normal in the deaf community."



Kidnapping & Hypnosis

Eleven children again raised the danger of being kidnapped while ten children highlighted the danger of being hypnotised online.

Even though this group said that there was no risk, their responses did, however, indicate that there was some risk involved, because the majority of the children gave advice on how to be safe: "As long as you can take care of yourself, there is no problem." Advice included the following:

- As long as it's not weird
- As long as it does not lead to sharing personal information
- Just be careful
- "Depends on the person you chatting with. If the chat starts to get weird (sexual or lying) it's dangerous"
- As long as there isn't a dispute
- "You know the limits"
- "Only talk about the game"
- "Okay if you the same age and women are not a risk"
- "Not always risky. At the beginning don't know but we communicate a bit further. Finally, we know. If the people are good, we will continue the communication. If it's not good, yes, we block it."

Talking about sexual acts on the internet

Almost ninety-one percent (91%) of the children believed that talking about sexual acts with someone on the internet was risky. Most of these children feared that negative things would emanate from this discussion. Negative things were described as: being kidnapped; brainwashed; abused; hypnotised; sexually harassed; sexual violence; blackmail and invited to do something sexual. An equal number believed that it was immoral, against religion and a taboo subject, one that was for adults and not children.

“Sexuality is not good, it’s a sin.”



A number of children pointed out that this activity could have a serious impact on children and, when asked to expand on this, explained that it could lead to the following:

- commission of sexual crimes
- damage the brain
- destroy people
- result in porn addiction
- result in curiosity so that one wants to see things related to sex
- influence others
- feelings of guilt
- bring shame
- can become a victim
- can lead to sex.

“Because by discussing this, at first I did not know, but now I know I am even more curious.” (13-year-old male)



Other reasons why children thought it was risky to discuss sexual acts with someone on the internet included:

- It could be spread, disseminated, recorded
- It was inappropriate, embarrassing, uncomfortable
- It was a private matter
- It was dangerous
- It can be reported to the police because it is breaking the law
- It was a subject not worth talking about
- It was prohibited by parents.

Two children said that they knew the behaviour was risky but did not actually know what the risks were.

Children who said that talking about sexual acts online was NOT risky, argued that there was nothing wrong with sharing knowledge and that it was usually with close friends. They also said that they were only talking and not doing anything. There were, however, some concerning responses in that twelve children (27%) admitted that they did not know what the risks were, and a few said there were no risks because nothing had happened to them yet.

Unpleasant online experiences

Forty-two percent of the children (42%) had had experiences online that bothered and upset them and made them feel uncomfortable or scared. The children were asked to share these experiences and they said that the following online activities had been unpleasant or bothersome:

- Insulted/bullied/threatened/mockered/ridiculed/slandered
- Inappropriate/rude comments/curses
- Spam and spam chat
- Inappropriate pictures, messages, videos
- Bullied about online games
- Harassed by strangers for numbers and photos
- Pop-up adverts
- Accounts hacked/hijacked

- Terrorized
- Fraud/scammed with online shopping
- Random inappropriate video calls
- Violent videos (horror, fighting, killing)
- Being blocked by people
- Being ignored online
- Blackmailed.

A number of children mentioned that they were bullied about online games. They were sworn at, threatened and forced to play by friends via messenger. One child said that they were so bullied online that they dropped out of school. Bullying took the form of being ridiculed in WhatsApp groups or having their photographs randomly edited.

“Suddenly when scrolling TikTok, porn pictures appear, even though I don’t follow these accounts.”

“Once my photo was badly commented on so I was insecure.”

“Middle-aged man who sends messages of pornographic images on Facebook.”

“A person continued to videocall at 3a.m and finally I answered the call. It was a person showing his genitals to me. Then I was shocked.”



Online Sexual Experiences

***“I was shocked at first,
but now I’m used to it.”***

The children were asked to explain their understanding of the concept of sexual messages or sexual images. A lack of certainty as to the meaning of these concepts emerged from their responses, and there was even less understanding of the term ‘sexual messages’ as many of the children stated that they were unsure what it meant. The majority of the children equated the terms with pornography, which could suggest that they would not identify other, less overt, actions as sexual. Their explanations were often vague, implying that they were unsure of the meaning. The implication is that children would need to be supplied with more information about what sexual images/messages are so that they will be able to identify them.

Online grooming often begins in a very subtle way (“you are beautiful ... you have a beautiful body”) and children need to be aware of this so that they can identify possible risky sexual messages at an early stage. The following explanations were provided by the children:

- Pornography (95 children)
- do not know (71 children)
- naked/nude/wearing no clothes (69 children)
- images of private parts, including breasts (37 children)
- adult matters (28 children)
- sexy messages or images (27 children)
- do not understand the terms, particularly ‘sexual messages’ (26 children)
- bad things or negative things (25 children)
- immodest dressing/revealing clothes/ tight clothes (21 children)
- inappropriate images (16 children)
- obscene or vulgar images (16 children)
- sexual act (10 children).

There were a lot of responses from the children that described the concepts in vague terms: weird; taboo; illegal; dating; and murder, indicating their lack of understanding.



“Contains elements of harassment.”

“Picture with shirt open.”

“Women clothed but revealing, like hijab but using tight clothes.”

“Indulgence of nakedness for the sake of likes or followers.”

“Indecent pictures like kissing.”

“Something taboo.”

Received sexual messages

- One hundred and twenty-eight children (25%) said that they had received sexual messages on their social media accounts. This number should be seen in the context of the earlier finding that some children were not sure of the meaning of the term ‘sexual messages.’
- Six children said that they had invited the messages, but the other one hundred and twenty-two had not.
- The majority of the children said that they felt shocked, annoyed and uncomfortable, while a number said that they felt indifferent and it did not bother them. Two children said that the messages made them feel happy. Responses included:

| Emotion | Number of Children |
|---------------|--------------------|
| Shocked | 25 |
| Annoyed | 23 |
| Uncomfortable | 20 |
| Afraid | 19 |
| Indifferent | 14 |
| Disgusted | 10 |

| Emotion | Number of Children |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| Unhappy | 8 |
| Confused | 5 |
| Worried | 4 |
| Disliked/hated it | 2 |
| Curious | 2 |
| Irritated | 2 |
| Happy | 2 |
| Ignored it | 1 |
| Very disappointed | 1 |
| Didn't understand | 1 |

"Wanted to cry."

"Scared after a while."

"Not good, disrupt concentration and confuse the mind."

"Immediately deleted, afraid parents would find out."



Posted sexual messages

- Five (5) children said that they had posted sexual messages via their social media accounts.
- As only 5 children admitted sending or posting sexual messages, all their responses are transcribed here. Of the 5, four were male:

| Age | Sex | To whom | Why |
|-----|----------------------|--------------------------------|--|
| 16 | M | Fellow boy/girlfriends | Curiosity and fun |
| 18 | F (Disabled - blind) | Friend just met through MiChat | "We are already in a relationship and I want to feel like dating although I have shortcomings" |
| 17 | M | Friend group | Fun – has a stock of porn stickers |
| 14 | M | Partner | Wanted to share |
| 16 | M | Friend | He made pictures and videos of his own genitals |

Sexual information requested

- Thirty-four (34) children, which comprised seven percent of the total participant group (7%), had been asked for sexual information about themselves. Three of the 34 children who responded yes had disabilities. One was asked by a friend for sexual information and the other by friends they had met on WhatsApp and MiChat.
- The children were approached for sexual information by the following people:
 - Strangers: n = 16
 - Friends (schoolmates, online friends): n = 15
 - Partner/ex-partner: n = 2
 - Family (cousin): n = 1.
- Sexual information sought from the children included the following:
 - Photographs of body parts/ breasts/genitals
 - Naked photographs
 - Bra size and colour
 - Last menstrual period
 - What they do when they date
 - Pornography, sex, adult content
 - Whether circumcised or not, then asked for photograph evidence (classmate)
 - "I was told to undress"
 - Initially asked size of clothing and shoes and then internal (private parts) measurements.
- Seven (7) of the thirty-four (34) children agreed to the requests, although four (4) said that they had not wanted to do so.
- The seven (7) who agreed to the requests experienced the following emotions:
 - Indifference (3 children)
 - Shock
 - Did not feel good
 - Were disturbed.

- The children who had NOT responded to the requests expressed the following feelings:
 - o Angry, irritated and scared
 - o Not happy
 - o Uncomfortable
 - o Disappointed (was a classmate)
 - o Annoyed/ very annoyed
 - o Fear and worry
 - o Shocked.

Unsolicited sexual information sent

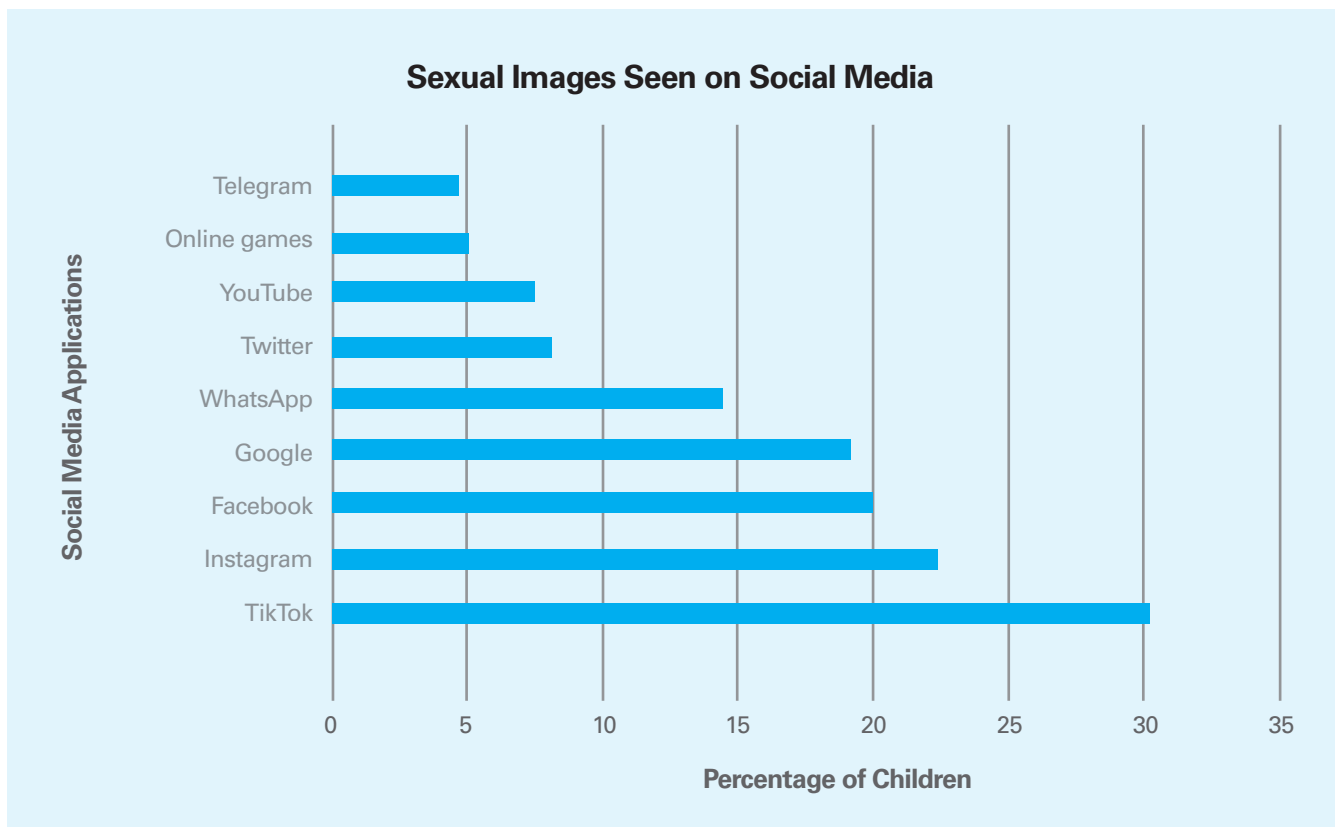
- One child, an 18-year-old male, disclosed that he had sent sexual information about himself to someone without being asked. He sent an adult video to his partner.

Sexual information requested by child

- The children were asked whether they had requested sexual information from somebody else and eight (8) children admitted that they had done so.

Sexual images seen on social media

- Half of the children (50.3%) had seen sexual images on social media.
- More than half of these children accessed sexual images on TikTok, Instagram, and Facebook.



Applications mentioned included SiMontok, Bigo Live and video chat applications.

Sexual images received on social media

- One hundred and eleven children (22%) had received sexual images on their social media accounts.
- Forty-eight (48) children said that they had received these images more than once.
- Twenty-three (23) children said they had received these images only once.
- Five (5) said they had received these images often.
- The majority of the sexual messages were sent within the last year (2022/3) with the latest being the day before the interview, a few days before and a week before.

| | |
|-------------------------------|----|
| Within the last year (2022/3) | 62 |
| Before 2022 | 39 |
| Not sure/forgot | 10 |

- The majority of sexual messages were sent by friends (49.5%)¹⁰. This included school friends, online friends, and new friends met on social media. This was closely followed by strangers (9.3%)¹¹, one of whom was described as a middle-aged man. A few children mentioned that they had received these messages from foreigners (7 children), one child specifically referring to someone from Europe. One child received it from a family member (cousin) while others received it on social media groups.

Request for photographs of private parts

- Twenty-five (4.9%) children had received requests for photographs or videos of their private parts.
- The request for photographs or videos emanated mostly from strangers (19 children). The rest were requests from friends (6 children).
- “I was asked to take a photo of my genitals” by online game friends.
- Of the twenty-five (25) children who had received requests, three (3) children sent the images but only one (1) said that they were okay with the process. The other one was forced and the third one did not actually want to send the image.

“Yes, it’s okay. I’m just curious. I’ll also ask for a photo of them later.” (13-year-old male)

“I don’t want to but I’m forced.” (16-year-old male by online friends on Bigo application)



¹⁰ 55 children

¹¹ 47 children

- The children who refused to send images of their private parts experienced a number of negative emotions, including being angry and annoyed; irritated; uncomfortable; disappointed; afraid; disturbed; cried and one “wanted to hit and punch them.”
- Those children who did send the image in response to the request felt indifferent; embarrassed; and uncomfortable and regretted it (the one who was forced).

Unsolicited photograph or video of private parts sent

- Three (3) children sent photographs or videos of their private parts to someone without being asked.
- They sent the photographs and images to their boyfriends and girlfriends.
- Two of the children said that they sent the images of their private parts because it was to their partners, and one said he sent it to a girl because he wanted to have some fun.
- Because the children chose to send the images, they did not experience any negative feelings. Two said that it made them feel happy while one said that he felt “indifferent.”

Request by child for a photograph or video of private parts

- Ten (10) of the children asked someone else to share a photograph or video of their private parts.
- The children asked their friends, partners and classmates to share photographs and/or videos of their private parts.
- All of the children, except for one, who made the request for images of private parts were male and aged between 13 and 18.
- Requests were all made to people the children knew, except for one 17-year-old male who approached strangers.
- Curiosity and fun were key reasons for requesting photos of private parts while one child thought it was a way to determine whether his partner loved him.
- Only one child expressed a negative feeling (regret) while the others were either indifferent or happy.
- The responses have been collated in the table below:

| Age | Sex | Who did you ask? | Why? | How did it make you feel? |
|---------|-----|------------------|---|---------------------------------------|
| 17-year | F | Boyfriend | Asked each other | Indifferent |
| 15-year | M | Friend | Out of curiosity | Happy |
| 16-year | M | Girlfriend | For fun | Indifferent |
| 13-year | M | Classmate | They asked for photo of his penis first | Indifferent |
| 13-year | M | Lover | He wanted to know | Happy |
| 17-year | M | Girlfriend | To show that they love him | Happy |
| 17-year | M | Strangers | Wanted to see their genitals and body | Looking for intimate relationship |
| 18-year | M | Boy friend | Just wanted to have fun | Happy because sharing with each other |
| 17-year | M | Girl friend | Likes girls | Indifferent |
| 16-year | M | Schoolmate | Curious | Regret |

Online sharing of children's sexual images

- Nine (1.8%) children said that their sexual images had been shared online.
- The sexual images were mostly shared by friends of the children. Friends included online friends, partners and schoolmates.
- The images were shared mostly on WhatsApp (5 children) followed by Instagram (2 children), Facebook (1 child) and Telegram (1 child).
- The children's responses to having their sexual images shared online were as follows:
 - o Indifferent (2 children)
 - o Uncomfortable (2 children)
 - o Shocked (2 children)
 - o Not good (1 child)
 - o "Not happy because I am shy" (1 child)
 - o No response (1 child).

- The majority of the children deleted and/or blocked the account from which it had been shared. One said that they “just left it.” Nobody mentioned reporting it or asking for assistance.

Links to pornographic websites received

- Nearly a quarter of the children (23.7%)¹² admitted to having received a link to a pornographic site.
- The majority of these children said that they had not received these links often. Only twenty-six (21.7%)¹³ children said they received them often.
- The overwhelming majority of the children received the pornographic links from their friends. The pornographic links were sent from the following:

| Pornographic Links Received From | Number of Children |
|--|--------------------|
| Friends (online, in groups and classmates) | 81 (67.5%) |
| Strangers (anonymous, unknown people) | 33 (27.5%) |
| Don't know | 3 |
| Neighbours | 2 |
| Foreigners | 1 |

- Seventy percent (70%) of the pornographic links were shared via WhatsApp, which aligns with the fact that the majority of links were sent by friends.
- The children expressed the following feelings at receiving the pornographic links:

¹² 120 children

¹³ 26 children

| Emotion | Number of Children |
|--|--------------------|
| Shocked/confused/surprised | 30 (25%) |
| Indifferent | 25 (20.8%) |
| Angry/annoyed/irritated | 24 (20%) |
| Afraid and worried (of being traced/parents finding out) | 13 (10.8%) |
| Uncomfortable | 11 (9.2%) |
| Curious | 7 |
| Sad/did not like it | 7 |
| Happy | 2 |
| Amused | 2 |
| Embarrassed | 1 |
| Regretful | 1 |
| Disgusted | 1 |
| Panicked | 1 |

"It's normal, but there's a little bit of fun." (16-year-old male)

"Confused, curious, happy."

"It is usual because I have watched it so much." (14-year-old male)

"Opened the site and was pleasantly surprised." (17-year-old male)

"At first I was curious but after a while I was scared." (18-year-old female)



- The majority of the children deleted and/or blocked the links, some ignored it and a few reported it.

| Action Taken | Number of Children |
|---------------------------------|--------------------|
| Deleted | 56 (46.7%) |
| Blocked | 25 (20.8%) |
| Ignored it | 9 (7.5%) |
| Told friends not to do it again | 5 |
| Reported it to platforms | 4 |
| Reported to parents | 1 |
| Turned off notifications | 1 |

“Immediately deleted the link and gave direct advice to my friend, don’t do that again.” (15-year-old male)

“Enjoyed the movies provided by the porn site.”



Threatened or blackmailed to engage in sexual activities

- Nine (1.8%) children said that they had been threatened or blackmailed to engage in sexual activities.
- The threats emanated from strangers (2 children); ex-lover (1 child); new social media friends (1 child); friends (1 child); teacher (1 child) and three (3) did not know.
- This activity occurred mostly on WhatsApp and Telegram.

| Age | Sex | Who did it? | On what platform? | What did they do? |
|--------------------|--------|----------------------------|----------------------|--|
| 17-year (disabled) | female | Don't know | Facebook, WhatsApp | If she does not want to have sex, her family will be humiliated |
| 15-year | female | Don't know | LitMatch , Instagram | Requested a breast photo |
| 15-year | female | Ex-lover | WhatsApp | Boyfriend said he would break up if she did not send pictures |
| 15-year | female | Stranger | Telegram | If you send a photo of your breasts, it will go viral |
| 18-year (disabled) | female | New social media friends | MiChat | Will tell her parents and teacher that she is often using MiChat |
| 14-year | female | Unknown people | Telegram | If you don't send, they will find you |
| 9-year (disabled) | male | Friend | WhatsApp | Asked to take sex photos |
| 17-year | female | Junior High School teacher | Direct | Have sex |
| 16-year | female | Stranger | Telegram | If they don't send naked pictures of themselves, they will spread shame and disgrace |

Payment to meet for sexual activity

- Thirteen (10.8%) children disclosed that they had been offered money or gifts to meet someone in person for the purpose of partaking in a sexual act. Of the thirteen children, two were children with disabilities.
- Eight (8) of the children were approached by strangers; one (1) by a family member; three (3) by friends on social media; and one (1) by a college student. The child approached by the college student was a 17-year-old male who said: “He forced me to meet them and forced me to do sexual acts like that. I said I wanted to be given the money if I did it.”
- The children had the following reactions to being offered money or gifts to meet in person to do something sexual:

| Reaction | Number of Children |
|------------------------------|--------------------|
| Refused | 4 |
| Blocked the number | 4 |
| Didn't mind | 2 |
| “Follow because I'm tempted” | 1 |
| Did it | 2 |

- Most of the children were approached on WhatsApp and Telegram.

Payment for sexual images or videos

- Eight (1.6%) children said that they had been offered money or gifts in return for sexual images or videos.
- The children said that they refused the offer; ignored it or told a parent.

Reporting online sexual experiences

Two hundred and sixty-four children (52.1%) said that they would tell someone if any of the above happened to them. Thirty-seven percent (37%) of the children said that they would not report.

“No, ashamed.”

“No, because it’s embarrassing to tell other people.”

“No, for fear of being misunderstood.”

“No, because you can deal with it on your own e.g. getting a porn link from an unknown person, will immediately block the person.”



The overwhelming majority of the children said that they would tell a parent, and more than a quarter specifically mentioned telling their mother. The next favoured person to confide in was a friend.

- Parents: 47.7% (126 children; 35 mentioned mother, 4 mentioned father)
- Friends: 13.6% (36 children)
- Family: 5.7% (15 children; sister, brothers, aunts)
- Teacher: 1.5% (4 children)
- Child Forum: 0.4% (1 child).

“Yes, to friends because they can keep a secret.”

“Yes, my mom, because it is more comfortable to talk with her.”

“Mom, because I feel close.”

“Dad, because I can be more open.”

“Because only parents can keep your confidentiality.”

“Yes, mom and dad, because they believe in protecting children.”

“If it doesn’t bother you, don’t report it.”



Of the 37% of children who said that they would not report the matter to the police, the majority acknowledged that they were too scared to do so. From the responses, it is clear that the children have very little understanding of what reporting the matter to the police involves. They expressed a number of fears related to reporting to the police and many of these were based on their misconceptions. They were afraid that they would be interrogated; that they would have to be a witness; that they would become the accused even if they did not do it; and that they would go to jail. Fear also related to possible retaliation from the perpetrator as well as fear of their parents' anger or shame. Ignorance of what would happen if they reported also contributed to their fear. Many also mentioned that they were afraid of the police themselves.

"Afraid of the police."

"Wouldn't dare."

"Because police tend to ignore it."



Another reason why children did not report was because they believed that they could deal with the matter themselves. They dealt with it in the following ways:

- Reported the application
- Blocked the person
- Reported to parents
- Deleted the message
- Ignored it
- Told friends.

The lack of knowledge of court processes was also evident in the fact that some of the children said that they could not report because they did not have enough evidence as the perpetrators use fake accounts; that they did not know the law; and that that this was not a crime ("There isn't much evidence"). Some children did not think it was serious as it was only on the phone and not face-to-face ("not threatening my life"). They considered it to be a normal part of being online. A number of children said that they did not know how to report to the police or did not know their number ("don't know the process"). They also mentioned that the reporting process was too complicated and time-consuming. The reasons for not reporting can be summarised as follows:

| Reason for Not Reporting | Number of Children |
|--------------------------|--------------------|
| Fear | 90 (37%) |
| Deal with it themselves | 80 (32.9%) |
| Don't know | 35 (14.4%) |
| Don't know how to report | 18 (7.4%) |
| Shame/embarrassment | 18 (7.4%) |
| Don't want to | 16 (6.6%) |
| It's normal/not serious | 13 (5.3%) |
| Evidentiary issues | 12 (4.9%) |

Forty-three (8.5%) children said that they were aware of other avenues that they could use to report, such as the Children's Forum and counseling guidance teachers at school.

"Don't want to prolong the problem."

"Shame because that's my personal business."

"Too much trouble."

"My parents' decision to report."

"Because for me it does not matter, as long as it does not hurt me."

"Because I have reported it to the police and got no response."

"It's ridiculous to report to police over trifles."



Why children do not report these matters

The children interviewed were asked why they thought children would not report these matters. The two main reasons given were fear (68.8%) and embarrassment (21.3%). They were scared of a wide variety of things, including: not being allowed to use their phone; not being allowed to play on the internet; unfavourable parental response; being scolded/punished or beaten by parents; afraid it will spread; afraid of being judged; afraid it will be perceived incorrectly; afraid of being blamed; afraid of being threatened or bullied; afraid of the police; and fear of their secret being exposed. Reasons for being embarrassed or ashamed included: possibility of it spreading; possibility of being shunned; family disgrace; family finding out and guilt.

The responses of the children have been included here as they provide enlightening insight into the way children think about reporting these activities and the emotions connected to that:

- Scared (349 children, 73 of whom were concerned about parents scolding or punishing them)
- Embarrassment/shame (108 children)
- Don't know (61 children)
- Because they enjoy it and it's their own private matter (10 children)
- Don't want to lose face/be considered a nerd or a baby
- Not brave enough
- Don't want the problem to escalate
- Confused
- Not close to their parents
- Don't trust others due to trauma
- Don't want to
- Happened online and not face-to-face
- Is not an issue for children – children don't care (“considered normal”)
- Don't recognise it as abusive (“Because children don't know that it's abusive”)
- Children don't disclose (“Because children are quiet and do not like to tell other people;” “choose to be silent and just ignore”).



“Because they are ashamed to talk about sexual matters.”

“Because it happened on the phone (online) and not in the real world.”

“Because children are afraid and ashamed of such things.”

“Children not confident to tell others.”

“Afraid of being threatened, afraid of being bullied and unable to tell their parents because they are not close (broken home) so they keep it to themselves.”



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Cyberbullying and Psychological Abuse

Teased by others

Two hundred and forty-one children (48%) have been teased by other children. Most of the children said that they were teased about physical attributes and disabilities. A big concern for the children was taunts about their parents, insults aimed at their parents and the mimicking of their parents' names. They were teased about:

- Being short/ugly/black or dark skin/fat/spotty/small/thin/teeth
- Hairstyles and clothing
- Taunts and insults about parents
- Physical deformities and disabilities: blind/cleft lip

- Not answering chats/ not being active on social media
- Being single
- Being stupid and unintelligent
- Losing in online games or not playing online games
- Different religion
- Not being good at sport.

“They mocked me because I was ugly and I was shunned by my school friends when I was at school.”

“Being ridiculed for being stupid and handicapped by friends.”



Embarrassed by others

One hundred and thirty-six children (26.8%) said that they had been embarrassed by someone. They had been embarrassed by being pushed and made to fall; mocked; bullied; openly humiliated; trousers pulled down in public; mimicked; parents made to be the butt of jokes; candid photos posted; humiliated in online games; shamed about things they do not have; sharing a naked photograph; and posting humiliating videos of them.

False stories spread by others

One hundred and six children (21%) said that they had had false stories spread about them. The children gave examples of the kinds of stories that were spread and these included that they had a bad attitude; slandered about a photograph of sex that was not true; said he had been crying when he was not; said they stayed out all night; said they hit someone first when they did not; saying they had stolen something; spreading stories that their family origins were not clear; accused of smoking or watching pornography; that they had had sex with a friend and a lot of bad gossip.

Blocked from groups

One hundred and thirty-one children (26%) have been blocked or deleted from groups. The reasons for this were varied and ranged from fights to simply no longer communicating with a person. Some of the reasons provided by the children included the following:

- Had an argument
- Misunderstanding problem with friends; friendship conflict
- Because they don't like me
- Kicked out of the prayer group
- Not active on group, then out; didn't reply to a chat
- Because they sent too many WhatsApp messages too often
- For not commenting; rarely active online
- Don't know; suddenly for no reason
- For not immediately getting into the game group
- Personal issues
- Misunderstanding when dating and blocked
- Different opinions
- Game lost
- For often disturbing other people in the group; sending funny stickers.

Received nasty or scary messages

Ninety-five children (19%) had received nasty and scary messages online. These varied from horror and ghost messages to bullying and sexual harassment. They shared the following instances:

| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| Ghost related messages | Ghost messages Pictures of ghosts Ghost chats Ghost voicemail Person's profile has ghost image and then they call |
| Horror | Horror movies Horror spam Photos of being stabbed |
| Sexual messages | Messages with pornographical images Links to adult sites by strangers Sexual stickers Asked for photographs of privates Forced to perform sexual acts |
| Threats | Sent murder messages Threats to fight with them or beat them up Threatened with death by unknown person Threatened to trace them to their home Threats to meet Terrorised to play games online |
| Viruses | |
| Harassed and bullied | Called by unknown people repeatedly Messages with rude words |
| Fraud and hoax messages | |
| Humiliation | Friends reveal secrets on WhatsApp Mocked Body shamed Sharing embarrassing photographs |
| Insulting family | |

"When I did not want to do something that was not good, such as having sexual activity with someone, I was threatened."



Children's responses to unpleasant online experiences

Most of the children said that they simply ignored the messages, blocked them or told their parents. Other methods of responding included:

- Responding, sometimes with rude messages in retaliation or warned them to stop
- Telling a close friend
- Reporting to a teacher
- Using the phone more carefully
- Refusing the requests and dodging or avoiding them
- Leaving the group
- Limiting comments
- Increasing privacy settings on their phones
- Limiting internet usage
- Trying to reduce curiosity
- Changing accounts.

"Just let it go because it's not so bad."

"As long as it does not bother you, just ignore it."

"If there is sexual harassment, in my opinion, it should only be notified to the closest relatives."

"As long as it's still reasonable, it's still normal. If it's too much, I'll report it to my parents."



The children identified a wide range of emotions that they experienced as a result of the unpleasant incidences they had suffered online, but there were two particularly interesting comments, which were echoed in a number of the earlier responses. Many of the children described becoming resigned to the cyberbullying while others described their reactions online as indifferent. There is a need for further research in the area of the impact of online on mental health and how this differs from offline.

- “Initially angry, after a while you get used to it.”
- “If online do not feel anything, if offline angry.”

Again here, the majority of the children described themselves as feeling indifferent to negative things online and regarded them as normal. The strongest emotion experienced was anger, followed by fear. The emotions identified were as follows:

- Normal/ indifferent (78 children)
- Anger/annoyance (52 children)
- Fear/afraid (45 children)
- Sad (23 children)
- Upset/did not like it (17 children)
- Uncomfortable (15 children)
- Embarrassed (10 children)
- Offended (7 children)
- Confused (6 children)
- Shocked (6 children)
- Shame (3 children)
- Strange (3 children)
- Disappointed (2 children)
- Felt inferior (1 child)
- Messed up (1 child)
- Restless (1 child)
- Disgusted (1 child)
- Worried (1 child).

Unpleasant or bullying behaviour by children

Although the children complained about the unpleasant experiences they had endured online and gave information about the negative impact on their lives, forty-four (8.7%) of the children admitted to having performed the same actions on others.

Of the 44 who admitted that they had done the above activities to others, almost all of them (with the exception of five), said they had done it towards friends. They categorised the different friends as follows:

| Victims | Number |
|-------------------|--------|
| Friends generally | 29 |
| Friends on groups | 2 |
| Classmates | 6 |
| Game friends | 1 |
| Boyfriend | 1 |

When asked for information about what they had done, the children confessed to performing a number of negative activities online, but most of them said that they had performed these actions as a joke or in retaliation to receiving the same. They confessed to:

- Joking and annoying friends
- Sending scary messages
- Teasing
- Sending/sharing of ugly or embarrassing photographs
- Threatening or mocking back
- Calling parents names and making fun of friends in retaliation
- Removing people from WhatsApp groups
- Bullying posts.

“Change to scary profile and then call.”

“Making friends jealous by sharing their ugly photos on WhatsApp status.”

“Usually just mock back.”

“Doing the same thing, calling his parents names too.”



Twenty-seven (27) of the forty-four (44) children said that they performed these actions in retaliation and to get revenge because the other party did it first. Eleven (11) also admitted doing it as a joke or to tease.

Topics covered in online education

Thirty-seven percent (37%) of the children said that they had received some form of information or education about keeping safe online, most of which they received from online searches, their parents or teachers.

In this section of the interview the children were asked for more details about the content of the information they had received. The following topics were identified:

- How to use social media properly
- How to maintain security online and on social media
- How to keep account private and use passwords
- Negative and positive impacts of the internet
- Dangerous applications/sites on the internet
- Correct way of communicating on social media
- Safe ways to surf on the internet
- Implications of excessive use and phone addiction
- How to block content
- Positive game play
- Negative internet behaviour
- What photos to post/share
- VPNs
- Making and meeting friends on the internet
- What content should be viewed
- How to avoid online violence
- How not to be cheated online
- Not to watch porn sites.

Almost ninety-nine percent (98.4%) of the children said that they found the information very useful, but this is understandable because it was specific information that they went in search of, which was obviously different for the different children.

Further information required

As in earlier questions, a primary focus of the children was related to their concerns of being hacked and it was an area that many children requested further information about. Many children simply wanted more information on how to use their devices and to improve their skills, as in learning how to develop a website. One child said that they did not know what information they needed to have because their knowledge of the internet was limited (“Don’t know because knowledge about the internet is limited”). In addition, the children wanted more detailed information about topics like avoiding pornography, the dangers of pornography, managing their time online and how to understand online addiction.

| Topics for Online Education | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Security | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to make strong passwords • How to change passwords • Privacy settings • How to maintain privacy when opening the internet • How to lock an account • How to block content • How to erase digital footprints/digital traces • How to block advertisements • How to protect photos on Google Drive • How to use a VPN and be secure • Cell phone control applications • How to strengthen social media privacy |
| General device information | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to create a Google account • How to clean trash on account • How to deactivate notifications on the account • How to restore an account that has been hacked |
| Online protection | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to use the internet safely • How to report content or negative people online • How to detect bad people • What are online dangers • How to avoid porn sites • How to identify safe links • Safe way to interact with social media • How to distinguish between good and bad videos • How to block a website that is not safe • How to avoid being hacked • How to protect oneself against fraud • How to keep safe from harassment online • How to protect against hoaxes and fake news • How to stop adult advertisements • How to safely find friends online |

| Topics for Online Education | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Online behaviour | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to chat politely with others • What should be accessed by children • How to maintain a healthy internet • How to use the internet without becoming addicted • What is the impact on children of excessive use • What is good content for children • Rules for playing games • How to avoid promiscuity on social media • What to post • Dangers of pornography • How to prevent hate speech |
| Further skills development | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to create website • How to become a game developer and YouTuber • Best ways to use applications |
| Online shopping | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to shop safely |
| Online gaming | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to keep safe in online gaming • Game ethics • Game addiction |
| Cyberbullying | |
| Online sexual harassment | |
| Social media mental health | |

How should this online information be presented

Sixty-nine percent (69%) of the children thought that online safety education should be taught at school and seventy-four percent (74%) of those believed it should be a life skills subject. Others said it could be presented during guidance counseling hours or online, especially for those who were not at school. Some suggested that it could be presented as an extra-curricular activity or during specific sessions during or after school. Emphasis was placed on direct face-to-face meetings where they indicated that they wanted youth activities in workshop format where they could ask questions and share with each other. Social media, webinars and posters were also suggested as vehicles for conveying information.

Many of the comments made by the children focused on the methods of presentation, namely that the presentations should be interesting and creative so that students were not bored. The following suggestions regarding format were made:

- Content must be interesting and easy to understand
- It should include videos and posters
- Use should be made of tutorials
- Lots of examples must be used
- It must include group activities
- There must be time for questions and answers
- Invite external sources with knowledge and expertise to address children
- It must include materials
- It must be free.

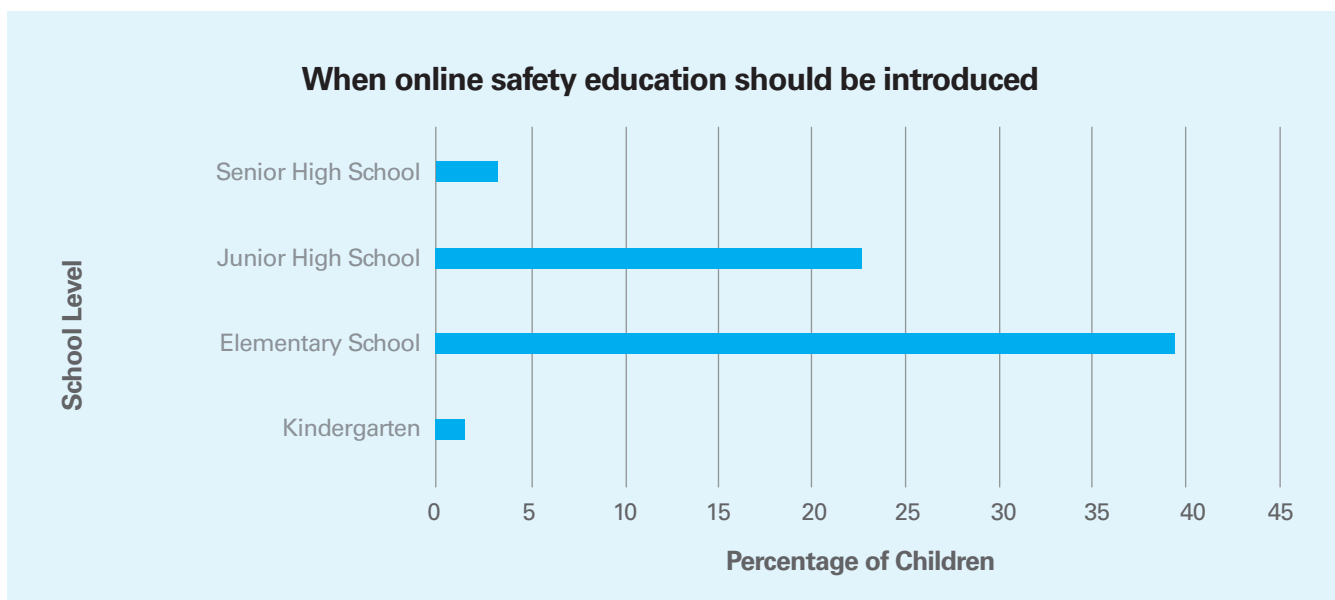
“It must be free, the important thing is to convey it and make it understandable, then for me, who doesn’t go to school, it can be given in youth activities.”

“Presented in as attractive way as possible, so children will follow the internet activities and be healthy and safe.”

“Must be delivered creatively so as not to be boring.”



The majority of responses favoured the introduction of online safety to be at elementary level and grade 1 received the most votes. Forty-five (8.9%) children specifically identified grade 1, which was double the amount of votes any other grade received.



Difficulties with presenting at schools

Most of the children were of the opinion that there would be no difficulties at all in presenting online safety education at schools as this information was very useful for the children. The rest of the children suggested possible difficulties, the three main areas of concern being that the content might be too technical and complicated for the children to understand; that the teachers might not be competent to present this information; and that there might not be adequate time available at school. A number of the children did not believe that their teachers were competent to present on the topics as some of the topics require special expertise (“Teachers must also understand the internet so that they can convey the information”) and the teachers may not agree with the content. Also, materials needed to be compatible for children with disabilities.

Two hundred and seventy-nine (55%) children were of the opinion that this information would be used since children almost all used their cell phones to access the internet. However, there was concern that some might not use the information provided because they did not

understand the content presented to them or that it had been boring and was not interactive enough. The children may not think the advice is important or they may just not want to use it since they may still be curious despite the information.

“Children are stubborn.”

“Because children are always curious about new things.”



Interviews with Parents

“The world of the children is the world of their phones.”

Demographics

- Five hundred and nine (509) parents and caregivers were interviewed and they ranged in age from twenty-one (21) to seventy (70). The average age was forty-two (42).
- The majority of the parents and caregivers (76%) who participated in the study were between the ages of thirty-one (31) and fifty (50).
- The adults were fairly evenly distributed in terms of gender with 50.7% female and 49.3% male.
- The average number of children per parent was 2.3.
- Half of the parents/caregivers (49.5%) came from Central Java; 29.7% came from East Java; and 20.8% came from South Sulawesi.

Age Categories

| Ages | No. of Parents |
|---------|----------------|
| 21 - 30 | 33 |
| 31 - 40 | 190 |
| 41 - 50 | 198 |
| 51 - 60 | 76 |



Parent Internet Usage and Activity

“Children in the present era already live internet-based lifestyles.”

Parents and caregivers in Indonesia are also avid users of the internet and this aligns with the statistics on online usage in Indonesia. In the 2022/3 period, approximately 216 million people were accessing the internet in Indonesia, making Indonesia one of the biggest online markets worldwide.¹⁴ And since parents spend an average of 5.3 hours a day online, the internet is clearly an integral part of their lives and is the space where they conduct business, develop friendships and communicate with their children. Most parents (98.2%) use their cell phones to access the internet.

¹⁴ Internet Service Providers Association (APJII) accessed at <https://indonesiabaik.id/infografis/orang-indonesia-makin-melek-internet>. The number of internet users is equivalent to 78.2% of Indonesia's total population.

At what age were your children allowed to go online?

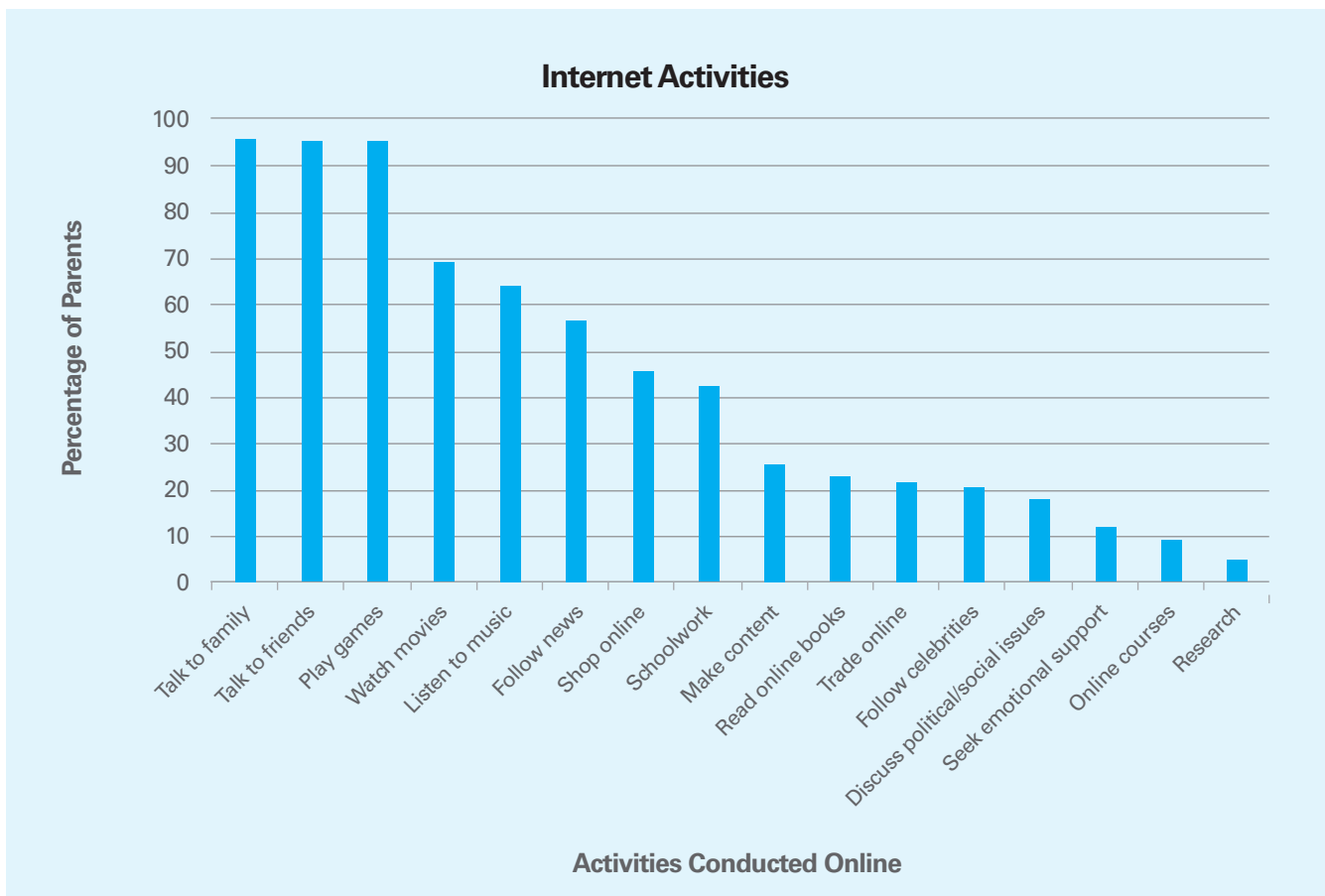
- Thirty-two percent (32%) of the parents allowed their children to go online when they were between the ages of 11 and 14.
- Twenty-three percent (23%) of the parents allowed their children to go online between the ages of 5 and 8.
- Nine parents (1.8%) allowed their children to go online from the age of 2 or younger.

Internet usage

- As mentioned, 98.4% of parents use the internet.
- The demographics of the 8 parents who did not use the internet are as follows:
 - o 5 males between the ages of 43 and 62
 - o 3 females between the ages of 50 and 58
 - o Except for the 1 male (aged 43) all the other parents/caregivers were 50 years or older.

Internet activities

- The three top activities online for parents were talking to family, talking to friends and playing games.
- Other activities undertaken by parents online included the following:
 - o Hobbies: n = 253 (50.5%)
 - o Career/job opportunities: n = 207 (41.3%)
 - o Medical information: n = 173 (34.5%)
 - o Further education opportunities: n = 124 (24.8%).



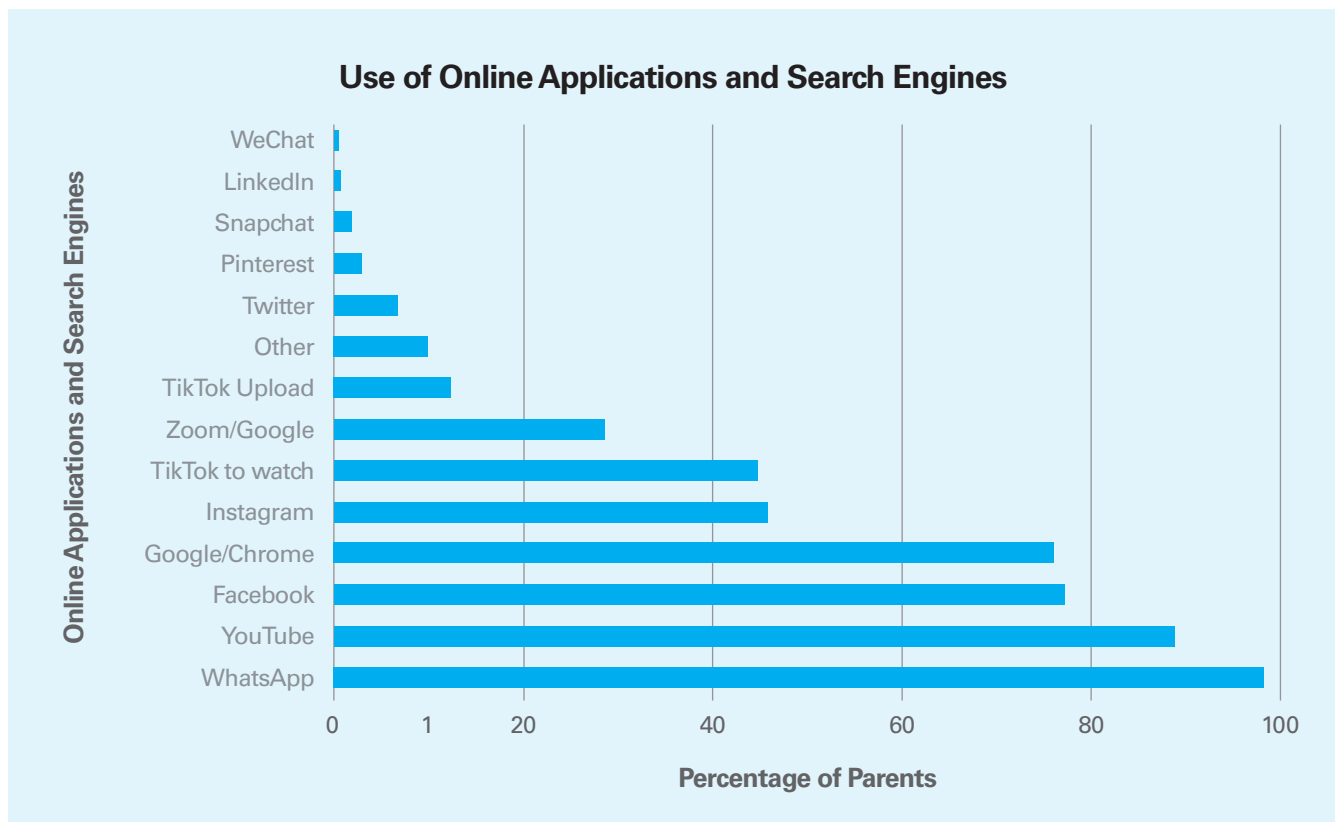
The use of virtual private networks (VPNs)

- Only eight percent (8%) of the parents used a VPN as opposed to the nearly fourteen percent (14%) of children who were using them.
- Those who used VPNS did so for the following reasons:
 - o For safety reasons, especially for social media security
 - o To access servers from abroad
 - o Necessary for work
 - o To open blocked sites
 - o For applications that require a VPN
 - o To access job applications
 - o Just in case it is needed
 - o Just a trend.

- Those who did not use VPNs provided the following reasons for not doing so:
 - Have not heard of it
 - Don't know what it is
 - Don't understand it
 - Don't need it
 - It's dangerous and afraid of being influenced by negative things
 - Uses too much data.

Use of online applications and search engines

- WhatsApp, YouTube and Facebook were the most popular applications for parents. Parents enjoyed Facebook more than the children but were less interested than the children in Instagram and TikTok to Watch.
- Facebook was by far the favourite with ninety-six percent (96.2%) of the parents preferring this application.
- The second favourite, YouTube, was used by sixty-seven percent (67.1%) of the parents.
- The use of online applications and search engines is reflected in the table below.



Child Internet Usage

***“They can do anything on the internet.
The world is in their hands.”***

Parents provided a wide variety of reasons why they believed that children like the internet. The primary reason, they believed, was for entertainment and secondly to find information or for study purposes.

Why do parents think children like the Internet so much

- It provides entertainment
 - o Entertainment included videos, games, and different applications.
 - o The internet was fun, filled children’s free time and was useful when they got bored outside.

“Because there are many videos to watch and online games to play, it serves as entertainment.”

“Because parents are busy working, so children need entertainment.”



- It’s the digital era
 - o Everything is now online and children now live internet-based lives. If they do not adapt to this they will be left behind.

“Children in the present era already live internet-based lifestyles.”
“Children adapt to increasingly sophisticated technological development.”

“If you don’t follow the development of the era, you will be left behind.”



- Children use the internet to find information and for study purposes
 - o The internet has opened up the world to children and they used it to access information, for their school projects and it enabled younger children to learn to read and do sums. It also made studying easier.
 - o The internet was varied and interesting and the children could learn about anything they wanted.

“Because they can see the world without limit.”

“Because the virtual world is more interesting.”

“It’s a window to the world.”

“From the internet children know the world, children become more creative.”



- It makes communication easy.
- They make friends/ follow friends.
- They are addicted to entertainment.
- The internet is easy to access.
- Children stay home and don’t roam.

“Instead of going to play in an obscure place, they watch interesting videos.”

“Instead of playing outside the house, it’s better just to stay home and be entertained.”



- Children will become depressed without the internet.

“Because of children’s current lifestyles (games and reading novels), if there is no internet, they will become depressed.”



- Children are influenced by their friends and they do not want to be left out
 - Cool kids play on the internet, so children also want to be cool
 - Parents were concerned that their children would be left out or isolated if they did not know or follow the trends.

“Because his friends are playing, afraid that the child will feel left out.”



- Follow their idols.
- Imitate their parents because the parents are always on their cell phones.
- Children are naturally curious about the outside world.
- It makes children happy.

“It makes the children feel happy and it has become a necessity.”

“Children cannot be separated from cell phones.”



- Children shop online.
- The internet reduces boredom.

“Because there were no other activities at home, in the end they just played on their cell phones.”



- They can access negative content.

“Anything that is prohibited is sure to please children.”



- Children follow the news.
- They find out information about their hobbies.
- Parents do not have parenting skills.

“Because they are left to do so by parents who do not have parenting skills.”



The opportunities and benefits of online for children

Education was identified as the key benefit of online for children and far outweighed any of the other opportunities or benefits. Seventy-eight percent (77.6%) of the parents regarded this as an important benefit. The following opportunities and benefits for children were identified by parents:

- It provided education and the opportunity to find information (n = 395)
 - o It was easy to find information on the internet; there were simple online lessons that assisted children and it was very useful for assignments.
 - o There was no need to buy physical books anymore.
 - o Children were given an opportunity to start studying at a younger age.
 - o The internet was very helpful for parents who were assisting their children with assignments and schoolwork.
 - o Being online improved the child’s language ability and increased their vocabulary.

“A lot of information can be obtained because the internet is their window to the world.”

“The child’s language becomes more fluent and increases vocabulary.”



- Children are provided with a vehicle for communication and they are able to stay in contact with friends, family and teachers, including family who live far away. Parents

also found that it was much quicker and easier to contact their children. More than three-quarters of the parents (76.4%) believed that it was easier to stay in contact with their children.

- It broadens horizons for children as it equips children for the digital age, giving them greater insight and contributing to increased creativity as well as affording them an opportunity to access current news from around the world. They are able to learn new skills, like cooking and even a foreign language.

“Get to know about the outside world and study new things.”

“To develop potential and hobbies.”

“More wide-open knowledge without space and time limits.”

“Develops unlocked talents; become content creators.”



- It provides them with entertainment and relaxation.
- It offers an opportunity to make friends and socialise.
- It is easier to find work, trade and shop. It enables children to earn an income and open an online store.
- It keeps children at home.

Ten (10) of the parents were of the opinion that the internet offered no benefit for children as there were too many adult sites and unknown people. They believed that children should not be allowed access to cell phones.

“There are no good things, because mostly, in my opinion, when playing cell phones there are only bad things.”



Rules and monitoring of online activity

Eighty-six percent (86.2%) of the parents said that they had rules or limitations in place regarding their children's online usage. When questioned about what rules they imposed, the vast majority of parents only had rules that focused on limiting the time the children spent online. The only other rule that achieved statistical validity related to the applications and sites that the children were not allowed to open.

- Limitations on time
 - Seventy-three percent (72.7%) of the parents (n = 370) had rules in place that limited the amount of time children could spend online.
 - The rules relating to time varied vastly. Some children could only use their phones over weekends; until sunset; until 10pm; after homework or prayers were completed.
- Restrictions on accessing certain sites or applications
 - Eleven percent (11%) of the parents (n = 56) imposed these restrictions.
 - Restrictions related to adult sites and age-inappropriate sites.
- Parents mentioned other restrictions that they had in place, but the number of parents applying these restrictions was very low:
 - Two parents did not allow their children to have cell phones – this response was elicited from a parent of two children under the age of five
 - One parent checked the child's cell phone
 - Three parents did not allow their children to have Facebook and TikTok

Older VS Younger Children

Parents noted a difference in online activities between older children and younger children.

- Older children use it for school activities and younger ones for games
- Children become more curious as they get older
- Older children are more critical when accessing the internet
- Older children have a wider range of activities
- Older children look for friends online
- Older children use social media
- Younger children have much more restrictions imposed on their online activities

- o Five parents did not allow their children to have a password or had to be informed of the password
- o Nine parents only allowed their children to use the internet for certain purposes, i.e. schoolwork and talking to friends
- o Five parents insisted that their children use the internet positively.

Do their children obey these rules?

- Fifty-nine percent (59%) of the parents said that their children obeyed these rules. Only 2.1% said that their children did not obey the rules, while the rest obeyed them most of the time or sometimes.
- Parents were of the opinion that the rule most broken was the one relating to time. The children exceeded their time allocations or spent too much time playing.
- The following reasons for disobeying rules were provided:
 - o Time restrictions (n = 132)
 - o Using the phone when they are not allowed to (n = 18)
 - o Improper use of the phone (n = 11) – this included accessing TikTok for videos; playing games they are not allowed to; playing games when they are supposed to work; and watching videos when they are supposed to be studying
 - o Accessing prohibited sites (n = 1).

“Children are addicted to playing with cell phones and if they are taken away from them, they become angry.”

“Breaking time restrictions while parents sleep.”

“When it is time to sleep at night, the child takes the cell phone and surfs the internet.”

“If they can’t play cell phones, they go to their friends to play.”



| | Yes | No |
|--|-------|-------|
| Are children allowed to have personal accounts on social media | 64,6% | 35.4% |
| Are parents friends with children on social media | 53,8% | 46.2% |
| Do parents always know what their children are doing online | 69,9% | 30.1% |
| Do their children spend too much time online | 45,8% | 54.2% |
| Do their children discuss online activity with them | 43,8% | 56.2% |

Children's online activity

Parents were asked to identify what their children do online most of the time. Entertainment was again identified as the activity that children used the internet for the most, followed by studying and schoolwork. Parents did not rate communicating with friends very high on the list of activities, yet this was identified as one of the top online activities by the children themselves. The responses are reflected in the table below:

| Children's Online Activities as Identified by Parents | Number of Parents | Percentages |
|---|-------------------|-------------|
| Watching movies and videos | 286 | 56.2 |
| Playing games | 239 | 47 |
| Learning and school activities | 103 | 20.2 |
| Social media | 93 | 18.3 |
| Communication with friends and family | 30 | 5.9 |
| Browsing | 18 | 3.5 |
| Shopping/ selling/ buying online | 14 | 2.8 |
| Editing photos/videos online | 12 | 2.4 |
| Don't know | 10 | 2 |
| Creative content/hobbies | 9 | 1.8 |
| Entertainment | 8 | 1.6 |
| Read novels/comics online | 6 | 1.2 |
| Work | 3 | 0.6 |

*“Don’t know, it’s up to the child to open anything.” –
42-year-old female with one child under 5*



Where do children go online

Seventy percent (70%) of parents said that their children went online in the same room as the parent. Those who did not go online in the same room as their parents went online in their bedroom, at a friend’s house, elsewhere in the house, at school or in a public place.

| Location | Number of Parents |
|----------------------------------|-------------------|
| Bedroom | 87 |
| Elsewhere in the house | 26 |
| At a friend’s house | 23 |
| At school/boarding school | 15 |
| Another house (family/neighbour) | 12 |
| Public places (cafes, stalls) | 7 |
| Workplace | 4 |
| When parents at work | 3 |
| Tidak tahu | 10 |

Who is more knowledgeable about the internet: children or parents

Sixty percent (60.3%) of the parents said that they believed that their children were more knowledgeable about the internet than they were and provided the following reasons for this belief:

- Parents do not have the time to learn new things
- Children nowadays are smarter and more sophisticated
- Parents only use the internet for work
- Children are more curious to find out things

- Children lead the way with social media
- Children understand more easily
- They learn about it at school and from their friends
- Children use it more often
- Parents are not good with technology – children adapt easily
- Children have accessed the internet from very young whereas there were no cell phones when parents were at school
- Parents often learn from the children
- Children try new things online
- Children are more intense about using cell phones.

“He teaches me more and he knows better.”

“The internet has become the world of children now.”



The forty percent (39.7%) of parents who believed that they were more knowledgeable than their children provided the following reasons for their opinion:

- They monitor the child’s online activity
- Their jobs involve using the internet
- They have a greater understanding of the internet
- They have more experience because they have used the internet for a long time
- They taught the child to use the internet
- They assist the child with their online activities.

Time spent online by children

Parents were asked to give an indication of how much time their children spent online each day.

| Time | Number of Parents |
|--------------------|-------------------|
| Less than an hour | 30.8% |
| 1 – 2 hours | 48.1% |
| 3 – 6 hours | 10% |
| 7 – 10 hours | 8.3% |
| More than 10 hours | 2.8% |

Internet Safety

“Damaging their eyes, damaging their souls.”

Just over half (53%) of the parents interviewed felt safe online. Most of them said they feel safe because they do not use the internet too much, have passwords and have never experienced anything negative. A number of the reasons forwarded for feeling safe were naïve and perhaps reflect a lack of understanding of the risks that exist online.

Why do parents feel safe online

- Parents gave the following reasons for feeling safe on the internet:
 - They only used the internet work
 - They had enough knowledge about the internet
 - They only opened ordinary applications and safe sites
 - They only used WhatsApp and YouTube
 - They have not experienced anything strange or suspicious
 - They have never been hacked
 - They have never come across a crime on the internet

- o They always block negative content
- o They can control the pop-ups that appear on the internet
- o They rarely use the internet
- o They only chat with family and friends
- o They don't contact unknown persons and avoid unknown numbers
- o They have a password/keep changing the password
- o They use a 2-step verification
- o They are not aware of the dangers on the internet
- o They have only experienced courtesy on the internet
- o They only use it for entertainment
- o They always activate a VPN
- o They can report if anything inappropriate happens
- o They install filter applications and filter contents
- o They block strange and suspicious accounts, including adult content and advertisements.

"As long as you never open anything strange, it is safe."

"There is a data encryption feature on WhatsApp so it feels safe."

"Have been on social media for a long time and it is safe."



Dangers on the internet

Although eighty-nine percent (89.2%) of the parents believed that there were dangers on the internet, most of them were not able to provide information about what the dangers were, as can be seen from the table below. Parents were mostly concerned about adult content on the internet and the fact that it was easy for fraud to be perpetrated.

| Dangers on the Internet | Number of Parents |
|--|-------------------|
| Adult content that pops up (porn and violence) | 131 |
| Fraud | 107 |
| Privacy can be invaded/hacked/data stolen | 51 |
| Health hazards (eye health, radiation) | 41 |
| Negative content (radicalism, blasphemy, racism and hate speech) | 38 |
| <i>Internet addiction</i> | 27 |
| Hoax news | 26 |
| Violence (violent movies and games) | 20 |
| Suspicious or dangerous sites and links | 17 |
| Impact on children's behaviour | 13 |
| Communication from unknown persons | 11 |
| Meet bad friends and dangerous strangers | 11 |
| Gambling | 9 |
| Trends | 4 |
| Online games | 4 |
| Child exploitation | 4 |
| Commenting on posts | 2 |
| Meeting strangers online | 2 |

Other dangers mentioned included harassment, child kidnapping, online hypnosis, spam, personal photo abusers, creating content that is against regulations/laws, buying and selling illegal goods and spending too much time online and not face-to-face.

Information on how to be safe online

Only thirty-three percent (32.8%) of parents had received information on how to be safe online. Information was acquired from various sources in an ad hoc manner, whether by chance in television advertisements or from friends. Most of the information was gained from social media, either in WhatsApp groups or from posts on Facebook, YouTube, TikTok and Instagram. Some obtained information from family, friends or their own children. Generally information was received informally from chatting to people. One parent said they had received advice from the village midwife when they were being vaccinated.

Parents said that they had received information on the following topics:

- How to keep data private
- Tips on healthy internet behaviour
- Security on WhatsApp and social media
- How to block people and accounts
- How to protect children online
- How to filter content
- Safe surfing – how to identify safe websites and confirm hoax news
- Dangers of social media
- Dangers of online gambling
- How to use a VPN
- How to report negative links
- How to download and upload content
- How to manage time on the internet
- Dangers of internet addiction
- Child abduction information
- Health Implications
- How to monitor children on their phones
- Dangers of online games.

Assisting children online

Only forty percent (39.9%) of the parents believed that they had enough knowledge about online to help their child. Parents performed a number of activities to assist children to be safe online, ranging from not allowing them to have a cell phone to checking their phones or accompanying them online. They provided advice and imposed restrictions to ensure that their children were safe. The following are some of the activities performed by parents:

- Don't let them have their own phone
- Accompany the child when they go online
- Monitor their cell phone usage
- Check their history and/or their WhatsApp accounts
- Perform sporadic checks on their phone
- Impose restrictions:
 - Limit time
 - Limit applications
 - Limit online friendships.
- Give advice/tips
 - Show children how to access content specifically for children
 - Direct them towards positive content
 - Explain stranger danger
 - How to use settings on social media
 - How to avoid adult content.
- Communicate with children and chat about the impact of the internet.

Parents' capacity for online safety

If parents are to assist children to be safe online, it was necessary to find out what the capacity of parents was in this regard. They were questioned about their ability to perform certain online tasks and the results show that less than half know how to block content and only a fifth know how to report negative content online and even less know how to check whether a website can be trusted.

| Online safety tasks | Number of parents able to perform task | |
|--|--|-------|
| Online searches | 376 | 73.9% |
| Use passwords | 372 | 73.1% |
| Join social media and set up a profile | 364 | 71.5% |
| Block people | 324 | 63.7% |
| Post videos you have made | 281 | 55.2% |
| Change your privacy settings | 277 | 54.4% |
| Block content | 204 | 40.1% |
| Deactivate the function showing location | 180 | 35.4% |
| Report negative content online | 105 | 20.6% |
| Check whether a website can be trusted | 85 | 16.7% |
| Know how to design a website | 11 | 2.2% |

Sharing pictures or stories of their children online

Sixty percent (60.1%) of the parents shared photos and stories of their children online. The majority of parents shared pictures and stories of their children on WhatsApp (73.1%), followed by Facebook (43.1%) and then Instagram (16.7%).

How parents keep their children safe online

There were 5 key methods used to keep children safe online: monitoring their online activities; accompanying them online; giving advice; checking their phones and limiting the amount of time they spent online. Monitoring their online activity was the most popular choice, although the methods of monitoring were rather vague and included "Every now and then asking what is done while online." The following methods of keeping children safe online were identified:

- Monitoring online activities, which included asking them about their online activities, following their posts and keeping an eye on their statuses. Monitoring also included checking the cell phone history.
- Accompanying them when they went online, especially in the case of younger children. Older siblings were often used to accompany and monitor younger children.
- Providing advice

- o not to trust strangers
- o what content should not be opened
- o not to make weird videos
- o to be careful about meeting people online
- o not to have too many friends
- o not to open negative things
- o the kinds of photos that can be uploaded
- o to keep their status modest.
- Imposing restrictions on:
 - o content accessed as well as content posted
 - o amount of time spent online
 - o adult content
 - o friendships
 - o data
 - o cannot access anything new online without permission
 - o can only communicate with family.
- Ensuring that there is good communication with the child.
- Providing religious knowledge to ensure good morals.
- Ensure privacy settings are activated.
- Activate safe browsing mode.
- Blur faces when posting photographs.
- Lock dangerous applications.

A number of the parents said that they did not know how to monitor or accompany their children online.

“Don’t know. Just reprimand.”

“Don’t know how to accompany him.”

“Don’t know how to keep them safe.”



Monitoring children's online activities

Seventy-eight percent (78%) of the parents said that they monitor their children's online behaviour. Monitoring ranged from checking cell phones to casual observations and waiting for the child to raise the subject. Parents monitored their children's activities in the following ways:

- Active monitoring of online activities
 - Checking the cell phones
 - Checking their search history
 - Checking their YouTube history, TikTok history
 - Check all their posts
 - Checking who they are chatting to
 - Use parent applications to monitor
 - Every now and then observing their activities online
 - Accompanying the child when they are on the phone
 - Sharing a phone with the child.
- Imposing rules on online activities
 - Not allowing passwords
 - Limiting time online
 - Limiting data
 - Prohibiting them from using the phone outside of the house.
- Communicating with the child
 - Communicating with the child, discussing their online activities and asking them questions
 - "By always building communication with children to be open"
 - Directing them to positive things online.
- Waiting for the child to introduce the topic.
- Using security features on the phone.
- Giving advice.
- Providing children with knowledge and religion.

Eighty-six percent (85.9%) of the parents said that their children were aware that they were being monitored. Fourteen percent (14.1%) of parents monitored their children’s online behaviour secretly. The vast majority (62.2%) said that their children were quite indifferent to being monitored and regarded it as normal. It was accepted as a rule and because the rule had been in place for so long, they were used to it. A small number were angry, complained and sulked or were shy and uncomfortable.

Prohibited online activities

Eighty-four percent (83.7%) of parents prohibited their children from performing certain activities online. Parents provided a long list of activities that children were not allowed to perform online, but the most prominent was the viewing of adult sites or pornography, which was mentioned three times more than any of the other activities. The main focus of prohibited activities related to content, including inappropriate content and violence. There was almost no focus on sending photographs to strangers, accessing the Dark Web, and posting information about identity. Prohibited activities included:

| Prohibited Activities | Number of Parents |
|---|-------------------|
| Accessing pornographic images or videos/adult sites | 181 (42.5%) |
| Accessing negative sites/content | 63 (14.8%) |
| Accessing videos with violence | 29 |
| Spending too much time on their cell phones | 41 |
| Content that is inappropriate (like videos of someone giving birth) | 22 |
| Playing online games for too long | 13 |
| Making statuses or posts that are inappropriate or would upset others | 13 |
| Playing online games | 12 |
| Shopping online without permission | 11 |
| Watching TikTok videos | 11 |
| Communicating with the opposite sex | 7 |
| Opening strange/unknown sites | 6 |
| Making friends with or talking to strangers | 6 |
| Any videos/images or movies with inappropriate clothing | 5 |
| Anything with dirty or ugly talking | 5 |
| Having Facebook, MiChat or Twitter accounts | 5 |

| Prohibited Activities | Number of Parents |
|--|-------------------|
| Posting photographs without the hijab | 5 |
| Accessing social media | 4 |
| Commenting on posts | 4 |
| Giving information about personal identity | 4 |
| Making or spreading hoax news | 3 |
| Sending photographs to strangers | 3 |
| Going on to the Dark Web | 3 |
| Reading adult novels | 2 |
| Anything against the law | 2 |
| Excessive use of social media | 2 |
| Accessing extremist or radical sites | 2 |
| Using a VPN | 1 |

Sixteen percent (16%) of the parents said that they did not prohibit their children from doing anything online. They provided a number of reasons for so doing, but many of the reasons given raise concern as they are based on the belief that the children themselves are able to distinguish between good and bad sites; that they have never seen the children access anything negative and that they trusted their children. A small number said that they did not have prohibitions in place because their children were still young and they accompanied them online. Some did not know why they did not have prohibitions in place while others said it was because they did not understand the internet.

Privacy for children online

The majority of parents (63.5%) did not allow their children to have privacy with regard to their online activities. The three main reasons why parents did not allow their children privacy online were that children were too young and immature; that they had to make sure that they were safe online; and that they had to monitor their phones. Children should not have secrets from their parents and they do not have the capacity to identify whether something is dangerous or bad. It was also considered necessary in order to help them if they needed it.

“Mutual trust gives freedom to children.”

“Children are adults and learning to choose between good and bad.”

“Because if the child is prohibited, they will be curious.”

“Children are mature enough.”

“Child is in high school and knows what can be done and what should not be done.”

“Let them choose themselves.”



“For children in high school I give freedom.”

“Because they cannot be monitored for 24 hours, let alone when they are out.”

“Children are adults (16 years old), already know good and bad.”

“Because even if prohibited, they will be doing it secretly.”



Thirty-seven percent (36.5%) of the parents said they did allow their children to have privacy online. Parents seemed to focus on the age of the child in determining whether they should be allowed privacy. High school children were regarded as being entitled to privacy, although the research shows that adolescents require more rules and guidance than younger children online. These parents acknowledged that children needed some space and had certain rights to privacy, and that they, as parents, needed to trust their children. Parents were of the opinion that teenagers were adults and needed to practise responsibility and be independent and that they were able to distinguish between good and bad. Some said it was convenient as it was not possible “to monitor children for 24 hours,” and, if prohibited, children would simply do it secretly.

Internet safety

Approximately half of the parents allowed their children to have passwords and discussed internet safety with them.

| | Yes | No |
|--|-------|-------|
| Are your children allowed to have passwords? | 52.1% | 47.9% |
| If yes, do you know the password? | 59.2% | 40.8% |
| Do you discuss internet safety with your children? | 54.4% | 45.6% |
| Do you use parental control applications to protect your children? | 10.2% | 89.8% |

Discussions about internet safety

Discussions with children about the internet covered a wide variety of topics and the four most important topics were:

- Dangers of the internet and negative content (drugs; hackers; physical violence; gangster recruitment; hoax news; sexual harassment; child abduction)
- Positive/wise use of the internet
- Dangers of porn and how to delete it/not to watch it/not to open it
- Sites that should not be opened and dangerous applications.

Discussions also touched on topics relating to privacy and security; safe ways to surf online; social media; being careful of strangers; online fraud; the kinds of games that should not be played; the making of pornographic content; the impact of the internet on health; and the dangers of gambling and being online too often.

Discussions with different age groups

Seventy percent (70.4%) of the parents said that they provided different information to children of different ages since children of different ages performed different activities on the internet and, therefore, required different information and rules. For instance, younger children only watched children's programmes while the older ones enjoyed posting and communicating with friends. Their needs were thus different and had to be adjusted accordingly.

“Educating and advising each child is different.”
“Teenagers must be monitored more because of their association on the internet.”



Thirty percent (29.6%) of the parents said they gave the same information to children of all different ages because “they all have the right to get the same knowledge.” They were all told about the dangers of the social media world and given the same rules and information.

“Both young and old get told same about sites that should not be opened.”
“Because they all have the right to get the same knowledge.”



Discussions with different genders

Sixty-three percent (63%) of the parents said they provided the same information to boys and girls since they had the right to receive the same information and that they were monitored in the same way. They provided the following explanations:

“Boys and girls are equal and in the same position.”
“The dangers are the same.”



Those parents who believed that boys and girls should receive different information, based this on the fact that the roles of boys and girls in society were different and they, therefore, had different obligations and different codes of behaviour. Men and women behave differently and there are different limits for boys and girls in terms of friendship and relationships as well as dress codes.



“Not everything that men can do can also be done by women.”

“The dangers are the same.”

“Boys must often be reminded not to surf the negative things on the internet.”

“Men are never advised, women are always advised.”

“Different gender, different understanding.”

“Because boys are smarter in accessing the IT than girls in my opinion.”

The method in which information was delivered also differed between boys and girls (“boys firmly, girls gently”). Boys need more attention and tend to be tougher while girls tend to be more obedient.

Parents’ knowledge and ability to inform children on how to keep safe online

Half of the parents believed that they had sufficient knowledge and skills to be able to provide their children with information on how to be safe online while the other half did not feel confident or knowledgeable enough.

Parents who believed they had the necessary knowledge and ability to perform this task attributed this to the following:

- they had been using the internet for a long time
- they had had a cell phone for a long time
- they understood enough of the internet world
- they were more experienced
- they knew more about internet security
- their children were still small and didn’t have many needs
- they had enough knowledge for now, but might need additional knowledge in the future

- they have been exposed to the internet since childhood
- they use the internet every day
- they have received training
- the internet has become their work as a content creator
- they follow technological developments
- they know more about the dangers of online
- they get information from friends
- they work in internet technology.

Those parents who felt that they were not adequately equipped to inform their children about internet safety provided the following reasons for their opinion:

- they did not have enough knowledge or expertise about the internet
- they don't really understand the world of technology
- they themselves do not know how to be safe online or what dangers there are online
- the children are more familiar with and know more about the internet than their parents
- they are less interested in the internet than children
- they don't know what to tell children
- children are smarter than them
- they rarely used the internet
- the children use their cell phones more and have more time to explore their cell phones and new applications
- the children taught them how to use the internet.

"Scared, feel the child is smarter."

"Because children are now more sophisticated than their parents."

"My knowledge is a little while the child's knowledge about the internet continues to grow."

"I was taught the internet by the children."





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Online Risks for Children

“The internet can be a child’s intellectual invader.”

Almost all of the parents believed that their children were exposed to a wide variety of dangers and negative impacts as a result of being online and they admitted to having particular concerns about their children being online.

Dangers and concerns of being online

Ninety-six percent (95.9%) of the parents believed that their children were exposed to dangers online and had concerns for their safety. Parents considered access to pornographic images, videos and games to be by far the biggest danger online for children. This was mentioned three times more than any of the other dangers. Parents were particularly concerned about online addiction.

- Access to pornographic images, videos and games was believed by parents (37.5%)¹⁵ to promote promiscuity as children would imitate the behaviour. It was considered dangerous for their minds and morally damaging.
- Internet addiction was considered to be a danger for children, particularly addiction to online games since children did not seem to be able to control their usage (13% of the parents who believed there were dangers online).¹⁶
- Content with a high level of violence (n = 58) was considered to be capable of causing psychological disturbance. This included bullying, child exploitation, sexual harassment, murder, kidnapping and hate content.
- Exposure to inappropriate content (n = 58) was considered to have a negative impact on children. Inappropriate content included radicalism, drug networks, terrorism, homosexual and lesbian sites, racism and rough language.
- Parents were concerned about the health impact of being online, particularly damage to their eyes (n = 54).
- Being online caused children to become irresponsible, to neglect their work and be lazy, apathetic and unfocused (n = 54).
- There was concern about children being exposed to online fraud, theft, prostitution and other crimes (n = 43).
- One parent said that they were so afraid of their child being kidnapped “to the point that the child does not dare go out.”
- Children are influenced by negative things and follow trends (n = 24) which affects the way they behave because they imitate things they see and it impacts on their thinking and behaviour.
- Because they are looking for friends, they are vulnerable to associating with the wrong people (n = 15).

“Lazy to learn, difficult to manage and apathetic to the environment.”

“Neglect tasks, become individualists, insensitive to their surroundings.”

“Psychological influence that makes children apathetic and easily angry.”



¹⁵ 183 parents

¹⁶ 64 parents

Further concerns

- Parents were concerned about the effect that being online had on their children's behaviour as it caused them to be disrespectful ("they tell parents to be quiet because they are focused on a game"), uncontrollable and they did not obey their parents.
- They were worried about the psychological impact of what children were exposed to online, which might give rise to behaviour deviations and early exposure could cause them to become adults before their time.
- Parents voiced concern about their inability to control who their children met and communicated with online. They were able to meet and talk to strangers, become acquainted with foreigners and indulge in video calls with friends and girlfriends, which could lead to bad things. They could have secret relationships with strangers, access dating applications and become involved with unfavourable online communities. Children had the ability to communicate without limits and parents found this disturbing.
- Children may also be bullied online or they may see things that make them feel uncomfortable.
- Parents were also concerned by the fact that their children do not talk to them as much and have become introverted and less attached to them.
- Parents worried about the influence that the internet had on the morals of children and complained that the children forgot to worship.
- The internet also impacted on children's studying. They had less time for studying, lost their focus and went to bed late at night, which impeded their ability to concentrate.

Parents who had no concerns

Four percent (4.1%) of the parents said that they did not have concerns about their children being online. They trusted that their children would be safe online because their children were mature and equipped with the necessary religious foundation to know what was good and what was bad. They believed that their children would immediately report anything untoward. Others said that they did not have concerns because their children were still young and that they monitored their online activities. Some responses, however, showed naivety in that the parents said they had no concerns because nothing bad has happened before; they occasionally ask their child what they are doing online; their children only watch and play games or only open TikTok, YouTube and WhatsApp.

“Yes, because as far as I know, they can only open WhatsApp.”
“I often ask what he saw while on the internet.”
“He knows what is good and not to be followed.”
“Because I’m sure that what is seen is only the game.”



Unpleasant experiences online

Seventeen percent (16.5%) of the parents disclosed that their children had personally experienced something unpleasant online. The three most prevalent causes of the unpleasant experiences were exposure to pornographic content, fraud and scams, and bullying.

- The children had received pornographic links, videos and images or had themselves, sometimes unwittingly, accessed pornographic content. One child had joined a group that shared pornographic content.
- Some of the children were the victims of online fraud. They were scammed in online games, cheated when shopping, lost money gambling and had their bank account hacked.
- Children had been bullied online, often via social media, and shunned by friends.
- Some children had also become involved in fights online, often in the context of online games.
- Children had also accessed videos or cartoons that had turned out to be sadistic and scary.

Impact of unpleasant online experiences

Parents reported that in some instances the impact of the unpleasant experiences had had a serious impact on the well-being of their children. The parents provided the following information on how their children had reacted to the experience:

- Receiving pornography or inappropriate images
 - o Children expressed shock, surprise and annoyance
 - o Child is now afraid to be friends with unknown persons on social media (made friends with someone on Facebook and received porn images)
 - o The one child was indifferent (the one who had entered a group sharing porn).

- Online fraud
 - o The child was scammed by friends in an online game (his game account was hacked) and became very aggressive.
 - o Other children reacted differently to fraud. Some were traumatised while others were indifferent.
 - o Some children had become distrustful.
- Bullying
 - o The greatest impact seemed to be experienced by the children who had been bullied.
 - o They lost interest in their studies and disturbed their focus at school.
 - o It affected the child's mood and they became grumpy and unhappy.
 - o Feelings of fear and inferiority were reported.
 - o "The child becomes silent, is not confident and does not dare to say."
- Scary/horror movies and videos
 - o The child became timid and fearful after seeing a scary, sadistic cartoon.
 - o These movies and videos caused the children to be terribly afraid and one parent said that their child was now too scared to go to the toilet and would not enter the house alone if nobody was there.
- Messages from unknown numbers
 - o These messages disturbed the children a great deal, especially as they did not know who was sending the messages.
 - o One parent reported that it had had a huge impact on their child and had disturbed them greatly.

Risky Online Behaviour

“Children are carried away by trends on the internet.”

Parents identified many examples of behaviour that they considered to be risky for children online. These have been captured in the table below:

| Risky Online Behaviour |
|--|
| Commenting harshly on posts or being disrespectful |
| Not listening to parents' advice |
| Spending too much time online |
| Uncontrollable behaviour |
| Using a vulgar profile picture |
| Interacting online with unknown people |
| Imitating what is on the internet and following trends |
| Accessing and sharing pornography |
| Creating controversial videos |
| Opening unknown or dangerous sites |
| Body shaming or bullying people online |
| Watching or uploading inappropriate content |
| Hate speech |
| Spreading hoax news |
| Spreading information / videos about others |
| Posting negative photographs |
| Posting photographs too often |
| Curious about negative content |
| Downloading inappropriate applications |
| Meeting people from the internet |
| Posting personal data |
| Communicating and video calls with the opposite sex |
| Not filtering content |
| Posting content that makes others jealous |
| Not understanding what risky behaviour online is |
| Associating with bad people |
| Being on the phone late at night |

Risky behaviour

Parents were asked to identify whether certain acts amounted to risky behaviour and their responses are recorded in the table below:

| Would You Consider the Following to Be Risky Behaviour for Children | Yes | No |
|---|-------|-------|
| Talking to someone on the internet that they have not met face-to-face? | 76.6% | 23.4% |
| Meeting someone face-to-face that they first got to know online? | 79.4% | 20.6% |
| Sharing an image with someone they have met online? | 75.8% | 24.2% |
| Talking to particular family members a lot? | 17.3% | 82.7% |
| Sending personal information to someone they have never met face-to-face? | 77.4% | 22.6% |
| Talking about sexual acts with someone on the internet? | 85.3% | 14.7% |
| Sending a sexual image or video to someone on the internet? | 87.8% | 12.2% |

Talking to strangers online

- Talking to strangers online was considered to be risky because they did not know what the intention of that person was. The person could be a bad person with evil intentions. They did not know if the person was dangerous or a foreigner. A number of parents refer to foreigners as a risk factor, seeming to believe that online perpetrators are foreign. The reality is that the majority of perpetrators are local and not foreigners.
- Consequently this held many risks for children and parents were afraid that children could be sexually harassed, seduced or persuaded to do bad things or commit crimes, like theft or drug dealing. Parents mentioned the danger of kidnapping or even murder (“there are stories on the news about children meeting online friends and being killed”). The child could become a victim of fraud or even be brainwashed.
- Parents were of the opinion that the risk was greater when the unknown person was of the opposite sex.

Face-to-face meeting with someone met online

- Parents were concerned about their children meeting someone face-to-face whom they had met online for the same reasons that they thought it was dangerous to talk to strangers online. They did not know who their person was or what their intentions were and whether they would harm the child in some way since people tended to lie about their identity and use fake profiles online.
- There was the possibility that their child could become a victim of crime, such as kidnapping, rape or robbery, or even murder. The child could be seduced or given drugs or brainwashed to do things they would not normally do.

Sharing images with people they have met online

- Parents considered the sharing of an image with someone they have met online to be risky because there was the possibility that the image could be misused, disseminated or used as a method of bullying their child.
- The image could be misused in the following ways: used for prostitution; used to create a false profile; used for fraud; or edited and disseminated.
- The image could be used as a threat or for extortion purposes and the child may be forced to behave negatively. The danger of sexual harassment and human trafficking were also raised.

Talking to particular family members a lot

- Talking to particular family members a lot was generally not considered to be a risk. Although a few highlighted possible risks, the majority were positive about interactions with the family.
- It was considered to be a positive interaction because the child was communicating with family and it gave them an opportunity to share family news and develop friendships. They saw it as a means of protection since the family would be able to see what was being posted.
- However, a few parents thought there was a possible risk since they did not know the intention of the family member and warned that sometimes relatives also behave inappropriately. They said that it also depended on the age of the parties involved because if there was a difference in age, discussions might not be appropriate.

Sharing personal information with a stranger online

- Sharing personal information with someone they have never met face-to-face was considered to be risky because the person was unknown and the information could be misused and might even expose the child to danger as they could be traced. The fraudulent use of the personal information was the main concern of most of the parents. They were concerned that the child could be a victim of fraud or a scam; that they could be the victim of identity theft; that it could be used to forge accounts or obtain loans and that the details could be disseminated.
- The other concern was that by revealing personal information, the child could be traced to their home and the child and their family could be endangered. There was even the possibility that the child could be kidnapped.

Talking about sexual acts with someone on the internet

- Talking about sexual acts with someone on the internet was thought to be risky because talking about sexual matters was not allowed and was considered taboo, especially to members of the opposite sex. It was, therefore, deemed inappropriate, disgraceful and violated the norms of society in addition to being illegal.
- There was concern that talking about sexual acts would make children curious to try them and they may be tempted into deviant behaviour. The child may become promiscuous and be influenced to partake in pornography.
- There was the danger that the child could become a victim of sexual violence or be exploited.
- A further concern was that the information could be shared everywhere and used to bully or extort the child.

“There is the fear that they will want to do what they talk about.”

“Can influence one’s faith and mind, causing them to want to engage in forbidden behaviour.”



Sending a sexual image or video to someone on the internet

- Sending a sexual image or video to someone on the internet was considered to be risky for a number of reasons, and parents were strongly of the opinion that sex was a private matter and that videos or images of this nature were a disgrace, inappropriate, vulgar, violated the norms of society and damaged morals. It was prohibited by law and religion and would embarrass families.
- There was concern that these images could be sold or disseminated and damage the child's reputation. It would leave a digital footprint and would impact on the child's future.
- These images could be used as a tool for extortion and the child could be threatened or forced to do negative things.
- There was also the danger that, by sending these kinds of images or videos, children could become addicted to pornography or it could have a negative impact on the psychology of the child.

Images that should or should not be shared

Parents were asked to provide input on what images they thought were appropriate for their children to share and which were not allowed to be shared. Most of the parents said that images related to pornography and nudity were not allowed to be shared. Three hundred and eight (60.5%) parents mentioned the terms 'porn/ naked/ adult/ vulgar' while others used words like 'inappropriate/ disrespectful/ sexy' which could also refer to pornography. Their other major concern related to the manner in which the children were dressed.

| Images that can be shared | Images that can't be shared |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Selfies with friends and family | Anything related to pornography |
| Positive activities like sport | Violent images/ fighting photos |
| Studying and educational images | Images that contain elements of ethnicity, religion, race, intergroup and porn |
| Achievements | Naked photographs |
| Photos wearing the hijab | Photos without the hijab |
| Tourist or travel pictures | Hoax photographs |
| Events with family | Photos wearing minimal clothing |
| Polite images | Bullying photographs |
| Pictures of animals | Gambling images |

| Images that can be shared | Images that can't be shared |
|--|---|
| Cartoons | Photos that are not socially acceptable |
| Vacation school activities | Photos of very personal activities |
| Appropriately dressed photographs | Images with harsh words |
| Funny pictures | Photos together with unmarried opposite sex |
| Daily activities | Sadistic images |
| Landscapes, flowers | Jogging photographs |
| Images of their creativity | Photos of murder cases and accident injured victims |
| Photos with friends | Scary images |
| Photos of celebrities or idols | Photos of eating |
| Photos not related to violence or love | Disrespectful photos, like with their tongue sticking out |
| Photos that have no criminal elements | Images that show their face |
| Photos that do not show the face directly - photos from the side or the back | |

Reporting negative behaviour

One third (33%) of the parents said that they would not report negative behaviour targeting their child to the police. Most of them said they would not report because they regarded it as a family matter that had to be resolved by the family itself. They regarded the idea of reporting to the police as too extreme. Many of them were also confused by the reporting procedures and did not know how to go about reporting the matter. They also believed that reporting the matter would simply delay the process. Reasons for not reporting included the following:

- Parents said that they were unsure of the reporting processes involved. They also seemed to think that they could not report because they did not know who the perpetrators were or because they were foreigners.

"The process is complicated and I do not understand how to report."

"Don't know the perpetrators, especially where they are foreigners."

"Don't know where to report."



- The majority of parents said that they preferred to deal with the matter themselves and not report. If necessary they would get assistance from friends, but they needed to investigate the matter themselves and find a solution.

"First try to find a solution."

"If you want to report, you need to know the root of the problem first otherwise it can turn back on your family."

"Family will sort it out."

"Because if I can handle it, I don't report."

"I can do it myself."

"Prefer to ask for help from experienced friends."



- Parents said that they would only report the matter if it was serious or if it continued, but believed that reporting to the police was too extreme.

"Only report if it is too much."

"Depends on the case – if threatening will report."

"Reporting to the police is too extreme."



- Parents were also concerned that reporting the matter to the police would prolong the affair and waste time.

“Sort it out immediately, don’t need to wait for police.”

“Rather than prolong and waste time.”

“Don’t want to extend the problem.”

“Takes too long.”



- Some parents said that they would simply ignore the matter.

“You don’t know the person and don’t want to bother.”

“Just ignore it.”

“I just don’t think about it.”

“If it can be ignored, just ignore it.”



- Some parents said that they would not dare to report the matter to the police as they did not think it was a problem that the police would be able to resolve. They also said that they were afraid of dealing with the police and found the process too long and complicated and would rather seek alternative assistance in the village.

“Wouldn’t dare report to police.”

“Never.”

“Afraid of dealing with the police, complicated and long.”

“Not necessarily a problem the police can resolve.”



- Finally, parents said that that they would be too ashamed to report the matter to the police.

“Shame and confused.”
“Embarrassed and scared – better to hide.”



Reasons why children do not report online abuse

More than half of the parents believed that children were too afraid to report online abuse. The other main reason suggested was that the children were too ashamed and embarrassed to report. Parents also identified two other reasons as being important for non-disclosure: children don't realise that they are the victims of online abuse and they are unable to communicate with their families. Parents suggested the following reasons why children did not disclose:

- Children are afraid to disclose (70,9% of parents).¹⁷
 - o Afraid of not being believed, of being threatened, of being bullied, of the matter becoming known (51.5%).¹⁸
 - o Afraid of being scolded or blamed (19.1% of parents).¹⁹
 - o Afraid their phone will be confiscated (0.4% of parents).²⁰

“Parents are too hard so that children become afraid and are not open when there are problems.”



- Children do not realise or understand that they are being harassed and that this is something they can report (6.5%).²¹
- Children cannot talk to their families or their families are not available for them (6.5%).²²

¹⁷ 361 parents

¹⁸ 262 parents

¹⁹ 97 parents

²⁰ 2 parents

²¹ 33 parents

²² 33 parents

- Children are embarrassed and ashamed (5.9% of parents).²³

“Embarrassed, he felt his actions were wrong and afraid of being scolded by his parents.”

“Because afraid of social sanctions (ridiculed and bullied).”



- Children deal with it themselves (block or delete accounts) (3.1%).²⁴

Other Reasons for Non-Disclosure by Children

- Don't feel the need
- Feel useless or disempowered
- Are depressed, worried, traumatised
- Are confused
- Don't want to drag the process out
- Don't know where to report
- Don't want to bother people around them

²³ 30 parents

²⁴ 16 parents

“Parents must understand the technology so that children are not smarter than their parents.”

Since the majority of parents did not believe that they had sufficient knowledge about the internet to assist their children online, this section of the research aimed to inquire what their needs were in this regard. Only thirty-eight percent (38%) of parents knew about the laws that apply to children and online behaviour. The research also sought to probe what information they thought their children should receive regarding the internet and how this information should be packaged.

What do children need to know about online behaviour

Identifying what amounted to good online behaviour for children was important as this would have implications for the development of training programmes for children. Parents suggested the following as important aspects of positive online behaviour that children should be aware of:

- How to be polite, respectful and communicate with peers
- How to comment appropriately on social media
- Good morals, ethics and religious values
- Not to be rude, tease, hurtful or mock others
- How to choose friends
- How to play online games without the negativity
- The limits of friendship
- Not to offend ethnicity, race, religion, intergroup
- Not to spread hoaxes
- To be aware that not everything on the internet is true
- To understand privacy issues online
- What photos are appropriate to share
- What risky behaviour entails
- How to deal with negative content.

Good Internet Behaviour

- children should not use the internet for things that are not good
- children should not be excessively online and should manage their time online
- children should be aware of the dangers of excessive internet use
- children should be able to identify positive and negative things on the internet
- children should view content that is age-appropriate
- children should know how to be secure online
- children should know to be careful with unknown persons
- children should be aware of the dangers of pornography
- children should know how to block dangerous content
- children should understand the importance of socialising with friends and the community offline
- children should know the ethics of surfing the internet
- children should be aware of the impact of online violence
- children should not imitate online behaviour

How can parents ensure good online behaviour

Monitoring was considered by parents to be the most important way to ensure that children behaved well online. Advising them and teaching them about the internet was also highlighted as important as well as accompanying them online. Parents should do the following:

- Monitor their children's behaviour and activities online (n = 211)
- Give them advice and teach them the proper skills (n = 121)
- Accompany them online (n = 56)
- Check their phones (n = 53)
- Have a good relationship with their children (n = 41)

- Instill religious education and good manners (n = 13)
- Be an example and give good direction (n = 10)
- Reprimand and teach discipline
- Friend their children on social media
- Include children in activities in their surrounding environment
- Limit online time
- Give children confidence to take care of themselves.

“Consider parents as friends.”

“Invite to talk about what is done and monitor the cell phone directly but with the child’s approval.”

“Provide a good example to children because children imitate the habits of parents.”



What information or support do parents need to assist their children online

Parents identified two distinct areas of knowledge needed. Firstly, they required enough knowledge about the internet to be able to interact effectively with their children and, secondly, they required information and support on how better to communicate with and parent their children. There was a great need for information and assistance on how to improve parenting skills and develop better relationships with children.

| Knowledge about the Internet |
|---|
| What information should be given to children about the internet |
| How to accompany children online |
| Examples of how to advise children so that the advice will be well received |
| Basic knowledge of the internet, including safety and security, laws, and dangers |
| Tips for safe internet and how to detect what sites children open without having to check their cell phones |
| How to mentor children on the internet |
| What messages should be conveyed by parents to children about the internet |
| How to identify which games are appropriate |
| Information on Parenting Skills |
| How to understand children in the online world |
| Information on parenting/science of parenting |
| Activities that are useful for improving communication between children and parents |
| How to interact and be open with children |
| Openness in communication between parents and children |
| How to deal with children so that they become friends |
| How to invite children to talk from the heart |
| How to control children when using the internet |
| How to reduce the time children spend on the internet |
| How to direct children not to behave badly online |
| How to invite chats with children about the dangers of online |
| How to discipline children |
| Information about the habits of children today |
| Health and psychological development of children |

Information on internet safety

Parents were asked what further information they required regarding internet safety and they provided a long list of topics, which offers insight into the type of information that should be included in online parenting programmes.

Information needed on Online Safety

- Identification of dangers on the internet and how to prevent them
- How to distinguish between good and bad sites
- How to use parent control applications
- How to block negative content
- How to keep children safe on the internet
- How to secure a device
- How to protect personal data
- How to protect against crimes of fraud
- Laws applicable to the internet
- How to stop adult content from popping up

Some parents found the internet so overwhelming that they had conceded defeat. They said that they did not need any information because they would not understand it and that the children were responsible for their own safety because they understood the online environment better.

“Nothing because I really don’t understand the internet.”

“I have entrusted his safety to the child because he knows better.”

“Because as a single parent, there is not enough time to supervise, let alone learn and look for information like that.”

“Because I feel old, it’s better for my child to be taught about the internet.”

“No need because the children are able to sort it out.”

“Rather tell the child because the age of 40 is above the average internet limit.”



Presentation format

The majority of parents said that they would want the information as part of socialisation activities and preferred direct face-to-face meetings so that they could understand properly, although some said that they were happy to receive the information on social media. Parents said that they would like to receive information in the following ways:

- as part of socialisation activities which included events or meetings held at the village hall/mothers' meetings and community associations (31.2%)²⁵
- direct (face-to-face) meetings (13.9%)²⁶
- via social media (WhatsApp group/YouTube) (10,2%)²⁷
- Google (9.8%)²⁸
- seminar or training (8.8%).²⁹

A lot of emphasis was placed on direct face-to-face meetings so that parents would be able to have a better understanding since the internet was complicated. Information, they said, had to be easy to understand and be phrased in very simple language.

Online safety education for children

Eighty-eight percent (88%) of the parents said that online safety education should be presented at school. The topics captured in the table below were suggested for inclusion in online safety programmes offered at schools.

| Topics for Children's Online Safety Programmes |
|--|
| Healthy use of the internet |
| Online security |
| Dangers of the internet |
| How to use social media wisely |
| Sex education |
| Dangers of pornography |
| Dangers of playing online games |

²⁵ 159 parents

²⁶ 71 parents

²⁷ 52 parents

²⁸ 50 parents

²⁹ 45 parents

| Topics for Children's Online Safety Programmes |
|--|
| Online ethics and moral education relating to the internet |
| Internet laws and age limitations |
| Fraud and violence online |
| Cyberbullying and sexual harassment |
| Talking to and meeting strangers online |
| How to secure personal data |
| How to block content and people |
| Dangers of excessive internet usage |
| Online gambling |
| Religion and the internet |
| VPN abuse |
| Sexual violence against children |

Presentation format

The majority of parents were of the opinion that online safety education should be presented at schools, either as part of socialisation or as part of the school curriculum.

- At school as part of curriculum: 37.5% (n = 191)
- As part of socialisation, including children and youth forums: 25.9% (n = 132)
- As an extra curricula activity: 3.1% (n = 16)
- By parents: 2.6% (n = 13)
- Seminar inviting speakers from outside: 1% (n = 5)
- At an event in the village: 1% (n = 5)
- Social media.

Parents also gave suggestions about the format of the information presented and said that it should be practical, easy to understand with lots of examples. There should be leaflets or pamphlets with pictures that are attractive to capture children's attention. It could be in the form of a video on YouTube, perhaps an anime-type video. It should also be face-to-face and not online. It should also be introduced from an early age.

Interviews with Children with Disabilities

“It’s easier to relate online.”

Demographics

- Fifty-two children (52) children with disabilities were interviewed, comprising 10.2% of all the children interviewed.
- The ages of the children ranged between nine (9) and eighteen (18) with the average age being fifteen (15).
- The children were fairly evenly distributed in terms of gender with 46.2% female (n = 24) and 53.8% male (n = 28).
- Type of disability
 - o Physical: n = 20 (38.5%)
 - o Mental: n = 12 (23.1%)
 - o Blind/sight: n = 10 (19.2%)
 - o Deaf/hearing: n = 8 (15.4%)
 - o Speech: n = 6 (11.5%).

Age Categories

| Ages | No. of Children |
|---------|-----------------|
| 9 - 11 | 5 |
| 12 - 15 | 22 |
| 16 - 18 | 25 |

- Nearly half of the children (48.1%) came from Central Java; 30.8% came from East Java; and 21.2% came from South Sulawesi.
- Eleven children did not attend school.

Internet Usage

“My cell phone is my friend.”

Section IX of the General Comment No 25 of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (March 2021) focuses on children with disabilities and states:

The digital environment opens new avenues for children with disabilities to engage in social relationships with their peers, access information, and participate in public decision-making processes.

A study conducted by the Council of Europe in 2019 (Two Clicks Forward and One Click Back) into the lives of children and young people with disabilities online found that, although life online for children with disabilities was similar to life online for those without disabilities, there were some important differences. The report also found that grouping children and young people with disabilities under one heading was not helpful as “their use of digital media and experiences vary significantly across and within different types of disabilities” and that seeing them as a homogenous group does them a disservice (Better Internet for Kids 2021).

For this reason the research included a sample of children with disabilities to investigate how their online experiences and needs differed from children without disabilities.

Internet Usage

- Ninety-six percent (96.2%) of the children use the internet. Only 2 children in the group did not use the internet.
- Eighty-four percent (84%) of the children went online every day and spent an average of 5.2 hours online per day.
- Most of the children (96%) access the internet at home and forty-four percent (44%) also access it at school.

What do the children like about the internet

- Eighty-two percent (82%) of the children enjoyed being online a lot/very much.
- The main reason (n = 19) was the opportunity for entertainment and games, followed by the ability to access information (n =10).
- The children said that they found the internet fun and exciting because there were a variety of activities available online and they had access to different applications and sites.
- An important feature of the internet was that it afforded them the opportunity to communicate more easily and they were able to chat with friends and others. One of the children, who was deaf, said: "It is easier to communicate through writing on chat." A number of the children mentioned how the internet allowed them to do things, such as connect with others and make friends, despite their disabilities.

"Can play games and see entertainment." (child who is deaf)

"It helps me spend time. Interesting." (child who is blind)

"Online activities are very exciting." (child with paralysis and mental disability)

"Fun to play." (child with a physical disability)

"Good and many friends." (child who is deaf)

"Can VC (video/voice chat)." (child who is deaf)

"Everything is available on the internet, including information, searching for school assignments is simple." (child who is blind)



Rules or limitations on online usage

- Fifty-four percent (54%) of the children said that they had limitations on their online activities.
- In the case of forty-two percent (42%) of these children, the limitations or restrictions related to the length of time that they were allowed to be online.
- Only one (1) child mentioned that they were not allowed to view negative or violent content and porn sites and another child was only allowed to use certain applications.

- Twenty-two percent (22%) of the children with rules said that they did not obey them, and provided the following reasons for not doing so:
 - o They enjoyed being online and they found the restrictions annoying;
 - o Their disability meant that they took longer to do things online and they, therefore, required more time for schoolwork and other activities.

“It has not been possible due to delay in thinking.”

(15-year-old female with a speech and cognitive delay)

“Sometimes I have to do my school assignment and in the end I don’t comply with the rules.” (17-year-old male who is blind)



Talking about online activities

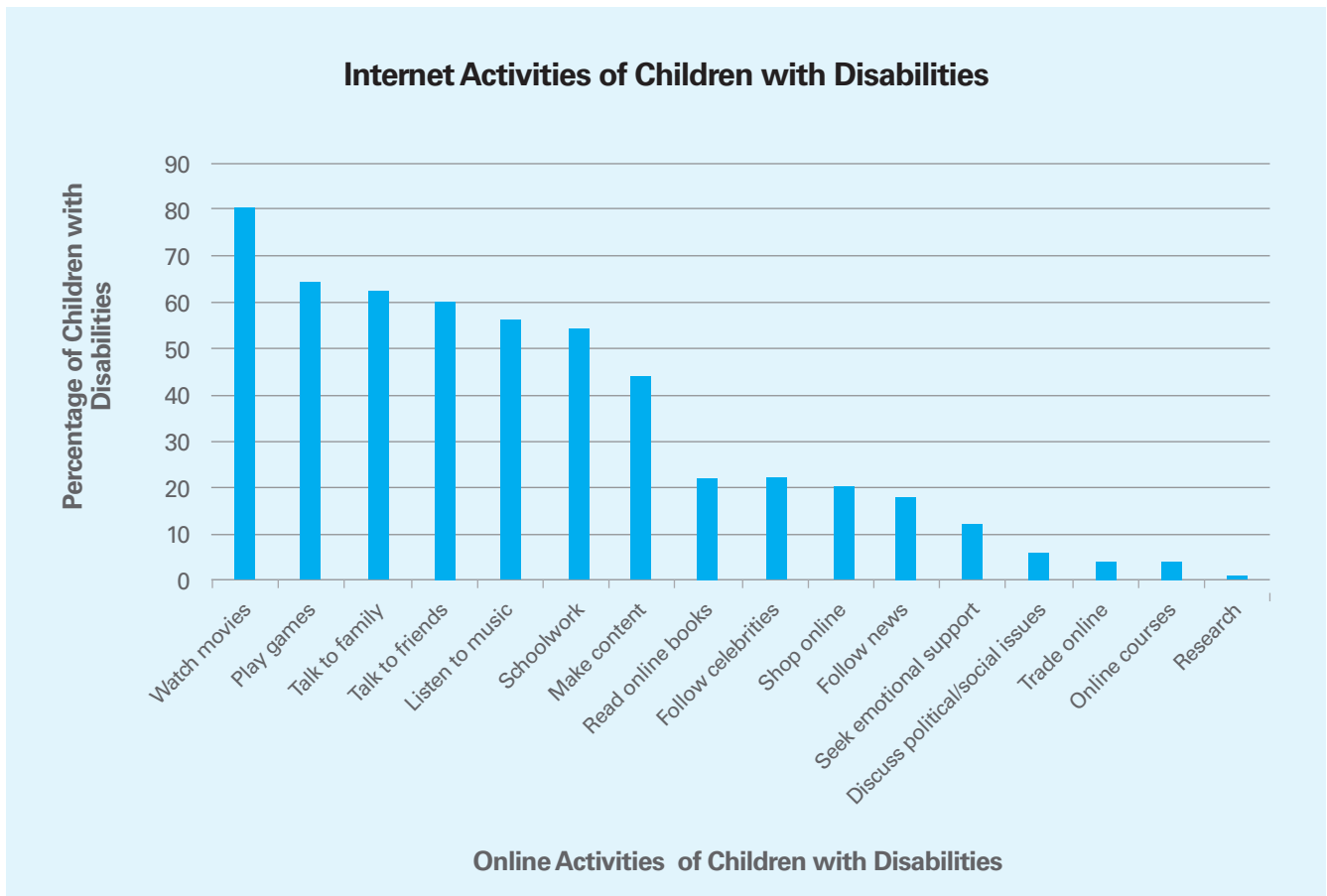
- Forty-six percent (46%) of the children said that they talked to someone about their online activities.
- Most of them (52.2%) chatted to their friends or their parents (43.5%), the predominant parent being the mother.
- Friends included close friends, classmates and neighbourhood/village friends, and one child specified that they spoke to a friend with a disability.
- The children chose to talk to their families because they felt more comfortable doing so, were present in the house with them and felt safe with them. In particular, the mother was reported to be the person they felt they could talk to the most. Reasons forwarded included the following:
 - The children chose to speak to their friends because they felt comfortable doing so as they are close, often spend time with each other, often talk to each other and depend on each other.
 - The children discussed various topics with their friends and families and these can be broadly categorised as relating to socialisation, gaming, schoolwork, and seeking assistance about how to use cell phones, the internet and social media:

- o Socialisation
 - Shared stories about their online activities
 - Discussed feelings
 - Talked about sports
 - Discussed friendship matters
 - Shared interesting/motivational social media posts
 - Talked about anything that was trending or viral
 - Discussed the problems that exist on social media
 - Discussed what they see on various apps like TikTok
- o Online games
- o Schoolwork
- o Assistance with schoolwork
- o Information about internet and devices
 - How to access music and other entertainment
 - How to use the internet and/or find information on the internet
 - How to use a cell phone.

Internet Activity

“Because you can communicate, ask the news from places that are far away, like Kalimantan.”

Key internet activities for this group of children were watching movies, playing games and communicating with family and friends. Listening to music and schoolwork were also important and they enjoyed making video content. Fewer of them followed the news, did research or online courses than the children without disabilities.



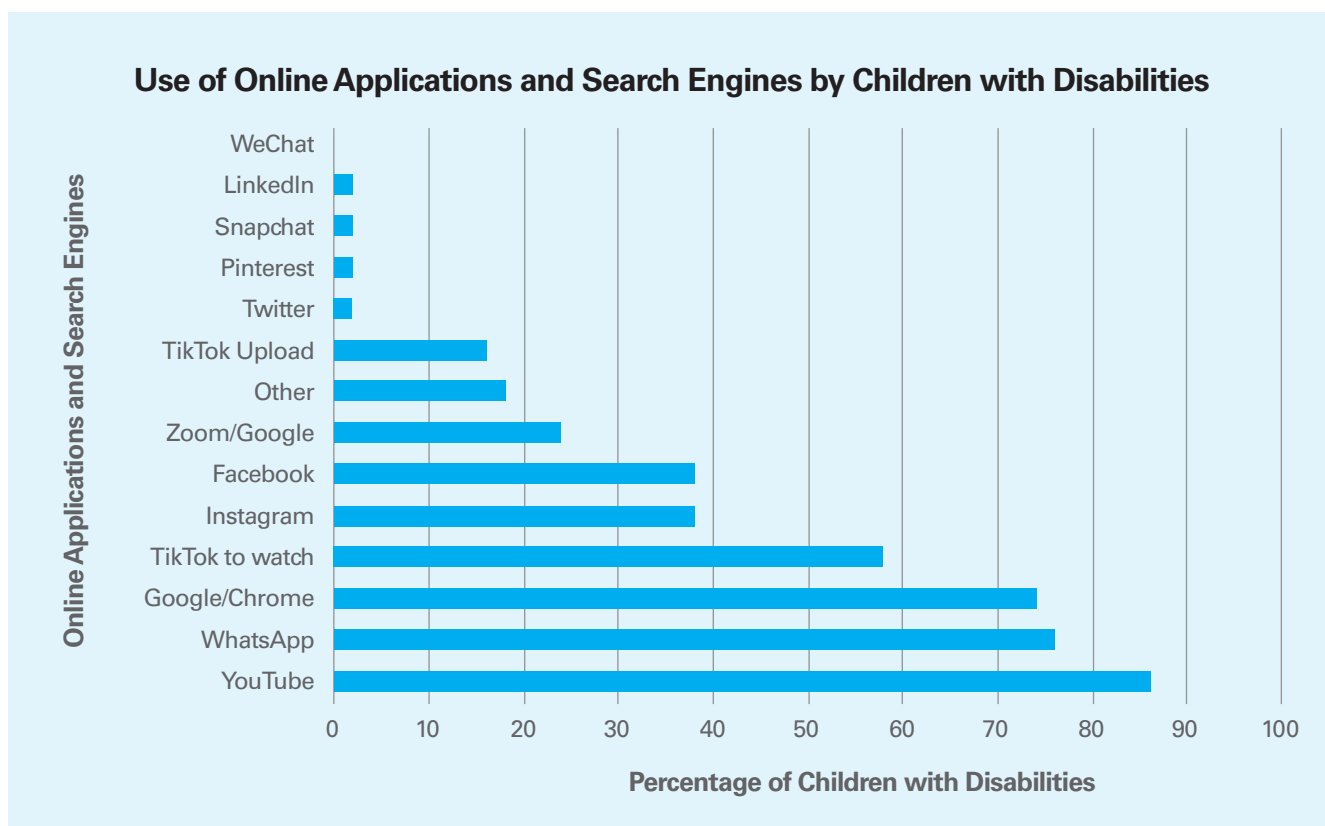
Two children mentioned that they also accessed Mitra Netra, a special application for blind people, which assists them with school assignments.

Use of Virtual Private Networks (VPN)

- Only four children (8%) made use of a VPN.
- They said that they used a VPN to access servers in other countries, to play games and to have more choices. One child said that they downloaded it out of curiosity and accessed a porn site.
- Most of the children who did not use a VPN did not know what it was or where to get it while a few said that it was used to access adult content and pornographic sites.

Use of online applications and search engines

- YouTube was the platform most used by the children and the percentages for this group were lower for WhatsApp and TikTok than the children without disabilities, as was the scores for Instagram and Facebook.



Allowing parents or family members to `friend` accounts

- Just over half (54%) of the children allowed their family to `friend` their accounts.
- They did so for the following reasons:
 - o To communicate with their families, share posts, photos, news and activities
 - o Because they had good family relationships, loved their families and wanted to connect with them

- o Because they were required to do so by their families and because it was impossible to refuse and parents would be angry if they did not
- o For security and monitoring purposes so that they could monitor each other and know what they were doing.
- Those children who did not allow their families to `friend` their accounts said it was because either they or their parents do not have social media accounts and because their parents did not have the relevant applications. One child said that they only allowed their friends to access their accounts because they did not want to be monitored by their parents.

Secret accounts

- Only four children (8%) had accounts that were secret from their parents. And they had created secret accounts so that their parents or families would not be aware of their activities online. One child said that they have six email accounts, but provided no reason for this.

“Because I have an account that my family can’t see.”
“So as not to be seen.”



- Children who did not have secrets accounts explained that it was because they did not have social media accounts or they did not have their own phone. Others said that it was not necessary to have a secret account or hide anything from their family.

“We are in control of the internet.”

Feeling safe online

- Sixty-two percent (62%) of the children said that they feel safe on the internet while eighteen percent (18%) said they did not know.
- Those who reported feeling safe claimed that this was so because they only used the internet for entertainment and learning, and they felt safe because:
 - o they control what they do on the internet
 - o they only use the internet when they need to
 - o they are accompanied by their parents while they use the internet
 - o they make use of passwords
 - o they use VPNs
 - o they don't access negative content online.

Dangers online

- Only those children who felt unsafe online were asked this question (20%). Overall, their knowledge of the dangers of the internet was significantly limited with the focus on adult content and fraud. Only two children referred to danger of a sexual nature.
- Dangers included adult content and vulgar images; inappropriate language (cursing); bullying; fraud and kidnapping. Negative behaviour was also linked to online gaming where children became abusive when losing games.

Keeping safe online

The children had very little knowledge about how to keep safe on the internet. Most of the children believed that avoiding negative content online would keep them safe or limiting the

time they spent online. Fourteen percent (14%) of the children said that they did not know how to keep safe online. They identified the following ways that they kept safe on the internet:

- Avoid negative content n = 7
- Don't know n = 7
- Limits on time spent online n = 6
- Have a password n = 4
- Use privacy settings n = 4
- Behave appropriately n = 4
- Parents accompany/monitor them on the internet n = 4
- Only use it for entertainment n = 3
- Don't use social media n = 1
- Obey parents' rules n = 1
- Use applications that clean up files on the device n = 1
- Create new accounts if hacked n = 1.

One child said that they did not feel the need to do anything to keep safe. Another child, a 15-year-old with autism and learning disabilities, did not answer the question. Rather, he stated that his account was hacked when he watched pornographic movies.

"Just watch videos."

"Use phone wisely."

"Access good things and not access things that are forbidden and toxic."



Information on how to keep safe online

- Sixty-four percent (64%) of the children had not received any information on how to keep safe online.
- The thirty-six percent (36%) who had received information had obtained it from the internet itself on various applications and social media accounts i.e. Google and YouTube (n = 12). Very few of them had received information from their school (n = 4) and from friends (n = 2). Only one child received information from their family and one from an organisation for the blind.
- The information received had included the following:
 - o How to use the internet safely: n = 6
 - o How to avoid inappropriate content: n = 3
 - o How to use privacy settings: n = 2
 - o How to change a password: n = 2
 - o Internet access restrictions: n = 1
 - o How to use the internet: n = 1
 - o Content not to be shared online: n = 1.

Monitoring of online activities

- Sixty-two percent (62%) of the children said that their parents monitored their online activity.
- Monitoring took place in various ways, with the majority of parents checking the phones to monitor the child's activities. The following monitoring took place:
 - o Phones were monitored to check activity: 67.7%
 - o Time restrictions were placed on the use of devices: 12.9%
 - o Parents would accompany children online: 9.7%
 - o Parents would ask questions and advise: 9.7%
 - o They would get into trouble (be reprimanded): 6.5%
 - o Parents have installed protection apps (Family Link): 6.5%
 - o They had to share phones with their parents: 3.2%
 - o Parents would select the content (videos): 3.2%.

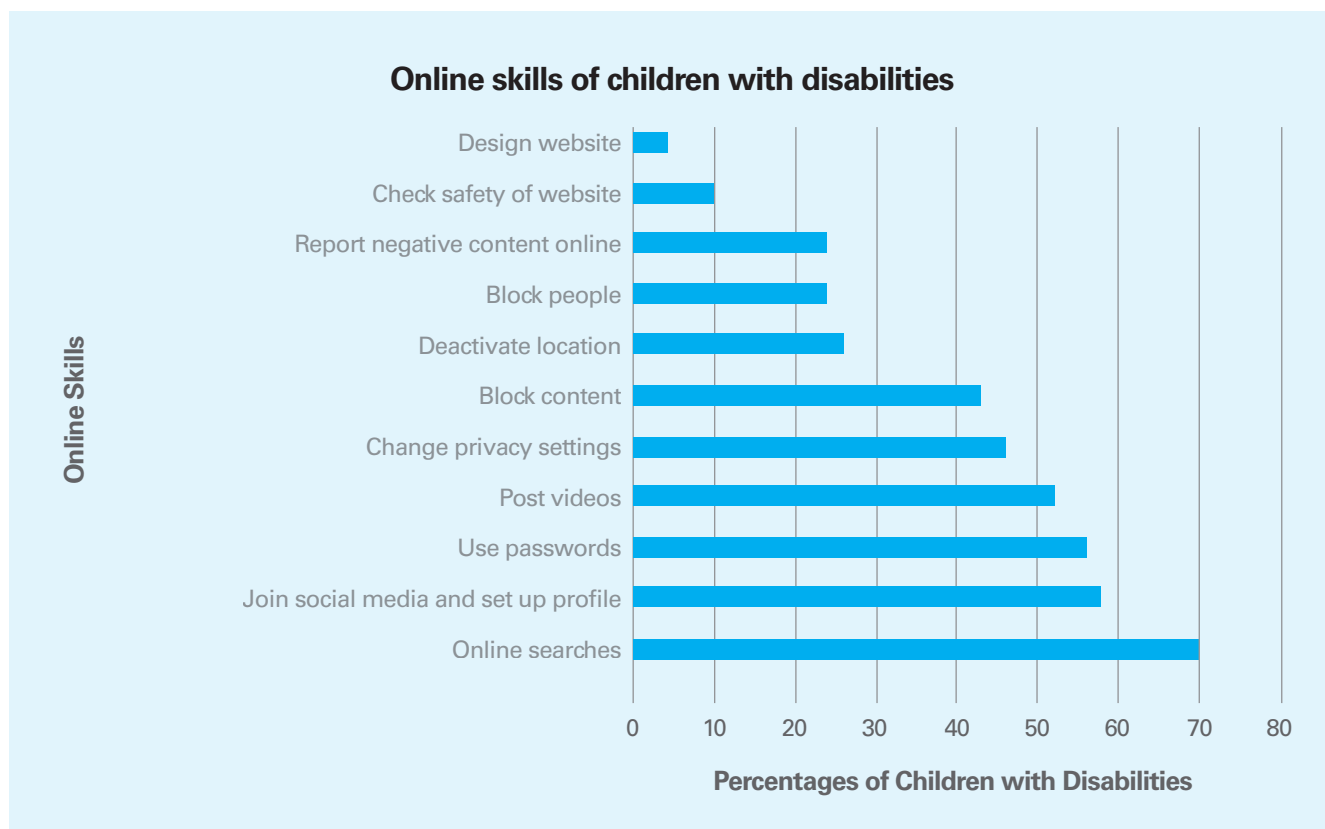
Prohibited activities

- Just over half (54%) of the children were prohibited from doing certain activities online.
- Watching pornography or accessing adult sites topped the list in things that children were not allowed to do online, and this was followed by not being allowed to access any negative content. Prohibited activities included:
 - o Not allowed to watch pornography or adult sites: n = 14 (51.9%)
 - o Not allowed to watch inappropriate content, including violence: n = 6 (12%)
 - o Not allowed to behave inappropriately (must use careful speech): n = 2 (7.4%)
 - o Only access certain sites and applications: n = 2 (7.4%)
 - o Limit time spent online: n = 1 (3.7%)
 - o Not allowed to talk to strangers: n = 1 (3.7%)
 - o Not allowed to imitate what is on the internet: n = 1 (3.7%)
 - o Not allowed to open strange messages: n = 1 (3.7%).
- Despite the prohibitions, two of the children said that they did the activities anyway.

Only fifty-two percent (52%) of the children said that their parents had sufficient knowledge to help them online.

Online skills

Very few of the children knew how to block people, block content, report negative content and check the safety of websites.



Removing people from contact lists

- Fifty-four percent (54%) of the children had removed someone from their contact lists.
- The majority of these (25.9%) had removed someone from their contact list because the people/messages were emotionally upsetting (inappropriate, scary, disturbing, irritating, bothersome, disrespectful, rude, angry, calls late at night).
- Nineteen percent (18.5%) removed someone from their contact list if they were sent spam, bullied or threatened by them or if the number was no longer in use.
- Eleven percent (11.1%) people removed people who were strangers.
- Seven percent (7.4%) removed someone because they no longer liked them (one of which was a dating relationship).

Sharing images of themselves online

Images they would share

- The children were asked what images of themselves they would share online, and they identified the following as images that they would share:
 - o Good pictures/nice/pictures/appropriate pictures: n = 14
 - o Pictures of the face only: n = 8
 - o Pictures of activities/holidays/gaming: n = 7
 - o Selfies: n = 5
 - o Pictures wearing hijab: n = 4
 - o Half body images: n = 2
 - o Animated pictures: n = 2
 - o Pictures with friends: n = 2
 - o Family photographs: n = 1
 - o School photographs: n = 1.
- Three of the children stated that they never send pictures.

Images they would not share

The children focused mainly on naked photographs and pornography and identified the following as images that they would not share:

- Sexually inappropriate photos: n = 23
 - o Naked photographs, photographs of exposed genitals or private parts: n = 12
 - o Sexy photographs: n = 6
 - o Pornography: n = 5.
- Inappropriate images (sensitive, negative images): n = 14
- Photos without a veil or hijab: n = 4
- Private photos: n = 3
- Photos of daily activities: n = 1
- Images of violence: n = 1.

Eight of the children (16%) did not know what images are not appropriate to share online.

Negative things that can happen online

The children seemed not to have sufficient insight into the dangers that could happen online as seen from their previous responses. This perception was reinforced by their responses to the question whether there were negative things that could happen to children online. A significant number of the children (40%) did not think that there were negative things that could happen to children online.

The children who said that negative things did happen online identified the activities in the table below. It is noticeable how few negative activities they were able to identify in comparison with the children without disabilities.

Negative phenomena that could occur online included the following:

- Exposure to inappropriate content (violence, swearing, crime)
- Excessive use or internet addiction
- Pornography/ adult content
- Accounts hacked, hoaxes, fake accounts and deception
- Can damage health and is bad for one's eyes
- Affects schoolwork negatively
- Organ trafficking
- Bullying

Advice to others on how to protect themselves online

A significant number of children did not know what advice to give or did not answer the question (38%). Those who did provide advice, suggested the following:

- Be careful while online
- Choose good content
- Use password protection
- Use the internet wisely

- Don't watch bad content
- Block contacts
- Don't bully or speak badly to anyone
- Don't play games.

Risky Behaviour

“As far as I understand, risky behaviour is behaviour that can cause bad things.”

The dark web

- Only three (6%) of the children knew what the DarkWeb is. All three were male and the youngest was twelve years old.
- Only one child had ever gone onto the Dark Web, a 12-year-old male with a mental disability. He said that he went onto the DarkWeb often because he was mischievous and he only went “just to have a look.” He said that he was not afraid of it.

Meeting people online

- Twenty-six percent (26%) of the children had added someone to their contacts that they did not know personally.
- More than half of these children had shared personal information with these people.
- They shared their names, home addresses and WhatsApp numbers.
- Nearly half of them shared photographs/ images with these people and most of these photographs were images of themselves, predominantly of their faces. Others shared photographs of their activities.

Meeting someone face-to-face after an online meeting

- Twenty-six percent (26%) of the children met someone face-to-face after they had met them online.
- Ninety-two percent (92.3%) of the children met friends, including friends from specific disability communities. Only 1 child met someone they did not know (9-year-old male with a physical disability).
- An analysis of the data further revealed that over double the number of boys met someone in person that they had first met online.
- A further extrapolation of the data revealed that the majority of the meetings took place in the 16 to 18 age group range with the highest recorded in the 17-year-old group.
- The majority of the children met the person in a public place. Public places included the town, square and stadium. Other meetings took place at the home of friends, at their own home or at school.
- The meetings appeared to be positive experiences for the children and the need to make friends was a key motivation. They said that they felt happy about the meetings and only one child expressed feeling awkward (they met Instagram friends by accident at the stadium).
- Almost all of the children (except for one) told someone about the meeting.
- Ten of the thirteen children who met someone face-to-face told their parents about the meeting. The majority of the parents were happy about the meeting. Others allowed it, some with conditions. The conditions attached to the meeting included “must be careful, polite, do not come into contact with men” (13-year-old blind female). Only one child was reprimanded.

Children's understanding of risky behaviour

The children were asked whether they performed certain activities in order to investigate whether they indulged in risky behaviour. The following five (5) activities were presented to the children and, as in the earlier findings with children without disabilities, finding friends emerged as a key motivation for children being online.

- Looked for new friends on the internet: 66%
- Used a false name and profile picture: 40%
- Lied about their age online: 22%
- Sent a photo/ video of themselves to someone they have never met: 14%
- Advertised on social media that they were looking for work: 6%.

False names and profile pictures

- Twenty (40%) children used false names and profile pictures. More males (n = 14) than females (n = 6) performed this activity.
- The age group in which the children used false names the most was thirteen, followed by 17-year-olds.
- This activity was performed most by children with a physical disability, more than twice any other disability group.

A significant number of children (38%)³⁰ were not able to explain what risky behaviour was. Comments from the interviewers indicate that the term 'risky' was not understood by the children. Overall, from their responses it was clear that there was very little knowledge in this group relating to risky behaviour online. Some of the explanations given were vague and described risky online behaviour as "bad, negative, impolite behaviour;" "behaviour that can cause bad things" or as "messages containing viruses." Some children had no idea at all and described risky behaviour as when a phone explodes as a result of games being played too frequently. A few of the children were able to give examples of risky behaviour and said that it included:

- Bullying
- Inappropriate behaviour online
- Giving out personal information
- Using WhatsApp frequently

³⁰ 19 children

- Imitating behaviour seen on social media
- Watching pornography
- Sending inappropriate images.

Sending a sexual image or video to someone online

Eighty-eight percent (88%) of the children believed that it was risky to send a sexual image or video to someone online. Although twelve percent (12%) responded 'no' to this question, they did not necessarily mean no, because on further questioning as to why they had said no, their responses were that they did not understand or that they did not have a phone.

The majority (31.8%) of those who responded 'yes' to this question said that it was immoral, wrong and sinful. Other reasons included the following:

- The images/videos could be shared with others
- They could go viral
- It was immoral/wrong/sinful
- It was dangerous
- The images/videos could be abused or misused
- It was harmful
- It could damage the good name of the family and of the individual concerned
- It was illegal and they could be imprisoned
- They would be punished
- It could ruin their mind
- They could be bullied
- They were afraid of exploitation, sextortion and abuse.

"Ruin the good name of your family, let alone yourself."

"Fear of being used by irresponsible people."

"When it is sent, it's just the same as we ask people to watch our porn videos."

"It can have a negative impact or can be disseminated."



Sending personal information to someone met online

- Sixty-eight percent (68%) of the children regarded this as risky behaviour, which was much lower than that of the children interviewed as a whole, of whom eighty-four percent (84%) believed the activity to be risky.
- The majority of the children (41.2%) who responded yes were concerned about the information being misused or abused. They thought it was dangerous because the people were strangers and these people would be able to trace them and come to their homes; they could kidnap them or misuse the information.
- Those who believed it was not risky said that they gave personal information when shopping online and the information they shared was with friends. This raises again the issue of how they define the term 'friends.' One child said that it depended on the purpose for which the information was shared as they sometimes had to provide personal information when registering for certain things online.

Face-to-face meetings with people who were first met online

- Fifty-eight percent (58%) thought that this was a dangerous activity, the main reason being that it could be dangerous and lead to criminal acts, including, kidnapping, rape and selling of organs. They were also concerned about the possibility of being defrauded and a number expressed suspicion and fear of strangers, especially as they did not know what the person's intention was.

"It's dangerous because you don't know the person."

"If the intention is evil, it is dangerous."

"Can be kidnapped and raped."



- The forty-two percent (42%) who did not think this activity was dangerous ascribed it to the fact that the person had become a friend online, yet again raising the concept of friendship. They said that they had got to know the people well online.

"You know each other well on the internet."

"Not always dangerous. Sometimes we know friends from social media, let alone friends from far away, with communication we become friends even until we meet directly."

"Sometimes we are also friends with people outside Jember (city) and know them through the application. For example, I'm selling on Facebook's marketplace. I frequently transact with cash on delivery."

"Because friends with the disability community."



Talking to strangers online

- Although sixty percent (60%) of the children said that it was risky to talk to someone on the internet whom they had not met face-to face before, their answers to 'why' didn't reflect a risk. It is not known if they did not understand the question or did not, in fact, find this behaviour risky. A large portion of the children also answered 'don't know' to why they think it is risky behaviour, which could mean that they know it is risky but they don't know why (lack of information).
- They reasons for regarding this behaviour as risky related to the fact that the people were strangers and they did not know what their intentions were. The intentions might be negative which raised concerns of kidnapping, fraud, seduction, chats being shared and inappropriate chats or videos.
- The main reason children did not consider this to be risky behaviour because it was the way they communicated amongst the disability community. They again raised the issue of friendships and said that they had got to know the people online and they were, therefore, no longer strangers. They also added that they were only chatting and were not discussing anything inappropriate.

"I know that he is good."

"At the beginning we didn't know but we communicate further, finally we know. If the people are good, we will continue the communication. If it's not good, yes we block it."

"Usually performed in deaf community groups."

"One community of friends with disabilities."



Talking about sexual acts

- Ninety percent (90%) of the children said that it was risky behaviour to talk about sexual acts online. They considered it a dangerous activity and offered the following reasons for this belief:
 - o They feared negative consequences
 - Being threatened, abused or invited to have sex
 - o It was immoral, taboo and against their religion
 - o It can have a serious impact on children
 - Promiscuity and a curiosity to see things related to sex
 - o The chats could be spread, disseminated and recorded
 - o It was inappropriate, embarrassing and made them feel uncomfortable
 - o This was an adult matter and children were too young to talk about it
 - o It was breaking the law and could be reported to the police.
- Two children said that they knew the behaviour was risky but did not actually know what the risks were.
- The children who said this was not risky behaviour either did not provide an explanation for their opinion or they said they did not understand so there is the possibility again that their responses were not true reflections of 'not risky.'

Unpleasant or uncomfortable online experiences

- Twelve of the children (24%) admitted to having experiences online that were unpleasant or which made them feel uncomfortable, and they indicated that the following incidents had happened to them:
 - o They received inappropriate pictures, messages or videos n = 4
 - o They were bullied n = 3
 - o Their account was hijacked n = 1
 - o They were exposed to adult pop-up adverts n = 1.

“I once felt insecure on the internet because I once accessed MiChat and I was almost harassed via MiChat by someone with my situation like this.” (18-year-old female who is blind)

“Sent a vulgar photo.”

“At that time I had Telegram, in Telegram I had accidentally entered a group that I also didn’t know, it turned out that the group contains sexual pictures. Sometimes the video is what I hear.” (17-year-old male who is blind)



Online Sexual Experiences

“Messages and pictures related to discussion of adult matters.”

Understanding of sexual messages or images

Twenty-two percent (22%) of the children said that they did not know what was meant by sexual messages or sexual images. Generally the responses were very vague with fourteen percent (14%) of the children describing them as ‘not good.’ Most of the responses referred to sexy messages or images; pornography; nude photographs; images of private parts; vulgar images and one child said it was a sexual act.

“Do not understand the term `sexual messages.” [9-year-old female with autism]

“Do not understand the concept of sex.” [16-year-old male with physical growth not appropriate for age]

“Sending images or photos with exposed genital is what sexual messages are.”



Received sexual messages on social media

- Ten children (20%) said that they had received sexual messages on their social media accounts. Three (3) of these children said they had invited the messages.
- Most of the children experienced negative feelings, including fear, anger and shock. Some said that they ignored or blocked the messages while others said that they felt uncomfortable and were annoyed.
- One child, a 14-year-old male, said that they made him curious.

Sent/posted sexual messages on social media

Only one (1) child admitted to sending a sexual message on social media. She was an 18-year-old female who was blind and who sent the message to a friend whom she met through MiChat. Her reason for doing it was “because for me, we are already in a relationship and I want to feel like dating even though I have shortcomings.” This highlights the particular vulnerability of children with disabilities, especially when they want to feel and experience what other young people are doing online.

Sexual information requested from child

- Three (3) children had received requests for sexual information. All three requests came from friends and again there is uncertainty as to whether these were strangers who they had befriended online.
- The particulars of the three children are as follows:
 - o 17-year-old female with only one eye was asked by a friend
 - o 18-year-old female who is blind was asked by friends on WhatsApp

- o 17-year-old male who is deaf and has a speech disability was asked by friends on social media
- o The requests were for sexy photographs and questions about their body shape.
- None of the children supplied the information and they all felt very negative about the requests and expressed feelings of anger, fear and shock.

Unsolicited sexual information supplied

- None of the children sent sexual information to anyone without being asked.

Requests for sexual information from others

- None of the children asked anyone for sexual information.

Exposure to sexual images on social media

Fifteen children (30%) admitted to seeing sexual images on social media. The platforms on which they saw the sexual images are contained in the table below.

| Platform/Application | Number of Children |
|--------------------------|--------------------|
| TikTok | 3 |
| Instagram | 3 |
| YouTube | 3 |
| Facebook | 2 |
| WhatsApp | 2 |
| Telegram | 2 |
| Online games | 1 |
| MiChat | 1 |
| Links and advertisements | 1 |

Received sexual images on social media account

- Twelve children (24%) had been the recipients of sexual images on their social media accounts. The majority of the sexual images were sent by strangers (58%) and by friends (33.3%) who included online friends and new friends met on social media. Only one child received an image from a foreign account.
- In five instances the sexual images were only sent once; in four instances more than once; in two instances often; and very often in one instance.

Request by others for photos of private parts

- Three children had received requests on social media for photos or videos of their private parts with the majority of requests coming from strangers. One child said that the request had come from a friend on MiChat.
- None of the children sent the picture that was requested.
- The children expressed feeling annoyed, afraid, disgusted, disturbed and uncomfortable.

Unsolicited images of private parts shared

None of the children sent unsolicited photographs of their private parts to anyone without being asked.

Request by children for photos of private parts of others

None of the children asked someone to share a photo or video of their private parts.

Sexual images of children shared online

None of the children have had their sexual images shared by someone else online.

Links to pornographic websites

- Seven children (14%) had received links to a pornographic website. The links were sent by strangers (n = 3); friends, including online friends (n = 3) and by an unknown person in one instance.
- This happened seldom or rarely in four (4) instances and often in three (3) instances.
- The children reported feeling various negative emotions while some admitted to indifference. Negative emotions included fear, disgust and discomfort. An 18-year-old

female who was blind said that at first she was curious but afterwards she became scared.

- The links were sent on the following platforms:

| Platform/Application | Number of Children |
|----------------------|--------------------|
| WhatsApp | 3 |
| Facebook | 2 |
| MiChat | 1 |
| Instagram | 1 |
| Telegram | 1 |

- Four (4) children blocked the link; one (1) opened it; one (1) did not open it and one (1) discussed it with a friend.

Threatened or blackmailed to engage in sexual activities

- Three (3) children said that they had been threatened or blackmailed to engage in sexual activities:
 - o A 17-year-old female with one eye was threatened by a stranger
 - o An 18-year-old female who is blind was threatened by new social media friends
 - o A 9-year-old male with a physical disability was threatened by friends.
- The threats/ blackmail took place on Facebook, WhatsApp and MiChat.
- In two of the three experiences, it appears as if the person making the threat/blackmail had access to personal information about the child, and used that information to threaten the child.
- Threats included the following:
 - o If she did not have sex with them, her family would be humiliated
 - o They threatened disclose to her teacher or parents that she was frequently on MiChat
 - o They asked him to take “a sex photo.”

Offer of money or gifts to meet for sexual purposes

- Three (3) children said that they had been offered money or gifts to meet someone in order to perform a sexual act. One child refused and one child did it while the response of the third child was unclear.
- Two of them were approached by friends on social media and the other by a group of college students. The 17-year-old male (blind) said that he had been forced to meet the college students who made him perform sexual acts. He then demanded money to perform the acts.
- The requests emanated from Facebook, WhatsApp and Telegram.

Offer of money or gifts for sexual images/videos

One child, a 17-year-old female, was offered money for sexual images but she refused.

Reporting online sexual experiences

The children were equally divided about whether they would tell someone about the online sexual experiences or not. Nineteen (38%) children said that they would not disclose to anyone and twenty-one (42%) said that they would tell someone while the others were unsure or did not respond.

- The overwhelming majority of the children who responded to the question said that they would tell a parent, and more than a quarter specifically mentioned telling their mother:
 - o Parents: n = 11
 - o Teacher: n = 2
 - o Friend: n = 1
 - o Brother: n = 1.
- Nearly three-quarters (72%) of the children said that they would not report online sexual experiences to the police. Most of the children said that they would not report because they were afraid, although they did not clarify what they were afraid of. The children provided the following reasons for not reporting to police:

| | |
|--|--------|
| o Fear: | n = 9 |
| o Don't know why: | n = 7 |
| o Prefer to report to others (parent/teacher): | n = 6 |
| o Don't want to report it/it doesn't matter: | n = 5 |
| o No reason given: | n = 4 |
| o Don't know how to report: | n = 4 |
| o Ignore it: | n = 1 |
| o It might be a joke: | n = 1. |

"If you can still handle, report to the parent or to the teacher. Then if it is excessive continue to the police."

"Don't want to prolong the problem."

"[Talk] to parents first. Then wait for the parents."

"I feel afraid and afraid that my family is worried."



Why do children not disclose online sexual abuse

The reason given most often for children not disclosing was fear. The children interviewed said that children would be scared of unfavourable parental responses, being scolded by parents and being threatened by the offender. Another significant reason for not telling anyone, as stated by the children, was embarrassment and shame, including feeling guilty. It should also be noted, however, that a quarter of the children did not know how to answer this question, again providing evidence of the need for education of children on these issues.



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Cyberbullying and Psychological Abuse

“Ridiculed because I am physically different.”

Teased by other children

- More than half of the children (56%) reported being teased, which was higher than the average for the other children who took part in the study (46%).
- The majority were teased about their disability. The children also reported being body shamed and excluded from friendship groups. They were teased about the following:

- o Physical deformities and disabilities: 34%
- o Body shaming/fat/ugly: 12%
- o Being excluded from friendships: 4%
- o Teased about not going to school: 4%
- o Told they were stupid: 2%.

Embarrassed by others

Sixteen children (32%) said that they had been embarrassed in the following ways:

- They had been pushed and made to fall
- They were mocked because of their disability
- They were humiliated openly
- A 15-year-old male with learning difficulties and autism reported that he had had his clothes removed (stripped).

False stories spread

Four (4) children said that they had had false stories spread about them, which included:

- Being falsely slandered about a sex photo
- Having their personal life bad-mouthed
- Being falsely accused of kissing a girlfriend.

Isolated or blocked from groups

Seven (14%) children had been blocked from groups and most of them did not know why they had been blocked while others related to friendship issues.

Sent nasty or scary messages

Seven (14%) children had been sent nasty or scary messages. The majority of the messages related to sexual messages that were either requests for sexual pictures, threats, links to pornography or resulted in sexual violence. In addition, the children were sent ghost images and messages.

Harassed or threatened

Ten (20%) children said that they had been harassed or threatened. The responses received here were repetitions of the answers provided to the previous questions as the concepts of nasty and scary are very similar to those of being threatened or harassed.



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Online Safety Education

“If possible, if there can be a special application for blind people too.”

Although fifty (50) children use the internet almost daily in this group, only thirteen (26%) have received some information on how to keep safe online. Most of the information was received from a teacher or at school (16%) while three children received information from their parents. The other two received their information from a friend and the Indonesian Blind Association.

The information they received dealt with the following topics:

- Internet safety
- Digital literacy
- How to use social media properly
- How to avoid online violence
- How to keep accounts private and use passwords
- The positives and negatives of the internet
- Healthy internet.

The children thought that the information they had received was useful, important and easy to understand.

Online safety education at school

Just over half (54%) of the children said that they would want online safety education to be presented at school. Of these, twenty-one children said that it should be presented as a life skills subject. The children said that the information could be presented by the teacher in lessons or be part of subjects like informatics, computer studies, civics and religious subjects. The information could also be offered in the form of workshops and seminars.

The six (12%) children who did not want the information presented at school wanted it to be delivered door-to-door and the reason for this was because they did not go to school as a result of their disabilities. Most of them were home bound and studied from home as one of the children explained: “My school is at home so the learning is conducted through home.” This a particularly important issue when considering online safety education for children with

disabilities. A number of children also wanted the information to be accessed online, on various platforms, including google and social media.

| Presentation format |
|--|
| Must be interesting and easy to understand |
| Should include videos |
| Must include activities |
| Should include group activities/socialisation |
| Invite external sources with knowledge to address children |
| Must provide materials |

The majority of the responses favoured the introduction of this information at school to be at elementary school level. Three (3) children said that children should be given this information as soon as they get their first phone.

Topics to be included in online safety education

The children suggested the topics in the table below for inclusion in online safety education.

| Topics for online safety education |
|--|
| How to access information safely online |
| How to keep accounts private |
| The benefits of the internet |
| The dangers of the internet |
| How to block dangerous sites |
| How to change a password |
| How to behave well online |
| How to protect themselves from being hacked |
| Dangers of pornography and other negative online content |
| Online sexual and non-sexual harassment |
| Introduction to online social media |

Difficulties with presenting information at schools

Some children highlighted the fact that there might be certain barriers for children with disabilities receiving this information at school. Barriers identified included the fact that the pace of learning for children with disabilities would be slower than for children without disabilities; that it would be difficult for some to practise the skills and that some may not understand the information.

Disaggregation of Data: Girls and Boys

The data from the study was further disaggregated into male and female to investigate whether there were any differences between the online usage and behaviour of boys and girls. The overall findings show that there were very few differences between boys and girls with respect to their online behaviour generally. There were slightly more boys (n = 273) than girls (n = 237) who participated in the study.

The following differences were observed:

Internet Usage

- There are more out of school boys (8% girls vs 15.4% boys).
- A hundred percent (100%) of boys used the internet while 98.7% of girls used the internet.
- Although boys and girls accessed the internet in roughly equal measures at home, school and at their friends, more than double the number of girls accessed the internet at malls (15.2% girls vs 6.6% boys).
- Slightly more girls said that their favourite place to go online was at home (83,1% of girls vs 74,4% boys) and more boys than girls preferred going online in public spaces and at a friend.

- Both the boys and the girls said that they felt comfortable at home and both mentioned that they felt safer at home.
- Girls were mainly interested in entertainment (watching TikTok videos and movies), finding information and chatting to friends, and only a few of the girls referred to online gaming. The boys, on the other hand, were mainly interested in online games, communicating and making new friends and finding information. Only a few mentioned watching TikTok videos.
- More girls than boys said that they obeyed the rules regarding online that their parents imposed (82,1% of the girls vs 75,3% of the boys).
- The reasons why they disobeyed the rules their parents imposed on their online activity differed. Boys were mostly concerned with their gaming and were of the opinion that they did not have enough time to play or could not finish their games. A number of the boys referred to being addicted while none of the girls mentioned addiction. The girls disobeyed the rules because they interfered with their entertainment and schoolwork. They thought the internet was a lot of fun and the rules did not give them enough time online.
- When asked whether they agreed with the rules, the girls were more emotional in their responses, saying that the restrictions annoyed them, made them angry and stubborn and that they did not like being restricted. The boys were more concrete in their responses and said that they thought the restrictions were unnecessary and they needed more time to play.

Internet Activities

- Chatting to friends, family, doing schoolwork and watching videos or movies were activities that both boys and girls did in equal measures. However there were certain differences in some of their other activities. These included the following:
 - o Many more boys played games online (57.8% of girls vs 86.8% of boys)
 - o Many more girls followed celebrities (42.2% of girls vs 17.6% of boys)
 - o More girls than boys browsed and shopped online (54.9% girls vs 38.8% boys)
 - o More girls did research online (8.9% girls vs 4.8% boys).

- There were also differences in the topics that boys and girls researched online. More boys investigated career opportunities and jobs while more girls researched further education opportunities. Girls also researched medical information more than boys (21.5% girls vs 9.9% boys).
- More boys than girls used VPNs (7.6% girls and 19% boys). The girls used VPNs because they were more concerned about privacy, hiding their identity and having private friends while most of the boys used them for gaming and to watch anime. They could access more sites and there was better streaming for games.
- There were slight differences in the use of applications and search engines between the boys and girls:
 - More boys used YouTube (80.6% girls vs 99.6% boys)
 - Almost double the number of girls used Google (92.4% girls vs 48.7% boys)
 - Slightly more girls used Instagram (76.8% girls vs 67% boys)
 - Many more boys used Facebook (46.4% girls vs 67.4% boys)
 - More girls used Snapchat (5.1% girls vs 1.1% boys).
- Slightly more girls allowed their family to 'friend' their accounts (78.1% girls vs 71.4% boys).

Internet Safety

- Girls felt slightly less safe on the internet than the boys (57% girls vs 62.6% boys), although both provided equally naïve reasons for feeling safe.
- As far as online dangers were concerned, both boys and girls were mostly concerned about being hacked, fraud or having their personal data infiltrated. Although some girls mentioned pornography as a danger, this was raised more frequently by the boys. Boys also referred to bullying in games, which was not raised by the girls. Girls frequently mentioned kidnapping as a danger but this was not mentioned by the boys at all.

- Both boys and girls received their information on how to be safe online from the internet itself on various applications and accounts i.e. Google, YouTube and TikTok. However, slightly more boys received their information from friends (5.9 % girls vs 8.4% boys) and more boys received information from school than girls (5.5% girls vs 9.5% boys).
- Girls were monitored slightly more than boys online by their parents (57.4% girls vs 51.3% boys).
- Although equal amounts of boys and girls were prohibited from performing certain activities, there were marked differences as to what activities were prohibited:
 - Girls were not allowed to take revealing or sexy photographs, photographs with tight clothing or ones in which they were not wearing a hijab. None of the boys had rules relating to sexy or revealing photographs
 - Boys had rules relating to gambling and violence, which were not mentioned by the girls
 - Boys mentioned rules relating to online gaming which was not mentioned by the girls
 - Although both groups were prohibited from watching pornography, this was mentioned much more by the boys.
- More than double the number of boys performed the prohibited acts anyway as compared to the girls (6.2% girls vs 15% boys).
- Slightly more girls than boys had removed people from their contact lists (74.3% girls vs 71.1% boys). Girls said they mostly removed people from their contact lists because they made them feel uncomfortable or received threatening/rude/impolite messages from the numbers. Boys, on the other hand, did this to people from whom they received pornography or inappropriate content or people with whom they were fighting or arguing.
- There was a difference in the images of themselves which boys and girls were prepared to share. Girls focused on dress while boys focused on activities. Girls said they shared polite photographs in which they were appropriately dressed and wearing hijabs. Boys said they mainly shared photographs of their activities and hobbies.
- When asked what images were not okay to share, boys focused mostly on pornographic photographs whereas only a few of the girls mentioned this. Girls focused on photographs wearing the hijab and photographs that were sexy or revealing.

Risky Behaviour

- The boys were more aware of the Dark Web (6.3% girls vs 17.9% boys) and more boys had gone onto the Dark Web than girls (0.8% girls vs 3.7% boys).
- Slightly more boys had added people to their contacts that they did not know personally (27.8% girls vs 33% boys). More boys had also shared personal information with these people (27.3% girls vs 34.4% boys) and more of them had shared photographs with these people (22.7% girls vs 35.6% boys).
- More boys met someone in person whom they had met for the first time on the internet (17.3% girls vs 28.9% boys). There were some differences between boys and girls with respect to where they met:
 - More girls met the person at school compared to boys
 - Many more boys than girls met the person at their home
 - Boys mostly met the person in a public space.
- Feelings about the meetings also differed with more girls being happy about the meeting (53.7% girls vs 44.3% boys) and more boys expressing indifference (26.8% girls vs 44.3% boys).
- Less of the girls told their parents about meeting someone in person that they had first got to know online (43.9% girls vs 51.9% boys). The parents of the boys expressed more indifference about the meetings (19.5% girls vs 32.9% boys), and were slightly more supportive and happier in the case of the girls.
- Both boys and girls were equally of the opinion that sending a sexual image or video to someone on the internet was risky as was talking about sexual acts with someone online. However, they differed about the following:
 - More girls thought it was risky to send personal information (i.e. name, address, phone number) to someone they had never met face-to-face before (87.8% girls vs 79.1% boys)
 - Many more girls believed it to be risky to meet someone face-to-face that they had first met online (80.6% girls vs 61.2% boys)
 - Many more girls believed it to be risky to talk to someone on the internet that they had not met before face-to-face (60.3% girls vs 46.5% boys).

Online Sexual Experiences

- Both boys and girls identified bullying/mocking/teasing as the activity that bothered or upset them the most. Boys also complained of negative online gaming experiences while the girls were concerned about being approached for personal information and naked photographs.
- Exactly the same percentage of boys and girls had received sexual messages on their social media accounts (25.3%), and many of the emotions they experienced were very similar, except for two. More girls reported feeling uncomfortable (28.3% girls vs 7.2% boys) and more boys said that they were indifferent to the messages (3.3% girls vs 17.4% boys).
- More boys than girls sent or posted sexual messages via their social media accounts (0.4% girls vs 1.5% boys).
- Slightly more girls were asked for sexual information about themselves although the percentages were very similar (8.9% girls vs 7.8% boys). The difference was that girls did not supply the information whereas just over half of the boys did.
- Slightly more boys asked somebody else for sexual information about themselves (0.8% girls vs 2.2% boys) and more boys have seen sexual images on social media (43.5% girls vs 56% boys).
- Both girls and boys received sexual images on their social media accounts with boys receiving slightly more than girls (19.4% girls vs 23.8% boys). The difference, however, was that boys received them four times more from their friends (26.1% girls vs 67.7% boys) while girls received them far more from strangers (52.2% girls vs 29.2% boys).
- More girls than boys received requests for photographs or videos of their private parts (7.6% girls vs 2.6% boys). None of the girls responded to the request whereas half of the boys did.
- More boys requested a photograph or video of private parts from somebody else: one girl did so whereas nine boys did so.

- More boys than girls admitted to having received a link to a pornographic site (16.5% girls vs 29.7% boys). The girls received more links from strangers than the boys (44.4% girls vs 29.6% boys) while the boys received more links from their friends (56.4% girls vs 67.9% boys). Many more boys reported feeling indifferent to receiving the links – 7.7% girls vs 23.5% boys. The biggest difference between boys and girls was that boys opened and watched the link 8 times more than the girls.
- Girls are targeted more than boys with threats and blackmail to engage in sexual activities (3.4% girls vs 0.4% boys).
- More than double the number of girls were offered money or gifts to meet someone for sexual purposes (3.8% girls vs 1.5% boys) and girls were again targeted more by strangers.
- More girls were prepared to report the matter to the police (41.8% girls vs 32.6% boys).

Cyberbullying and Psychological Abuse

- Girls and boys were equally teased, had false stories spread about them and blocked from groups. Slightly more girls reported being harassed or threatened (9.7% girls vs 7.3% boys).

Recommendations

Children's digital literacy

- In addressing online literacy for children, there needs to be recognition that children spend a great deal of time online and that it has become an integral part of their lives, a place where they are entertained, their development is taking place and they feel happy. Their world is contained within their phones and the benefits far outweigh the negative experiences.
- Children need a greater awareness of the dangers that are inherent in online activities as their knowledge is limited in this regard. They focus on hacking and fraud and, therefore, believe that they are safe if they have privacy settings and passwords on their devices. They also need more detailed information on how to protect themselves online against these dangers since many simply block negative or problematic content or messages or ignore them, irrespective of whether there are images of them being shared with others. Online safety education programmes should deal with the topics of VPNs and the Dark Web to ensure children understand the nature of the dangers inherent in the activities. Children access the Dark Web out of curiosity and are not prepared for what they encounter there.
- The concept of online friendship also needs to be clarified for children since an important finding of the research was that children believe that someone is a friend if they have been chatting to them online. This has repercussions for exchanging photographs and meeting the newly acquired 'friends' as the children no longer perceive these people to be strangers.

- Children need to have greater access to online safety education programmes as the majority have not had access to these, which should focus not only on internet safety but also online behaviour and ethics.
- Risky behaviour is a topic that would have to be included in any online safety education programme as many children do not understand what risky behaviour is, the consequences of it and how to protect themselves against it.
- Children have online sexual experiences, both wanted and unwanted, and to ensure that they have the knowledge to adequately protect themselves, programmes need to contain open discussions of appropriate sexual behaviour and how to keep safe online. These discussions are important since the taboo on discussing sex impacts on the child's ability to disclose possible abuse.
- Children with disabilities make great use of the internet for purposes of communication and meeting friends, yet over 70% of them have not received any online safety education, contributing significantly to their vulnerability since many of them did not have an understanding of the concept of risky behaviour.

Parenting in the online world

- Parent programmes need to be developed that include a discussion on the rules that parents should impose so that the rules address the dangers inherent in online activities as opposed to simply imposing time restrictions on internet usage. Parents focus overwhelmingly on the amount of time children spend online as opposed to what they are doing online. The concept of monitoring must also be explored to ensure it is more effective as well as different ways to ensure that children are safe online. Parents had not received online safety education other than that which they gleaned from their friends and the internet. This is evident in their inability to identify risky behaviour and monitor their children effectively. In order for children to be safe online, it is vital that parents have access to online safety education.
- Good relationships between parents and children are key to the child's safety and a greater focus needs to be placed on the methods of creating and nurturing these relationships. Parents also requested information on parenting skills and information on how to communicate better with their children. Parent programmes should be introduced that focus on promoting an understanding of child development, adolescents and building healthy communication between parents and children as this is key to protecting children online.

Policy implications

- Greater attention and further research must be focused on cyberbullying as this appears to be the most prevalent negative online behaviour that children come into contact with. Most of the children have experienced it in some form and it has had severe impact in some cases. Children also have no idea of how to deal with this behaviour or protect themselves other than by blocking accounts.

Online safety education in schools

- The viability of including online safety education in school curricula should be investigated as the vast majority of parents and children believed that it would be best placed there.
- Online safety education should be integrated into school programmes and subjects and should be introduced at elementary school.
- It is recommended that greater focus be placed on the dangers of pornography and its impact on individuals in online safety programmes as this appears to be a particular concern arising from boys' online activities.
- Programmes, both educational and media, should emphasise the fact that boys are as vulnerable as girls to online sexual exploitation and perhaps even more so since they are more inclined to respond to requests they receive.

Engagement with tech sector

- Programmes geared specifically for children with disabilities must be developed and made available for these children as well as their parents.

Strengthening reporting and service provision

- Reporting of online abuse is problematic because parents and children do not have knowledge of the laws, the process of reporting and the procedures involved. It is recommended that reporting mechanisms and platforms are strengthened, accessible and sustainable. This information is vital and must be included in online safety education as well as media campaigns.

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