

# **Online Safety Briefing: Parents**

**May 2025**

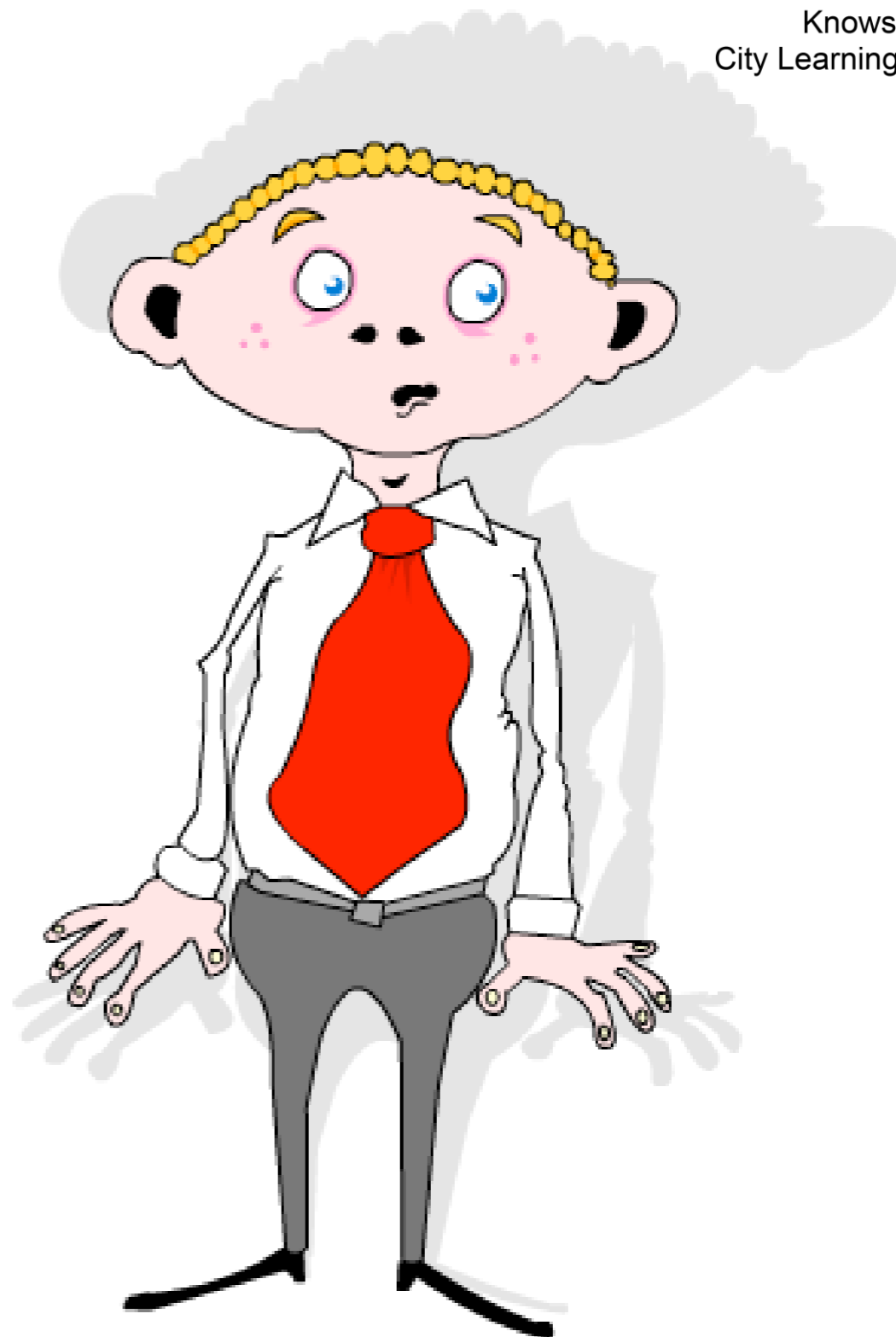
# Introduction

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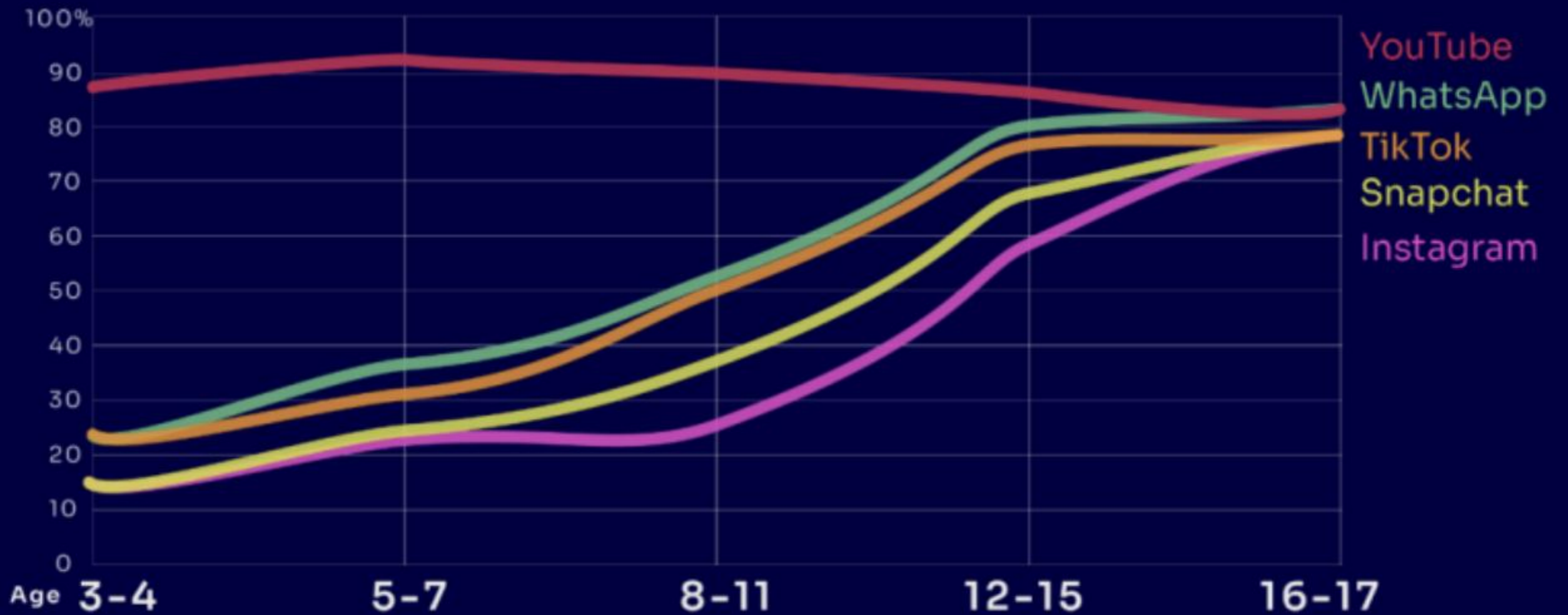


# 1. Current Trends

- **Popular platforms:** TikTok, Instagram & YouTube.
- **Online gaming:** Roblox, Fortnite & Minecraft
- **Live streaming platforms:** Twitch, Bigo, Monkey & Clash
- **Communication apps:** WhatsApp, Snapchat & Discord

# 1. Current Trends

Top 5 apps/sites used across all categories - by age group



# 1. Current Trends

## Online Gaming: 8-17s

### Playing games with others



74%

Played against or with someone else **they know**



32%

Played against or with someone **they don't know** outside game

### In-game chat (messaging or headset)

64%

Chat to people **they know**

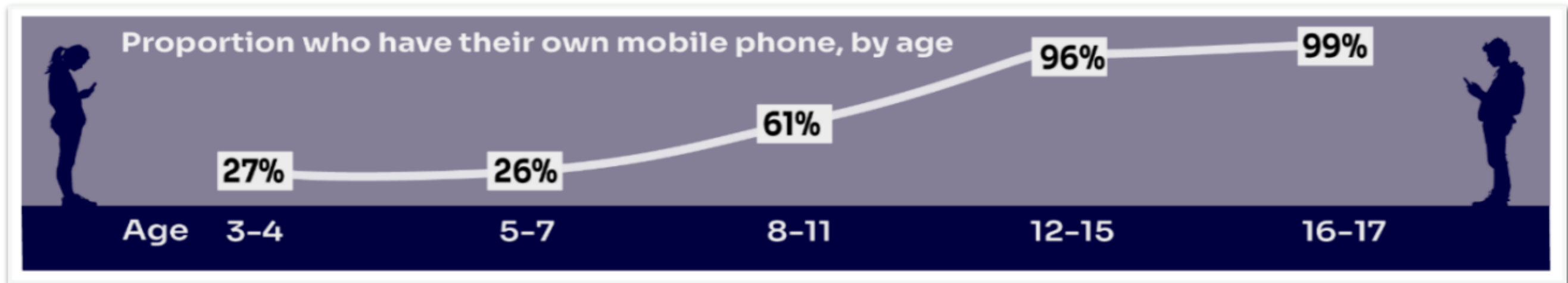


31%

Chat to people **they don't know** outside the game



# 1. Current Trends



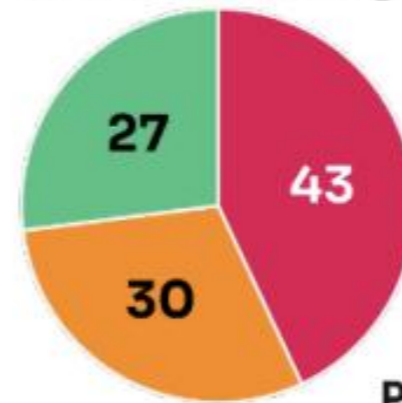
# 1. Current Trends



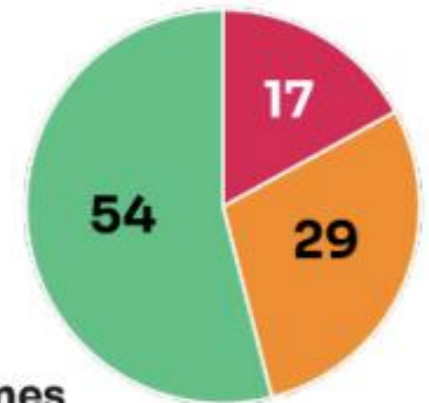
The benefits to my child outweigh the risks



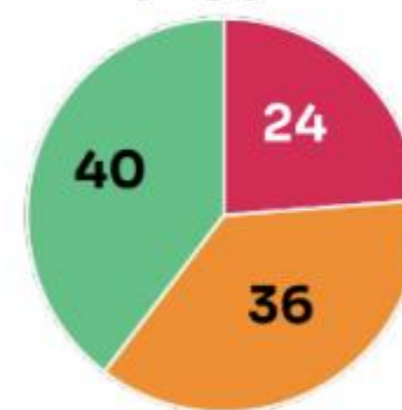
Social media, messaging and video sharing



Gathering information online



Playing games



Agree  
Disagree  
Neither/DK

% of parents whose child aged 3-17 goes online



Theo (left) and Ben (right) are both fascinated by the impact AI is having on education

Family & Education 6 min read

# 'Most of our friends use AI in schoolwork'

Updated 17 hours ago

By Theo and Ben  
BBC Young Reporters



Home



My News



Search

## % of UK online adults who visited services and the most popular service in each sector



### Social Media

98% visited at least one of the top ten social media services

91% visited YouTube



### Search

97% visited at least one of the top ten search services

86% visited Google



### Retail

87% visited Amazon  
64% visited eBay



### Generative AI

31% visited these services  
23% visited ChatGPT



### Pornographic content

29% visited these services  
18% visited PornHub



### Online dating

11% visited these services  
5% visited Tinder

### Generative artificial intelligence

Three in ten UK internet users aged 16+ said that they used a generative AI tool

Generative artificial intelligence (generative AI) broadly refers to algorithms that can create new content in response to a prompt, including text, images, video and code outputs. ChatGPT is the most widely used service; our survey conducted in June 2023 found that 23% of internet users aged 16+ said they had used it.

Snapchat My AI is the generative AI tool most widely used by online children

Four in five (79%) online teenagers and two in five (40%) online 7-12s had used any of the following generative AI tools: ChatGPT, Snapchat My AI, Midjourney or DALL-E. Half of UK online 7-17-year-olds said in June 2023 that they had used Snapchat My AI, making it the most popular generative AI tool among children.

# 2. Understanding the Risks

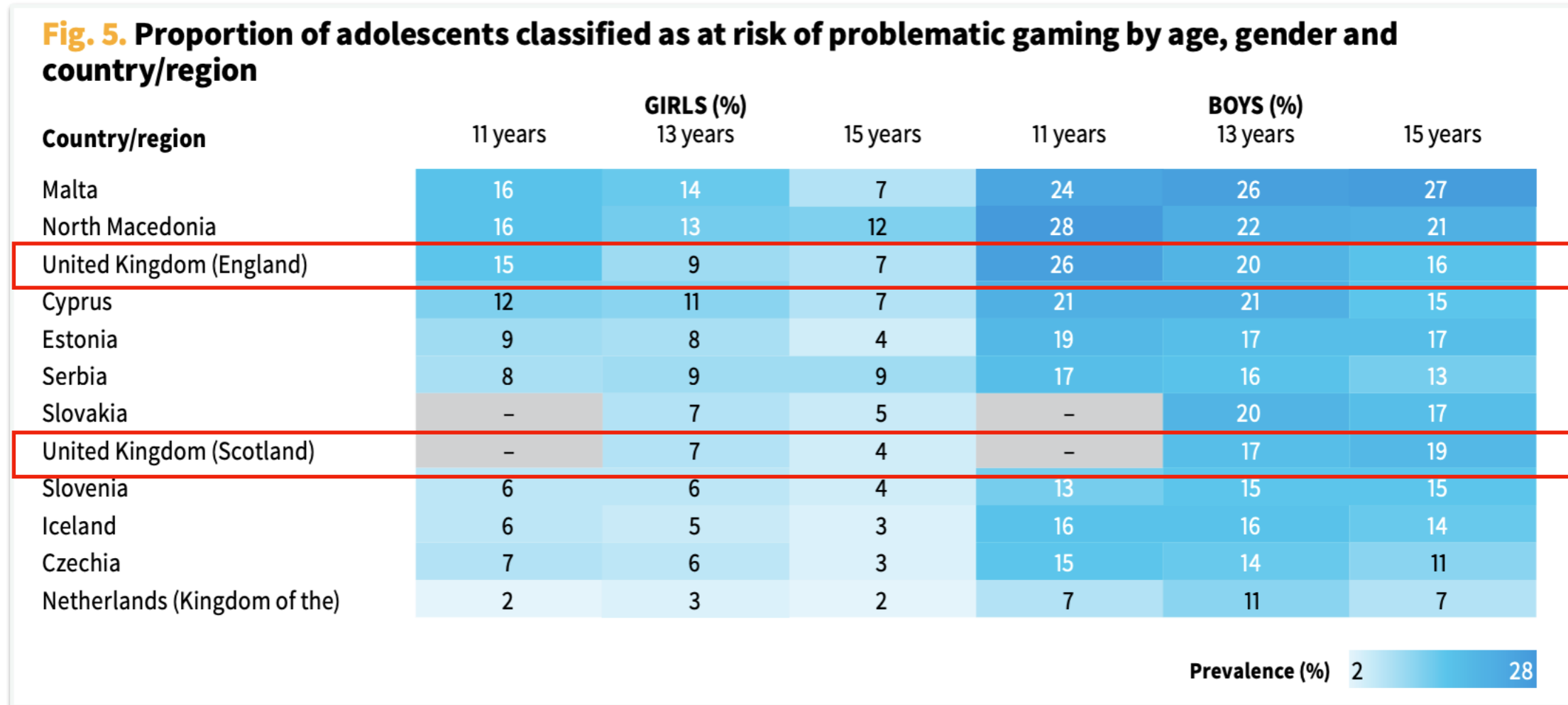
- **Social Media:** Cyberbullying, inappropriate content, privacy issues, screen addiction.
- **Online Gaming:** In-game purchases, contact with strangers, gaming addiction.
- **Live Streaming:** Sharing personal information, real-time interactions with strangers.

# 2. Understanding the Risks

- **Sexting and image-sharing:** Sharing explicit images online.
- **Live streaming and its impact on privacy:** Sharing personal details during live streams.
- **The impact of screen time on mental health:** Excessive screen time with issues like anxiety, sleep deprivation, and attention problems.

# World Health Organisation

A focus on adolescent social media use and gaming in Europe, central Asia and Canada



Problematic gaming - having five or more symptoms on the Internet Gaming Disorder Scale (details on next slide).

### Internet Gaming Disorder Scale–Short-Form (IGDS9-SF) (Pontes & Griffiths, 2015)

**Instructions:** These questions will ask you about your gaming activity during the past year (i.e., last 12 months). By gaming activity we understand any gaming-related activity that has been played either from a computer/laptop or from a gaming console or any other kind of device (e.g., mobile phone, tablet, etc.) both online and/or offline.

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
1. Do you feel preoccupied with your gaming behavior? (Some examples: Do you think about previous gaming activity or anticipate the next gaming session? Do you think gaming has become the dominant activity in your daily life?)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Do you feel more irritability, anxiety or even sadness when you try to either reduce or stop your gaming activity?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Do you feel the need to spend increasing amount of time engaged gaming in order to achieve satisfaction or pleasure?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Do you systematically fail when trying to control or cease your gaming activity?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Have you lost interests in previous hobbies and other entertainment activities as a result of your engagement with the game?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. Have you continued your gaming activity despite knowing it was causing problems between you and other people?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. Have you deceived any of your family members, therapists or others because the amount of your gaming activity?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. Do you play in order to temporarily escape or relieve a negative mood (e.g., helplessness, guilt, anxiety)?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. Have you jeopardized or lost an important relationship, job or an educational or career opportunity because of your gaming activity?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

# 2. Understanding the Risks

Parents of  
3-17-year-olds



**39%**  
Agree

**44%**  
Disagree

**“I find it hard to control my child's screen time”**

Agreement by age of child

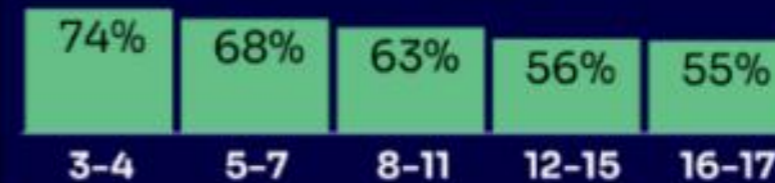


**62%**  
Agree

**22%**  
Disagree

**“I think my child has a good balance between screen time and doing other things”**

Agreement by age of child



# 2. Understanding the Risks

## Continuous online contact with people other than friends

Country/region	11-year-olds			13-year-olds			15-year-olds		
	BOYS (%)	GIRLS (%)	TOTAL (%)	BOYS (%)	GIRLS (%)	TOTAL (%)	BOYS (%)	GIRLS (%)	TOTAL (%)
Albania	26	22	24	35	35	35	32	38	35
Armenia	21	21	21	24	19	21	12	15	14
Austria	6	6	6	5	5	5	5	4	4
Iceland	15	15	15	13	15	14	16	12	14
Ireland	13	12	13	18	20	19	14	17	16
United Kingdom (England)	21	18	19	12	16	14	15	14	14
United Kingdom (Scotland)	16	17	17	12	19	15	13	19	16
United Kingdom (Wales)	13	15	14	9	14	11	10	12	11
<b>HBSC average</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>14</b>

Note: no data were received from Belgium (French), Slovakia and Switzerland.

# IWF Annual Data & Insights Report 2024



Reports suspected to contain child sexual abuse imagery in 2024

424,047

[Jump to our reports assessment](#)

291,273

Reports confirmed to contain  
child sexual abuse imagery

729,696

Imagery assessed to be  
criminal in 2024

# 2. Understanding the Risks

## Reports assessment - key outcomes in 2024

**424,047**

**Total number of reports assessed (an 8% increase on 2023)**

**1,142**

**Reports received through the Report Remove tool (a 44% increase on 2023)**

**291,273**

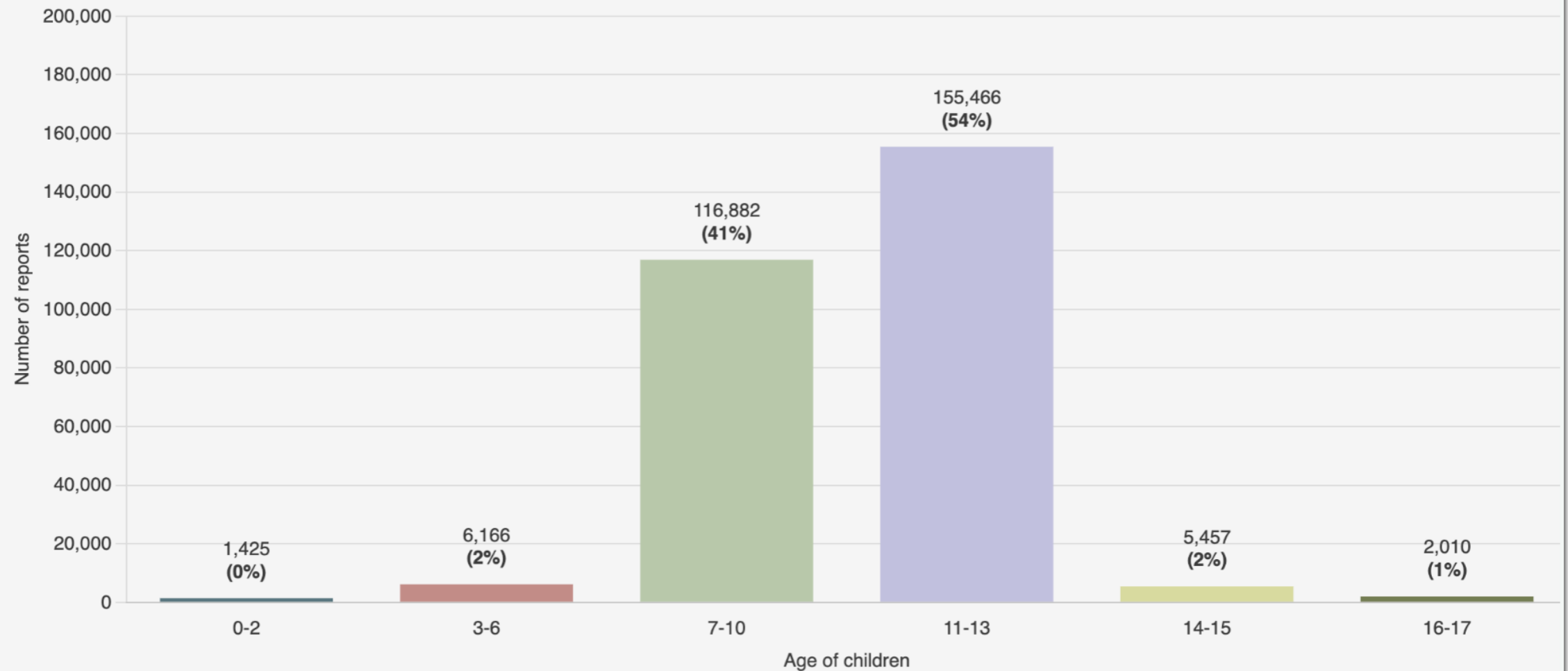
**Reports confirmed as containing child sexual abuse imagery (a 6% increase on 2023)**

**245**

**Number of URLs containing AI-generated images of child sexual abuse (a 380% increase on 2023)**

# 2. Understanding the Risks

Age comparison – past three years

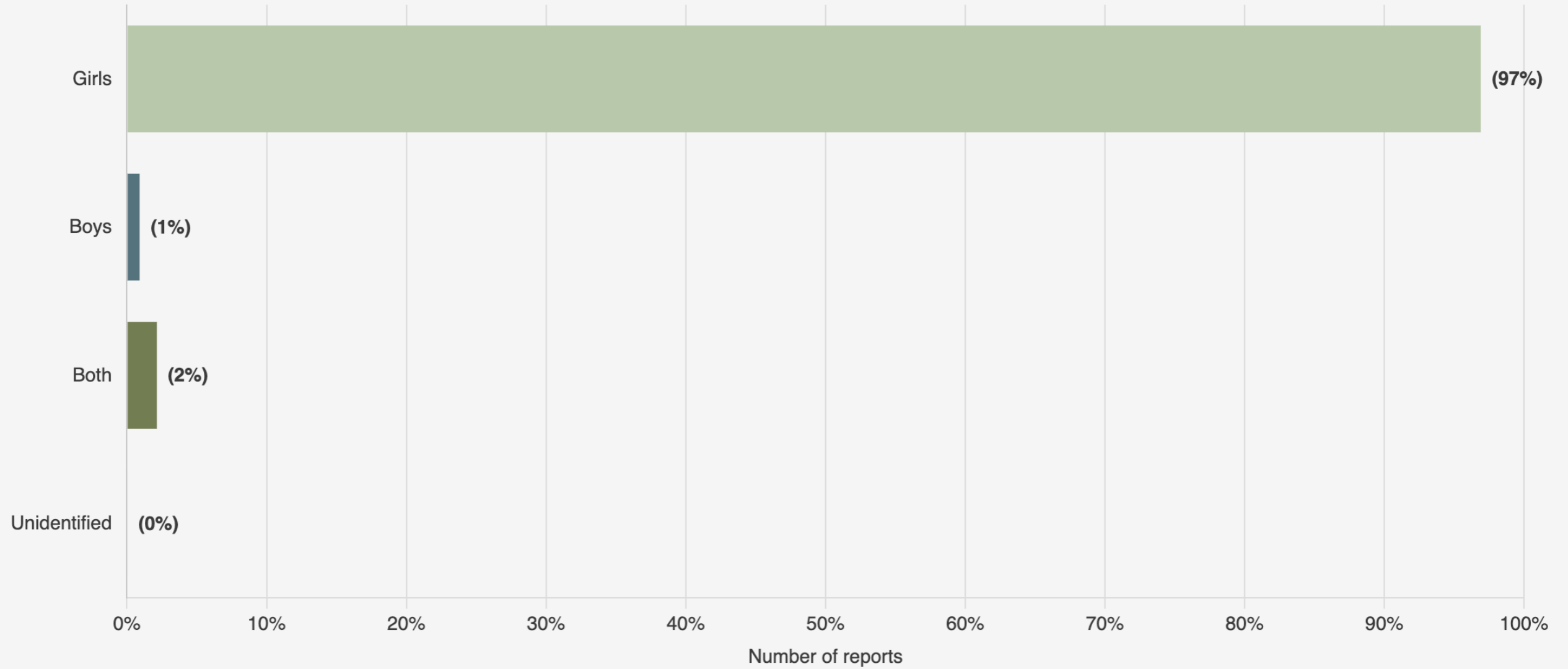


2024    2023    2022

*IWF analysts record the age of the youngest child seen in any image on a URL or in imagery reported via child reporting services. This chart provides a three-year view of the number and proportion of the different age groups recorded by IWF analysts.*

# 2. Understanding the Risks

Analysis by sex – past three years



2024  2023  2022

**Victims are getting younger – with a 25% increase in reports involving 14-15 year olds compared to the previous year.**

## ‘Exponential increase in cruelty’ as sextortion scams hit younger victims

Published: Fri 23 Aug 2024

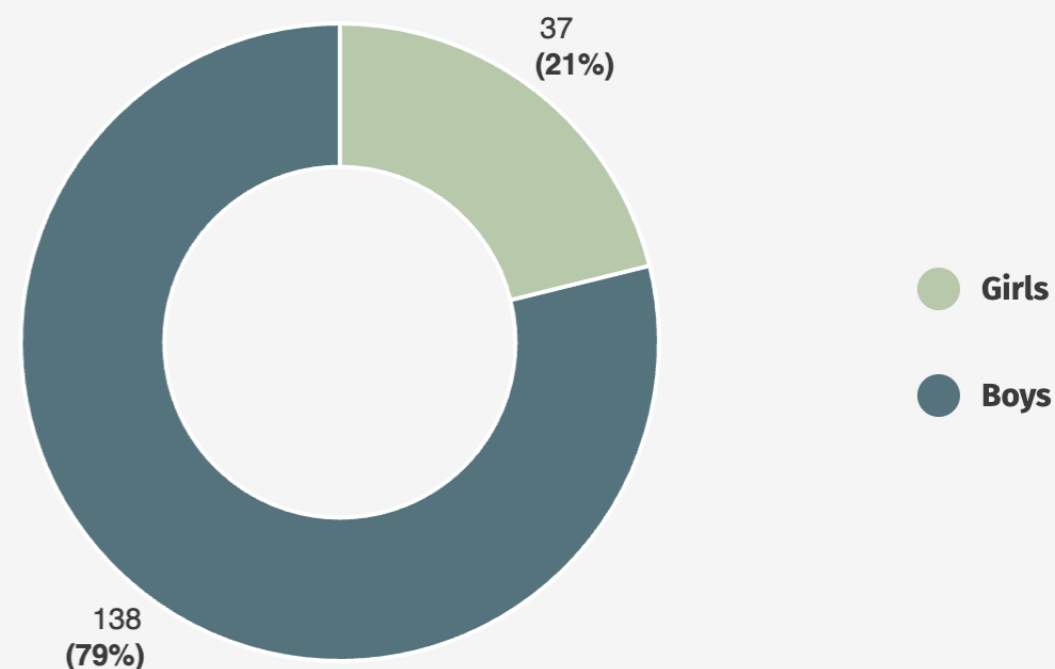
### Reports involving sexual extortion are on the rise as criminals become more ‘adept’ at targeting younger children

Children as young as 11 are being preyed on in sextortion scams, as criminal gangs are targeting younger victims and girls in an “exponential increase in cruelty”.

The Internet Watch Foundation (IWF) is warning that younger children, as well as increasing numbers of girls, are now being exposed to sexual extortion, commonly known as “sextortion”.



### Sex of children seen in sexual extortion reports

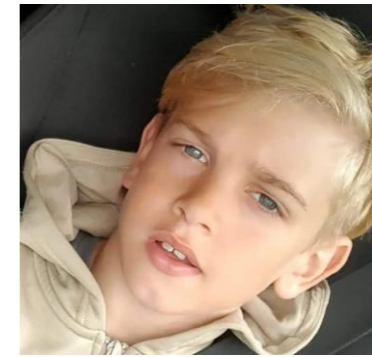


# *“The Future of Communication”*

*Dave Baszuki, Roblox CEO, March 2025*

# 2. Understanding the Risks

What is the Blackout Challenge?



Google search results for "blackout challenge".

Search bar: blackout challenge

Navigation: All, Videos, Images, News, Shopping, More, Tools

Filters: tattoo, social media, archie, tik, tok, battersbee, boy, boy dies, tiktok challenges, challenge death, tiktok trend

Search Results:

- blackout' challenge | GMA ... youtube.com
- blackout challenge' | Ti... theguardian.com
- attempting 'blackout challenge ... news.stv.tv
- Parents Sue TikTok After Daughters Die ... people.com
- TikTok "Blackout Challenge" Results in ... okayplayer.com
- Archie Battersbee: What is the... independent.co.uk
- Tiktok Blackout Challenge - Everything ... youtube.com
- Child deaths blamed on TikTok "blackout ... cbsnews.com
- Blackout Challenge has la... piunikaweb.com
- TikTok 'Blackout Challenge ... coventrytelegraph.net
- Families sue TikTok after 2 girls die ... foxla.com
- blackout challenge' killed 82 children ... dailymail.co.uk
- Parents blame TikTok challenge for ...
- TikTok Blackout Challenge – What You ...
- Parents sue TikTok for death of 9-year ...
- Dad Warns Parents After Son, 12, Dies ...
- Desperate mum of 'brain dead' boy ...

# 3. What can you do?

- **Digital resilience:** Teach your child to recognise when something online feels off or uncomfortable and encourage them to come to you.
- **Keep communication open:** Regularly talk to your child about their online activities.

# 3. What can you do?

- **Set boundaries:** Create family rules for screen time and online behaviour.
- **Monitor usage:** Use parental controls to help monitor screen time, social media activity, and app downloads.
- **Stay informed:** Keep up with the apps and games your child is using.

# 3. What can you do?

- **Encourage healthy habits:** Suggest activities like “digital detox” weekends, where the family takes a break from screens.
- **Use technology together:** Suggest doing tech activities together, like setting up accounts and exploring apps to understand them better.

# Do you know your child's online habits?

Start with **four** simple questions:

1. Do you always know what your children do online?
2. Do you always know who they interact with?
3. Do you always know what online content they are viewing?
4. Do you always know what that content is rated?



# Family Gaming Database

<https://www.familygamingdatabase.com/home>

Family Gaming DATABASE

Game Finder  Sign-In

Home / GAMES / FORTNITE / FORTNITE Games For You

## Fortnite

Game Review

BAFTA Award

Parent Comment 304 Likes

Content Rating	Skill Level	Costs	Online Play	Accessibility
Mild Violence	8+ Ambitious Communication Competition Geographic Good Challenge Popular Choice Social Play Low Pressure	Free In-Game Purchases User-Generated Content Android PC PS4 PS5 Switch Xbox One iOS	100 Players Online Online Interactions Competitive Online 100 Online	25 Features Large Subtitles Large Text Control Assists No Repeated Pressing Strongest In Controls Visual

## Content Rating

Rated PEGI 12 for frequent mild violence. Violence consists of you using whatever weapons you can find or make to defeat the other players with damage being dealt by numbers and life bars. The players disappear in a blue light when defeated.



**User-Generated Content:** This game includes content created by other players, such as maps, outfits and items, that are not reflected in the game rating.

**Users Interact:** The game enables players to interact and communicate with each other, so may expose players to language usually associated with older rated games.

Fortnite provides [Parental Controls](#) in the game in addition to those on the console you are playing on. They enable you to filter swear words in text chat, disable friend requests, require a password to make in-game purchases and turn off voice or text chat. You can also turn on Playtime Reporting for the game, which provides weekly play reports via email. These settings are protected by a PIN code.

## Skill Level

8+ year-olds usually have the required skill to enjoy this game. Still, it's important for parents and guardians to consider the maturity required to process the game content. It's also important to ensure children understand in-game purchases and have spending limits set-up. Although you need good reactions and aiming skills to do well, the game aims to match you against players of the same ability. When you first start as a newcomer there are often easy-to-beat computer players in the matches to help you get started.

Our Game Pathways reveal how 9 - 12 year-olds play this game:

## Fortnite

	Xbox One	Free	—
	PS5	Free	—
	PS4	Free	—
	PC	Free	—
	Switch	Free	—
	iOS	Free	—
	Android	Free	—

This game is free to play, but there are other costs associated with this game:

- In-Game Purchases:** Additional in-game purchases are offered for items that enhance the experience.
- In-Game Pass:** Purchase a season/battle pass to gain access to limited in-game purchases, reward items and other aspects of the game.

You can buy Loot Llamas using V-Bucks, these offer unseen items when opened. Recently these have been changed to show players what is inside them before purchase. However, if you earn the Llamas by playing the game rather than purchasing you can't see inside beforehand.

You can purchase the Fortnite Crew subscription for £9.99/\$11.99 a month. This provides a Battle Pass for the full season, 1,000 V-Bucks each month and an exclusive "outfit bundle" each month.

# 3. How to apply Parental Controls

## Social Media

- **Instagram:** Go to Settings > Privacy > Account Privacy > Switch to Private Account.
- **TikTok:** Settings > Family Pairing > Choose Safety and Privacy Settings.
- **Snapchat:** Settings > Who Can > Contact Me/See My Story > My Friends.
- **WhatsApp:** Settings > Privacy > Last Seen/Profile Photo/Status > My Contacts.

# 3. How to apply Parental Controls

## Gaming Consoles

- **Nintendo Switch:** Settings > Parental Controls > Set limits for play time, restrict purchase
- **PlayStation:** Settings > Parental Controls > Restrict access to certain games and chat features
- **Xbox:** Settings > Family Settings > Manage screen time, purchases, and online interactions

# Our Parental Controls Videos

## Online Safety Videos

### iOS (iPhone/iPad) related

1. Setting up Parental Controls on an iOS device with Family Sharing
2. Setting up Parental Controls on your child's iOS device (when you don't have an iOS device)

→ Click to view

### Android related

1. Setting up Parental Controls using Google Family Link on an Android device

→ Click to view

### Social Media

1. Setting up Snapchat Family Centre
2. Setting up Snapchat Privacy settings (on your child's account)

→ Click to view

### Games

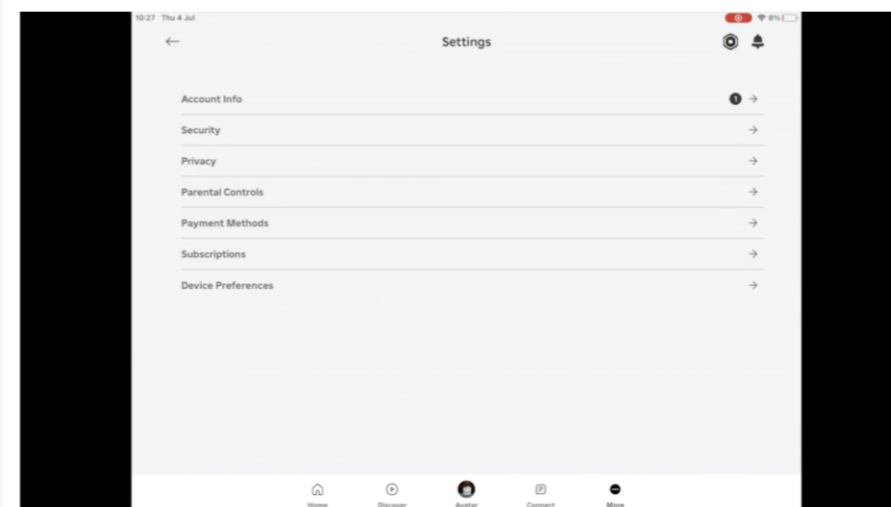
1. Roblox
2. Nintendo Switch Parental Controls App

→ Click to view

### YouTube

1. YouTube Kids App

## Roblox Parental Controls and Privacy settings

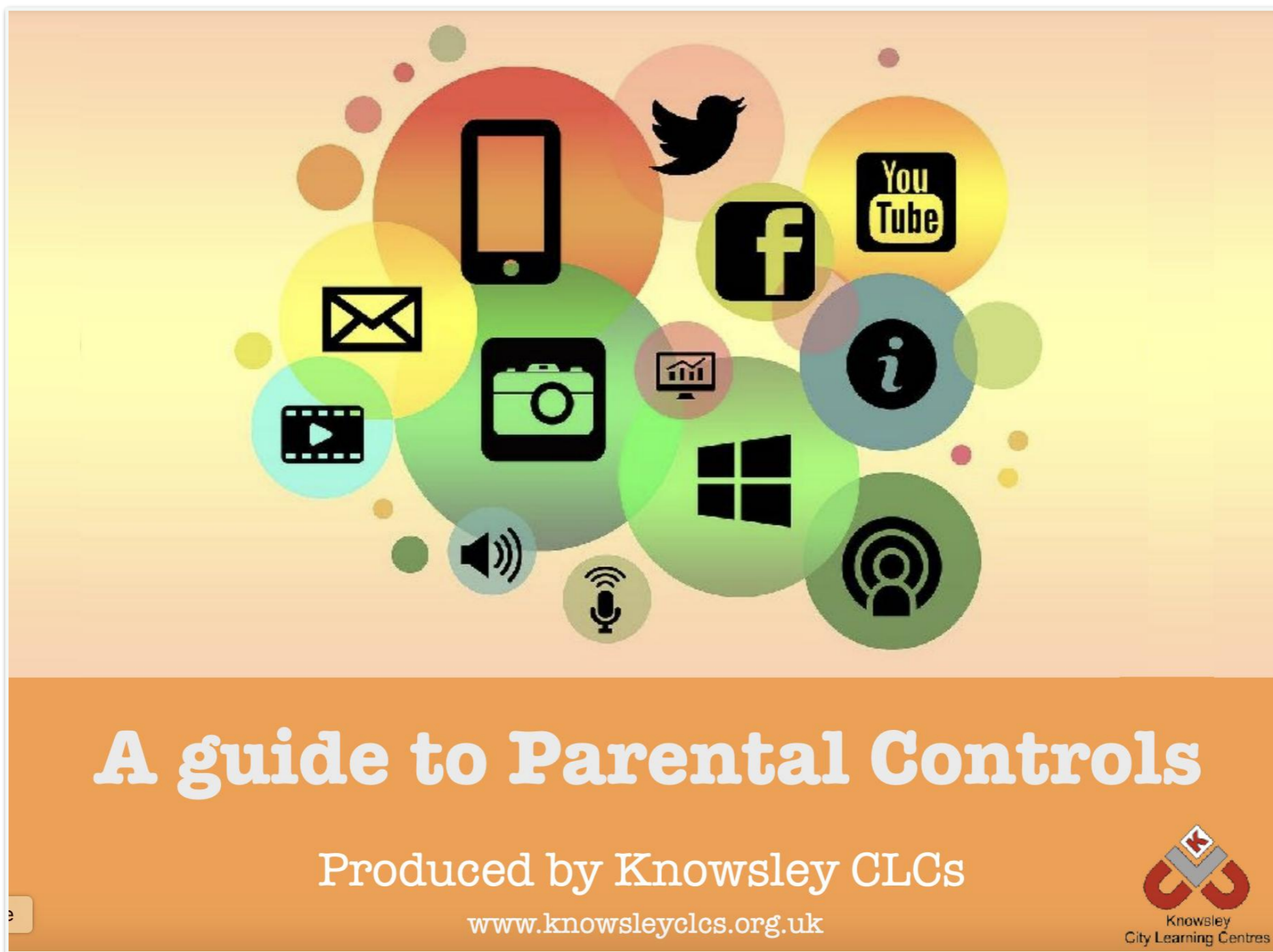


Click on the link below for further information from Roblox:

→ Further information

Released July 2024

# Our Parental Controls Guide Booklet



# 3. Practical Tips for Parents

- **Set up devices together:** Teach your child how to use privacy settings.
- **Use "Safe Search" features:** Enable on YouTube, Google, etc.
- **Disable location services:** Keep your child's location private on apps.

# 3. Practical Tips for Parents

- **Peer Support:** Talk to other parents, agree on access/ apps/ games/ sites kids can access (where possible).
- **Social media “friend audits”:** Encourage regular checks of who your child is connected with online and discuss the importance of only adding people they know in real life.

# 3. Practical Tips for Parents

- **Create a family agreement:** Establish a family agreement on online safety and device use.
- **Teach media literacy:** Help children critically evaluate the content they see online. For example, ask questions such as -
  - Who made this content, why?
  - Do you trust it (them)?
  - Do you agree with it?
  - How can you check its correct?
  - Do you share their opinion?

# 3. Practical Tips for Parents

- **Be a role model:** Model good online behaviour and share your own screen habits with your child.
- **Create tech-free zones at home:** Suggest setting boundaries like no phones at the dinner table/ in bedrooms/ at bedtime.

*“That’s why digital literacy education is so important, yet it remains inadequate in many countries, and where it is available it often fails to keep pace with young people and rapidly evolving technology.*

*“We are seeing the consequences of this gap, with worse likely to come, unless governments, health authorities, teachers and parents recognise the root causes of the current situation and take steps to rectify it.*

*“It’s clear we need immediate and sustained action to help adolescents turn the tide on potentially damaging social media use, which has been shown to lead to depression, bullying, anxiety, and poor academic performance.”*

World Health Organisation, 2024

# Digital Family Agreement



LGfL DigiSafe®

## Digital Family Agreement



LGfL DigiSafe®

**I will:**

**Why?**

- Check with mum before getting a new app or game or buying an add-on so she can check it's safe
- Set up privacy and safety settings on any apps and sites I use and show them to dad, so he doesn't worry
- Check with mum or dad before going live and explain what I can do to avoid any risks
- Not post or share any personal information, e.g. mobile, address, to stay private and safe
- Put my phone down when we're eating together or mum or dad want to talk, as it's respectful
- Turn off notifications when I'm doing homework and at bed time, to help concentrate and sleep
- Come off my devices an hour before bedtime to unwind and sleep well

**If there are any issues:**  
We will talk about it calmly and respectfully  
I may have to show you more about what I am doing on devices, or other consequences

**Parent/carer will:**

**Why?**

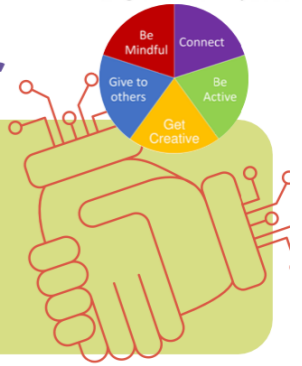
- Put our devices down when you want to talk to me/us so we can model good behaviour
- Keep our mobiles away for important family time, e.g. breakfast and dinner so we can have quality time and talk
- Trust you to manage your screen time sensibly as we agreed, and only say something if I/we are worried, to help you stay safe and healthy
- Ask permission before sharing any photos of you, to respect your privacy

**If I'm worried by anything:**  
I can tell mum or dad and they won't judge me  
I can talk to Ms Patel at school  
I can contact Childline or The Mix

Safer Internet Day

ISLINGTON  
Digital Charter

Children's  
COMMISSIONER  
Digital 5 A Day



Islington wants to promote the safe, happy and creative use of technology. In consultation with our children, parents and staff we have developed our very own 'Digital Charter'



**Mobile-free mealtimes**



**Real books at bedtime**



**Be kind online**



**Create, don't consume**



**Balance online and physical activity**



**Think before you share**



**If something upsets you, tell an adult**

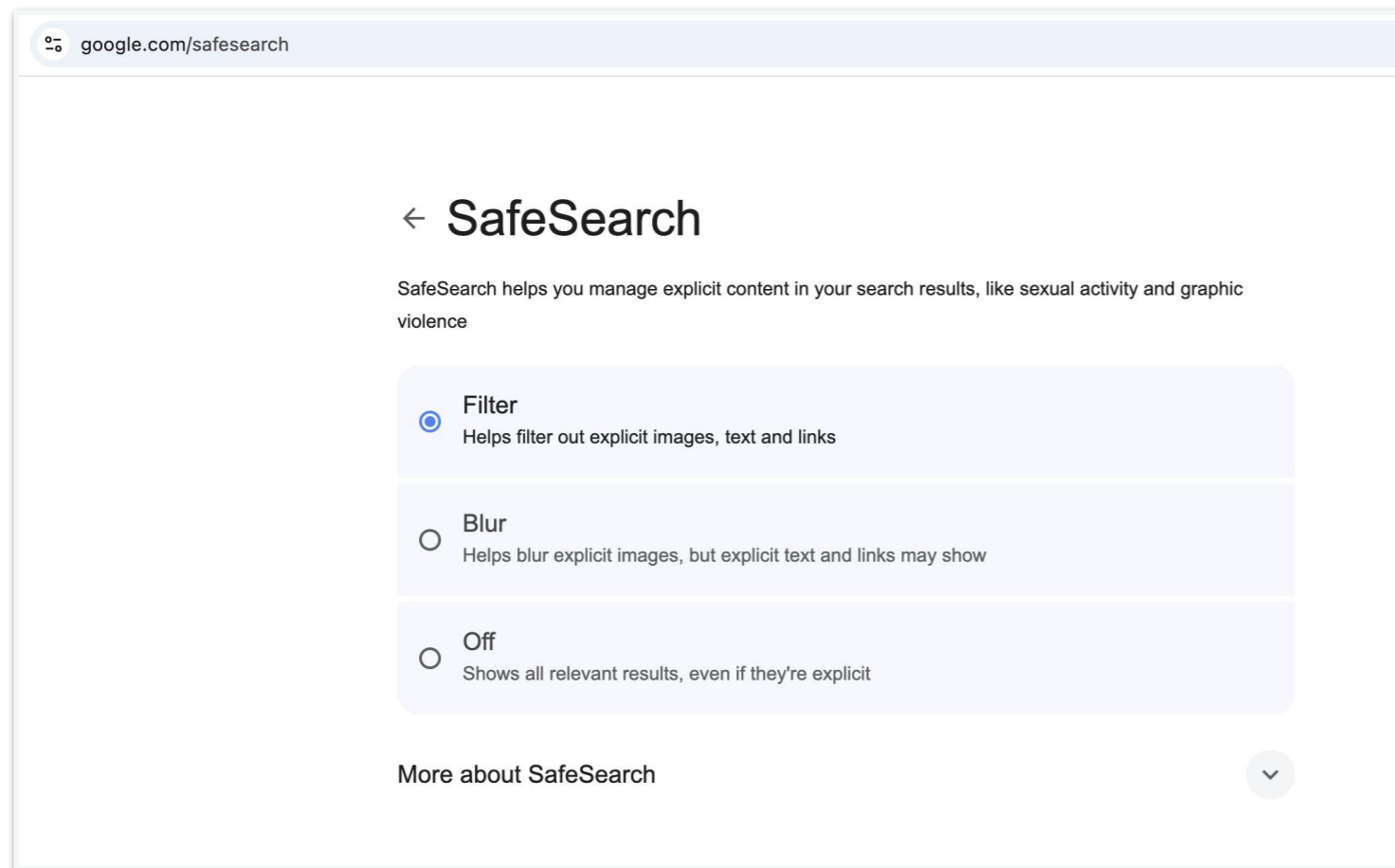


**Age appropriate content only**

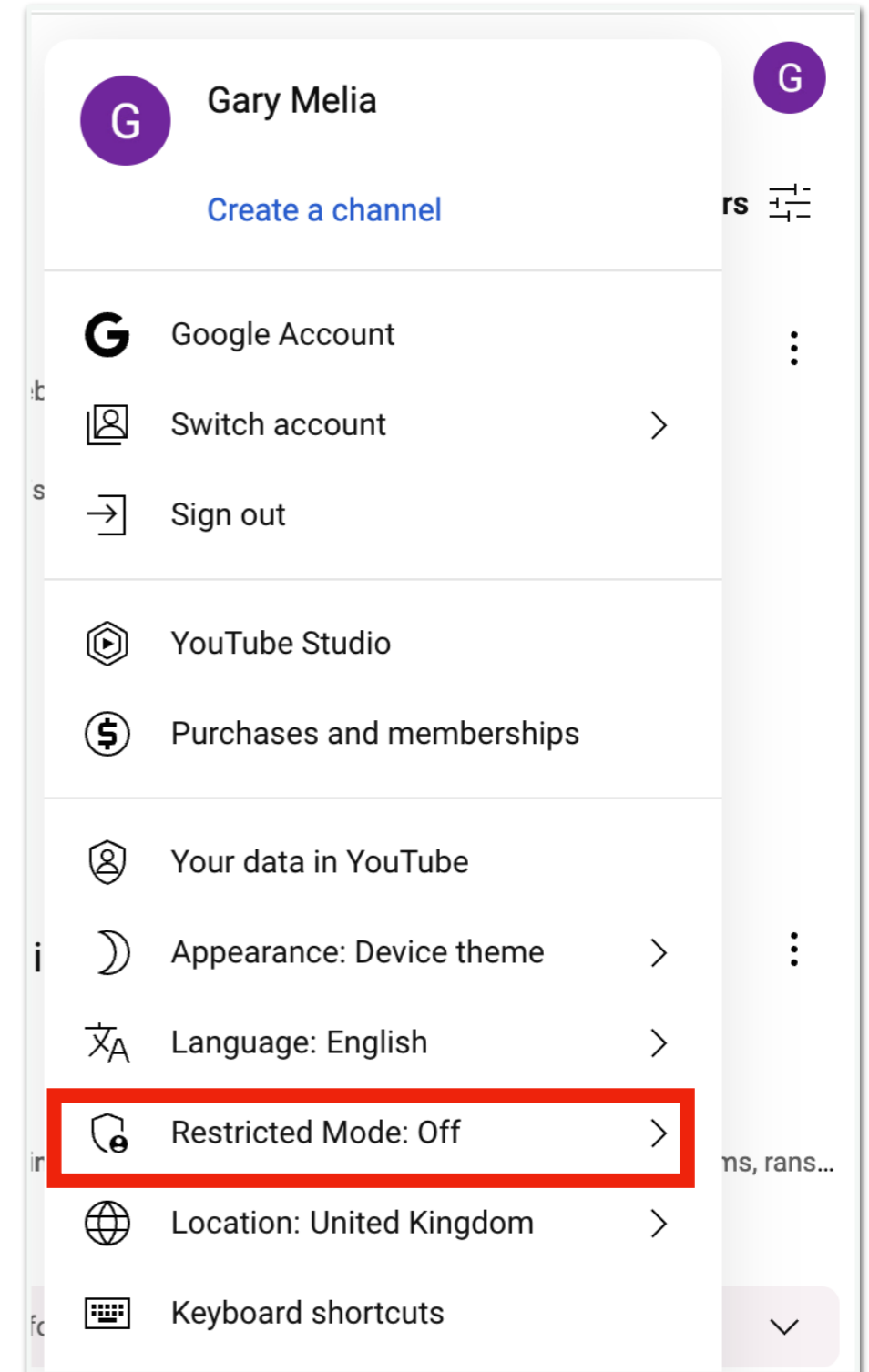
<https://islington-gov.j2bloggy.com/Islington-Computing-Online-Safety/>

We recommend a family agreement to make clear what is allowed...or not, how much time you can spend on devices, and ground rules like no phones at the table or in the bedroom at night-time. Shared expectations will reduce arguments and keep everyone safe & healthy.

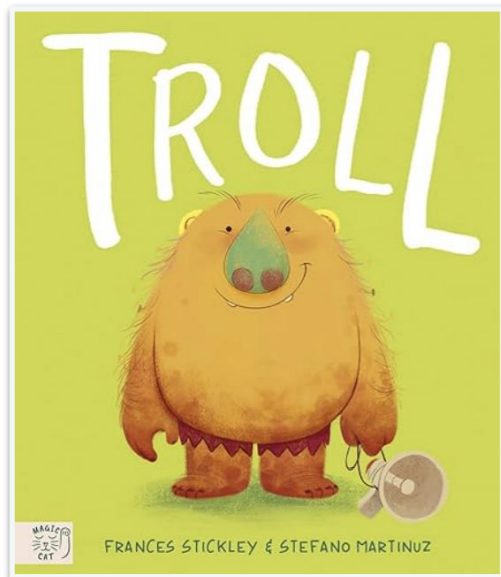
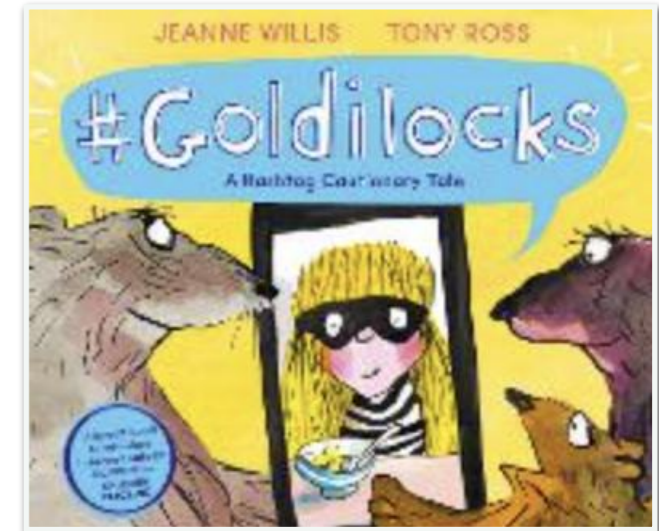
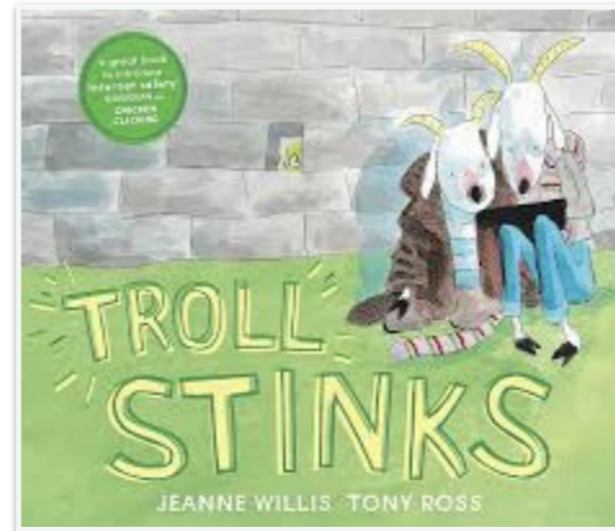
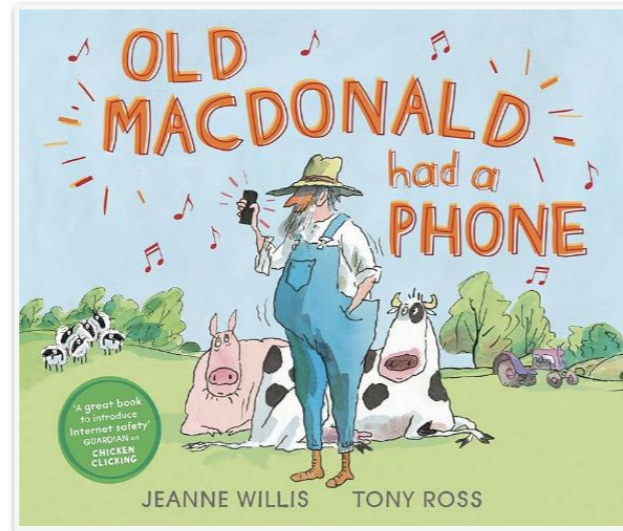
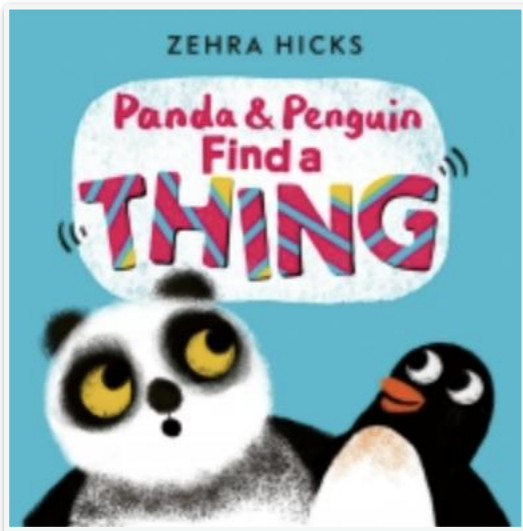
# 3. Enabling SafeSearch



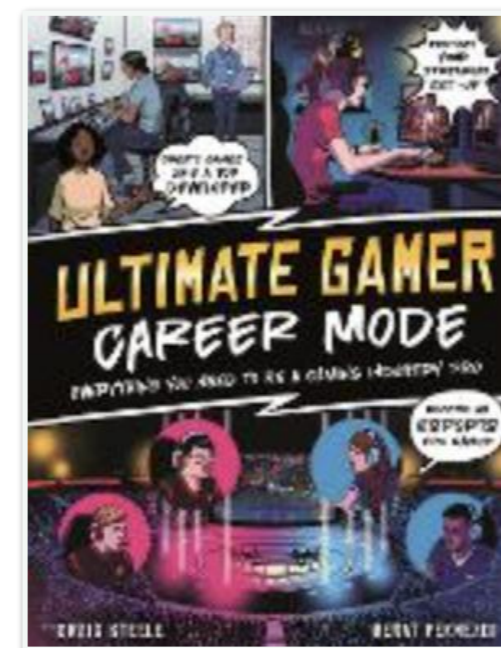
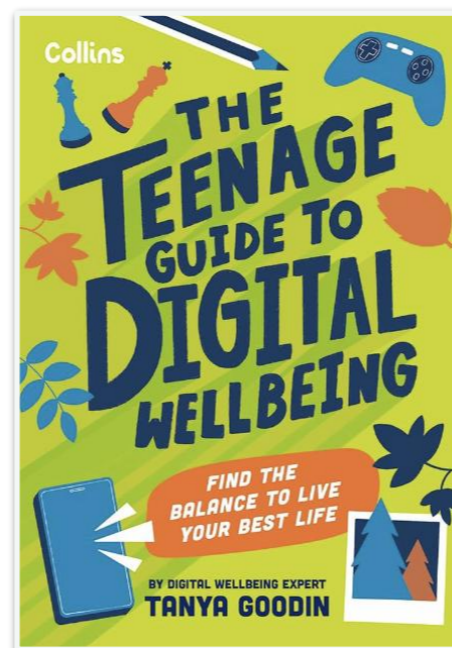
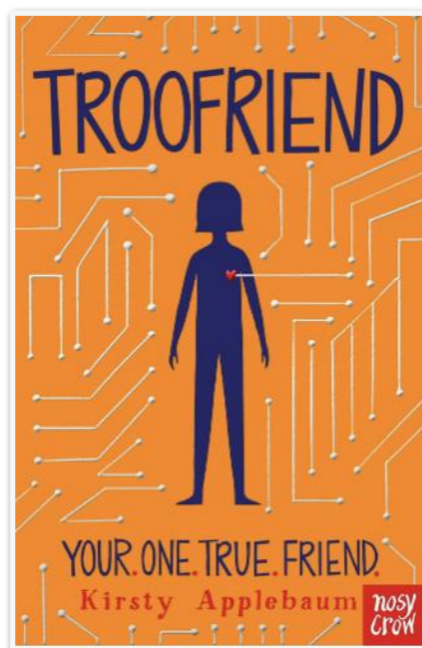
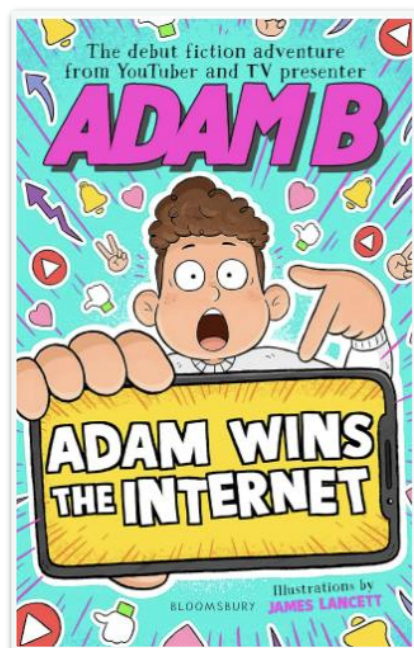
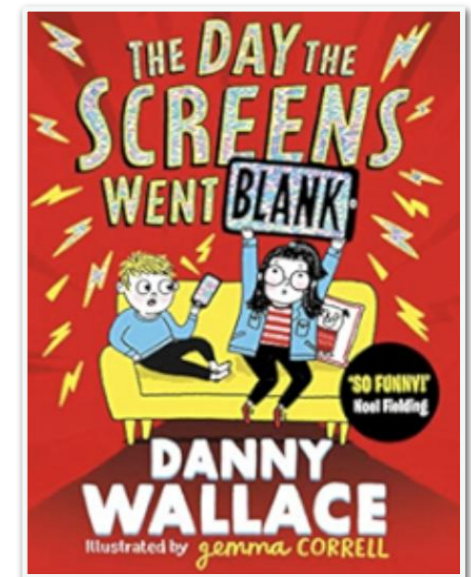
Google SafeSearch



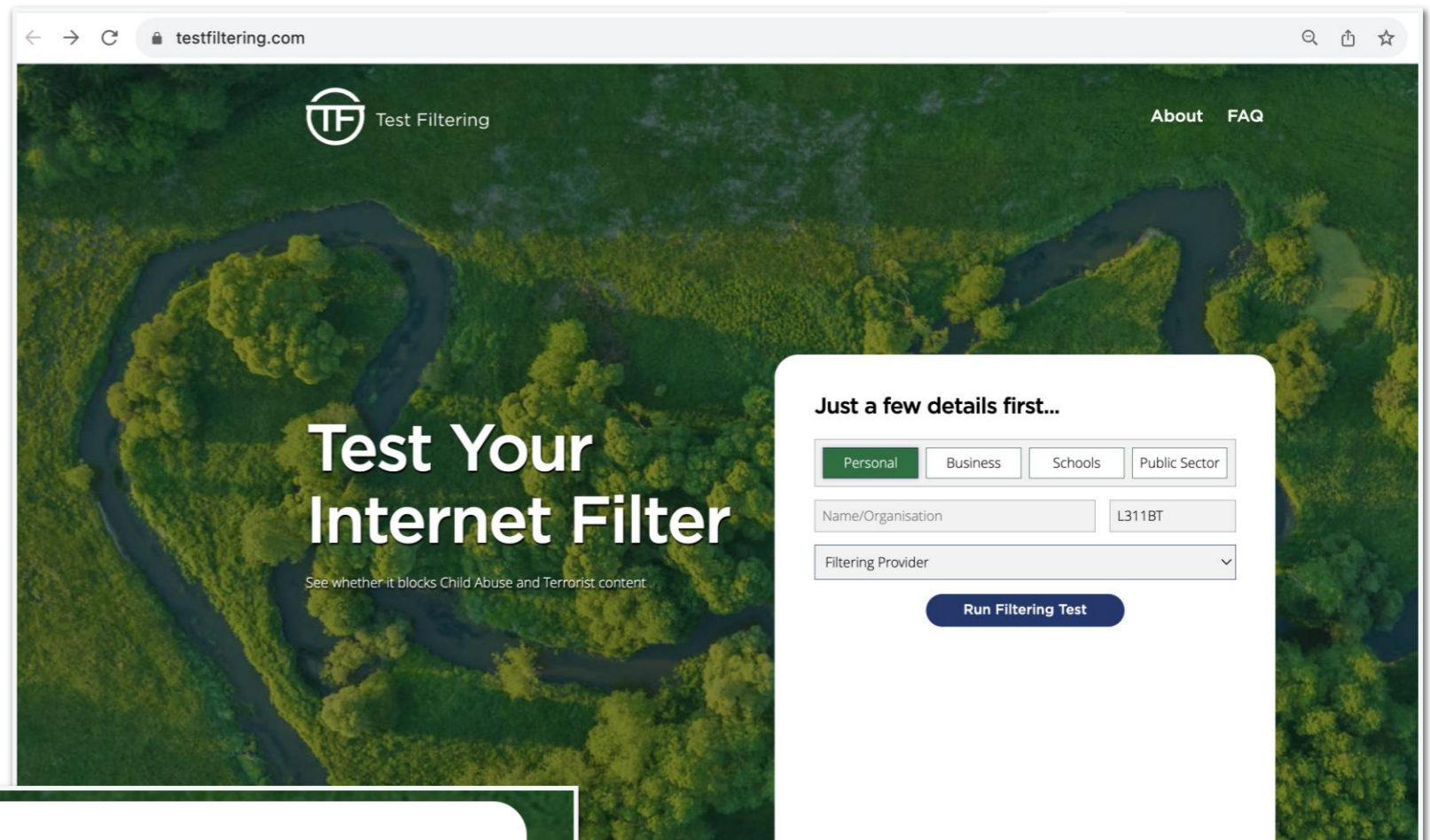
YouTube Restricted Mode



# Online Safety Books



# Test your Home Filtering





## Filter Test Results

Tests were performed at 04/10/2023 13:23

### Your Connection

<b>Type</b>	<b>Postcode</b>	<b>IP Address</b>
Personal	L31 1BT	62.252.201.33
<b>Network</b>	<b>Reputation</b>	
NTL	Excellent	

### Results Overview

	
Child Sexual Abuse Content	Adult Content

<https://testfiltering.com/>

# Advice for Parents



Teachers & professionals

Help and Advice

## Keeping under fives safe online

Online safety advice for parents and carers with young children

**Ofcom's research has shown that 86% of 3-4 year olds have access to a tablet at home and 21% have their own tablet.**

<https://www.childnet.com/help-and-advice/keeping-young-children-safe-online/>

# 4. Further Support

- **Internet Matters:** [www.internetmatters.org](http://www.internetmatters.org)
- **NSPCC:** [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)
- **Childline:** [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)
- **UK Safer Internet Centre:** [www.saferinternet.org.uk](http://www.saferinternet.org.uk)
- **CEOP** (Child Exploitation and Online Protection):  
[www.ceop.police.uk](http://www.ceop.police.uk)

# 4. Advice for Parents

The screenshot shows the 'Safety Settings' page from the Safety Centre website. The header includes the Safety Centre logo and navigation options: Privacy, Safety, Block, Report, and More. The main heading is 'Safety Settings' accompanied by a shield icon with a checkmark. The page is organized into a grid of eight colored tiles, each representing a different app or service with its logo and name:

- Among Us** (Yellow tile)
- ASKfm** (Red tile)
- Bing** (White tile)
- Discord** (Blue tile)
- Google** (White tile)
- Google Family Link** (White tile)
- Instagram** (Purple tile)
- Kik** (Green tile)

<https://oursafetycentre.co.uk/safetysettings/>

*My first message would be, if  
you're not comfortable, don't let  
your kids be on Roblox*

Questions?