



Media Literacy Audit

Report on UK children's media literacy

Research Document

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Section 1

Executive summary

The promotion of media literacy is a responsibility placed on Ofcom by Section 11 of the Communications Act 2003. Ofcom's definition of media literacy, developed after formal consultation with stakeholders is 'the ability to access, understand and create communications in a variety of contexts'. This report is structured according to the elements in this definition.

Access includes take-up of media devices, volume and breadth of use.

Understand includes interest and competence in using the features available on each platform, extent and levels of concern, trust in television and online content and use of television and internet security controls.

Create includes people's confidence in engaging with creative content and their interest in carrying out creative tasks, most notably using social networking sites.

Children are among the most enthusiastic and engaged groups in society in terms of their consumption of a wide range of media. Homes containing children are significantly more likely to have access to a wider range of technologies than homes that do not. Our analysis also demonstrates that age, gender and socio-economic group are key determinants of which types of media are used, where they are used and how they are used.

In understanding children's media literacy, it is important to consider the context in which they are consuming media, particularly at home. For this reason we capture and track detailed information about what devices children have at home, either in shared areas or in their own bedroom, and how they use and regard this equipment. Where possible, we also explore out-of-home use.

The in-home media landscape has continued to develop at a rapid pace in recent years, with access to, and use of, the internet in particular increasing significantly since the last Audit. As the nature of children's access to media changes, so do the ways in which children consume and combine media. In the first part of this report we discuss these changes, and explore which groups are most affected and why.

As the range and type of media available in-home varies considerably for each child, so too does the ability of parents to cope with the demands of this technology – we go on to explore the use of rules, understanding and information needs in more detail later in this report.

Access

Increased access to and use of key media, differences by age and gender

Across the UK we continue to see increased take-up and use of key media and newer technologies, particularly the internet, mobile phones, MP3 players and digital cameras, in households with children.

Use of some key media, including the television, games consoles and the internet, are well established by the age of 5; while the volume and range of media use increases with age, it is largely driven by increases in mobile phone and internet use. There are high levels of media activity in children's bedrooms, with a significant increase in internet access in the bedroom since 2005 (3% compared to 9% for 8-11s and 13% compared to 20% for 12-15s).

Indeed children's bedrooms are increasingly becoming multi-media centres, with children aged 12-15 having an average of six media devices in their bedrooms and children aged 8-11 having an average of four.

Around two-thirds of children tend to watch television, listen to the radio and use the internet in a room without an adult present. Solo users account for 16% of all children aged 8-15 watching television and 14% of all children aged 8-15 using the internet.

The correlation between age and mobile phone use is particularly strong, with the proportion of children using a mobile almost doubling between the age of 9 (52%) and 15 (95%). While in 2005 we saw a sharp increase in mobile phone use between the ages of 10 and 11 years, in 2007 the rise is more gradual and starts at an earlier age, with significantly higher usage levels among 9 and 10 year olds; children are acquiring mobiles at a younger age and using them more.

Behaviour patterns and media preferences vary considerably by gender; boys of all ages are more likely than girls to use games consoles and to cite these as the medium they would miss the most. While the media preference of younger girls is dominated by television, older girls demonstrate particularly high levels of mobile phone use and are more likely to miss their mobile phone than any other medium.

Communication is also a key driver of internet use among older girls; they are significantly more likely than older boys to use the internet for contact with other people (84% compared to 75% using the internet at least once a week for instant messaging and 79% compared to 64% using the internet at least once a week for social networking).

Lower internet access in socio-economic group C2DE households

While internet access and use continues to increase overall, there is a marked difference between household penetration of the internet by socio-economic group (ABC1 86% compared to C2DE 63%). Almost all children access the internet in some way, but those in the C2DE socio-economic groups are more likely to access the internet only outside the home (ABC1 12% compared to C2DE 31%); mainly at school, but also in the homes of friends who do have access.

Simultaneous media use growing, particularly among older children

There have been increases in claimed usage levels of all media since 2005, particularly for the internet and radio (across all ages), and the mobile phone (among older children). This is indicative of another key trend: children using more than one device at the same time. This is particularly prevalent among older children who have a mobile phone and internet access.

Television remains a key platform for children: access is universal, most children watch it daily and it remains the activity children would miss the most across all ages. However, current usage patterns suggest that television has increasingly to compete for attention with the growing presence and simultaneous use of other technologies, particularly the internet. This is predominantly the case for older children and those in ABC1 households.

Conversely, increased internet use also appears to play a critical role in driving up interaction with other media, including television; interaction with television overall has declined, but interaction with programme websites has increased, no doubt influenced by simultaneous use of television and the internet.

Children are also starting to use the internet increasingly for viewing television programmes, films or video clips; nearly one in five older children claim to do this at least once or twice a week, although a far higher proportion, around one in three, say they use the internet to download music videos or user-generated content. This type of active interaction via websites may have the potential to increase levels of engagement and to change the nature of children's relationship with these media.

Understand

Trust in television content varies by genre

Children's trust in television programmes differs by type of programme (43% of 8-11s and 47% of 12-15s). There are higher levels of trust for news and nature programmes (over 80% for all 8-15s) than for reality television programmes (under 50% for all 8-15s).

At an overall level, children claim to trust online content (59% of 8-11s and 61% of 12-15s). However, further analysis suggests a more complex picture, with less than one in ten children strongly agreeing that they *believe most of what they see on the internet*; this suggests that at some level children are evaluating the content they see online.

Over half of children aged 12-15 also make some form of check when visiting a new website; for example, by asking others, evaluating the look and feel of the website, reviewing how up to date it is, or considering who has created the site and why.

The different levels of trust in internet and television content may reflect the differing roles and usage of the two platforms; the internet is much more likely to be used for sourcing information than television, which is largely used for fun and relaxation.

Children and parents have a variety of concerns over use of media

The most common dislike about television among children is that there are too many adverts; 47% of 8-11s and 57% of 12-15s dislike the number of adverts they see on television. Although at relatively low levels, some children say that they see or hear things on the television that *make them sad, frightened or embarrassed* (19% of 8-11s and 12% of 12-15s) or that they consider are *too old for them* (11% of 8-11s and 7% of 12-15s).

The most common dislike among child internet users is that there are too many pop-up adverts (41% of 8-11s and 65% of 12-15s) and that websites take too long to load (37% of 8-11s and 41% of 12-15s). Although at relatively low levels, as with television, some children are seeing or hearing things online that they say *make them sad, frightened or embarrassed* (8% of 8-11s and 9% of 12-15s) or that they consider are *too old for them* (12% of 8-11s and 8% of 12-15s).

It is worth noting that the content children say they dislike is not necessarily content they should be shielded from. For example, seeing footage of poverty or animal cruelty may be sad or frightening, but highlights issues that, arguably, children should be aware of.

Most children are confident about using the internet and a high proportion claim that they can always find what they are looking for (94%); those who are more confident about using the internet are less likely to state they have seen something on the internet that has made them feel concerned.

Parents are more likely than children to be concerned about the key media platforms, although overall levels of concern do not appear to be particularly high; less than one in ten

parents consider the internet to be one of their major concerns, and for television this drops to less than one in twenty.

There is a clear tension in the role of the internet for parents, who perceive it as both the most beneficial and the most worrying platform used by their children. When asked directly, however, the majority agree that the benefits do outweigh the risks (70% of parents of 8-11s and 75% of parents of 12-15s).

Children share public concern about violent games

Children's views on gaming are particularly interesting. Around two-thirds of older children agree that *violence in games affects people's behaviour outside the game* and that *violence in games has more impact on people's behaviour than violence in television or films*. There are high levels of agreement for having settings on consoles which can restrict game playing based on age ratings.

Although research to date has failed to prove conclusively a link between violent games and violent behaviour in children, children themselves clearly share the wider public concern around this issue. A possible factor in this is the high ongoing level of media coverage of violent crimes in which game playing is alleged to have been a factor.

Absence of rules on media use in some homes

Nearly one in ten parents with children using more than one of the platforms have no rules for any of their child's media use; these are more likely to be parents of older children in DE households.

Around a third of all parents say they do not have concerns about any of the media platforms; again these were particularly parents of older children and those from the C2DE socio-economic group. Parents of boys were also less likely than parents of girls to have concerns.

In addition, children who tend to watch television or use the internet alone, often in their bedroom, are less likely to have rules than those who watch with others (71% compared to 84%), although this is influenced to some extent by older children being more likely to use these devices alone.

Overall, just under a third of parents use a PIN or password control to restrict their child's television viewing. Since 2005 there has been a significant increase in parental awareness/use of PINs for multichannel television among parents of younger children (25% compared to 31%).

More than half of all households with internet access have no blocking software or other controls over online access. The number of households using such safety provisions has declined since 2005, both for households with 8-11 year olds (55% down to 50%) and those with 12-15 year olds (51% down to 43%). The main reason for parents not having such controls is their belief in their child's ability to self-regulate their internet behaviour (54% of parents of 8-11s and 72% of parents of 12-15s).

Create

Social networking sites increase creative activity

Social networking sites are a key driver of children's desire and ability to create content online, and we have seen a significant increase in this type of creative behaviour since 2005

as a result of the rise in popularity of social networking sites. The increased prevalence of recordable devices such as camera phones, digital cameras, MP3 players and webcams are also a factor in this trend. Over half of 12 – 15s who have the internet at home state that they have a social networking profile.

Girls are more likely than boys to engage in a range of creative online activities, particularly those related to communicating or sharing content with other people. Participating in social networking has quickly become a popular activity and social currency among children. Although social networking sites are mainly used as a communications tool to manage existing relationships a significant minority are using them to communicate with people that they do not know (11%).

Among many social networking site users there is a lack of awareness of, or concern about, potential safety and security risks. Many feel that they are immune to any potential risks, and that even if they were to have problems, they would be able to deal with them.

At the same time, a significant proportion of children continue to express a lack of interest in creative activities; a third say they have no interest in setting up a social networking site profile and half are not interested in creating content such as making short films, producing photo albums or writing blogs.

Learn

Older children are more likely than younger children to learn about digital technology in school. Since 2005 there has been an increase in 8-11s reporting they have lessons about television (for example, how television programmes are made and paid for) and an increase in 12-15s reporting they have lessons about the internet (for example, how the internet works, how to do research on the internet or how to avoid websites that you do not want to see).

Urban and rural

While overall levels of media access do not vary significantly between children living in urban and rural areas, some interesting differences emerge in usage patterns. Mobile phone use is significantly higher among children living in urban areas compared to those living in rural areas (87% compared to 83%), while use of social networking sites is higher among rural children (61% compared to 54%).

Nations

Some interesting differences emerge between children living in the different UK nations:

- Since 2005 there has been a reduction in the proportion of parents in England who have rules for their children about using the internet (from 86% to 79%) and using a mobile phone (from 75% to 69%). In Scotland in the same period there has been a significant increase in parents saying they have rules about all platforms. As a result, rules for use of key media platforms in Scotland are now level with the UK as a whole.
- In general, parents in Northern Ireland are more likely than the UK as a whole to have controls in place on television content (64% compared to 52%) and internet content (78% compared to 67%). Households with digital television in Northern Ireland are more likely to have set controls to restrict the channels available and setting digital television controls has increased since 2005. They are also more likely

than the whole of the UK to have rules about using the internet and to have internet controls or blocking software.

- Children in Scotland (81%) and Wales (84%) tend to be confident in using the internet and are more likely than children in the UK as a whole (75%) to say that they can always find what they are looking for online. Children in Northern Ireland are less confident that they can always find what they are looking for online (60%).
- In each of the UK nations the number of children saying they have lessons about the internet has increased since 2005. However, compared to the UK average (74%), children in Wales (66%) and Northern Ireland (59%) are less likely to say they have lessons at school about the internet.

Section 2

Introduction

2.1 Background

As outlined in the Ofcom Annual Plan¹ people in a media literate society will have the skills, knowledge and understanding that they need to make full use of the opportunities presented by both traditional and new communications services. These skills will enable people to protect themselves and their families from the possible risks presented by new services. We need to continue working with other public bodies, and with our stakeholders, to fulfil Ofcom's aim of supporting UK children and adults in acquiring the ability to engage confidently with the ever-growing range of sophisticated communications services.

The promotion of media literacy is a responsibility placed on Ofcom by Section 11 of the Communications Act 2003.

Ofcom's work to promote media literacy is intended:

- to give people the opportunity and motivation to develop competence and confidence to participate in communications technology and digital society; and
- to inform and empower people to manage their own media activity (both consumption and creation).

This report is a research-based report and provides an update of the Children's Media Literacy Audit published in 2006². Where possible we show changes over time as well as examining responses by gender, age, nation, socio-economic group and rural or urban location.

2.2 Defining media literacy

Ofcom's definition of media literacy, developed after formal consultation with stakeholders, is *'the ability to access, understand and create communications in a variety of contexts'*.

The purpose of the Audit as a whole is to track media literacy within the UK population (both adults and children). To do this, we needed to convert our definition of media literacy into quantifiable elements, and so have used the following measures as proxies for some of the key areas of media literacy. It is important to note that our definition of 'access' is much wider than simple availability or take-up of the platforms. Rather, it focuses upon interest, awareness, use and competence.

The following box summarises the elements of the media literacy framework:

Access

- Interest in, and awareness of, the various media platforms
- Use, volume of use and breadth of use of the platforms
- Competence in using the features available on each platform

¹ Annual Plan 2008/2009 published April 3 2008 http://www.ofcom.org.uk/about/accoun/reports_plans/

² Childrens Media Literacy Audit published May 2 2006
http://www.ofcom.org.uk/advice/media_literacy/medlitpub/medlitpubrss/children/

Understand

- Trust in television and online content
- The extent and level of concerns with each platform
- The extent of rules about access to, and use of, each platform
- Knowledge of, and competence in using, content controls, such as the ability to block access to certain websites

Create

- The ability of individual users to create their own content
- The ability of users to interact with the platform or with other users

The above list indicates the core elements investigated in the study. However, we also asked a range of other questions about media habits and preferred media forms, which add further context and background to the research.

2.3 Objectives

The key objectives of the Audit are to:

- provide a rich picture of the different elements of media literacy across the key platforms of television, radio, the internet and mobile phones;
- to identify emerging issues and skills gaps; and
- provide insights that will help to target both Ofcom's and stakeholders' resources for the promotion of media literacy.

The results of this Audit provide a guide to many of the key elements of media literacy. It is Ofcom's intention to continue to repeat this Audit in future, to track how these elements evolve over time.

2.4 Methodology

This report draws mainly on research from two sources of consumer research; the children's Media Literacy Audit and the Ofcom Young People's Media Usage survey.

Where appropriate, data is also drawn from a recent Ofcom report on social networking; *Social Networking: a quantitative and qualitative research report into attitudes, behaviours and use*. Further details of this research are provided in Annex 1.

Ofcom Children's Media Literacy Audit

The Ofcom Children's Media Literacy Audit is a quantitative survey that involved 2068 face-to-face interviews with parents and children aged 8-15 from October to December 2007.

Full details of the research methodology can be found at Annex 1. Copies of surveys for each of the two children's age groups are available from our website at http://www.ofcom.org.uk/advice/media_literacy/ml_audit/

Young People's Media Usage Survey

This is a quantitative tracking survey which provides Ofcom with continued understanding of children's behaviour in the UK communications markets.

2,711 interviews with parents and children aged 8-15 were conducted during 2007, with the fieldwork taking place over three waves of research; April to May, June and September 2007.

Full details of the research methodology can be found at Annex 1.

2.5 Statistical reliability

Significance testing at the 95% confidence level was carried out. This means that where findings are reported as 'significant', there is only a 5% or less probability that the difference between the samples is by chance, and is different from the main population. Where findings are reported as 'significant', this is what is being referred to.

2.6 Structure of report

The report is structured on Ofcom's definition of media literacy.

Section 3: 'Access' covers people's take-up of media, usage and relationship with the various devices.

Section 4: 'Understand' covers the extent to which people understand the influences on what they see, read or hear, as well as their critical awareness.

Section 5: 'Create' covers people's engagement with creative activities such as uploading photographs, social networking and contributing to websites.

Ongoing learning is important in the dynamic media landscape we live in. Section 6 covers children's learning experiences and learning preferences through both formal and informal mechanisms.

Section 7 explores the extent of media literacy in the UK nations.

Annex 1 contains details of the research methodologies for all research projects referred to in this report.

Annex 2 contains a glossary of key terms used in this report.

Annex 3³ looks at media literacy on a platform by platform basis: television, the internet, mobile phones, electronic gaming and radio.

2.7 Further publications

Alongside this report, separate reports will also be published, focusing on the media literacy of UK adults and ethnic minority groups.

^{3 3} See http://www.ofcom.org.uk/advice/media_literacy/medlitpub/medlitpubrss/

Section 3

Access

This section looks at access to, and use of, media devices in children's households. It also explores children's reasons for using specific media platforms, and what platforms they prefer for different purposes.

3.1 Access: summary

The in-home media landscape has continued to develop at a rapid pace in recent years, with access to and use of the internet in particular increasing significantly since the last Audit.

Age, gender and socio-economic group are major determinants of ownership and use of media in the household. Older children are more likely than younger children to have higher consumption levels, use a greater variety of media, use media more frequently and carry out a wider range of activities with the media they use, with the 10-11 being the age at which media usage noticeably broadens.

Around two-thirds of children tend to watch television, listen to the radio and use the internet in a room *without* an adult present. This is particularly the case for older children and those who have a device in their bedroom. Solo users account for one in six television viewers and one in seven internet users.

Although a wide range of media devices are available and used in children's households, television remains the key platform, particularly for younger children. However, consumption of, and preference for, television does decline with age; and consumption of, and preference for, the internet and mobile phone increases as children get older.

There are high levels of confidence among children about using the media they have at home. Many children are consuming multiple media at any one time; for example, using a mobile phone or games console while watching television.

Interactivity among child television viewers is more popular than interaction among child radio listeners. However, overall levels of listener interaction with radio have increased over the last two years while interaction among television viewers has declined.

3.2 High take-up of media in the home continues, but take up by C2DE households lags behind

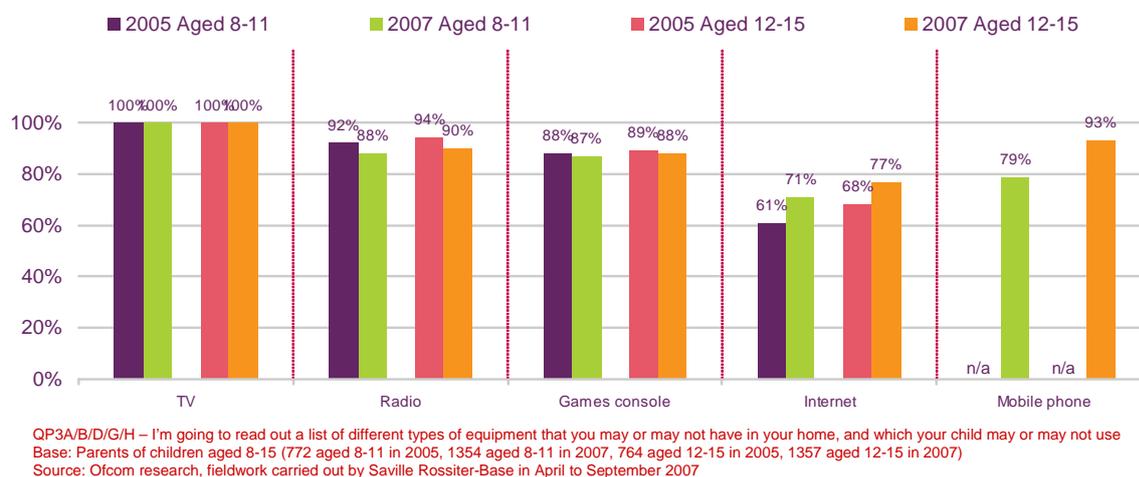
High penetration of key media platforms in households with children, although internet access still at lower levels

Penetration of the five key media platforms - television, the internet, mobile phone, games console and radio - is high within households containing children. While internet penetration has seen the highest increase in penetration of all media in the last two years it remains lower than other platforms and differences between socio-economic groups remain, with C2DE households still falling behind ABC1 households.

There are high levels of in-home access to the five key media platforms - television, the internet, mobile phone, games console and radio. Our figures show that there is a television in every household containing 8-15 year olds and a radio, games console and mobile phone

in over eight in ten households. Both internet and mobile phone access are more common in households with older children (aged 12-15 years) than those with younger children (aged 8-11 years). This is likely to be linked to children moving to secondary school, when the internet is seen by many parents as key for homework and studying and a mobile phone is seen as more appropriate with their child's growing independence.

Figure 1: Ownership of key media, 2005 and 2007



While internet penetration has seen the highest increase in household penetration of all media in the last two years, it still lags slightly behind the other key media; 71% of households with children aged 8-11 and 77% of households with children aged 12-15 now have internet access, a movement of about 10% for each age group from 2005. However, internet access also shows the most marked differences by socio-economic group; 86% of ABC1 households have internet access, compared with 63% of C2DE households.

Despite increased in-home use of many media devices since 2005, television remains dominant

Alongside the changes in household media penetration, there have been increases in children's use of many media devices over the last two years. However, television remains the most used device across all age groups. Age and socio-economic group are major determinants of ownership and use of media in the household.

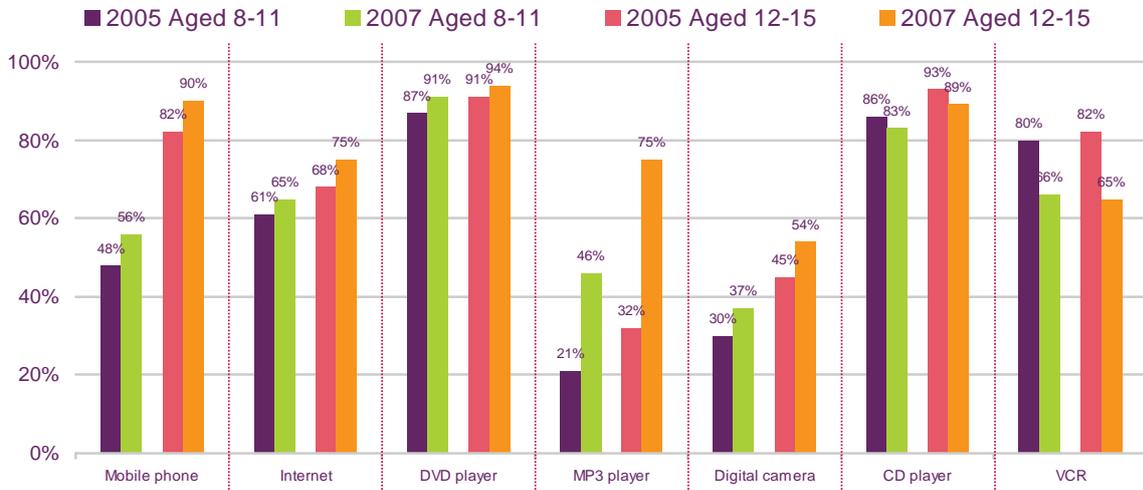
There have been increases in children's use of many media devices over the last two years, particularly the internet, mobile phones, DVD players, MP3 players and digital cameras. However, television remains by far the most-used device across all age groups, with all children aged 8-15 years having at least one television set in their household and using it almost every day.

To some extent this increased penetration and use can be attributed to affordability; as devices move from being niche, early adopter to mass market products, they gradually become more affordable. Parents are subsequently more likely to acquire new technologies for their household and to pass on older devices to the children; they are also more likely to buy devices specifically for their child. These increases in use are also indicative of children's interest in media and their desire to consume new technology.

By contrast, usage levels for more established technologies such as CD players and video-cassette recorders (VCR) have decreased or remained stable, as these devices are

replaced by newer-generation products such as MP3 players, DVD players and hard disk recorders.

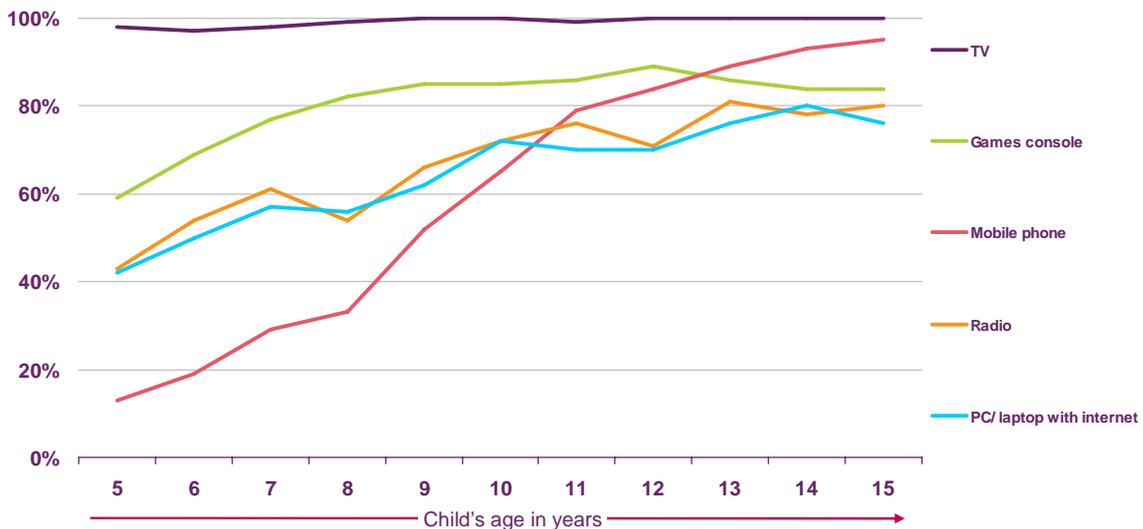
Figure 2: Media used by children, 2005 and 2007



QP3A/B/D/G/H – I'm going to read out a list of different types of equipment that you may or may not have in your home, and which your child may or may not use
 Base: Parents of children aged 8-15 (772 aged 8-11 in 2005, 1354 aged 8-11 in 2007, 764 aged 12-15 in 2005, 1357 aged 12-15 in 2007)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to September 2007

As household penetration of some media varies by age of child and socio-economic group, so too do usage levels. ABC1 children are more likely to use the internet at home than are C2DE children. Older children are significantly more likely than younger children to use a mobile phone, radio or the internet. The increased use of key media as children get older can be clearly seen in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Use of key media by children from age 5 to age 15



QP3A-M – I'm going to read out a list of different types of equipment that you may or may not have in your home, and which your child may or may not use
 Base: Parents of children aged 8-15 (336 aged 5, 315 aged 6, 334 aged 7, 400 aged 8, 306 aged 9, 314 aged 10, 334 aged 11, 418 aged 12, 313 aged 13, 286 aged 14, 340 aged 15)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to September 2007

The correlation between age and mobile phone use is particularly strong, with the proportion using a mobile almost doubling between the ages of 9 and 15. It is interesting to note that whereas in 2005 there was a sharp increase in mobile phone use between the ages of 10

and 11, in 2007 the rise is more gradual and starts at an earlier age, with significantly higher usage levels among 9 and 10 year olds.

Out-of-home internet use is high and particularly important for children in C2DE households

An absence of internet access at home does not necessarily mean that children are not using the internet; our analysis shows high levels of internet use outside the home, both among children who do have access at home and those who do not. Most of this out of home use takes place in school or at a friend's or relative's house. Due to the lower proportions of C2DE households with internet access, a higher proportion of those children solely using out-of-home access are in those socio-economic groups.

Figure 4: Children's internet access by socio-economic group

	Any access – ABC1	Any access - C2DE
	%	%
PC/laptop at home	86	63
Out of home	91	89
Only use out of home	12	31

Qc28 – Do you use the internet anywhere apart from home at all?

Base: Children aged 8-15 (1354 aged 8-11, 1357 aged 12-15)

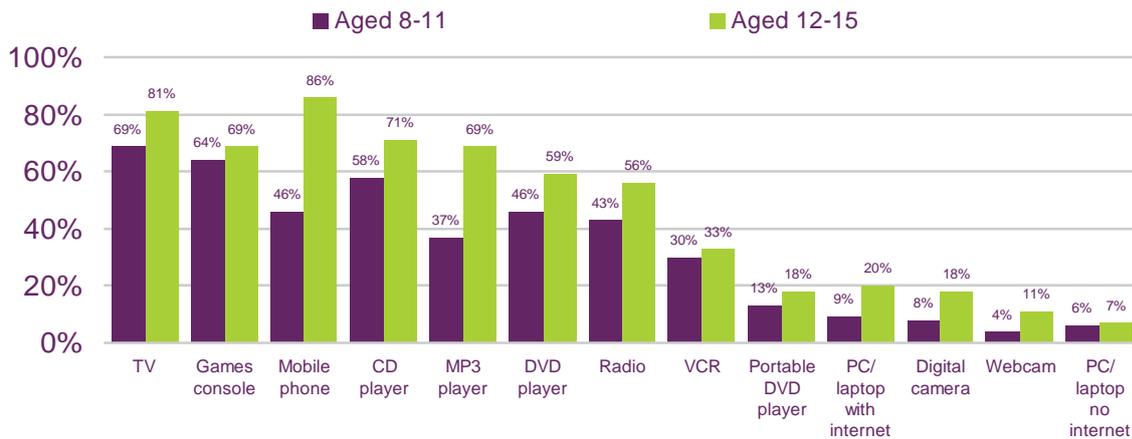
Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to September 2007

High levels of media use in the bedroom, particularly among older children

There are high levels of media use in children's bedrooms, with a significant increase in internet access in the bedroom since 2005. However, a television remains the device most likely to be in a child's bedroom. Age and socio-economic group affect the type of media in the bedroom, with older children having a wider range than younger children, and different socio-economic groups having different types of media in their bedrooms.

It is also interesting to explore the location of the various media in the home; in many cases children have these devices not just in their home but also in their own bedroom. While checking with parents which of the listed media children have access to and use, details were collected on which were in their child's bedroom. Figure 5 illustrates the proportion of children who have each of the 13 media in their bedroom and shows that there are high levels of media use in children's bedrooms. Clearly some of the devices are portable and can be used in any location (mobile phones, MP3 players and some games consoles, for example), but many children also have a wide range of more static media devices in their bedroom.

Figure 5: Media in children's bedroom, by age

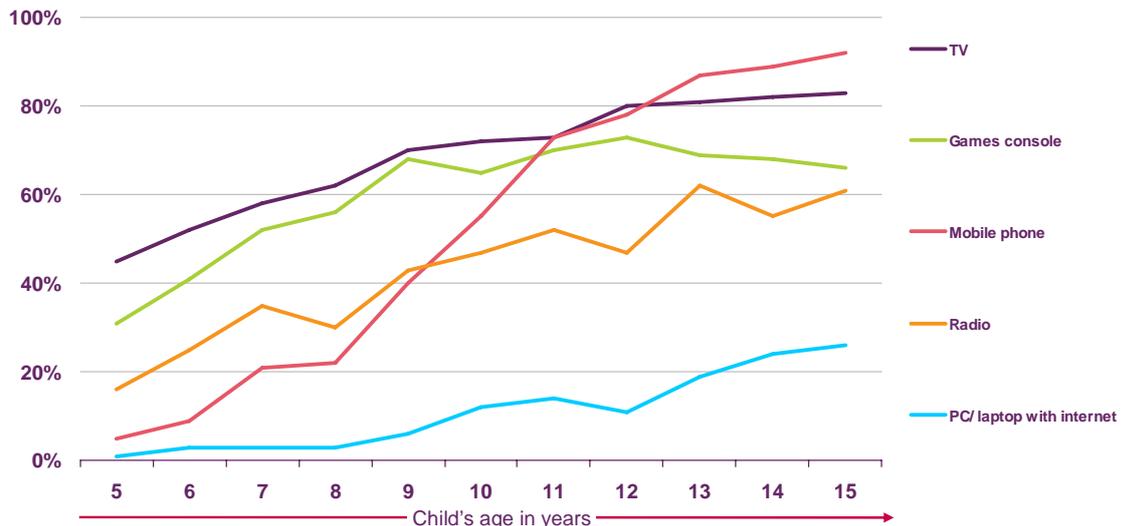


QP3A-M – I'm going to read out a list of different types of equipment that you may or may not have in your home, and which your child may or may not use
 Base: Parents of children aged 8-15 (1354 aged 8-11, 1357 aged 12-15)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to September 2007

Television is the static device most likely to be in a child's bedroom; 69% of 8-11s and 81% of 12-15s have a television in their bedroom and 25% of 8-11s and 33% of 12-15s have digital television. This is closely followed by games consoles, mobile phones and CD players, although this varies significantly by age.

Older children have more media equipment in their bedroom; children aged 12-15 have an average of six devices in their bedroom, compared to four for 8-11 year olds and two for 5-7 year olds. This difference is largely driven by marked increases in the penetration of mobile phones and MP3 players among older children.

Figure 6: Key media in children's bedrooms, by age



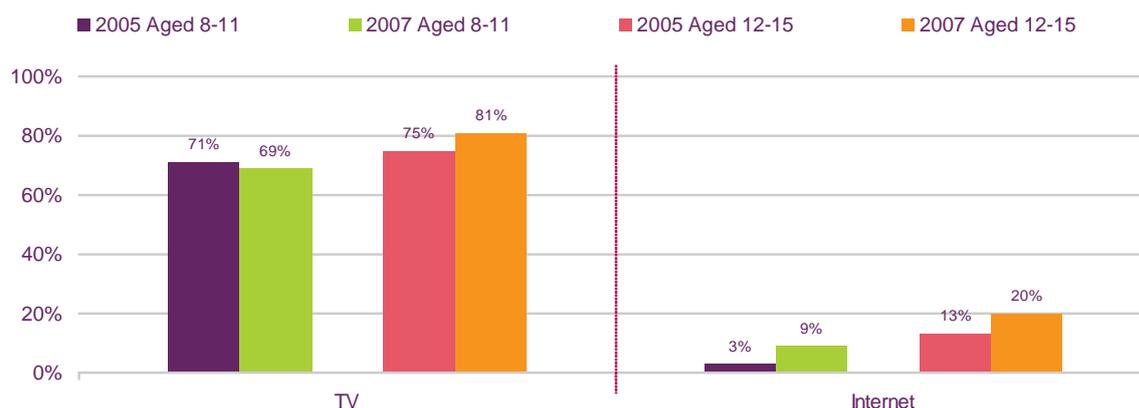
QP3A-M – I'm going to read out a list of different types of equipment that you may or may not have in your home, and which your child may or may not use
 Base: Parents of children aged 8-15 (336 aged 5, 315 aged 6, 334 aged 7, 400 aged 8, 306 aged 9, 314 aged 10, 334 aged 11, 418 aged 12, 313 aged 13, 286 aged 14, 340 aged 15)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to September 2007

While socio-economic group does not affect the number of media devices that children have in their bedroom, it does affect the type of media; children in ABC1 households are more likely than children in C2DE households to have an MP3 player, digital camera or internet

access in their bedrooms, while children in C2DE households are more likely to have a television, DVD player or VCR.

In Figure 7 we can see that, compared to the 2005 Children's Media Literacy Audit, there has been no change in the proportion of children that have a television in their bedroom for 8-11 year olds, but an increase among 12-15 year olds. Over the same period the proportion of children with internet access in their bedroom has increased significantly across both age bands, although it remains at relatively low absolute levels.

Figure 7: Television and internet in children's bedrooms, 2005 and 2007

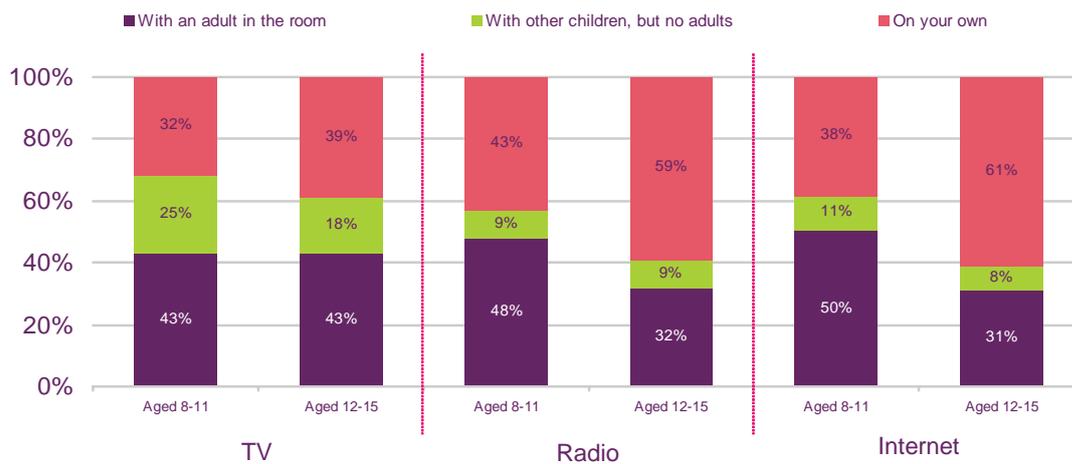


QP3A/B – I'm going to read out a list of different types of equipment that you may or may not have in your home, and which your child may or may not use
 Base: Parents of children aged 8-15 (772 aged 8-11 in 2005, 1354 aged 8-11 in 2007, 764 aged 12-15 in 2005, 1357 aged 12-15 in 2007)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to September 2007

More than half of children mostly use the television, radio or internet without an adult present

On average, around two-thirds of children tend to watch television, listen to radio and use the internet in a room without an adult present. This is particularly the case for older children and those who have a device in their bedroom. Solitary users account for one in six children who watch television and one in seven children who use the internet at home.

All children aged 8-11 and aged 12-15 were asked who was with them most of the time they watch television, listen to radio or use the internet, and were prompted with three possible options: *with an adult in the room, with other children but no adults, or on your own*. Figure 8 shows that among younger children (aged 8-11), a third mostly watch television and use the internet on their own, and two fifths listen to the radio on their own. Older children (aged 12-15) have only slightly higher levels of solitary television viewing, but are much more likely to listen to the radio or use the internet on their own.

Figure 8: Who is with child while television, radio and internet are consumed

QC1/ QC10/ QC15 – Thinking about when your [using the platform] at home, so you spend most of the time...

Base: Parents of children aged 8-15 who use each media at home (TV 1035 aged 8-11, 1007 aged 12-15. Radio 433 aged 8-11, 528 aged 12-15. Internet 663 aged 8-11, 768 aged 12-15)

Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in October-December 2007

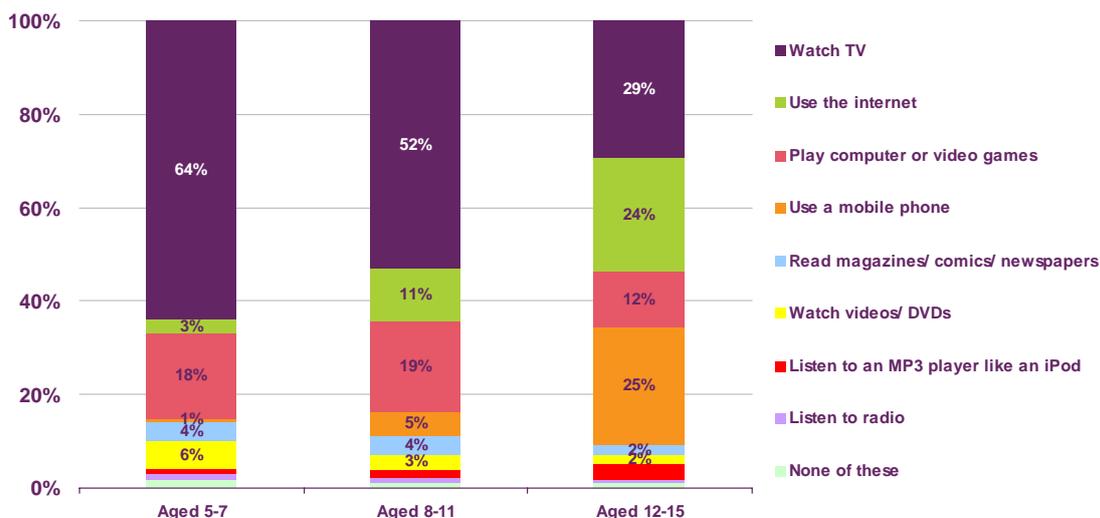
Of those who mostly watch television or use the internet in their bedroom, a clear majority spend most of their time using the device on their own. Solitary television viewing accounts for one in six of all children aged 8-15 watching television, and is higher among 12-15s and older boys. Solitary internet users account for one in seven of all children aged 8-15 using the internet, with a higher incidence among 12-15s (20%), but with no difference by gender or by socio-economic group of the household.

As we will discuss later, children watching television or using the internet in their bedroom are less likely to have any parental rules or restrictions than those who use the device in the living room, although this is at least partly driven by the older age profile of these users. Solitary users also have higher television and internet consumption levels and use the internet for a broader range of activities than non-solitary users. They are also less likely to claim to have seen things that concern them or that are too old for them. There is no difference in levels of confidence between those using the internet or television alone compared to those who use them with someone else in the room.

Television remains the preferred device among younger children, but the internet and mobile phone are equally as important as television for older children

The increased frequency, range and breadth of media use as a child gets older are key factors in their media preferences. Television remains the key platform for younger children. However, preference for television declines with age and preference for the internet and mobile phone increases with age. Differences between genders emerge, with girls more likely than boys to prefer mobile phone and television, and boys more likely than girls to prefer gaming devices.

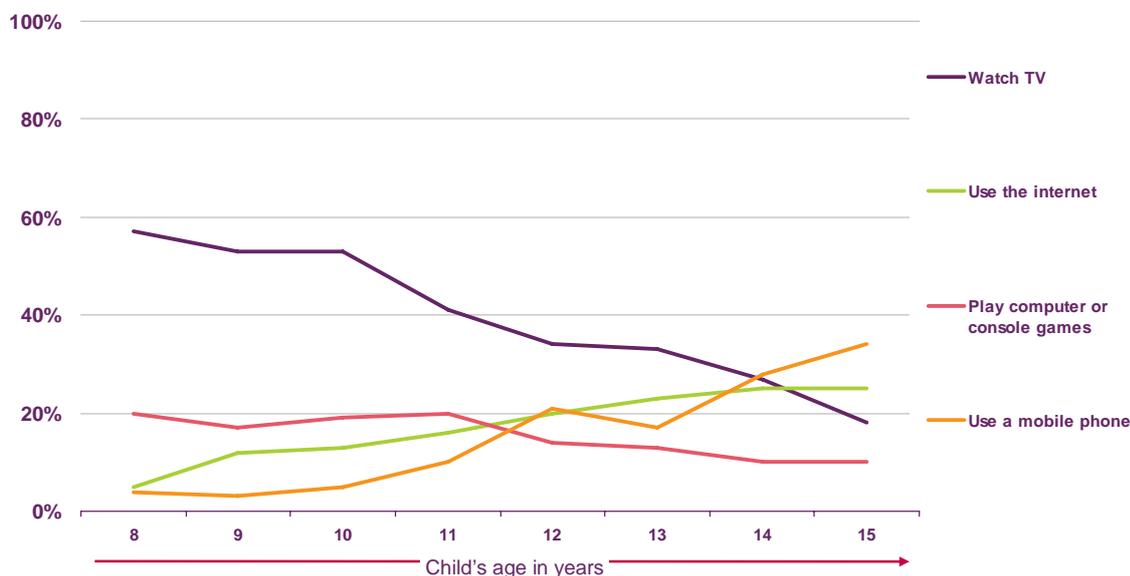
Figure 9: Media activity would miss the most, by age



QC39B – Now of the ones you do almost every day, which one of these would you miss doing most if it got taken away?
 Base: Children aged 8-15 (985 aged 5-7, 1354 aged 8-11, 1357 aged 12-15)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to September 2007

Television is clearly an important platform for many children, and is the favoured platform among younger children. However preference for television declines as a child gets older (Figure 10). So, by the age of 15, children are using a wider range of media devices and television drops to the third most-missed platform, behind the mobile phone and the internet.

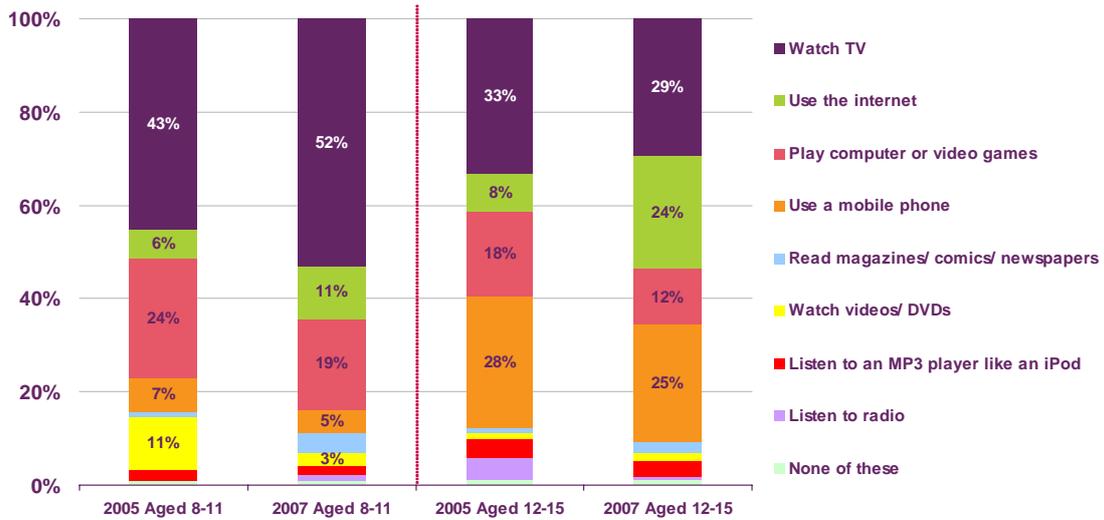
Figure 10: Media activity children would miss the most, by age



QC39B – Now of the ones you do almost every day, which one of these would you miss doing most if it got taken away?
 Base: Children aged 8-15 (400 aged 8, 306 aged 9, 314 aged 10, 334 aged 11, 418 aged 12, 313 aged 13, 286 aged 14, 340 aged 15)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to September 2007

Several significant differences in children's most missed media have emerged since 2005 (Figure 11). The most noticeable is the rise of the internet as a preferred platform, particularly for older children. Interestingly, the proportion of 8-11s citing television as the activity they would miss the most has increased, at the expense of games playing and watching videos/ DVDs, which have declined among this age group.

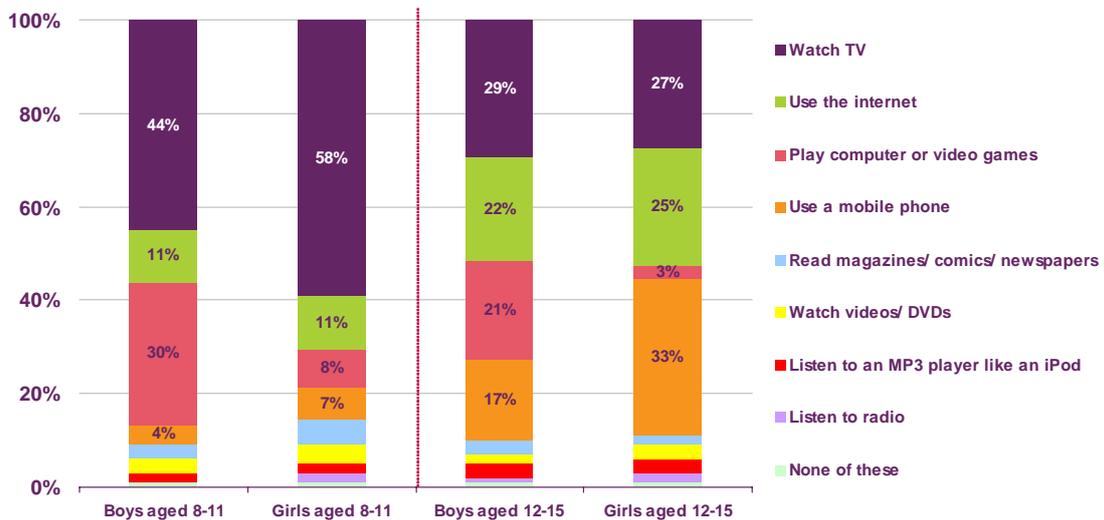
Figure 11: Media activity would miss the most, 2005 and 2007



QC39B – Now of the ones you do almost every day, which one of these would you miss doing most if it got taken away?
 Base: Children aged 8-15 (772 aged 8-11 in 2005, 1354 aged 8-11 in 2007, 764 aged 12-15 in 2005, 1357 aged 12-15 in 2007)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to September 2007

While television remains the most-missed platform, regardless of gender and socio-economic group, there are some differences regarding other media. Girls (particularly younger girls) are more likely than boys to claim that they would miss television or their mobile phone, whereas boys are more likely than girls to claim that they would miss playing computer or video games. For boys, playing computer or video games is the second most missed activity, behind television.

Figure 12: Media activity would miss the most, by gender



QC39B – Now of the ones you do almost every day, which one of these would you miss doing most if it got taken away?
 Base: Children aged 8-15 (668 boys aged 8-11, 686 girls aged 8-11, 679 boys aged 12-13, 678 girls aged 12-15)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to September 2007

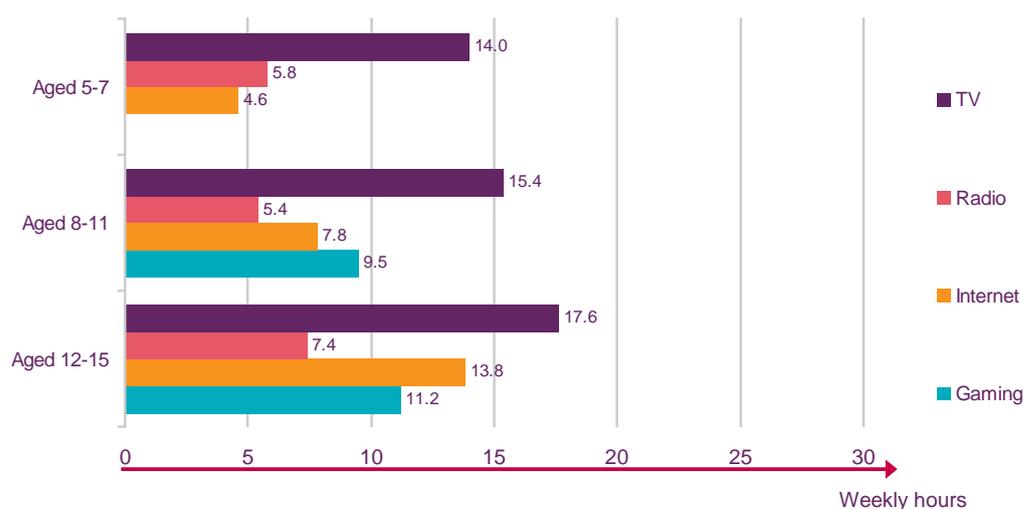
Television continues to have the highest level of consumption, although the internet is a close second among older children

Comparing the key media platforms, television has the highest level of consumption among users in all age groups. Among older users, the internet is a close second to television. For all platforms, consumption levels increase with age. Consumption also differs by gender, with boys using game consoles more than girls, and girls using mobile phones more than boys.

Weekly hours spent using each of the four key media are estimated by asking the parents of younger children and by asking the older children directly to say how many hours they used each platform at home, on a typical school day and on a typical weekend day. Because these estimates are self-reported it is likely that a degree of under- and over-reporting will be present, and the estimates should be taken as indicative only.

Figure 13 compares the number of hours each platform is used at home in a typical school week (so excluding use in school holidays). We do not have an estimate for hours spent gaming for children aged 5-7.

Figure 13: Weekly media consumption at home among users, by age

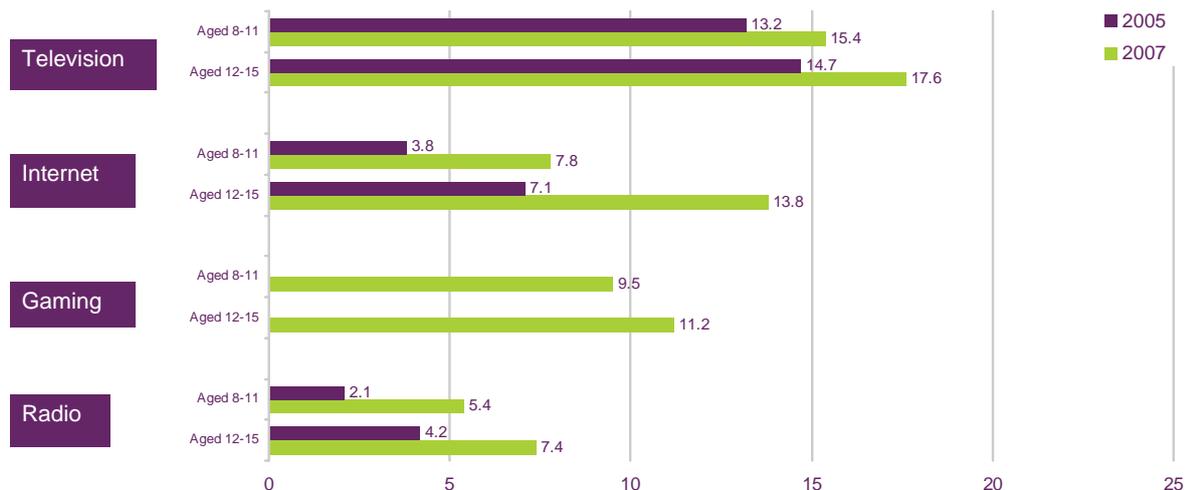


QP9A-B/ QP13A-B/ QP19A-B/ QP18A-B/ QC3A-B/ QC13A-B/ QC18A-B/ QC36-37 – How many hours would you say he/ she spends [USING MEDIUM] on a typical school day/ on a weekend day?
 Base: Parents of children aged 8-11 who use each medium at home and children aged 12-15 who use each medium at home (For TV, 1336 aged 8-11, 1352 aged 12-15. For radio, 525 aged 8-11, 588 aged 12-15. For internet 875 aged 8-11, 1045 aged 12-15. For gaming 929 aged 8-11, 891 aged 12-15)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to September 2007 and October-December 2007

As we have previously seen, television is a key part of children’s lives. This is also reflected in consumption patterns, with television having the highest level of consumption of all key media platforms among users for all age groups. However, internet consumption increases with age and among 12-15s the internet is a close second to television. The role that the different platforms play in children’s lives will be explored in later sections.

As we can see in Figure 14, comparison with 2005 shows an increase in consumption across all platforms⁴. This change is particularly apparent for internet use, which has doubled since 2005 across both age groups. Because of changes in the way these data are captured, the figures shown are not directly comparable over time. However, this finding is consistent with overall usage trends discussed later in this report (for example, increases in the range of uses and in simultaneous use of platforms). We do not have data over time for gaming, as questions about hours spent gaming were not asked in the 2005 Children's Media Literacy Audit.

Figure 14: Weekly media consumption among users, 2005 and 2007



QP9A-B/ QP13A-B/ QP19A-B/ QP18A-B/ QC3A-B/ QC13A-B/ QC18A-B/ QC36-37 – How many hours would you say he/ she spends [USING MEDIUM] on a typical school day/ on a weekend day?

Base: Parents of children aged 8-11 who use each medium at home and children aged 12-15 who use each medium at home (For television, 1336 aged 8-11, 1352 aged 12-15 in 2007, 768 aged 8-11 and 761 aged 12-15 in 2005. For internet 875 aged 8-11, 1045 aged 12-15 in 2007, 315 aged 8-11 and 416 aged 12-15 in 2005. For gaming 929 aged 8-11, 891 aged 12-15 in 2007. For radio, 525 aged 8-11, 588 aged 12-15 in 2007, 505 aged 8-11 and 593 aged 12-15 in 2005)

Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to September 2007 and October-December 2007

With the exception of radio, claimed media consumption is higher among children who have the platform in their bedroom and say they use it mostly on their own. Children aged 12-15 report higher levels of use for each of these media, compared to parents' reports for children aged 8-11. Additionally, boys report higher use of games consoles than girls, and C2DE children report higher use of television and games consoles than ABC1 children.

As with other key media, mobile phone consumption (both voice calls and text messaging) increases with age (Figure 15). For all children, the volume of text messages sent with a mobile phone far exceeds the volume of mobile voice calls made. However, as we have already seen, gender plays an interesting role in mobile phone use, with older girls making a higher number of calls than older boys, and girls of all ages sending a higher volume of text messages than boys.

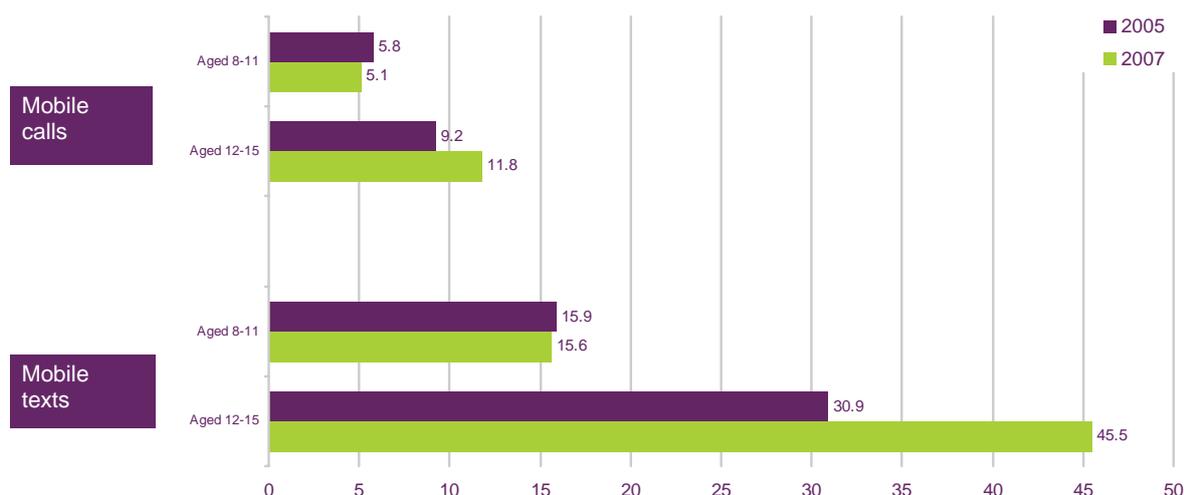
Among younger mobile phone users aged 8-11, the number of texts sent in a typical school week does not vary according to the presence or absence of parental rules or restrictions regarding their mobile phone use. Among older children aged 12-15, however, those with no parental rules or restrictions send significantly more text messages (at 55.1 per week) than

⁴ It is important to note that television viewing figures are self-reported for 11-15 year olds and reported by the parent for 8-11 year olds, and differ from BARB television viewing figures, which do not show an increase in weekly consumption between 2005 and 2007.

those with any parental rules or restrictions about mobile use (at 39.2 text messages per week).

Compared to the 2005 Children's Media Literacy Audit, the average number of calls made and text messages sent by 8-11 year olds has not changed significantly. There has, however, been a significant increase in the number of calls made and text messages sent by 12-15 year olds. This may be partly due to increased availability of inclusive call and text packages, particularly on pay-as-you-go tariffs.

Figure 15: Weekly calls made and text messages sent by users, 2005 and 2007



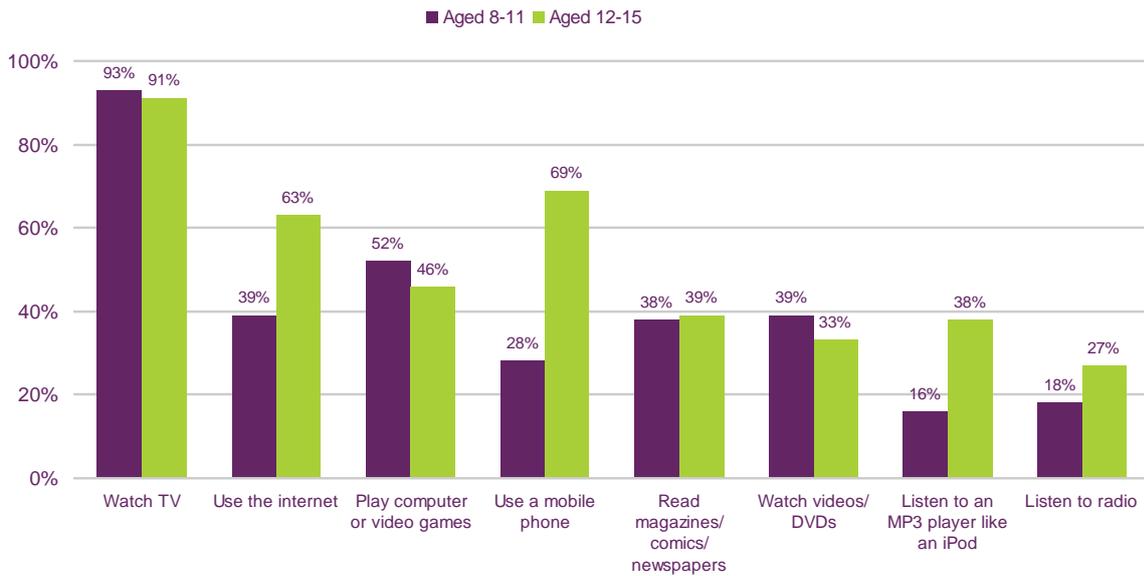
QP28A-B/ QC32A-B / QP29A-B/ QC33A-B – How many calls/ texts would you say he/ she makes spends using his/ her mobile phone on a typical school day/ on a weekend day?
 Base: Parents of children aged 8-15 whose child has their own mobile phone (665 aged 8-11, 1173 aged 12-15 in 2007, 334 aged 8-11 and 611 aged 12-15 in 2005)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to September 2007

Frequency and range of media used increases with age and differs by gender and socio-economic group

With the exception of television, which is watched by almost all children most days, frequency of media use at home differs by age, gender and socio-economic group. Older children are more likely than younger children to use all media more frequently and to carry out a wider range of activities. The age at which media use noticeably broadens is 10-11, largely due to mobile phone usage. While there are some differences in the frequency of using certain media by gender and socio-economic group, there are no differences between gender or socio-economic group in terms of the number of media activities undertaken almost every day. This indicates that different genders and socio-economic groups are engaging in similar amounts of daily activity, but are just choosing different media to engage with.

As we have already seen, age is a major determinant of ownership and use of media in the household. With the exception of television, which is watched by almost everyone most days, the frequency of media use at home differs between 8-11s and 12-15s. Younger children are more likely than older children to enjoy gaming and watching videos and DVDs on a daily basis. However, older children are more likely to use the internet, a mobile phone, an MP3 player and radio on a daily basis (Figure 16).

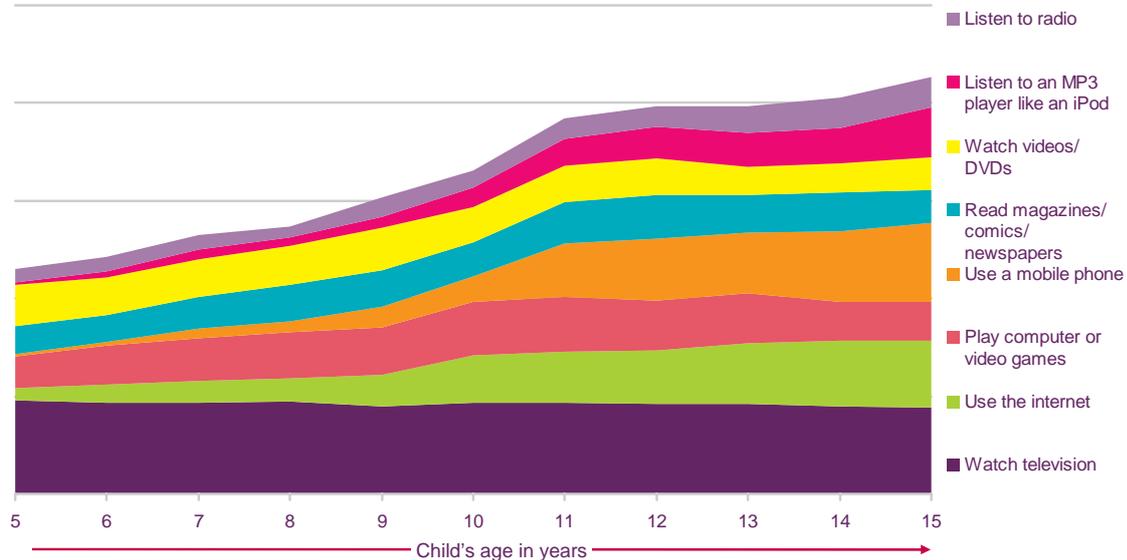
Figure 16: Media activities carried out almost every day



QC39A – Which of the following do you do almost every day?
 Base: Children aged 8-15 (1354 aged 8-11, 1357 aged 12-15)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to September 2007

Figure 17 shows that the range of media activities carried out almost every day increases with age; with an average of 4.0 activities carried out by 12-15 year olds compared to 3.2 activities for 8-11 year olds and 2.4 activities for 5-7 year olds. Age 10-11 is the age at which media use noticeably broadens, largely due to increased mobile phone use. This is likely to be linked to children moving to secondary school, growing independence from parents and gaining a larger network of friends.

Figure 17: Media activities carried out almost every day, by age



QC39A – Which of the following do you do almost every day?
 Base: Children aged 8-15 (336 aged 5, 315 aged 6, 334 aged 7, 400 aged 8, 306 aged 9, 314 aged 10, 334 aged 11, 418 aged 12, 313 aged 13, 286 aged 14, 340 aged 15)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to September 2007

Some of these differences are related to the child's access to the media concerned, with older children more likely to have higher levels of access to the internet, a mobile phone and an MP3 player. However, there are comparable levels of access to a games console, DVD player and radio across the age groups, indicating that different choices are being made by

younger and older children regarding the media they use. Indeed, different choices are also being made regarding *how* they use the media; older children have a wider range of uses of mobile phones and the internet than do younger children.

Gender also plays an important role in media use, with boys more likely than girls to use, and to spend more time playing with, gaming devices, while girls (particularly older girls) are more likely than boys to use a range of media devices, including mobile and the internet, and reading magazines, comics and newspapers.

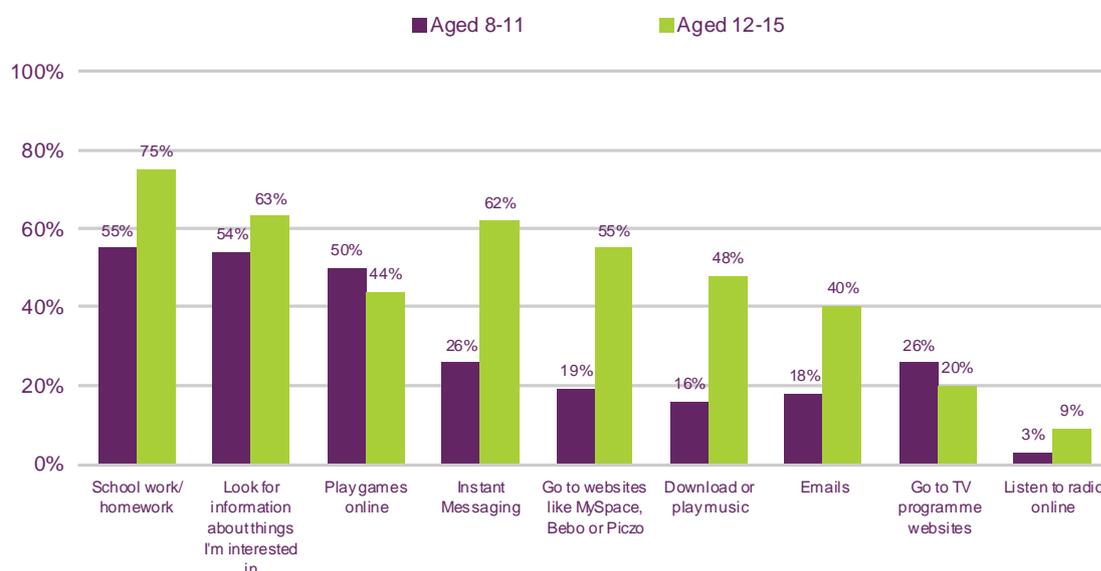
There are also some significant differences between the socio-economic groups, with children from ABC1 households tending to use the internet and MP3 players more, whereas children from C2DE households are more likely to watch videos and DVDs. However, there are no differences between gender or socio-economic group in terms of the number of media activities undertaken almost every day, indicating that different genders and socio-economic groups are engaging in similar amounts of daily activity, but are just choosing different media to engage with.

Children engage in a wide range of internet and mobile use, which increases with age

Children, particularly older children, are carrying out a wide range of activities on the internet and mobile phone. Girls make broader use of both the internet and mobile phone than boys.

Children who use the internet at home are prompted with nine possible uses of the internet and are asked to say which they ever do online, and how often. Figure 18 shows the proportions of children aged 8-11 and 12-15 that carry out each of the online activities at least once a week.

Figure 18: Internet activities carried out at least once a week by home users



QC20 – Thinking about what you do when you use the internet at home, do you use the internet to do any of these? How often do you do this over the internet? Would you say most days, once or twice a week, not much, or never?
 Base: Children aged 8-15 who use the internet at home (499 aged 8-11, 587 aged 12-15)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to September 2007

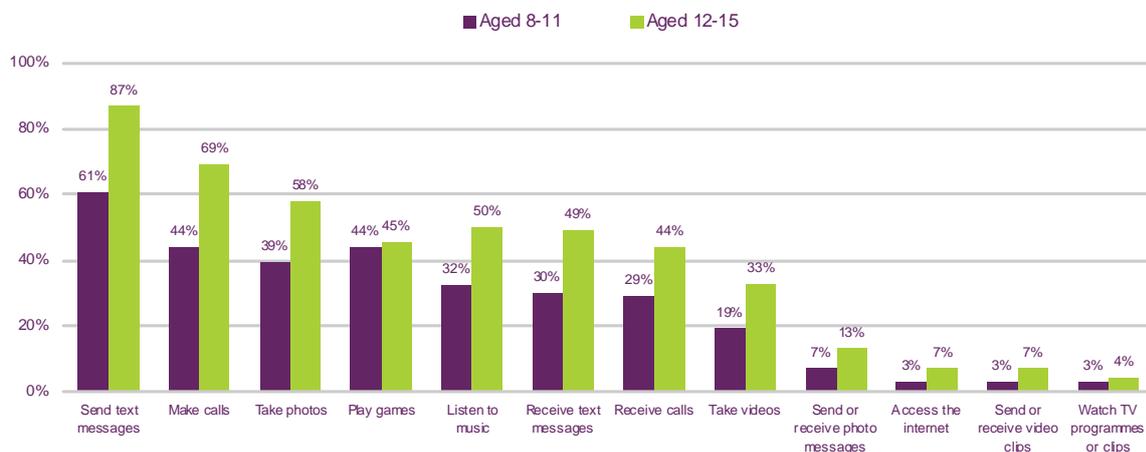
Other than using the internet to go to television programme websites, each of these nine types of use are more likely to be made by older internet users, aged 12-15. The range of internet activities carried out at least once a week rises from an average of 2.0 out of 9 for 8 year olds to an average of 4.7 out of 9 for 15 year olds.

Among younger internet users, aged 8-11, girls are more likely than boys to go to television programme websites. Among older internet users, aged 12-15, boys are more likely than girls to play games online. All other differences by gender within the age groups relate to higher use by girls aged 12-15; specifically using instant messaging, social networking sites, downloading or playing music, and emails. Older girls have the broadest use of the internet, at 4.4 out of 9 activities on average.

Those with internet access in their bedroom make more of these uses of the internet than other internet users, although this will be influenced to some extent by older children being more likely to have internet access in their bedroom. Looking only at 12-15 year old users, those who have internet access in their bedroom are more likely to use the internet for instant messaging, visiting social networking sites, downloading or playing music, and email.

Children with their own mobile phone were prompted with twelve possible uses and were asked to say which they ever do with their mobile phone, and how often. Figure 19 shows the proportion of children aged 8-11 and 12-15 who carry out each of the activities with their mobile phone at least once a week.

Figure 19: Mobile phone activities carried out at least once a week by owners



QC34 – Thinking about what you use your mobile phone for, do you use it to do any of these?
 Base: Children aged 8-15 who use the internet at home (665 aged 8-11, 1173 aged 12-15)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to September 2007

Each of these twelve types of use is more likely to be made by older mobile phone users, aged 12-15. The range of mobile phone activities carried out at least once a week rises from an average of 2.5 out of 12 for 8 year olds to an average of 5.0 out of 12 for 15 year olds. Girls make broader use of their mobile phone than boys in each age group.

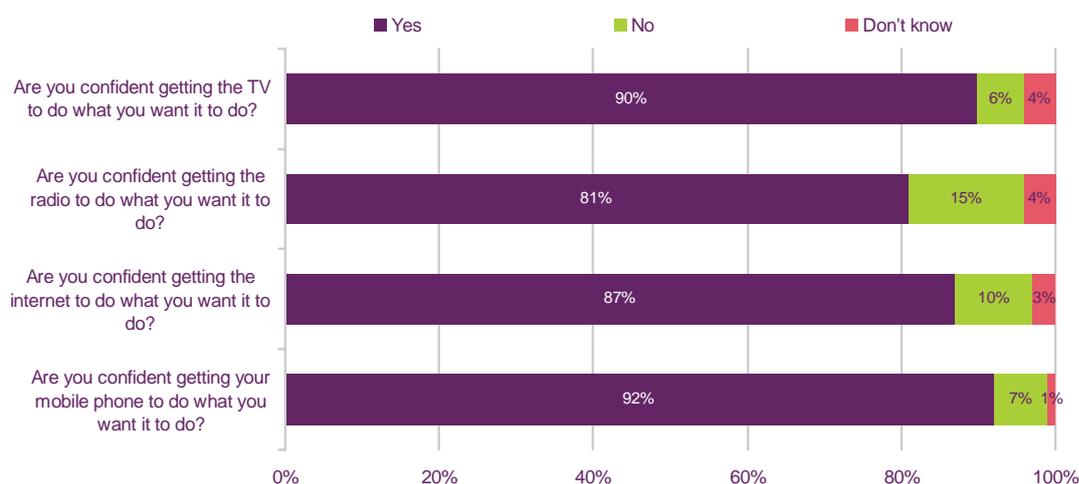
Those who make broader use of the internet at home also make broader use of their mobile phone.

3.3 Children have a high level of confidence in their ability to use media

There are high levels of confidence among children to be able to get the media they use at home to do what they want (Figure 20). For all media this confidence increases with age. Children are most confident about using mobile phones and the television. For all users of media except younger mobile users there is no difference in volumes of use between those who state that they are confident users compared to those who state that they are not confident. For 8-11s with their own mobile phone, those who are not confident make fewer calls, send fewer texts and make a narrower use of their mobile phone than those who are confident.

Confident internet users are more likely than those who are not confident to make broader use of the internet. Among younger children, those who are confident carry out an average of 3.0 activities per week, compared to 1.7 activities among those who state that they are not confident. Among older children, those who are confident carry out an average of 4.4 activities at least once a week, compared to 3.1 activities among those who state that they are not confident. Those who are more confident about using the internet are also less likely to state they have seen something on the internet that has made them feel concerned.

Figure 20: Users' confidence with media



QC7B/ QC14B/ QC22B/ QC36B – Are you confident getting the TV/ the radio/ the internet/ your mobile phone to do what you want it to do?
 Base: Children aged 8-15 who watch TV at home (2688), who listen to radio at home (1185), who use the internet at home (1920), who have their own mobile phone (1838)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to September 2007

3.4 Children use media platforms for a variety of reasons and many are using a number of different media at the same time

Clear roles emerge for television, mobile and radio, while the internet has a variety of functions

Watching television is mainly for leisure/ entertainment; using a mobile phone is predominantly for contacting other people and children tend to listen to the radio 'to have something on in the background'. The internet has more diverse reasons for use: leisure/ entertainment, finding information and, for older children, contact with other people.

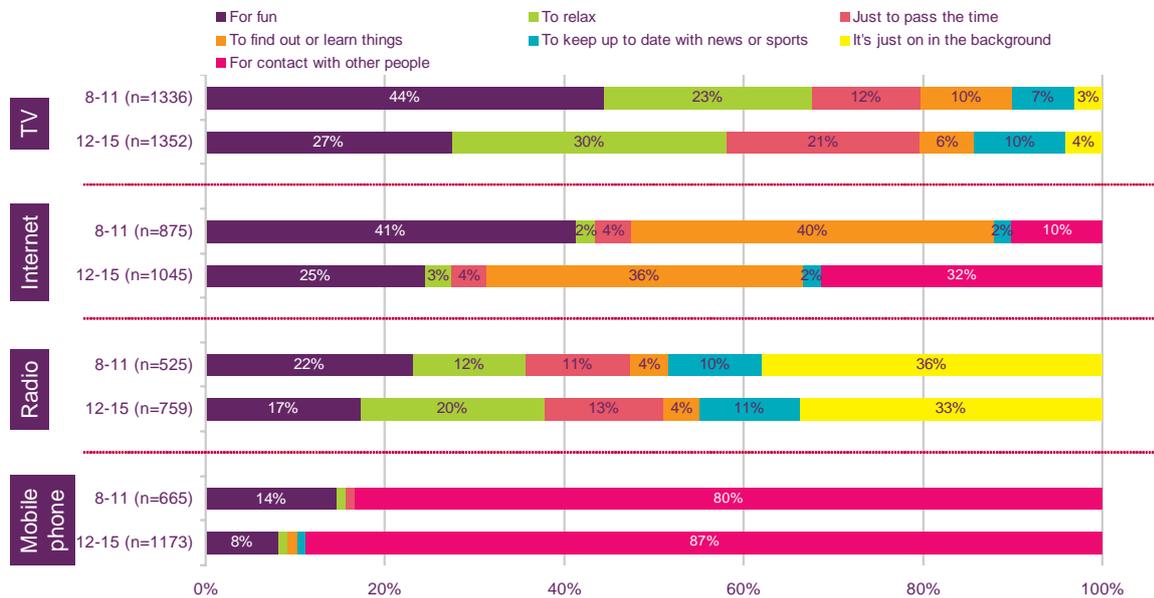
As discussed above, the broad range of media platforms available in the home gives 8-15 year olds a variety of communications choices. Television is primarily used for leisure/ entertainment, preferred when children are looking for fun, relaxation or to pass the time. The important leisure/ entertainment role that television plays may help explain the important place it has traditionally played for children, and still does for many.

For 8-15 year olds a mobile phone is the preferred platform for contact with other people. This is particularly strong among 12-15 year olds, who are more likely to be heavier users of mobiles. Radio is largely seen as something *on in the background*, although boys are more likely than girls to say its purpose is *to keep up to date with news or sport*.

The internet plays a more diverse, interactive role in a child's life. Overall, two main reasons are given for its use: leisure/ entertainment and as a source of information. For older children, and particularly girls, a third reason emerges - for contact with other people. This reflects these groups' interest in the more social activities that can be found on the internet, such as social networking sites, instant messaging and chat rooms. As we will see in later

chapters, the diversity of reasons given for internet use reflects the variety of interactive ways and the spread of activities that children, particularly those aged 12-15, are using the internet for.

Figure 21: Main reason for using media platforms



QC8B/ QC24B/ QC15B/ QC37B – Which one is your main reason for using [MEDIUM]?

Base: Children aged 8-15 who use each medium (TV 1336 aged 8-11, 1352 aged 12-15. Internet 875 aged 8-11, 1045 aged 12-15. Radio 525 aged 8-11, 759 aged 12-15. Mobile phone 665 aged 8-11, 1173 aged 12-15)

Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to September 2007

Using more than one platform at a time is widespread and increases with age

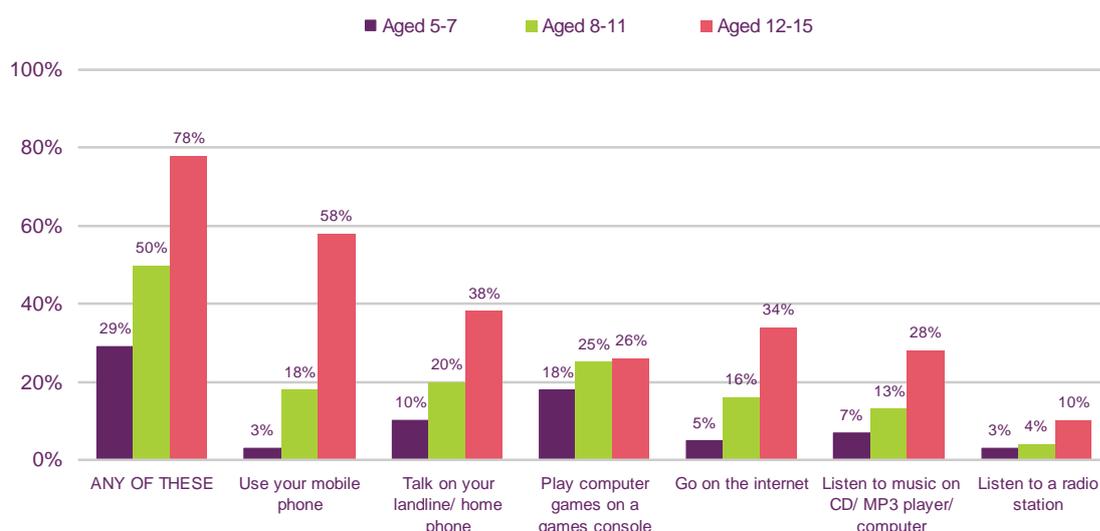
Using more than one platform at a time is a common practice for many 8-15 year olds and increases with age. The most common type of media used while watching television is a mobile phone (for older children) and a games console (for younger children). The most common type of media used while using the internet is a mobile phone (for older children) and watching the television (for younger children).

As access and use increases, and the functionality of each platform develops, changing usage patterns are emerging. Children are increasingly using devices in a number of ways, not just for the original or primary purpose, and are often using more than one device simultaneously or using several features of a platform simultaneously.

All children aged 8-15 who watch television at home were prompted with six other media activities and were asked whether they ever watch television and do any of the activities at the same time (Figure 22).

A quarter of 5-7s, half of 8-11s and three-quarters of 12-15s who watch television at home ever carry out any of these other six media activities at the same time as watching television; watching television while using a mobile phone is the most common type of simultaneous media use among older children, while watching television at the same time as playing on a games console is the most common type for younger children.

Figure 22: Media used while watching television, by age

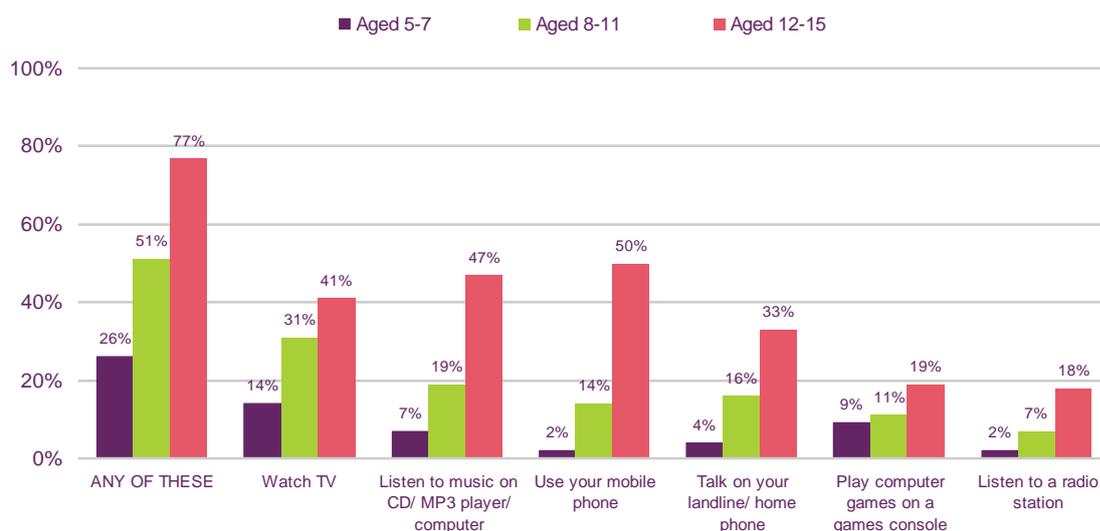


QC4A-F – Do you ever watch TV at home and do any of these other things at the same time? (SHOWS % STATING THEY DO THIS 'MOST TIMES' OR 'SOMETIMES' WHEN WATCHING TV)
 Base: Children aged 5-7 (964), 8-11(1336) and 12- 15 (1352) who watch TV at home
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to September 2007

Internet users were also asked whether they ever use the internet and do any other activities at the same time (Figure 23). A quarter of 5-7s, half of 8-11s and three-quarters of 12-15s who use the internet at home ever carry out any of these other six media activities at the same time as using the internet.

Overall, using other media while watching television and while using the internet are at very similar levels, but using the internet while using a mobile phone is the most common type of simultaneous media use for older children, while using the internet while watching television is the most common type for younger children.

Figure 23: Media used while using the internet, by age



QC19A-F – Do you ever use the internet at home and do any of these other things at the same time? (SHOWS % STATING THEY DO THIS 'MOST TIMES' OR 'SOMETIMES' WHEN USING THE INTERNET)
 Base: Children aged 8-15 who use the internet at home (477 aged 5-7, 875 aged 8-11, 1045 aged 12-15)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to September 2007

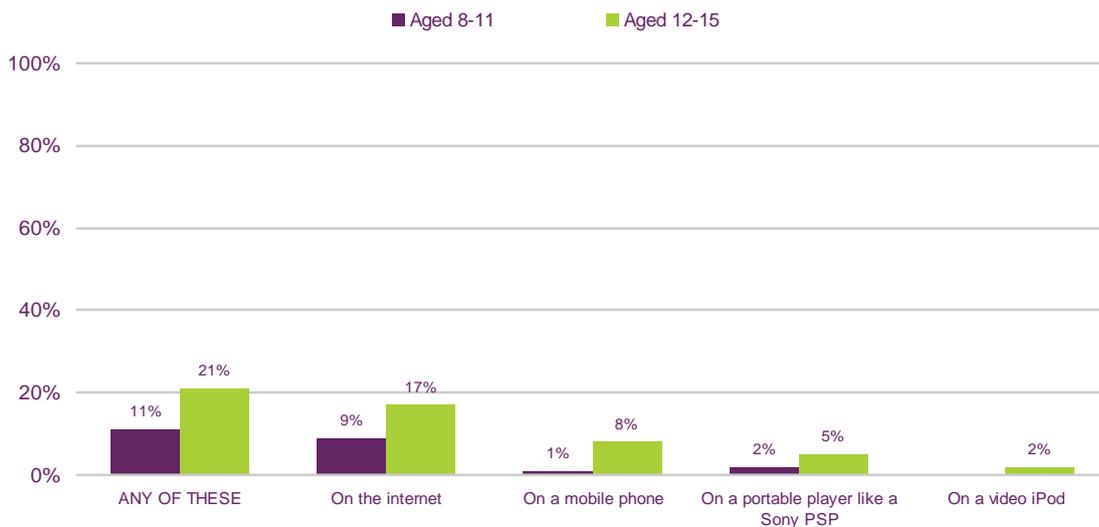
To a large extent, the profile of children who are using different media at the same time reflects children's general usage profile; given that older children are more likely than

younger children to use a variety of media, it is unsurprising that older children are more likely to be using more than one platform at a time. It is also unsurprising, given their media preferences, that girls are significantly more likely than boys to use a mobile or fixed phone while watching television or using the internet, while boys are significantly more likely to play computer games while watching television or using the internet.

Children who have television or internet access in their bedroom are significantly more likely to use more than one platform at the same time. Again, this is linked to the age profile of these children, with older children being more likely to have television or internet in their bedroom as well as being more likely to use more than one platform at the same time.

We also asked children about the ways in which they access various types of content, specifically how they tended to watch television programmes, films or video clips and what type of content they view online. This type of behaviour is strongly linked to penetration of the relevant devices; the children who are more likely to watch television, films or video clips on other devices are more likely to be 12-15, male and living in an ABC1 household. Among those who do watch audio-visual content regularly through another platform, the internet is most commonly used, although levels are relatively low at less than one in ten for 8-11s and less than one in five for 12-15s.

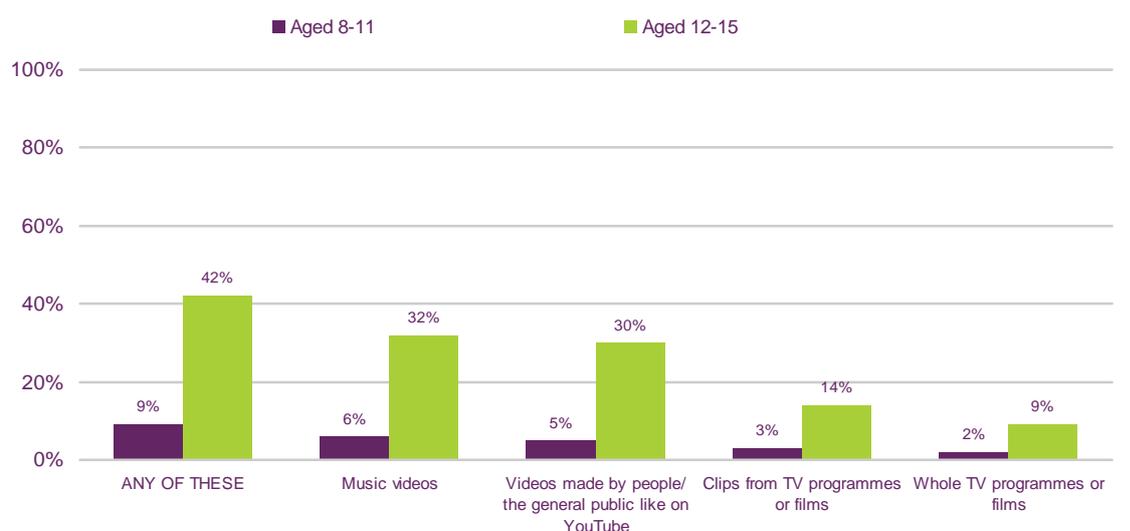
Figure 24: Ways children watch television, films or video clips apart from on television, by age



QC9A-D – Apart from on a TV, are any of these ways that you watch TV, films or video clips at home? (SHOWS % STATING THEY DO THIS 'MOST DAYS' OR 'ONCE OR TWICE A WEEK')
 Base: Children aged 8-11 (382) and 12-15 (385)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in September 2007

Looking more broadly at the type of audio-visual content that children watch or download reveals higher levels of use among older children; two-fifths of 8-15 year olds who use the internet at home regularly download or watch any content from the internet. Watching or downloading music videos and videos made by the general public are the most popular.

Figure 25: Content children watch online or download from the internet, by age

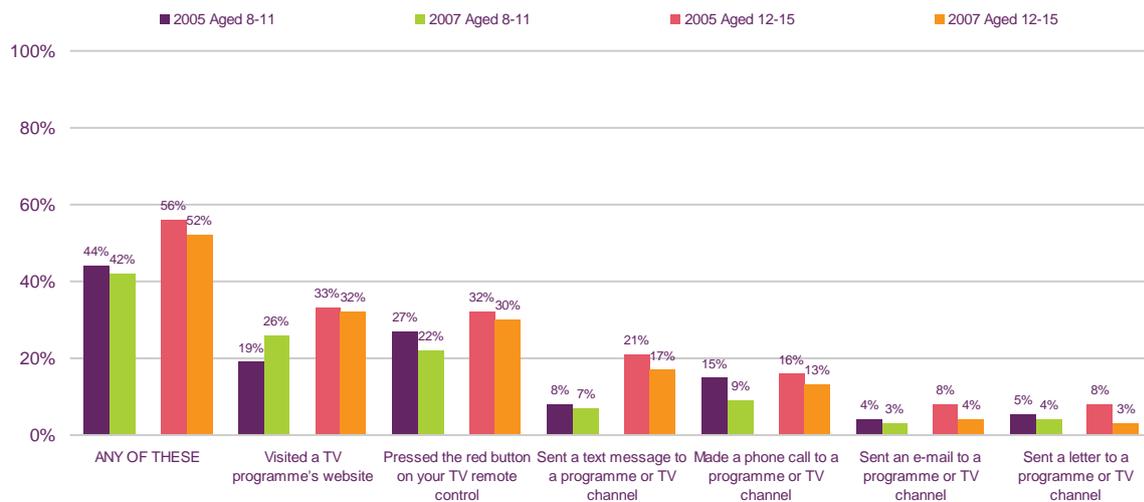


QC21A-D – Do you watch or download any of these from the internet? How often? (SHOWS % STATING THEY DO THIS 'MOST DAYS' OR 'ONCE OR TWICE A WEEK')
 Base: Children aged 8-15 who use the internet at home (875 aged 8-11, 1045 aged 12-15)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to September 2007

Despite interaction with radio having significantly increased, interactivity among television viewers remains more popular

Interactivity among television viewers is more popular than interaction among radio listeners. This is despite the fact that listeners' interaction with radio has increased over the last two years and interaction among television viewers has declined. The two largest areas of decline for television interaction are red-button activity and sending a text message to a programme. Increases in radio interaction are largely driven by listeners going to the radio station's website.

There have been significant developments in children's reported interaction with television and radio over the last two years. Overall, interactivity among television viewers is more popular than interaction among radio listeners (although interaction with radio has increased over the last two years). It is interesting to see that although there has been an increase in children interacting with the internet, levels of interaction with television have significantly declined (Figure 26).

Figure 26: Interactivity as a result of seeing something on television, 2005 and 2007

QC5 – Have you ever done any of these things as a result of seeing something on television?

Base: Children aged 8-15 who watch TV at home (768 aged 8-11 in 2005, 1336 aged 8-11 in 2007, 761 aged 12-15 in 2005, 1352 aged 12-15 in 2007)

Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to September 2007

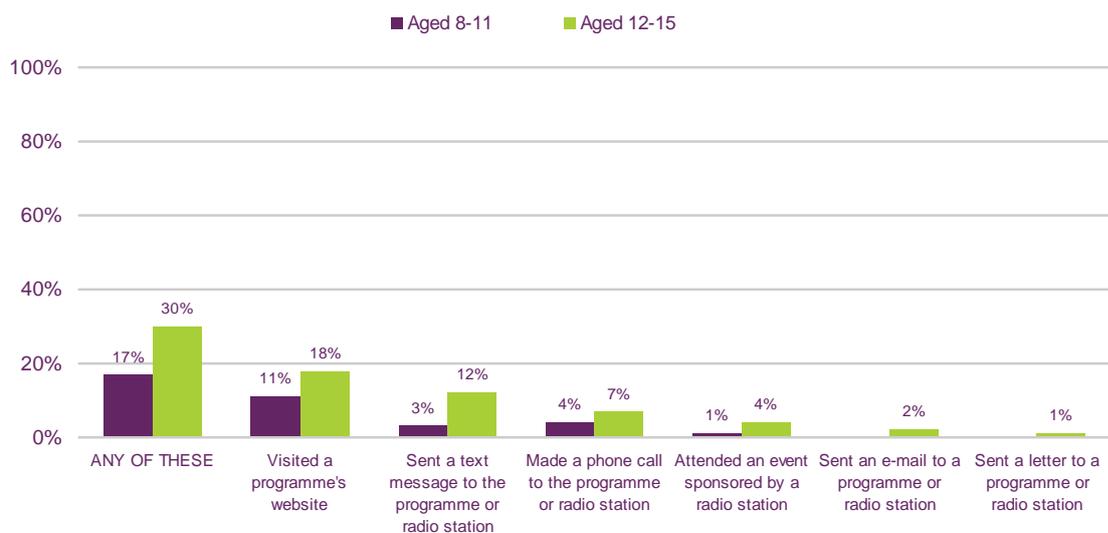
There has been a general drop in all interaction with television, but two of the largest areas are red-button activity and sending a text message to a programme or television station. While pressing the red button remains one of the most popular interactive activities, it has fallen since 2005, particularly for 8-11 year olds. However, the fall in television interaction since 2005 is largely driven by the decline in sending text messages to television channels or programmes, particularly amongst 12-15 year olds.

This may be partly due to the highly-publicised issues surrounding phone-in and text messaging, involving voting and competitions on a number of programmes popular with children. These incidents may have affected children's wishes or parental permission to vote/nominate or enter competitions.

They may also have affected children's ability to vote; following these incidents in 2007 the facility for viewers to vote/nominate or enter competitions via text message was suspended for many programmes. Given children's preference for text messaging over voice communications, this may have reduced the ease, and their inclination, to vote/nominate or participate in competitions.

In contrast, despite being still at relatively low levels (a quarter of child radio listeners), interaction with radio stations has significantly increased for all age groups (Figure 27). This increase is mainly driven by children visiting a radio station's website, demonstrating many radio stations' success at driving listeners online with an increase in activities such as live studio webcams, competitions, play lists, podcasts, play-again facilities and other show-related content.

Figure 27: Interactivity as a result of hearing something on the radio, 2005 and 2007



QC11 – Have you ever done any of these things as a result of hearing something on the radio?
 Base: Children aged 8-15 who listen to radio at home (433 aged 8-11, 528 aged 12-15)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in October-December 2007

Section 4

Understand

This section looks at children's knowledge and understanding of each media platform.

4.1 Understand: summary

Children's trust in television programmes differs by type of programme, with higher levels of trust for news programmes and nature programmes than reality television programmes, such as Big Brother and Wife Swap.

Over half of older children make some form of check when visiting a new website and most children would complain if they saw something worrying, distressing or offensive online. However, there is some uncertainty over whom they should complain to. Many older children have concerns over violence in games, resulting in high levels of agreement with consoles having controls which restrict play based on games' age ratings.

Most parents have rules in the household about access to and use of the main media platforms, although rules about internet use have significantly decreased since 2005. Overall, younger children and ABC1 households are more likely than older children and C2DE households to have rules. Nearly one in ten parents with children using more than one of the platforms has no rules for any of their child's media use.

Since 2005, there has been an increase in use of television PIN/ password controls, but a decrease in internet security software being used in children's households. Households with younger children are more likely than those with older children to have such restrictions. The main reason for parents not setting up internet controls is their belief in their child's ability to self-regulate their internet behaviour.

Parents have higher levels of concern than their children about the media their children are using, with the internet being the platform of most concern, and the radio of least concern. Children's use of the internet raises a dilemma for many parents, with parents rating the internet as the media platform that is both the most beneficial to their child and of the most concern.

4.2 Trust in television content varies by programme genre

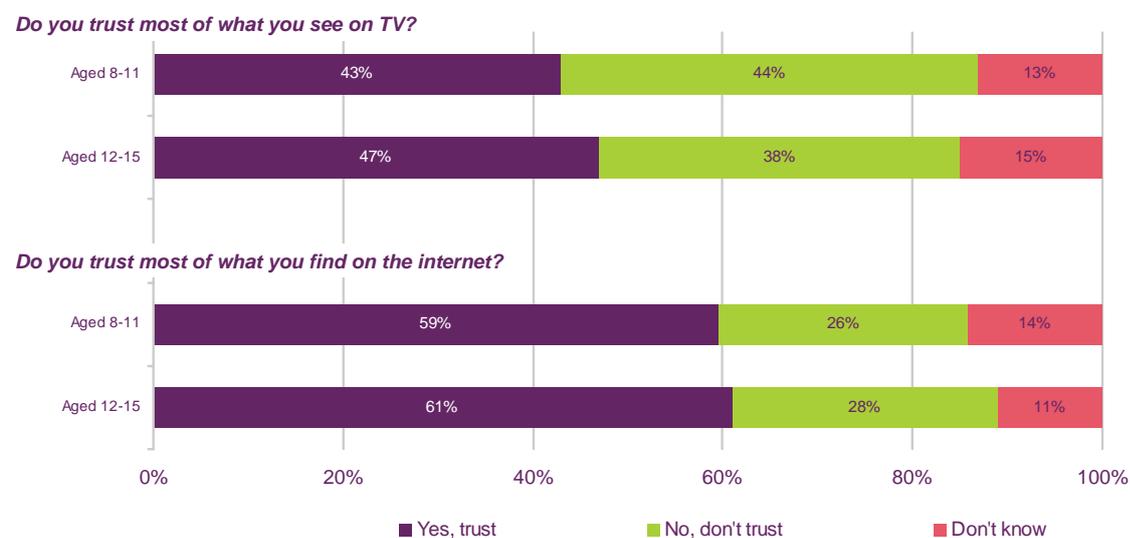
Children's trust in television programmes differs by type of programme, with higher levels of trust for news and nature programmes than reality television programmes. While most children would complain if they saw something worrying, distressing or offensive online, there is some uncertainty over whom they should complain to.

At an overall level, children have higher levels of trust in online content than television content, though this may reflect its role; the internet is much more likely to be used for sourcing information than television, which is largely used for fun and relaxation. Levels of trust in television are similar for both children and adults, but children show significantly higher levels of trust than adults in internet content.

There are some differences by age, gender and socio-economic group; children who are older, C2DE and live in an urban area are more likely than younger, ABC1 children living in a

rural area to trust television, while boys are more likely than girls to trust what they find online.

Figure 28: Children's trust in television and online content



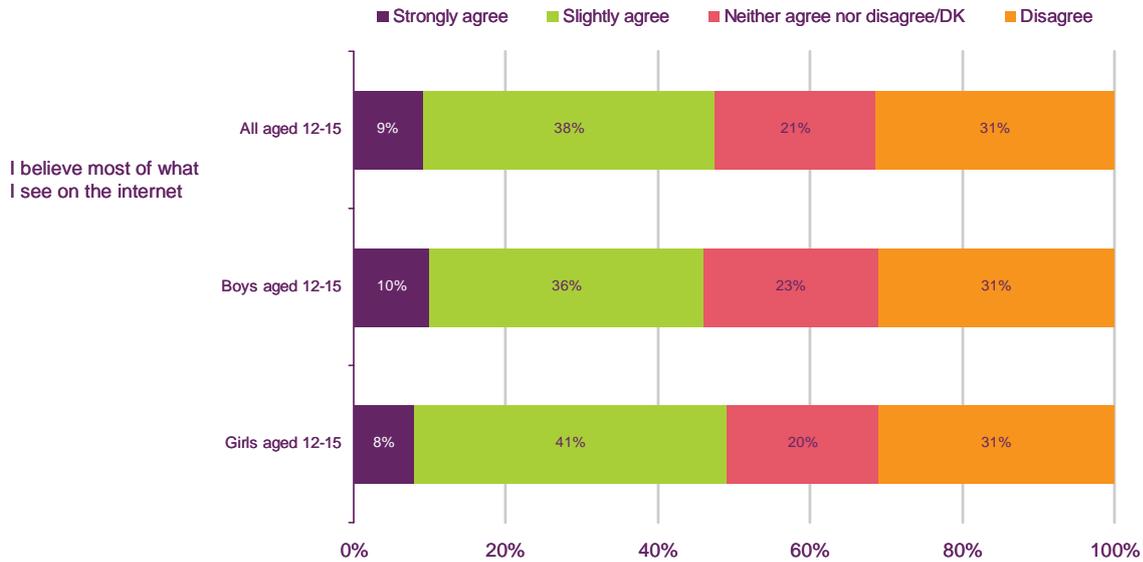
QC7F/QC22G – Do you trust most of what you see on TV/ Do you trust most of what you find on the internet?
 Base: Children aged 8-15 who watch TV at home (1336 aged 8-11, 1352 aged 12-15), who use the internet at home (875 aged 8-11, 1045 aged 12-15)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April – September 2007

This higher level of trust in online content may be explained by a number of reasons:

- there is a great deal of confidence among children in their own ability to use the internet and to be able to find what they are looking for;
- the ways in which children mainly use the internet inevitably forge a sense of trust, particularly in finding out or learning things (homework, school work), and for contacting others (email, chat rooms, social networking sites);
- children who make broader use of the internet are more likely to trust most of what they find, suggesting that they are fairly experienced, knowledgeable users, rather than naïve users with more limited experience, as might be assumed; and
- many children are visiting well known and/or recommended sites, so feel more confident in the integrity of the content.

Further analysis suggests a complex picture, with less than one in ten children strongly agreeing that they *believe most of what they see on the internet*; this suggests that children are evaluating content they see online at some level. Children from rural areas are more likely to agree strongly than those from urban areas.

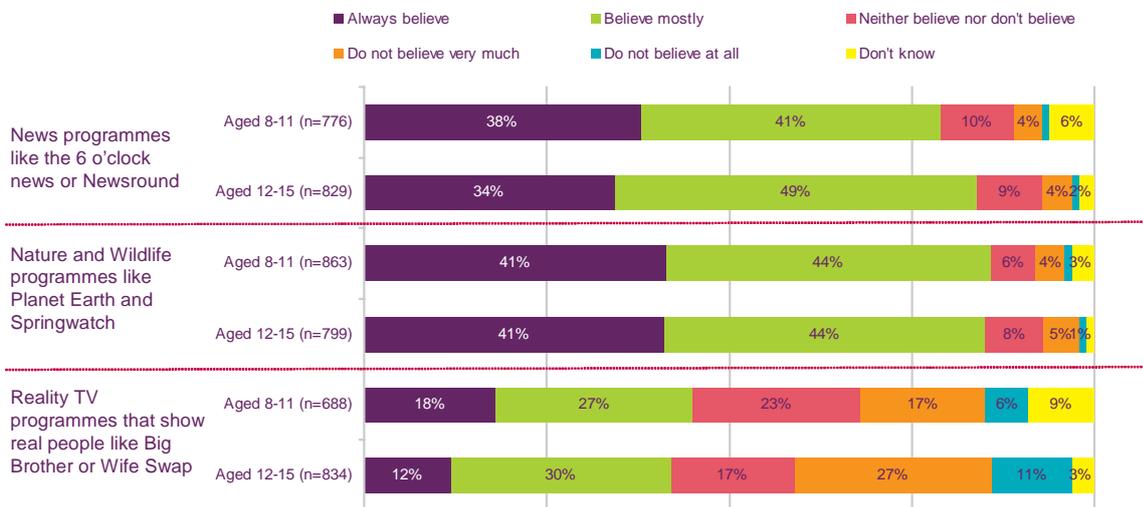
Figure 29: Children's attitudes towards the internet, by gender aged 12-15



QC21A-C – Using this card, choose an answer to show how much you agree or disagree with some things other people have said about the internet
 Base: Children aged 12-15 who use the internet at home (734 aged 12-15, 370 boys aged 12-15, 364 girls aged 12-15)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in October-December 2007

As Figure 30 shows, there are differences between how strongly children believe in the content of different types of television programmes. Levels of trust are highest for news and nature programmes, while reality television programmes such as *Big Brother* and *Wife Swap* are much less trusted. Children from C2DE households are more likely to believe all of the types of television content that we asked about.

Figure 30: Children's trust in types of television content

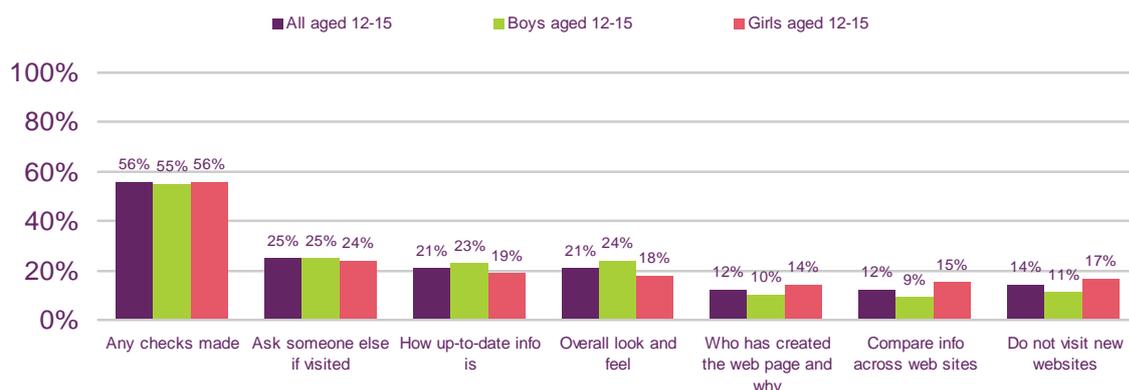


Base: All children aged 8-15 who watch these types of TV programmes (Base sizes shown within Figure 63). Questions QC5A-C. Source: Ofcom's *Media Literacy Audit*, Saville Rossiter-Base, October to December 2007

The majority of children are making checks when visiting a new website

Most children claim they make some form of check when visiting a new website; for example, by asking others, by evaluating the look and feel of the website, by reviewing how up to date it is, or considering who has created the site and why.

Figure 31: Checks made by children when visiting a new website, by gender aged 12-15

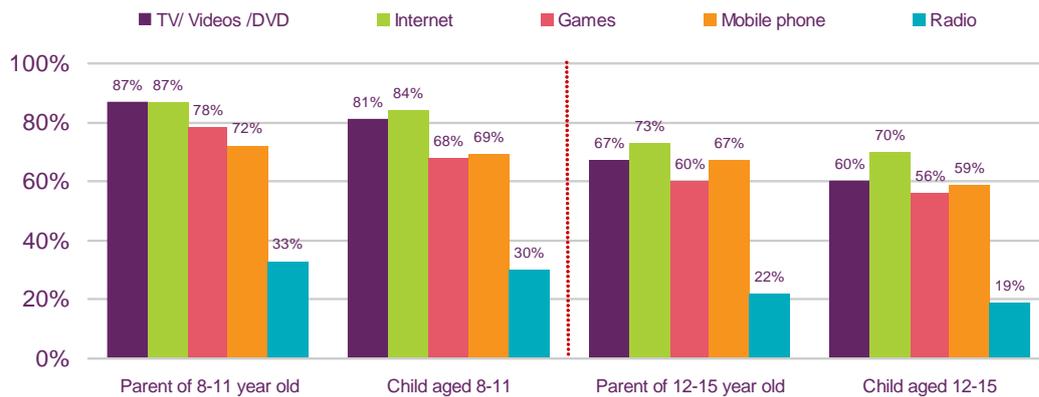


QC19 – Thinking about new websites you visit. Which, if any of these things would you check?
 Base: Children aged 12-15 who use the internet at home (734 aged 12-15, 370 boys aged 12-15, 364 girls aged 12-15)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in October-December 2007

4.3 Most households have rules in place regarding access to, and use of, main media platforms

Most parents have rules about access to, and use of, the main media platforms, although the proportion of parents having any rules for internet use has decreased since 2005. Overall, younger children and ABC1 households are more likely than older children and C2DE households to have such rules. Nearly one in ten parents with children using more than one of the platforms have no rules for any of their child's media use.

Most parents have rules in the household concerning access to, and use of, the main media platforms. Rules about television and internet are most common, and rules for radio listening least common.

Figure 32: Rules about accessing media, as reported by children and parents

Questions QP5/ QP13/ QP16/ QP19/ QP9/ QC3/ QC17/ QC12/ QC38/ QC40

Base: Parents of children aged 8-15 and children aged 8-15 who have a TV in the household that the child uses (2042), uses the internet at home or elsewhere (1431), play games on a games console, PC or laptop (1820), have a mobile phone (1319), who listen to the radio at home (951)

Source: Ofcom's *Media Literacy Audit*, Saville Rossiter-Base, October to December 2007

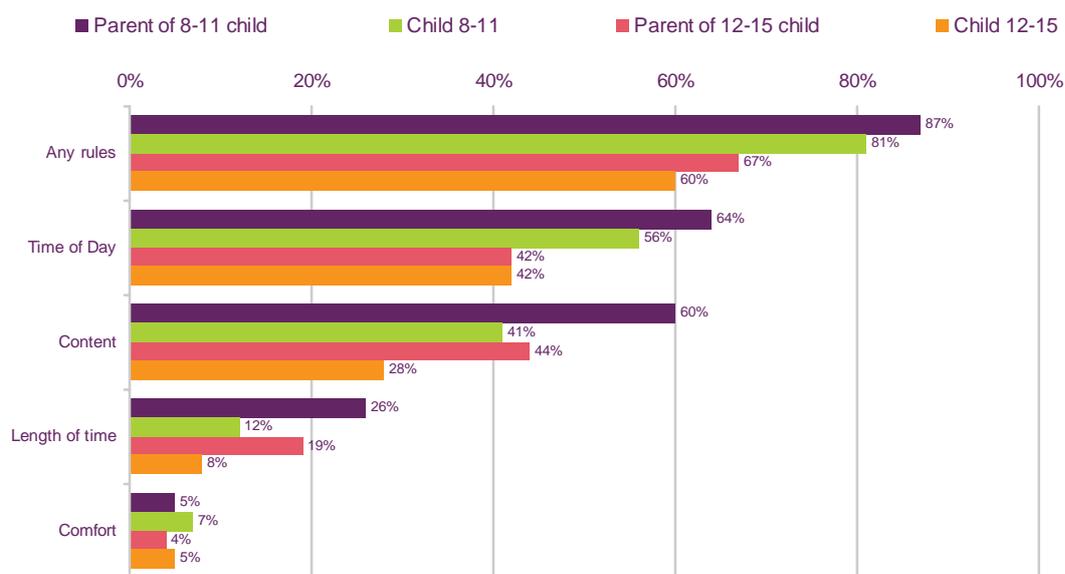
For all platforms except mobile, households with younger children are significantly more likely than households with older children to have rules. ABC1 parents are also more likely than C2DE parents to have rules for television, games and mobile phones, which could help to explain why ABC1 children have lower levels of usage of these platforms than their C2DE contemporaries.

There are some interesting trends regarding rules about internet use. Overall, rules for internet use have significantly decreased since 2005 and, although three-quarters of parents of older children do have some rules in place, they are less likely than parents of younger children to have any rules. Those with television, internet or a games console in their bedroom are less likely to have any parental rules or restrictions regarding its use than those who mostly use the device in the living room, although the proportion of older children that have rules about watching television has increased since 2005.

For those parents who have set rules, the main restriction is on the type of content children watch. Rules about content are more frequent for the internet than for television. This may be due to the variety of content available on the internet and because the internet is mainly unregulated, unlike television.

Children in both age groups are less likely than their parents to state that any rules exist regarding television viewing in the home. Rules about television viewing are also more likely to be nominated by parents and children for the younger age group. The incidence of parents nominating time-of-day and content rules does not differ according to the child's gender, but parents of boys are more likely than parents of girls to impose rules about length of time and comfort (for example, not sitting too close to the television and not having the volume too loud).

Figure 33: Rules about television watching, as reported by parents and children

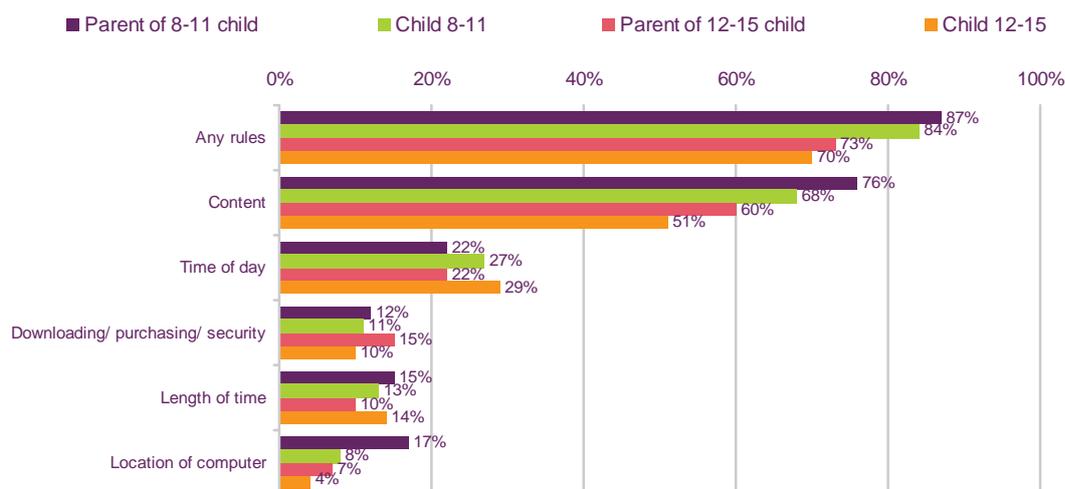


QP5/QC3 - Do you have rules or do anything about the TV, videos and DVDs that your child watches/ Do your parents have any rules or do anything about the TV, videos and DVDs that you watch at home?
 Base: Those with any TVs in the household that the child uses (1035 parents of children/ children aged 8-11, 1007 parents of children/ children aged 12-15)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in October-December 2007

At the overall level, unlike rules about television, the proportion of parents and children saying they have rules about internet use are at a similar level for each age group. As with television, parents of younger children are more likely than parents of older children to nominate any rules.

For both age groups, rules relating to content account for a clear majority of any rules. However, compared to the 2005 Media Literacy Audit, there has been a decrease in the incidence of rules regarding online content, as stated by parents of younger and older children (from 91% to 76% and from 68% to 60% respectively).

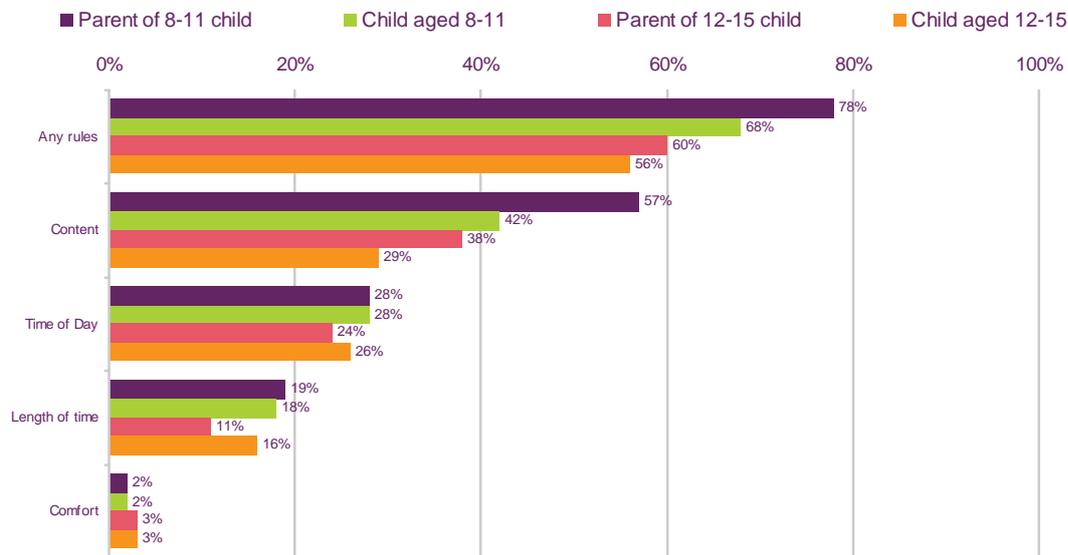
Figure 34: Rules about access to the internet as reported by parents and children



QP13/QC17 - Do you have any rules or do anything about the access that your child has to the internet?/ Do your parents have any rules or do anything about you using the internet at home?
 Base: Those whose child uses the internet at home – 663 parents of children aged 8-11, 638 children aged 8-11, 768 parents of children aged 12-15, 734 children aged 12-15)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in October-December 2007

As with television and the internet, parents of younger children are more likely than parents of older children to say they have any rules regarding their child's games playing. Rules relating to content are the most common for both younger and older children, followed by time of day, then length of time. Children are less likely than parents to nominate any parental rules for playing games, with the biggest 'gap' between parents and children relating to rules around content.

Figure 35: Rules about games playing as reported by parents and children



QP19/QC38 - Do you have rules or do anything about the games your child plays on a games console or computer/ Do your parents have any rules or do anything about you playing games at home?

Base: Those whose child ever plays games on a games console, PC or laptop (929 parents of 8-11 year olds and children aged 8-11, 891 parents of 12-15 year olds and children aged 12-15)

Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in October-December 2007

There is a small group of parents who have no rules for any of the media platforms used by their child. Nearly one in ten parents with children using more than one of the platforms have no rules for any of their child's media use. This is significantly more likely in DE households and for children aged 12-15 years.

4.4 Increase in use of security controls on digital televisions but decrease in internet controls

Increase in use of PIN or password protection in digital television households with younger children

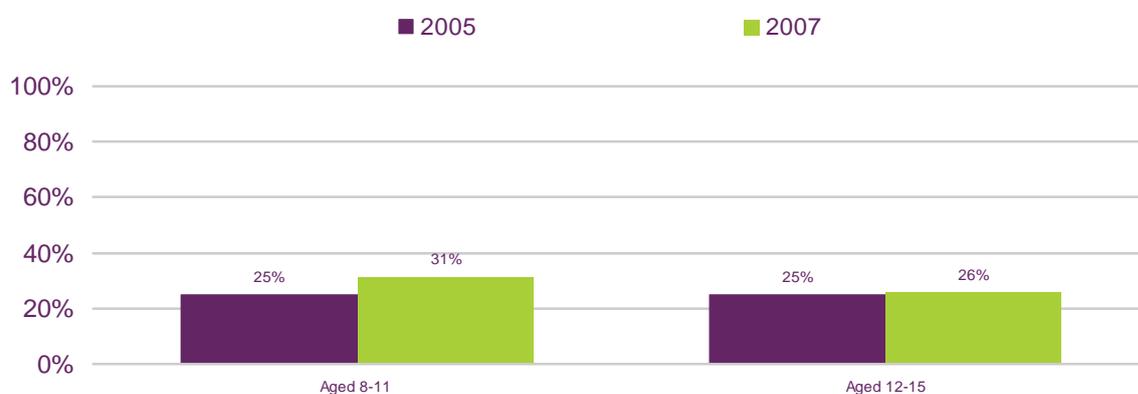
Despite an increase in the use of PIN or password protection on digital television in households of younger children, there is still limited use of such restrictions. Households with younger children are more likely than those with older children to have PIN/ password controls

Nine out of ten 8-15 year olds live in households with digital television, whether accessed via satellite, cable, or a set-top box such as Freeview. Parents of children in these households were asked whether there are any controls set on their television service so that their child can only watch particular channels or types of programmes once a PIN number or password is entered.

Overall, a minority of parents are using such restrictions; just under a third of 8-15s with digital television have controls such as PIN or password protection. There has been a

significant increase in the use of PIN/password protection on television in households with 8-11 year olds since 2005 and as a result this younger age group is now more likely than 12-15 year olds to have such restrictions to their television viewing. This increase in PIN protection among 8-11s may be due to Sky having widely publicised its parental control features, which include PIN protection, over the last two years.

Figure 36: PIN or password controls set on television services, 2005 and 2007



QP11 Are there any controls set on your TV service so that your child could only watch particular channels or types of programmes once a PIN number or password has been entered?
 Base: Those with multi-channel TV in the household and whose child watches TV at home (1173 aged 8-11, 1221 aged 12-15)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to September 2007

Alongside the fact that older children are more likely to be watching television unsupervised, the general lack of PIN controls among this group means that they are more likely to have totally unrestricted access to television. Those who have wholly unsupervised access to television (defined as those with no rules in place regarding their viewing, who mostly watch without an adult present and who do not have any controls set on their television), account for one in ten children aged 8-15. This figure increases to one in five children aged 12-15. The profile of children who are wholly unsupervised does not differ from the profile of all UK children who watch television.

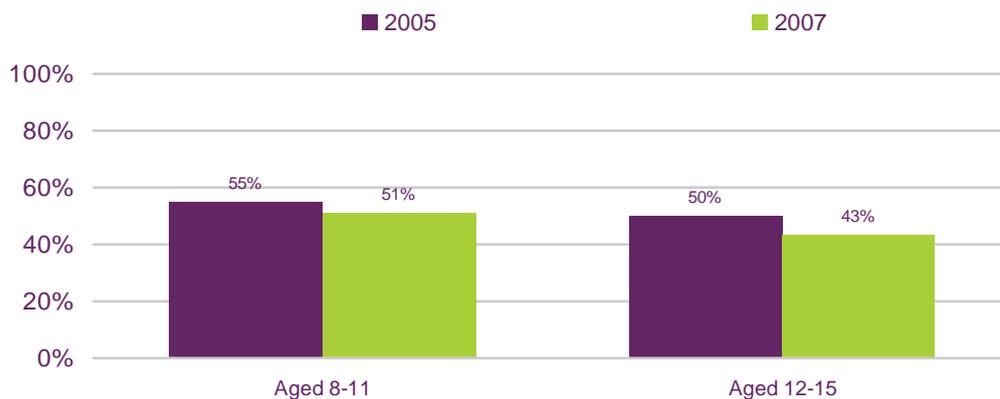
Over half of all households with internet access have no controls or software to restrict online access

More than half of all households with internet access have no blocking software or controls regarding online access. The use of such controls has decreased since 2005. Such restrictions are less likely to be in households with older children than in those with younger children. The main reason for parents not having such controls is the parent's belief in their child's ability to self-regulate their internet behaviour.

Parents of children who use the internet at home were asked if there are any controls set or software loaded, to stop their child viewing certain types of websites. Three-quarters of 8-15 year olds live in a household with internet access and over half of these households have no controls or software in place to prevent unrestricted access to websites.

Those who have wholly unsupervised access (defined as those with no rules in place regarding their use of the internet, who mostly go online without an adult present and who do not have any controls set on their PC) account for one in ten children aged 8-15. This figure increases to one in five children aged 12-15 accessing the internet in the home with unsupervised access to the online environment.

Figure 37: Internet controls or blocking software loaded, 2005 and 2007



QP21- Are there any controls set or is any software loaded to stop your child viewing certain types of websites?
 Base: Parents of children aged 8-15 who use the internet at home (875 aged 8-11, 1045 aged 12-15)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to September 2007

While parents who do have controls in place are generally confident that these controls are working and that their children cannot over-ride or bypass these settings, parents of 12-15 year olds are less confident about this, with one in ten saying that their child does know how to bypass them. This may be partly fuelled by parents feeling that their child knows more about the internet than they do, with over three quarters of parents of children aged 12-15 agreeing with this statement (Figure 38).

Despite the fact that older children are more likely than younger children to visit a wider variety of websites, controls or software to prevent access to certain websites are significantly less likely to be installed on computers used by 12-15 year olds, than on computers used by 8-11 year olds. Indeed, since 2005 the incidence of such controls/software on computers used by 12-15s has significantly declined (from 50% in 2005 to 43% in 2007).

Figure 38: Parental attitudes towards the internet in relation to their child

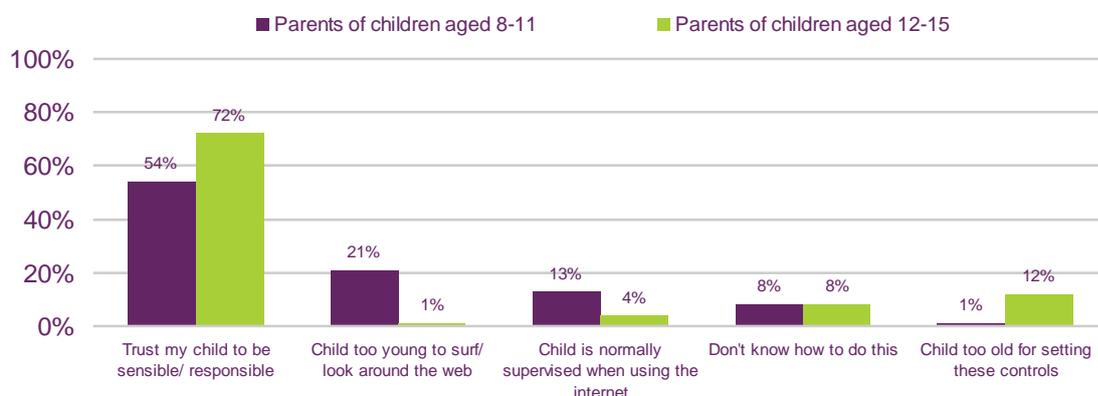


QP15B/C/E - Could you please use the options on this card to tell me the extent to which you agree or disagree with these statements in relation to your child?
 Base: Parents of children aged 8-11 (663) and 12-15 (768) who use the internet at home or elsewhere
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in October-December 2007

The main rationale for parents not having set up such controls is their belief in their child's ability to self-regulate their internet behaviour. Four in five parents who have not set controls have not done so because they trust their child to be responsible. Figure 39 shows that this is demonstrated in three main ways; the parent trusting their child to use the internet responsibly, the belief that their child is too old for such controls (higher for parents of

children aged 12-15) or that their child is too young for such controls and would not be likely to access unsuitable sites (higher for parents of 8-11 year olds).

Figure 39: Reasons for no internet controls or blocking software loaded, by age



QP23 – And can you tell me why that is (that there are no internet controls or blocking software loaded)?
 Base: Parents of children aged 8-11 and 12-15 who use the internet at home without any controls set or software loaded to stop their child viewing certain types of websites (359 aged 8-11 and 258 aged 12-15)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to September 2007

Parents' trust in their child to use the internet responsibly is higher among parents of older children and those in ABC1 households. Lack of knowledge about how to set up such controls or software is also a reason for just under one in ten, but significantly more of an issue for low-income households; 15% of parents in lower-income households claim this is the reason they do not use filters.

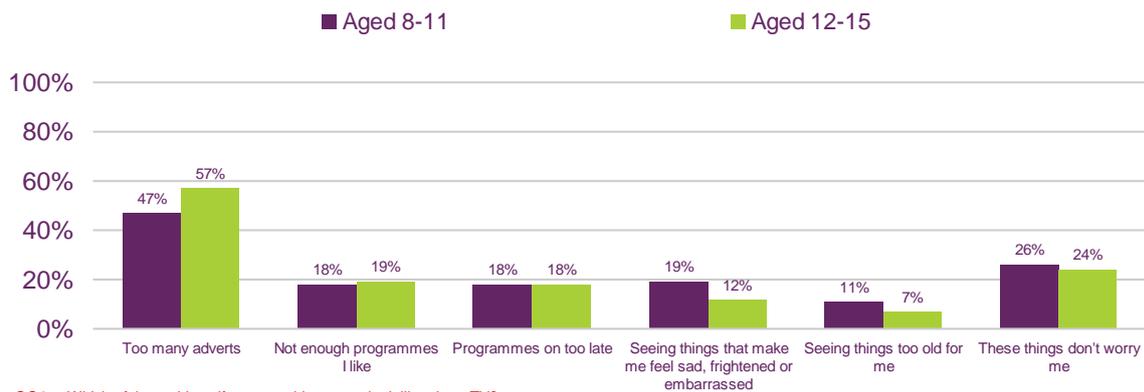
4.5 Children and parents have a variety of dislikes and concerns over use of media

Over half of children dislike the number of adverts they experience on television and online

For both television and the internet the most common complaint among children is that there are too many adverts. Although at relatively low levels, some children are seeing or hearing things that make them feel uncomfortable, or that they feel are 'too old for them'. For all media, there is no difference in levels of concern based on whether the child has the platform in their bedroom or whether they use it unsupervised. Many older children have concerns over violence in games, resulting in high levels of agreement with consoles having controls which restrict play based on games' age ratings.

For both television and the internet the most common complaint among children is that there are too many adverts (see Figure 40 and Figure 42). This is higher among older children, rising to 57% for television and 65% for the internet. In addition, across both platforms, one in four children is not worried about any of the issues raised.

Figure 40: Children's dislikes about television, by age

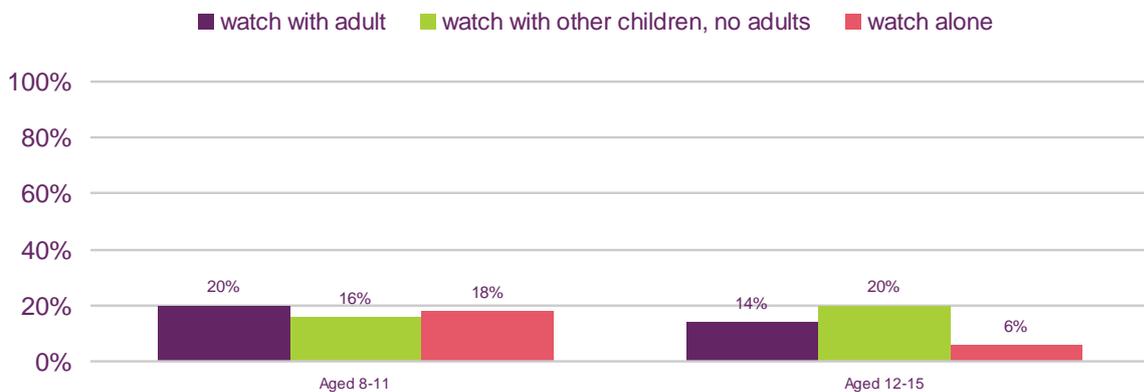


QC4 – Which of these things if any, are things you don't like about TV?
 Base: Children aged 8-11 (1035) and 12-15 (1007) who watch TV at home
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in October-December 2007

Children are more likely to report hearing or seeing things that make them feel sad, frightened or embarrassed as a result of something they have seen on television than through the internet. Younger children and those in ABC1 households are more likely than older children and those in C2DE households to have seen something on the television that they say has made them feel sad, frightened or embarrassed.

This may be partly linked to shared television viewing in the home, either with adults or other children, where children may be less able to select their own viewing or may be subject to peer pressure to view content they are uncomfortable with. The analysis below suggests that this may be a factor for older children, who are significantly more likely to have this type of experience if viewing with adults or other children.

Figure 41: Percentage seeing things that make me feel sad, frightened or embarrassed, by children who watch with others

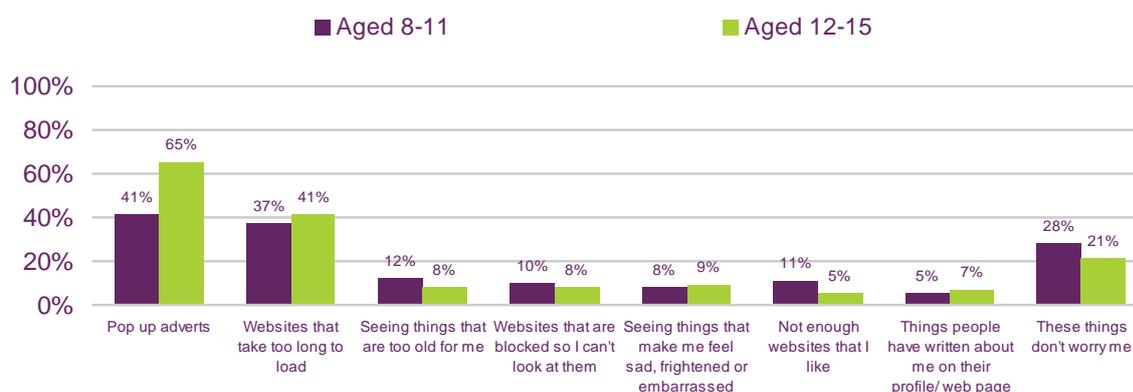


QC4/QC13/QC18/QC41 – Which of these things if any, are things you don't like about TV/ radio/ internet/ mobile phones?
 Base: Children aged 8-15 who watch TV at home (2042) / listen to the radio at home(961) / use the internet at home (1372)/ who have a mobile phone (1319)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in October-December 2007

Also, for television there appears to be a link between parental concerns and the concerns of their child. Where parents say that they consider their child's television viewing to be a concern, the child is significantly more likely to say that they have concerns about *seeing things that make them feel sad, frightened or embarrassed*. It is worth noting that the content children say they dislike is not necessarily content they should be shielded from. For example, seeing footage of poverty or animal cruelty may be sad or frightening, but highlights issues that, arguably, children should be aware of.

Unlike concerns about television, concerns relating to *seeing things that make me feel sad, frightened or embarrassed* online do not vary by age. Younger children are, however, more likely to be concerned about *seeing things that are too old for me*. One in twenty children who use the internet has concerns that about others posting comments about them on social networking sites or websites.

Figure 42: Children's dislikes about the internet, by age



QC18 – Which of these things if any, are things you don't like about the internet?
 Base: Children aged 8-15 who use the internet at home (638 aged 8-11, 734 aged 12-15)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in October-December 2007

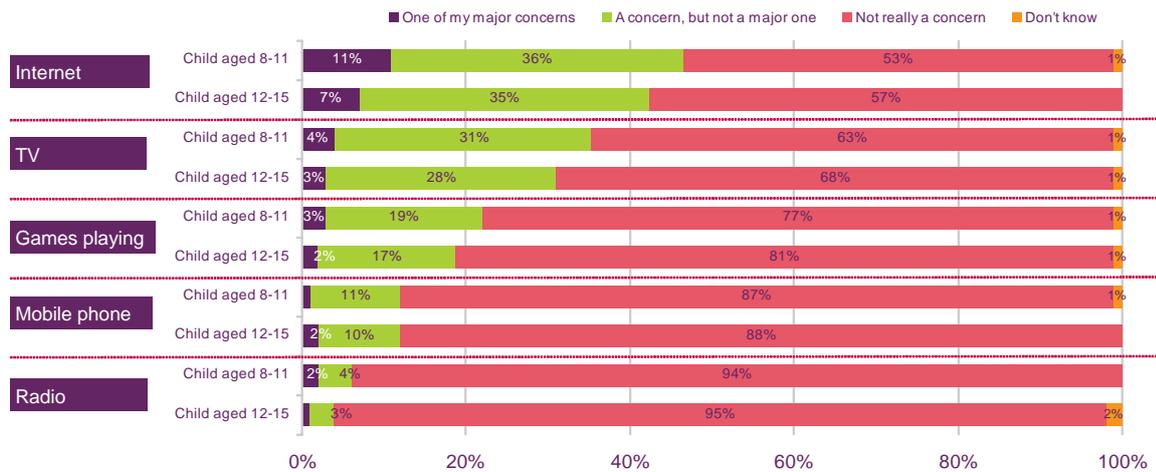
Most 12-15 year olds say they would complain if they saw something worrying or offensive online. Four in five say they would complain, with girls more likely to do so than boys. However, there is a degree of uncertainty about this; one in ten did not know who they should complain to.

Parents have higher levels of concern about media than children

Parents have higher levels of concern than their children about the media their children are using. The internet is the platform that parents of both younger and older children are most likely to be concerned about, and radio is the platform that parents are least concerned about.

For all media, parents have higher levels of concern than their children about the media their children are using. Except for television, concern does not differ significantly by the age of the child. Television is more likely to be a concern for parents of younger, rather than older, children.

Figure 43: Parents' concerns over use of media platforms



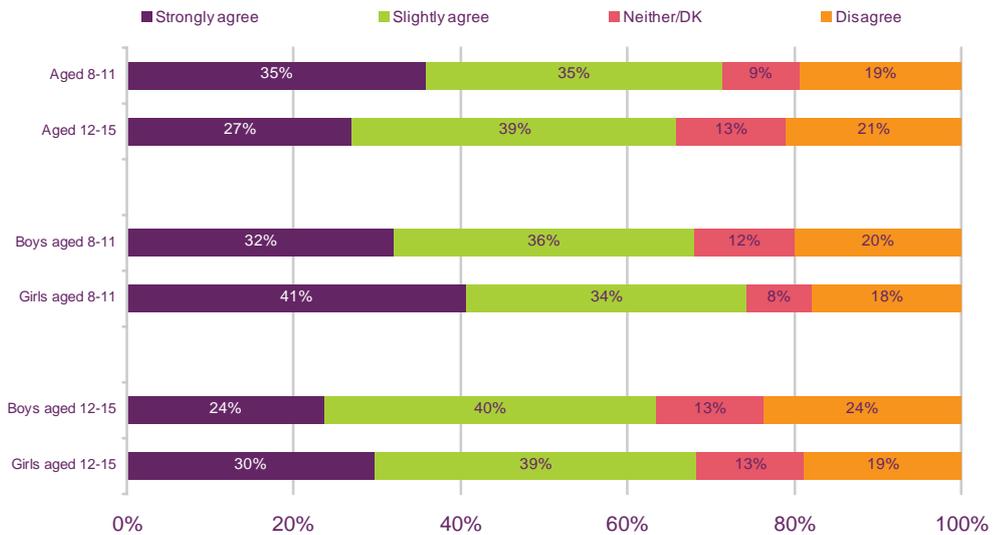
QP6/QP10/QP14/ QP17/ QP20 – Please think about your child's TV viewing/ radio listening/ use of the internet/ a mobile phone/ games playing alongside any concerns you may have relating to your child. Would you describe your child's use as...?
 Base: Parents of children aged 8-15 whose child uses each medium. Internet 663 aged 8-11, 768 aged 12-15. TV 1035 aged 8-11, 1007 aged 12-15. Games playing 929 aged 8-11, 891 aged 12-15. Mobile phone 457 aged 8-11, 862 aged 12-15. radio 429 aged 8-11, 522 aged 12-15.
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in October-December 2007

Parents in ABC1 households are more likely than parents in C2DE households to have concerns about television, mobile phones and game playing. Parents in rural areas are more likely than parents in urban areas to be concerned about the internet and mobile phones.

Differences in parental concern by the child's gender are largely driven by differences in media use, with parents of boys more likely to be concerned than parents of girls about their child's television viewing and game playing. Likewise, parents of older girls are more likely to be concerned about their child's mobile phone use.

Parental concerns over their child's use of the internet are also apparent when parents are asked specifically about such attitudes. As Figure 44 below shows, 70% of parents of 8-11 year olds and 66% of parents of 12-15 year olds agree that they are worried about their child seeing inappropriate things on the internet. Parents of younger children, particularly younger girls, are more likely to agree strongly with the statement.

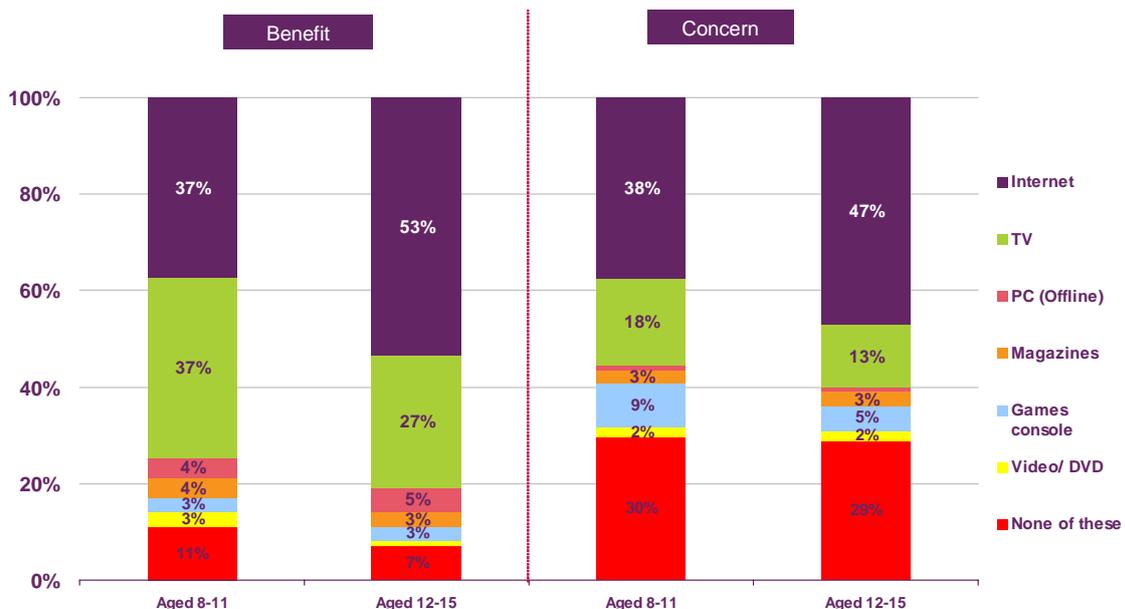
Figure 44: Parental attitudes towards the internet in relation to their child: *I'm worried about my child seeing inappropriate things on the internet*



QP15D– Could you please use the options on this card to tell me the extent to which you agree or disagree with these statements in relation to your child?
 Base: Parents of children who use the internet at home or elsewhere (663 aged 8-11, 768 aged 12-15, 316 boys aged 8-11, 347 girls aged 8-11, 388 boys aged 12-15 380 girls aged 12-15)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in October-December 2007

All parents of 8-15 year olds were asked which media platform they felt benefited their child the most and which worried them the most. Children's use of the internet raises a dilemma for many parents. All parents of 8-15 year olds rated the internet as the media platform that is the most beneficial to their child, yet also of most concern (Figure 45). The internet is significantly more likely to be seen in this way among parents whose children are heavier users of the internet in the home (i.e. parents in ABC1, higher-income households and those with children aged 12-15 and girls).

Figure 45: Media platform rated by parent to be of most benefit and of most concern



QP21/QP22 – Please take a look through this list. Which one of these would you say benefits your child the most? And which do you worry about the most?
 Base: Parents of children aged 8-15 (1051 aged 8-11, 1017 aged 12-15)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in October-December 2007

Television is seen as most beneficial by a third of parents, and again more likely to be seen to be of benefit by parents of the highest users - C2DE households and those with children aged 8-11. This may help explain why there are lower levels of rules or regulations for television viewing in C2DE households. Indeed, among parents of 8-11 year olds television is seen as the most beneficial platform, alongside the internet. Interestingly, television does not have the same level of concern as the internet, with less than one in five claiming it as the platform that gives them most concern (although rising to a fifth of parents of 8-11s).

Just under a third of parents claim that none of the platforms worry them. This is significantly higher for C2DE households and those with boys or children aged 12-15.

Children share parental concerns on gaming

Children's views on gaming are particularly interesting; around two-thirds of older children agree that violence in games affects people's behaviour outside the game, and that violence in games has more impact on people's behaviour than violence in television or films. There are high levels of agreement with the statement that *settings on consoles that prevent games with certain age ratings being played are a good thing*.

Although research has failed to demonstrate conclusively a proven link between violent games and violent behaviour in children, children themselves clearly share the wider public concern around this issue. A possible factor in this is the high ongoing level of media coverage of violent crimes, where game playing is alleged to have been a factor.

Figure 46: Children's attitudes towards gaming



QC39B-E- Using this card, choose an answer to show how much you agree or disagree with some things other people have said about playing games on a console, online or on a computer?
 Base: Children aged 12-15 (1017 aged 12-15, 366 play 10+ hrs, 512 boys aged 12-15, 505 girls aged 12-15, 471 ABC1 households, 536 C2DE households)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in October-December 2007

4.6 High awareness of online shops, but low awareness that free downloading from file sharing services is often illegal

People can download music and movies in one of two ways. One way to buy music or movies is from an online store like iTunes. The other way is to download content from a site (such as Limewire or Kazaa) where an individual shares copies of the content for free. This last type of activity is called peer to peer file sharing.

It is illegal to share or download copies of rights protected content without the permission of the right's holder.

Awareness of online music shops and file-sharing services is high among 12-15s, even among non-internet users. However, most are not aware that free downloading from the latter can be illegal and the majority think that it should not be illegal to do this.

All children aged 12-15 were prompted with a description of the two main ways in which music and movies can be downloaded from the internet: *by paying at an online shop like iTunes, or from a download service like Limewire or Kazaa where a person shares their copy of the music or the movie for free.* Having described the two main ways of downloading, the children were asked whether they had been aware of these prior to taking part in the interview.

There is high awareness of online shops like iTunes (75%) and file-sharing services (61%). This is true even among internet non-users (about half having heard of each). However, there is low awareness that free downloading from file sharing services can be illegal (23%). Among those who are aware that it can be illegal, a third agree that it should be illegal and half think it should not be illegal. The belief that it should not be illegal is more commonly held among children in C2DE households and urban areas.

Section 5

Create

This section looks at children's ability to create their own content and interact in the online environment.

5.1 Create: summary

Children aged 12-15 are carrying out a relatively wide range of creative activities using digital technology. However, the majority of these are focused around social networking activities. As girls are more active on social networking sites, they are more likely to have experienced, or to be interested in, many of the activities asked about.

Social networking sites have quickly become a popular activity among children, and particularly girls. Over half of all 12-15 year olds who use the internet at home have created a page or profile on a social networking site. This equates to two in five of all 12-15 year olds in the UK having a social networking site profile/ page.

Among those with a social networking site profile, there is very high involvement and interaction, with a third of users visiting the site every day. Although social networking sites are used mainly as a communications tool to manage existing relationships, a significant minority of children are communicating with, or browsing the pages of, people that they do not know.

Over half of all social networking site users limit access to their profile. However, two in five 12-15s have not set any privacy settings.

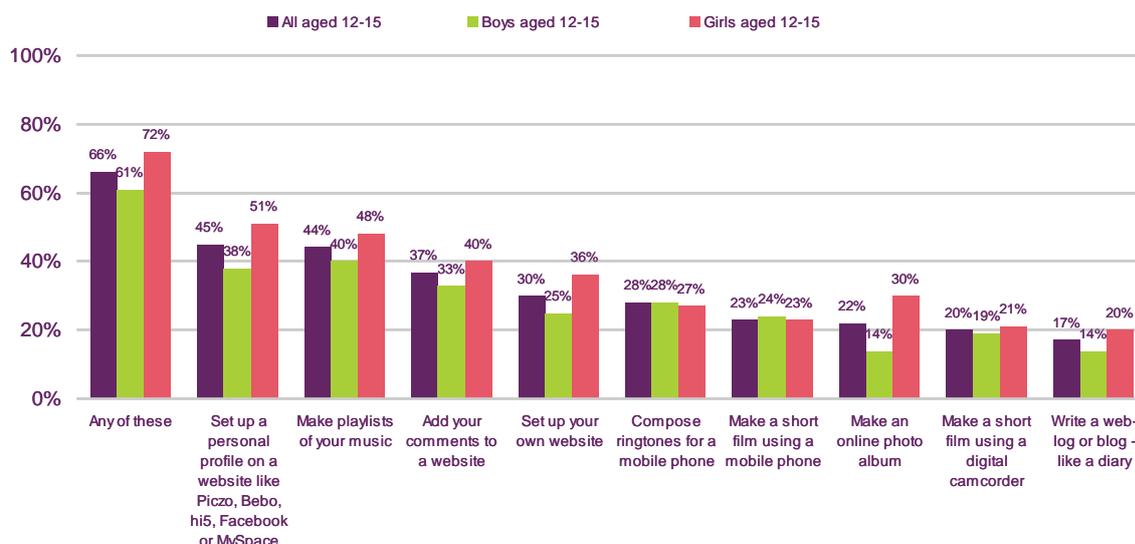
5.2 A high level of creative activities are being carried out by children using digital technology, mostly focused around social networking activities

Older children are carrying out a relatively wide range of creative activities using digital technology. However, the majority of these are focused around social networking activities. Social networking sites are particularly popular among girls and as a result, girls are more likely to have experienced, or be interested in, many of the activities asked about.

Children aged 12-15 were prompted with various types of creative activities associated with digital technology. For each type of activity the children were asked if they had already done this, were interested in doing, or were not interested in doing it.

12-15 year olds are involved in a relatively high amount of creative activities using digital technology. However, the majority focus around social networking activities, such as uploading photos, creating one's own website and creating one's own profile on a website. Because girls are more active on social networking sites, they are significantly more likely than boys to have experienced, or to be interested in, many of the creative activities we asked about.

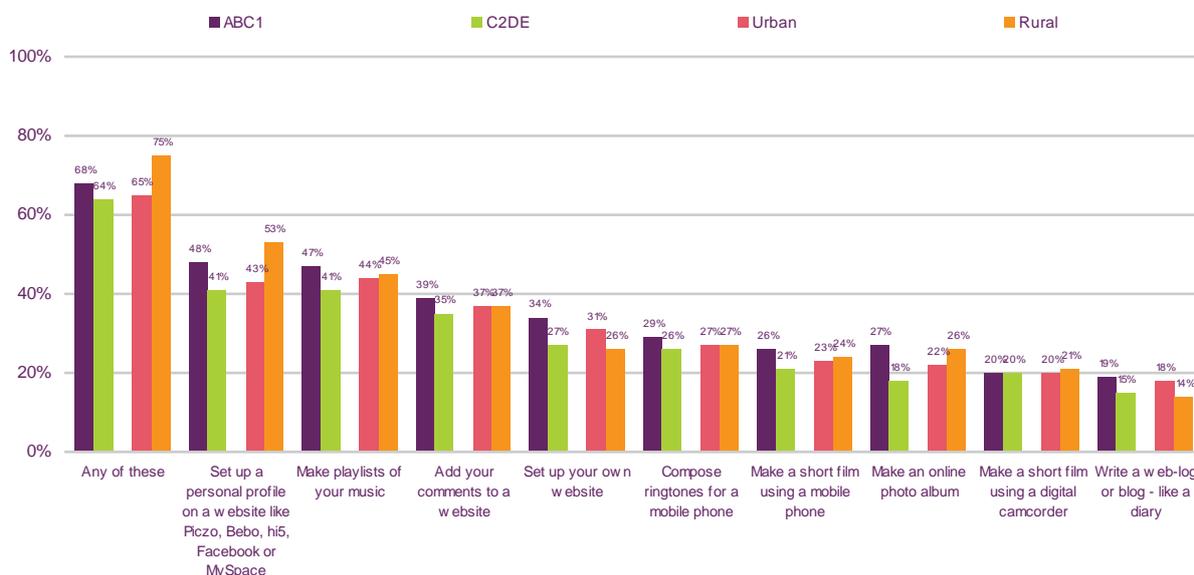
Figure 47: Children's experience of creative activities, by gender aged 12-15



QC42A-I – I'd like to read out a number of things people might do using the types of technologies we've been talking about. For each one, could you please tell me if you've done it, or you'd be interested in doing it, or you're not interested in doing it?
 Base: Children aged 12-15 (1017 aged 12-15, 512 boys aged 12-15, 505 girls aged 12-15)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in October-December 2007

Children in rural areas are more likely than those in urban areas to have experienced any of these creative activities, probably driven by the higher overall levels of social networking activity among children in rural areas.

Figure 48: Children's experience of any creative activities, by socio-economic group and urban or rural areas



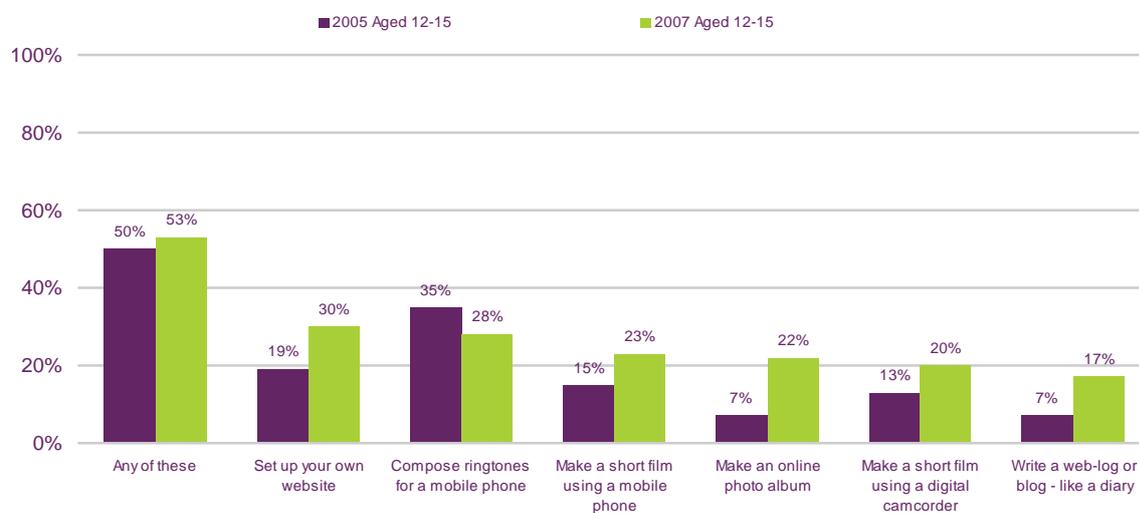
QC42A-I – I'd like to read out a number of things people might do using the types of technologies we've been talking about. For each one, could you please tell me if you've done it, or you'd be interested in doing it, or you're not interested in doing it?
 Base: Children aged 12-15 (471 ABC1 households, 536 C2DE households, 766 urban areas, 251 rural areas)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in October-December 2007

We did not ask children about their experience of creative activities regarding social networking sites in 2005, as social networking has only recently become a mass-market activity.

However, we did ask about their experience of other creative activities in 2005, and as shown in Figure 49, there has been a significant increase in all creative activities except *compose ringtones for a mobile phone* - an activity which perhaps has become outdated in the last two years.

In addition, there has been an increase in the breadth of experiences, with more children experiencing a wider range of activities in 2007 compared to 2005. Of the six activities asked about in both 2005 and 2007, an average of 1.2 activities out of 6 was experienced in 2005, compared to 4.0 out of 6 in 2007.

Figure 49: Children's experience of creative activities, 2005 and 2007



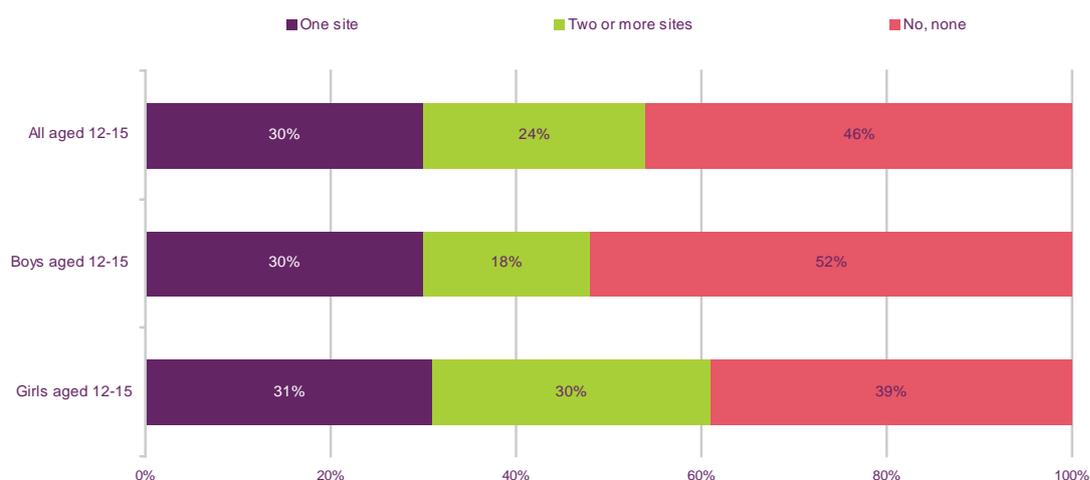
QC42A-I - I'd like to read out a number of things people might do using the types of technologies we've been talking about. For each one, could you please tell me if you've done it, or you'd be interested in doing it, or you're not interested in doing it?
 Base: Children aged 12-15 (764 in 2005, 1017 in 2007)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in October-December 2007

5.3 Social networking sites are very popular among older children, particularly girls

Social networking sites have quickly become a popular activity among children, and particularly girls; over half of 12-15 year olds who use the internet at home have created a page or profile on a social networking site. This equates to two in five of all 12-15 year olds in the UK having a social networking site profile/ page. Among those with a social networking site profile, there is very high involvement and interaction, with a third of users visiting the site every day. Although social networking sites are used mainly as a communications tool to manage existing relationships, a significant minority of children are communicating with, or browsing the pages of, people that they do not know. While over half of social networking site users limit access to their profile, two in five 12-15 year olds have not set any privacy settings.

Social networking sites have quickly become a popular activity among children; over half of 12-15 year olds who use the internet at home have created a page or profile on a social networking site, which equates to two in five of all 12-15 year olds in the UK. They are more popular among girls than boys.

Figure 50: Number of social networking site pages or profiles by gender aged 12-15



QC24/ QC25 – Have you ever created your own page or profile on a site like Piczo, Bebo, Facebook, hi5 or MySpace?/ Which different sites like this do you have a page or profile on?
 Base: Children aged 12-15 who use the internet at home (734 aged 12-15, 370 boys aged 12-15, 364 girls aged 12-15)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in October-December 2007

Research conducted by Ofcom in 2007⁵ exploring behaviours and attitudes towards social networking sites identifies reasons for joining. For many children, being an active member of a social networking site is an essential social currency within their peer set. Children who do not have access to the internet at home may struggle to keep up with their peers because they lack this social currency.

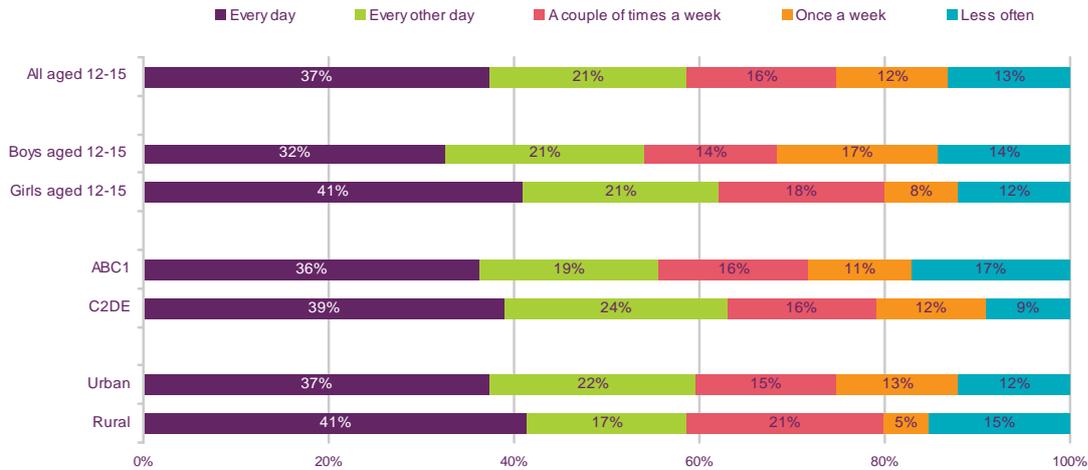
‘Sometimes there is a real buzz when you get to school about what happened on Bebo the night before’.
 (Boy, 15, rural/semi-rural)

‘I joined because most of my friends were joining and I didn’t want to feel left out.’
 (Girl, 13, rural/semi-rural)

Perhaps due to their high social currency, there are high levels of interaction with, and immersion in, social networking sites. A third of all users visit a site every day, and a further fifth every other day. Indeed, only 1 in 10 visit less often than once a week. As previously discussed, girls are more likely to engage in most online activities than boys, and this includes social networking sites. They are more likely than boys to have created a social networking site page or profile, to use more than one site, to visit sites more frequently and to spend more time on the sites. Children in ABC1 households are more likely to visit these sites at least once a week than children in C2DE households. However, children in rural areas with a social networking site profile are no more frequent visitors, overall, than those in urban areas.

⁵ Ofcom Social Networking: a quantitative and qualitative research report into attitudes, behaviours and use, April 2008
www.ofcom.org.uk/advice/media_literacy/medlitpub/medlitpubrss/socialnetworking/

Figure 51: Frequency of visiting social networking sites, by gender and those in urban or rural areas

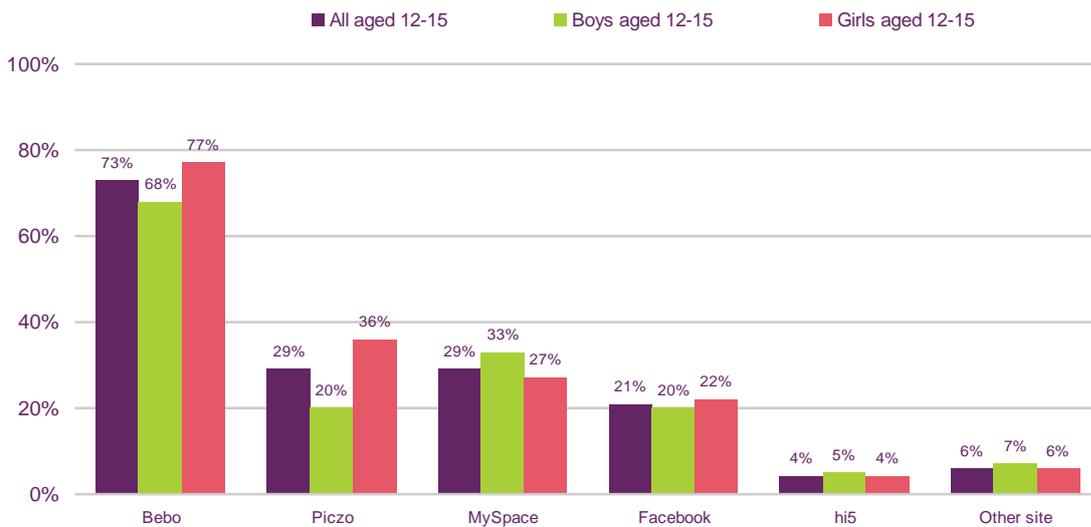


QC27 – How often do you visit any sites like Piczo, Bebo, hi5, Facebook or MySpace?
 Base: Children aged 12-15 who have ever created their own page or profile on a social networking site (734 aged 12-15, 370 boys aged 12-15, 364 girls aged 12-15, 225 ABC1 households, 188 C2DE households, 298 urban areas, 120 rural areas)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in October-December 2007

Bebo is currently the most popular social networking site for 12-15 year olds, particularly among girls. It is used by 73% of 12-15s who have created their own page or profile on a social networking site. This equates to nearly a third of all 12-15 year olds in the UK using Bebo.

Girls are more likely than boys to use both Bebo and Piczo. Children in C2DE households with a social networking site profile are more likely than those in ABC1 households to have a profile on Bebo. While, overall, ABC1 children still favour Bebo over other social networking sites, they are more likely than those in C2DE households to be on MySpace.

Figure 52: Social networking sites that 12-15 year old users have a page or profile on, by gender aged 12-15



QC24 – Which different sites do you have a page or profile on?
 Base: Children aged 12-15 who have ever created their own page or profile on a social networking site (418 aged 12-15, 196 boys aged 12-15, 222 girls aged 12-15)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in October-December 2007

This gravitation towards one site is understandable, as the whole point of being on a social networking site is to connect with one's peer group. Consequently, when people first start

using social networking sites, their choice of site is predominately dictated by recommendations and by which site the majority of their friends are on. For children with more than one network of friends, or whose friends move on to another site, this could mean they are a member of more than one site.⁶

'You heard at school more people talking about Bebo and after a while I thought it would be a good idea to join'.
(Boy, 12, rural/semi-rural)

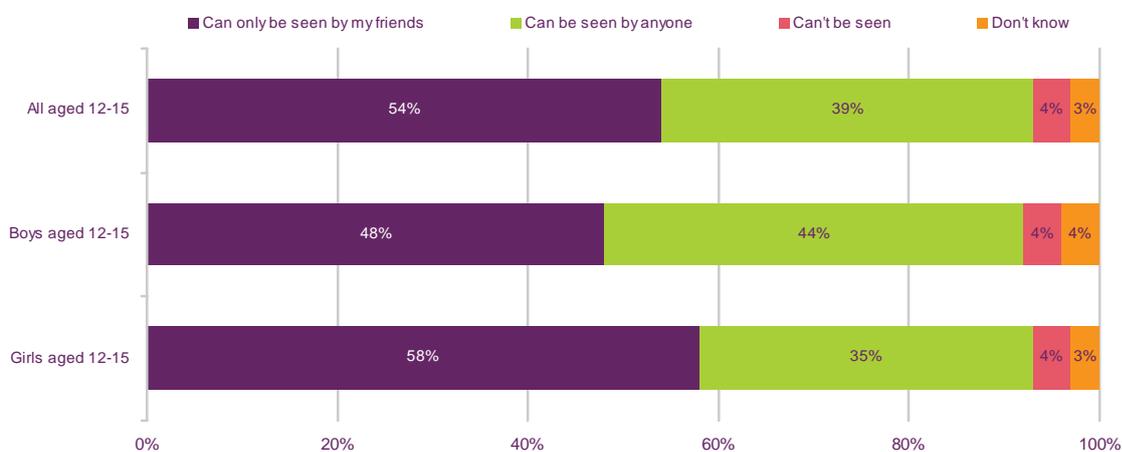
'I joined Bebo because everyone at school was doing it'.
(Girl, 12, rural/semi-rural)

'I am on Bebo for my friends at school and then on Facebook to keep in contact with my brother who is at uni'.
(Girl, 12, rural/semi-rural)

While over half of all social networking site users limit access to their profile, two in five 12-15 year olds have not set any privacy settings. Girls are more likely than boys to have set access settings to 'friends only'. Privacy settings are also more common among users of Piczo. This may be due to Piczo's privacy setting, where every time a user is about to post publicly viewable information they are asked if they are sure that they want to do it.

Interestingly, those who have not set privacy settings are more likely to have privacy concerns than those who have a limited profile. This suggests that they are aware of the implications of others having open access to their page, but they are either unaware that they can, do not know how to, or do not want to, change their profile settings to private.

Figure 53: Visibility of social networking site profile, by gender aged 12-15



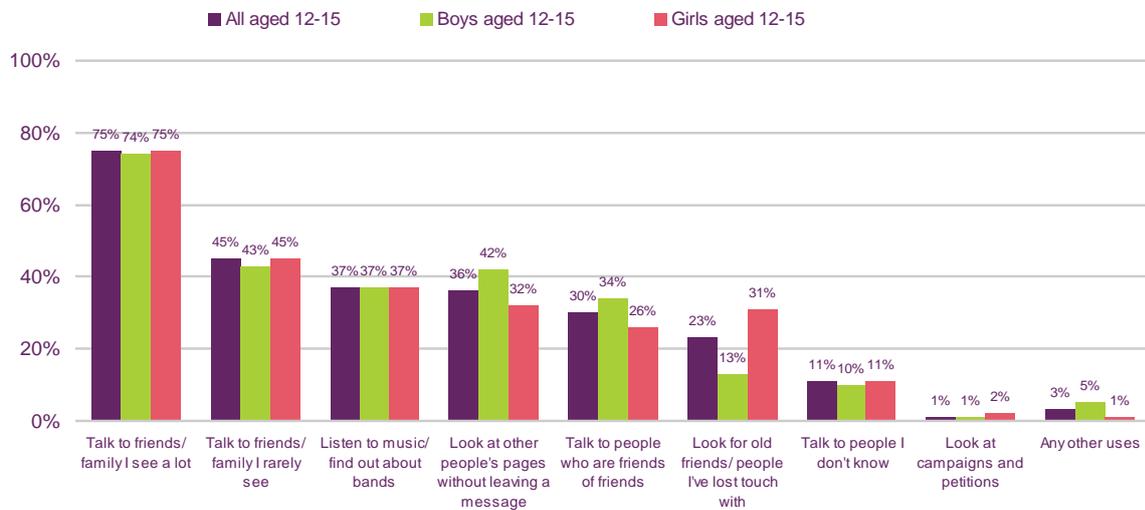
QC26 – And do you know if this profile can be seen by other people?
Base: Children aged 12-15 who have ever created their own social networking site page or profile (418 aged 12-15, 196 boys aged 12-15, 222 girls aged 12-15)
Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in October-December 2007

Both boys and girls use social networking mainly as a communications tool to manage existing social relationships in a fun, inclusive and free way (Figure 54). It will be interesting

⁶ Ofcom Social Networking: a quantitative and qualitative research report into attitudes, behaviours and use, April 2008
www.ofcom.org.uk/advice/media_literacy/medlitpub/medlitpubrss/socialnetworking/

to see how this develops and whether social networking sites will seriously challenge other forms of communication such as email, instant messenger and text messaging.

Figure 54: Types of uses of social networking sites, by gender aged 12-15



QC28 – Do you regularly use these sites for any of the things shown on this card?
 Base: Children aged 12-15 who have ever created their own social networking site page or profile (418 aged 12-15, 196 boys aged 12-15, 222 girls aged 12-15)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in October-December 2007

One in ten users browse the pages of people they don't know, and more than one in three talk to people who are friends of friends. The qualitative research commissioned by Ofcom suggests that many teenage social networking site users have a blasé attitude to such issues and a sense of invincibility, thinking that even if something bad happened to them they could handle it. Additionally, some found privacy and safety information difficult to find and hard to understand⁷.

'How can we come to any harm when we are sitting at home, nothing really bad can happen'.
 (Girl, 15, urban/suburban)

'I just want to go ahead and have fun and not worry about things like that, it's too boring'.
 (Boy, 11, rural/semi-rural)

'A lot of people wouldn't listen to [Bebo's privacy video]. Most people couldn't be bothered, they'd just go straight on and start talking to people'.
 (Boy, 12, rural/semi-rural)

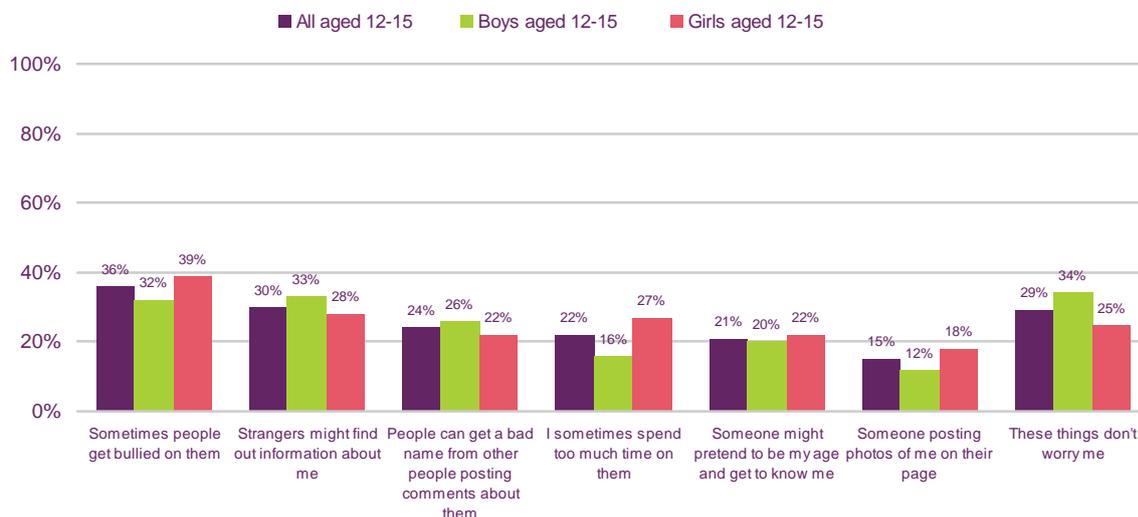
'Anybody could find out who you are. But I wouldn't know how to make it so people couldn't see me'.
 (Boy, 11, rural/semi-rural)

'The security side of things is a bit worrying for me. Obviously you have to put safety first but I wouldn't know how to go about it'.
 (Girl, 13, rural/semi-rural)

⁷ Ofcom Social Networking: a quantitative and qualitative research report into attitudes, behaviours and use, April 2008
www.ofcom.org.uk/advice/media_literacy/medlitpub/medlitpubrssi/socialnetworking/

There are relatively low levels of concern about using social networking sites. Main worries are about bullying on the sites, or obtaining a bad reputation as a result of comments posted by others. Less than three in ten 12-15 year olds acknowledged the possible implications of contact from people they do not know, or from someone pretending to be their age to get to know them.

Figure 55: Children's dislikes about social networking sites, by gender aged 12-15



QC29 – Which of these things, if any, are things that you don't like about sites like Piczo, bebo, hi5, Facebook or MySpace?
 Base: Children aged 12-15 who have ever created their own social networking site page or profile (418 aged 12-15, 196 boys aged 12-15, 222 girls aged 12-15)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in October-December 2007

Section 6

Learn

This section looks at the ways that children currently learn about, and would prefer to learn about, digital technology.

6.1 Learn: summary

Older children are more likely than younger children to learn about digital technology in school. This is mainly through ICT or media studies lessons.

Since 2005 there has been an increase in children reporting they have lessons about television (for example, how television programmes are made and paid for) for 8-11 year olds and an increase in lessons about the internet (for example, how the internet works, how to do research on the internet or how to avoid websites that you do not want to see) for 12-15 year olds.

Although the preference to learn from parents has significantly increased for all children since 2005, the most popular way for all 8-15s to choose to learn about digital technology remains at school, followed by from parents and friends. Younger children are more likely than older children to prefer to learn about using digital technology from their parents, while older children are more likely than younger children to prefer to learn from friends or on their own.

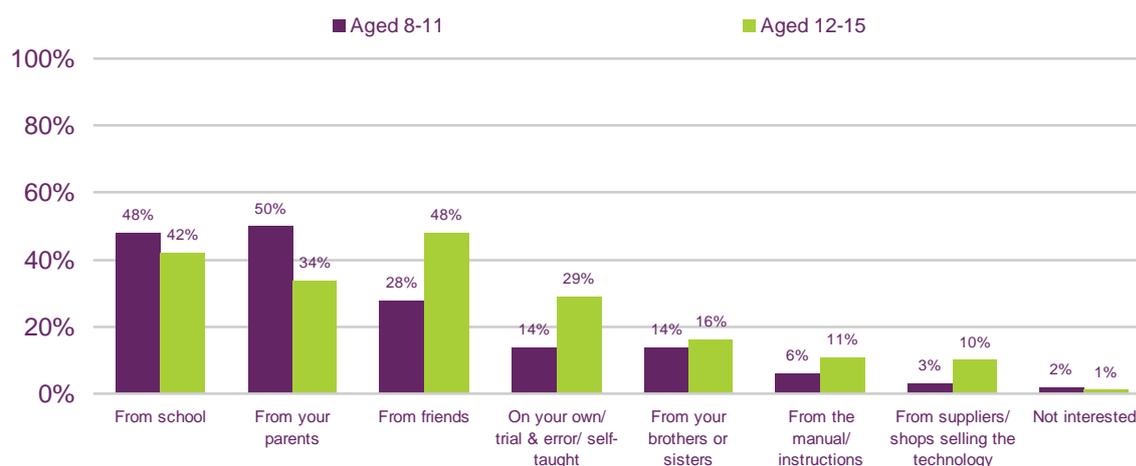
6.2 Lessons about digital technology have increased significantly since 2005, although remain more common for older than younger children

Children are most likely to learn about television (for example, how television programmes are made and paid for) from ICT or media studies lessons, and to learn about the internet (for example, how the internet works, how to do research on the internet or how to avoid websites that you do not want to see) from ICT lessons. Both types of lessons are more common among 12-15 year olds, with 37% of 12-15s having lessons about television (compared to 17% of 8-11s) and four-fifths having lessons about the internet (compared to 64% of 8-11s).

For both age groups, these types of lessons have increased significantly since 2005, but in different ways; despite relatively low levels, for 8-11 year olds there has been an increase in lessons about television but not about the internet, while for 12-15 year olds there has been an increase in lessons about the internet, but not about television.

As in 2005, ICT is the main lesson for learning about digital technology, particularly with regard to learning about the internet. Teaching about digital technology in school is particularly important, given that many parents are assuming that children are being taught about media, especially the internet, at school, and therefore may not be monitoring their children's online behaviour.

Figure 56: Ways child would prefer to learn about using digital technology, by age



QC41 – Which if any, of these ways would you prefer to learn about using the internet, mobile phones, digital TV and so on?
 Base: Children aged 8-15 (1354 Aged 8-11, 1357 Aged 12-15)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to September 2007

Despite the preference to learn from parents having significantly increased, for all children, since 2005, the most popular preference for all 8-15 year olds about how to learn about digital technology remains at school, followed by from parents and friends. Younger children are significantly more likely than older ones to prefer being taught at school or by parents, and older ones are more likely to prefer learning from friends. This difference may be partly due to older children's desire for increased independence and also the subjects that different ages are interested in learning about, with the older age group having more complex requirements. There may also be types of activities that they feel parents or schools are unable to help with, or that they would not want their parents or school to know about.

The more technologically confident, and those more likely to have in-home access to media (older and ABC1 children) are significantly more likely to want to self-teach. Children from ABC1 households are also more likely to prefer being taught by parents, possibly due to the greater access to media devices in the home and the increased parental ability to help. However, children from C2DE households, who are less likely to have in-home access and therefore less likely to have parents who can help them, are more likely to choose school.

Evidence from the Adults' Media Literacy Audit⁸ suggests that adults from C2DE households who have access to the internet are less likely to have learning strategies and less likely to feel confident about using the internet. Therefore, not only is their lack of confidence and appetite for learning restricting their own use of the internet, it is also affecting their children's internet use.

⁸ Adult Media Literacy Audit, published 16 May 2008
www.ofcom.org.uk/advice/media_literacy/medlitpub/medlitpubrss/

Section 7

Nations

This section compares key measures from the 2007 Children's Media Literacy Audit across each of the four UK nations, highlighting any significant differences compared to the measure for the UK as a whole.

When looking at the English data it is important to remember that because the population of England represents 83% of the population of the UK as a whole, findings for England will be similar to those for the UK. Throughout this report we will highlight many variations by nation. It is important for the reader to note that some variations between nations will be influenced by demographic rather than geographic, cultural or statutory frameworks.

7.1 Nations: summary

England

As in the whole of the UK, households with children in England have high levels of ownership of key media, and have experienced a significant increase in children's use of the internet since 2005. Since 2005 children in England also have increased use of a DVD player, a mobile phone, an MP3 player and a digital camera.

As in the UK generally, the proportion of children in England with internet access in their bedroom has increased since 2005 (7% to 14%).

Since 2005, parents in England are less likely to have rules for their children about using the internet and using a mobile phone. Over the same time period, internet controls or blocking software have become less common.

Television is the media platform that children in all nations would miss the most. Since 2005 there has been an increase in the proportion of children saying they would miss the internet the most. This trend is seen across the UK. Compared to 2005, children in England are less likely to say they would miss gaming the most.

Since 2005 there has been an increase in England in the proportion of children who prefer to learn about digital technology from their parents.

Scotland

As in the UK overall, households with children in Scotland have high levels of ownership of key media, and have experienced a significant increase in children's use of the internet since 2005. Since 2005 children in Scotland also have increased use of a mobile phone, an MP3 player and a digital camera.

Children in Scotland are more likely than those in the UK as a whole to have a games console in the household. They are also more likely to have a wider range of media in their bedroom (6.1 out of 13 media asked about compared to 5.2 for the UK as a whole). In line with UK trends, the proportion of children in Scotland with internet access in their bedroom has increased since 2005 (8% to 16%).

Children in Scotland have similar consumption levels to children in the UK as a whole for television, radio and games devices. However, they do make fewer mobile phone calls, and send more text messages in a typical school week.

Children in Scotland are more likely than children in other nations to use a mobile or landline phone while watching television, and to watch television, talk on a landline phone or play computer games while using the internet. They are also more likely to watch, or download, online video content.

Since 2005 there has been a significant increase in Scottish children saying they have rules about watching television, using the internet, using a mobile phone and listening to radio. As a result, rules for key media platforms in Scotland are now level with those for the UK as a whole.

Parents in Scotland are less likely than those in the whole of the UK to say their child's television viewing is a concern, and are more likely to say that they trust their child to use the internet safely, and that the benefits of the internet for their child outweigh any risks.

Children in Scotland are more likely than those in the whole of the UK to say they are confident about using the internet and that they can always find what they're looking for online.

Wales

As in the whole of the UK, households with children in Wales have high levels of ownership of key media, and have experienced a significant increase in children's use of the internet since 2005. Since 2005 children in Wales also have increased use of a CD player, an MP3 player and a digital camera.

Children in Wales are more likely than children in the whole of the UK to have a television and a portable DVD player in their bedroom. As in the UK, children in Wales are more likely to have internet access in their bedroom than they were in 2005 (an increase from 7% to 13%).

In each of the UK nations there has been an increase since 2005 in children saying they would miss the internet the most. Children in Wales are less likely to say they would miss a games console the most, compared to 2005.

Children in Wales watch fewer hours of television and listen to more hours of radio in a typical school week, and are less likely to use media other than a television to watch video content. They are also less likely to use other media at the same time as watching television or using the internet.

Children in Wales tend to be confident using the internet and are more likely than children in the UK as a whole to say they can always find what they're looking for online.

Parents in Wales are more likely to say their child's mobile phone use and radio listening are a concern.

Children in Wales are more likely to agree with attitudes towards gaming relating to the consequences of violence in games, the value of settings on consoles preventing access to games with certain age ratings, and the wider use of skills learned playing games.

In each of the UK nations, an increased number of children say that they have lessons about the internet, compared to 2005. However, compared to the UK average, children in Wales are less likely to say they have lessons at school about the internet.

Northern Ireland

Households with children in Northern Ireland have high levels of ownership of key media. Northern Ireland has shown the greatest increase in children's use of the internet since 2005 and now has the highest penetration level of all nations (at 82%). Since 2005 children in Northern Ireland also have increased use of a DVD player, a games console, a mobile phone, an MP3 player and a digital camera.

As in the whole of the UK, there has been an increase in the proportion of children with internet access in their bedroom since 2005 (4% to 11%). However, children in Northern Ireland are less likely than those in the UK as a whole to have a television in their bedroom.

Children in Northern Ireland also watch fewer hours of television, use the internet for fewer hours and spend less time gaming in a typical school week.

Television is the media platform that children in all nations would miss the most, although in Northern Ireland the proportion of children who say they would miss the television the most has decreased from 47% in 2005 to 39% in 2007. Compared to 2005, children in Northern Ireland are more likely to choose the internet (from 4% to 14%) and computer/ video games (from 12% to 18%) as the media platforms they would miss the most.

Parents in Northern Ireland are more likely than parents in the UK as a whole to say their child's television viewing is a concern, and to have rules for their children about television viewing. Parents in Northern Ireland are less likely than parents in the UK as a whole to have rules for their children about using a mobile phone.

In general, parents in Northern Ireland are more likely to have controls in place regarding television and internet content. In households with digital television, they are more likely to have set any controls to restrict the channels available. Setting digital television controls has increased since 2005. Parents in Northern Ireland are also more likely than those in the whole of the UK to have set rules about using the internet, and to have internet controls or blocking software.

Parents in Northern Ireland are less likely than parents in the UK as a whole to say their child has been taught at school how to use the internet safely and efficiently, and more likely to agree that they are worried about their child seeing inappropriate things on the internet.

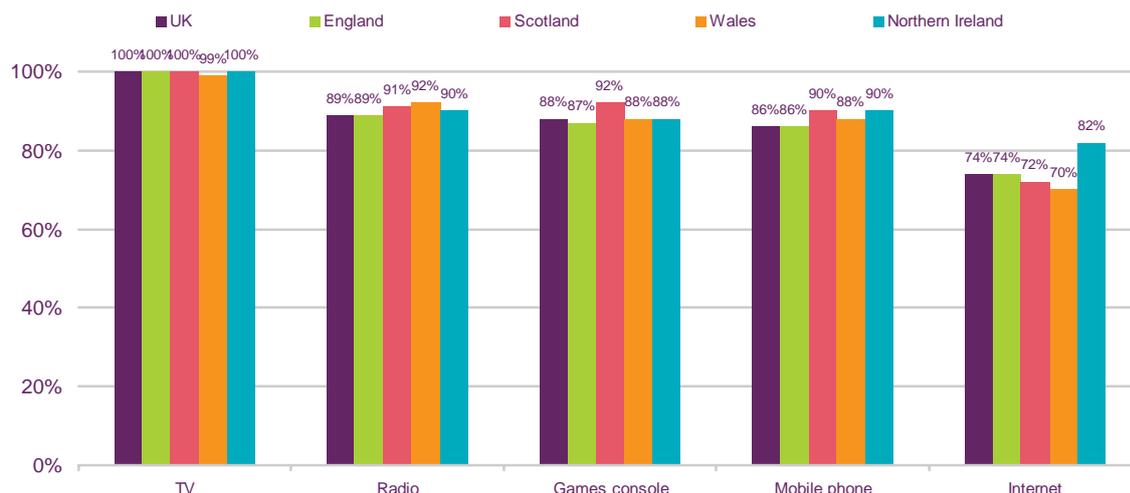
Since 2005 there has been an increase in Northern Ireland in the proportion of children who prefer to learn about digital technology from their parents. While there has been an increase since 2005 in children in Northern Ireland stating that they have lessons at school about television or the internet, children in Northern Ireland are less likely than the UK as a whole to do so.

Despite spending less time on the internet, children in Northern Ireland are more likely than children in the whole of the UK to have a social networking site page or profile.

7.2 Ownership of media

Parents of children aged 8-15 were prompted with a list of electronic equipment. For each type of equipment we recorded whether it was in the child's bedroom, owned by the child elsewhere in the home, used or not used by the child, or not in the home. Figure 57 shows the proportion of children in the UK and in each nation who have each of the five key media of television, radio, games console, internet and mobile phone in their household. The media shown in Figure 57 may be owned by the child, by someone else in the household or by the household generally.

Figure 57: Ownership of key media



QP3A/B/D/G/H – I'm going to read out a list of different types of equipment that you may or may not have in your home, and which your child may or may not use
 Base: Parents of children aged 8-15 (2711 UK, 1718 England, 350 Scotland, 360 Wales, 282 Northern Ireland)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to September 2007

Children in Scotland are more likely than those in the UK as a whole to have a games console in the household. Children in Northern Ireland are more likely than those in the UK as a whole to have internet access at home through a PC or laptop.

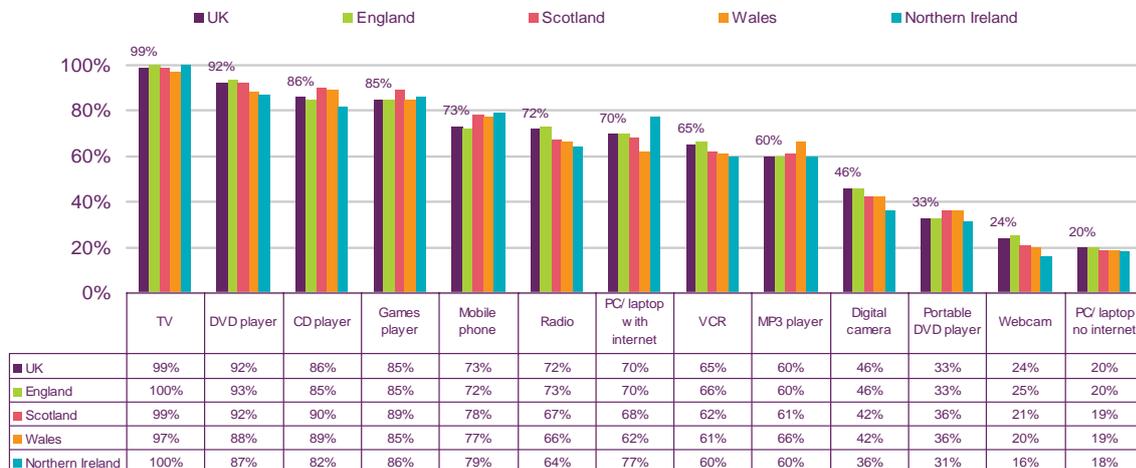
Household access to the internet has increased for the UK as a whole and for each of the nations since 2005 (from 64% for the UK, 66% in England, 61% in Scotland, 61% in Wales, and 38% in Northern Ireland).

Household ownership of a games console has increased significantly since 2005 for Northern Ireland (from 70% in 2005 to 88% in 2007), but is unchanged for the other nations or the UK as a whole.

7.3 Children's use of media

Figure 58 shows the proportion of children aged 8-15 in the UK, and in each nation, who use each of the 13 types of media their parents were asked about.

Figure 58: Media used by children



QP3A-M – I'm going to read out a list of different types of equipment that you may or may not have in your home, and which your child may or may not use
 Base: Parents of children aged 8-15 (2711 UK, 1718 England, 350 Scotland, 360 Wales, 282 Northern Ireland)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to September 2007

There are some differences in trends in use of key media by nation:

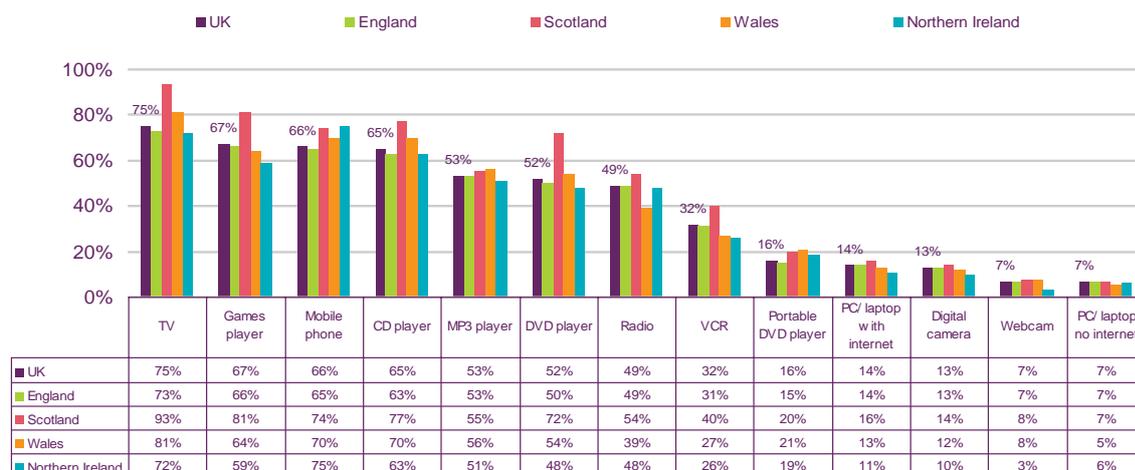
- children in England are more likely than those in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland to listen to the radio at home.
- children in Scotland are more likely than those in the UK as a whole to use a mobile phone.
- children in Wales are less likely than those in the UK as a whole to watch television or listen to radio; and
- children in Northern Ireland are more likely than those in the UK as a whole to use the internet at home and less likely than those in the UK as a whole to listen to radio.

Since 2005 the proportion of children using mobile phones and the internet has increased in England, Scotland and Northern Ireland. In Wales internet use has increased but mobile phone use is unchanged.

7.4 Media in children's bedrooms

When checking with parents which of the listed media children have access to and use, we collected details of which media devices are in their child's bedroom. Figure 59 shows the proportion of children who have each of the 13 media in their bedroom.

Figure 59: Media in children’s bedrooms



QP3A-M – I’m going to read out a list of different types of equipment that you may or may not have in your home, and which your child may or may not use
 Base: Parents of children aged 8-15 (2711 UK, 1718 England, 350 Scotland, 360 Wales, 282 Northern Ireland)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to September 2007

Children in Scotland are more likely than those in the UK as a whole to have six particular media in their bedroom: television, games player, mobile phone, CD player, DVD player, and VCR.

Children in Wales are more likely than those in the UK as a whole to have television or a portable DVD player in their bedroom, or to use an MP3 player, and less likely than those in the UK as a whole to have radio in their bedroom.

Children in Northern Ireland are more likely than those in the UK as a whole to have a mobile phone in their bedroom, and less likely than those in the UK as a whole to have a games console or a webcam in their bedroom.

The 2005 Children’s Media Literacy Audit details whether television or the internet is in the child’s bedroom, but not the other media listed in Figure 59.

The proportion of children with a television in the bedroom has not changed since 2005 for the UK as a whole, but has increased for children in Northern Ireland (from 67% to 72% in 2007).

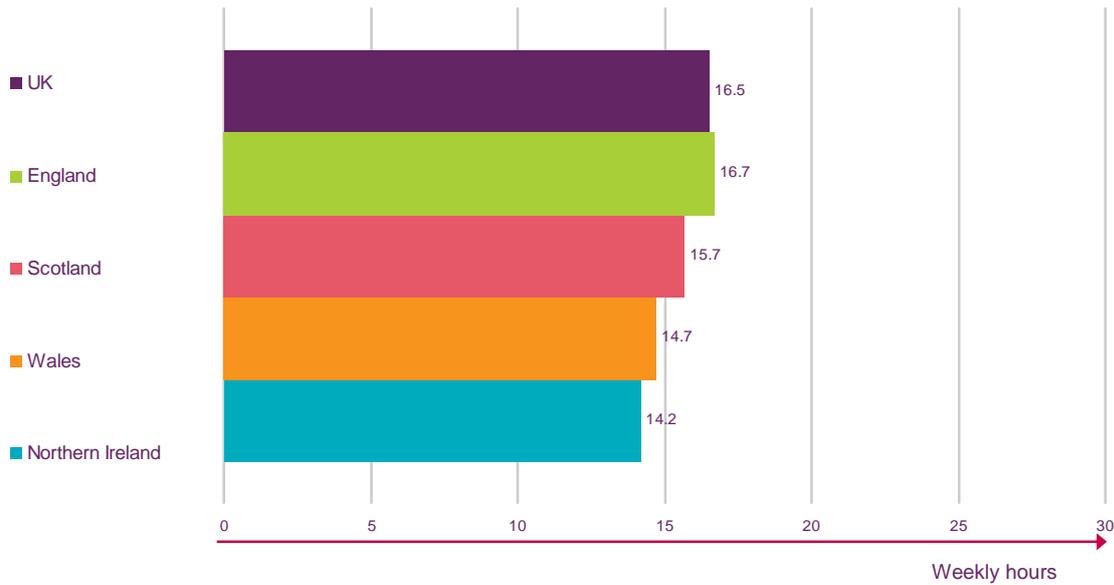
The proportion of children with access to the internet in their bedroom has increased for the UK as a whole and for each of the nations since 2005 (from 7% to 14% for the UK, 7% to 14% in England, 8% to 16% in Scotland, 7% to 13% in Wales, and 4% to 11% in Northern Ireland).

7.5 Media consumption

We estimated weekly hours spent using each of four key media by asking the parents of younger children, and by asking the older children directly, to say how many hours they spent on these activities at home, both on a typical school day and on a typical weekend day. Because these estimates are self-reported it is likely that a degree of under- and over-reporting will be present, and the estimates shown should be taken as indicative only.

Figure 60 shows the estimated average weekly television viewing hours for children aged 8-15 who watch television at home. Children in Wales and in Northern Ireland watch fewer hours of television in a typical school week, compared to children in the UK as a whole.

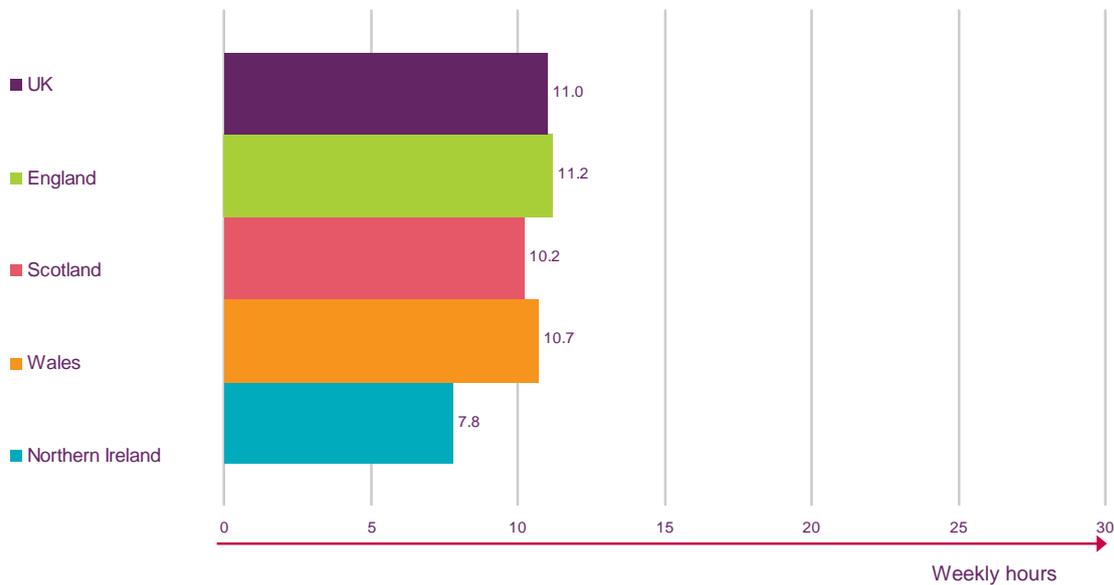
Figure 60: Weekly volume of television viewing among users



QP9A-B/ QC3A-B – How many hours would you say he/ she spends watching TV on a typical school day/ on a weekend day?
 Base: Parents of children aged 8-11 who watch TV at home and children aged 12-15 who watch TV at home (2688 UK, 1710 England, 347 Scotland, 348 Wales, 282 Northern Ireland)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to September 2007 and October-December 2007

Figure 61 shows the estimated average weekly hours spent using the internet at home by children aged 8-15 who use the internet at home. Children in Northern Ireland use the internet for fewer hours in a typical school week than children in the UK as a whole.

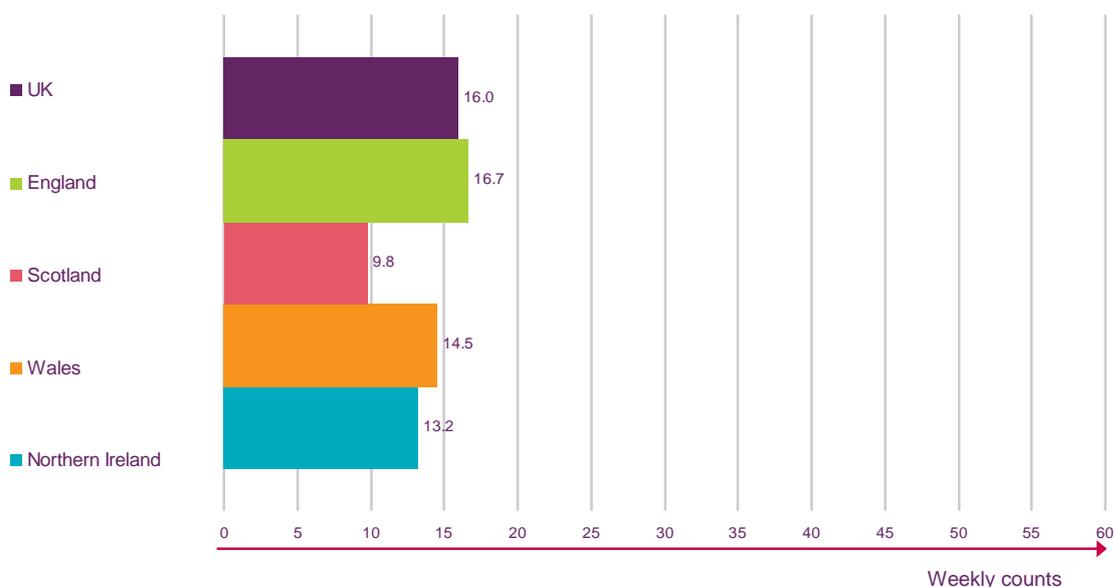
Figure 61: Weekly volume of internet use among users



QP19A-B/ QC18A-B – How many hours would you say he/ she spends using the internet at home on a typical school day/ on a weekend day?
 Base: Parents of children aged 8-11 who use the internet at home and children aged 12-15 who use the internet at home (1920 UK, 1233 England, 245 Scotland, 223 Wales, 219 Northern Ireland)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to September 2007 and October-December 2007

Figure 62 shows the estimated average number of weekly calls made by children aged 8-15 with their own mobile phone. Children in Scotland make fewer mobile phone calls in a typical school week compared to children in the UK as a whole, but send more text messages.

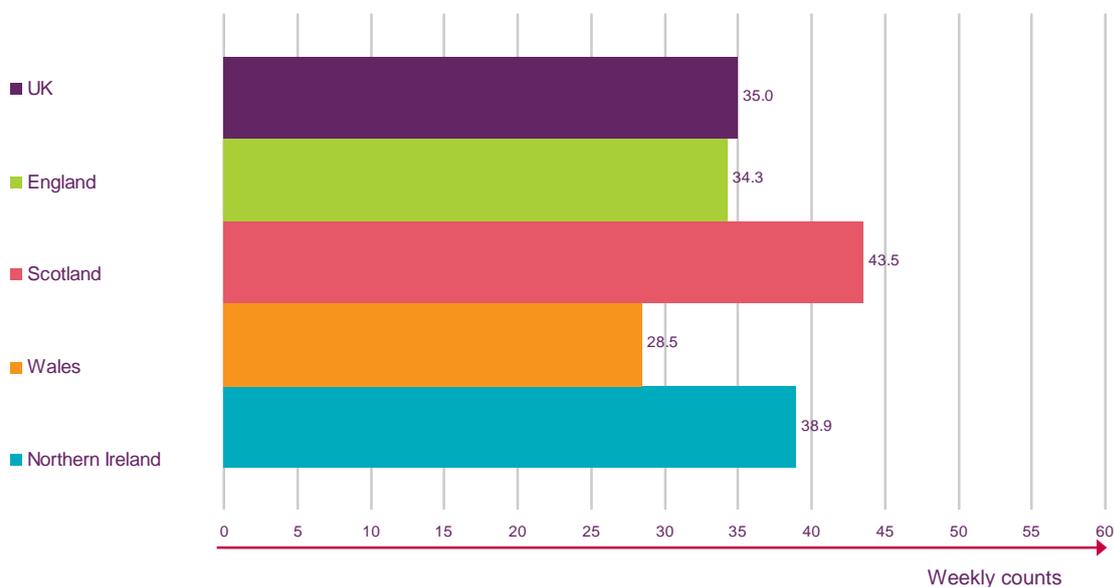
Figure 62: Weekly volume of mobile phone calls made by users



QP28A-B/ QC32A-B – How many calls would you say he/ she makes using his/ her mobile phone on a typical school day/ on a weekend day?
 Base: Parents of children aged 8-11 whose child has their own mobile phone and children aged 12-15 who have their own mobile phone (1838 UK, 1118 England, 257 Scotland, 251 Wales, 212 Northern Ireland)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to September 2007 and October-December 2007

Figure 63 shows the estimated average number of weekly text messages sent by children aged 8-15 with their own mobile phone. Children in Wales send fewer text messages in a typical school week compared to children in the UK as a whole.

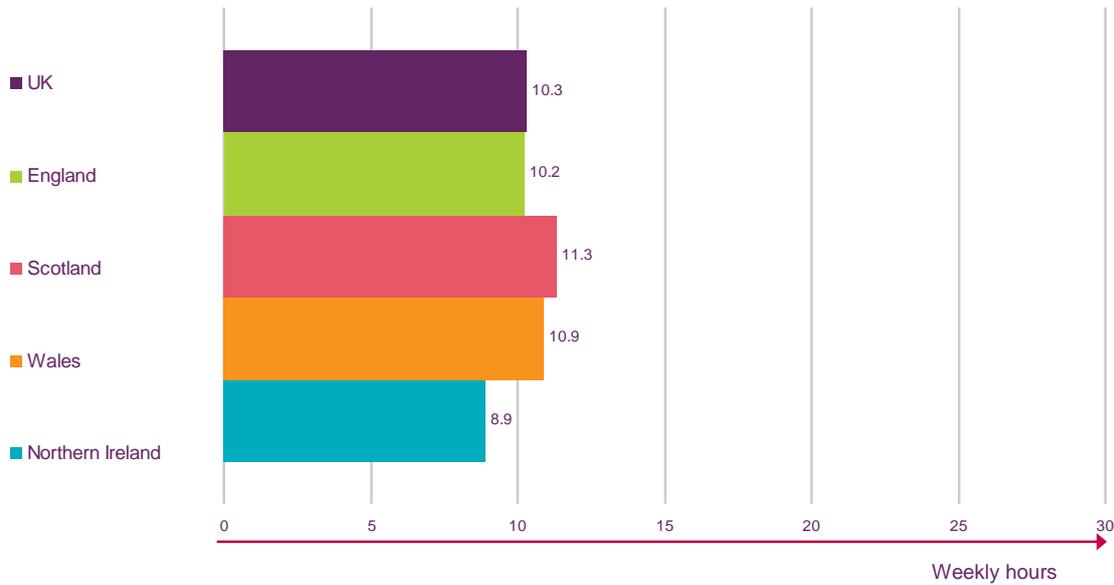
Figure 63: Weekly volume of text messages sent by users



QP29A-B/ QC33A-B – How many text messages would you say he/ she sends using his/ her mobile phone on a typical school day/ on a weekend day?
 Base: Parents of children aged 8-11 whose child has their own mobile phone and children aged 12-15 who have their own mobile phone (1838 UK, 1118 England, 257 Scotland, 251 Wales, 212 Northern Ireland)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to September 2007 and October-December 2007

Figure 64 shows the estimated average weekly hours spent playing games on a computer or games console at home for children aged 8-15 who play computer/ console games at home. Children in Northern Ireland play console/ computer games for fewer hours in a typical school week compared to children in the UK as a whole.

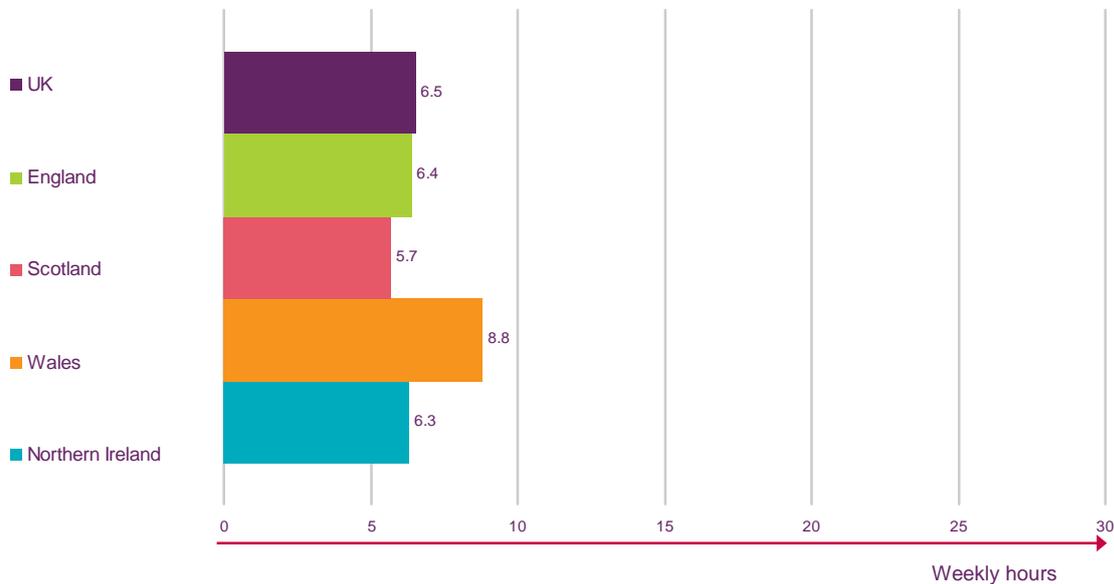
Figure 64: Weekly volume of gaming by users



QP18A-B/ QC36/37 – How many hours would you say he/ she spends playing computer/ console on a typical school day/ on a weekend day?
 Base: Parents of children aged 8-11 who play games on a games console, PC or laptop at home and children aged 12-15 who play games on a games console, PC or laptop at home (1820 UK, 1003 England, 263 Scotland, 278 Wales, 276 Northern Ireland)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to September 2007 and October-December 2007

Figure 65 shows the estimated average weekly hours spent listening to radio for children aged 8-15 who listen to radio at home. Whilst compared to children in the UK generally fewer children in Wales listen to the radio, those who do listen in Wales consume more hours of radio in a typical school week than the UK average.

Figure 65: Weekly volume of radio listening among users



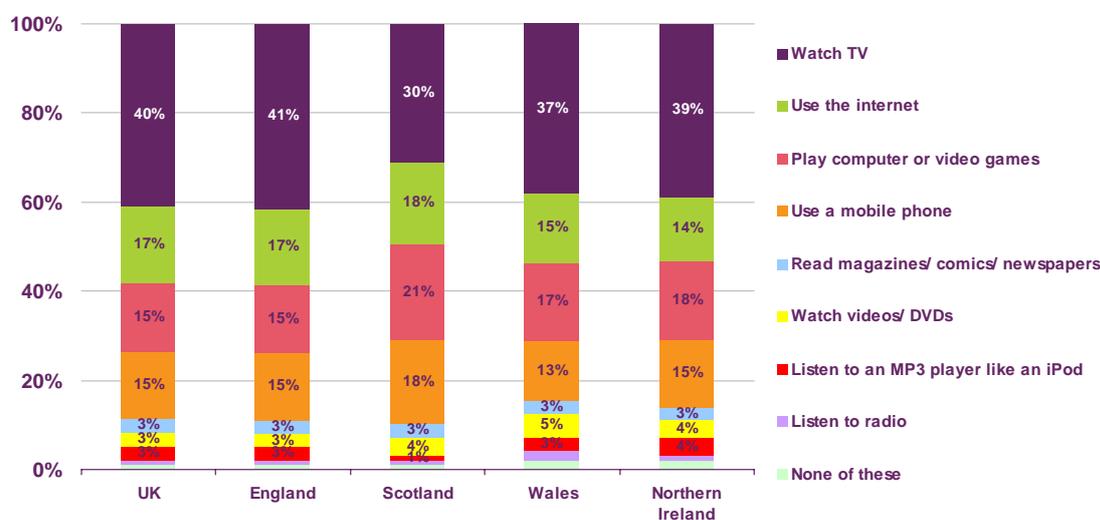
QP13A-B/ QC13A-B – How many hours would you say he/ she spends listening to radio on a typical school day/ on a weekend day?
 Base: Parents of children aged 8-11 who listen to radio at home and children aged 12-15 who listen to radio at home (1113 UK, 732 England, 130 Scotland, 154 Wales, 97 Northern Ireland)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to September 2007 and October-December 2007

7.6 Most missed media activity

All children aged 8-15 were asked to choose from a list of eight media activities to say which they do almost every day, and then which one of these they would miss doing the most.

Figure 66 shows the most missed media activity for all children aged 8-15 in the UK generally and in each of the four nations.

Figure 66: Media activity children would miss the most



QC39B – Now of the ones you do almost every day, which one of these would you miss doing most if it got taken away?
 Base: Children aged 8-15 (2711 UK, 1718 England, 350 Scotland, 360 Wales, 282 Northern Ireland)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to September 2007

Children in Scotland are less likely than children in the UK as a whole to choose television as the device they would miss the most, and more likely than children in the UK as a whole to choose playing computer or console games as the device they would miss the most.

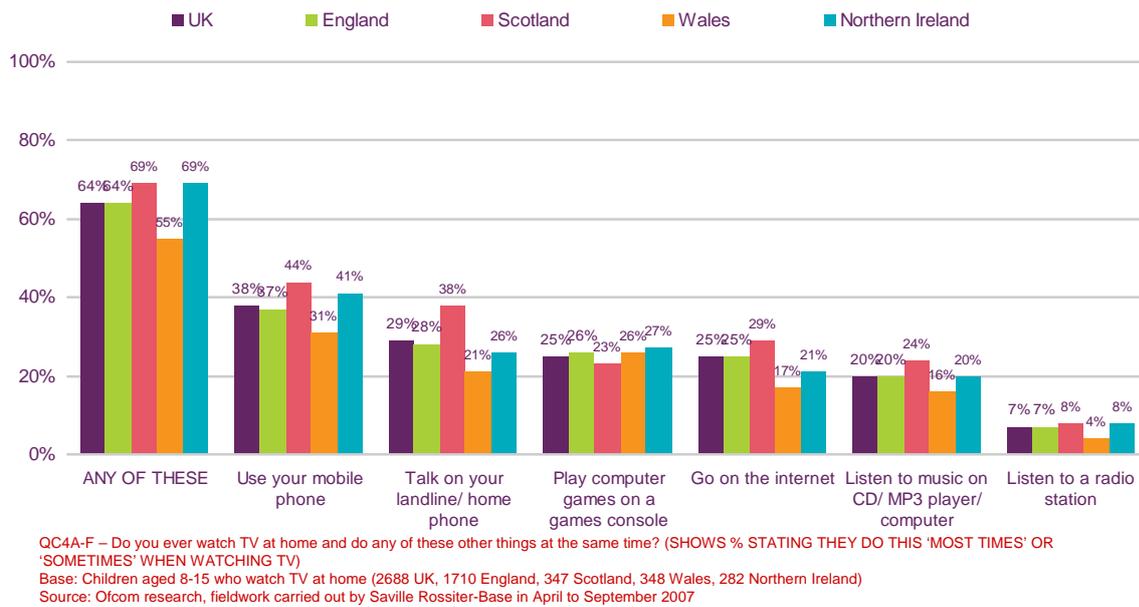
Children in Wales are more likely than children in the UK as a whole to choose watching videos or DVDs as the device they would miss the most.

Compared to 2005, children in all nations are more likely to choose the internet as the device they would miss the most, and less likely to choose computer/ video games.

7.7 Other media used while watching television

All children aged 8-15 who watch television at home were prompted with six other media activities and were asked whether they ever watch television and do any of these other activities at the same time. Figure 67 shows the proportion of children in the UK and in each nation who watch television and carry out each of the other media activities at the same time, either most times, or sometimes, when they watch television.

Figure 67: Other media used while watching television



Two-thirds of children aged 8-15 who watch television at home ever carry out any of these other six media activities at the same time as watching television.

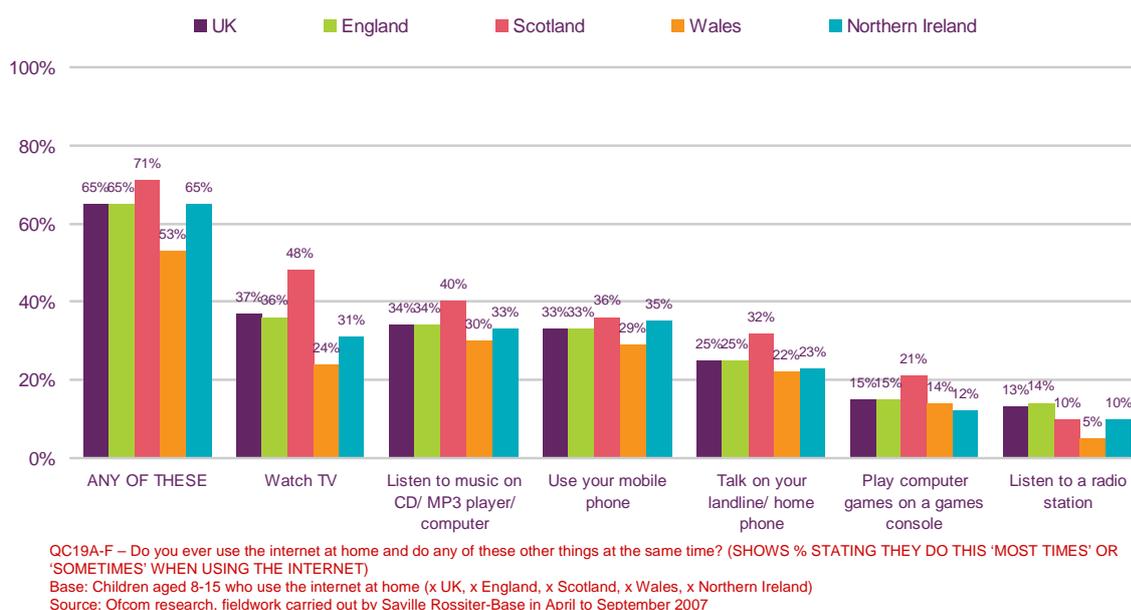
Children in Wales are less likely than children in the UK as a whole to ever carry out any of these other six media activities at the same time as watching television. Five of the six activities are less likely to be done by children in Wales at the same time as watching television: use a mobile phone, talk on a landline phone, go on the internet, listen to music on a CD/ MP3 player/ computer, and listen to a radio station.

Children in Scotland are more likely than children in the UK as a whole to use a mobile phone or talk on a landline phone at the same time as watching television.

7.8 Other media used while using the internet

All children aged 8-15 who use the internet at home were prompted with six other media activities and were asked whether they ever use the internet and do any of these other activities at the same time. Figure 68 shows the proportion of children in the UK and in each nation who use the internet and carry out each of the other media activities at the same time, either most times, or sometimes, when they use the internet.

Figure 68: Other media used while using the internet



Two-thirds of children who use the internet at home ever carry out any of these other six media activities at the same time as using the internet.

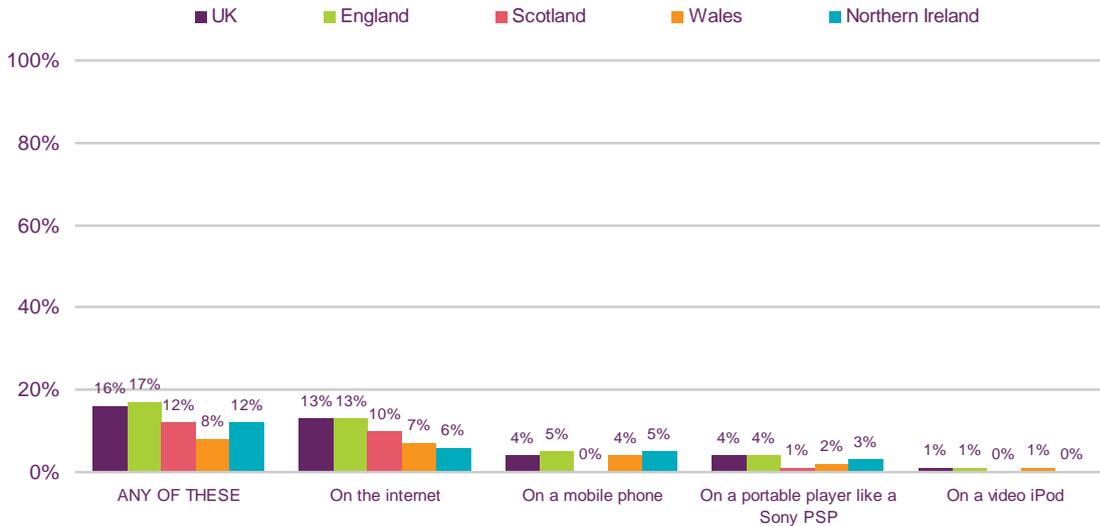
Children in Wales are less likely than children in the UK as a whole to ever carry out any of these other six media activities at the same time as using the internet. Two of the six activities are less likely to be done by children in Wales at the same time as using the internet: watch television and listen to a radio station.

Children in Scotland are more likely than children in the UK as a whole to watch television, talk on a landline phone or play computer games at the same time as using the internet. Three of the six activities are more likely to be done by children in Scotland at the same time as using the internet: watch television, talk on a landline phone and play computer games on a games console.

7.9 Convergence

All children aged 8-15 were prompted with different ways of watching television programmes, films or video clips at home, apart from on a television. They were asked to say which they do, and how often they do them. Figure 69 shows the proportion of children in the UK and in each nation who use each way of watching television, films or video clips at least once a week.

Figure 69: Ways children watch television, films or video clips, apart from on a television

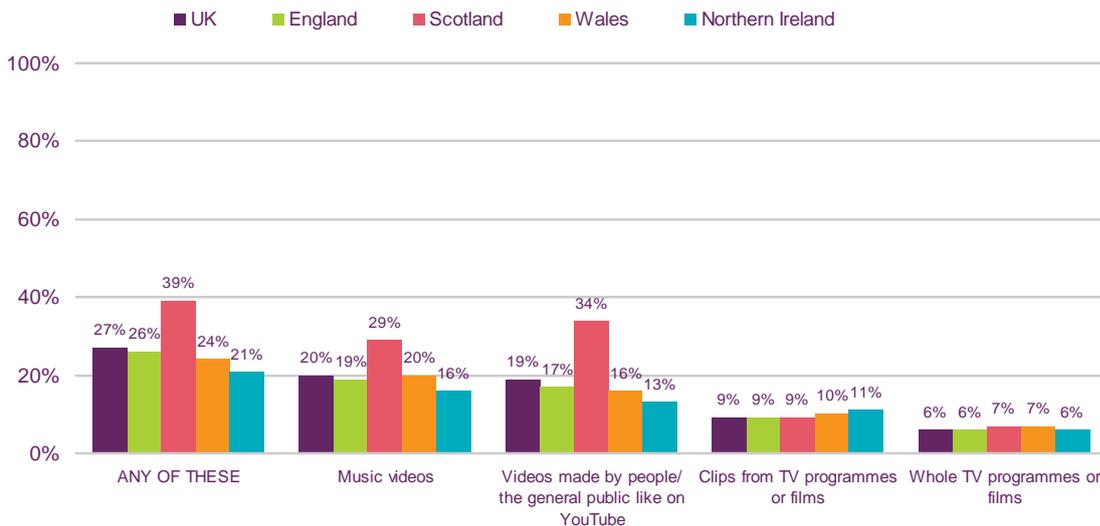


QC9A-D – Apart from on a TV, are any of these ways that you watch TV, films or video clips at home? (SHOWS % STATING THEY DO THIS 'MOST DAYS' OR 'ONCE OR TWICE A WEEK')
 Base: Children aged 8-15 (767 UK, 486 England, 94 Scotland, 109 Wales, 77 Northern Ireland)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in September 2007

Children in Wales are less likely than children in the UK as a whole to use media other than a television to watch television, films or video clips at least once a week.

All children aged 8-15 who use the internet at home were prompted with different types of audio and video content available online. They were asked to say which they watch or download from the internet, and how often. Figure 70 shows the proportion of 8-11 year old and 12-15 year old internet users who watch online or download each type of content at least once a week.

Figure 70: Content children watch online or download from the internet



QC21A-D – Do you watch or download any of these from the internet? How often? (SHOWS % STATING THEY DO THIS 'MOST DAYS' OR 'ONCE OR TWICE A WEEK')
 Base: Children aged 8-15 who use the internet at home (1920 UK, 1233 England, 245 Scotland, 223 Wales, 219 Northern Ireland)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to September 2007

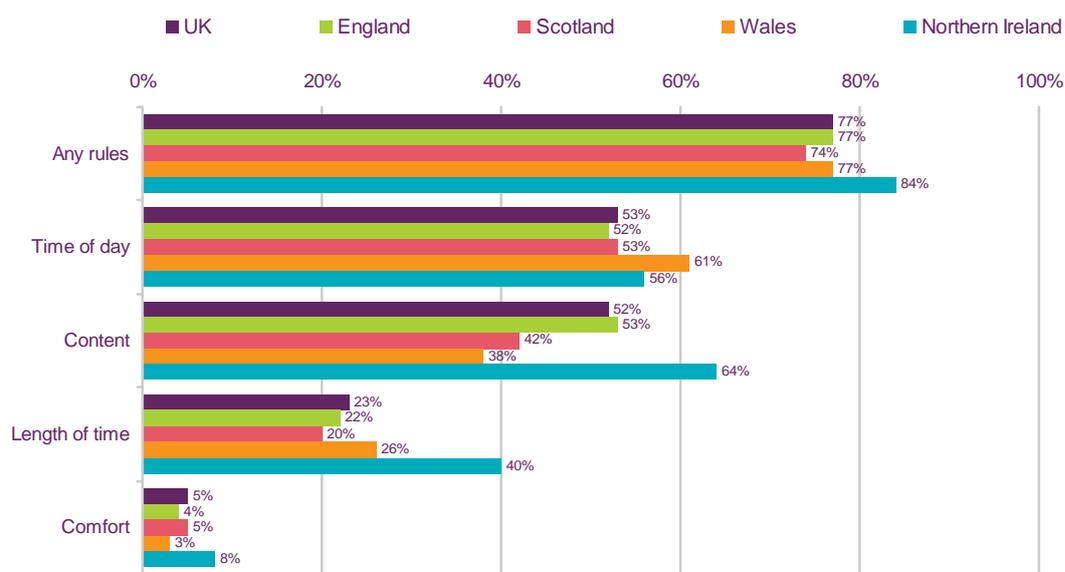
Children in Scotland who use the internet at home are more likely than children in the UK as a whole to watch online or download any of these types of content. Compared to children

who use the internet at home in the UK as a whole, children in Scotland are more likely to watch online or download music videos and YouTube-type videos.

7.10 Parental rules and restrictions about television

Figure 71 shows the responses given by parents regarding rules or restrictions about the television that is watched at home⁹. The responses given by parents have been grouped into the broad themes shown, also defined below.

Figure 71: Rules about television watching, as reported by parents



QP5 - Do you have rules or do anything about the TV, videos and DVDs that your child watches?
 Base: Parents with any TVs in the household that the child uses (2042 UK, 1132 England, 290 Scotland, 320 Wales, 300 Northern Ireland)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in October-December 2007

'Time of day' relates to responses such as *no television after a certain time, must complete homework first, only on weekends, not on school nights*. 'Content' relates to responses such as *no programmes with swearing/ bad language, regularly checking on what they're watching, only DVDs/ videos with appropriate age ratings*. 'Length of time' relates to the response *length of time watch television*. 'Comfort' relates to the response *don't sit too close to the television*.

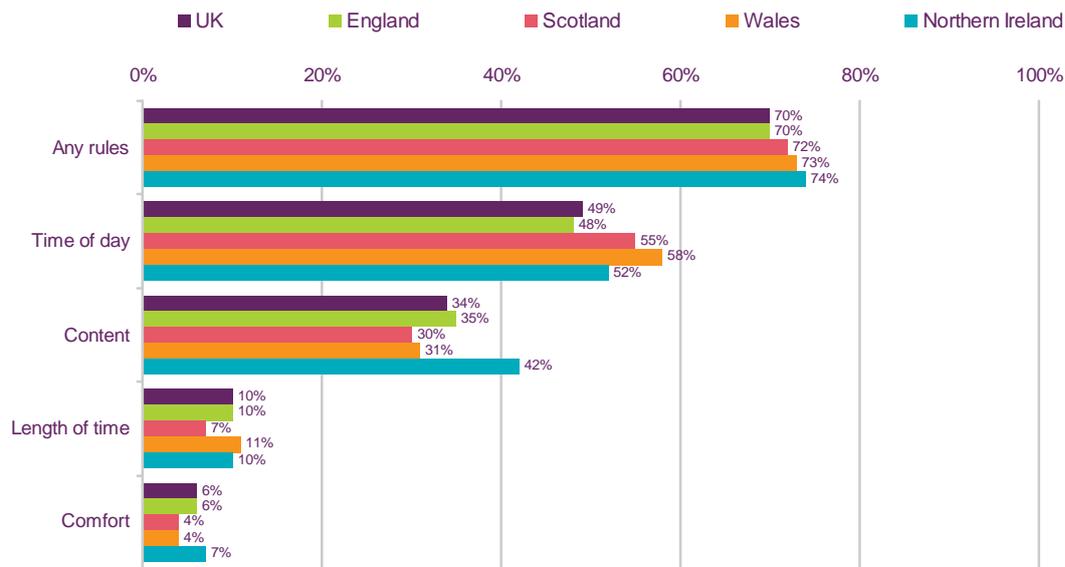
Three in four parents in the UK have any rules or restrictions about the television, videos and DVDs that their child watches. Parents in Northern Ireland are more likely than parents in the UK as a whole to have any of these rules or restrictions. This higher incidence of any rules regarding television for parents in Northern Ireland is a result of higher measures for rules relating to content, length of time and comfort. Parents in Wales do not differ from the overall UK measure in terms of having any rules about television, but are more likely than parents in the UK as a whole to have rules relating to time of day.

⁹ All parents of 8-15 year olds with the relevant platform in the home were asked whether they *have rules or do anything about* the media content their child accesses. The children interviewed were also asked whether their parents *have rules or do anything about* the media they access. Parents and children were not prompted with a list of possible answers, and so this section reports on spontaneous rather than prompted responses.

Compared to the 2005 Children's Media Literacy Audit, a higher proportion of parents in the UK as a whole have any rules about television (from 73% to 77% in 2007). This increase is also seen for Scotland (from 65% to 74%), Wales (from 70% to 77%) and Northern Ireland (from 61% to 84%).

Figure 72 shows the responses given by children regarding parental rules or restrictions about the television they watch at home. The responses given by children have been grouped into the broad themes shown, as defined above for parents.

Figure 72: Rules about television watching, as reported by children



QC3 - Do your parents have any rules or do anything about the TV, videos and DVDs that you watch at home?
 Base: Children aged 8-15 who watch TV at home (2042 UK, 1132 England, 290 Scotland, 320 Wales, 300 Northern Ireland)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in October-December 2007

Around two in three children who watch television at home report any parental rules or restrictions about the television, videos and DVDs they watch at home. Children are less likely than their parents to state that any rules exist regarding television viewing in the home. The gap between parents and children regarding mentions of rules is widest for those in Northern Ireland; where 84% of parents mention any rules, compared to 74% of children.

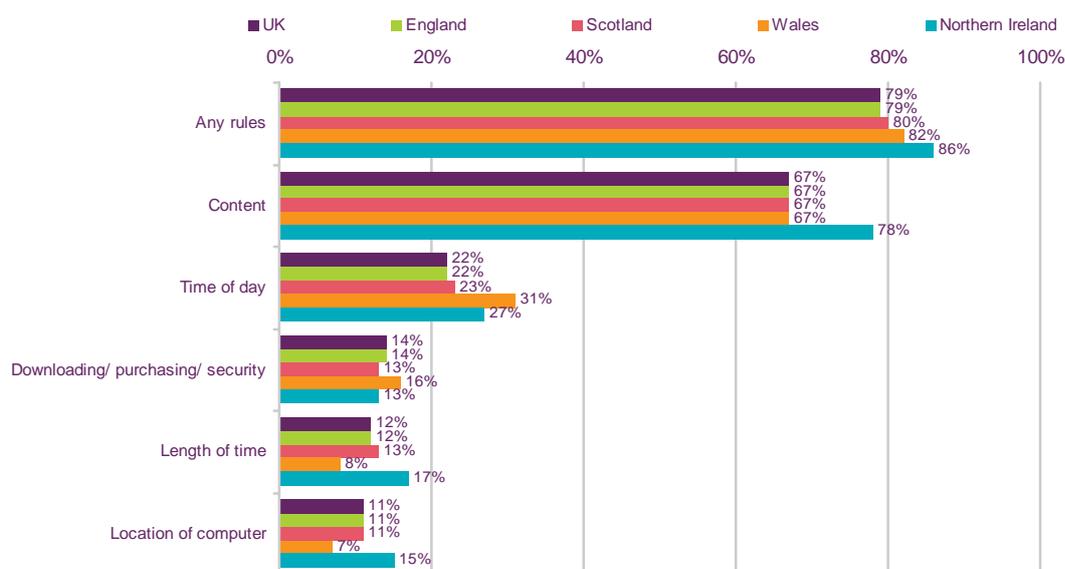
Children in Scotland and in Wales are more likely than those in the UK as a whole to mention rules relating to time of day. Children in Northern Ireland are more likely than those in the UK as a whole to mention rules relating to content.

Compared to the 2005 Children's Media Literacy Audit, a higher proportion of children in the UK as a whole say their parents have any rules about television (from 65% to 70% in 2007). This increase is also seen for Scotland (from 50% to 72%), Wales (from 64% to 73%) and Northern Ireland (from 60% to 74%).

7.11 Parental rules and restrictions about the internet

Figure 73 shows the responses given by parents regarding rules or restrictions about use of the internet at home. The responses given by parents have been grouped into the broad themes shown, also defined below.

Figure 73: Rules about access to the internet, as reported by parents



QP13 - Do you have any rules or do anything about the access that your child has to the internet?
 Base: Parents whose child uses the internet at home 1431 UK, 822 England, 182 Scotland, 197 Wales, 230 Northern Ireland
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in October-December 2007

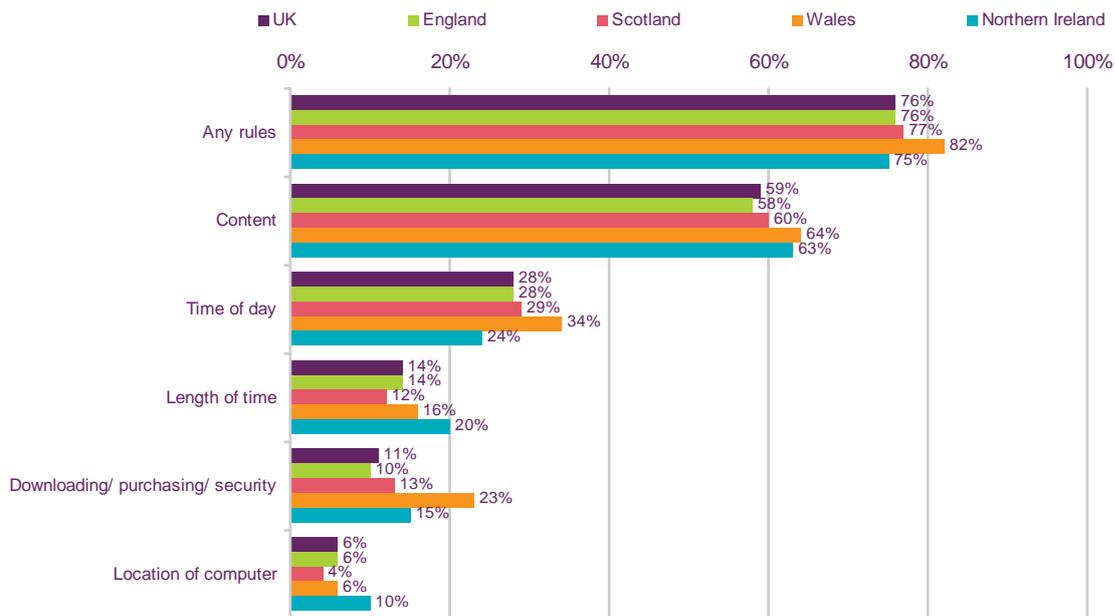
'Content' relates to responses such as *regularly check what they're doing online, can only use when supervised, not on their own, PIN/ password required to enter new websites*. 'Time of day' relates to responses such as *no internet after a certain time, or must complete homework first*. 'Downloading/ purchasing/ security' relates to responses such as *no purchasing from websites, no downloading or don't give out personal details*. 'Length of time' relates to the response *don't use for too long*. 'Location of computer' relates to the response *computer is in a room where those using it can be seen*.

Four in five parents in the UK have any rules or restrictions about the access their child has to the internet. Parents in Northern Ireland are more likely than parents in the UK as a whole to have any of these rules or restrictions, and they are also more likely to have rules relating to content. Parents in Wales do not differ from the overall UK measure in terms of having any rules about the internet, but are more likely than parents in the UK as a whole to have rules relating to time of day.

Compared to the 2005 Children's Media Literacy Audit, a lower proportion of parents in the UK as a whole have any rules about the internet (from 86% to 79% in 2007). This decrease is also seen for England (from 87% to 79%). Parents in Scotland are more likely to have rules about the internet in 2007 compared to 2005 (from 71% to 80%).

Figure 74 shows the responses given by children regarding parental rules or restrictions about them using the internet at home. The responses given by children have been grouped into the broad themes shown, as defined above for parents.

Figure 74: Rules about access to the internet, as reported by children



QC17 - Do your parents have any rules or do anything about you using the internet at home?
 Base: Children aged 8-15 who use the internet at home (1372 UK, 794 England, 175 Scotland, 182 Wales, 221 Northern Ireland)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in October-December 2007

Around three in four children who use the internet at home report any parental rules or restrictions about their use of the internet at home. Children are less likely than their parents to state that any rules exist regarding their use of the internet at home. The gap between mentions of rules from parents and children is widest for those in Northern Ireland, where 86% of parents mention any rules, compared to 75% of children.

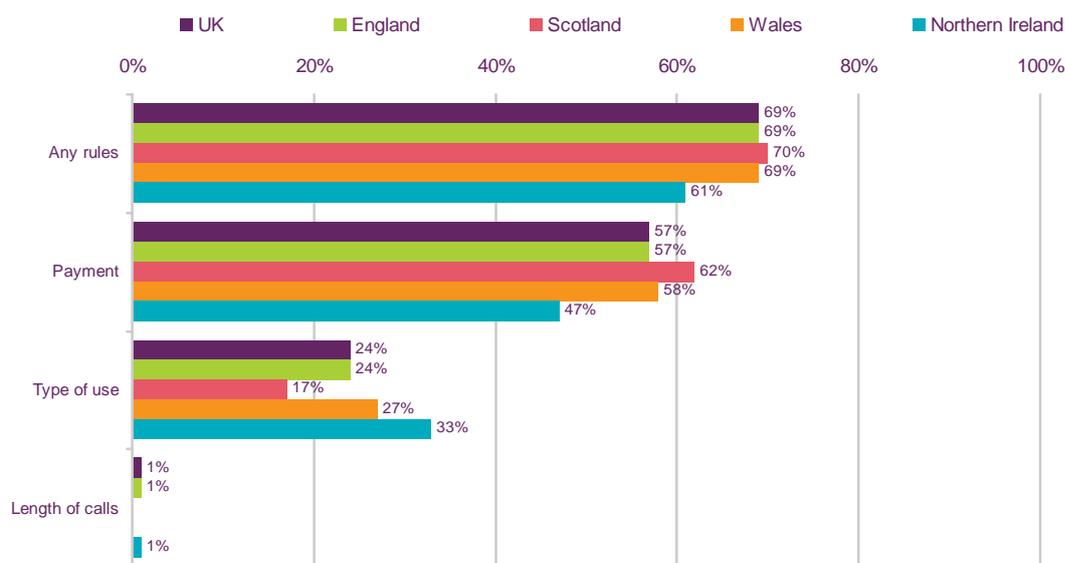
Children in Northern Ireland are more likely than those in the UK as a whole to mention rules relating to length of time and downloading/ purchasing. Children in Wales are also more likely than those in the UK as a whole to mention rules relating to downloading/ purchasing.

Compared to the 2005 Children's Media Literacy Audit, the proportion of children in the UK as a whole who say their parents have any rules about the internet has not changed to any significant extent. There has been an increase in the proportion of children mentioning parental rules about the internet in Scotland (from 64% to 77%) and Wales (from 73% to 82%).

7.12 Parental rules and restrictions about mobile phones

Figure 75 shows the responses given by parents regarding rules or restrictions about use of the child's mobile phone¹⁰. The responses given by parents have been grouped into the broad themes shown, also defined below.

Figure 75: Rules about mobile phone use, as reported by parents



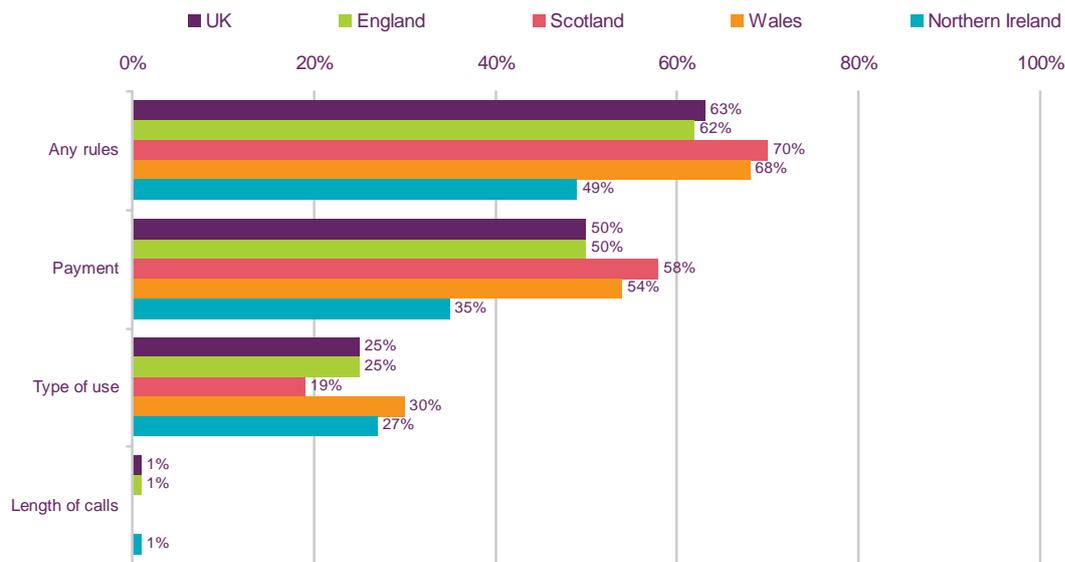
QP16 – Do you have any rules or do anything about the use your children make of their mobile phone?
 Base: Parents whose child has their own mobile phone (1319 UK, 710 England, 186 Scotland, 209 Wales, 214 Northern Ireland)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in October-December 2007

'Payment' relates to responses such as *limit how often credit can be put on the phone and child is responsible for paying top-ups/ bills*. 'Type of use' refers to rules such as *only calls/texts with people already know, be careful taking the phone out in public*. 'Length of calls' relates to the response *limit amount of time spent on the phone*.

Two in three parents in the UK have any rules or restrictions about the use their child makes of a mobile phone. Parents in Northern Ireland are less likely than parents in the UK as a whole to have any of these rules or restrictions, through being less likely to have rules relating to payment. Parents in Northern Ireland are, however, more likely to have rules relating to the type of use made.

Compared to the 2005 Children's Media Literacy Audit, a lower proportion of parents in the UK as a whole have any rules about their child's mobile phone use (from 73% to 69% in 2007), and this decrease is also seen for England (from 75% to 69%). Parents in Scotland are more likely to have rules about their child's mobile phone use, compared to 2005 (from 55% to 61% in 2007).

Figure 76 shows the responses given by children regarding parental rules or restrictions about their mobile phone use. The responses given by children have been grouped into the broad themes shown, as defined above for parents.

Figure 76: Rules about mobile phone use, as reported by children

QC40 –Do your parents have any rules or do anything about how you use your mobile phone?
 Base: Children aged 8-15 with their own mobile phone (1319 UK, 710 England, 186 Scotland, 209 Wales, 214 Northern Ireland)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in October-December 2007

Around two in three children with their own mobile phone report any parental rules or restrictions about how they use their mobile phone. Children are less likely than their parents to state that any rules exist regarding their use of the mobile phone. The gap between mentions of rules from parents and children is widest for those in Northern Ireland; where 61% of parents mention any rules, compared to 49% of children.

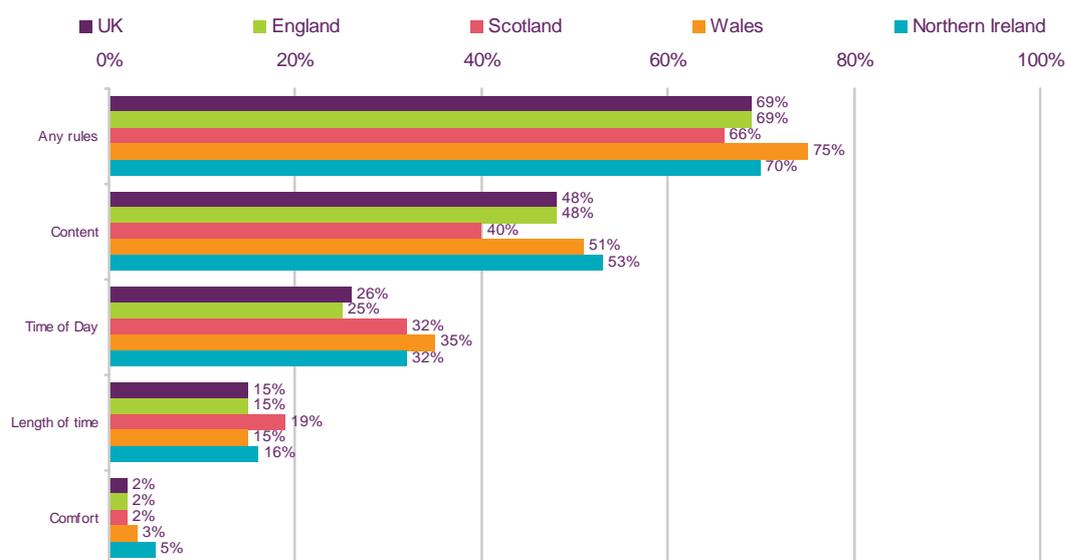
Children in Scotland are more likely than those in the UK as a whole to report any parental rules about how they use their mobile phone. Children in Northern Ireland are less likely than those in the UK as a whole to report any parental rules about how they use their mobile phone, and less likely to mention rules relating to payment.

Compared to the 2005 Children's Media Literacy Audit, a higher proportion of children in the UK as a whole say their parents have any rules about how they use their mobile phone (from 57% to 63% in 2007), and this increase is also seen for Scotland (from 49% to 70%). Children in Northern Ireland are less likely to mention parental rules regarding their mobile phone compared to 2005 (from 67% to 49%).

7.13 Parental rules and restrictions about gaming

Figure 77 shows the responses given by parents regarding rules about gaming. The responses have been grouped into the broad themes shown, also defined below.

Figure 77: Rules about gaming, as reported by parents



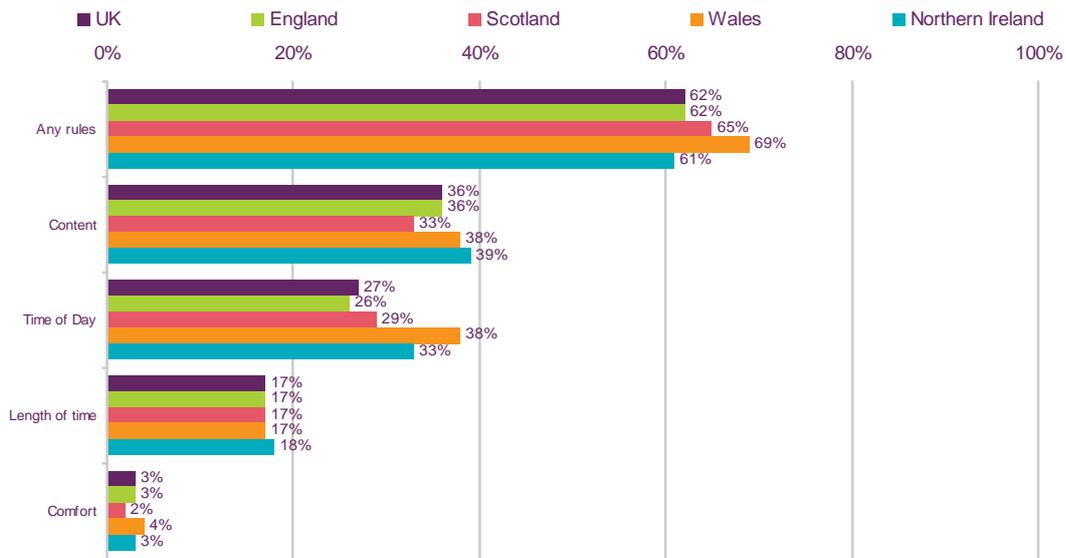
QP19 - Do you have rules or do anything about the games your child plays on a games console or computer
 Base: Those whose child ever plays games on a games console, PC or laptop (1820 UK, 1003 England, 263 Scotland, 278 Wales, 276 Northern Ireland)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in October-December 2007

'Content' relates to responses such as *only games with appropriate age ratings, no games with violence*. 'Time of day' relates to responses such as *must complete my homework first, no playing after a certain time*. 'Length of time' relates to the response *don't play for too long*. 'Comfort' relates to the response *don't sit too close to the television*.

Two in three parents have any rules or restrictions about the games their child plays on a games console or computer. Parents in Wales and in Northern Ireland are more likely than those in the UK as a whole to mention rules relating to time of day. Parents in Scotland are less likely to mention rules relating to content.

Figure 78 shows the responses given by children regarding parental rules or restrictions about their gaming. The responses given by children have been grouped into the broad themes shown, as defined above for parents.

Figure 78: Rules about gaming, as reported by children



QC38 - Do your parents have any rules or do anything about you playing games at home?
 Base: Children who play games on a games console, PC or laptop (1802 UK, 997 England, 254 Scotland, 273 Wales, 278 Northern Ireland)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in October-December 2007

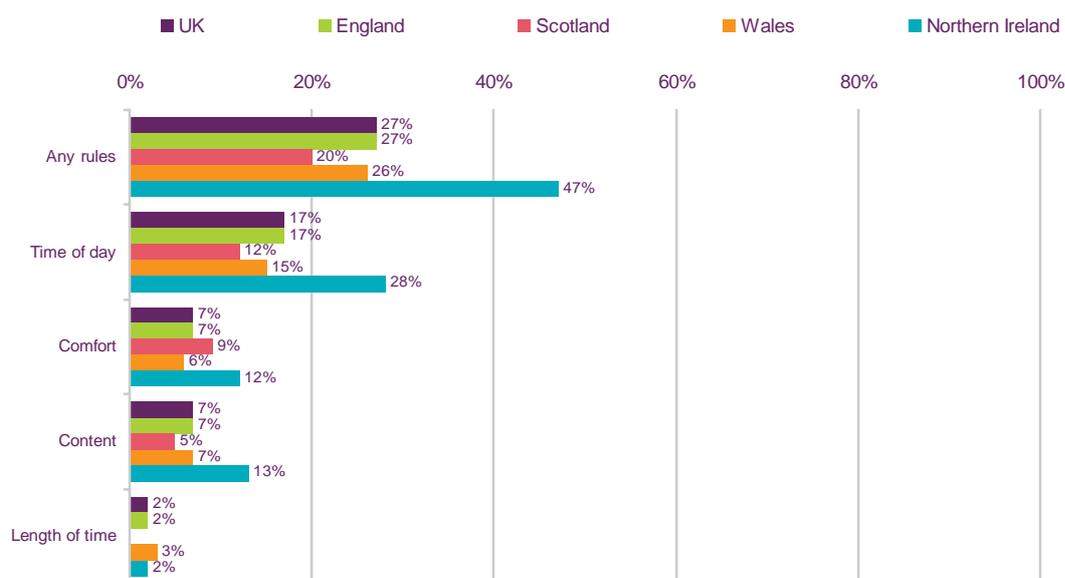
About three in five children who play computer or console games at home report any parental rules or restrictions about their gaming. Children are less likely than their parents to state that any rules exist regarding their gaming. The gap between mentions of rules by parents and children is widest in Northern Ireland, where 70% of parents mention any rules, compared to 61% of children.

Children in Wales are more likely than those in the UK as a whole to report any parental rules about their gaming, and any rules relating to time of day. Children in Northern Ireland are also more likely to report any rules relating to time of day.

7.14 Parental rules and restrictions about radio

Figure 79 shows the responses given by parents regarding rules or restrictions about their child's radio listening. The responses given by parents have been grouped into the broad themes shown, also defined below.

Figure 79: Rules about radio, as reported by parents



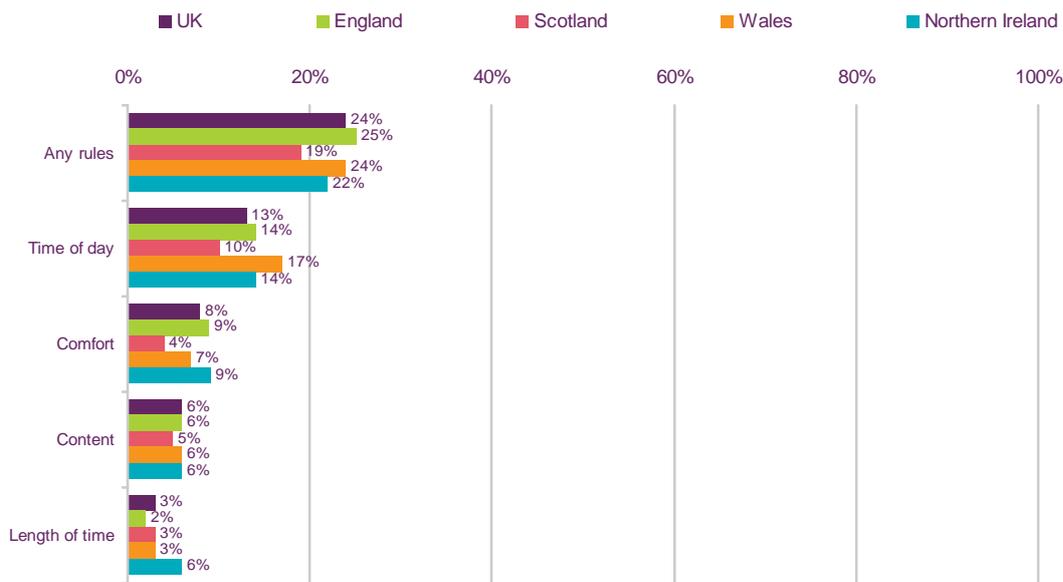
QP9 - Do you have any rules or do anything about the radio your child listens to?
 Base: Those whose child listens to radio at home (951 UK, 600 England, 104 Scotland, 124 Wales, 123 Northern Ireland)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in October-December 2007

'Time of day' relates to responses such as *no radio after a certain time, and must complete homework first*. 'Comfort' relates to the response *don't play the radio too loud*. 'Content' relates to responses such as *no music with swearing/ bad language, and only certain radio stations/ shows*. 'Length of time' relates to the response *don't listen for too long*.

One in four parents has any rules or restrictions about the radio their child listens to at home. Parents in Northern Ireland are more likely than those in the UK as a whole to mention rules about radio, and to mention rules relating to time of day, comfort and content.

Compared to the 2005 Children's Media Literacy Audit, a higher proportion of parents in the UK as a whole have any rules about their child's radio listening (from 17% to 27% in 2007), and this increase is also seen for England (from 18% to 27%), Scotland (from 11% to 20%), Wales (from 20% to 26%) and Northern Ireland (from 18% to 47%).

Figure 80 shows the responses given by children regarding parental rules or restrictions about their radio listening. The responses given by children have been grouped into the broad themes shown, as defined above for parents.

Figure 80: Rules about radio, as reported by children

QC12 - Do your parents have any rules or do anything about the radio you listen to?
 Base: Children who listen to radio at home (961 UK, 590 England, 108 Scotland, 130 Wales, 133 Northern Ireland)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in October-December 2007

Around one in four children who listen to radio at home report any parental rules or restrictions about their radio listening. Children are less likely than their parents to state that any rules exist regarding their radio listening. The gap between mentions of rules from parents and children is widest for those in Northern Ireland, where 47% of parents mention any rules, compared to 22% of children.

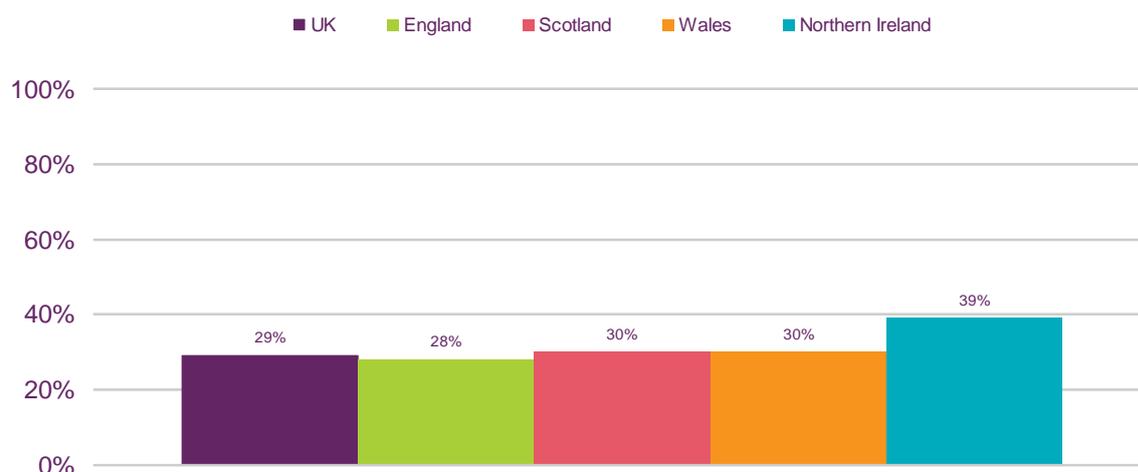
Children in Northern Ireland are more likely than those in the UK as a whole to report any parental rules relating to length of time.

Compared to the 2005 Children's Media Literacy Audit, a lower proportion of children in the UK as a whole say their parents have any rules about radio (from 29% to 24% in 2007), and this decrease is also seen for England (from 31% to 25%).

7.15 Television controls and security

Parents of children in households with digital television were asked whether there are any controls set on their television service so that their child can watch particular channels or types of programmes only when a PIN number or password has been entered. Responses from parents of children in the UK, and in each of the nations, are shown in Figure 81.

Figure 81: PIN or password controls set on digital television services



QP11 Are there any controls set on your TV service so that your child could only watch particular channels or types of programmes once a PIN number or password has been entered?
 Base: Those with multi-channel TV in the household and whose child watches TV at home (2394 UK, 1524 England, 309 Scotland, 323 Wales, 237 Northern Ireland)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to September 2007

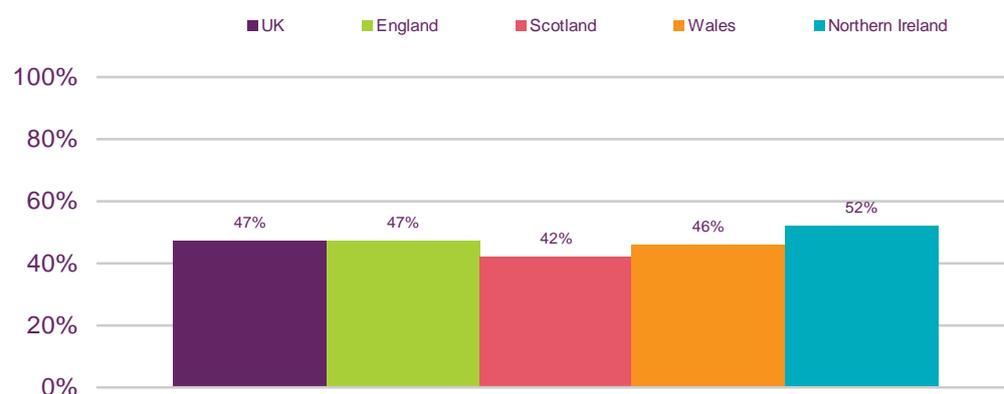
Parents in Northern Ireland are more likely than those in the UK as a whole to have set any controls on their digital television service.

Compared to the 2005 Children's Media Literacy Audit, there has been no change in the proportion of parents in the UK setting controls on their television service. There has, however, been an increase for Scotland (from 26% to 30%), Wales (from 22% to 30%) and Northern Ireland (from 14% to 39%).

7.16 Internet controls and security

Parents of children who use the internet at home were asked if there are any controls set, or software loaded, to stop their child viewing certain types of websites. Responses from parents of children in the UK overall and in each of the nations are shown in Figure 82.

Figure 82: Internet controls or blocking software loaded



QP21- Are there any controls set or is any software loaded to stop your child viewing certain types of websites?
 Base: Parents of children aged 8-15 who use the internet at home (1920 UK, 1233 England, 245 Scotland, 223 Wales, 219 Northern Ireland)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to September 2007

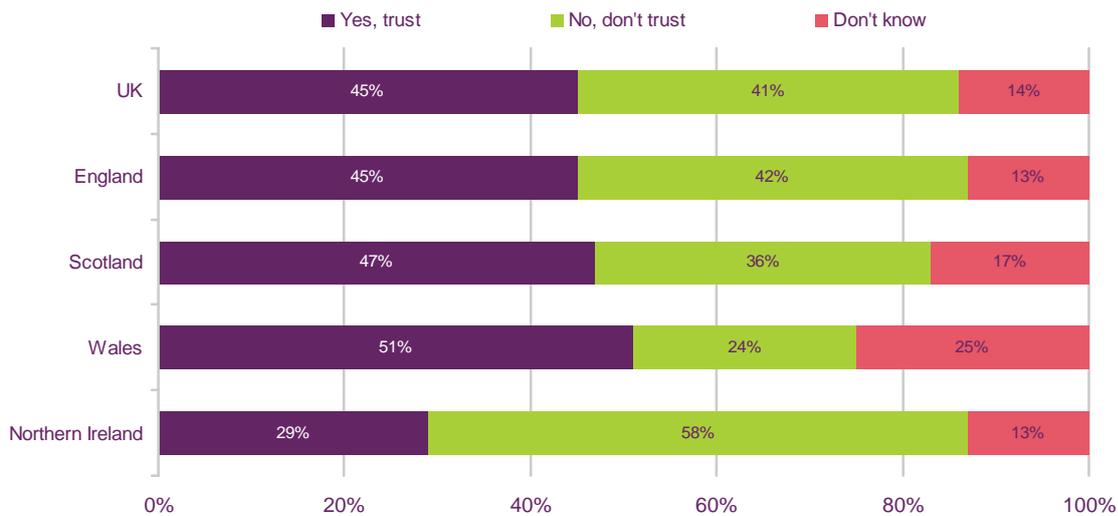
The incidence of internet controls being set or software loaded does not vary to any significant extent across the UK nations.

Compared to the 2005 Media Literacy Audit, there has been a decrease in the incidence of parents across the UK setting controls or loading software to stop their child viewing certain types of websites (from 52% to 47%). This decrease is also seen in England (from 53% to 47%). There has, however, been an increase in Northern Ireland (from 41% to 52%).

7.17 Critical awareness

Children aged 8-15 who watch television at home were asked whether they trust most of what they see on television, with responses shown in Figure 83 for the UK as a whole and for each of the nations.

Figure 83: Children's trust in television content



QC7F – Do you trust most of what you see on TV?

Base: Children aged 8-15 who watch TV at home (2688 UK, 1710 England, 347 Scotland, 348 Wales, 282 Northern Ireland)

Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to September 2007

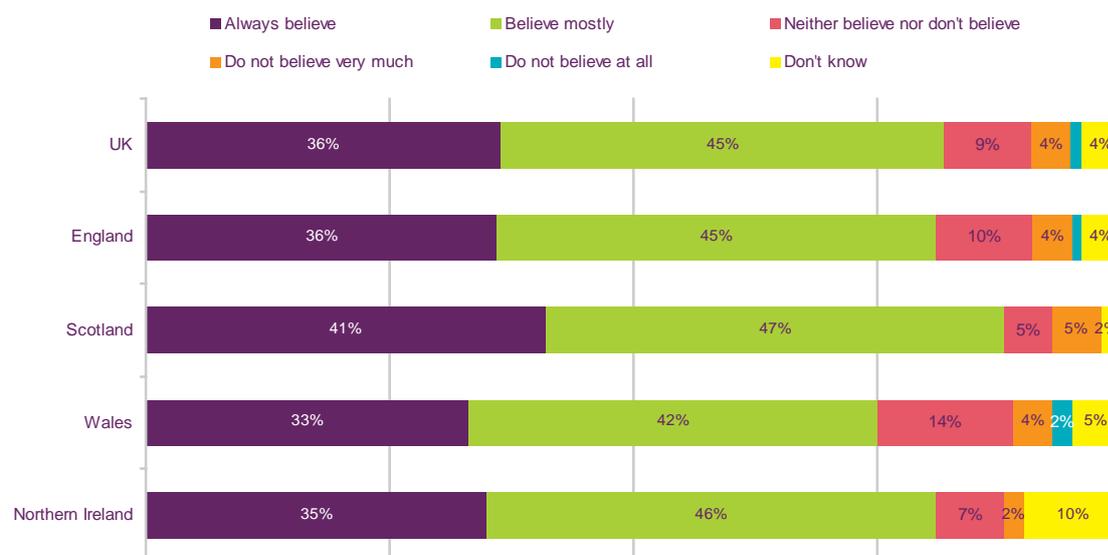
At an overall level, children have higher levels of trust in online content than television content, though this may reflect its role; the internet is much more likely to be used for sourcing information than television, which is largely used for fun and relaxation.

Less than half of all children who watch television say they trust most of what they see on television, with two in five saying they don't trust most of what they see on television. Children in Wales are more likely than those in the UK as a whole to say that they trust most of what they see on television. Children in Northern Ireland are more likely than those in the UK as a whole to say they don't trust most of what they see on television.

All children who watch television at home were asked how much they believe what they see in different types of television programmes, and were asked to select a response ranging from *always believe* to *do not believe at all*¹¹. Figure 84 shows the extent to which children believe in news programmes like *the 6 o'clock news* or *Newsround*.

¹¹ Figures exclude those children in the UK and in each nation who state that they do not watch that type of programme.

Figure 84: Children's trust in types of television content – news programmes

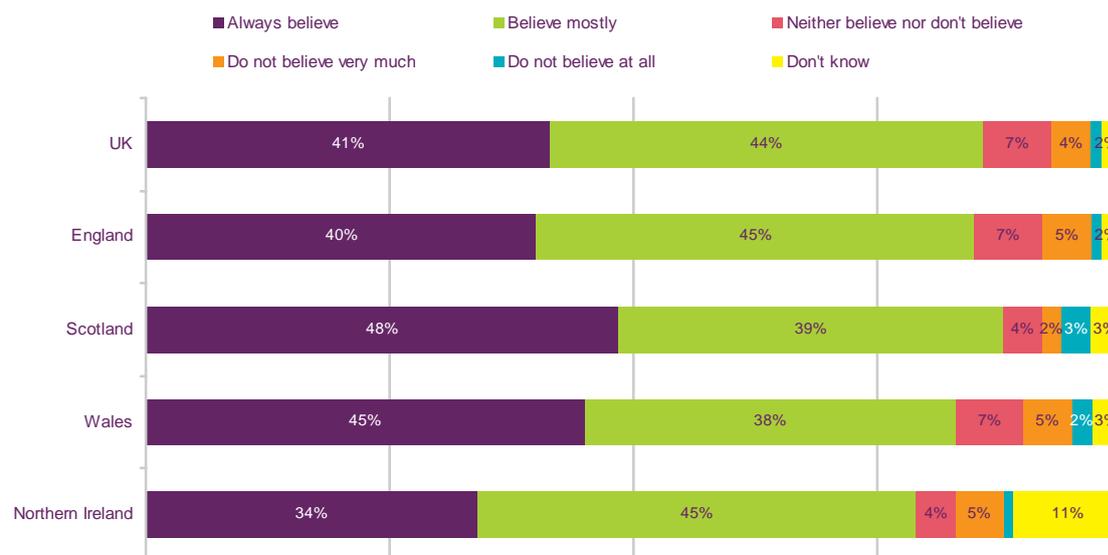


QC5B - Some people believe what TV programmes show and tell them and some people don't. Using this card, choose an answer to show how much you believe what you watch on different types of TV programmes that I'm going to read out.
 Base: Children aged 8-15 who do not say they don't watch each type of programme (1605 UK, 914 England, 205 Scotland, 254 Wales, 232 Northern Ireland)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in October to December 2007

A majority of children who watch news programmes in the UK and in each nation believe (either always or mostly) what they see in these programmes. Children in Scotland are more likely than those in the UK as a whole to say they believe what they see in news programmes.

Figure 85 shows the extent to which children believe in nature and wildlife programmes (like *Planet Earth* or *Springwatch*).

Figure 85: Children's trust in types of television content – nature and wildlife programmes

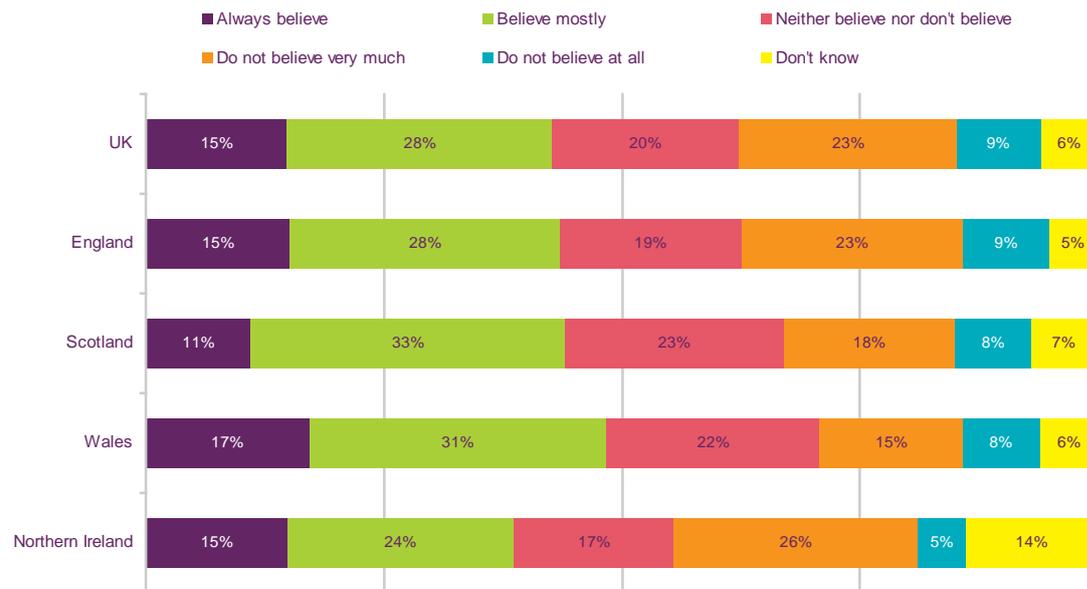


QC5A - Some people believe what TV programmes show and tell them and some people don't. Using this card, choose an answer to show how much you believe what you watch on different types of TV programmes that I'm going to read out.
 Base: Children aged 8-15 who do not say they don't watch each type of programme (1662 UK, 927 England, 217 Scotland, 278 Wales, 240 Northern Ireland)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in October to December 2007

A majority of children who watch nature and wildlife programmes in the UK and in each nation believe (either always or mostly) what they see in these programmes. Children in Northern Ireland are less likely than those in the UK as a whole to say they believe what they see in these programmes, and there is a higher proportion saying they don't know.

Figure 86 shows the extent to which children believe in reality television programmes (like *Big Brother* or *Wife Swap*).

Figure 86: Children's trust in types of television content – reality television programmes



QC5C - Some people believe what TV programmes show and tell them and some people don't. Using this card, choose an answer to show how much you believe what you watch on different types of TV programmes that I'm going to read out.
 Base: Children aged 8-15 who do not say they don't watch each type of programme (1522 UK, 857 England, 199 Scotland, 251 Wales, 215 Northern Ireland)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in October to December 2007

Less than half of children in the UK and in each nation who watch reality television programmes believe (either always or mostly) what they see in these programmes. None of the nations differs from the UK as a whole in terms of levels of agreement or disagreement, although children in Northern Ireland are more likely to say they don't know.

Older children, aged 12-15, were also asked about their attitude towards television advertising in terms of the extent to which they agree or disagree with the statement, *In general I think television adverts tell the truth*. Responses for 12-15 year olds in the UK and in each of the nations are shown in Figure 87.

Figure 87: Children’s attitudes towards television advertising: *In general I think television adverts tell the truth*

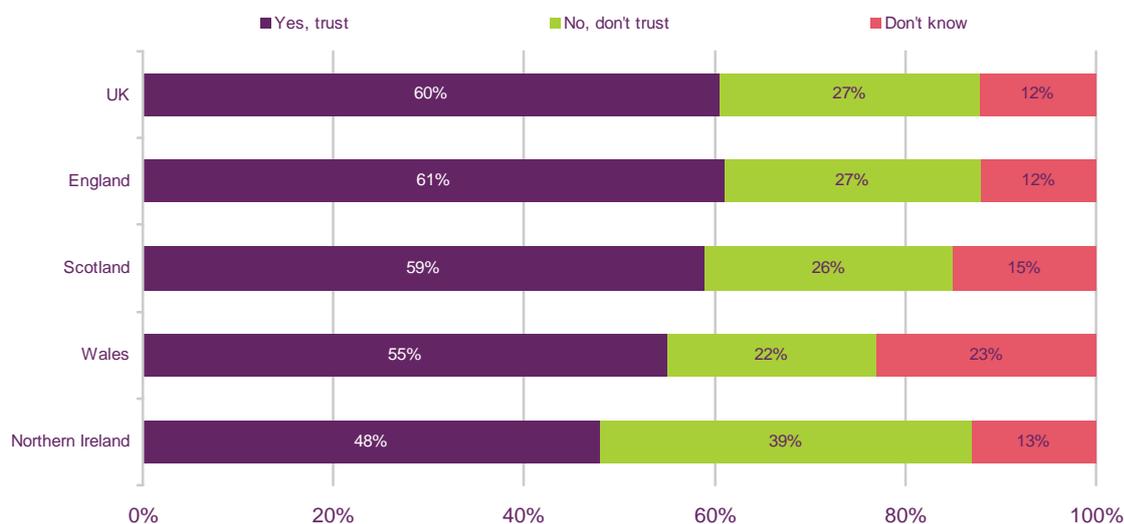


QC8C Using this card, choose an answer to show how much you agree or disagree with some things other people have said about television
 Base: Children aged 12-15 (1017 UK, 564 England, 142 Scotland, 159 Wales, 152 Northern Ireland)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in October to December 2007

While one quarter of all 12-15 year olds agree with the statement that *in general television adverts tell the truth*, this is more common among children in Scotland and Wales.

Children aged 8-15 who use the internet at home were asked whether they trust most of what they find online, with responses shown in Figure 88 for the UK as a whole and for each of the nations.

Figure 88: Children’s trust in online content

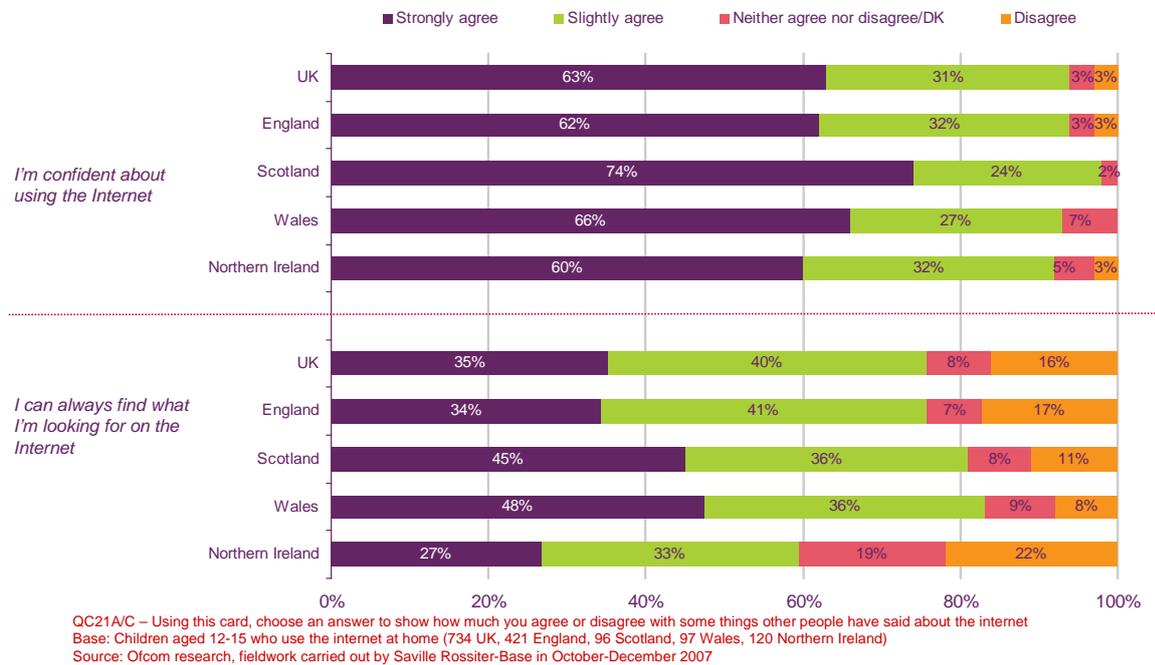


QC22G – Do you trust most of what you find on the internet?
 Base: Children aged 8-15 who use the internet at home (1920 UK, 1233 England, 245 Scotland, 223 Wales, 219 Northern Ireland)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to September 2007

The majority of internet users aged 8-15 in the UK trust most of what they find on the internet. This is less common among children in Northern Ireland, where a higher proportion say they don’t trust most of what they find on the internet, compared to the UK as a whole.

Older children were also asked about some specific attitudes regarding their confidence using the internet; their views are summarised in Figure 89.

Figure 89: Children's confidence using the internet



A majority of children aged 12-15 who use the internet at home strongly agree that *I'm confident about using the internet*. Children in Scotland are more likely than those in the UK as a whole to agree strongly with this statement.

More than one-third of all children aged 12-15 who use the internet at home strongly agree that *I can always find what I'm looking for on the internet*. Children in Scotland and in Wales are more likely than those in the UK as a whole to agree strongly with this statement. Children in Northern Ireland are less likely than those in the UK as a whole to agree (either strongly or slightly) with this statement.

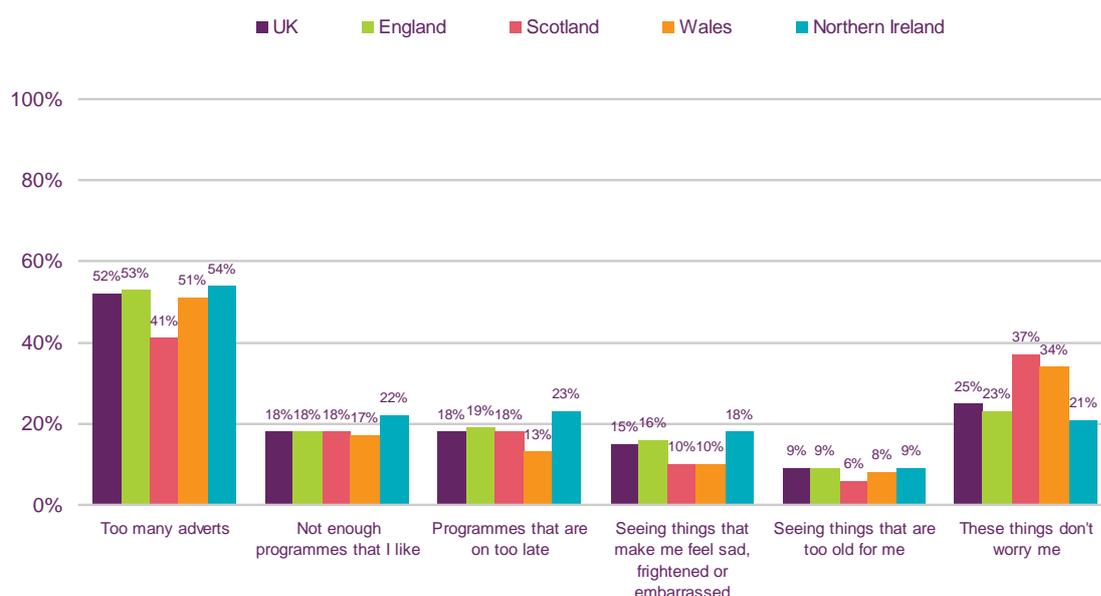
7.18 Concerns and dislikes

Children were asked about specific dislikes they had regarding the key media platforms. All children were prompted with a list detailing potential dislikes and asked to select as many or as few as applied to them as *things they don't like about (platform)*.

Television

Children were asked about specific dislikes they had regarding television. All children were prompted with a list detailing five potential dislikes and asked to select as many or as few as applied to them as *things they don't like about television*. Figure 90 details responses for these potential dislikes.

Figure 90: Children's dislikes about television

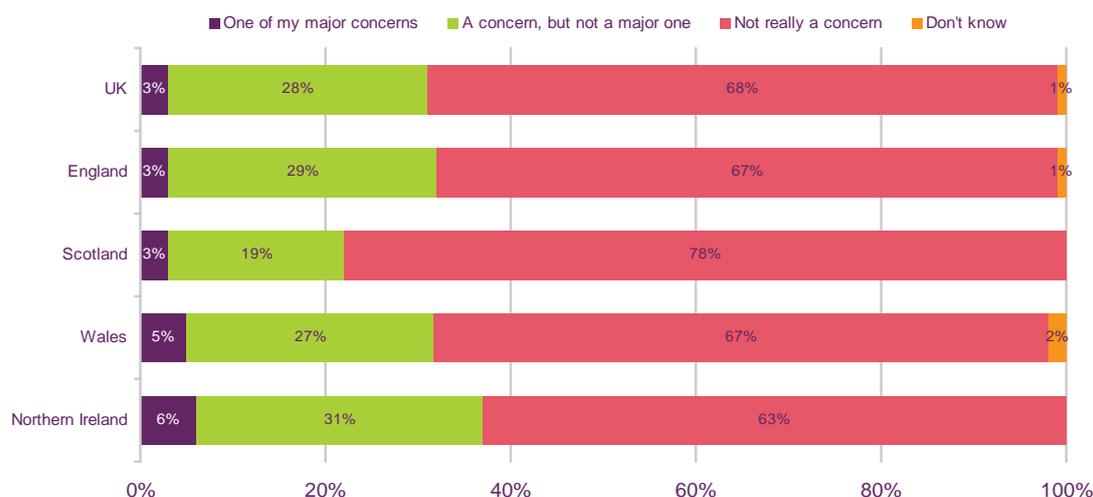


QC4 – Which of these things if any, are things you don't like about TV?
 Base: Children aged 8-15 who watch TV at home (2042 UK, 1132 England, 290 Scotland, 320 Wales, 300 Northern Ireland)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in October to December 2007

Among all nations, the most common complaint among children is that there are *too many adverts* on television. This is lower for children in Scotland than all other nations. Children in Scotland and in Wales are less likely than those in the UK as a whole to report *seeing things that make me feel sad, frightened or embarrassed* on television and *programmes that are on too late*. There are no differences across the nations, compared to the UK as a whole, in terms of the incidence of reporting of *seeing things that are too old for me* and *not enough programmes that I like*.

Figure 91 shows responses from parents regarding their levels of concern about their child's television viewing. Parents were asked whether they considered their child's television viewing to be *one of their major dislikes*, *a concern but not a major one* or *not a concern at all*.

Figure 91: Parental concerns about child's television viewing



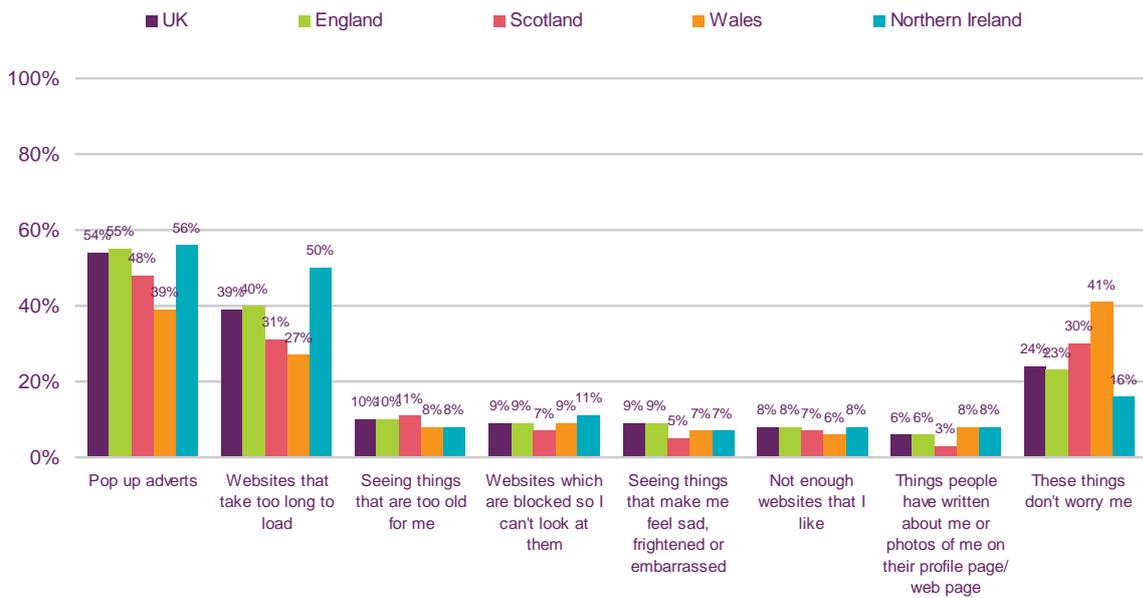
QP6– Please think about your child's TV viewing alongside any concerns you may have relating to your child. Would you describe your child's use as...?
 Base: Parents of children aged 8-15 whose child watches (2042 UK, 1132 England, 290 Scotland, 320 Wales, 300 Northern Ireland)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in October to December 2007

Compared to the overall UK measure, parents in Scotland are more likely to say that their child's television viewing is *not really a concern*, while parents in Northern Ireland are more likely to say that their child's television viewing is *one of their major concerns*.

Internet

Children were asked about specific dislikes they had regarding the internet. All children were prompted with a list detailing seven potential dislikes, and asked to select as many or as few as applied to them as *things they don't like about the internet*. Figure 92 details responses for these potential dislikes.

Figure 92: Children's dislikes about the internet

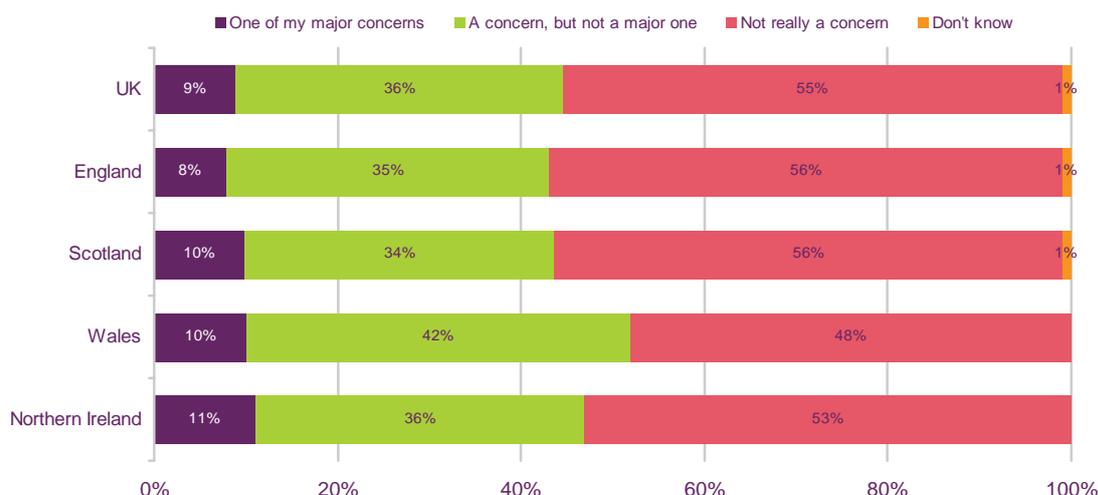


QC18 – Which of these things if any, are things you don't like about the internet?
 Base: Children aged 8-15 who use the internet at home (1372 UK, 794 England, 175 Scotland, 182 Wales, 221 Northern Ireland)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in October-December 2007

For all nations, the two most common complaints among children are that there are *pop up adverts* on the internet and *websites that take too long to load*. Both of these complaints are lower for children in Scotland and Wales than other nations. All other potential dislikes asked about was a dislike for one in ten children or less. A quarter of all children in the UK claim that none of the potential issues worried them. This is higher for children in Wales and lower for children in Northern Ireland.

Figure 93 shows responses from parents regarding their levels of concern about their child's use of the internet (at home or elsewhere). Parents were asked whether they considered their child's use of the internet to be *one of their major concerns*, *a concern but not a major one* or *not a concern at all*.

Figure 93: Parental concerns about child's use of the internet



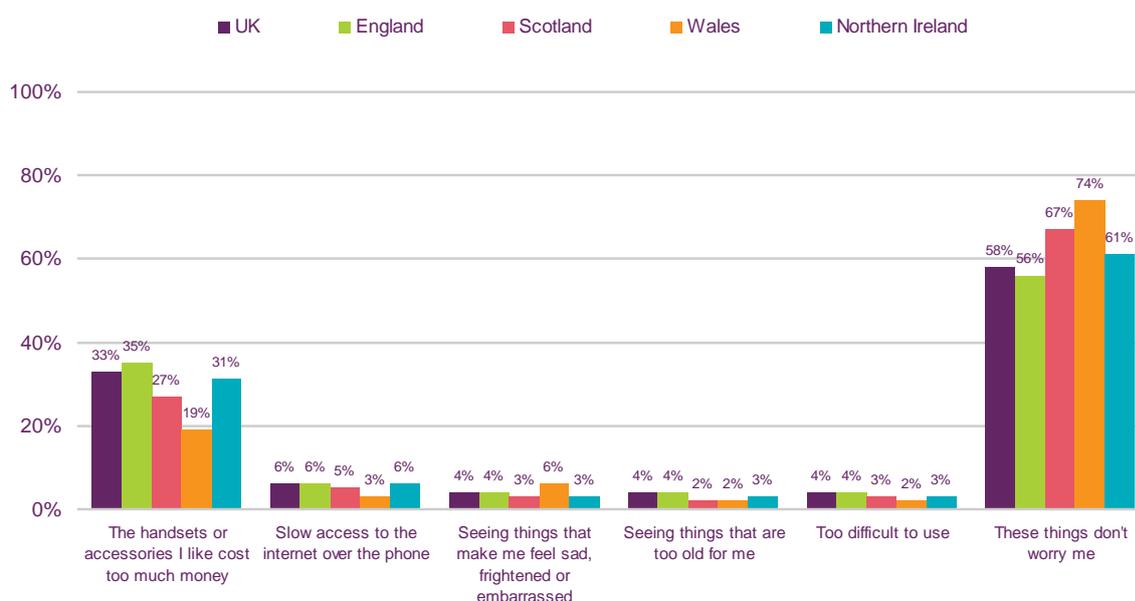
QP14– Please think about your child's use of the internet alongside any concerns you may have relating to your child. Would you describe your child's use as...?
 Base: Parents of children aged 8-15 whose child uses the internet (1431 UK, 822 England, 182 Scotland, 197 Wales, 230 Northern Ireland)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in October-December 2007

There are no differences across the nations compared to the UK as a whole in terms of parental concerns about their child's use of the internet.

Mobile phones

Children with their own mobile phone were asked about specific dislikes they had regarding mobile phones. All children were prompted with a list detailing five potential dislikes and asked to select as many or as few as applied to them as *things they don't like about mobile phones*. Figure 94 details responses for these potential dislikes.

Figure 94: Children's dislikes about mobile phones

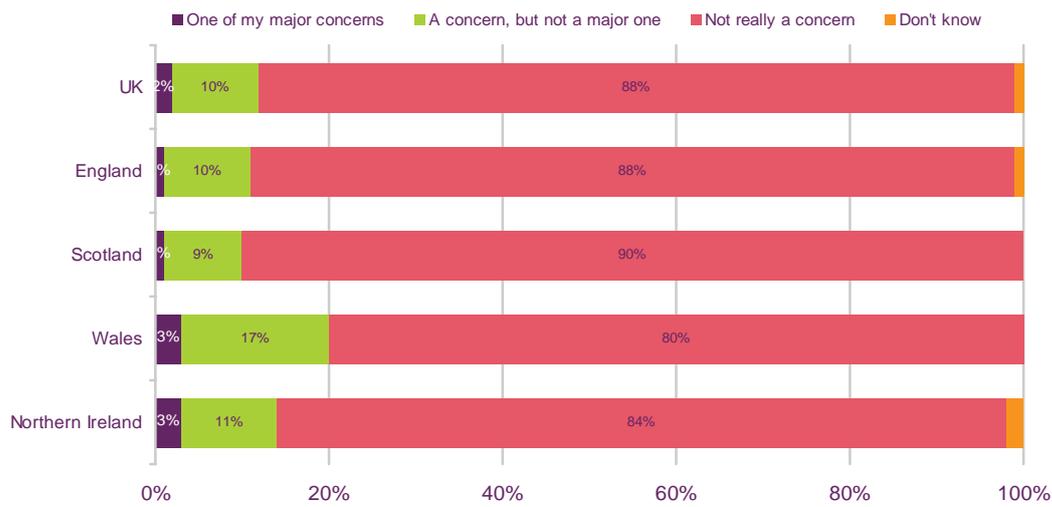


QC41 – Which of these things if any, are things you don't like about mobile phones?
 Base: Children aged 8-15 who have a mobile phone (1319 UK, 710 England, 186 Scotland, 209 Wales, 214 Northern Ireland)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in October-December 2007

A minority of children who use a mobile phone at home have dislikes about mobile phones. Children in Wales are more likely to state this than all other nations. *Cost of handset or accessories* is the most common complaint for all nations. All other possible dislikes that we asked about received low levels of dislike and no differences across the nations compared to the UK as a whole.

Figure 95 shows responses from parents regarding their levels of concern about their child's use of a mobile phone. Parents were asked whether they considered their child's use of a mobile phone to be *one of their major concerns*, *a concern but not a major one* or *not a concern at all*.

Figure 95: Parental concerns about child's use of a mobile phone



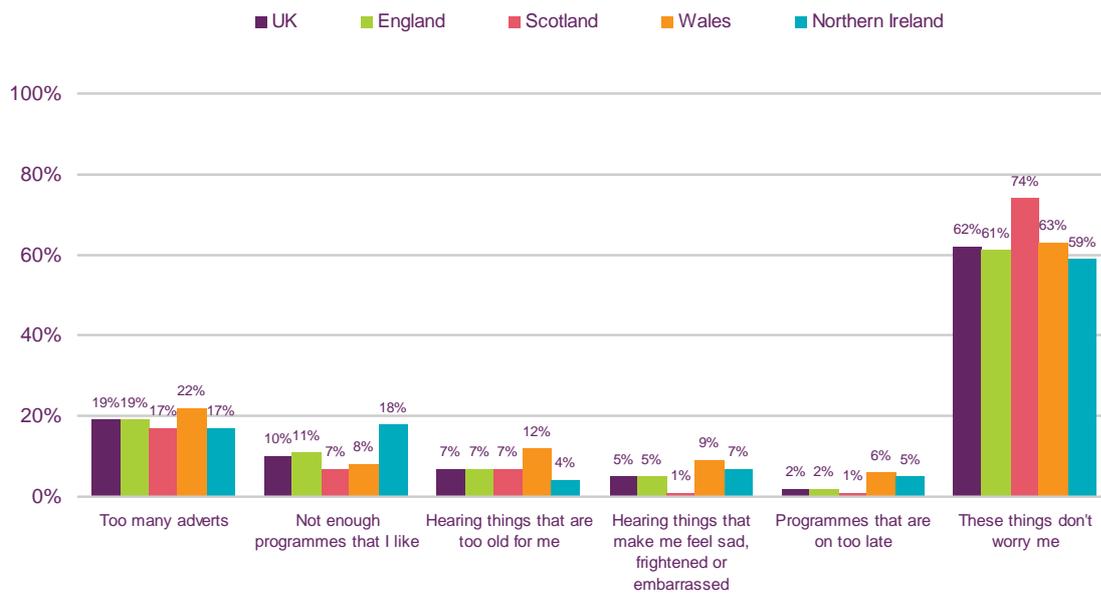
QP17- Please think about your child's use of their mobile phone alongside any concerns you may have relating to your child. Would you describe your child's use as...?
 Base: Parents of children aged 8-15 whose child has their own mobile phone (1319 UK, 710 England, 186 Scotland, 209 Wales, 214 Northern Ireland)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in October-December 2007

Compared to the overall UK measure, parents in Wales are more likely to say that their child's use of a mobile phone is a concern.

Radio

Children were asked about specific dislikes they had regarding radio. All children were prompted with a list detailing five potential dislikes and asked to select as many or as few as applied to them as *things they don't like about radio*. Figure 96 details responses for these potential dislikes.

Figure 96: Children's dislikes about radio

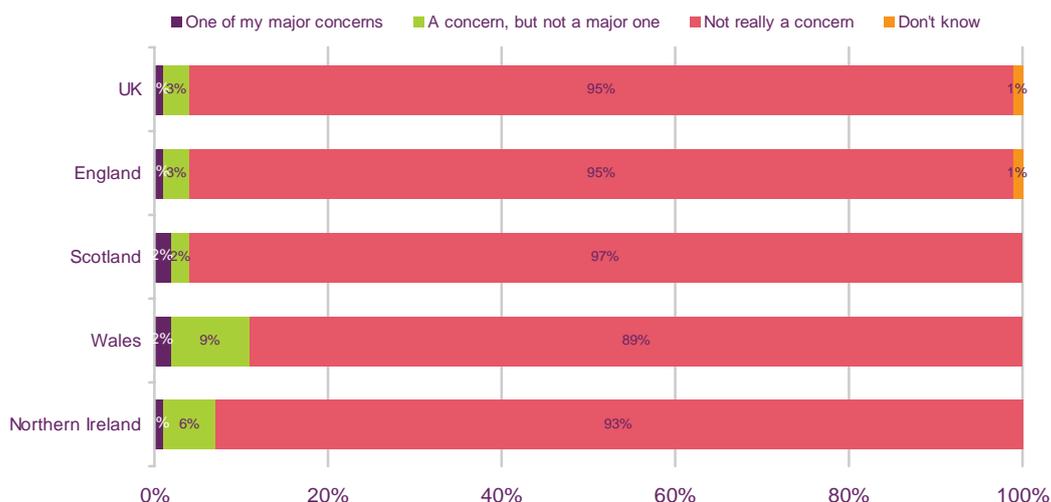


QC13 – Which of these things if any, are things you don't like about radio?
 Base: Children aged 8-15 who listen to radio at home (961 UK, 590 England, 108 Scotland, 130 Wales, 133 Northern Ireland)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in October to December 2007

A minority of children who listen to radio at home have dislikes about radio. The most common complaint is *too many adverts*, followed by *not enough programmes that I like*. Whilst at relatively low levels, children in Wales are more likely than those in the UK as a whole to have dislikes about *hearing things that are too old for them* on the radio.

Figure 97 shows responses from parents regarding their levels of concern about their child's radio listening. Parents were asked whether they considered their child's radio listening to be *one of their major concerns*, *a concern but not a major one* or *not a concern at all*.

Figure 97: Parental concerns about child's access to radio



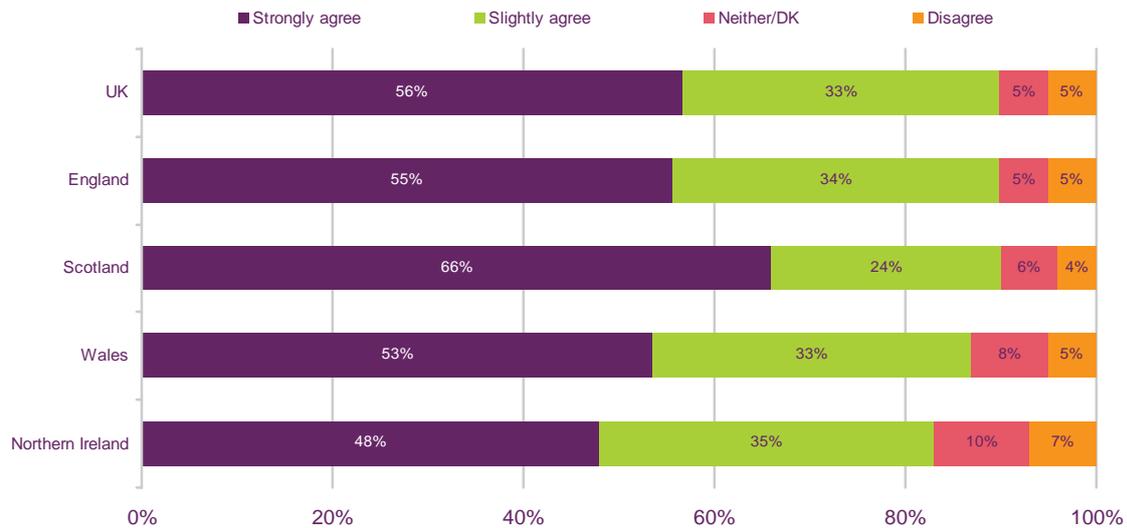
QP10– Please think about your child's radio listening alongside any concerns you may have relating to your child. Would you describe your child's radio listening as...?
 Base: Parents of children aged 8-15 whose child listens to the radio at home (951 UK, 600 England, 104 Scotland, 124 Wales, 123 Northern Ireland)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in October-December 2007

Compared to the overall UK measure, parents in Wales are more likely to say that their child's radio listening is a concern.

7.19 Parent and children's attitudes towards the internet

Parents of 8-15 year olds who use the internet were prompted with a series of statements about their child's use of the internet and were asked to indicate the extent to which they agree or disagree with each. Figure 98 shows attitudes of parents regarding the statement: *I trust my child to use the internet safely.*

Figure 98: Parental attitudes towards the internet in relation to their child: *I trust my child to use the internet safely*

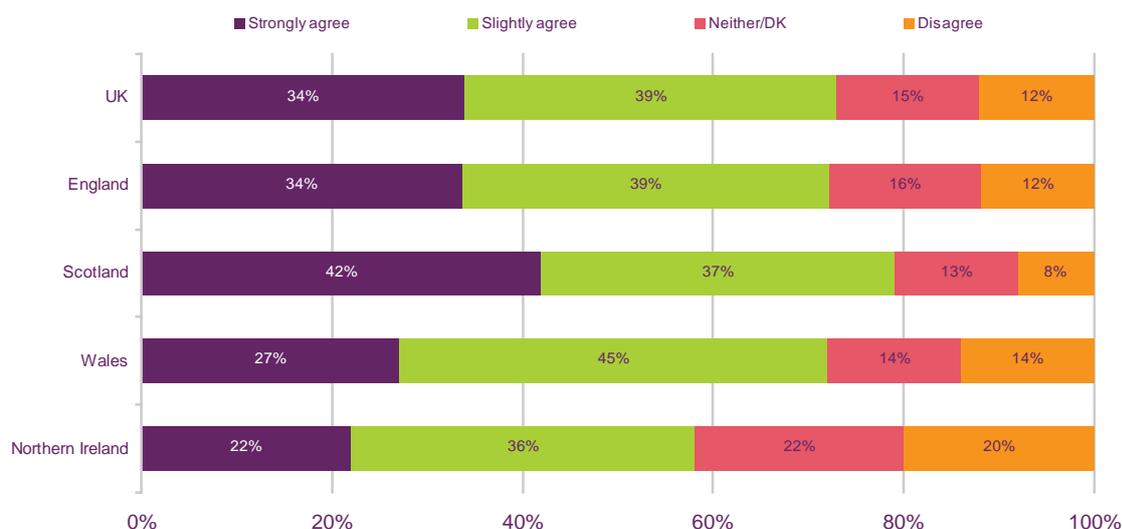


QP15B – Could you please use the options on this card to tell me the extent to which you agree or disagree with these statements in relation to your child?
 Base: Parents of children who use the internet at home or elsewhere (1431 UK, 822 England, 182 Scotland, 197 Wales, 230 Northern Ireland)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in October-December 2007

Over half of all parents of 8-15 year olds who use the internet strongly agree that they trust their child to use the internet safely, and this is more likely for parents in Scotland compared to the UK as a whole. Parents in Northern Ireland are less likely to agree with this statement, either strongly or slightly.

Figure 99 shows attitudes of parents regarding the statement: *The benefits of the internet for my child outweigh any risks.*

Figure 99: Parental attitudes towards the internet in relation to their child: *The benefits of the internet for my child outweigh any risks*



QP15A – Could you please use the options on this card to tell me the extent to which you agree or disagree with these statements in relation to your child?
 Base: Parents of children who use the internet at home or elsewhere (1431 UK, 822 England, 182 Scotland, 197 Wales, 230 Northern Ireland)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in October-December 2007

One in three parents of 8-15 year olds who use the internet strongly agree that *the benefits of the internet for their child outweigh any risks*, and this is more likely for parents in Scotland than in the UK as a whole. Parents in Northern Ireland are more likely to disagree with this statement.

Figure 100 shows attitudes of parents regarding the statement – *I'm worried about my child seeing inappropriate things on the internet*.

Figure 100: Parental attitudes towards the internet in relation to their child: *I'm worried about my child seeing inappropriate things on the internet*



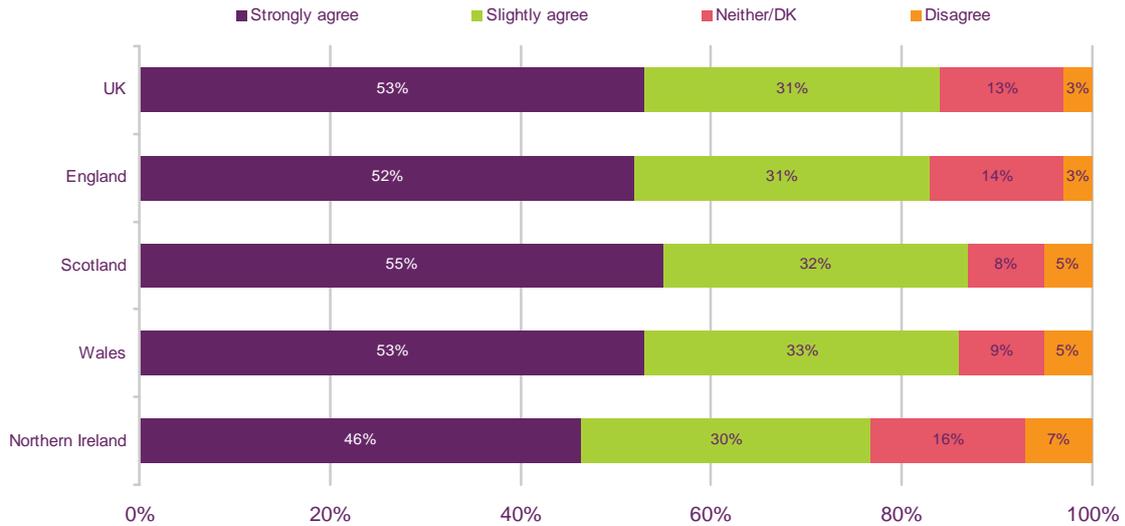
QP15D – Could you please use the options on this card to tell me the extent to which you agree or disagree with these statements in relation to your child?
 Base: Parents of children who use the internet at home or elsewhere (1431 UK, 822 England, 182 Scotland, 197 Wales, 230 Northern Ireland)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in October-December 2007

One in three parents of 8-15 year olds who use the internet strongly agree that *they are worried about their child seeing inappropriate things on the internet*, and this is more likely for parents in Northern Ireland, compared to the UK as a whole.

Compared to the 2005 Children's Media Literacy Audit, parents of children who use the internet at home or elsewhere are less likely in 2007 to strongly agree with the statement – *I'm worried about my child seeing inappropriate things on the internet* (from 45% to 31%). This decrease in the proportion that strongly agree with this statement is also seen for parents in England (from 47% to 30%).

Figure 101 shows attitudes of parents regarding the statement: *My child has been taught at school how to use the internet safely and efficiently.*

Figure 101: Parental attitudes towards the internet in relation to their child: *My child has been taught at school how to use the internet safely and efficiently*

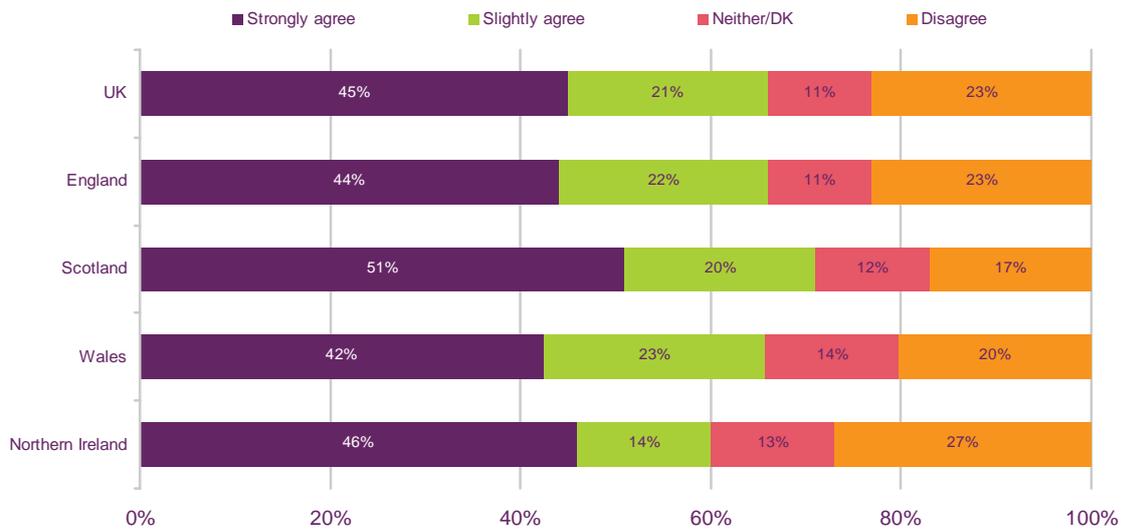


QP15C – Could you please use the options on this card to tell me the extent to which you agree or disagree with these statements in relation to your child?
 Base: Parents of children who use the internet at home or elsewhere (1431 UK, 822 England, 182 Scotland, 197 Wales, 230 Northern Ireland)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in October-December 2007

At an overall level of agreement, whether strongly or slightly, parents in Northern Ireland are less likely to agree and more likely to disagree, compared to the UK as a whole.

Figure 102 shows attitudes of parents regarding the statement: *My child knows more about the internet than I do.*

Figure 102: Parental attitudes towards the internet in relation to their child: *My child knows more about the internet than I do*

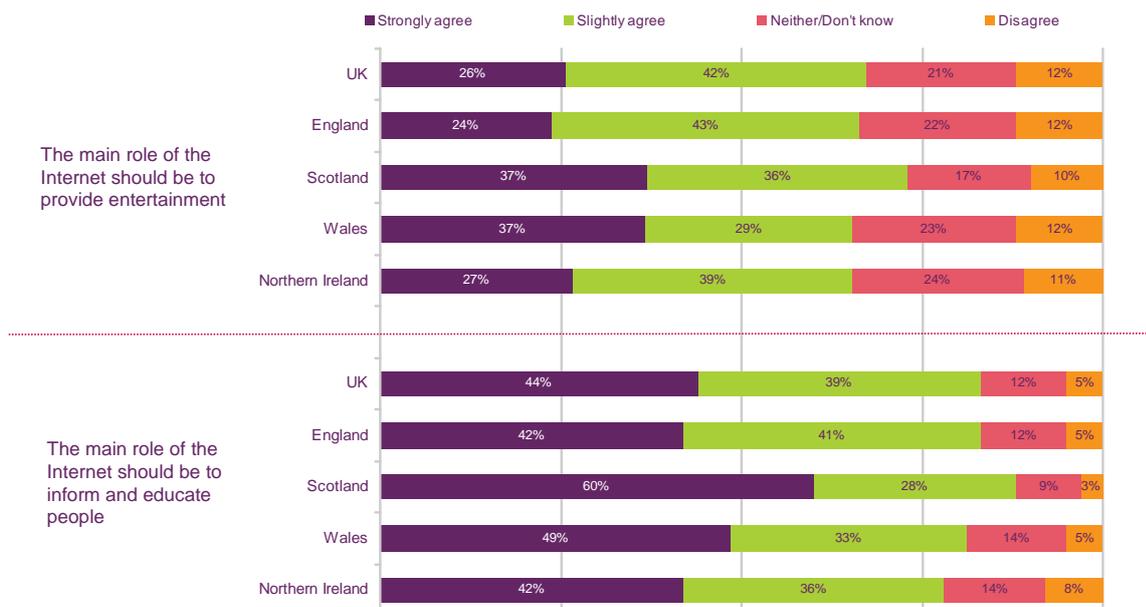


QP15E – Could you please use the options on this card to tell me the extent to which you agree or disagree with these statements in relation to your child?
 Base: Parents of children who use the internet at home or elsewhere (1431 UK, 822 England, 182 Scotland, 197 Wales, 230 Northern Ireland)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in October-December 2007

Close to half of parents of 8-15s who use the internet strongly agree that their child *knows more about the internet than they do*, and this measure does not vary to any significant extent across the nations.

Figure 103 shows the responses of all children aged 12-15 (rather than all internet users) when asked about their views of the role of the internet. It directly compares these children's responses to whether they feel the main role of the internet is *entertainment* or whether its main role is to *inform and educate people*. These two questions were asked separately, and so it is possible for children to agree or to disagree with each.

Figure 103: Children aged 12-15 - attitudes towards the internet



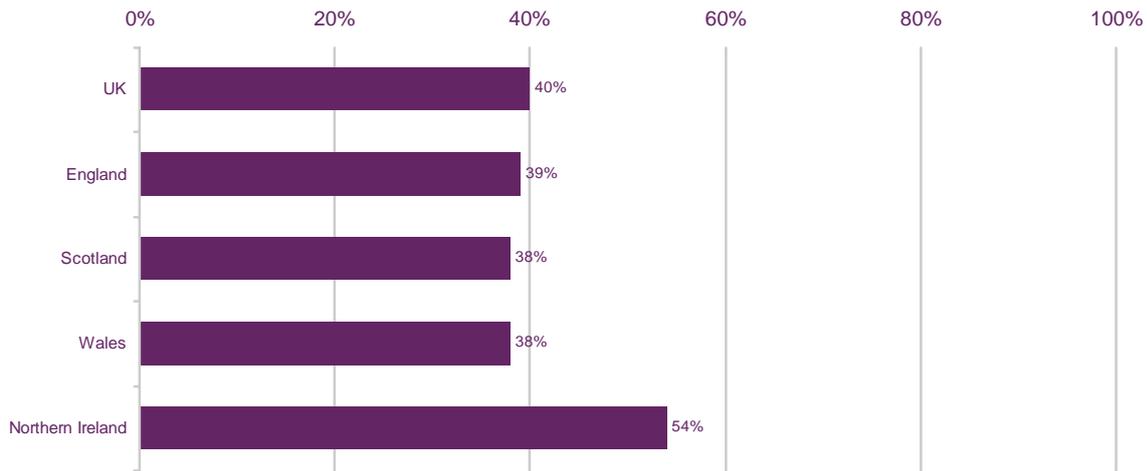
QC20A-B– Using this card, choose an answer to show how much you agree or disagree with some things other people have said about the internet
 Base: Children aged 12-15 (1017 UK, 564 England, 142 Scotland, 159 Wales, 152 Northern Ireland)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in October-December 2007

One in four children aged 12-15 agree strongly that the main role of the internet should be to provide entertainment, and this is more common among children in Scotland and in Wales.

Close to half of children aged 12-15 agree strongly that the main role of the internet should be to inform and educate people, and this is more common among children in Scotland.

All children aged 8-15 who use the internet were asked whether they could *easily live without the internet*, with responses shown in Figure 104.

Figure 104: Whether child 'could live without' the internet



QC22A - Could you easily live without the internet?

Base: Those children aged 8-15 who use the internet at home (1920 UK, 1233 England, 245 Scotland, 223 Wales, 219 Northern Ireland)

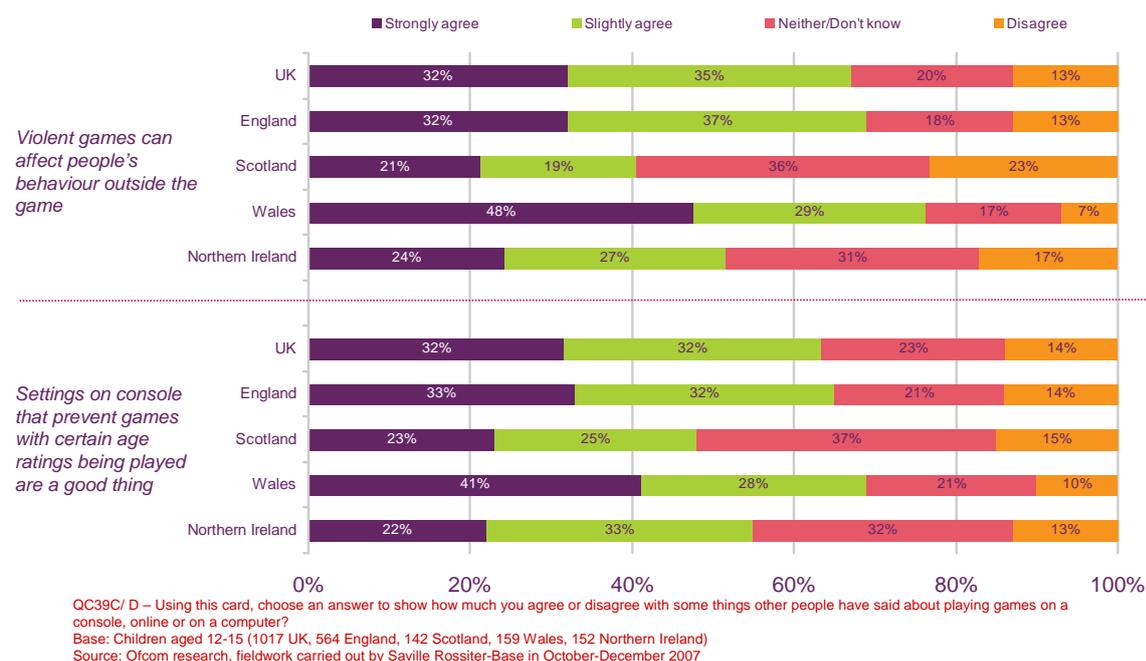
Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April – September 2007

Two in five children across the UK who use the internet at home say they could easily live without the internet, and this is more common among children in Northern Ireland.

7.20 Attitudes towards gaming

All children aged 12-15 were prompted with four statements relating to gaming and were asked to indicate the extent to which they agree or disagree with each. Figure 105 shows responses to two of these statements about gaming: *violent games can affect people's behaviour outside the game* and *settings on consoles that prevent games with certain age ratings being played are a good thing*.

Figure 105: Children's attitudes towards gaming

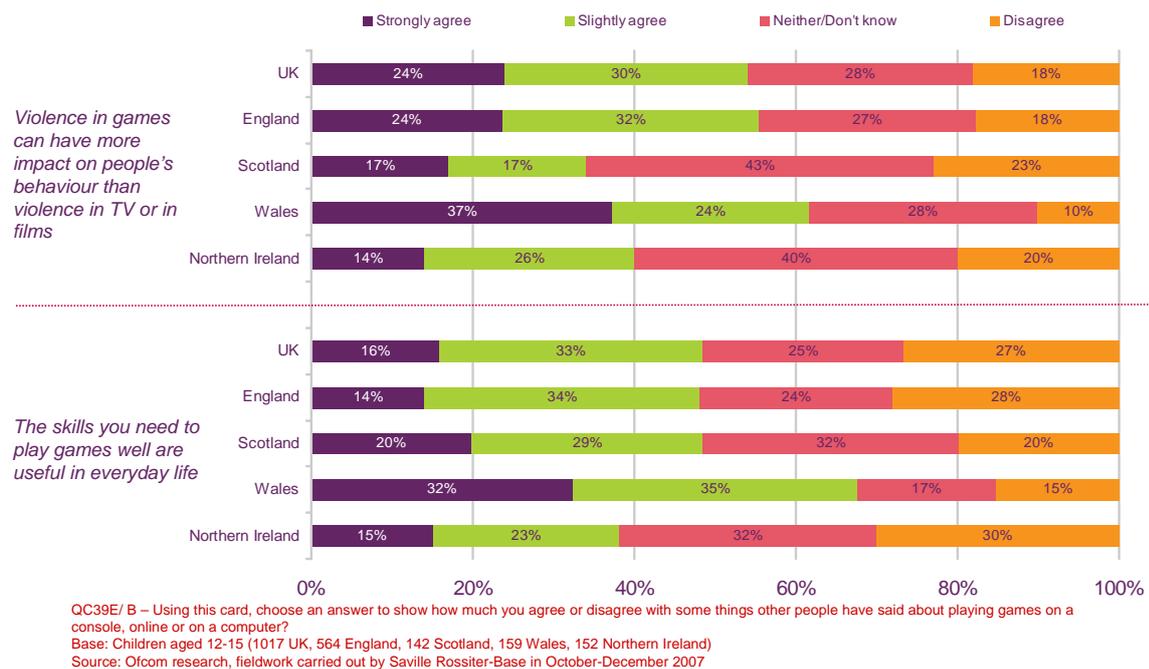


A majority of all 12-15 year olds agree that *violent games can affect people's behaviour outside the game*. Children in Wales are more likely than those in the UK as a whole to agree with this statement, while those in Scotland are more likely to disagree or to have a neutral opinion.

A majority of all 12-15 year olds agree that *settings on consoles that prevent games with certain age ratings being played are a good thing*. Children in Wales are more likely than those in the UK as a whole to agree with this statement, while those in Scotland are more likely to have a neutral opinion.

Figure 106 shows responses from 12-15 year olds to the next two statements about gaming: *violence in games can have more impact on people's behaviour than violence in television or in films* and *the skills you need to play games well are useful in everyday life*.

Figure 106: Children's attitudes towards gaming



Around half of all 12-15 year olds agree that violence in games can have more impact on people's behaviour than violence on television or in films, and the proportion strongly agreeing with this statement is higher among children in Wales than in the UK as a whole. Levels of agreement are lower for children in Scotland and in Northern Ireland because of higher levels of neutral or 'don't know' responses.

Around half of all 12-15 year olds agree that *the skills you need to play games well are useful in everyday life*. Children in Wales are more likely than those in the UK as a whole to agree with this statement. Levels of agreement are lower for children in Northern Ireland because of higher levels of neutral or 'don't know' responses.

7.21 Social networking sites

Children aged 12-15 who use the internet at home or elsewhere were asked whether they had ever created their own page or profile on a site like Piczo, Bebo, hi5, Facebook or MySpace. Those who had ever done so were then asked which sites they have a page or profile on.

Figure 107 shows the proportion of children aged 12-15 who use the internet at home and have a social networking site profile, for the UK as a whole and for each of the nations.

Figure 107: Number of social networking site pages or profiles among 12-15 year olds

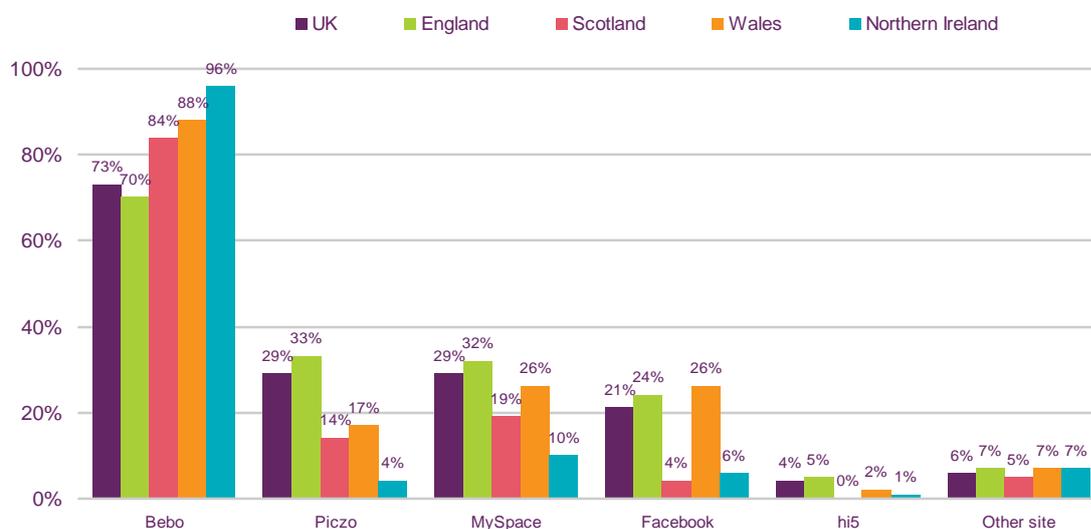


QC24/ QC25 – Have you ever created your own page or profile on a site like Piczo, Bebo, Facebook, hi5 or MySpace?/ Which different sites like this do you have a page or profile on?
 Base: Children aged 12-15 who use the internet at home (734 UK, 421 England, 96 Scotland, 97 Wales, 120 Northern Ireland)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in October-December 2007

Over half of all 12-15 year olds who use the internet have a current page or profile on a social networking site. Having a page or profile is more common among internet users in Northern Ireland than in the UK as a whole.

Figure 108 shows the social networking sites that users have a page or profile on.

Figure 108: Social networking sites 12-15 year old users have a page or profile on



QC24 – Which different sites do you have a page or profile on?
 Base: Children aged 12-15 who have ever created their own page or profile on a social networking site (418 UK, 216 England, 58 Scotland, 57 Wales, 87 Northern Ireland NB – LOW BASE SIZES FOR SCOTLAND, WALES AND NORTHERN IRELAND)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in October-December 2007

Bebo is the most popular social networking site among 12-15 year old users in all nations; with around three-quarters using this site. Compared to the other nations, a higher proportion of children are using this site in Northern Ireland and Wales. Piczo is used by a higher proportion of children in England compared to Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Social networking site users were asked how often they visit any of these types of sites, and responses are summarised in Figure 109.

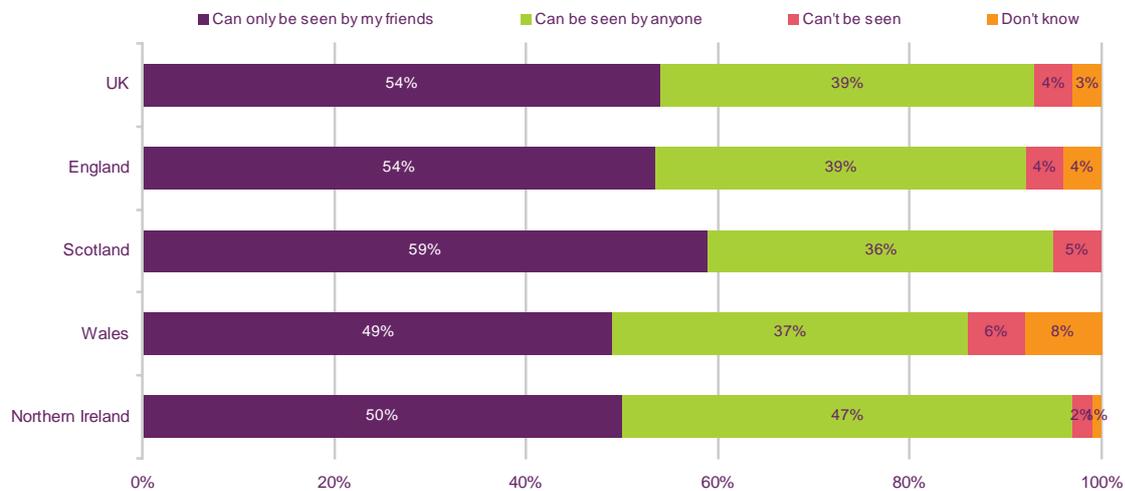
Figure 109: Frequency of users visiting social networking sites



QC27 – How often do you visit any sites like Piczo, Bebo, hi5, Facebook or MySpace?
 Base: Children aged 12-15 who have ever created their own page or profile on a social networking site (418 UK, 216 England, 58 Scotland, 57 Wales, 87 Northern Ireland NB – LOW BASE SIZES FOR SCOTLAND, WALES AND NORTHERN IRELAND)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in October-December 2007

Two in five children aged 12-15 with a social networking site page or profile visit social networking sites every day. All children aged 12-15 with a social networking site profile were asked whether their profile can be seen by other people, and if so, who can see it. Figure 110 shows the responses given overall, and by nation.

Figure 110: Visibility of social networking site profile

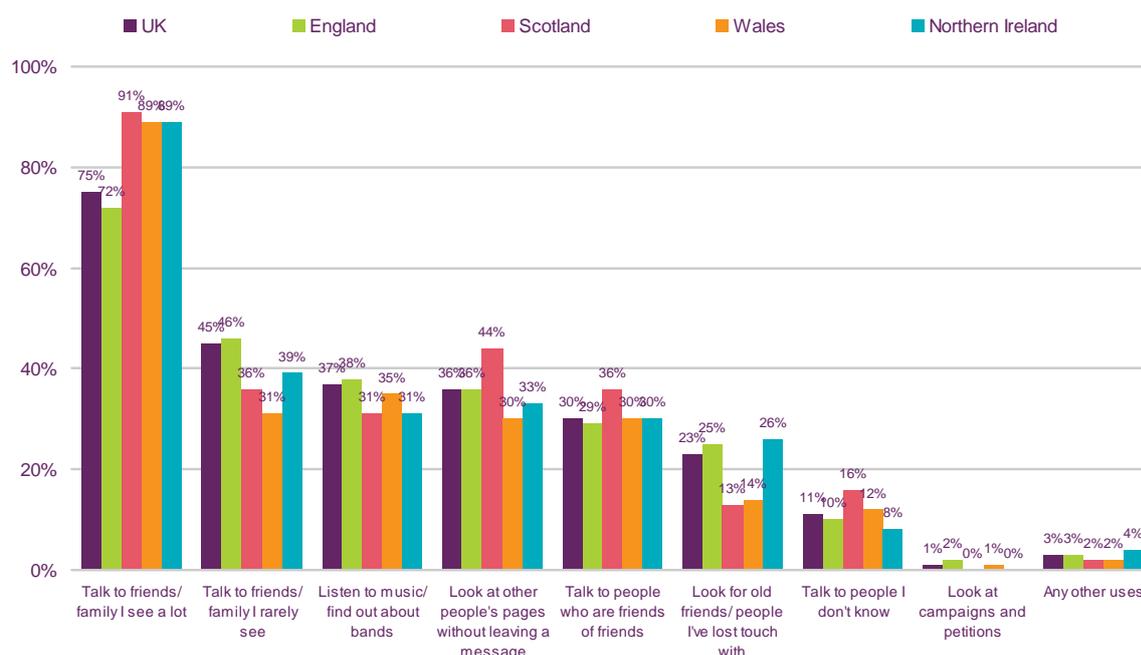


QC26 – And do you know if this profile can be seen by other people?
 Base: Children aged 12-15 who have ever created their own social networking site page or profile (418 UK, 216 England, 58 Scotland, 57 Wales, 87 Northern Ireland NB – LOW BASE SIZES FOR SCOTLAND, WALES AND NORTHERN IRELAND)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in October-December 2007

Two in five children aged 12-15 with a social networking site profile say that their profile can be seen by anyone, and this measure does not vary to any significant extent across the nations.

Children with a social networking site profile were prompted with a list of types of use and were asked which they regularly use these types of sites for. Figure 111 shows responses overall, and those in each nation.

Figure 111: Types of uses of social networking sites

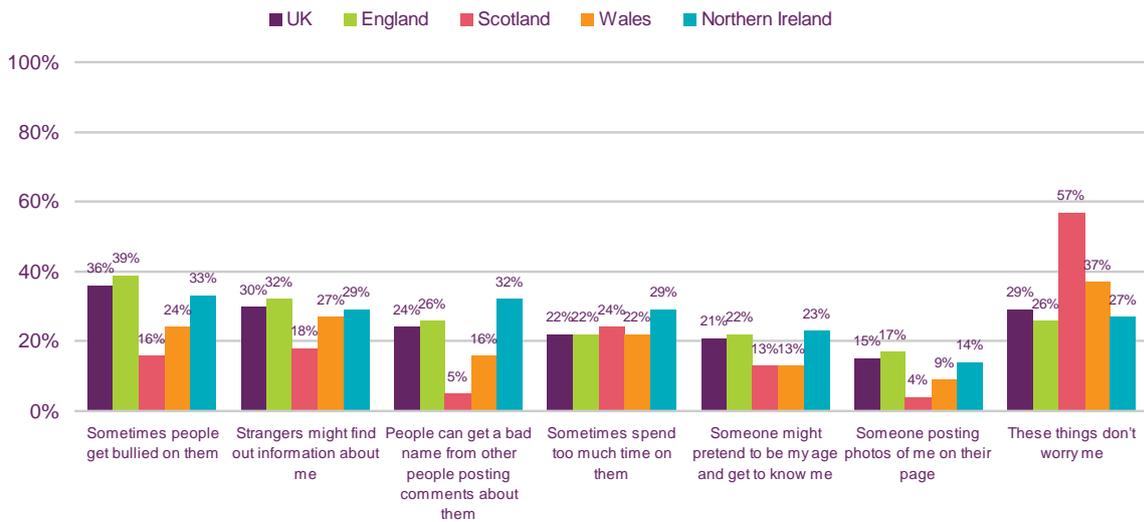


QC28 – Do you regularly use these sites for any of the things shown on this card?
 Base: Children aged 12-15 who have ever created their own social networking site page or profile (418 UK, 216 England, 58 Scotland, 57 Wales, 87 Northern Ireland NB – LOW BASE SIZES FOR SCOTLAND, WALES AND NORTHERN IRELAND)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in October-December 2007

Using the site to talk to *friends or family I see a lot* is clearly the most popular use for social networking sites, and is more common among children in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland compared to the overall UK measure. Other uses for social networking sites do not vary to any significant extent across the nations.

Children aged 12-15 who use social networking sites were asked about specific dislikes they had regarding these sites. All children were prompted with a list detailing six possible dislikes and asked to select as many or as few as applied to them as *things they don't like about social networking sites*. Responses to the five dislikes that relate to potential harm are shown in Figure 112.

Figure 112: Children's dislikes about social networking sites



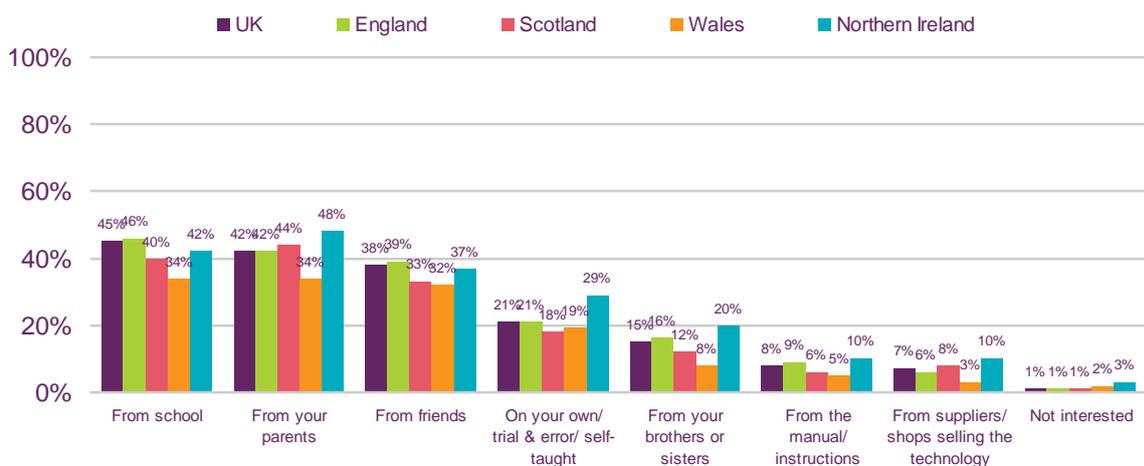
QC29 – Which of these things, if any, are things that you don't like about sites like Piczo, bebo, hi5, Facebook or MySpace?
 Base: Children aged 12-15 who have ever created their own social networking site page or profile (418 UK, 216 England, 58 Scotland, 57 Wales, 87 Northern Ireland NB – LOW BASE SIZES FOR SCOTLAND, WALES AND NORTHERN IRELAND)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in October-December 2007

None of these dislikes are more likely to be mentioned by users in any particular nation¹². Those in Scotland are less likely to mention several of these dislikes: *bullying*, *strangers finding out information about them*, *getting a bad name from comments posted by other users*, and *photos posted by other users* and are more likely to say *these things don't worry me*.

7.22 Learning about digital technology

Figure 113 shows the responses given by all children aged 8-15 in terms of the ways, if any, they would prefer to learn about 'using the internet, mobile phones, digital television and so on'. All children were prompted with a list detailing seven possible ways of learning and were asked to nominate as many or as few as applied to them.

Figure 113: Ways child would prefer to learn about using digital technology



QC41 – Which if any, of these ways would you prefer to learn about using the internet, mobile phones, digital TV and so on?
 Base: Children aged 8-15 (2711 UK, 1718 England, 350 Scotland, 360 Wales, 282 Northern Ireland)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to September 2007

¹² Although there are variations in proportions mentioning each concern by nation, these are not statistically significant differences due to low base sizes.

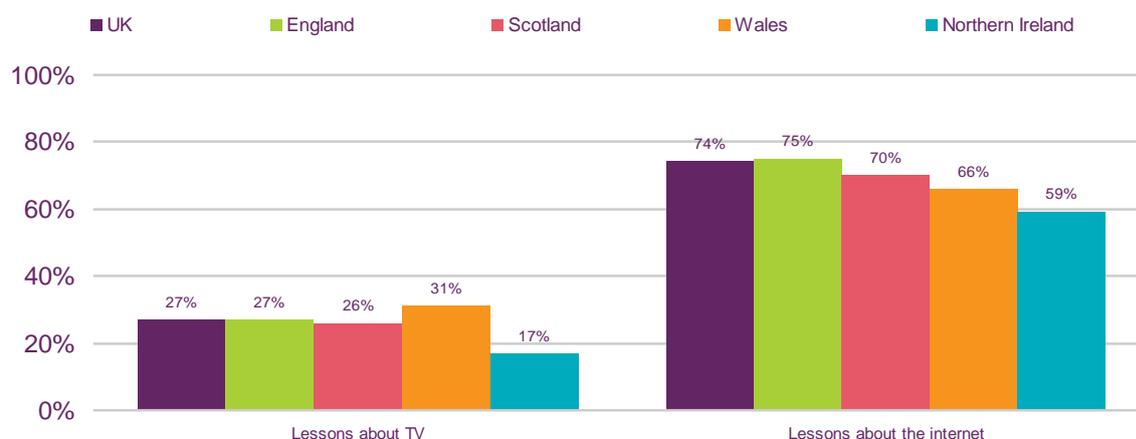
Children in Wales stand out from those in the UK as a whole, through being less likely to choose several of the different options for learning about using digital technology (from school, from their parents, from their friends, from their brothers or sisters, from the manual/ instructions and from suppliers or shops selling the technology). Children in Wales are no more likely than the UK average to say they are not interested in learning, so it appears they are choosing a smaller number of options for learning compared to those in the UK as a whole.

Children in Northern Ireland are more likely than those in the UK as a whole to choose learning from their parents, on their own/ through trial and error/ self-taught, and from their brothers or sisters.

Compared to 2005, there has been an increase in the proportion of children in the UK who prefer to learn from their parents (from 35% to 42%), and this increase is also seen among children in England (from 35% to 42%), Scotland (from 34% to 44%) and Northern Ireland (from 29% to 48%). Compared to 2005, children in Northern Ireland are also more likely to choose to learn on their own/ through trial and error/ self-taught (from 15% to 29%), and from their brothers or sisters (from 8% to 20%)

Children aged 8-15 were asked whether they had any lessons at school that taught them about television¹³ or about the internet¹⁴. Figure 114 shows responses from children in the UK and in each of the nations.

Figure 114: Lessons at school about television/ the internet



QC42/43 – Do any of your lessons at school teach you about TV / about the Internet?
 Base: Children aged 8-15 (2711 UK, 1718 England, 350 Scotland, 360 Wales, 282 Northern Ireland)
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to September 2007

One in four children aged 8-15 in the UK has any lessons at school about television, and this is less common among children in Northern Ireland.

Compared to 2005, there has been an increase in the proportion of children in the UK who say they have lessons about television (from 22% to 27%), and this increase is also seen among children in Scotland (from 14% to 26%) and Wales (from 13% to 31%), but there is a decrease for children in Northern Ireland (from 23% to 17%).

¹³ For example, how TV programmes are made and how they are paid for

¹⁴ For example, how the Internet works, how to make websites, how to do research on the internet, or how to avoid websites you don't want to see

Three in four children aged 8-15 in the UK have any lessons at school about the internet, and this is less common among children in Wales and in Northern Ireland.

Compared to 2005, there has been an increase in the proportion of children in the UK who say they have lessons about the internet (from 67% to 79%), and this increase is also seen among children in England (from 69% to 75%), Scotland (from 64% to 70%), Wales (from 51% to 66%), and Northern Ireland (from 48% to 59%).

Annex 1

Research methodologies

1.1 Ofcom Children's Media Literacy Audit 2007

Interviews with parents and children

A total of 2,068 interviews were conducted with parents and children aged 8-15. All interviews were conducted in the respondents' homes by a team of interviewers in 378 locations in the UK. For each interview certain questions were asked of the parent of the child in question, which took an average of ten minutes to complete, with the remaining questions asked of the child aged 8-11 or 12-15. Interviews conducted with 8-11 year olds took an average of 15 minutes to complete and interviews with 12-15 year olds took an average of 20 minutes to complete.

Parents were free to stay with their child and the interviewer while their child was being interviewed, and in most cases the parent was present while the child was being interviewed: for 91% of the interviews with 8-11 year olds and 79% of interviews with 12-15 year olds. Interviewers conducting the research recorded very few incidences of parents answering on behalf of their child or influencing the responses.

Sampling

A specialist sampling agency (UK Geographics) was used to draw the sampling points, using output areas (OAs) as classified by the 2001 Census. Interviewers were then provided with specific addresses to approach regarding the research. All interviews were conducted in respondents' homes, using paper questionnaires and prompt material.

Quotas were set for each wave to achieve a minimum number of interviews with boys and girls in each age group: 8-11 and 12-15, in each of the nations: England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Interviews were conducted across 378 sampling points: 213 in England and 55 in each in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Fieldwork dates

Fieldwork was conducted between 29th October and 10th December 2007.

Sample sizes

The final unweighted sample sizes achieved were as follows:

Total	2,068
8 -11 years	1,051
12 -15 years	1,017
Boys aged 8 -11	519
Girls aged 8 -11	532
Boys aged 12 -15	512
Girls aged 12 -15	505

Data weighting

The data were weighted back to the correct proportions (to remove the effect of the oversampling). The following matrix was used for the weighting:

	Unweighted	Weighted
Gender - Male 8 -15	1031	1034
Gender - Female 8 -15	1037	1034
Age – 8 -11	1,051	1,034
Age - 12-15	1017	1,034
Social Grade - AB	331	348
Social Grade - C1	593	591
Social Grade - C2	490	521
Social Grade - DE	636	589
Nation - England	1147	1729
Nation- Scotland	296	180
Nation - Wales	324	102
Nation - Northern Ireland	301	57

All interviews were conducted in English with parents and children aged 8-11 (1051 interviews) and aged 12-15 (1017 interviews). All interviews were conducted in the respondents' homes by a team of interviewers across the UK. For each interview certain questions were asked of the parent of the child in question, with the remaining questions asked of the child.

1.2 Ofcom Children's Media Literacy Audit 2005

Interviews with parents and children

A total of 1,536 interviews were conducted with parents and children aged 8-15. All interviews were conducted in the respondents' homes by a team of interviewers in 303 locations in the UK: 138 in England and 55 in each of the three other nations.

All interviews were conducted in the respondents' homes, with certain questions asked of parents and the remaining questions asked of the child. Interviews conducted with 8-11 year olds took an average of 15 minutes to complete, and interviews with 12-15 year olds took an average of 25 minutes to complete.

Parents were free to stay with their child and the interviewer while their child was being interviewed. In most cases the parent was present while their child was being interviewed: for 85% of the 772 interviews with 8-11 year olds and for 66% of the 764 interviews with 12-15 year olds. Interviewers conducting the research recorded very few incidences of parents answering on behalf of their child or influencing the responses.

Sampling

A specialist sampling agency (Business Geographics) was used to draw the sampling points, using Output Areas (OAs), as classified by the 2001 Census. Interviewers were then provided with specific addresses to approach regarding the research. The average OA contains around 130 households in England and Wales, around 160 households in Scotland, and around 150 households in Northern Ireland. This approach therefore affords tight control

over the addresses an interviewer can call at. All interviews were conducted in respondents' homes, using paper questionnaires and prompt material.

Fieldwork dates

Fieldwork was conducted between 8th June and 5th August 2005.

Sample sizes

The final unweighted sample sizes achieved were as follows:

Total	1536
8 -11 years	772
12 -15 years	764
Boys aged 8 -11	364
Girls aged 8 -11	408
Boys aged 12 -15	394
Girls aged 12 -15	370

Data weighting

The data were weighted back to the correct proportions (to remove the effect of the oversampling). The following matrix was used for the weighting:

	Unweighted	Weighted
Gender - Male 8 -15	758	726
Gender - Female 8 -15	778	778
Age - 8-11	772	785
Age - 12-15	764	719
Social Grade - AB	209	256
Social Grade - C1	355	382
Social Grade - C2	329	358
Social Grade - DE	559	442
Nation - England	523	1249
Nation - Scotland	336	135
Nation - Wales	322	75
Nation - Northern Ireland	355	45

1.3 Ofcom Young People and Media Usage Survey 2007

Interviews with parents and children

A total of 3,696 interviews were conducted with parents of children aged 5-15. All interviews were conducted in the respondents' homes by a team of interviewers.

For each interview certain questions were asked of the parent of the child in question, which took an average of 10-15 minutes to complete, with the remaining questions asked of the child aged 5-7, 8-11 or 12-15. Interviews conducted with 5-7 year olds took an average of 10 minutes to complete, interviews with 8-11 year olds took an average of 15 minutes to

complete and interviews with 12-15 year olds took an average of 25 minutes to complete. Parents were free to stay with their child and the interviewer while their child was being interviewed, in most cases the parent was present while the child was being interviewed: for 98% of the interviews with 5-7 year olds, 96% of the interviews with 8-11 year olds and 84% of interviews with 12-15 year olds. Interviewers conducting the research recorded very few incidences of parents answering on behalf of their child or influencing the responses.

Sampling

A specialist sampling agency (UK Geographics) was used to draw the sampling points, using output areas (OAs) as classified by the 2001 Census. Interviewers were then provided with specific addresses to approach regarding the research. All interviews were conducted in respondents homes' using paper questionnaires and prompt material.

Quotas were set each wave to achieve a minimum number of interviews with boys and girls in each age group, 5-7, 8-11 and 12-15, in each of the nations: England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Interviews were conducted across 431 sampling points : 274 in England, 57 in Scotland, 57 in Wales and 43 in Northern Ireland.

Fieldwork dates

Fieldwork was conducted over three waves as outlined below:

Wave 1 - between 10th April and 8th May 2007.

Wave 2 – between 5th and 30th June 2007.

Wave 3 – between 3rd and 28th September 2007.

Sample sizes

The final unweighted sample sizes achieved were as follows:

Total	3696
5 -7 years	985
8 -11 years	1354
12 -15 years	1357
Boys aged 5 -7	498
Girls aged 5 -7	487
Boys aged 8 -11	668
Girls aged 8 -11	686
Boys aged 12 -15	679
Girls aged 12 -15	678

Data weighting

The data were weighted back to the correct proportions (to remove the effect of the oversampling). The following matrix was used for the weighting:

	Unweighted	Weighted	
Gender - Male 5 -15		1845	1848
Gender - Female 5 -15		1851	1848
Age – 5 -7		985	1008
Age – 8 -11		1354	1344
Age - 12-15		1357	1344
Social Grade - AB		697	734
Social Grade - C1		949	923
Social Grade - C2		844	842
Social Grade - DE		1147	1137
Nation - England		2329	3141
Nation - Scotland		481	333
Nation - Wales		500	148
Nation - Northern Ireland		385	74

1.4 Ofcom Social Networking: a quantitative and qualitative research report into attitudes, behaviours and use

This report was published in April 2008 and can be located via the link below:

http://www.ofcom.org.uk/advice/media_literacy/medlitpub/medlitpubrss/socialnetworking/

Annex 2

Glossary

AB See socio-economic group

BARB Broadcasters Audience Research Board. The pan-industry body which measures television viewing

Bebo One of the three most popular social networking sites in the UK, founded in 2005.

Blog is short for weblog. A weblog is a journal (or newsletter) that is frequently updated and intended for general public consumption. Blogs generally represent the personality of the author or the website.

Broadband A service or connection which is capable of supporting always-on services which provide the end-user with high data transfer speeds. Large-capacity service or connection allowing a considerable amount of information to be conveyed often used for transmitting bulk data or video or for rapid Internet access.

C1 See socio-economic group

C2 See socio-economic group

DE See socio-economic group

DVD Digital Versatile Disc. A high capacity CD-size disc for carrying audio-visual content, Initially available read-only, but recordable formats are now available.

DVR (Digital Video Recorder) also known as a PVR (Personal Video Recorder)

Digital binary coded representation of a waveform, as opposed to analogue, which is the direct representation of a waveform.

Digital television can be either via cable ([Virgin Media](#)); satellite ([Sky](#)) or terrestrial ([DTT](#)) ([Freeview](#)).

Facebook One of the three most popular social networking sites in the UK, founded in 2004.

Flickr A website based around photo sharing.

hi5 A social networking site launched in 2003

ICT Information and communications technology

IM (Instant Messaging) A service that alerts users when friends or colleagues are on line and allows them to communicate with each other in real time through private online chat areas.

Internet A global network of networks, using a common set of standards (e.g. the Internet Protocol), accessed by users with a computer via a service provider.

Media Literacy Ofcom's definition, developed after formal consultation with stakeholders is 'the ability to access, understand and create communications in a variety of contexts'.

MMS (Multimedia Messaging Service) The next generation of mobile messaging services, adding photos, pictures and audio to text messages.

MP3 (MPEG-1 Audio Layer-3) A standard technology and format for compressing a sound sequence into a very small file (about one-twelfth the size of the original file) while preserving the original level of sound quality when it is played.

MP3 Player A device that is able to store and play back MP3 files

MySpace One of the three most popular social networking sites in the UK, founded in 2003.

Piczo a social networking site launched in 2004 based around photos and website building.

Profile The personal homepage on a social networking site, usually including information about a user, photos, and their friend list. Profiles form the basis of social networking sites.

PVR Personal Video Recorder (also known as Digital Video Recorder and Digital Television Recorder). A digital TV set top box including a hard disc drive which allows the user to record, pause and rewind live television.

SMS Short messaging service

Social Networking Site (SNS) A site which allows users to create a personal page or profile and construct and display a social network of their online contacts.

Socio-economic group (SEG) A social classification system, classifying the population into social grades, usually on the basis of Market Research Society occupational groupings (MRS 1991). The groups are defined as follows;

- A.** Professionals such as doctors, solicitors or dentists, chartered people like architects; fully qualified people with a large degree of responsibility such as senior civil servants, senior business executives and high ranking grades within the armed forces. Retired people, previously grade A, and their widows.
- B.** People with very senior jobs such as university lecturers, heads of local government departments, middle management in business organisations, bank managers, police inspectors, and upper grades in the armed forces.
- C1.** All others doing non-manual jobs, including nurses, technicians, pharmacists, salesmen, publicans, clerical workers, police sergeants and middle ranks of the armed forces.
- C2.** Skilled manual workers, foremen, manual workers with special qualifications such as lorry drivers, security officers and lower grades of the armed forces.
- D.** Semi-skilled and unskilled manual workers, including labourers and those serving apprenticeships. Machine minders, farm labourers, lab assistants and postmen.
- E.** Those on the lowest levels of subsistence including all those dependent upon the state long-term. Casual workers, and those without a regular income.

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