



# UK children's media literacy

Research Document

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## Section 1

# Executive summary

The report is designed to give an accessible overview of media literacy among children and young people aged 5-15 and their parents/carers, and is based on two waves of research, conducted in spring and autumn 2010. Where possible, within the sample of children aged 5-15 and their parents, demographic analysis is conducted by age (of the child interviewed), by gender and by household socio-economic group.

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

The purpose of this report is to support people working in this area to develop and promote media literacy among these groups.

### Take-up of media

- There has been growth in the use of 'alternative' devices to access the internet - use of a games console/player in this way rose from 18% of 12-15s in 2009 to 23% of 12-15s in 2010. Use of a mobile to access the internet rose from 14% to 23% for 12-15s.
- Smartphone ownership in 2010 comprised 3% of 5-7s, 13% of 8-11s, and around one third - 35% - of 12-15s.
- Home internet use stands at 67% for 5-7s, 82% for 8-11s and 90% for 12-15s. Around one in ten 5-7s (10%) and 8-11s (9%) use the internet only at school, compared to 4% of 12-15s. One in twelve (8%) of all 5-15s do not use the internet at all, in any location, although this varies considerably by age.
- Levels of solitary use of the internet are relatively high for older children, with over half – 56% - of 12-15s saying they 'mostly use the internet alone' - although this does not represent a change since 2009. Two in five (41%) of parents of this age group say that their child has access to the internet in their bedroom, a rise from 31% in 2009.
- Most children in each of the three age groups use any type of gaming device, accounting for eight in ten 5-7s (82%), nine in ten 8-11s (94%) and nine in ten 12-15s (91%). 12% of 12-15s who ever play games say they mostly play with other people over the internet, and this rises to 19% for boys in this age group who ever play games. This figure has not changed from 2009.
- Children aged 5-15 from AB households are more likely to use the internet at home (89% v. 69% for children from DE households).
- Children aged 5–15 with a mobile phone from DE households are twice as likely as those from AB households to have one by the age of 8 (32% v 16%), although overall,

children aged 5-15 in AB and DE households are equally likely to have a mobile phone (50%).

- Children from DE households are now as likely to have digital TV at home as all 5-15s, as access for this group has increased from 88% in 2009 to 94% in 2010.
- TV remains the preferred medium for 5-7s (52%), and 8-11s (45%), although there has been an increase among 8-11s saying they would most-miss the internet (15% in 2010 v. 10% in 2009). Children aged 12-15 are now as likely to miss the internet (24%) and mobiles (26%) as they are to miss TV (24%). The proportion who say TV is their preferred medium has fallen from 32% in 2009.

### Use of media

- Hours spent online at home vary by the age of the child. Children aged 5-7 use the internet for an estimated 5.2 hours in a typical week, compared to 8.4 hours for 8-11s and 15.6 hours for 12-15s. Hours have risen since 2009 for 5-7s and 12-15s. This compares with an estimated 14.8 hours watching TV per week for 5-7s, 16.4 hours per week for 8-11s, and 17.2 hours per week for 12-15s.
- Social networking activity continues to increase, especially for younger age-groups who use the internet at home. There has been an increase in 5-7s' use of social networking – weekly use has increased from 7% in 2009 to 23% in 2010 – although this relates to them visiting virtual worlds like Club Penguin or Moshi Monsters rather than mainstream social networking sites. When parents were asked specifically whether or not their online 5-7 year old had an active social networking profile, 5% said they had. One third (34%) of 8-12s have a profile on sites that require users to register as being 13 or over, up from 25% in 2009. Looking specifically at 10-12 year old internet users, 47% have such a profile, a rise from 35% in 2009.
- There has been no change since 2009 in terms of watching audio-visual content online - around one in five (19%) 8-11s who use the internet at home has watched / downloaded TV programmes or films (in full or in part). Two in five 12-15s (38%) have watched/ downloaded TV programmes (in full or in part). Half of all children aged 8-15 who use the internet at home visit sites like YouTube, with the likelihood of visiting increasing with the age of the child, accounting for just over one third of 8-11s (37%) and two thirds of 12-15s (66%).
- Compared to 2009, 12-15s now estimate they make fewer calls per week on their mobile phone (20 vs. 25 calls) with no change for 8-11s, while the estimated volume of text messages sent per week has remained at similar levels for both 8-11s (27 vs. 22 in 2009) and 12-15s (113 vs. 104 in 2009).



## Knowledge and understanding of media among 8-15s

- Two thirds of 8-11s (67%) who use the internet at home say they only visit websites they've been to before. Over half of 12-15s (57%) say this.
- 44% of 12-15s who ever use search engines make some type of critical judgement about search engine results, thinking that some of the sites returned will be truthful while others may not be. 31% believe that if a search engine lists information then it must be truthful and 15% don't consider the veracity of results but just visit the sites they like the look of. These proportions have not changed since 2009, suggesting that nearly half of 12-15s who use search engine websites are not critically aware of the provenance of its content.
- Around three in five 12-15s (61%) who use the internet at home say they would make some kind of checks when visiting a website they hadn't been to before. Nearly one quarter (23%) of 12-15s who use the internet say they do not make any of these checks. These proportions have not changed since 2009.
- There is a clear hierarchy of the types of information children aged 12-15 who use the internet at home or elsewhere would be happy to put online. The majority of 12-15s would be happy to post photos from being out with their friends (58%) or from their holiday (54%) while around half would be happy to post information about what they are doing (51%) or how they are feeling (46%). Children would be much less willing to give out their contact details such as their email address (22%), their mobile phone number (8%) or their home address details (6%).
- 85% of 8-11s and 87% of 12-15s with a social networking profile say that it can only be seen by friends. For 12-15s this represents a rise since 2009. However, in terms of who they communicate with via their profile, 22% of 8-11s and nearly one third (32%) of 12-15s say they either speak to friends of friends or people they don't know, in other words that they are potentially in contact with people not directly known to them.

## Parents and children's attitudes and concerns

- There are high levels of agreement and confidence from parents in terms of their attitudes towards trusting their child, the benefits of the internet, and whether their child has been taught about online safety at school. However, 48% of parents think their child knows more than them about the internet, rising to 70% of parents of 12-15s.
- Three in ten parents of 5-15s (30%) who use the internet at home are very or fairly concerned that their child may be giving out personal details to inappropriate people, with concern increasing with the age of the child. The same is also true for parental concern about cyber-bullying: a majority of parents are not very or at all concerned (64%), although concern increases with the age of the child. Around one in four parents of 5-15s (26%) are concerned about the content of the websites their child visits, with a similar proportion (25%) also concerned about who their child is in contact with online. Both these figures have decreased since 2009.
- Children's dislikes about the media they use are relatively low. However, there has been a significant increase since 2009 in 8-11s with an active social networking profile saying they dislike people getting bullied on social networking sites (32% vs. 18%).

- Nearly one quarter (24%) of 12-15s who use the internet at home say they feel more confident on the internet than in real life. But 12% of 8-15s agree that 'when I'm on the internet I forget about the safety rules'.
- Close to half of all children aged 12-15 (47%) say they know of someone who has had gossip spread about them, around one in three (35%) know of someone who has sent an email or text message they regretted, and slightly less than three in ten know of someone who has experienced embarrassing pictures being made public (29%) or of someone pretending to be them (28%).

### Parental mediation strategies

- Close to four in five parents of children aged 5 -15 who use the internet at home (78%) say they have put in place any rules about internet use. These rules are more common for children aged 5-7 (80%), or 8-11 (89%), than for children aged 12-15 (66%). There has been no change since 2009 in the overall incidence of rules in place for each of the media that children use at home except that 5-7s are now less likely to have rules in place for gaming.
- Nearly one quarter (23%) of 12-15s say they go online via a mobile phone. However, only one in five (21%) of parents of 12-15s with such phones say that access to over-18 online material has been restricted.
- There has been an increase in setting parental controls on multichannel TV, from 32% of households with 5-15s in 2009 to 36% in 2010. This is driven by parents of children aged 5-7 being more likely to have controls set in 2010 (38% vs. 30%).
- Among parents of children aged 5-15 who use the internet at home, there has been a decrease in the use of internet controls or filtering software (37% vs. 43%), which is driven by a decrease among 8-11s (42% vs. 49%) and 12-15s (35% vs. 41%). The likelihood of having controls set or software loaded does not vary by the household socio-economic group or by the child's gender. Compared to 2009, parents of 8-11s are now more likely to state that controls are not in place because their child is normally supervised (54% vs. 44%) and parents of 8-11s are now less likely to be unaware of how to set such controls (9% vs. 17%).
- The majority of parents of 12-15s whose child watches / downloads content from broadcasters' websites are aware that broadcasters show guidance labels (62%). However, a smaller proportion, one in eight parents of 12-15s (13%), has actually set up a PIN which needs to be entered before viewing programmes that have a guidance label. There has been no change in awareness of or use of a PIN compared to 2009.
- Parental controls for television and the internet are now at similar levels – previously internet controls were more likely to be set.

## Section 2

# Introduction

## 2.1 Background

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

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

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

Ofcom's definition of media literacy is:

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

This report is designed to give an accessible overview of media literacy among children and young people<sup>1</sup> aged 5-15 and their parents/carers<sup>2</sup>, and is based on two waves of research, conducted in spring 2010 and autumn 2010. Where possible, within the sample of children aged 5-15 and their parents, demographic analysis is conducted by age (of the child interviewed), by gender and by household socio-economic group.

The key objectives of this research are:

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

## 2.2 Research methodology and analysis

This report provides an update to the *Children's Media Literacy Audits* published in 2006, in 2008 and 2010<sup>3</sup>. It draws on the following surveys:

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

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<sup>1</sup> References to children in this report are used to refer to children and young people.

<sup>2</sup> References to parents in this report are used to refer to parents and carers.

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

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

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

This report looks at the two waves of the *Media Literacy Tracker 2010* with children and parents. In some instances, we make comparisons between this research, the *Media Literacy Tracker* in 2009 and either the *Young People's Media Usage* survey, conducted in 2007 and 2008, or the *Media Literacy Audits* conducted in 2005 and 2007.

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

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

## Section 3

# Children's take-up of media

This section looks at children's take-up of media devices. It documents the access children have via household devices, and the personal use that they make of such devices. It includes an examination of whether such media devices are in the child's bedroom. The internet can now be accessed at home through a variety of devices, which are also detailed in this section, comparing the devices 'ever used' and those 'mostly used' for access. This section also looks at the extent of sole, or without-adult, use of the internet. As context, it also provides a snapshot of the affinity that children have for each medium, and how this has changed – or not – over time.

A range of take-up figures are provided here, including the child's access to a household device, a child's use of it, and their regular use.

### Key findings

- There has been growth in the use of 'alternative' devices to access the internet - use of a games console/player in this way rose from 18% of 12-15s in 2009 to 23% of 12-15s in 2010. Use of a mobile to access the internet rose from 14% to 23% for 12-15s.
- Smartphone ownership in 2010 comprised 3% of 5-7s, 13% of 8-11s, and around one third - 35% - of 12-15s.
- Home internet use stands at 67% for 5-7s, 82% for 8-11s and 90% for 12-15s. Around one in ten 5-7s (10%) and 8-11s (9%) use the internet only at school, compared to 4% of 12-15s. One in twelve (8%) of all 5-15s do not use the internet at all, in any location, although this varies considerably by age.
- Levels of solitary use of the internet are relatively high for older children, with over half – 56% - of 12-15s saying they 'mostly use the internet alone' - although this does not represent a change since 2009. Two in five (41%) of parents of this age group say that their child has access to the internet in their bedroom, a rise from 31% in 2009.
- Most children in each of the three age groups use any type of gaming device, accounting for eight in ten 5-7s (82%), nine in ten 8-11s (94%) and nine in ten 12-15s (91%). 12% of 12-15s who ever play games say they mostly play with other people over the internet, and this rises to 19% for boys in this age group who ever play games. This figure has not changed from 2009.
- Children aged 5-15 from AB households are more likely to use the internet at home (89% v. 69% for children from DE households).
- Children aged 5–15 with a mobile phone from DE households are twice as likely as those from AB households to have one by the age of 8 (32% v 16%), although overall, children aged 5-15 in AB and DE households are equally likely to have a mobile phone (50%).

**Continued ...**

**Key findings (continued)**

- Children from DE households are now as likely to have digital TV at home as all 5-15s, as access for this group has increased from 88% in 2009 to 94% in 2010.
- TV remains the preferred medium for 5-7s (52%), and 8-11s (45%), although there has been an increase among 8-11s saying they would most-miss the internet (15% in 2010 v. 10% in 2009). Children aged 12-15 are now as likely to miss the internet (24%) and mobiles (26%) as they are to miss TV (24%). The proportion who say TV is their preferred medium has fallen from 32% in 2009.

**3.1 Higher take-up of internet access, digital television and games consoles<sup>4</sup> in households with children aged 5-15<sup>5</sup>**

Households with children aged 5-15 have high levels of access to digital television, internet, games consoles (either those that are connected to a television or handheld / portable games players) and to radio.

Nearly all children aged 5-15 (95%) live in a household with a digital television service. Since 2009, take-up of digital television has increased for 5-7s (96% vs. 90%) and for 8-11s (95% vs. 91%) and has remained the same for 12-15s (95%).

Close to nine in ten children aged 5-15 (87%) live in a household with access to the internet through a PC or laptop. Access to the internet at home has increased for children aged 5-7 (84% vs. 78% in 2009) for children aged 8-11 (86% vs. 81%) and for 12-15s (89% vs. 85%).

Nine in ten children aged 5-15 (92%) live in a household with a games console. Since 2009, 12-15s are the only age group in which access to a games console has increased (93% vs. 89%).

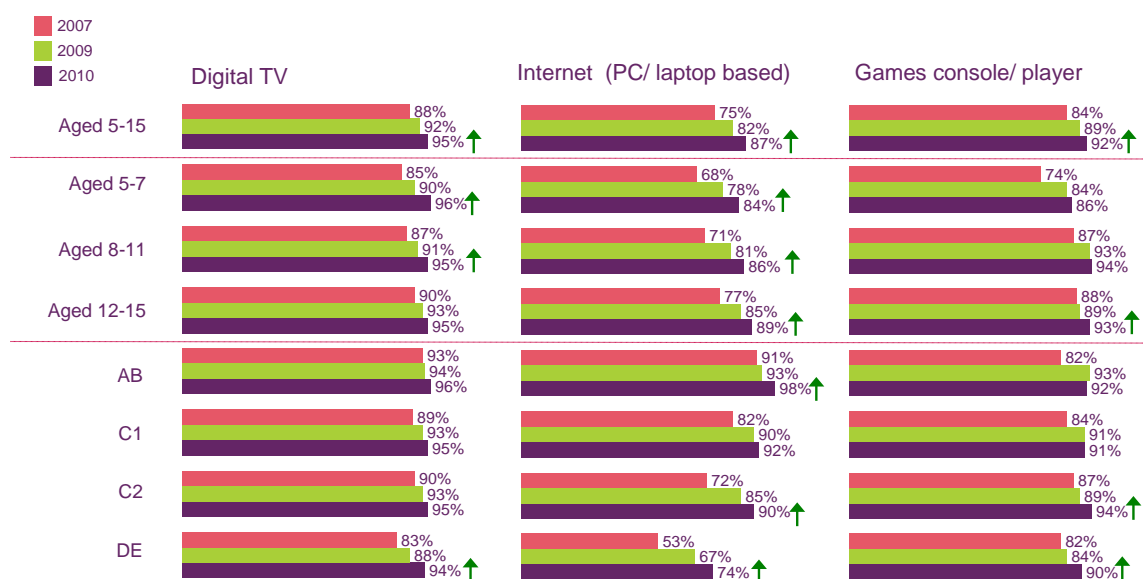
Boys aged 5-15 are more likely than girls to live in households with a games console, and this is evident for each age group: 5-7s (90% vs. 82%), 8-11s (97% vs. 90%) and 12-15s (98% vs. 89%). This consistent divide between boys and girls across each age group is not evident for any other type of media in the home.

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<sup>4</sup> 'Games console' refers to either a 'fixed' games console that is connected to a television or a portable/ handheld gaming device. In 2007 parents were asked about their child's access to either a games console or a games player, while in subsequent years parents were asked separately about access to a games console and access to a portable or handheld games console – responses at these questions have therefore been combined in 2009 and 2010 to show access to either of these devices.

<sup>5</sup> The terms 'access to' and 'take-up' are used interchangeably within this report and refer to circumstances where a particular device is present in the household. These terms do not, however, imply that the device is necessarily used by the child. The term 'use' relates to a device that is present in the household and that the child actually makes use of.

**Figure 1: Access to key platforms in the home, by age and socio-economic group: 2007, 2009 and 2010**



QP3A/B/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 (prompted responses, single coded)  
 Base: Parents of children aged 5-15 (3696 aged 5-15 in 2007, 2131 aged 5-15 in 2009, 2071 aged 5-15 in 2010, 985 aged 5-7 in 2007, 576 aged 5-7 in 2009, 558 aged 5-7 in 2010, 1354 aged 8-11 in 2007, 774 aged 8-11 in 2009, 760 aged 8-11 in 2010, 1357 aged 12-15 in 2007, 781 aged 12-15 in 2009, 753 aged 12-15 in 2010, 697 AB in 2007, 374 AB in 2009, 426 AB in 2010, 949 C1 in 2007, 507 C1 in 2009, 576 C1 in 2010, 844 C2 in 2007, 472 C2 in 2009, 407 C2 in 2010, 1147 DE in 2007, 751 DE in 2009, 661 DE in 2010) - significance testing shows any differences between 2009 and 2010.  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

Since 2009, take-up of digital television has increased only for those households with children aged 5-15 in socio-economic group DE (94% vs. 88% in 2009). In all previous years, children aged 5-15 in DE households were less likely to have access to digital television at home, but in 2010 they are as likely to have access as all 5-15s.

PC/ laptop-based home internet access has increased for children aged 5-15 in AB households (98% vs. 93%), in C2 households (90% vs. 85%) and in DE households (74% vs. 67%). In 2007, only one in two children aged 5-15 in DE households (53%) had PC/ laptop based internet access, while in 2010 the figure is closer to three in four children (74%). However, PC-based home internet access for children aged 5-15 in DE households continues to be lower than the levels across all other socio-economic groups. PC/ laptop-based internet access at home in AB households with children aged 5-15 is now close to universal (98%).

In 2010, close to nine in ten (88%) households with children aged 5-15 with PC/ laptop-based internet access at home have fixed-line broadband. The type of PC/ laptop-based internet access does not vary by the age of the child. However, compared to all 5-15s, children in AB households are more likely to have fixed-line broadband (93% vs. 88%). Children aged 5-15 in DE households are less likely to have fixed-line broadband (82% vs. 88%) and more likely to have mobile broadband (15% vs. 10%)

Access to games consoles has increased since 2009 in C2 households with children aged 8-15 (94% vs. 89%) and for DE households (90% vs. 84%), but has not changed for AB households (92%) or for C1 households (91%).

Half of all children aged 5-15 (52%) now live in a household that has a digital video recorder (DVR). Take up of DVRs has increased across all three age groups since 2009, (53% in 2010 vs. 36% in 2009 for 5-7s, 50% vs. 36% for 8-11s and 52% vs. 43% for 12-15s).

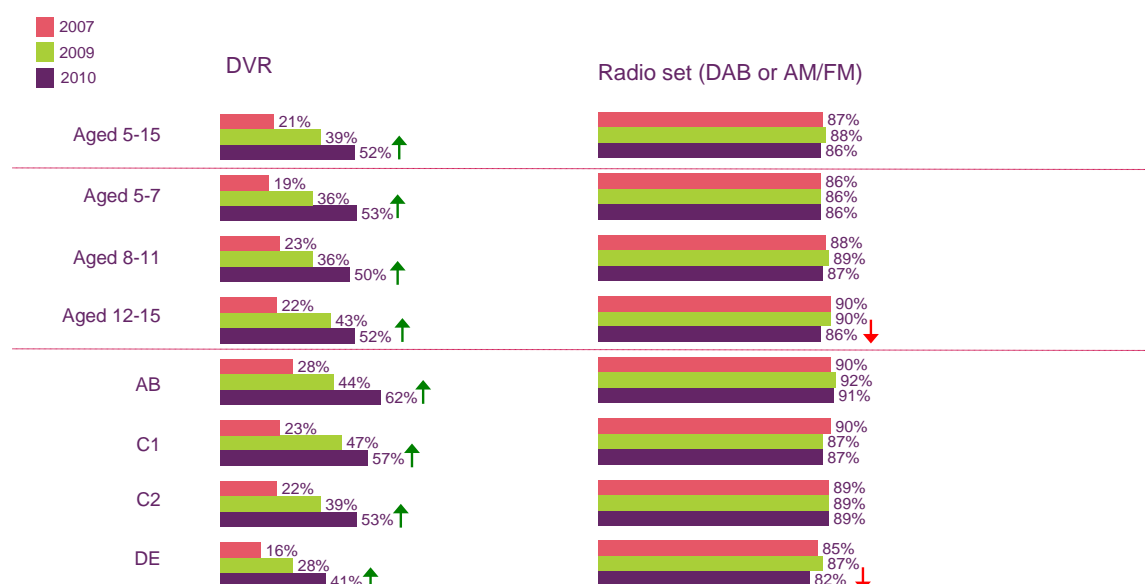


This increase in take-up among households with children aged 5-15 has occurred across all four socio-economic groups (AB, C1, C2 and DE), although children aged 5-15 in DE households continue to be less likely to have access to a DVR, compared to all children aged 5-15 (41% vs. 52%), while children in AB households are more likely to have access (62% vs. 52%).

Close to nine in ten (86%) children aged 5-15 have access to a radio set (either DAB or AM/FM) within the home, and since 2009 access to a radio set has remained the same for 5-7s and 8-11s, and decreased for 12-15s (86% vs. 90%). While not shown in Figure 2, listening to the radio at home has also decreased for 12-15s since 2009 (53% vs. 61%), although this decrease is in 'traditional' radio listening rather than representing a decline in listening to digital radio.

Compared to 2009, children aged 5-15 in socio-economic group DE are now less likely to have access to radio in the home (82% vs. 87%).

**Figure 2: Access to key platforms in the home, by age and socio-economic group: 2007, 2009 and 2010**



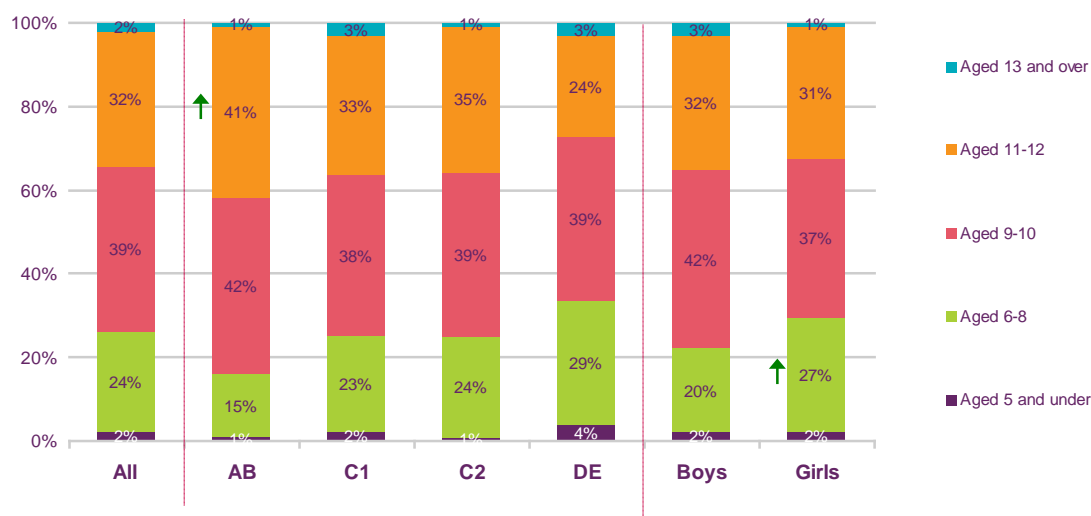
QP3A/B/G/H – I'm going to read out a list of different types of equipment that you may or may not have in your home, and which your child may or may not use (prompted responses, single coded) – NB – Question wording changed in 2010 for DVR  
 Base: Parents of children aged 5-15 (3696 aged 5-15 in 2007, 2131 aged 5-15 in 2009, 2071 aged 5-15 in 2010, 985 aged 5-7 in 2007, 576 aged 5-7 in 2009, 558 aged 5-7 in 2010, 1354 aged 8-11 in 2007, 774 aged 8-11 in 2009, 760 aged 8-11 in 2010, 1357 aged 12-15 in 2007, 781 aged 12-15 in 2009, 753 aged 12-15 in 2010, 697 AB in 2007, 374 AB in 2009, 426 AB in 2010, 949 C1 in 2007, 507 C1 in 2009, 576 C1 in 2010, 844 C2 in 2007, 472 C2 in 2009, 407 C2 in 2010, 1147 DE in 2007, 751 DE in 2009, 661 DE in 2010) - significance testing shows any differences between 2009 and 2010.  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

### 3.2 Close to one in five children aged 5-15 owns a smartphone

All parents of children aged 5-15 were asked about their child's ownership of a mobile phone. In addition, parents of children with a mobile phone were also asked the age at which their child first acquired a mobile phone. Figure 3 shows that two in three of these children (65%) have acquired their first mobile phone by the time they are ten years old. The age at which a mobile phone is first acquired has remained consistent since 2007, with a comparable proportion of children with a mobile phone acquiring their first phone by the age of 10 years (65% in 2010 vs. 65% in 2009 vs. 67% in 2008 and 64% in 2007).



**Figure 3: Age at which child first acquired a mobile phone, by socio-economic group and gender: 2010**



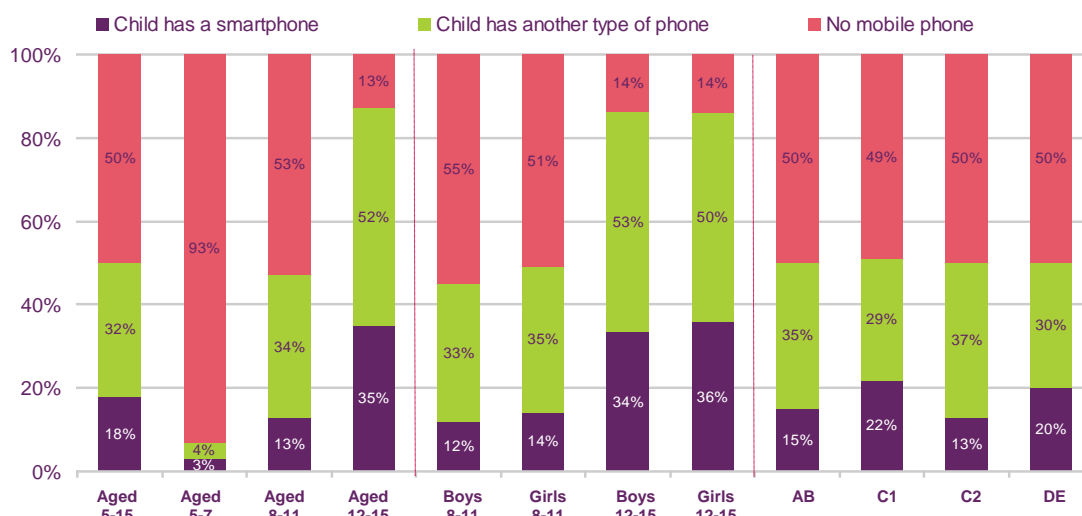
QP34 – How old was your child when they first got a mobile phone that makes and receives calls? (spontaneous responses, single coded)  
 Base: Parents of children aged 5-15 with a mobile phone (1040 aged 5-15, 217 AB, 295 C1, 204 C2, 324 DE, 508 boys, 532 girls)  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

There are no differences in the age at which a child first obtained a mobile phone when comparing those children aged 5-15 who currently have a smartphone to all children with a mobile phone.

Figure 3 also shows the variation in mobile phone acquisition in 2010 by gender and by socio-economic group. Girls are more likely than boys to have acquired a mobile phone by the age of 8 (29% vs. 22%). Children aged 5-15 in DE households are also more likely to have acquired a mobile phone by the age of 8, compared to all children aged 5-15 (32% vs. 25%), while children in AB households are less likely (16% vs. 25%). As such, children in DE households are twice as likely to have a mobile phone by the age of 8, compared to AB children (32% vs. 16%).

Figure 4 shows that half (50%) of all children aged 5-15 have a mobile phone, and close to one in five (18%) parents of children aged 5-15 say their child has a smartphone. As with overall incidence of mobile phone ownership, the likelihood of owning a mobile phone increases with the age of the child, with just 3% of 5-7s owning a smartphone, around one in eight 8-11s (13%) and around one in three 12-15s (35%). There are no variations in the incidence of overall mobile phone ownership or smartphone ownership by gender among 5-7s, 8-11s or 12-15s, nor are there any differences by household socio-economic group compared to all households with children aged 5-15.

**Figure 4: Smartphone and mobile phone ownership, by age, gender and socio-economic group: 2010**



QP3D/ NQP3P - I'm going to read out a list of different types of equipment that you may or may not have in your home, and which your child may or may not use (prompted responses, single coded)/ You mentioned that your child has their own mobile phone. Is this a Smartphone? A Smartphone is a phone on which you can easily access emails, download files as well as view websites and generally surf the internet. Popular brands of Smartphone include BlackBerry, iPhone and HTC (spontaneous responses, single coded) – asked at Wave 2 2010 only  
 Base: Parents of children aged 5-15 (275 aged 5-7, 374 aged 8-11, 376 aged 12-15, 188 boys aged 8-11, 186 girls aged 8-11, 193 boys aged 12-15, 183 girls aged 12-15, 208 AB, 280 C1, 198 C2, 338 DE) - significance testing shows any differences by gender within age or by SEG compared to all aged 5-15  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in September to October 2010

### 3.3 Four in five children aged 5-15 now use the internet at home through a PC or laptop

As well as asking about the presence of certain media in the home, parents were asked about their child's use of the various media within the home (Figure 5). Four in five of all children aged 5-15 (80%) use the internet at home through a PC or laptop. Two in three children aged 5-7 (66%), four in five 8-11s (81%) and close to nine in ten 12-15s (88%) use the internet at home through a PC or laptop. 8-11s and 12-15s are now more likely to use the internet at home through a PC or laptop, compared to 2009 (81% vs. 76% for 8-11s and 88% vs. 83% for 12-15s).

Children's use of a mobile (Figure 5) includes circumstances in which the child may also be using a mobile phone that belongs to someone else in the household. Since 2009, mobile phone use has not changed for 5-7s, 8-11s or 12-15s.

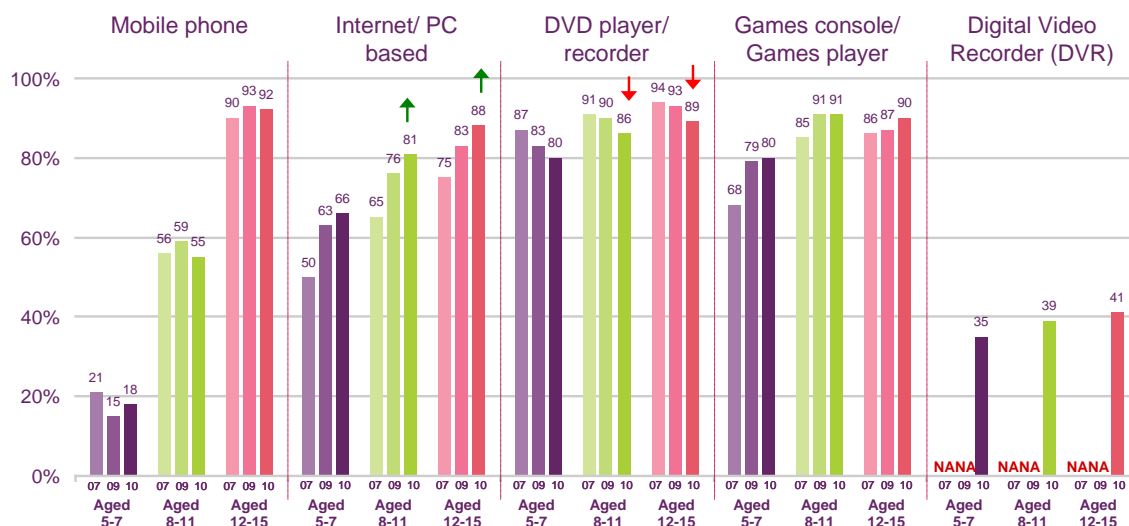
Compared to 2009, children aged 8-11 and 12-15 are now less likely to use a DVD player/recorder at home (86% vs. 90% for 8-11s and 89% vs. 93% for 12-15s), and this is perhaps linked to the increase in take-up of DVRs (Figure 2).

In 2010, parents of children aged 5-15 with digital television were asked whether they had a digital video recorder (DVR) and, if so, whether their child ever watched TV programmes that have been recorded on the DVR. Figure 5 shows the proportion of all children<sup>6</sup> aged 5-15 who ever watch TV programmes on the DVR. Around one in three 5-7s use the DVR (35%) as do around two in five 8-11s (39%) and 12-15s (41%). The incidence of DVR use does not therefore vary by the age of the child. One in five children (19%) aged 5-15 live in a household with a DVR but do not use it, which when re-basing it on all children accounts for one in ten children (10%).

<sup>6</sup> For the purposes of comparability Figure 5 shows the proportion of all children aged 5-15 that use the DVR to watch TV programmes as opposed to the proportion of all children aged 5-15 with digital TV in the household.

Four in five 5-7s use a games console/games player (80%) as do around nine in ten 8-11s (91%) and 12-15s (90%). There has been no change in use since 2009 among 5-7s, 8-11s or 12-15s.

**Figure 5: Media used by children at home, by age: 2007, 2009 and 2010**



QP3A/B/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 (prompted responses, single coded) / NQP5E – Does your child ever watch TV programmes that have been recorded on this Digital Video Recorder (DVR) (spontaneous responses, single coded)  
 Base: Parents of children aged 5-15 (985 aged 5-7 in 2007, 576 aged 5-7 in 2009, 558 aged 5-7 in 2010, 1354 aged 8-11 in 2007, 774 aged 8-11 in 2009, 760 aged 8-11 in 2010, 1357 aged 12-15 in 2007, 781 aged 12-15 in 2009, 753 aged 12-15 in 2010) - significance testing shows any change between 2009 and 2010  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

When comparing by gender, girls aged 5-7 are more likely than boys aged 5-7 to use a radio at home (47% vs. 36%), while boys are more likely to use a fixed or portable games player (85% vs. 76%). Boys aged 8-11 are also more likely than girls of this age to use a fixed or portable games player (96% vs. 87%). Girls aged 12-15 are more likely than boys to use a mobile phone (95% vs. 89%) and a digital camera (61% vs. 53%), while boys aged 12-15 are more likely to use a fixed or portable games player (98% vs. 84%).

When comparing by household socio-economic group, there are four media that children aged 5-15 in AB households are more likely to use at home, compared to all households with children aged 5-15: the internet (89% vs. 80%), MP3 players (54% vs. 47%), digital cameras (55% vs. 44%) and portable media players (27% vs. 19%). In contrast, four media are less likely to be used by children aged 5-15 in DE households, compared to all households: the internet (69% vs. 80%), MP3 players (40 vs. 47%), digital cameras (34% vs. 44%) and portable media players (11% vs. 19%). This reflects the lower levels of household take-up of these media in DE households.

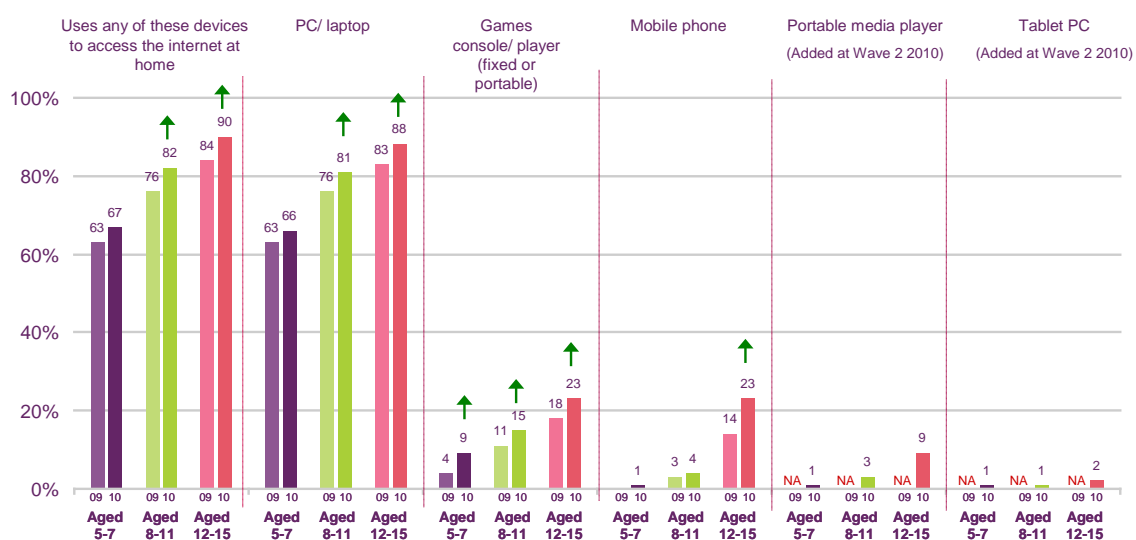
### 3.4 Around one in four 12-15s have ever used their games console/ player to access the internet at home

In addition to asking parents about their child's use of the internet through a computer or laptop at home, parents were asked whether their child ever uses alternative devices to access the internet at home (Figure 6).

While four in five children aged 5-15 (80%) use the internet at home through a PC or laptop, one in six (16%) goes online via a fixed or portable games console/ games player, one in ten (10%) via a mobile phone, one in twenty through a portable media player (5%) and less than one in twenty through a tablet PC (1%).

The likelihood of accessing the internet through any of these devices increases with age. As shown above (Figure 5), use of a PC/ laptop to access the internet has increased since 2009 for 12-15s, while using a mobile phone to access the internet (Figure 6) has also increased since 2009 (23% vs. 14%). Accessing the internet at home through a fixed or portable games player/ console has also increased since 2009 for each of 5-7s (9% vs. 4%), 8-11s (15% vs. 11%) and 12-15s (23% vs. 18%).

**Figure 6: Devices ever used by children to access the internet at home: 2009 and 2010<sup>7</sup>**



QP3B/ NQP21A – I'm going to read out a list of different types of equipment that you may or may not have in your home, and which your child may or may not use / Including any ways you may have already mentioned, does your child ever use any of the following devices to go online at home? (prompted responses, single coded) – **NB The question wording changed at Wave 2 2010 – responses from wave 1 and wave 2 2010 have however been combined**  
 Base: Parents of children aged 5-15 (576 aged 5-7 in 2009, 558 aged 5-7 in 2010, 774 aged 8-11 in 2009, 760 aged 8-11 in 2010, 781 aged 12-15 in 2009, 753 aged 12-15 in 2010) – significance testing shows any change between 2009 and 2010  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

When comparing by gender, boys aged 8-11 are more likely than girls aged 8-11 to ever access the internet at home via a fixed or portable games console/games player (19% vs. 11%), as are boys aged 12-15 compared to girls aged 12-15 (32% vs. 14%).

The proportion of children in each age group that access the internet at home through the total of any of these devices is nearly identical to the proportion of children in each age group that access via a PC or laptop. This shows that accessing the internet at home through other devices is very much *in addition to* accessing through a PC/ laptop.

As might be expected, nearly twice as many parents of children aged 5-15 with a smartphone say that their child has ever accessed the internet through their mobile phone, compared to parents of children with a mobile phone (29% vs. 17%).

### 3.5 One in twenty children aged 5-15 who use the internet at home mostly use a games console for internet access

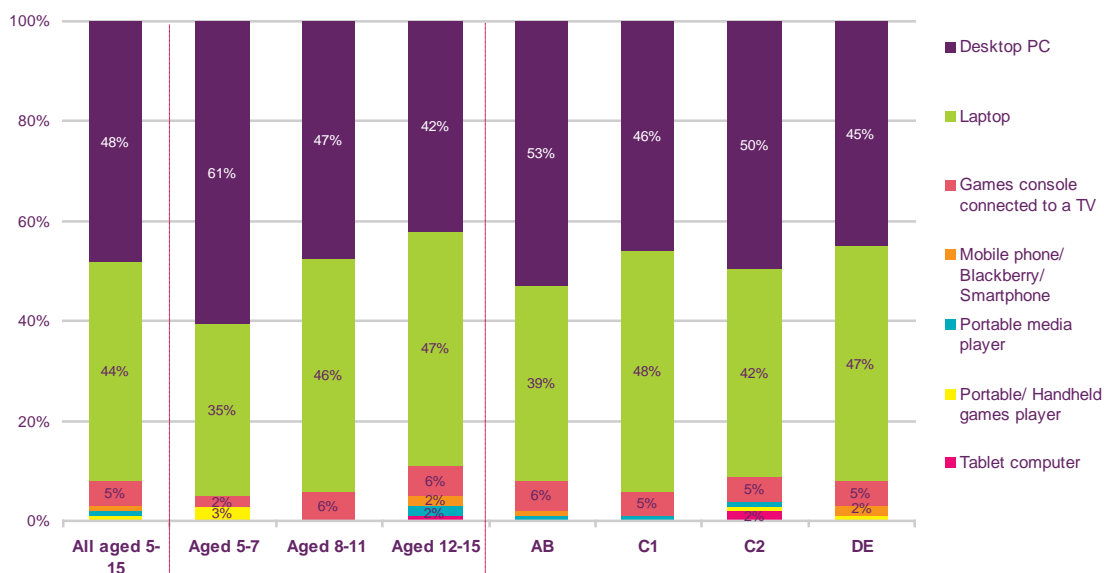
As well as asking about the types of devices ever used to access the internet at home, in the second wave of research in 2010 parents were also asked about the device that the child mostly uses to go online at home. As Figure 7 shows, at an overall level children aged 5-15 who use the internet at home are more likely to mostly use a desktop PC than a laptop (48%

<sup>7</sup> At Wave 2 in 2010, the questions establishing the devices that the child uses to go online at home were amended in order to establish devices 'ever used' and 'mostly used'. It has, however, been possible to combine the responses across the relevant questions at Wave 1 and Wave 2 to get an overall figure for 2010.

vs. 44%). Fixed games consoles are mostly used to access the internet at home by 5% of all 5-15s who use the internet at home, with most of this use attributable to 8-11s and 12-15s, rather than 5-7s.

There are no differences by household socio-economic group.

**Figure 7: Devices used 'mostly' by children to access the internet: 2010**



QP21B – And when your child goes online at home, which device do they mostly use? (prompted responses, single coded) – ASKED AT WAVE 2 2010 ONLY  
 Base: Parents of children aged 5-15 whose child ever goes online at home (770 aged 5-15, 155 aged 5-7, 283 aged 8-11, 352 aged 12-15, 178 AB, 229 C1, 153 C2, 209 DE) - significance testing shows any differences by SEG compared to all aged 5-15  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in September to October 2010

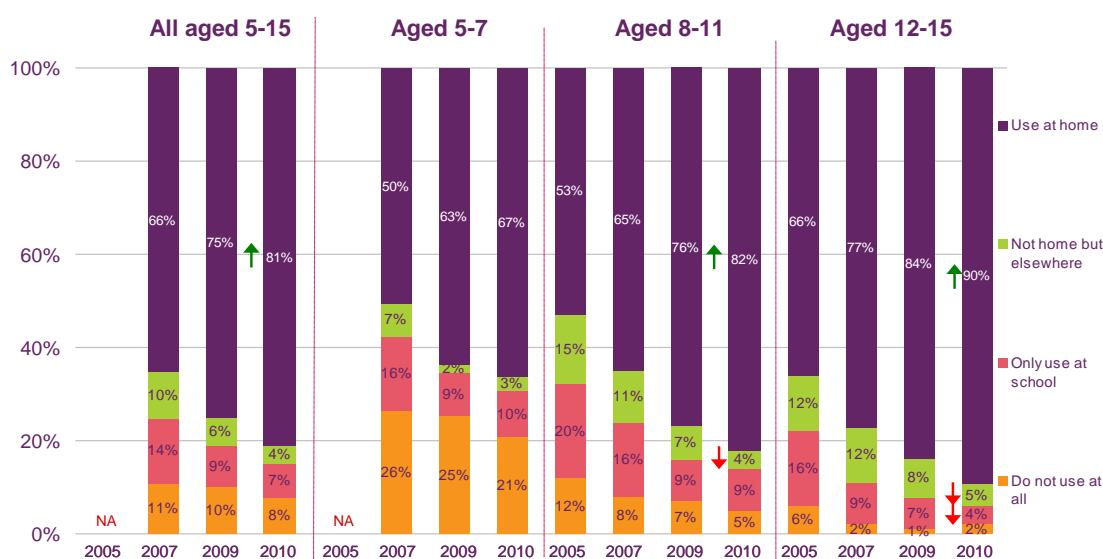
### 3.6 One in twelve children do not use the internet at all, in any location

While the main focus of our analysis is upon children's use of the internet at home, we are also interested in whether children use the internet anywhere else, for example, at school, at a library, at the houses of relatives or friends, or via a portable device such as a portable media player, games player or mobile. Figure 8 shows where the internet is used by 5-7s, 8-11s, 12-15s, and how this has changed over time. Four distinct groups are shown: those who use the internet at home (and may well use it elsewhere); those who use it elsewhere (and may well use it at school but not at home); those who use it only at school; and those who don't use it at all.

The incidence of using the internet at all (in any location) through any device has not changed for any age group since 2009, and accounts for around four in five 5-7s (79%), over nine in ten 8-11s (95%) and almost all 12-15s (98%). A higher proportion of children aged 8-11 and 12-15 use the internet at home compared to 2009; now accounting for four in five 8-11s (82% vs. 76% in 2009) and nine in ten 12-15s (90% vs. 84%).

Around one in ten 5-7s (10%) and 8-11s (9%) use the internet only at school, compared to 4% of 12-15s. One in twelve (8%) of all 5-15s do not use the internet at all, in any location.

Children aged 5-15 with a smartphone do not differ in the location of their use (based on these four distinct groups) when compared to all children aged 5-15 with a mobile phone.

**Figure 8: Where the internet is used by children: 2005, 2007, 2009 and 2010**

QP3B/ NQP21A/ NQP21B/ QC25 – SUMMARY OF WHERE THE INTERNET IS USED (prompted responses, single coded)

Base: Parents of children aged 5-15 (3696 aged 5-15 in 2007, 2131 aged 5-15 in 2009, 2071 aged 5-15 in 2010, 985 aged 5-7 in 2007, 576 aged 5-7 in 2009, 558 aged 5-7 in 2010, 772 aged 8-11 in 2005, 1354 aged 8-11 in 2007, 774 aged 8-11 in 2009, 760 aged 8-11 in 2010, 764 aged 12-15 in 2005, 1357 aged 12-15 in 2007, 781 aged 12-15 in 2009, 753 aged 12-15 in 2010) – significance testing shows any change between 2009 and 2010

Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

### 3.7 Since 2009 the incidence of radio listening at home has decreased among 5-15s – although the incidence of digital listening has not changed

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

Around half of all children aged 5-15 listen to the radio at home, with the likelihood of listening to radio increasing with the age of the child, accounting for more than one in three children aged 5-7 (37%), close to half of 8-11s (45%) and slightly more than half of 12-15s (53%). Among all 5-15s, one in six children (16%) listen to digital radio (either through a DAB radio set, through their digital TV service or over the internet) with a similar proportion of 5-7s and 8-11s listening in this way (12%) and more than one in five 12-15s (22%).

Three in ten children aged 5-15 who listen to the radio at home listen only through a traditional radio set (30%). The incidence of radio listening at home among all 5-15s has decreased since 2009 (46% vs. 53%), although this overall decline is not evident for digital radio listening, but is due to a decline in listening via a traditional radio set (30% vs. 36%).

In 2010, there are some differences by socio-economic group. Children aged 5-15 in AB households are more likely than all children to listen to digital radio (24% vs. 16%), with this being specifically attributable to DAB radio listening (13% vs. 6%) and listening over the internet (7% vs. 4%). Children aged 5-15 in DE households are less likely to listen to radio through a DAB set (3% vs. 6%). There is only one difference by gender; boys aged 12-15 are more likely than girls aged 12-15 to listen to radio over the internet (9% vs. 4%).

## Figure 9: Radio listening at home, by age: 2010

### 3.8 One in five boys aged 12-15 who play games say they mostly play with other people over the internet

We asked parents and children a number of questions to find out about the devices they used to play games, either at home or elsewhere<sup>8</sup>.

Most children in each of the three age groups use at least one of the devices to play games, accounting for eight in ten 5-7s (82%), nine in ten 8-11s (94%) and nine in ten 12-15s (91%).

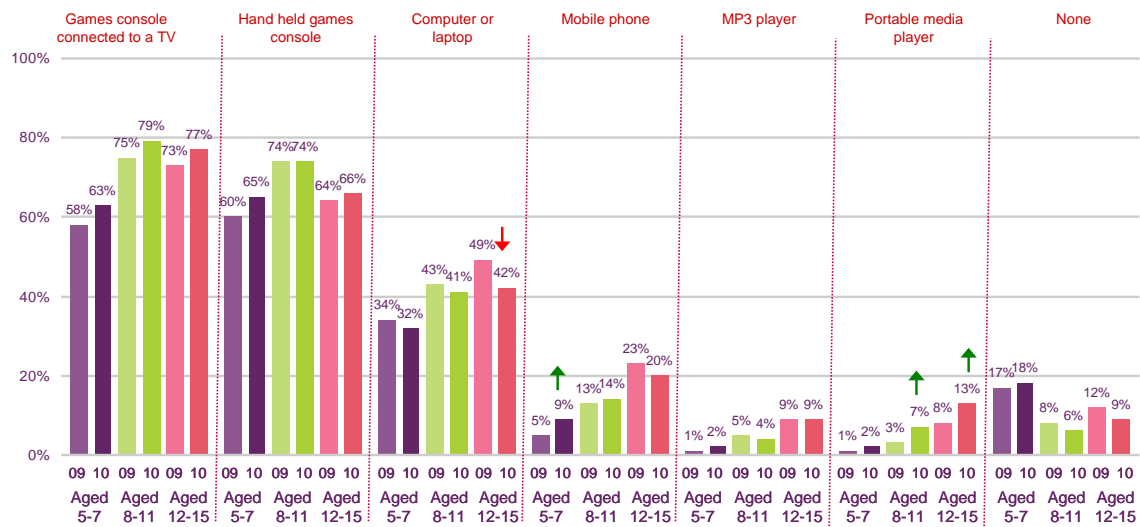
Games consoles connected to a television and handheld / portable games consoles are the most commonly-used devices for gaming; used by six in ten or more children in each age group. In comparison, fewer children ever play games using a computer or laptop; one in three 5-7s (32%), four in ten 8-11s (41%) and two in five 12-15s (42%).

Playing games using a mobile phone is undertaken by around one in five or fewer children – 9% of 5-7s, 14% of 8-11s and 20% of 12-15s. A significant minority of 12-15s play games through other devices such as an MP3 player (9%) or portable media players (13%).

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<sup>8</sup> Figure 10 shows six out of the eight devices we asked about, the two devices not shown (PDA/ tablet computer) are only ever used by under 1% of all children aged 5-15.

**Figure 10: Devices used for gaming, by age: 2009 and 2010**



NQP43– Does your child ever play games at home or elsewhere in any of these ways? (prompted responses, multi-coded) – only showing responses by 2% or more  
 Base: Parents of children aged 5-15 (576 aged 5-7 in 2009, 558 aged 5-7 in 2010, 773 aged 8-11 in 2009, 760 aged 8-11 in 2010, 781 aged 12-15 in 2009, 753 aged 12-15 in 2010) – significance testing shows any differences between 2009 and 2010  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

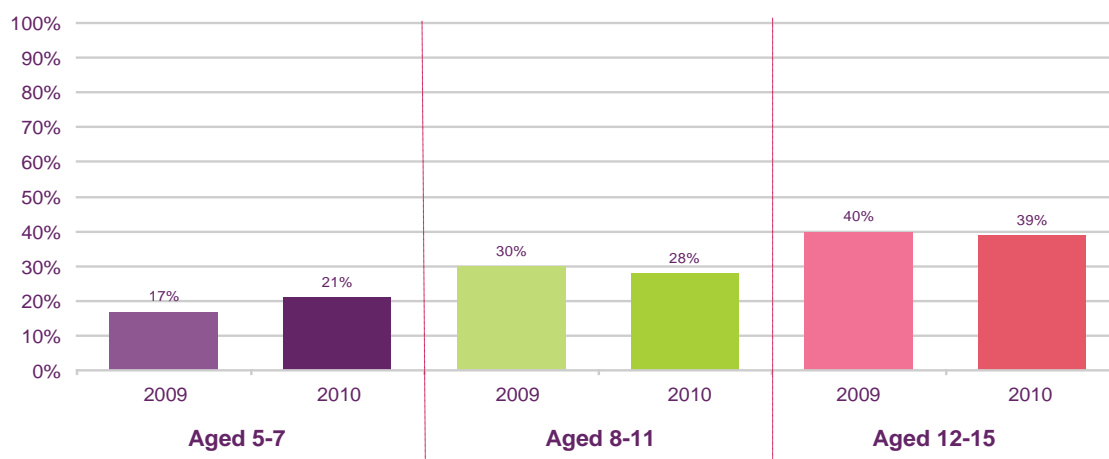
The majority of girls in each of the three age groups ever play games using any of these devices (79% for girls aged 5-7, 91% for girls aged 8-11 and 84% for girls aged 12-15). Much of the overall difference in gaming between boys and girls continues to be due to the higher use among boys of games consoles connected to a television – although boys are also more likely to play games on a portable games console and on a computer or laptop.

There have been four changes in the types of device used for gaming since 2009: children aged 12-15 are now less likely to ever play games on a computer or laptop (42% vs. 49%) while 5-7s are now more likely to ever play games on a mobile phone (9% vs. 5%). Use of a portable media player for gaming has also increased since 2009 for 8-11s (7% vs. 3%) and for 12-15s (13% vs. 8%).

Parents of children aged 5-15 who use any of the devices for gaming were also asked whether their child had ever played single/ multiplayer games over the internet. A significant minority of children who play games have ever played online; one in five 5-7s (21%), almost three in ten 8-11s (28%) and two in five 12-15s (39%). Among those children who ever play games, playing online is more common among boys aged 8-11 and 12-15 than among girls of these ages (31% vs. 23% for 8-11s and 49% vs. 28% for 12-15s). There is no difference in playing games online by socio-economic group. There has also been no change in the incidence of online game playing among 5-7s, 8-11 or 12-15s, since 2009.



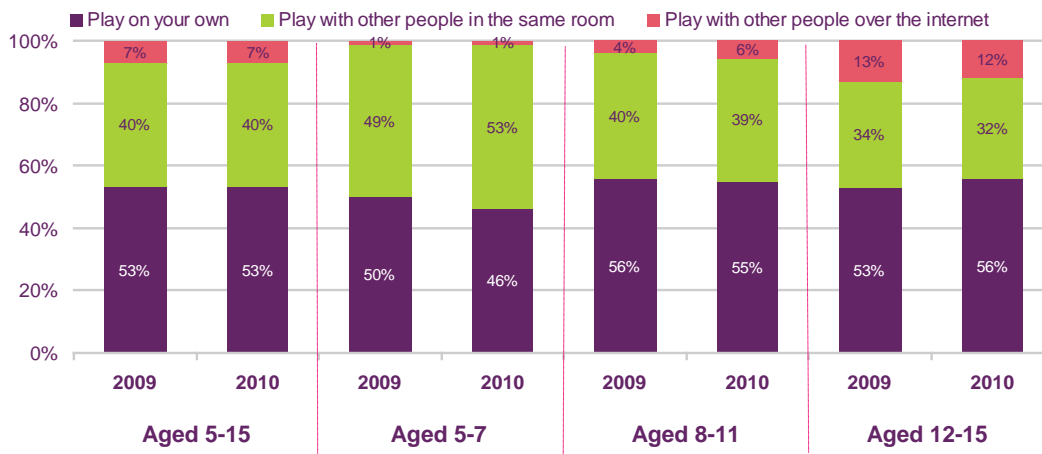
**Figure 11: Online gaming by age: 2009 and 2010**



QP44 – Does your child ever play single or multiplayer games over the internet on any of these devices which is often referred to as online game playing? (prompted responses, single coded)  
 Base: Parents of children aged 5-15 whose child ever plays games on a games console/ player , computer or other device (471 aged 5-7 in 2009, 451 aged 5-7 in 2010, 710 aged 8-11 in 2009, 710 aged 8-11 in 2010, 688 aged 12-15 in 2009, 683 aged 12-15 in 2010) – significance testing shows any differences between 2009 and 2010  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

Children who ever play games were asked which of the following three options best described whom they most often played games with: playing games on their own, playing with other people in the same room or playing with other people over the internet.

Figure 12 shows that more than half of children aged 5-15 (53%) who play games say they most often play on their own, with children aged 8-11 and 12-15 both being more likely to do this, compared to 5-7s. Children aged 12-15 are the only group in which a sizable minority say that they most often play with other people over the internet (12%) with this figure rising to one in five (19%) for boys aged 12-15. Results do not differ by socio-economic group. Since 2009 there has also been no change in the incidence of the child mostly playing alone, with other people in the same room or playing with other people over the internet, among 5-7s, 8-11s or 12-15s.

**Figure 12: Who the child mostly plays games with: 2009 and 2010**

QC31 - When you play games on your computer, games console or any other way, do you most often.....(prompted responses, single coded)  
 Base: Children aged 5-15 who ever play games (1879 aged 5-15 in 2009, 451 aged 5-15 in 2010, 471 aged 5-7 in 2009, 710 aged 5-7 in 2010, 711 aged 8-11 in 2009, 680 aged 8-11 in 2010, 698 aged 12-15 in 2009, 680 aged 12-15 in 2010) – significance testing shows any difference between 2009 and 2010  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

### 3.9 Two in five children aged 12-15 now have PC-based internet access in their bedroom

In order to understand more about children's and young people's media habits, it is useful to know the various types of media activity that take place in a child's bedroom, including TV, games and the internet.

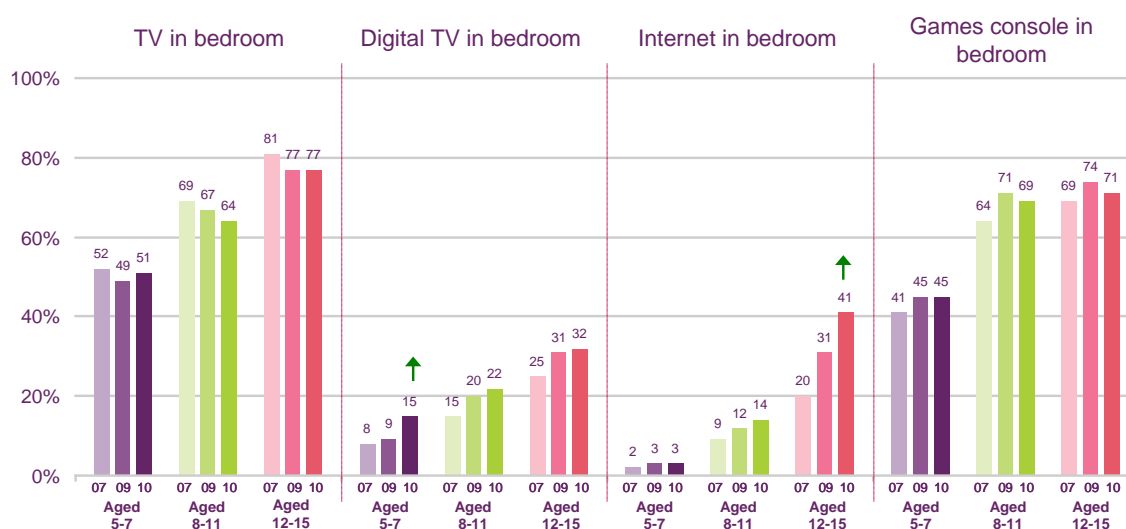
All children aged 5-15 (100%) have access to a television at home. The incidence of having a television in the bedroom, however, increases with each age group; accounting for one in two 5-7s (51%), close to two in three 8-11s (64%), and three in four 12-15s (77%). The incidence of having a television in the bedroom has not changed since 2009 for any of these three age groups.

While many children aged 5-15 have a television in their bedroom, relatively few have a digital television service in their bedroom. Again, the incidence of having a digital television service in the bedroom increases with each age group; accounting for more than one in ten 5-7s (15%), two in ten 8-11s (22%), and three in ten 12-15s (32%). There has, however, been an increase since 2009 for 5-7s with a digital television service in their bedroom (15% vs. 9%).

After television, games consoles/ games players (either fixed or portable) are the second most common type of medium present in children's bedrooms; accounting for slightly less than one in two 5-7s (45%), and seven in ten 8-11s (69%), and three in four 12-15s (71%). Access to a games console/ games player in the bedroom has not changed since 2009.

Although most households with children aged 5-15 have access to the internet (87%), fewer children aged 5-15 have access to the internet via a PC/ laptop in their bedroom. The incidence of having access to the internet in the bedroom increases with each age group; accounting for less than one in twenty 5-7s (3%), but one in seven 8-11s (14%), and two in five 12-15s (41%). Internet access in the bedroom has increased since 2009 by ten percentage points for 12-15s (41% vs. 31%).

**Figure 13: Media in children's bedrooms: 2007, 2009 and 2010**



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 (prompted responses, single coded)  
 Base: Parents of children aged 5-15 (985 aged 5-7 in 2007, 576 aged 5-7 in 2009, 558 aged 5-7 in 2010, 1354 aged 8-11 in 2007, 774 aged 8-11 in 2009, 760 aged 8-11 in 2010, 1357 aged 12-15 in 2007, 781 aged 12-15 in 2009, 753 aged 12-15 in 2010) – significance testing shows any change between 2009 and 2010  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

When making comparisons by household socio-economic group, children aged 5-15 in AB socio-economic groups were less likely than all children to have a television in their bedroom (53% vs. 65%). Children in DE households are more likely to have a television in their bedroom compared to all children (70% vs. 65%) and less likely to have PC/ laptop-based internet access (16% vs. 21%).

### 3.10 12-15s continue to mostly use the internet on their own

Children who use the internet at home were asked where in the house they most often used it.

Less than one in twenty 5-7s (2%), one in ten 8-11s (10%) and close to two in five 12-15s (38%) said they mostly used the internet in their bedroom. These figures for 5-7s and 8-11s have not changed since 2009, while 12-15s are now more likely to use the internet mostly in their bedroom (38% vs. 29%).

The living room continues to be the most often-mentioned location for internet use for each of the age groups.

**Figure 14: Where the child mostly uses the internet, by age: 2007, 2008, 2009 and 2010**



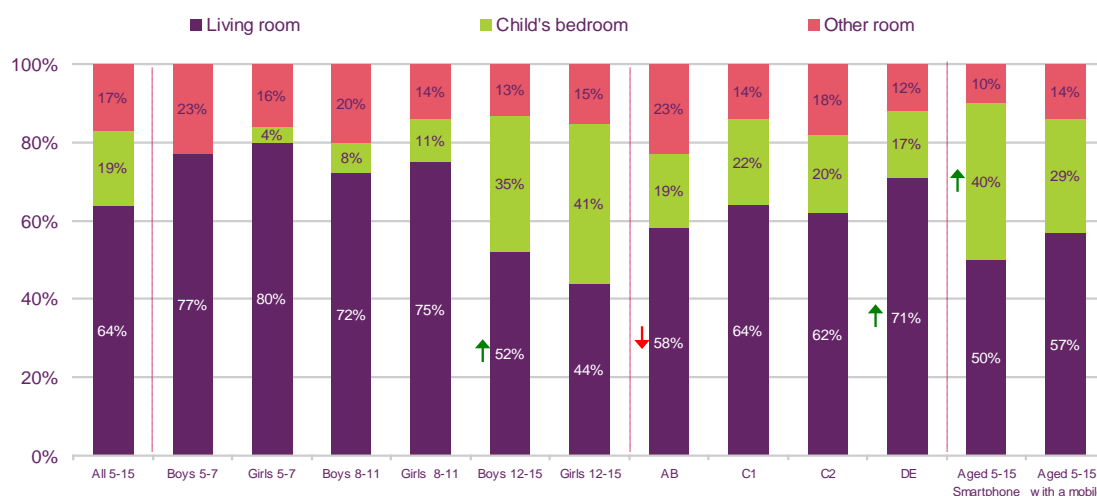
QC10B- In which room do you use the internet most often at home?  
 Base: Children aged 5-15 who use the internet at home (477 aged 5-7 in 2007, 308 aged 5-7 in 2008, 340 aged 5-7 in 2009, 343 aged 5-7 in 2010, 875 aged 8-11 in 2007, 527 aged 8-11 in 2008, 582 aged 8-11 in 2009, 597 aged 8-11 in 2010, 1045 aged 12-15 in 2007, 614 aged 12-15 in 2008, 645 aged 12-15 in 2009, 665 aged 12-15 in 2010) – significance testing shows any changes between 2009 and 2010  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

When making comparisons by gender, Figure 15 shows that boys aged 12-15 are more likely than girls aged 12-15 to use the internet mostly in the living room (52% vs. 44%). Children aged 5-15 in DE households are more likely than all children to most often use the internet in the living room (71% vs. 64%), with children in AB households less likely to use the internet mostly in the living room (58% vs. 64%).

Figure 15 also shows that children aged 5-15 with a smartphone are more likely to use the internet mostly in their bedroom, compared to all children with a mobile phone (40% vs. 29%).<sup>9</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Please note that this is not to say that children aged 5-15 with a smartphone are necessarily using this phone to access the internet in their bedroom.

**Figure 15: Where the child mostly uses the internet, by gender, socio-economic group and smartphone ownership: 2010**



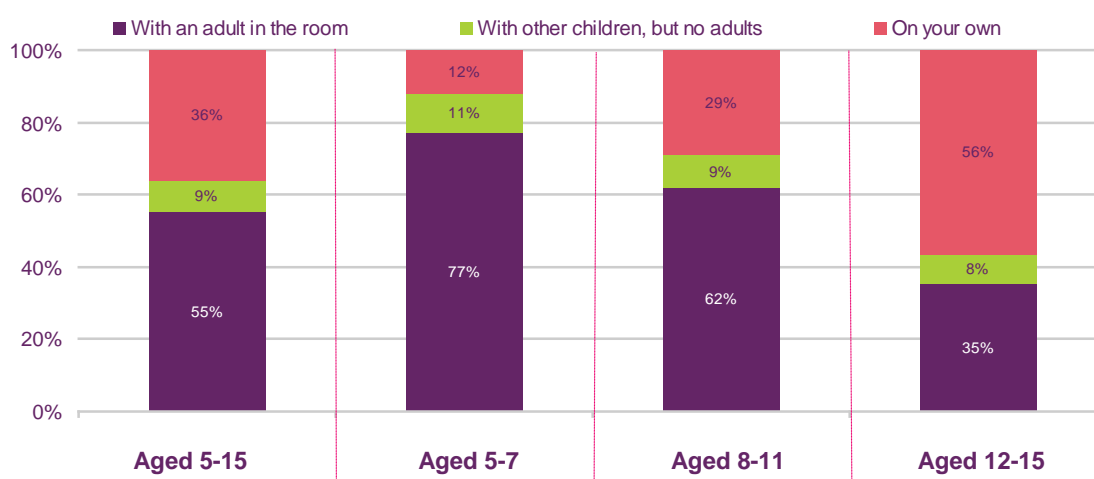
QC10B– In which room do you use the internet most often at home?  
 Base: Children aged 5-15 who use the internet at home (1605 aged 5-15, 173 boys aged 5-7, 170 girls aged 5-7, 314 girls aged 8-11, 283 girls aged 8-11, 340 boys aged 12-15, 325 girls aged 12-15, 373 AB, 479 C1, 325 C2, 427 DE, 152 aged 5-15 with a Smartphone, 918 aged 5-15 with a mobile phone) – significance testing shows any differences by gender within age, by SEG compared to all aged 5-15, and between all aged 5-15 with a Smartphone to all aged 5-15 with a mobile  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

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

The majority of 5-7s and 8-11s say they spend most of the time using the internet with an adult in the room (77% and 62% respectively). However, the incidence of children who spend most of the time using the internet on their own increases with each age group. Those who mostly use the internet on their own account for one in eight internet users aged 5-7 (12%), three in ten aged 8-11 (29%) and over half of those aged 12-15 (56%).

When making comparisons by household socio-economic group, children aged 5-15 in DE households are more likely to mostly use the internet with an adult present (61% vs. 55%) and less likely to use it alone (29% vs. 36%)

Since 2009, there has been no change in whether a child mostly uses the internet with an adult present, in the presence of other children or on their own, across any of the three age categories.

**Figure 16: Who is with the child when using the internet: 2010**

QC11 – Thinking about when you're using the internet at home, do you spend most of the time using... (prompted responses, single coded)  
 Base: Children aged 5-15 who use the internet at home (1605 aged 5-15 in 2010, 343 aged 5-7 in 2010, 597 aged 8-11 in 2010, 665 aged 12-15 in 2010)  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

The majority of 5-7s (57%) and 8-11s (57%) who watch television at home say they mostly watch with an adult in the room. Just under half of 12-15s (47%) say they mostly watch television with an adult present, and slightly more than one in three (37%) say they mostly watch on their own. As with the internet there has been no change, since 2009, in whether a child mostly watches the television with an adult present or on their own, across any of the three age categories.

A child aged 5-7 who uses the internet at home is, therefore, more likely to have an adult present than a child of this age who watches television (77% vs. 57%). However, 12-15s who use the internet at home are less likely to have an adult present than 12-15s who watch television (35% vs. 47%).

### 3.11 Television continues to be the most likely regular<sup>10</sup> media activity undertaken by children of all ages

All children aged 5-15 were asked about a list of media activities, such as watching television and listening to an MP3 player, and were asked to say which, if any, they do regularly, defined in this research as 'almost every day'<sup>11</sup>.

As was the case in 2009, television watching and watching videos or DVDs are the two activities that are undertaken daily by children in each age group to a similar degree, whereas regular use of the internet, mobile phones and MP3 players increases with the age of the child.

When looking at any differences by gender, boys in each age group are more likely than girls to say they regularly play computer or video games (63% vs. 41% for 5-7s, 68% vs. 51% for 8-11s, and 74% vs. 40% for 12-15s). Girls aged 8-11 and 12-15 are more likely than boys in

<sup>10</sup> In this context, 'regular' refers to an activity which the child states they do almost every day.

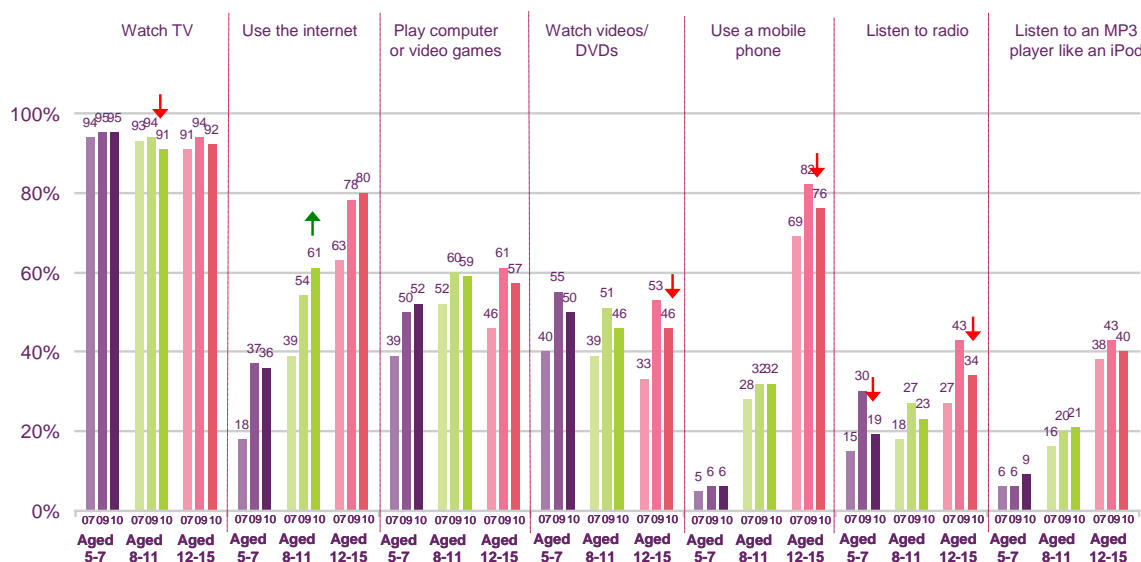
<sup>11</sup> Media use will differ to the figures shown earlier at Figure 5 as those data showed 'any use' as opposed to 'regular use'. Figure 7 data were also obtained from a parent while regular media use was obtained from the child.

each of these age groups to use a mobile phone almost every day (36% vs. 27% for 8-11s and 84% vs.68% for 12-15s). Girls aged 8-11 are also more likely than boys to regularly listen to the radio (27% vs. 19%).

There are also three differences in regular media use by household socio-economic group: children aged 5-15 in C1 households are more likely than all children to regularly use a mobile phone (47% vs. 41%) while children in DE households are less likely to regularly use the internet (54% vs. 61%) and are less likely to regularly listen to an MP3 player (20% vs. 25%).

Since 2009 there have been some changes in the patterns of regular media use. Children aged 5-7 are now less likely to regularly listen to the radio (19% vs. 30%), while 8-11s are less likely to regularly watch television (91% vs. 94%) but more likely to regularly use the internet (61% vs. 54%). There are three activities that children aged 12-15 are now less likely to undertake almost every day: watching DVDs or videos (46% vs. 53%), using a mobile phone (76% vs. 82%) and listening to the radio (34% vs. 43%).

**Figure 17: Regular media activities undertaken: 2007, 2009 and 2010**



QC39A – Which of the following do you do almost every day? (prompted responses, multi-coded)  
 Base: Children aged 5-15 (985 aged 5-7 in 2007, 576 aged 5-7 in 2009, 558 aged 5-7 in 2010, 1354 aged 8-11 in 2007, 774 aged 8-11 in 2009, 760 aged 8-11 in 2010, 1357 aged 12-15 in 2007, 781 aged 12-15 in 2009, 753 aged 12-15 in 2010) – significance testing shows any differences between 2009 and 2010  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

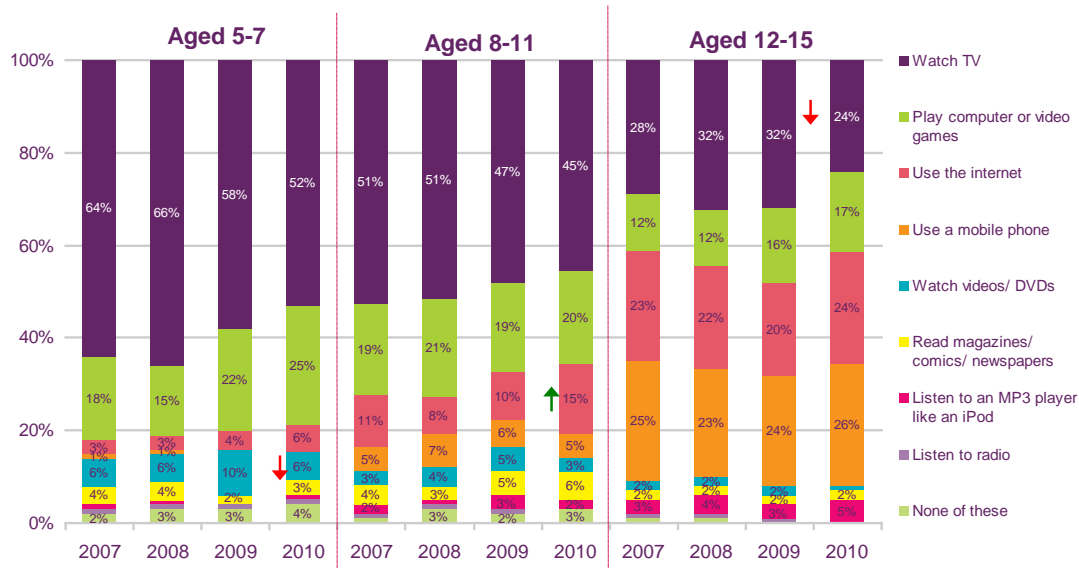
### 3.12 Preference for television declines as children get older

When asked which of the activities that they carried out regularly they would miss the most, there continues to be an overall preference among children aged 5-15 for television. However, this preference declines with the child's age, while a preference for the internet and mobile phones increases with age. While television is the preferred medium of around half of 5-7s (52%) and close to half 8-11s (45%), only one in four 12-15s (24%) say this.

Since 2009, children aged 12-15 have been less likely to nominate television as the medium they would miss the most (24% vs. 32%). They are now as likely to miss the internet (24%) as they are to miss television (24%) or to miss using a mobile phone (26%). 8-11s are, however, now more likely than they were in 2009 to say they would miss using the internet (15% vs. 10%), while 5-7s are now less likely to miss watching videos or DVDs (6% vs. 10%).

When comparing by gender, boys in each age group are more likely than girls to say they would miss playing computer games (38% vs. 12% for 5-7s, 31% vs. 8% for 8-11s and 34% vs. 2% for 12-15s). In contrast, girls aged 5-7 and 8-11 are more likely to miss watching television (63% vs. 41% for 5-7s and 52% vs. 39% for 8-11s) and to miss watching DVDs/videos (9% vs. 4% for 5-7s and 5% vs. 2% for 8-11s). Girls aged 8-11 are also more likely to miss using a mobile phone (7% vs. 3%) as are girls aged 12-15 (38% vs. 13%). There are no differences in 2010 by household socio-economic group.

**Figure 18: Media activity children would miss the most: 2007, 2008, 2009 and 2010**



QC39B – Which one of the things you do almost every day, would you miss doing the most if it got taken away?  
 Base: Children aged 5-15 (985 aged 5-7 in 2007, 563 aged 5-7 in 2008, 576 aged 5-7 in 2009, 558 aged 5-7 in 2010, 1354 aged 8-11 in 2007, 748 aged 8-11 in 2008, 774 aged 8-11 in 2009, 760 aged 8-11 in 2010, 1357 aged 12-15 in 2007, 755 aged 12-15 in 2008, 781 aged 12-15 in 2009, 753 aged 12-15 in 2010) – sig testing show any difference between 2009 and 2010  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

If a child aged 8-15 nominated television as the medium they would miss the most, they were also asked whether they were specifically referring to missing live/ broadcast television content viewed through a TV set, time-shifted TV content (i.e. recorded on a DVR) or television content they could download online. Nine in ten children (91%) aged 8-15 stated they would miss watching TV as it was broadcast, and this incidence does not vary by the age of the child.

If a child aged 8-15 nominated the internet as the medium they would miss the most, they were asked what specific online activity they would miss the most. Low base sizes among 8-11s prevent analysis by age. However, among all 8-15s, two in five (42%) would miss using the internet to go to social networking sites, close to one in five (17%) would miss looking up information online for school work/ homework, and around one in ten would miss Instant Messaging (11%) or playing games on websites or online (10%). One in twenty (5%) would miss looking for information on websites about things they are interested in. No other online activity was mentioned by more than one in twenty children.



## Section 4

# Children's use of media

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

### Key findings

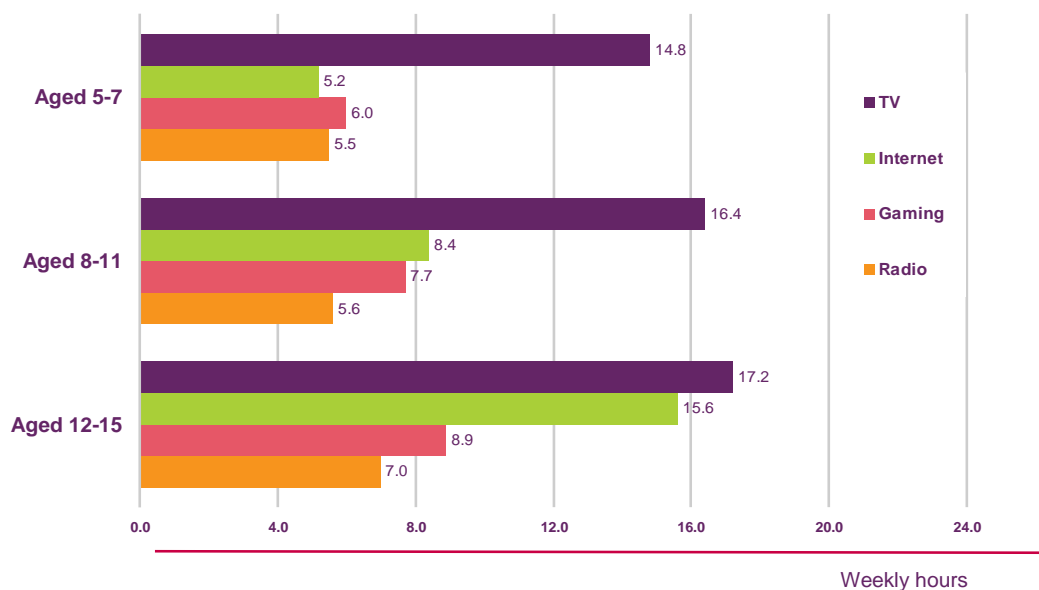
- Weekly consumption of television, radio and games has not changed since 2009, but for the internet, 5-7s and 12-15s are now online for more hours per week than in 2009.
- Social networking activity continues to increase, especially for younger age-groups who use the internet at home. There has been an increase in 5-7s' use of social networking – weekly use has increased from 7% in 2009 to 23% in 2010 – although this relates to them visiting virtual worlds like Club Penguin or Moshi Monsters rather than mainstream social networking sites. When parents were asked specifically whether or not their online 5-7 year old had an active social networking profile, 5% said they had.
- One third (34%) of 8-12s have a profile on sites that require users to register as being 13 or over, up from 25% in 2009. Looking specifically at 10-12 year old internet users, 47% have such a profile, a rise from 35% in 2009.
- In terms of who they communicate with via their profile, 22% of 8-11s and nearly one third (32%) of 12-15s say they either speak to friends of friends or people they don't know, in other words that they are potentially in contact with people not directly known to them.
- There has been no change since 2009 in terms of watching audio-visual content online - around one in five (19%) 8-11s who use the internet at home has watched / downloaded TV programmes or films (in full or in part). Two in five 12-15s (38%) have watched/ downloaded TV programmes (in full or in part). Half of all children aged 8-15 who use the internet at home visit sites like YouTube, with the likelihood of visiting increasing with the age of the child, accounting for just over one third of 8-11s (37%) and two thirds of 12-15s (66%).
- Compared to 2009, 12-15s now estimate they make fewer calls per week on their mobile phone (20 vs. 25 calls) with no change for 8-11s, while the estimated volume of text messages sent per week has remained at similar levels for both 8-11s (27 vs. 22 in 2009) and 12-15s (113 vs. 104 in 2009).

## 4.2 Television continues to have the highest level of consumption

We asked parents of younger children (aged 5-11) and asked older children (aged 12-15) to estimate the hours spent at home by the child using each of the four media: television, radio, internet and games players/ consoles, on a typical school day and on a typical weekend day<sup>12</sup>.

Figure 19 shows that television has a higher level of consumption in each age group compared to all other media, although the difference in consumption between television and the internet becomes less marked for children aged 12-15. Since 2008, the 'gap' between television and internet consumption has been getting smaller for 12-15s.

**Figure 19: Estimated weekly hours of media consumption at home among users, by age: 2010**



QP8A-B/ QC3A-B/ QP23A-B/QC12A-B/ QP45A-B/ QC23A-B/QP16A-B/QC7A-B – 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 5-11 who use each medium at home and children aged 12-15 who use each medium at home (VARIABLE BASE)

Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

## 4.3 The youngest and oldest children now use the internet at home for more hours per week than they did in 2009

Figure 20 shows the weekly hours of estimated television consumption since 2007.<sup>13</sup>

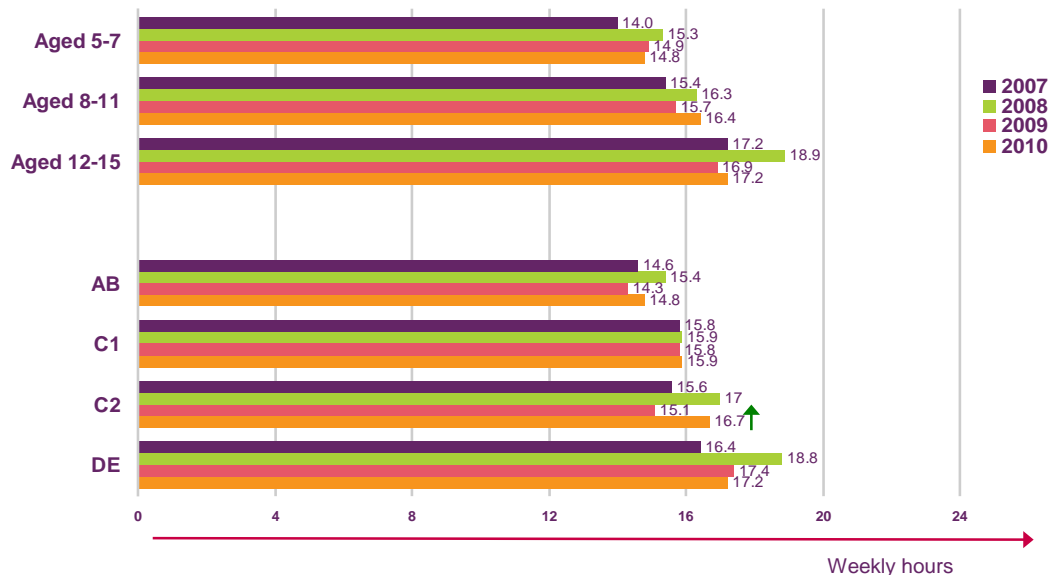
In 2010, parents of children aged 5-7 state that their child watches 14.8 hours of television per week, which is a lower volume than both those aged 8-11 (16.4 hours) and those aged 12-15 (17.2 hours). Among all 5-15s, girls watch more television at home per week than boys (16.7 hours vs. 15.8 hours); this is driven by girls aged 8-11 watching more television than boys of this age (17.4 hours vs. 15.5 hours). Children aged 5-15 in DE households are likely to watch more television at home per week than are all children (17.2 hours vs. 16.3 hours) while children in AB households are likely to watch less (14.8 hours vs. 16.3 hours).

<sup>12</sup> Estimates of hours shown are not based on all children, but on all children who use each of the media at home. Because these estimates are self-reported it is likely that a degree of under- and over-reporting will be present and the estimates should be taken as indicative only.

<sup>13</sup> These figures are comparable to BARB television viewing data – in 2010 the average weekly hours viewed according to BARB were 15 hours and 10 minutes for all 5-15s, 15 hours and 17 minutes for 5-7s, 15 hours and 45 minutes for 8-11s and 14 hours and 42 minutes for 12-15s.

Compared to 2009, the volume of weekly television viewing has not changed for any age group, and has increased among children aged 5-15 in C2 households (16.7 vs. 15.1 hours). Television consumption among children aged 5-15 in AB, C1 and DE households has not changed since 2009.

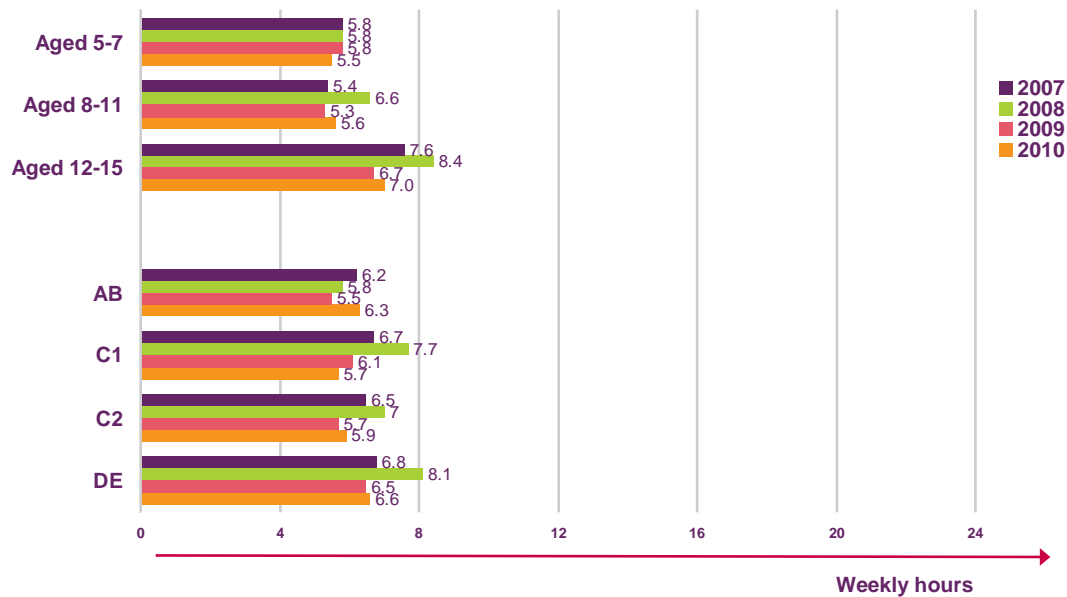
**Figure 20: Estimated weekly hours of television consumption by age and socio-economic group: 2007, 2008, 2009 and 2010**



QP8A-B/ QC3A-B – How many hours would you say he/ she spends watching TV on a typical school day/ on a weekend day? (spontaneous responses, single coded)  
 Base: Parents of children aged 5-11 who watch TV at home and children aged 12-15 who watch TV at home (VARIABLE BASE) – significance testing shows any difference between 2009 and 2010  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

Estimated weekly consumption of radio at home does not vary by the age of child. Children aged 5-7 listen for 5.5 hours per week, children aged 8-11 listen for 5.6 hours per week and children aged 12-15 for 7.0 hours per week. In 2010, there are no differences by gender at an overall level (among all 5-15s) or when looking at gender within each of the three age categories of children. There are also no differences by household socio-economic group. As with weekly television consumption, there has been no change in radio consumption at home since 2009 for children aged 5-7, 8-11 or 12-15. There has also been no change by socio-economic group since 2009.

**Figure 21: Estimated weekly hours of radio consumption by age and socio-economic group: 2007, 2008, 2009 and 2010**



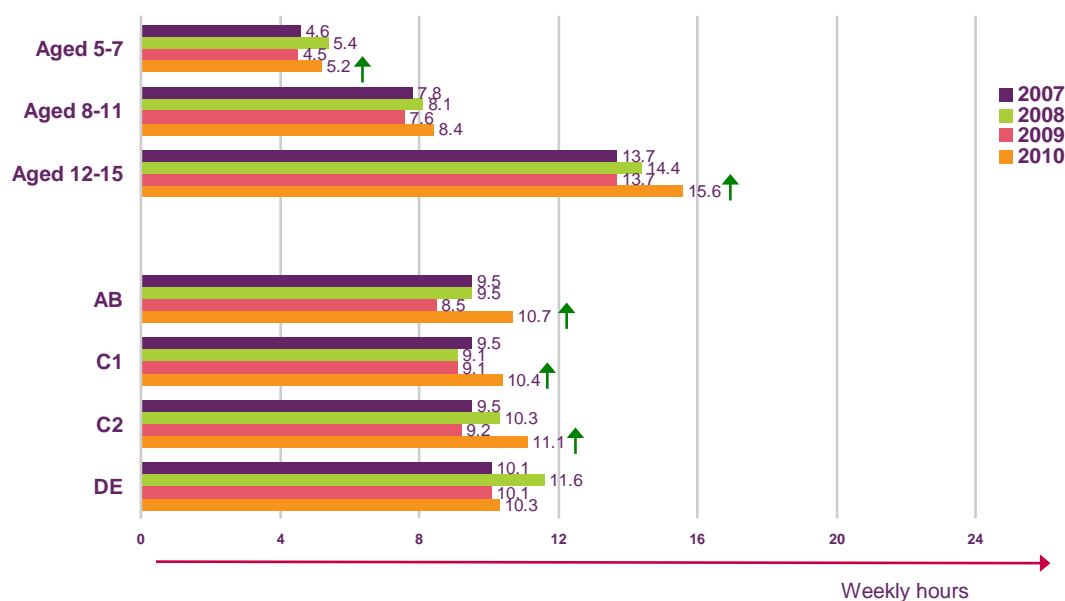
QP16A-B – How many hours would you say he/ she listens to the radio on a typical school day/ on a weekend day?  
 Base: Parents of children aged 5-11 who listen to the radio at home and children aged 12-15 who listen to the radio at home (VARIABLE BASE) – significance testing shows any difference between 2009 and 2010.  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

Use of the internet at home increases with the age of the child. Children aged 5-7 use the internet for 5.2 hours in a typical week, compared to 8.4 hours for 8-11s and 15.6 hours for 12-15s.

In 2010, there are no differences in the volume of hours spent online in a typical week by gender within age, or by household socio-economic group.

Compared to 2009, children aged 5-7 are now more likely to spend more hours online at home in a week (5.2 hours vs. 4.5 hours) as are children aged 12-15 (15.6 hours vs. 13.7 hours). Children in AB households are also more likely to spend longer online in a typical week than they did in 2009 (10.7 hours vs. 8.5 hours), as are children in C1 households (10.4 hours vs. 9.1 hours) and children in C2 households (11.1 hours vs. 9.2 hours). Weekly internet consumption at home has not changed for children in DE households (10.3 hours).

**Figure 22: Estimated weekly hours of internet consumption by age and socio-economic group: 2007, 2008, 2009 and 2010**

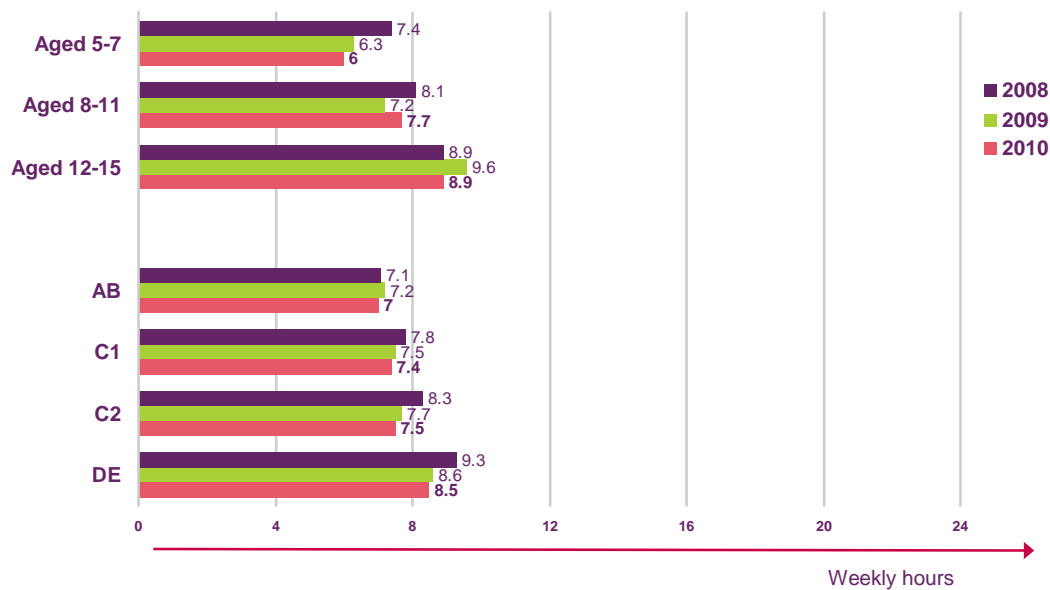


QP23A-B/ QC12A-B – How many hours would you say he/ she spends using the internet at home on a typical school day/ on a weekend day? (spontaneous question, single coded)  
 Base: Parents of children aged 5-11 who use the internet at home and children aged 12-15 who use the internet at home (VARIABLE BASE) – significance testing shows any differences between 2009 and 2010  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

As with home internet use, game playing increases with the age of the child. Children aged 5-7 spend 6.0 hours in a typical week game playing, with children aged 8-11 gaming for 7.7 hours per week and 12-15s gaming for 8.9 hours per week. As we saw in 2009, children aged 5-7 spend more time playing games than they do using the internet in a typical week (6.0 hours vs. 5.2 hours), children aged 8-11 spend a similar amount of time using both media (7.7 hours for gaming vs. 8.4 hours for the internet) while children aged 12-15 spend more time using the internet at home than they do playing games (15.6 vs. 8.9 hours).

Within each age category, boys spend more time game playing in a typical week than do girls. Children aged 5-15 in DE households also spend more time game playing than all children (8.5 hours vs. 7.7 hours). Compared to 2009, there has been no change in the number of hours spent gaming in a typical week for 5-7s, 8-11s or 12-15s, nor has there been any change in weekly consumption by household socio-economic group.

**Figure 23: Weekly hours of game playing consumption by age and socio-economic group: 2008, 2009 and 2010**



QP45A-B- How many hours would you say he/ she spends playing these games on a typical school day/ on a weekend day?  
 Base: Parents of children aged 5-11 whose child plays games on a games console, PC or laptop etc and children aged 12-15 (VARIABLE BASE) – significance testing shows any change between 2009 and 2010  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

Parents of 5-11s and children aged 12-15 were also asked about the volume of calls made and text messages sent through their mobile phone in a typical week<sup>14</sup>. As with other key media, mobile phone consumption (both voice calls and text messaging) increases with age.

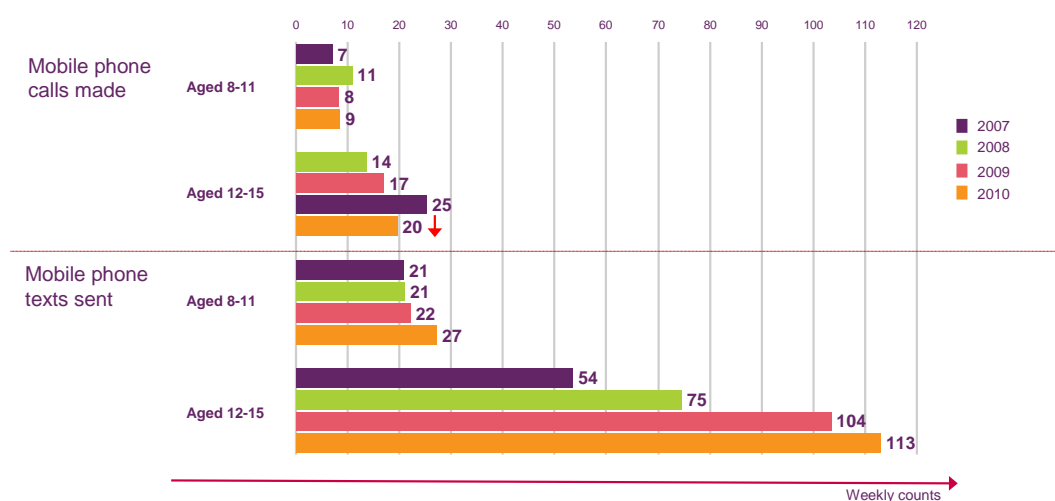
Unlike 2009 - when there were no differences in the volume of calls made by gender for either 8-11s or 12-15s - in 2010 it is more common for girls aged 8-11 or 12-15 to make more calls per week than boys (11 vs. 6 calls for 8-11s and 22 vs. 17 calls for 12-15s). Girls aged 8-11 and 12-15 also send more text messages per week compared to boys (37 texts vs. 17 texts for 8-11s and 140 texts vs. 83 texts for 12-15s). In 2010, there are no differences by socio-economic group in the volumes of calls made or text messages sent in a typical week.

Compared to 2009, 12-15s now make fewer calls per week on their mobile phone (20 vs. 25 calls) with no change for 8-11s, while the volume of text messages sent per week has remained the same both for 8-11s and for 12-15s.

There are no differences in the volume of calls made and text messages sent in a typical week when comparing 5-15s with a smartphone to all children with any mobile phone.

<sup>14</sup> Figure 24 only shows data relating to 8-11s and 12-15s as there were too few 5-7s with their own mobile phone to report on.

**Figure 24: Weekly calls made and text messages sent by users: 2007, 2008, 2009 and 2010**



QP35A-B/ QP36A-B – How many calls/ texts would you say he/ she makes/ 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 with their own mobile phone (VARIABLE BASE) –  
 significance testing shows any differences between 2009 and 2010  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

#### 4.4 Children of all ages are now more likely to undertake social networking related activity on a weekly basis

Children who use the internet at home were prompted with a range of internet activities and were asked to say which they ever do online, and how often they do them<sup>15</sup>.

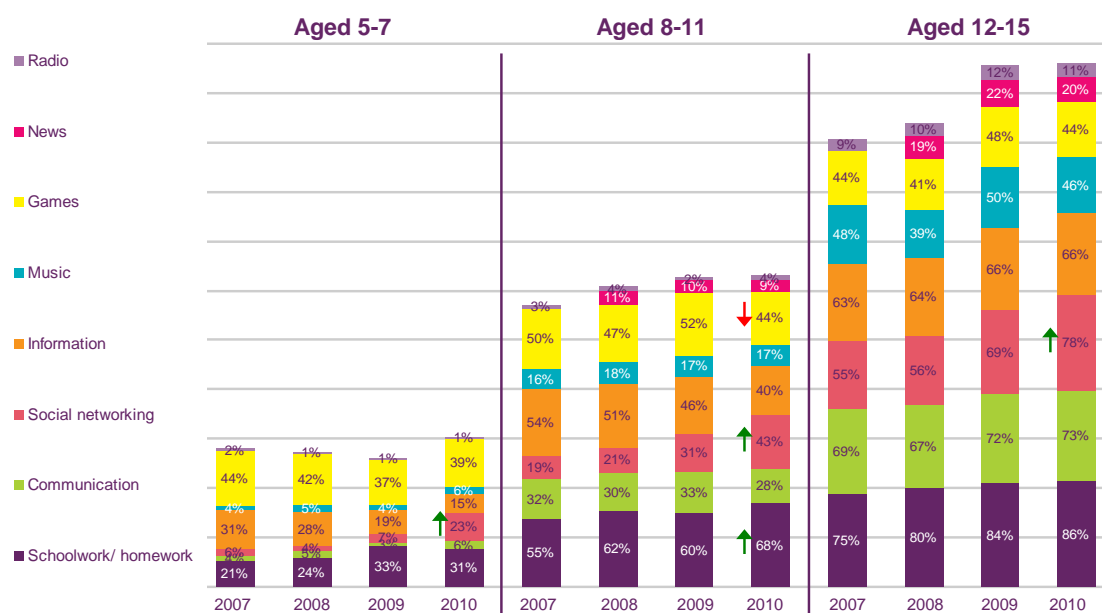
These uses have been grouped into eight types, in order to assess breadth of use of the internet.

- Schoolwork / homework – relates to finding information online for their studies
- Communication – relates to uses such as sending or receiving email or using Instant Messaging services
- Social networking – relates to visiting social networking websites like Facebook or Bebo, or virtual worlds (like Club Penguin or Moshi Monsters)
- Information – relates to general surfing/ browsing/ looking around the internet<sup>16</sup>, or looking at blogs or wikis (only asked of 8-15s)
- Music – relates to downloading or playing music over the internet
- Games – relates to playing games on websites or online
- News – relates to visiting news websites (only asked of 8-15s in 2008 and 2009)
- Radio – relates to listening to radio over the internet

<sup>15</sup> These activities in no way represent an exhaustive list of all the potential activities that children can undertake online. In order to draw comparisons over time Figure 25 shows only those activities that children were asked about in a consistent manner between 2007 and 2010 – some activities have therefore been excluded.

<sup>16</sup> In 2009 the wording of this particular question was ‘Looking for information on websites about things that interest them’.

**Figure 25: Internet activities carried out at least once a week by users: 2007, 2008, 2009 and 2010**



QC13A-M – Thinking about what you do when you use the internet at home, do you use the internet to do any of these? (prompted responses, multi-coded)

– PERCENTAGES SHOWN REFLECT THOSE THAT UNDERTAKE ACTIVITY AT LEAST WEEKLY

Base: Children aged 5-15 who use the internet at home (280 aged 5-7 in 2007, 308 aged 5-7 in 2008, 340 aged 5-7 in 2009, 343 aged 5-7 in 2010, 499 aged 8-11 in 2007, 527 aged 8-11 in 2008, 582 aged 8-11 in 2009, 597 aged 8-11 in 2010, 587 aged 12-15 in 2007, 614 aged 12-15 in 2008, 645 aged 12-15 in 2009, 665 aged 12-15 in 2010). Significance testing shows any change between 2009 and 2010

Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

The relative height of the columns indicates the proportion of children carrying out the activities, and as such represents breadth of use. Breadth of use has a clear link to the age of the child, with 5-7s continuing to have the narrowest use of the internet and 12-15s the broadest use.

Children aged 5-7 mostly use the internet at least weekly for games (39%), schoolwork (31%) for visiting virtual worlds/ social networking websites (23%) or for information (15%)<sup>17</sup>.

The majority of children aged 8-11 use the internet for schoolwork (68%) and around two in five use it for gaming (44%), social networking (43%) or for information (40%). Communication (28%) and music (17%) are the next most popular categories, with one in ten using the internet weekly or more often for news (9%).

The majority of 12-15s use the internet at least weekly for four of the eight categories: schoolwork (86%), social networking (78%), communication (73%), and information (66%).

Children aged 5-7 who use the internet at home are now more likely than in 2009 to use it at least weekly for social networking purposes (23% vs. 7%). This is not to say that children aged 5-7 are now more likely to visit mainstream social networking sites like Facebook or Bebo; this type of weekly use has remained constant over time (2% in 2009 vs. 5% in 2010). It is instead driven by an increase in this age group visiting virtual worlds such as Club Penguin or Moshi Monsters (up from 6% in 2009 to 20% in 2010). Since 2009, children aged 8-11 are also now more likely to visit social networking sites at least weekly (43% vs. 31%) and to use the internet for schoolwork/ homework (68% vs. 60%) and are less likely to use the internet weekly for gaming (44% vs. 52%). As with 5-7s, only one activity is now more likely to be undertaken at least weekly by 12-15s: social networking (78% vs. 69%).

<sup>17</sup> While 5-7s appear to have a narrower use of the internet, these data look at those activities undertaken online at least weekly. 5-7s may use the internet for these purposes but not always on a weekly basis.



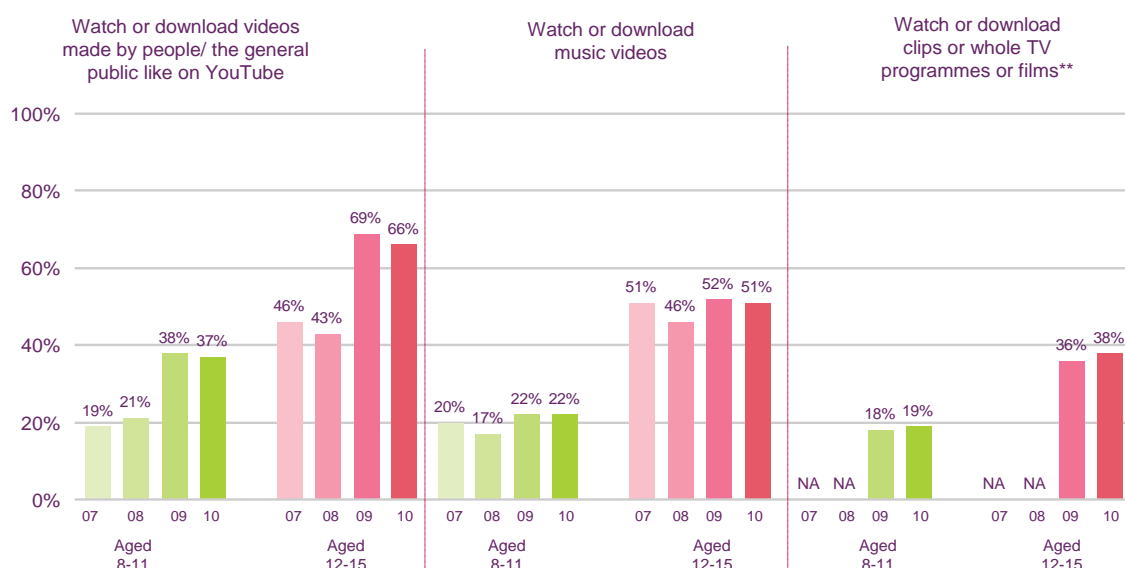
In 2010, there are some differences in breadth of use of the internet by gender. Girls aged 8-11 are more likely than boys of this age to use the internet on a weekly basis for schoolwork/ homework (73% vs. 63%) and communication (34% vs. 23%), while boys aged 8-11 are more likely to use it on a weekly basis for information (45% vs. 35%).

Girls aged 12-15 are more likely to use the internet weekly for social networking (82% vs. 74%) and for communication (78% vs. 67%) and boys of this age are more likely than girls to use it for games (53% vs. 35%) and for news (24% vs. 15%).

#### 4.5 There has been no change in the incidence of watching/ downloading user-generated content online for 8-11s or 12-15s

Older children (aged 8-15) were also asked whether they watched or downloaded the following types of online content: user-generated content (“watching or downloading videos made by people / the general public, like on YouTube”), music videos or clips of/ whole TV programmes/ films<sup>18</sup>.

**Figure 26: Watching/ downloading activities carried out by users aged 8-15: 2007, 2008, 2009 and 2010<sup>19</sup>**



NQC13A-M – Thinking about what you do when you use the internet at home, do you use the internet to do any of these? (prompted responses, multi-coded) – PERCENTAGES SHOWN REFLECT THOSE THAT UNDERTAKE ACTIVITY EVER \*\*in 2009 this was asked as two separate questions relating to clips and whole TV programmes or films. These questions were then combined in 2010  
 Base: Children aged 8-15 who use the internet at home (499 aged 8-11 in 2007, 527 aged 8-11 in 2008, 582 aged 8-11 in 2009, 597 aged 8-11 in 2010, 1045 aged 12-15 in 2007, 615 aged 12-15 in 2008, 645 aged 12-15 in 2009, 665 aged 12-15 in 2010) – significance testing shows any change between 2009 and 2010  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

Children aged 12-15 are more likely than those aged 8-11 to have watched or downloaded each of these types of content. Two in five 8-11s (37%) who use the internet at home have ever watched / downloaded user-generated content, with around one in five (22%) also watching / downloading music video content. Around one in five 8-11s (19%) have also watched / downloaded TV programmes or films (in full or in part). Among 12-15s, two in three (66%) of all those who use the internet at home have ever watched / downloaded user-generated content, and half (51%) have watched/ downloaded music videos. Two in five 12-15s (38%) have watched/ downloaded TV programmes (in full or in part).

<sup>18</sup> In 2009 the question distinguished between clips and whole TV programmes or films, but in 2010 these two separate codes were combined. The 2009 data has therefore also been combined to show those that responded at either of these separate questions.

<sup>19</sup> Figure 25 shows those activities undertaken at least weekly, while Figure 26 refers to activities ever undertaken.

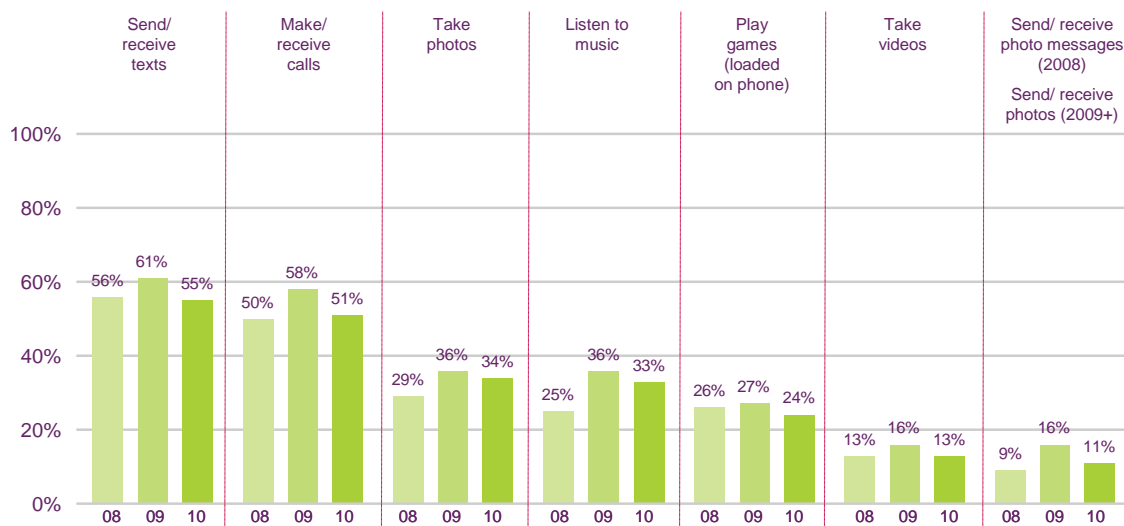
There has been no change since 2009 in the incidence of ever undertaking each of these activities by children aged 8-11 or 12-15.

In 2010 there are no differences in the likelihood of ever having undertaken each of these activities by gender within age or by household socio-economic group.

#### 4.6 Children aged 5-15 with a smartphone tend to use their phone for a broader range of activities

Children aged 8-15 with their own mobile phone were prompted with a range of types of use and were asked to say which they ever do with their mobile phone and how often<sup>20</sup>. Figure 27 shows the proportion of children aged 8-11 who carry out each of these activities with their mobile phone at least once a week.

**Figure 27: Mobile phone activities carried out at least once a week by owners aged 8-11: 2008, 2009 and 2010**



QC36A-O – Do you use your mobile phone to do any of these? (prompted responses, single coded) - Only showing activities undertaken at least weekly by 5% or more of 8-11s in 2010

Base: Children aged 8-11 with their own mobile phone (413 in 2008, 392 in 2009, 339 in 2010) – significance testing shows any difference between 2009 and 2010

Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

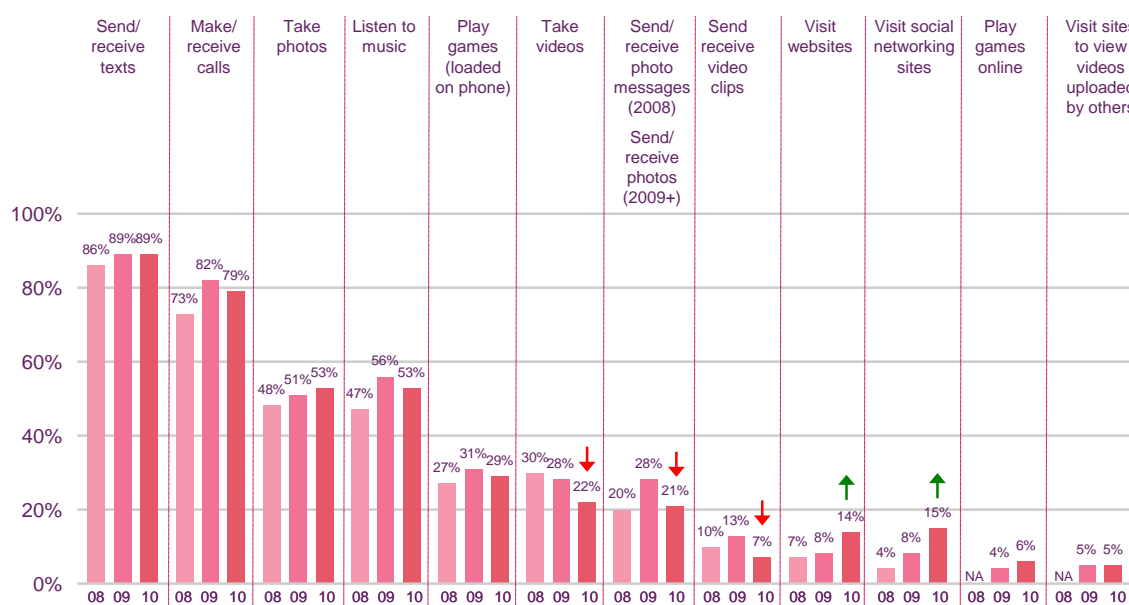
The majority of children aged 8-11 use their mobile phones at least weekly for sending/receiving text messages (55%) and to make/ receive calls (51%), with around one in three using their phones to take photos (34%) or listen to music (33%). One in four use their phone weekly to play games loaded on the phone (24%) with around one in eight (13%) using their phone to take videos or to send/ receive photos (11%). All other activities are undertaken by less than one in twenty children aged 8-11.

Since 2009 there has been no change in the weekly incidence of undertaking each activity on their mobile phones for children aged 8-11. In 2010, there is only one difference by gender: girls (aged 8-11) are more likely than boys to send/receive photos on a weekly basis (15% vs. 7%).

<sup>20</sup> Figure 27 shows seven out of the 17 activities asked about, the ten activities not shown are only undertaken weekly by less than 5% of children aged 8-11.

Figure 28 shows the proportion of children aged 12-15 who carry out each of these activities with their mobile phone at least once a week<sup>21</sup>.

**Figure 28: Mobile phone activities carried out at least once a week by owners aged 12-15: 2008, 2009 and 2010**



QC36A-O – Thinking about what you use your mobile phone for, do you use it to do any of these? - (prompted responses, single coded) - Only showing activities undertaken at least weekly by 2% or more of 12-15s in 2010  
 Base: Children aged 12-15 with their own mobile phone (690 aged 12-15 in 2008, 684 aged 12-15 in 2009, 654 aged 12-15 in 2010)  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

There are four activities undertaken weekly by the majority of 12-15s with a mobile phone: sending/ receiving text messages (89%), making or receiving calls (79%), taking photos (53%) and listening to music (53%). Around one in five 12-15s use their phone weekly to take videos (22%) or to send/ receive photos (21%). One in seven children aged 12-15 now use their phone to visit websites (14%) and for social networking (15%). All other activities are undertaken weekly by less than one in ten 12-15s.

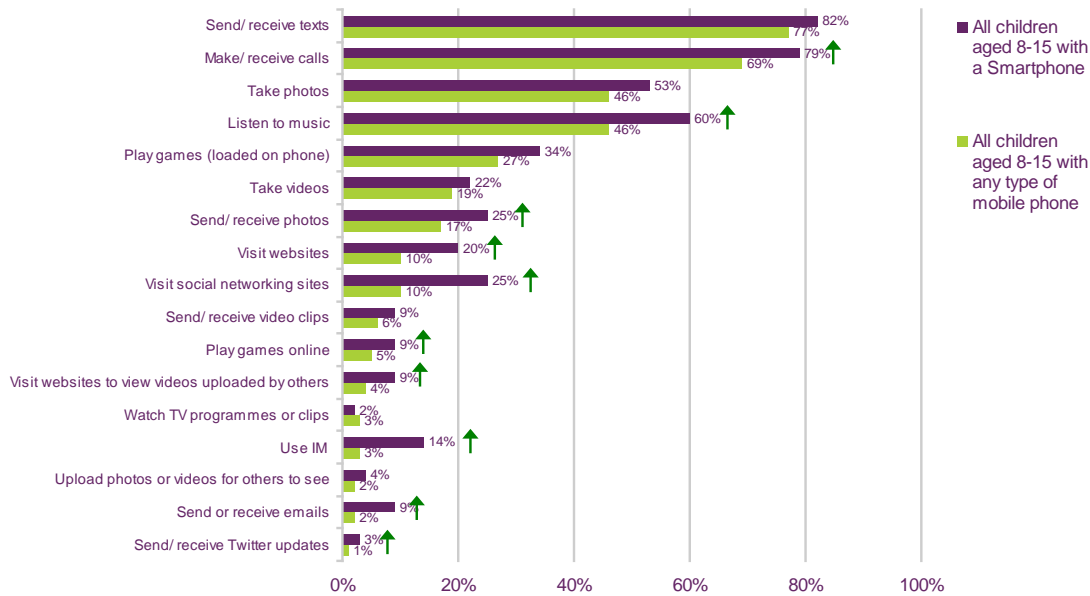
In contrast to 8-11s, there are more differences in 12-15s' weekly mobile phone use by gender. Girls aged 12-15 are more likely than boys to send/ receive text messages (94% vs. 83%) and to take photos (60% vs. 46%) while boys are more likely than girls to play games loaded on their phone (34% vs. 25%) and to watch TV programmes or clips (6% vs. 2%). Unlike the 8-11s, there have been some changes since 2009 in the weekly activities undertaken. Children aged 12-15 are now more likely to use their phone to visit websites (14% vs. 8%) and for social networking (15% vs. 8%).

Figure 29 shows the weekly activities undertaken by children aged 8-15 with a smartphone compared to those aged 8-15 with any mobile phone. Smartphone users are more likely to undertake nine of the 17 activities at least weekly, compared to all children aged 8-15 with any mobile phone. The weekly activities with the biggest percentage point difference between smartphone users and those with any type of mobile are: using the phone to visit social networking sites (15 percentage point difference – 25% vs. 10%), listening to music (14 percentage point difference - 60% vs. 46%), Instant Messaging (11 percentage point difference (14% vs. 3%), making/ receiving calls (10 percentage point difference - 79% vs. 69%), visiting websites (10 percentage point difference (20% vs. 10%), sending/ receiving photos (8 percentage point difference – 25% vs. 17%), visiting websites to look at videos or

<sup>21</sup> Figure 28 shows 12 out of the 17 activities, activities not shown are undertaken weekly by less than 5% of children aged 12-15

clips posted by other people (5 percentage point difference – 9% vs. 4%), playing games online (4 percentage point difference - 9% vs. 5%) and using Twitter ( 2 percentage point difference - 3% vs. 1%).

**Figure 29: Mobile phone activities carried out at least once a week by children aged 8-15 with a Smartphone and all children aged 8-15 with a mobile phone: 2010**



QC36A-O – Do you use your mobile phone to do any of these? (prompted responses, single coded) - Base: Children aged 8-15 with their own mobile phone (155 with a smartphone, 993 with any type of mobile phone) – significance testing shows any difference between these two groups  
Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in September to October 2010

#### 4.7 Children aged 8-15 are more likely to have undertaken certain creative activities online

Children aged 8-11 and 12-15 were prompted with various types of creative activities associated with digital technology. For each type of activity, they were asked if they had already done it, were interested in doing it or were not interested in doing it.

Of the activities asked about, the majority of 12-15s have set up a profile on a social networking site (80%) making this the most popular creative activity. This is followed by uploading photos to a website (61%). A sizeable minority of 12-15s have experience of creating an avatar that lives or plays in the online world (31%), of making a short video and uploading it to a website (22%) and of setting up their own website (18%). No single activity has been undertaken yet by the majority of 8-11s, with the most popular activity for this age group being creating an avatar (39%), followed by setting up a social networking profile (28%) and uploading photos to a website (16%).

Signing an online petition has been undertaken by relatively few 8-11s (2%) or 12-15s (9%). Expressing views online about political or social issues has been undertaken by only around one in twelve 12-15s who use the internet at home (8%).

There are differences by gender, most noticeably among children aged 8-11. Boys aged 8-11 are more likely than girls aged 8-11 to have made a short video and uploaded it to a website (6% vs. 1%), with girls more likely to say they are not interested in this activity (82% vs. 67%). While boys aged 8-11 are as likely as girls to have signed an online petition, they are more likely than girls to say they are interested in doing so (7% vs. 3%). Girls aged 8-11

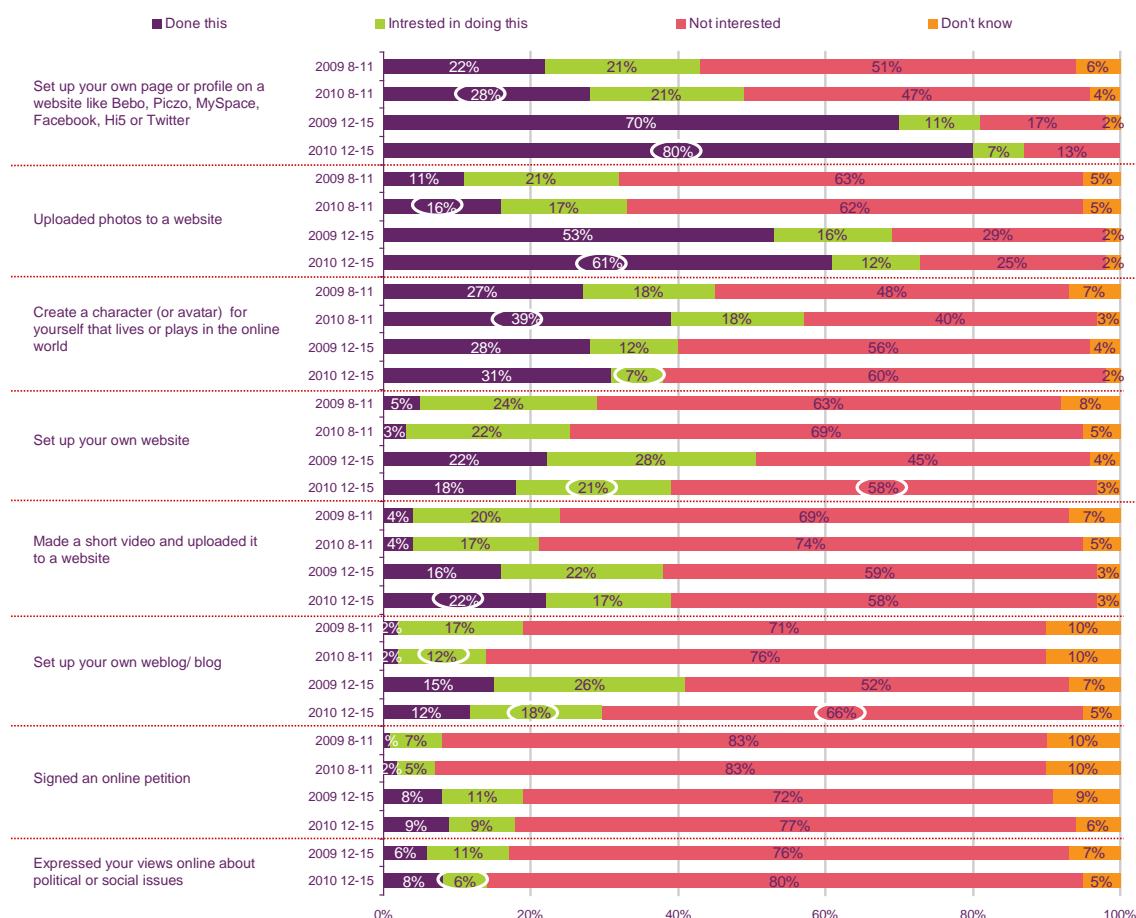
are more likely than boys to say they are not interested in setting up their own website (75% vs. 64%) or not interested in setting up a blog (82% vs. 71%).

Girls aged 12-15 are more likely than boys aged 12-15 to have set up a social networking site profile (85% vs. 76%) or to have uploaded photos to a website (67% vs. 55%). While the actual experience of having made a short video and uploaded it is the same for boys and girls aged 12-15, boys are more likely to say they are interested in doing this (21% vs. 12%), with girls being more likely to say they are not interested (63% vs. 53%).

There are few differences when comparing by household socio-economic group. Children aged 8-15 in AB households are less likely than all 8-15s who use the internet at home to say they are not interested in signing an online petition (72% vs. 80%). Children in C1 households are more likely to be interested in uploading photos (19% vs. 14%) and DE children are more likely to say they are not interested in making a short video and uploading it (72% vs. 66%). Children aged 12-15 in AB households are more likely than all 12-15s who use the internet at home to have expressed their views online about political or social issues (14% vs. 8%)

Since 2009, 8-11s are more likely to have set up a social networking site profile (28% vs. 22%), uploaded photos to a website (16% vs. 11%) and to have created an avatar that lives or plays in the online world (39% vs. 27%). While experience of having undertaken the activity has not changed, 8-11s are now less likely to be interested in setting up their own blog (12% vs. 17%). Children aged 12-15 are now more likely to have set up a social networking site profile (80% vs. 70%), to have uploaded photos to a website (61% vs. 53%) and to have made a short video and uploaded it to a website (22% vs. 16%). There are four creative activities that children aged 12-15 are as likely to have undertaken in 2009 and in 2010, but are now less likely to be interested in: creating a character that lives or plays in the online world (7% vs. 12%), setting up a website (21% vs. 28%), setting up a blog (18% vs. 26%) and expressing views online about political or social issues (6% vs. 11%).

**Figure 30: Children's experience of creative activities, by age: 2009 and 2010**



QC18 – I'd like to read out a number of things people might do. For each one, could you please tell me if you've done it, you'd be interested in doing it, or not interested? (prompted responses, single coded)  
 Base: Children aged 8-15 who use the internet at home (582 aged 8-11 in 2009, 597 aged 8-11 in 2010, 645 aged 12-15 in 2009, 665 aged 12-15 in 2010) – significance testing shows any difference between 2009 and 2010  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

#### 4.8 Four in five 12-15s who use the internet at home now have a social networking site profile

Given the popularity of social networking, questions relating specifically to children's use of social networking sites have been included in Ofcom's media literacy research since 2007.

Figure 30, above, shows children's experience of and interest in setting up a page or profile on a social networking site, while Figure 31 shows the proportion of children aged 5-7<sup>22</sup>, 8-11 and 12-15 who currently have an active profile on any social networking websites. One in twenty parents of children aged 5-7 (5%) say their child has a social networking site profile. Slightly more than one in four children aged 8-11 (27%) say they have a profile, as do four in five children aged 12-15 (79%).

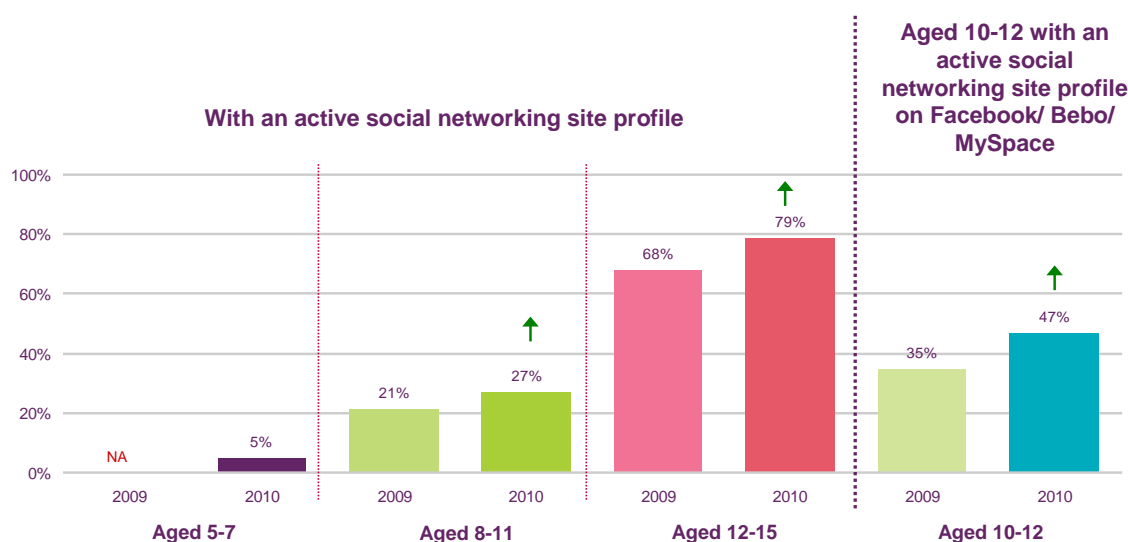
Both 8-11s and 12-15s are now more likely to have an active social networking site profile than they were in 2009.

When comparing by gender, girls aged 12-15 are more likely than boys aged 12-15 to have an active social networking site profile (84% vs. 75%).

<sup>22</sup> In 2010 parents of children aged 5-7 were asked whether their child has a profile on a social networking site, but all subsequent questions about children's use of social networking sites were only asked of children aged 8-11 or 12-15 or their parents.

Figure 31 also shows that around half of children aged 10-12 who use the internet at home say they have a profile on Facebook, Bebo or MySpace (47%)<sup>23</sup>. Compared to 2009, children aged 10-12 are now more likely to have a profile on at least one of these three sites (47% vs. 35%). Last year the report focused on children aged 8-12 with an active profile on Facebook/ Bebo/ MySpace. In 2010 around a third (34%) of children of this age who use the internet at home have a social networking site profile on one of these sites which has increased from one in four (25%) in 2009.

**Figure 31: Children with an active social networking site profile, by age: 2009 and 2010**



NQP29A/ NQC19- Which different social networking sites do you have a page or profile on? (spontaneous responses, multi coded)  
 Base: Parents of children aged 5-7 and children aged 8-15 who use the internet at home ( 343 aged 5-7 in 2010, 581 aged 8-11 in 2009, 597 aged 8-11 in 2010, 645 aged 12-15 in 2009, 665 aged 12-15 in 2010, 487 aged 10-12 in 2009, 511 aged 10-12 in 2010 ) - significance testing shows any changes between 2009 and 2010  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

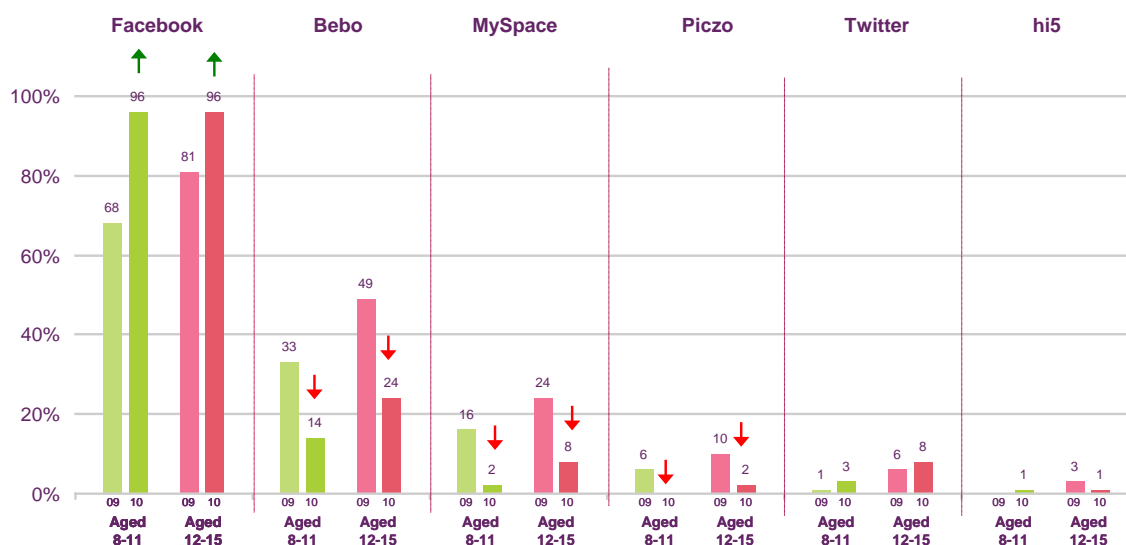
Nearly all 8-15s with an active social networking site profile now use Facebook (96% for both 8-11s and 12-15s). Children aged 12-15 are more likely than 8-11s to also use Bebo (24% vs. 14%) and MySpace (8% vs. 2%). Since 2009, children aged 8-11 and 12-15 with a profile are now less likely to say they use Bebo, MySpace and Piczo, and are more likely to use Facebook. Seven per cent of all 8-15s with an active social networking site profile say they use Twitter, accounting for fewer than one in twenty children aged 8-11 (3%) and one in twelve 12-15s<sup>24</sup> (8%). Looking at these as a proportion of all children aged 8-15 indicates that 3% of all 8-15s use Twitter.

<sup>23</sup> This group of children is of particular interest as the minimum age for setting up a profile on Facebook/ Bebo/ MySpace is 13. Rather than looking at all children aged under 13 with profiles on Facebook/ Bebo/ MySpace, we have chosen to look at a subset - those children aged 10-12 with a profile on at least one of these sites. This prevents any subsequent analysis being too heavily influenced by factors attributable to the age of the youngest children within this group (i.e. those aged 5-9 with a profile on Facebook/ Bebo/ MySpace).

<sup>24</sup> Twitter is not aimed at those under 13. It is not included in the subset group analysis, which focuses on the main social networking sites.



**Figure 32: Social networking websites where children aged 8-15 currently have an active profile: 2009 and 2010**



NQP29A/ NQC19- Which different social networking sites do you have a page or profile on? (spontaneous responses, multi coded)  
 Base: Children aged 8-15 who have an active social networking site profile (129 aged 8-11 in 2009, 153 aged 8-11 in 2010, 442 aged 12-15 in 2009, 507 aged 12-15 in 2010) - significance testing shows any changes between 2009 and 2010  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

#### 4.9 One in five 8-11s with a social networking site profile talk to people that are not directly known to them

Children aged 8-15 with an active social networking site profile were prompted with a list of activities that they could possibly undertake when visiting these types of website:

- Talk to friends/ family.
- Talk to people I don't know.
- Talk to people who are friends of friends.
- Look at other people's pages without leaving a message.
- Listen to music/ find out about bands.
- Look for old friends/ people I've lost touch with.
- Look at or join in with campaigns and petitions.

Nearly all 8-11s (98%) say they use these types of sites to talk to friends or family with around one in five (18%) talking to friends of friends. Around one in twenty (4%) say they talk to people they don't know.

A similar proportion of 12-15s say they talk to friends or family (98%) and close to three in ten talk to friends of friends (28%). In addition to being more likely to talk to friends of friends, children aged 12-15 are more likely than 8-11s to use these sites to look at other people's pages without leaving a message (37% vs. 21%), to listen to music/ find out about bands (32% vs. 21%) and to look for people they've lost touch with (33% vs. 20%). Close to one in ten children aged 12-15 with a social networking site profile (8%) say they talk to people they don't know. There are no differences by gender among children aged 12-15<sup>25</sup>,

<sup>25</sup> Low base sizes prevent analysis by gender among 8-11s



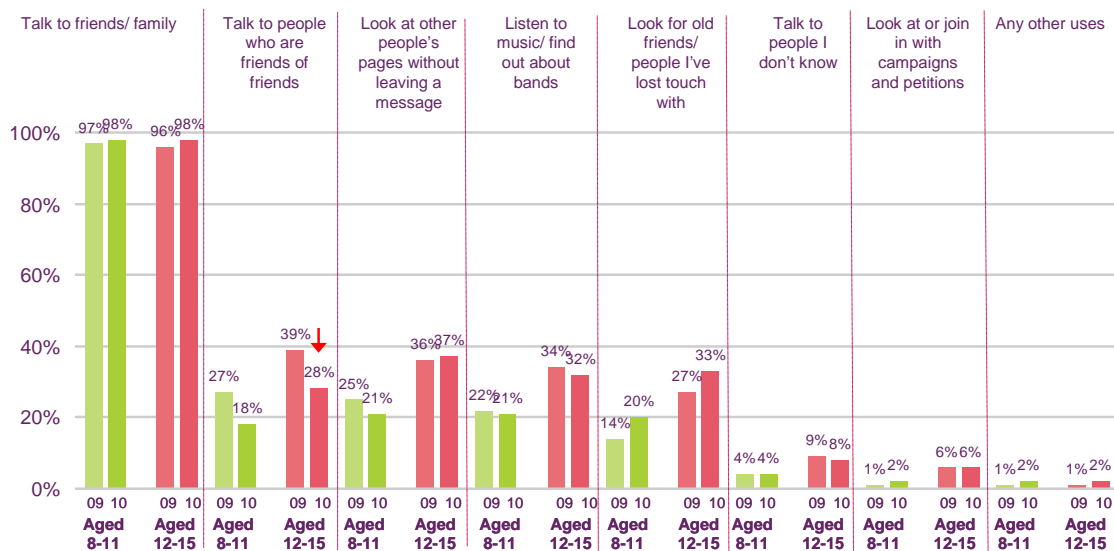
and children aged 8-15 in AB households are more likely than all children to use social networking sites to look for people they've lost touch with (41% vs. 30%) or to look at or join in with campaigns/ petitions (10% vs. 5%).

Compared to 2009, children aged 12-15 are now less likely to talk to people who are friends of friends (28% vs. 39%).

Children who talk to people who are friends of friends could be talking to people who may not be directly known to them. By combining responses among the children who said they use social networking sites for either talking to friends of friends or people they don't know, around one in five 8-11s (22%) and one in three 12-15s (32%) talk to people who are potentially not directly known to them.

When looking at the responses for children aged 10-12 with an active profile on Facebook/ Bebo/ MySpace, one in four of these children talk to people who are potentially not directly known to them (25%).

**Figure 33: Types of use of social networking sites, by age: 2009 and 2010**



QC21 – Do you regularly use social networking sites for any of the things shown on this card? (prompted responses, single coded)  
 Base: Children aged 8-15 who have a social networking site profile that is currently active (129 aged 8-11 in 2009, 153 aged 8-11 in 2010, 442 aged 12-15 in 2009, 507 aged 12-15 in 2010) - significance testing shows any changes between 2009 and 2010  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

## Section 5

## Knowledge and understanding of media among 8-15s

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

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

Due to potential comprehension issues, some of these questions were not asked of the youngest children (aged 5-7). Some of them were asked of children aged 8 -11, and all of the questions were asked of children aged 12-15.

### Key findings

- Two thirds of 8-11s (67%) who use the internet at home say they only visit websites they've been to before. Over half of 12-15s (57%) say this.
- 44% of 12-15s who ever use search engines make some type of critical judgement about search engine results, thinking that some of the sites returned will be truthful while others may not be. 31% believe that if a search engine lists information then it must be truthful and 15% don't consider the veracity of results but just visit the sites they like the look of. These proportions have not changed since 2009, suggesting that nearly half of 12-15s who use search engine websites are not critically aware of the provenance of its content.
- Around three in five 12-15s (61%) who use the internet at home say they would make some kind of checks when visiting a website they hadn't been to before. Nearly one quarter (23%) of 12-15s who use the internet say they do not make any of these checks. These proportions have not changed since 2009.
- There is a clear hierarchy of the types of information children aged 12-15 who use the internet at home or elsewhere would be happy to put online. The majority of 12-15s would be happy to post photos from being out with their friends (58%) or from their holiday (54%) while around half would be happy to post information about what they are doing (51%) or how they are feeling (46%). Children would be much less willing to give out their contact details such as their email address (22%), their mobile phone number (8%) or their home address details (6%).
- 85% of 8-11s and 87% of 12-15s with a social networking profile say that it can only be seen by friends. For 12-15s this represents a rise since 2009.

## 5.1 Children feel able to differentiate between the truthfulness of different types of television content

Children aged 8-11 and 12-15 who watch television at home were asked, for various genres of television programmes, whether they believed that what they were watching reflected a true picture of what really happened – with the aim of understanding whether they accepted television content at face value or applied some degree of 'critical understanding' to filter the information shown in such programmes. Children were therefore asked whether they felt that reality TV programmes (like *Big Brother*), TV documentary programmes (like wildlife programmes) or news programmes (like *Newsround*) showed a true picture of what really happened. The results are shown in Figure 34 below<sup>26</sup>.

Children in both age groups are more likely to believe that documentary or news programmes show a true picture of what really happened.

With regard to reality TV programmes, while the majority of 12-15s (58%) say that these do not give a true picture of what really happened, considerably fewer 8-11s give this response (38%). However, a larger proportion of 8-11s state that they are unsure, as opposed to them feeling that they do show a true picture of what really happened. Boys aged 12-15 are more likely than girls aged 12-15 to say that reality TV programmes show a true picture of what really happened (63% vs. 53%). Boys aged 8-11 or 12-15 are more likely than girls in each age group to say that TV documentary programmes show a true picture of what really happened (83% vs. 74% for 8-11s and 86% vs. 79% for 12-15s).

Children aged 8-15 in C2 households are less likely to say that reality TV programmes show a true picture of what really happened (19% vs. 27%) and are more likely to say that they are unsure (32% vs. 24%).

There has been no change in these levels of critical understanding since 2009.

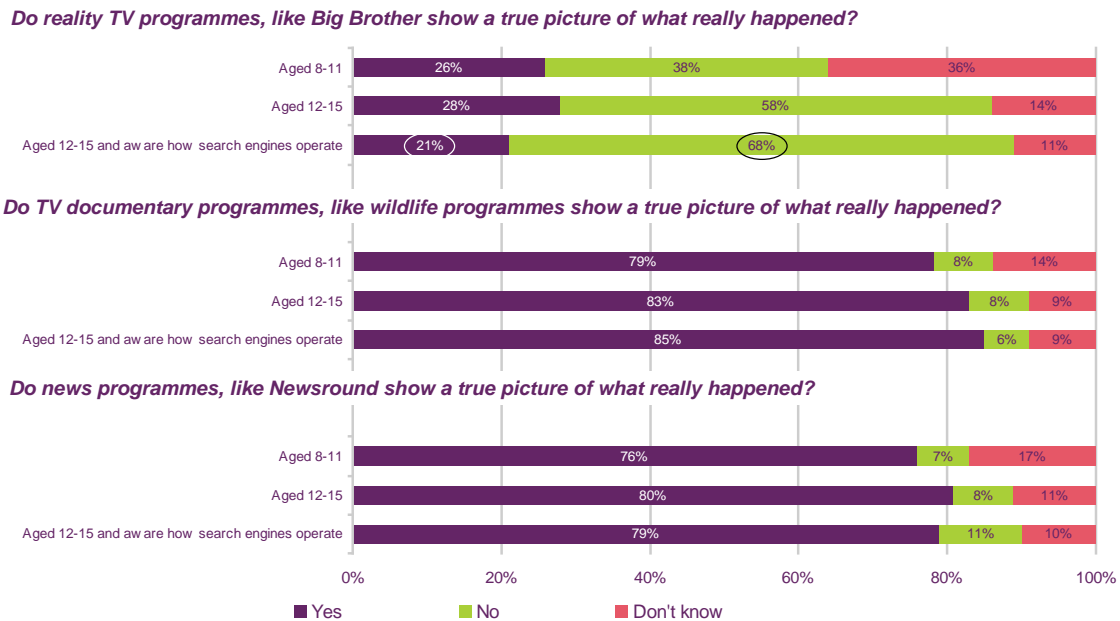
Figure 34 also shows responses to each of these questions among children aged 12-15 who use the internet at home and who are aware of how search engines operate. The purpose of considering this group's responses to these questions is to understand whether critical understanding of how one medium operates transfers across to understanding of other media. Children aged 12-15 who are aware how search engines operate are more likely to say, when compared to all 12-15s who watch TV at home, that reality TV programmes do not show a true picture of what really happened (68% vs. 58%).

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<sup>26</sup> The data shown in Figure 34 for both age groups exclude those children who do not watch each type of television programme

**Figure 34: Children's belief in television content, by genre: 2010**

**Children's belief in television content, by genre**



QC4B-D- Here are some questions about how you feel about TV. Could you give me a Yes or No for each one please? (spontaneous responses, single coded)  
 Base: Children aged 8-15 who watch TV at home (Base varies) - NB EXCLUDES THOSE WHO DO NOT WATCH EACH TYPE OF PROGRAMME - Significance testing shows any difference between those aged 12-15 who are aware how search engine operates and all aged 12-15  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

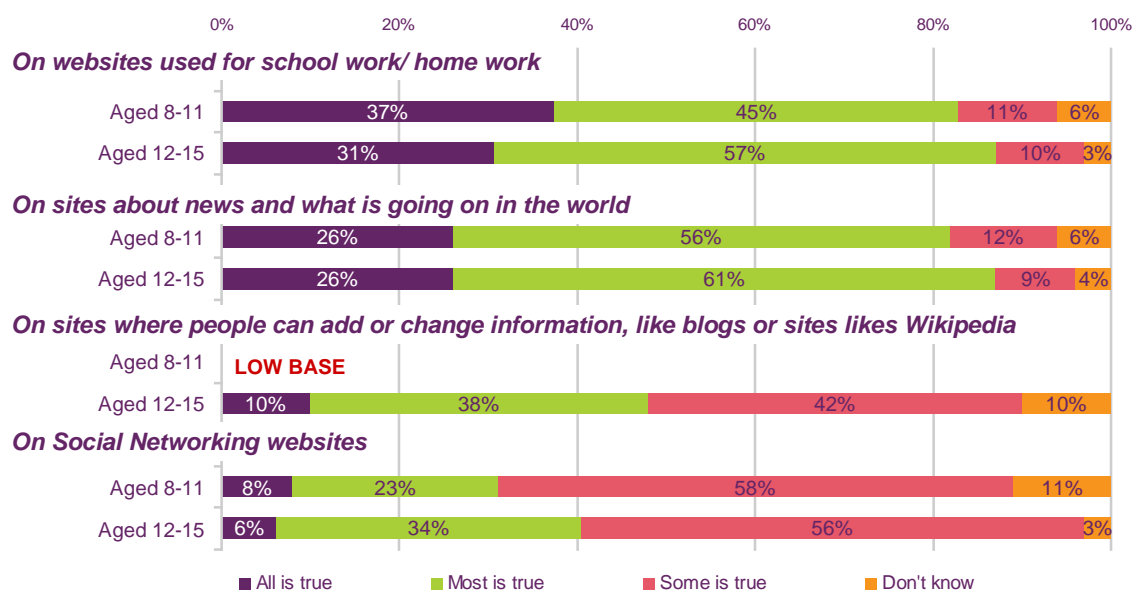
**5.2 8-15s also apply a level of 'critical understanding' regarding the truthfulness of online content**

Children aged 8-15 who use the internet at home were asked how frequently they visited certain types of websites. Children who had ever visited four particular types of websites: those used for schoolwork / homework, those used for news purposes, those where user-generated content is posted (such as blogs or sites like Wikipedia) and social networking sites, were asked whether they believed that all of the information, most of the information or some of the information on these types of site was true.

Close to nine in ten 8-11s (88%) and nearly all 12-15s (95%) who use the internet at home have ever visited websites for schoolwork / homework. Those aged 12-15 are more likely than those aged 8-11 to believe that all or most of the information is true (88% vs. 83%). There are no differences by gender or by household socio-economic group. There has been no change in children's attitudes towards the truthfulness of sites that they use for schoolwork/ homework since 2009.

Slightly more than one in five (22%) of 8-11s and two in five (42%) of 12-15s who use the internet at home have ever visited sites about news and what is going on the world, and both age groups are as likely as each other to believe that information on this type of site is all or mostly true (82% for 8-11s and 87% for 12-15s). There are also no differences in belief by gender or by household socio-economic group. Since 2009, children aged 8-11 are now more likely to believe that most of the information is true.

**Figure 35: Children's belief in websites used for information and news purposes, by age: 2010**



QC14B/ C/ A/ D- When you use the internet to visit .....Do you believe that all of the information you see is true, most of it is true or just some of it is true? (prompted responses, single coded)  
 Base: Children aged 8-15 who use the internet to visit relevant websites (VARIABLE BASE)  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

One in five (20%) of 8-11s<sup>27</sup> and close to half of 12-15s (46%) who use the internet at home say they have ever visited sites where people can add or change information, like blogs or sites like Wikipedia. 12-15s are much less likely to feel that all or most of the information on these types of sites is true (48%), compared to news sites (87%) or those sites used for homework (88%). There are no differences in belief by gender or by socio-economic group and there has been no change in attitudes among 12-15s since 2009.

One in three 8-11s (35%) and four in five 12-15s (83%) who use the internet at home have ever used the internet to visit social networking sites. 12-15s are more likely than 8-11s to believe that all or most of the information on social networking sites is true (41% vs. 31%). There are no differences in belief by gender, and children aged 8-15 in AB households are less likely to believe that all is true, when compared to all children aged 8-15 (2% vs. 7%). There has been no change in attitudes since 2009 for either 8-11s or 12-15s.

### 5.3 Slightly more than two in five 12-15s who use search engines understand how they operate

Children aged 12-15 who ever use search engines (94% of all home internet users) were asked about the truthfulness of information that was returned by the search engine. Children were asked which of the following statements is closer to their opinion:

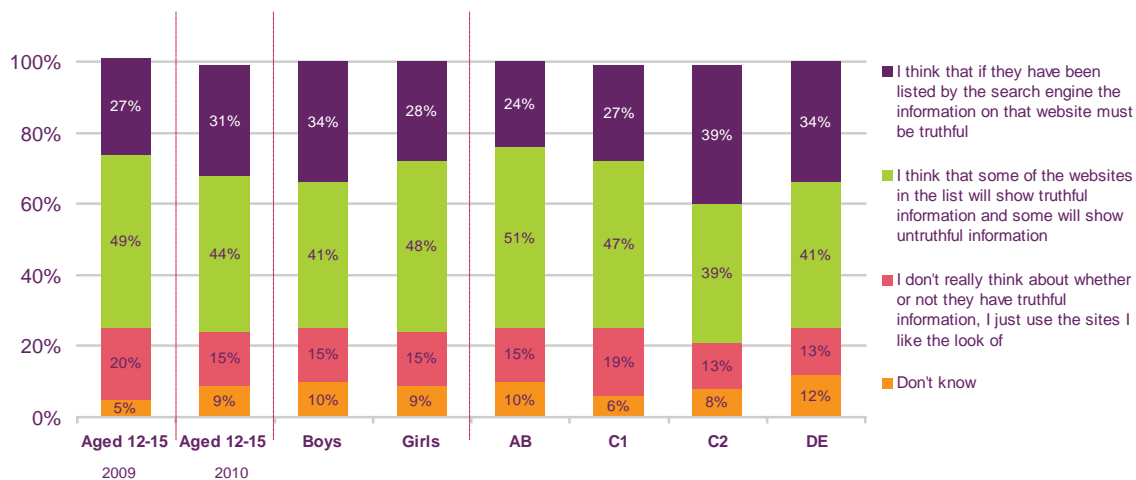
- I think that if they have been listed by the search engine the information on the website must be truthful.
- I think that some of the websites in the list will show truthful information and some will show untruthful information.

<sup>27</sup> It is not possible to show data for 8-11s due to the low base of respondents

- I don't really think about whether or not they have truthful information, I just use the sites I like the look of.

Slightly more than two in five children aged 12-15 (44%) make some type of critical judgement about search engine results, thinking that some of the sites returned will be truthful while others may not be. Three in ten children aged 12-15 (31%) believe that if a search engine lists information then it must be truthful and less than one in five (15%) don't consider the veracity of results but just visit the sites they like the look of. Around one in ten children aged 12-15 (9%) are unsure. There are no differences in any responses by gender or by household socio-economic group. There are also no differences when comparing the responses given by children in 2010 to the responses given in 2009.

**Figure 36: Children's understanding of results listed by search engines: 2010**



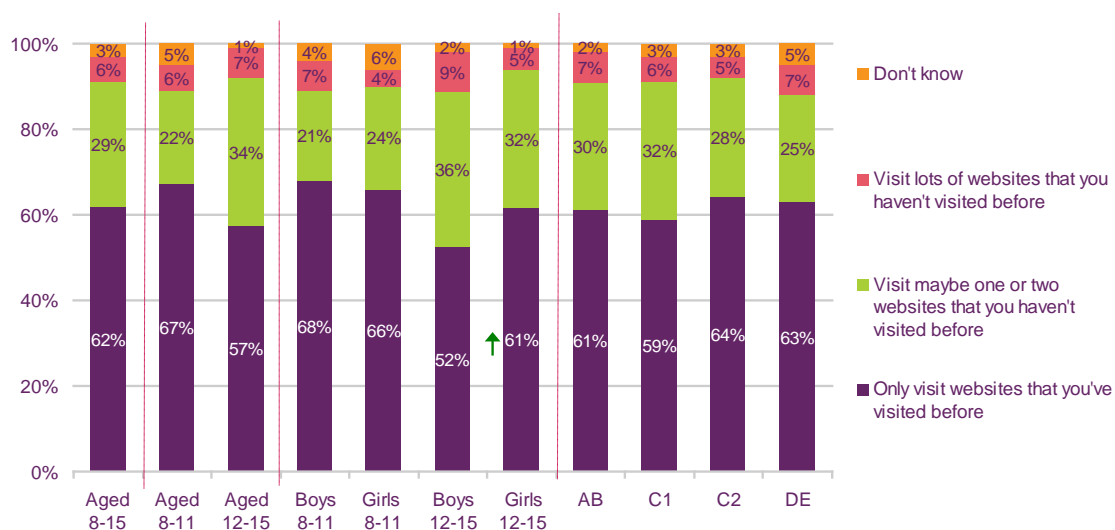
NQC24 – Which one of these is the closest in your opinion about the truthfulness of the information in the websites that appear in the results pages? (prompted responses, single coded)  
 Base: Children 12-15 who ever use search engines to find out about other websites or search for information (313 aged 12-15 in 2009, 620 aged 12-15 in 2010, 317 boys aged 12-15, 303 girls aged 12-15, 151 AB, 188 C1, 124 C2, 157 DE) – significance testing shows any difference between 2009 and 2010 or by socio-economic group compared to all 12-15s.  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

## 5.4 The majority of internet users aged 8-15 only use websites they've visited previously

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

The majority of 8-11s and 12-15s say they only visit websites they've visited before, with 8-11s more likely than 12-15s to give this response (67% vs. 57%). A similar proportion of 8-11s and 12-15s, slightly more than one in twenty, say they visit lots of websites they haven't visited before (6% for 8-11s and 7% for 12-15s) with 12-15s being more likely than 8-11s to say they visit one or two websites they haven't visited before (34% vs. 22%). There are no differences by gender among 8-11s, although girls aged 12-15 are more likely than boys of that age to say they only visit websites that they've visited before (61% vs. 52%). There are no differences by household socio-economic group.

**Figure 37: 8-15s experience of visiting websites they haven't visited before: 2010**



NQC16 – In most weeks when you use the internet, would you say that you....?  
 Base: Children aged 8-15 who use the internet at home (1262 aged 8-15, 597 aged 8-11, 665 aged 12-15, 314 girls aged 8-11, 283 girls aged 8-11, 340 boys aged 12-15, 325 girls aged 12-15, 276 AB, 382 C1, 265 C2, 339 DE) – significance testing shows any differences by gender within age and by socio-economic group compared to all aged 8-15  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

## 5.5 One in four internet users aged 12-15 does not make any checks when visiting new websites

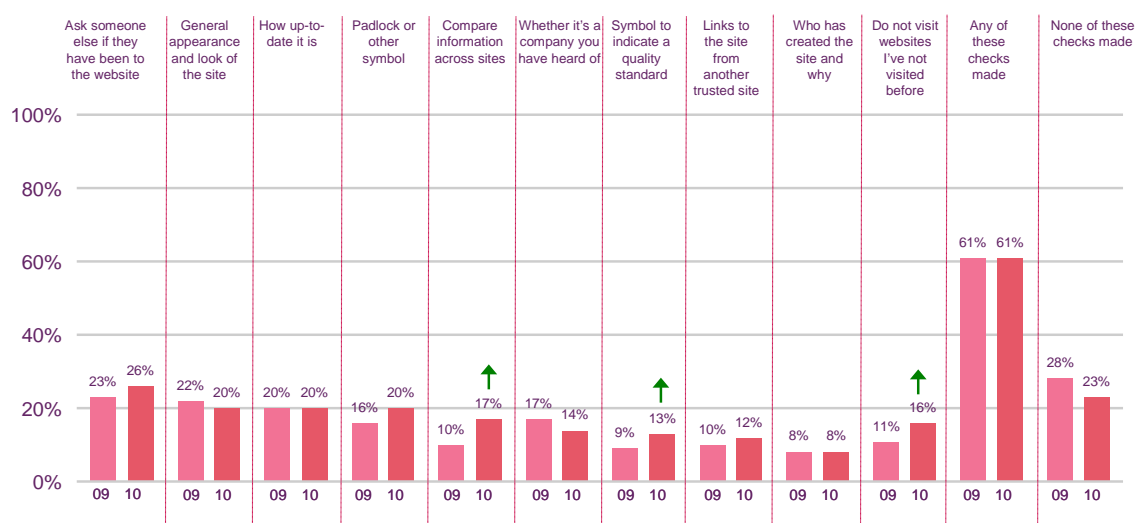
Children aged 12-15 who use the internet at home were shown a list of types of checks that could be made when visiting websites that they hadn't visited before, and were asked to say which, if any, of these things they would check.

Around three in five 12-15s (61%) said they would check at least one of the things on the list. Slightly less than one in four (23%) 12-15s who use the internet said that they do not make any of these checks. There is only one difference by gender; boys aged 12-15 are more likely than girls to say they would ask someone else if they had been to the website (30% vs. 22%). There are no differences by household socio-economic group.

Since 2009, there has been no change in the overall incidence of 12-15s making any of these checks. They are, however, more likely now to say they check some types of information across a number of websites to make sure that it is correct (17% vs. 10%) or to say they check whether there is a symbol to indicate a quality standard (13% vs. 9%). Since 2009, they are now also more likely to say they do not visit websites they haven't visited before (16% vs. 11%).



**Figure 38: Checks made by 12-15s when visiting websites they haven't visited before: 2009 and 2010<sup>28</sup>**



NQC16B – Thinking about the websites that you visit that you haven't visited before. Which, if any of these things would you check? (prompted responses, multi-coded) – NB in 2009 the question referred to 'new' websites

Base: Children aged 12-15 who use the internet at home (645 aged 12-15 in 2009, 665 aged 12-15 in 2010) – significance testing shows any difference between 2009 and 2010

Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

Children aged 12-15 who say that in most weeks they either visit lots of websites that they haven't visited before, or visit one or two websites that they haven't visited before, are no more likely than all children aged 12-15 who use the internet at home to make any of the nine checks.

There are, however, some differences in the ranking order of checks made by children aged 12-15 who say they visit either lots of, or one or two, new websites. The most popular mention for this group of children is asking someone else if they have been to the website (33%) followed by checking to see if there is a padlock or other symbol (25%). Around one in five check the general appearance and look of the site (22%) compare information across sites (22%) or check how up-to-date the information is (21%).

## 5.6 Children aged 12-15 are now more likely to say they restrict access to their social networking site profile

A similar proportion of both 8-11s and 12-15s with an active social networking site profile say that their profile can be seen only by their friends (85% for 8-11s and 87% for 12-15s), or that their profile can be seen by anyone (8% for 8-11s and 7% for 12-15s). Compared with 2009, 12-15s are now more likely to have set their profile to be viewed only by friends (87% vs. 78%) and less likely to let it be seen by anyone (7% vs. 18%). There has been no change in the types of settings used by 8-11s since 2009. There are no differences by gender among 12-15s<sup>29</sup> and also no differences by household socio-economic group.

Nearly nine in ten children aged 10-12 with a profile on either Facebook, Bebo or MySpace (88%) say their profile can be seen only by friends, with around one in twenty saying their

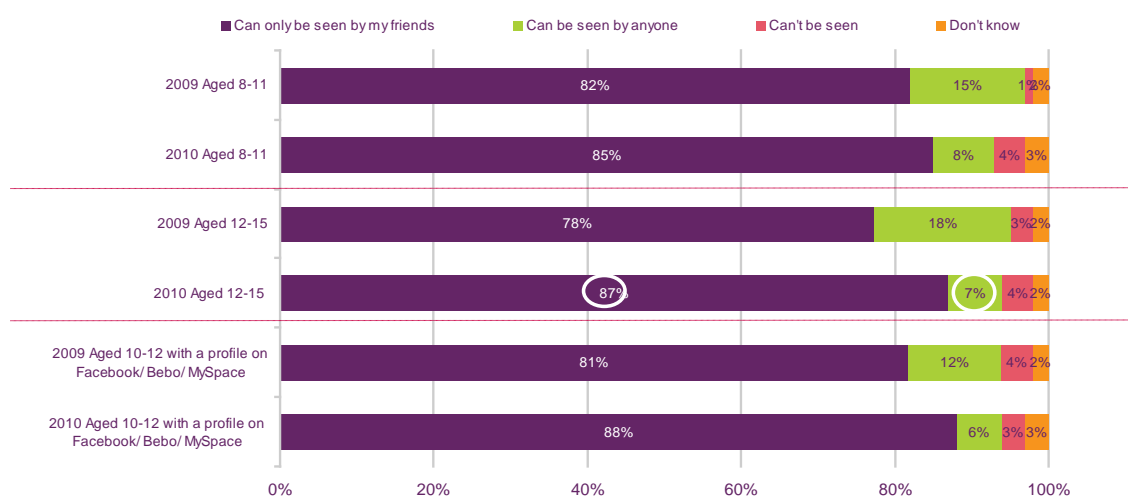
<sup>28</sup> In 2009, the following option was also shown to children: "If I have heard of the site on TV/ radio/ in a newspaper/ magazine". This option was removed in 2010, and the data for 2009 have therefore been adjusted accordingly

<sup>29</sup> Due to base sizes it is not possible to look at any differences between boys and girls aged 8-11



profile is visible to anyone (6%). There has been no change in the types of settings used by this group since 2009.

**Figure 39: Visibility of social networking site profiles, by age: 2009 and 2010**



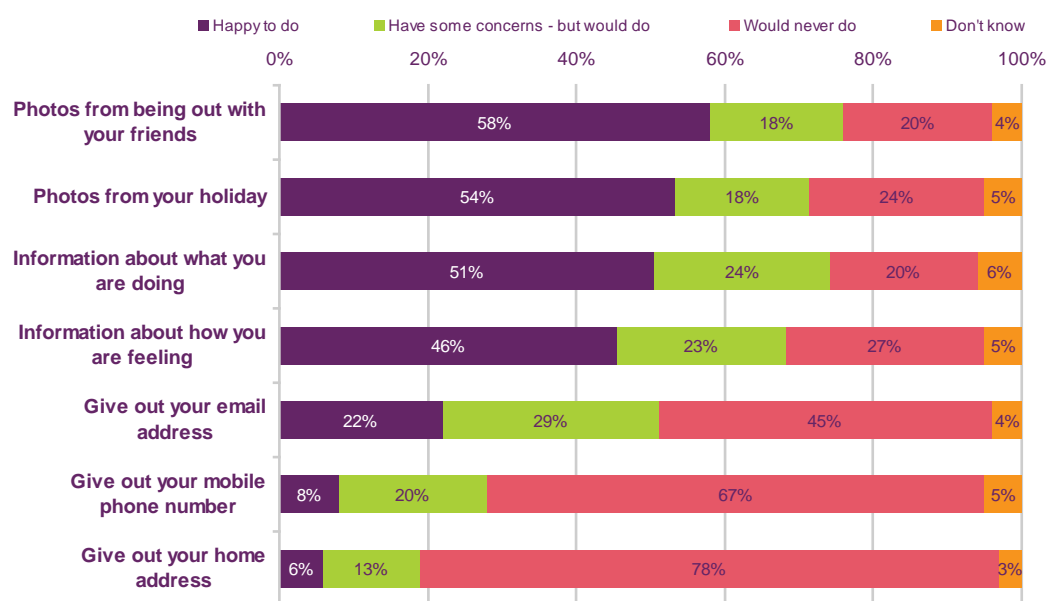
QC20 – And do you know if this profile can be seen by other people?  
 Base: Children aged 8-15 who have a social networking site profile that is currently active (129 aged 8-11 in 2009, 153 aged 8-11 in 2010, 442 aged 12-15 in 2009, 507 aged 12-15 in 2010, 177 aged 10-12 with a profile on Facebook/MySpace/Bebo in 2009, 236 aged 10-12 with a profile on Facebook/ Bebo/ MySpace in 2010) – significance testing shows any change between 2009 and 2010  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

## 5.7 Variation in the types of personal information 12-15s are happy to post/ put online

In 2010, children aged 12-15 who use the internet at home or elsewhere were prompted with a list of information types and asked how they would feel about putting these types of information online. They were asked to say whether they would be happy to post the information, or would put this information online but had some concerns about doing so, or would never post this type of information.

There is a clear contrast between the types of information that children aged 12-15 would be happy to put online. The majority of 12-15s would be happy to post photos of themselves out with their friends (58%) or on holiday (54%), while around half would be happy to post information about what they were doing (51%) or how they were feeling (46%). Children say they are much less willing to give out contact details such as their email address (22%), their mobile phone number (8%) or their home address details (6%).

There are some differences by gender and household socio-economic group. Girls are more likely than boys to say they would have concerns, but would give out their email address (33% vs. 25%). Boys are more likely to say they would never put information online about how they are feeling (30% vs. 23%). Compared to all 12-15s, children aged 12-15 in AB households are more likely to say they would never give out their mobile phone number online (76% vs. 67%), while children in C1 households would be more likely to say they would be happy to give out their mobile phone number (14% vs. 8%). Children in DE households would be more likely to say that they would never post photos from their holiday online (32% vs. 24%).

**Figure 40: Personal information that children aged 12-15 are willing to share: 2010**

NQC26BA/ BB/ BC/ BD/ BE/ BF/ BG – I'm going to read out some types of information that people can show on the internet, and for each one I'd like you to say how you would feel about putting this information online (prompted responses, single coded)  
 Base: Those children aged 12-15 who use the internet at home or elsewhere (737 aged 12-15)  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

## 5.8 Two in five 12-15s think that downloading shared copies of music and movies for free should not be 'illegal'

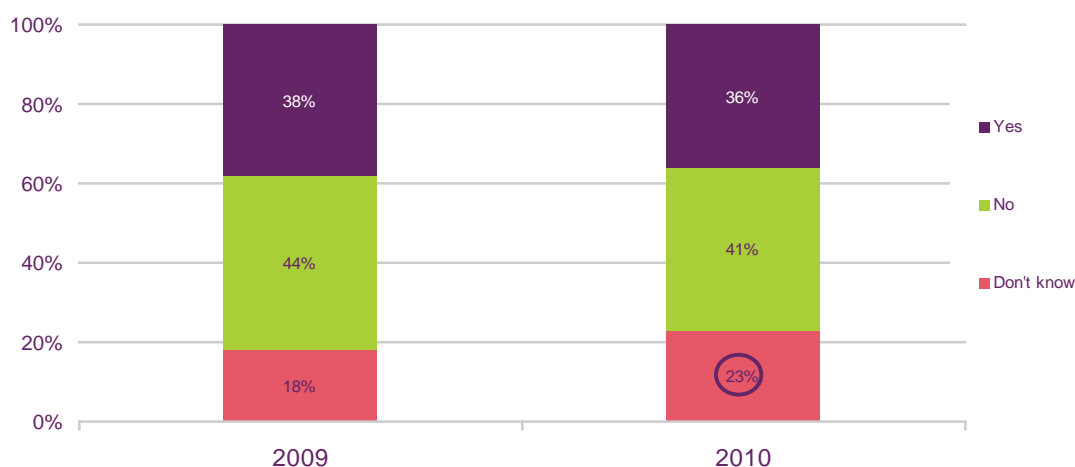
Children aged 12-15 were also asked about attitudes to downloading music and films from the internet. All children were told about downloading shared copies of music and films from the internet<sup>30</sup> and asked whether they thought it should be. Around two in five 12-15s (41%) think that downloading in this way should not be illegal. Around one in five (23%) is unsure whether it should be illegal, with slightly more than one in three (36%) thinking that it should be illegal.

Results differ by gender, with boys more likely to believe that downloading in this way should be illegal (42% vs. 31%) and girls more likely to be unsure (26% vs. 19%). In 2009, boys were more likely to think that such downloading should be legal than girls (48% vs. 40%).

Since 2009, children aged 12-15 are no more or less likely to say that downloading music or films for free in this way should be illegal. They are, however, more likely to be unsure (23% vs. 18%).

<sup>30</sup> Children were provided with the following description: 'Music and films can be downloaded from the internet in two main ways – by paying at an online shop like iTunes or Tesco.com or by downloading for free from a site where someone else has shared their copy of the music or the film. Sharing content for free in this way is often illegal.'

**Figure 41: Attitudes towards online copyright infringement among 12-15s: 2009 and 2010**



QC28 – (DESCRIPTION OF DOWNLOADING MUSIC AND MOVIES FROM THE INTERNET) - Do you think that downloading music and movies for free in this way should be illegal? (spontaneous response, single coded)  
 Base: Children aged 12-15 (781 aged 12-15 in 2009, 753 aged 12-15 in 2010) – significance testing shows any difference between 2009 and 2010  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

## 5.9 Children prefer to learn about digital media through a variety of sources

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

Figure 42 shows that children in both of the age groups prefer to learn through a variety of sources. For 12-15s in particular, there is no single source that is preferred by the majority. Children aged 8-11 are more likely than 12-15s to prefer to learn from their parents (55% vs. 40%) while 12-15s prefer to learn from friends (38% vs. 23%), to be self-taught (25% vs. 9%), from the manual (11% vs. 4%) or from suppliers/ shops (7% vs. 3%).

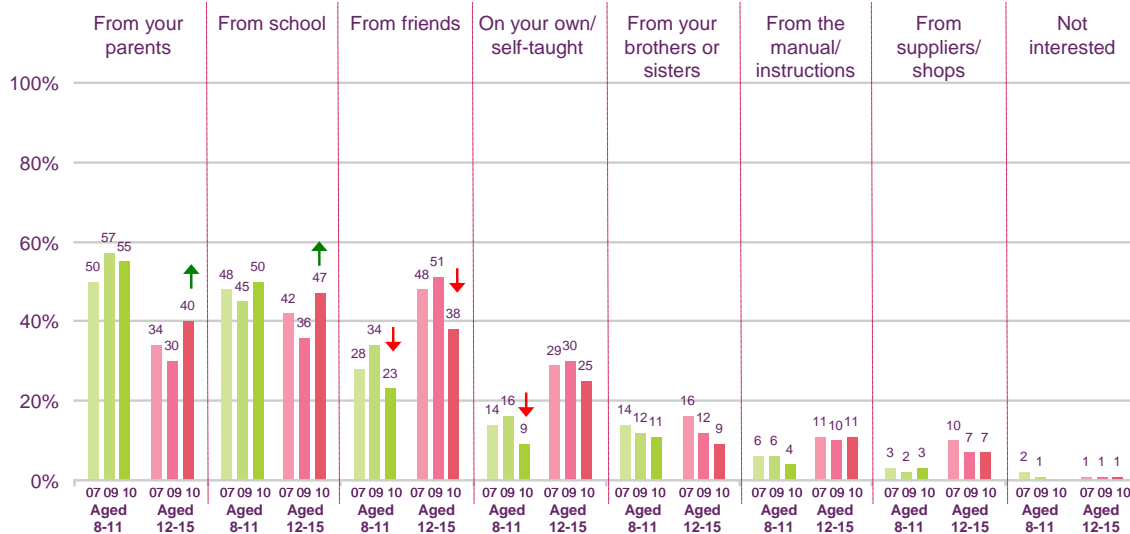
There is only one difference by gender; boys aged 8-11 are more likely than girls of this age to prefer to learn through self-taught means (12% vs. 5%). Children aged 8-15 in AB households are more likely than all children of this age to prefer to learn from their parents (54% vs. 47%) while DE children are more likely to prefer to learn at school (55% vs. 49%).

Children aged 8-15 who forget about the safety rules online<sup>31</sup> are more likely than all children of this age who use the internet at home to prefer to learn through self-taught means (27% vs. 19%) and less likely to prefer to learn from their parents (40% vs. 50%) or from school (38% vs. 48%).

Compared to 2009, children aged 8-11 are less likely to prefer to learn from friends (23% vs. 34%) or through self-taught means (9% vs. 16%). Children aged 12-15 are more likely to prefer to learn from parents (40% vs. 30%), or from school (47% vs. 36%) and less likely to prefer to learn from friends (38% vs. 51%).

<sup>31</sup> For more information about children who forget about the safety rules online, please refer to section 6.6 of this report.

**Figure 42: Children's preferences for learning about using digital technology: 2007, 2009 and 2010**



QC40 – Which if any, of these ways would you prefer to learn about using the internet, mobile phones, digital TV and so on? (prompted responses, multi-coded)  
 Base: Children aged 8-15 (1354 aged 8-11 in 2007, 774 aged 8-11 in 2009, 760 aged 8-11 in 2010, 1357 aged 12-15 in 2007, 781 aged 12-15 in 2009, 753 aged 12-15 in 2010) – significance testing shows any change between 2009 and 2010  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

### 5.10 8-11s and 12-15s are more likely to receive lessons at school about the internet than they are to learn about television

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

As shown in Figure 43, a minority of children have learned about television in school - one in five children aged 8-11 (21%) and two in five children aged 12-15 (41%). Since 2009, there has been no change in learning about television across either age group of child.

**Figure 43: Lessons about television, by age: 2005, 2007, 2009 and 2010**



QC41/ 43 – Do any of your lessons at school teach you about TV ? (prompted responses, single coded)  
 Base: Children aged 8-15 (772 aged 8-11 in 2005, 1354 aged 8-11 in 2007, 774 aged 8-11 in 2009, 760 aged 8-11 in 2010, 764 aged 12-15 in 2005, 1357 aged 12-15 in 2007, 781 aged 12-15 in 2009, 753 aged 12-15 in 2010) – significance testing shows any change between 2009 and 2010  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

The majority of 8-11s (72%) and 12-15s (85%) have experience of learning about the internet at school, which, as with television, is more common among 12-15s than 8-11s. There has been no change in learning about the internet at school since 2009 for either age group.

**Figure 44: Lessons about the internet, by age: 2005, 2007, 2009 and 2010**



QC42/ 44 – Do any of your lessons at school teach you about TV / about the Internet? (prompted responses, single coded)  
 Base: Children aged 8-15 (772 aged 8-11 in 2005, 1354 aged 8-11 in 2007, 774 aged 8-11 in 2009, 760 aged 8-11 in 2010, 764 aged 12-15 in 2005, 1357 aged 12-15 in 2007, 781 aged 12-15 in 2009, 753 aged 12-15 in 2010) – significance testing shows any change between 2009 and 2010  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

## Section 6

# Parents' and children's attitudes and concerns

This section looks at parents' attitudes towards their children's use of the internet and the extent to which they have specific concerns about the internet, mobile phones and any games that their children play. It addresses parents' attitudes towards the potential impact of mobile location services. Finally, it covers children's attitudes to their use of media<sup>32</sup>.

### Key findings

- There are high levels of agreement and confidence from parents in terms of their attitudes towards trusting their child, the benefits of the internet, and whether their child has been taught about online safety at school. However, 48% of parents think their child knows more than them about the internet, rising to 70% of parents of 12-15s.
- Three in ten parents of 5-15s (30%) who use the internet at home are very or fairly concerned that their child may be giving out personal details to inappropriate people, with concern increasing with the age of the child. The same is also true for parental concern about cyber-bullying: a majority of parents are not very or at all concerned (64%), although concern increases with the age of the child. Around one in four parents of 5-15s (26%) are concerned about the content of the websites their child visits, with a similar proportion (25%) also concerned about who their child is in contact with online. Both these figures have decreased since 2009.
- Children's dislikes about the media they use are relatively low. However, there has been a significant increase since 2009 in 8-11s with an active social networking profile saying they dislike people getting bullied on social networking sites (32% vs. 18%).
- Nearly one quarter (24%) of 12-15s who use the internet at home say they feel more confident on the internet than in real life. But 12% of 8-15s agree that 'when I'm on the internet I forget about the safety rules'.
- Close to half of all children aged 12-15 (47%) say they know of someone who has had gossip spread about them, around one in three (35%) know of someone who has sent an email or text message they regretted, and slightly less than three in ten know of someone who has experienced embarrassing pictures being made public (29%) or of someone pretending to be them (28%).

<sup>32</sup> More information about children's attitudes and concerns about their use of the internet and how these may vary by the presence of rules, controls and parental guidance can be found in the publication *Parental mediation and children's online safety*, to be published in May 2011.

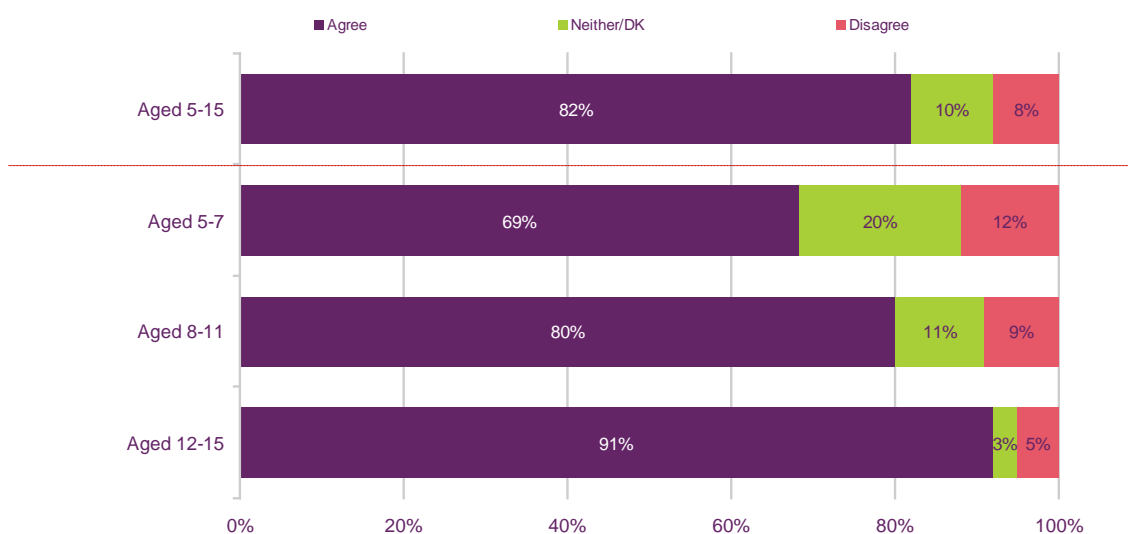
## 6.1 The majority of parents continue to feel that the benefits of the internet outweigh any risks, and trust their child to use the internet safely

Parents of children aged 5-15 who use the internet at home were asked about the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the following statements about their child's use of the internet:

- I trust my child to use the internet safely.
- The benefits of the internet for my child outweigh any risks.
- My child has been taught at school how to use the internet safely.
- My child knows more about the internet than I do.

The vast majority of parents agree with the statement: 'I trust my child to use the internet safely (82%)'. Slightly less than one in ten parents across all 5-15s (8%) disagrees that they trust their child to use the internet safely. Parents' agreement that they trust their child increases with each age group.

**Figure 45: Parental agreement – “I trust my child to use the internet safely”, by age: 2010**



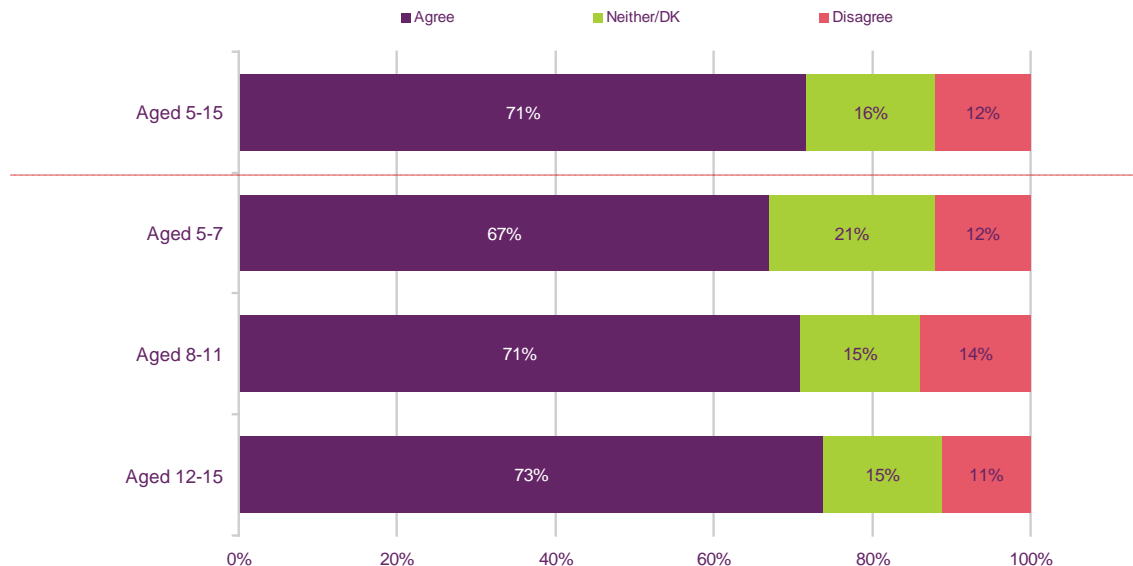
QP30B – Please tell me the extent to which you agree or disagree with these statements in relation to your child? (prompted responses, single coded)  
 Base: Parents of children who use the internet at home (1605 aged 5-15, 343 aged 5-7, 597 aged 8-11, 665 aged 12-15)  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

In 2010, there are no differences in agreement levels by gender within age or by socio-economic group. There has also been no change in agreement levels since 2009.

Parents were also asked the extent to which they agreed or disagreed that: “The benefits of the internet for my child outweigh any risk”. The majority of parents of 5-15s also agree with this statement, although agreement does not vary by the age of the child. Slightly more than one in ten parents of children aged 5-15 (12%) disagree with this statement.

As with the previous statement, there are no differences in the extent of agreement by gender within age or by socio-economic group. There has also been no change in the levels of agreement since 2009.

**Figure 46: Parental agreement – “The benefits of the internet for my child outweigh any risks”, by age: 2010**



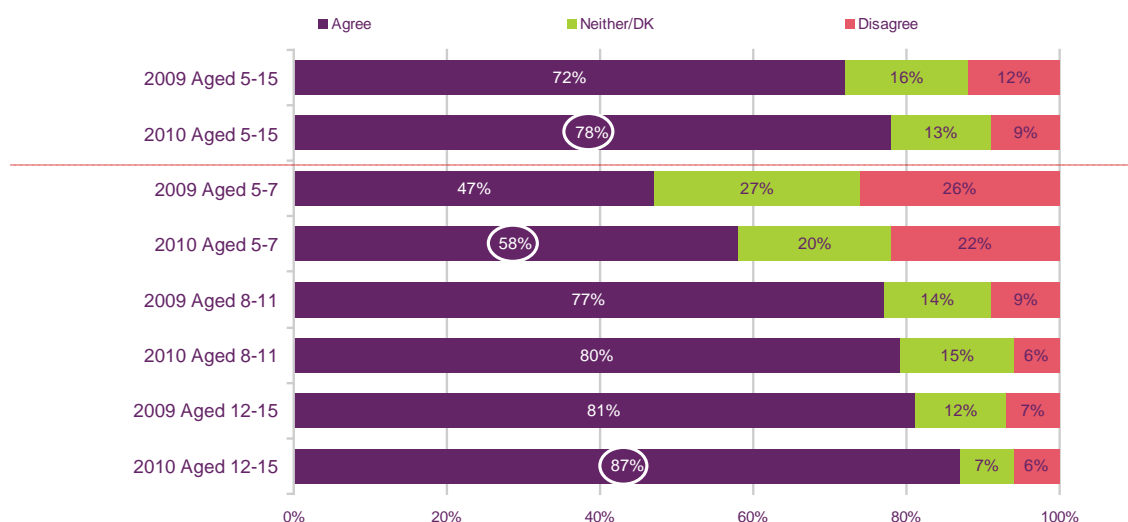
QP30A – Please tell me the extent to which you agree or disagree with these statements in relation to your child? (prompted responses, single coded)  
 Base: Parents of children who use the internet at home (1605 aged 5-15, 343 aged 5-7, 597 aged 8-11, 665 aged 12-15)  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

Parents of children who use the internet at home were asked the extent to which they agreed or disagreed that: “My child has been taught at school how to use the internet safely”. Close to four in five parents of children aged 5-15 (78%) agree with this statement and parental agreement increases with each age group. One in ten parents of children aged 5-15 (9%) disagree that their child has been taught at school how to use the internet safely, with parents of 5-7s more likely to disagree (22%) than either parents of an 8-11 child (6%) or parents of a 12-15 (6%). There are no differences in levels of agreement by household socio-economic group.

Since 2009 parents of children aged 5-7 who use the internet at home are more likely to agree with this statement (58% vs. 47%), as are parents of 12-15s (87% vs. 81%), while there has been no change in agreement over time among parents of 8-11s.



**Figure 47: Parental agreement – “My child has been taught at school how to use the internet safely”, by age: 2009 and 2010**

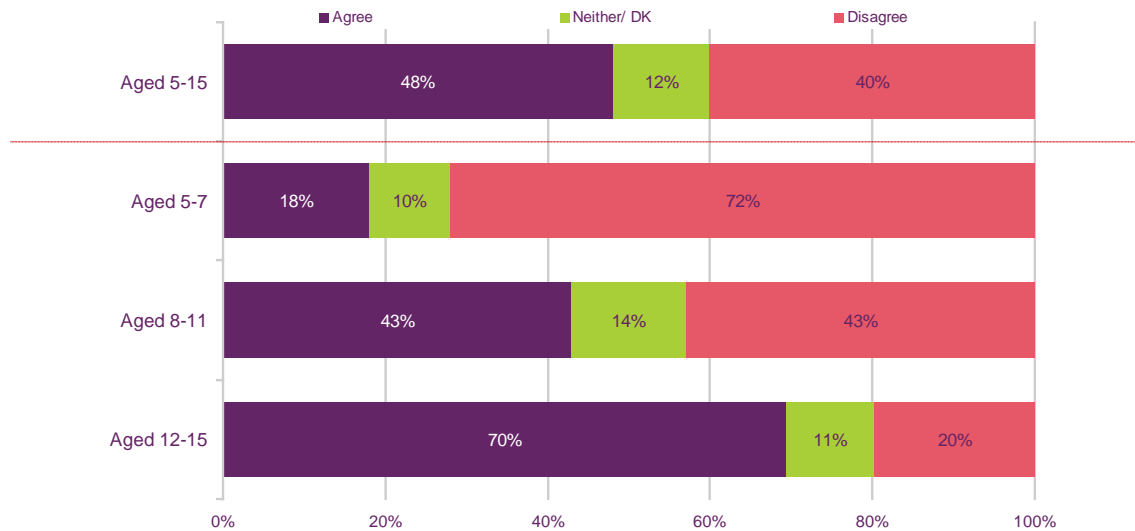


QP30C– Please tell me the extent to which you agree or disagree with these statements in relation to your child? (prompted responses, single coded)  
 Base: Parents of children who use the internet at home (1566 aged 5-15 in 2009, 1605 aged 5-15 in 2010, 340 aged 5-7 in 2009, 343 aged 5-7 in 2010, 663 aged 8-11 in 2009, 582 aged 8-11 in 2009, 597 aged 8-11 in 2010, 768 aged 12-15 in 2009, 645 aged 12-15 in 2009, 665 aged 12-15 in 2010)– significance testing shows any changes between 2009 and 2010  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

One in two parents of a child aged 5-15 (48%) agrees with the statement: “My child knows more about the internet than I do”. Agreement increases with each age group, with close to one in five parents of a 5-7 agreeing (18%), compared to slightly more than two in five parents of an 8-11 year-old child (43%) and seven in ten parents of 12-15s (70%).

Parents of children aged 5-15 in AB households are also more likely to disagree, compared to all parents (50% vs. 40%). There has been no change in agreement with this statement since 2009.

**Figure 48: Parental agreement – “My child knows more about the internet than I do”, by age: 2010**



QP30D– Please tell me the extent to which you agree or disagree with these statements in relation to your child? (prompted responses, single coded)  
 Base: Parents of children who use the internet at home (1605 aged 5-15, 343 aged 5-7 in 2010, 597 aged 8-11, 665 aged 12-15)  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

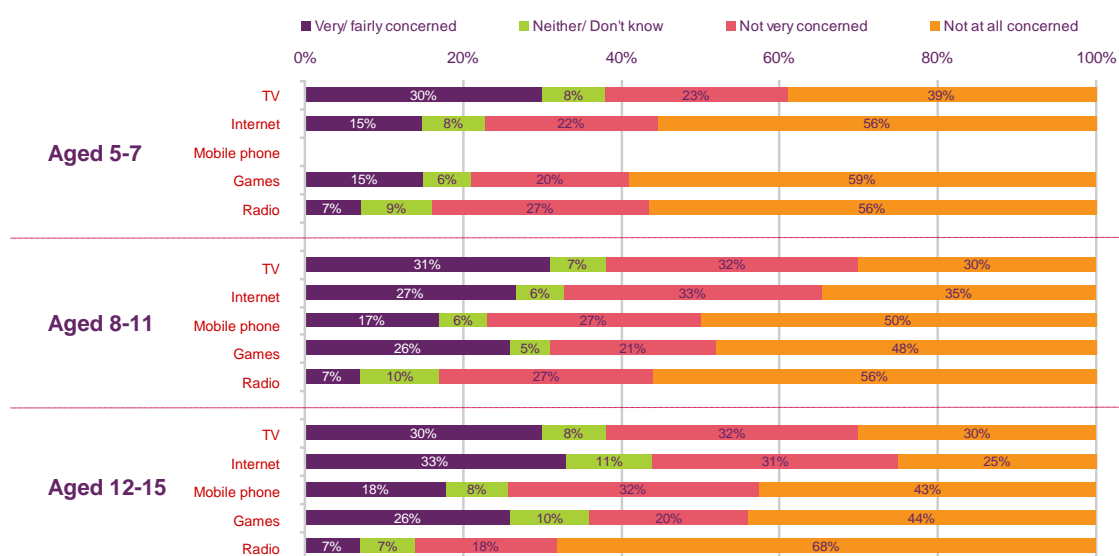
## 6.2 A minority of parents are concerned about the media content that their child has access to

Parents were asked specific questions about their child's use of different media, in order to gauge the extent to which they are concerned about their child's exposure to potentially harmful or inappropriate content. This section provides detail on the questions that were asked across the different media.

Figure 49 summarises parental concern about the content that their child encounters or engages with, in order to provide a snapshot of how the level of concern varies, for each medium.

A minority of parents are concerned about the content that their child engages with, across all media. Parents of 5-7s are most likely to be concerned about television content, compared to other media, while parents of 8-11s and 12-15s are equally concerned about television, online and gaming content.

**Figure 49: Parental concerns about media content, by age: 2010<sup>33</sup>**



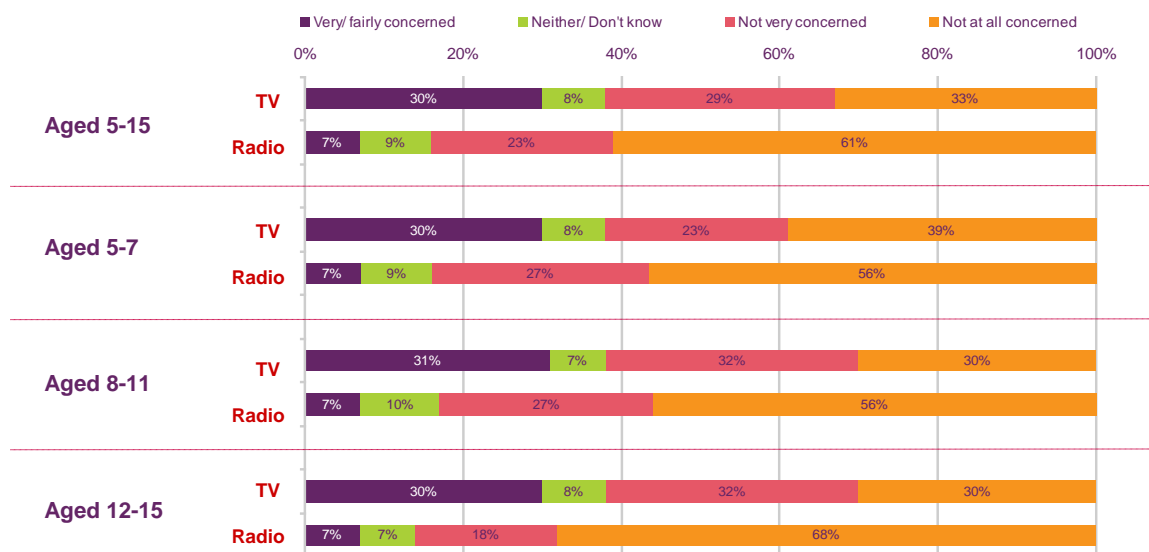
QP10A/ NQP33CA/ QP38A/ QP47A/ QP18A – Please tell me the extent to which you are concerned about these aspects of your child's TV viewing /internet use/ mobile phone use/ games playing/ radio listening ? (prompted responses, single coded)  
 Base: Parents of children whose child watches TV at home (554 aged 5-7, 753 aged 8-11, 751 aged 12-15)/ Uses the internet at home (343 aged 5-7, 597 aged 8-11, 665 aged 12-15)/ Has their own mobile phone (339 aged 8-11, 654 aged 12-15)/ Plays games (451 aged 5-7, 710 aged 8-11, 683 aged 12-15)/ Listens to the radio at home (183 aged 5-7, 299 aged 8-11, 368 aged 12-15)  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

Figure 50 shows the extent of parental concern about the television and radio content that their child encounters. The proportion of parents stating that they have concerns about television content does not vary by the child's age, with around three in ten parents in each age group saying they are either very, or fairly, concerned. Concerns about radio content are also consistent by the child's age group, with 7% in each age group being very, or fairly, concerned.

Parental concerns about television or radio content do not vary by the gender of the child within each of the three age categories, while parents of children aged 5-15 in AB households are more likely than all parents of children aged 5-15 to have concerns about the radio their child listens to (13% vs. 7%). There are no differences by household socio-economic group for concerns regarding the television that children watch.

Compared to 2009, parents of children aged 5-7 or 8-11 are less likely to state that they are very, or fairly, concerned about the television content that their child views (30% vs. 40% for 5-7s and 31% vs. 40% for 8-11s). Concern about television content among parents of 12-15s has not changed since 2009, nor has concern about radio content among parents with children in any of the three age groups.

<sup>33</sup> There are no data shown for children aged 5-7 for mobile phone, due to the low base of children of this age with a mobile phone.

**Figure 50: Parental concerns about television and radio content, by age: 2010**

QP10A/ QP18A – Please tell me the extent to which you are concerned about these aspects of your child's TV viewing/ radio listening ? (prompted responses, single coded)

Base: Parents of children whose child watches TV at home (2058 aged 5-15, 554 aged 5-7, 753 aged 8-11, 751 aged 12-15) / Listens to the radio at home (850 aged 5-15, 183 aged 5-7, 299 aged 8-11, 368 aged 12-15)

Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

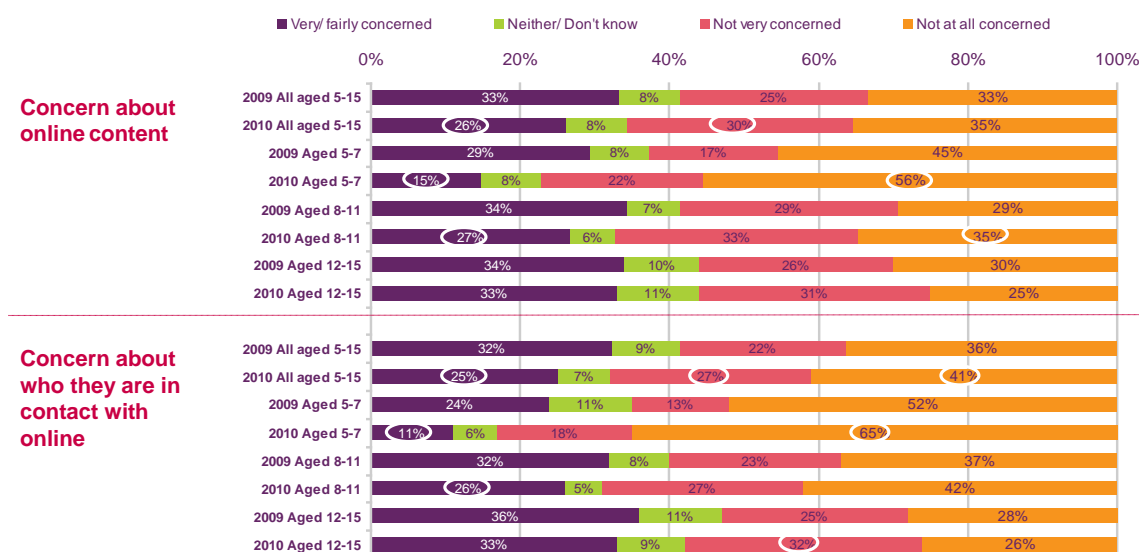
Parents of children aged 5-15 who use the internet at home were asked about the extent of their concerns relating to online content as well as their concerns about whom their children were in contact with online. Around one in four parents of 5-15s (26%) are concerned about the content of the websites their child visits, with a similar proportion concerned about whom their child is in contact with online (25%). Concern about online content and whom the child is in contact with increases with the age of the child.

Half (52%) of all parents of children aged 5-15 who are very, or fairly, concerned, either about the content of the websites that their child visits, or whom their child is contact with online, are concerned about *both* these aspects. Expressing this as a proportion of all parents of children aged 5-15 who use the internet at home, slightly less than one in five parents (18%) are concerned about both these aspects. Concern about both the content of the websites that their child visits and whom their child is in contact with online, among all parents of children who use the internet at home, increases with the age of the child (7% for 5-7s, 17% for 8-11s and 24% for 12-15s).

In 2010 there is only one difference in the extent of concern by the child's gender. Parents of girls aged 8-11 are more likely than parents of boys of this age to be very, or fairly, concerned about whom they are in contact with online (30% vs. 21%). There are no differences by household socio-economic group.

Compared to 2009, parents of 5-7s and 8-11s are less likely to say they are very, or fairly, concerned about the content on the websites that their child visits (15% vs. 29% for 5-7s and 27% vs. 34% for 8-11s). Parents of 5-7s are also less likely to say they are either very, or fairly, concerned about whom their child is in contact with online (11% vs. 24%) as are parents of 8-11s (26% vs. 32%).

**Figure 51: Parental concerns about online content and whom their child may be in contact with online, by age: 2009 and 2010**



NQP33CA/ NQP33CC – Please tell me the extent to which you are concerned about these possible aspects of your child's internet use – The content on the websites that they visit/ who they are in contact with online (prompted responses, single coded)  
 Base: Parents of children whose child use the internet at home (1566 aged 5-15 in 2009, 1605 aged 5-15 in 2010, 340 aged 5-7 in 2009, 343 aged 5-7 in 2010, 581 aged 8-11 in 2009, 597 aged 8-11 in 2010, 645 aged 12-15 in 2009, 665 aged 12-15 in 2010) – significance testing shows any difference between 2009 and 2010  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

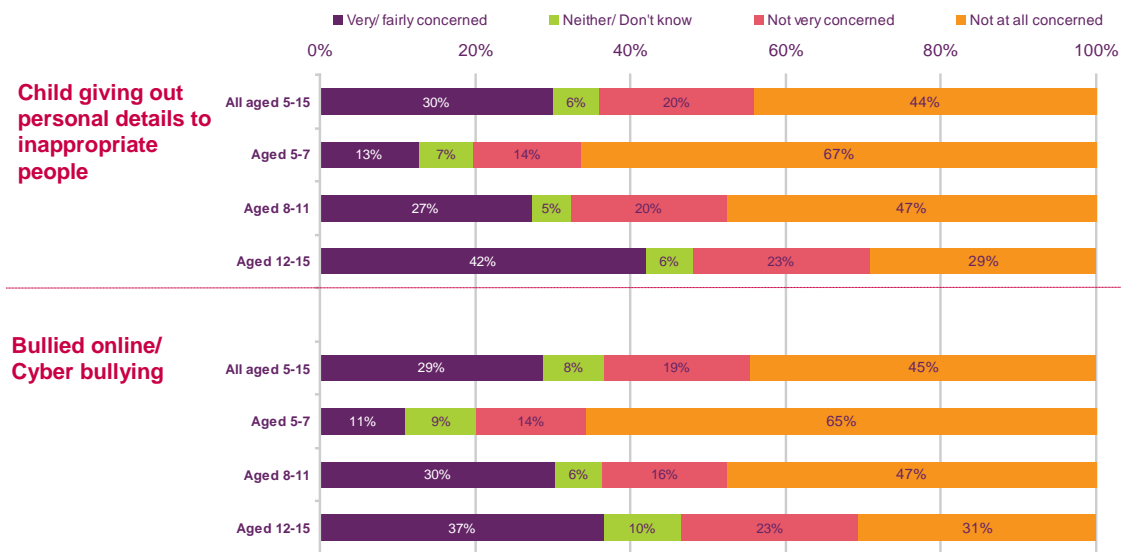
Four in five children aged 5-15 (80%) watch television at home and also use the internet at home. One in seven parents (14%) of children aged 5-15 who use both of these media at home are concerned about both the television content and the online content that their child engages with. Concern about both types of content varies by the age of the child. Seven per cent of parents of 5-7s who watch television and use the internet at home are concerned about both types of content, as are 14% of parents of 8-11s and 18% of parents of 12-15s.

In 2010 parents of 5-15s who use the internet at home were also asked how concerned they were about their child giving out personal information online to inappropriate people and about their child being bullied online.

Figure 52 shows that three in ten parents of 5-15s (30%) are very, or fairly, concerned that their child may be giving out personal details to inappropriate people, with concern increasing with the age of the child. However, the majority of parents (64%) are either not very, or not at all, concerned. The same is also true for parental concern about cyber-bullying: the majority of parents are not concerned (64%), although concern increases with the age of the child.

There are no differences in the level of parental concern by gender of the child or by household socio-economic group for either of the measures shown in Figure 52.

**Figure 52: Parental concerns about their child giving out personal details online to inappropriate people and about cyber-bullying, by age: 2010**



NQP33CF/ NQP33CG – Please tell me the extent to which you are concerned about these possible aspects of your child's internet use – Them giving out their personal details to inappropriate people/ Them being bullied online/ cyber bullying (prompted responses, single coded)  
 Base: Parents of children whose child use the internet at home (1605 aged 5-15, 343 aged 5-7, 597 aged 8-11, 665 aged 12-15)  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

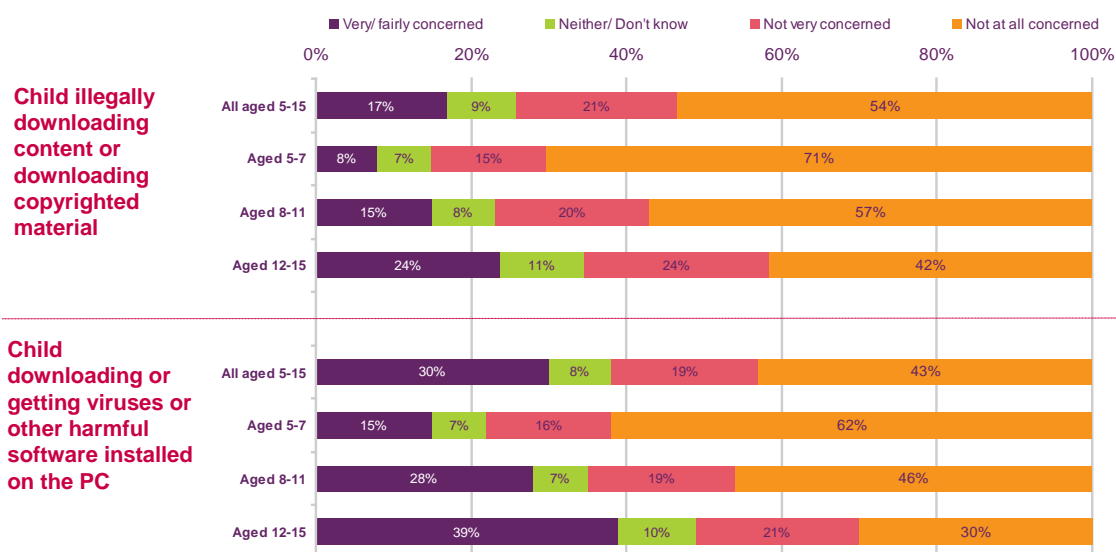
Parents of 5-15s who use the internet at home were also asked how concerned they were about their child downloading content illegally/ any downloading of copyrighted material, and about their child downloading or getting viruses or other harmful software installed on the PC as a result of what they do online.

One in six parents of 5-15s who use the internet at home (17%) are concerned about their child illegally downloading content or downloading copyrighted material, with concern increasing with the age of the child.

Overall, three in ten parents of 5-15s who use the internet at home (30%) say they are concerned about their child downloading or getting viruses or other harmful software installed on the PC. Concern also increases with the age of the child.

For both of these measures, the majority of parents in each age group are either not very, or not at all, concerned. There are also no differences in the level of parental concern by gender of the child or by household socio-economic group.

**Figure 53: Parental concerns about any illegal downloading, or downloading viruses, by age: 2010**



NQP33CD/ NQP33CE – Please tell me the extent to which you are concerned about these possible aspects of your child's internet use – Any illegal downloading or downloading of copyrighted material/ Downloading or getting viruses or other harmful software installed on the PC as a result of what they do online (prompted responses, single coded)  
 Base: Parents of children whose child use the internet at home (1605 aged 5-15, 343 aged 5-7, 597 aged 8-11, 665 aged 12-15)  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

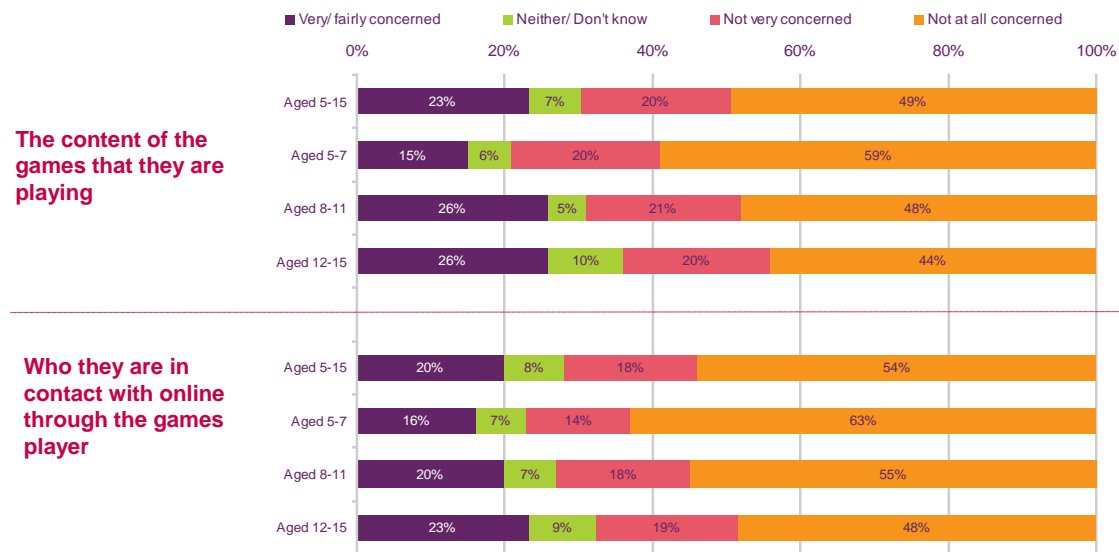
Parents of children who ever play games through a gaming device were asked how concerned they were about the content of the games that their child played and about the contact their child may have with others online, through these devices<sup>34</sup>. Slightly less than one in four parents (23%) of children aged 5-15 whose child ever plays games are very/fairly concerned about the content of the games that the child plays. Parents of 8-11s and 12-15s are more likely to be concerned (both 26%), compared to parents of a 5-7 year old (15%).

Given that boys in each age category are more likely to regularly play games, it is perhaps not surprising that there are some differences in parental concern by gender. Parents of boys aged 8-11 and 12-15 are more likely to be very/ fairly concerned compared to parents of girls in each age category (30% vs. 20% for 8-11s and 34% vs. 17% for 12-15s). Parents of children aged 5-15 in DE households are less likely to be very, or fairly, concerned about the content of the games their child plays (19% vs. 23%). Compared to 2009, there has been no change in the level of concern within each age category, although at an overall level, parents of 5-15s are now more likely to state that they are not at all concerned (49% vs. 44%).

Similarly, compared to 2009, parents of a 5-15 year old are now more likely to say they are not at all concerned about whom their child is in contact with through their games player (54% vs. 48%). Around one in five parents of a 5-15 year old child (20%) say they are very, or fairly, concerned. There are no differences by gender within age or by socio-economic group.

<sup>34</sup> The question about whom their child is in contact with through their gaming device allowed a Not Applicable option, in case their child did not use the gaming device/ games player to game online or to access the internet. Those parents who answered Not applicable have therefore been excluded from the base.

**Figure 54: Parental concerns about gaming content and who their child is in contact with online through the games player, by age: 2010**



QP47A/ C – Please tell me the extent to which you are concerned about these aspects of your child's games playing? (prompted responses, single coded)  
 Base: Parents of children whose child ever plays games (1844 aged 5-15, 451 aged 5-7, 710 aged 8-11, 683 aged 12-15)/ Parents of children whose child ever plays games -excluding not applicable responses (1272 aged 5-15, 262 aged 5-7, 484 aged 8-11, 526 aged 12-15)  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

Parents of children aged 5-15 with their own mobile phone were also asked about specific concerns relating to their child's use of their mobile phone<sup>35</sup>. Figure 55 shows parental responses in 2010 relating to concerns about mobile phone content and about whom the child may be in contact with via their mobile. The proportion of parents who are very/ fairly concerned about what their child sees or reads on their mobile phone does not vary by the age of the child, with one in six parents of an 8-11 year old (17%) or a 12-15 year old (18%) having concerns. Parents of an 8-11 year old are, however, more likely than parents of a 12-15 year old to state they are not at all concerned about the content their child views via their mobile phone (50% vs. 43%).

Compared to 2009, in 2010 parents of children aged 12-15 are more likely to say they are not at all concerned (43% vs. 36%).

Parents of an 8-11 or a 12-15 year old are as likely to be concerned about whom their child may be in contact with as they are to be concerned about what their child sees or reads on their mobile phone. There are no differences in the extent of concerns relating to mobile phone content or whom the child may be in contact with online by gender within each age group, although at an overall level (among all 5-15s) parents of girls are more likely than parents of boys to be very, or fairly, concerned about whom their child is in contact with (22% vs. 16%). There are no differences for either of the measures shown in Figure 55 by household socio-economic group. Concerns also do not vary among parents of children aged 5-15 with a smartphone, compared to parents of all children with a mobile phone.

<sup>35</sup> No data are shown for children aged 5-7 for mobile phones, as there were only 47 children of this age with their own mobile phone.



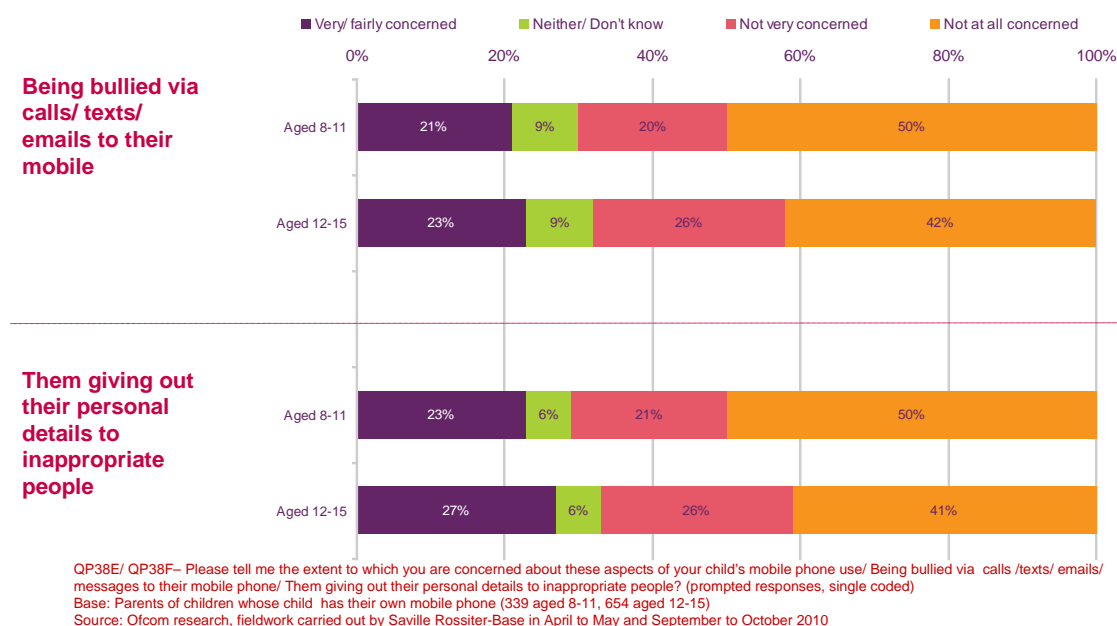
**Figure 55: Parental concerns about mobile phone content and whom their child is in contact with via their mobile, by age: 2010**



In 2010, parents of children aged 5-15 with their own mobile phone were asked about the extent of any concerns about their child being bullied via calls/ texts/ emails to their mobile phone. While a comparable proportion of parents of 8-11s and 12-15s say they are very, or fairly, concerned about this aspect of their child's mobile phone use (around one in five parents – 20%), parents of an 8-11 year old are more likely to say they are not at all concerned, compared to parents of a 12-15 year old (50% vs. 42%). The same is also true about their child giving out personal details to inappropriate people. There are no differences in the proportions of parents stating they are very, or fairly, concerned, but parents of an 8-11 year old are more likely to be not at all concerned, compared to parents of a 12-15 year old (50% vs. 41%).

There are no differences in the level of concern by gender within each age group or by household socio-economic group. Concerns do not vary among parents of children with a smartphone compared to all children with a mobile phone.

**Figure 56 : Parental concerns about their child being bullied via calls/ texts/ emails to the child's mobile phone and their child giving out personal details to inappropriate people, by age: 2010**



### 6.3 Awareness of mobile location services has increased among parents since 2009

All parents were shown a description of mobile location services<sup>36</sup> and were then asked whether they were fully aware, partially aware or not aware that such services were available through some mobile phones.

Close to half of parents of 5-15s (46%) are aware of mobile location services at an overall level (either full or partial awareness) and awareness does not vary by the age of the child. Awareness has increased among parents of children aged 5-15 (from 39% in 2009).

When comparing by household socio-economic group, parents of children aged 5-15 in AB households are more likely than all parents to be aware of mobile location services (56% vs. 46%) while parents in DE households are less likely to be aware (38% vs. 46%). There are no differences in awareness levels between parents of all 5-15s with a smartphone and parents of children aged 5-15 with a mobile phone.

<sup>36</sup> Mobile location services generally either allow the mobile phone user to locate himself or herself (e.g. for navigation or finding "Where's my nearest chemist/cash machine/cinema etc.?" ) - often referred to as 'active' services - or services whereby a mobile phone user, once s/he has enabled and consented to the service, can be located by another person initiating a location request - often referred to as 'passive' services.

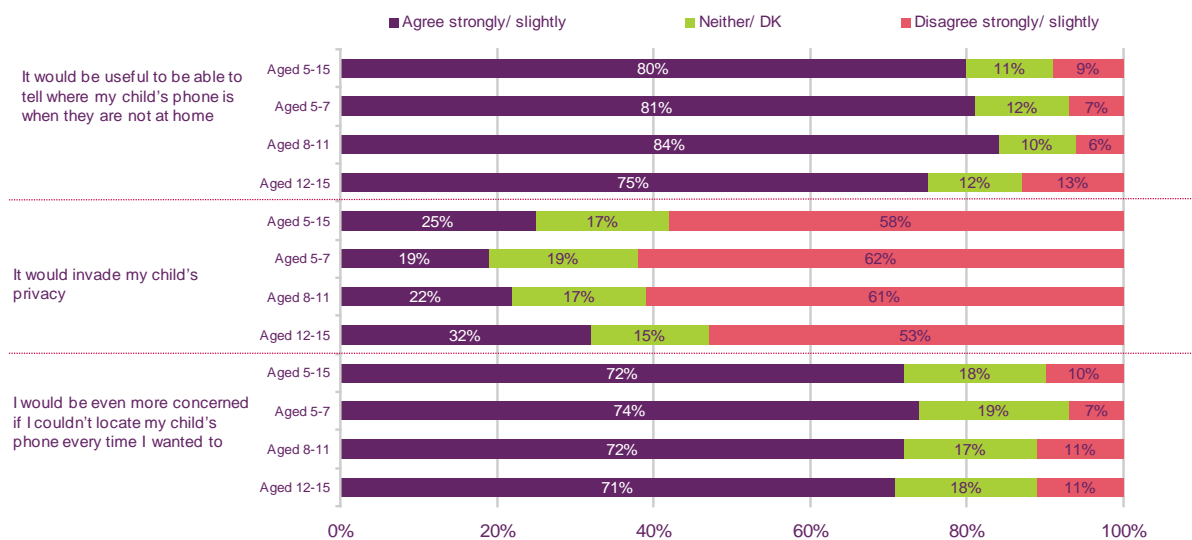
A number of data sources are used to deliver mobile location services, such as the Global Positioning Systems (GPS) satellite, open cell ID, Wi-Fi location and/or cell location data supplied by the mobile networks (the last of these are the subject of a code of practice developed by nine leading location service providers (LSPs) in the UK and the five mobile network operators, and agreed between the police, the Home Office and child protection agencies in 2004. Under the terms of the Code, in addition to consent being required initially for the phone (more accurately, the SIM card) to be tracked, random SMS reminders must be sent to the phone.

All parents were prompted with a series of five statements relating to mobile location services and were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with each one. The responses to these five statements are shown in Figures 57 and 58.

While most parents agree that mobile location services would be useful for them to help locate their child, they also agree that the services could lead to more concerns if they could not locate their child when they wanted to. Relatively few parents agree that: "It would invade my child's privacy", although agreement with this is higher among parents of 12-15s than among parents of 5-7s or 8-11s. Compared to 2009, parents of 5-15s are now less likely to agree (25% vs. 30%) that mobile location services would invade their child's privacy.

In 2010 there are some differences in attitude towards location services by demography. Parents in AB households are more likely to disagree that mobile location services would be useful for them to help locate their child (12% vs. 9%) while DE parents are more likely to agree that they would be concerned if they could not locate their child's phone when they wanted to (77% vs. 72%). Furthermore, parents of girls aged 12-15 are more likely to agree that their child's privacy would be invaded, compared to parents of boys (39% vs. 26%).

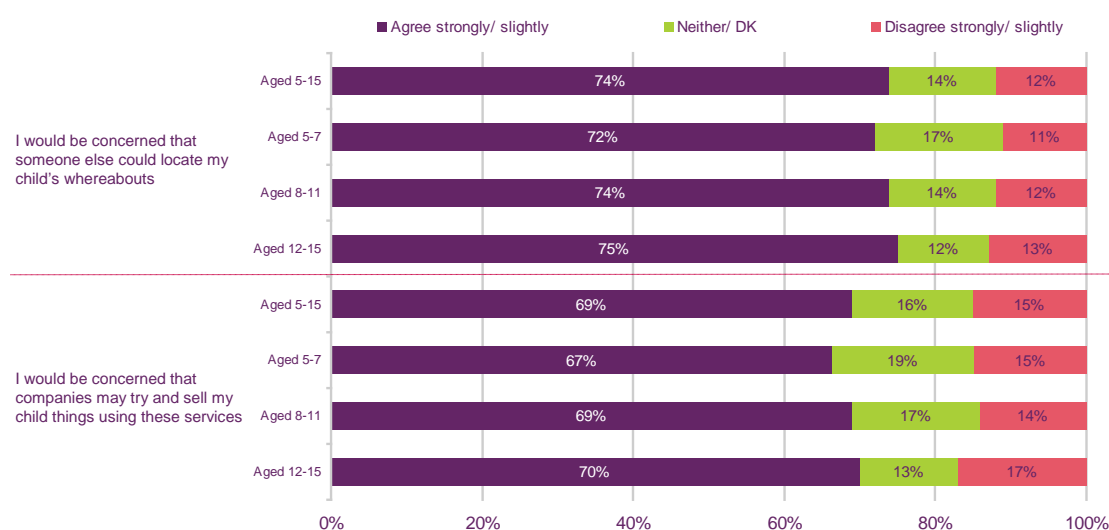
**Figure 57: Parental attitudes to mobile location services, by age: 2010**



QP42- Please tell me the extent to which you agree or disagree with these statements in relation to your child? (prompted responses, single coded)  
 Base: Parents of children aged 5-15 (2071 aged 5-15, 558 aged 5-7, 760 aged 8-11, 753 aged 12-15)  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

Agreement with the statements: "I would be concerned that someone else could locate my child's whereabouts" and "I would be concerned that companies may try and sell my child things using these services", as shown in Figure 58, do not vary by the child's age. When comparing by gender, parents of girls aged 12-15 are more likely than parents of boys to agree that they would be concerned that someone else could locate their child's whereabouts (79% vs. 72%).

There has been no change in attitudes since 2009 among parents of children aged 5-15 for either of these two statements.

**Figure 58: Parental attitudes to mobile location services, by age: 2010**

QP42- Please tell me the extent to which you agree or disagree with these statements in relation to your child? (prompted responses, single coded)  
 Base: Parents of children aged 5-15 (2071 aged 5-15, 558 aged 5-7, 760 aged 8-11, 753 aged 12-15)  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

## 6.4 Children's media-related dislikes have not changed since 2009

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

Children aged 8-15 who use each of the relevant media were prompted with a list of possible things that they may not like about television / radio / mobiles / using the internet and game-playing over the internet and were asked to nominate which, if any, applied to them. The aim of these questions was to establish children's views in two key areas - accessing content that made them feel sad, frightened or embarrassed, and accessing content that they felt was too old for them.<sup>37</sup>

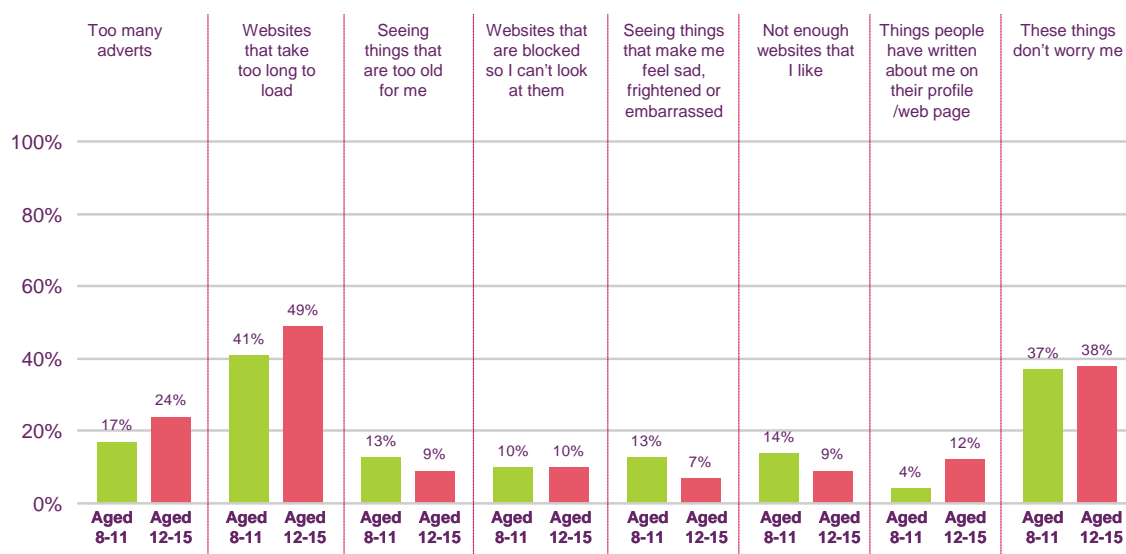
Turning firstly to the internet, children aged 8-15 were prompted with a list of seven possible things that they might not like about using the internet, and were asked to specify which, if any, applied to them (Figure 59).

Both children aged 8-11 and those aged 12-15 are most likely to identify 'websites that take too long to load' as the issue that they dislike the most (41% for 8-11s and 49% for 12-15s). One in eight 8-11s (13%) dislikes seeing things that are too old for them, or things that make them feel sad, frightened or embarrassed. 12-15s are less likely than 8-11s to have concerns about seeing things that are too old for them (9% vs. 13%) or seeing things that make them feel sad, frightened or embarrassed (7% vs. 13%).

There are no differences across either of these key concerns by gender within age or by household socio-economic group. Since 2009, there has been no change in the reported incidence of these key concerns among children aged 8-11 or 12-15.

<sup>37</sup> The aim of these questions was to establish the extent to which children may have these specific concerns about the media that they engage with. As this is a sensitive area, the questions were designed to prevent upset or distress to children by using language that focused on possible dislikes rather than actual concerns.

**Figure 59: Children's dislikes about the internet, by age: 2010**



QC15 – 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 (597 aged 8-11, 665 aged 12-15)  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

Children aged 8-11 and 12-15 with an active social networking profile (on any social networking site) were prompted with a list of seven things that they might dislike about social networking sites. Figure 60 shows that the level of dislike is similar for 8-11s and for 12-15s for six out of the seven possible dislikes. However, children aged 12-15 are three times more likely than children aged 8-11 to say “I sometimes spend too much time on them” (28% vs. 9%).

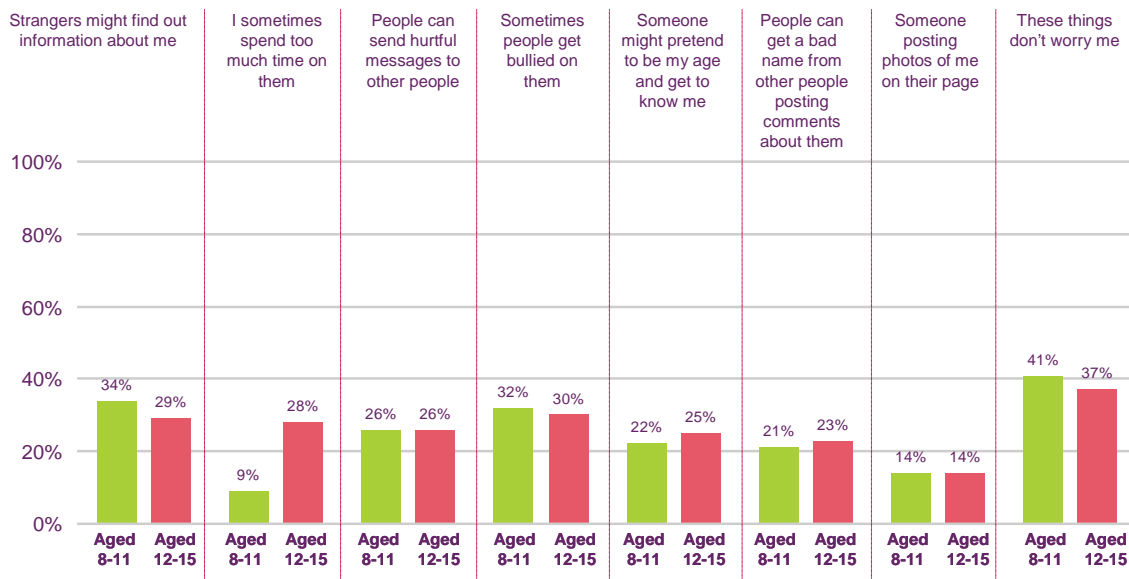
When comparing children aged 8-15<sup>38</sup> by gender, girls are more likely than boys to dislike the possibility that: “someone might pretend to be my age and get to know me” (29% vs. 19%) or that: “I sometimes spend too much time on them” (28% vs. 18%).

Children aged 8-15 in AB households are more likely than all children to dislike five of the seven areas: strangers finding out information about them (40% vs. 30%), people sending hurtful messages to other people (38% vs. 26%), someone pretending to be their age and getting to know them (34% vs. 24%), people getting a bad name from comments posted about them (32% vs. 23%) and someone posting photos of them on their page (21% vs. 14%).

There has been one change since 2009, with 8-11s now being more inclined to dislike people being bullied on social networking sites (32% vs. 18%).

<sup>38</sup> Due to low base sizes it is not possible to look at 8-11s with an active social networking site profile by gender - hence looking at all children aged 8-15 by gender.

**Figure 60: Children's dislikes about social networking sites, by age: 2010**



QC22 – Which of these things, if any, are things that you don't like about sites like Bebo, Piczo, hi5, Facebook or MySpace?  
 Base: Children aged 8-15 who have a social networking site profile that is currently active (153 aged 8-11, 507 aged 12-15)  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

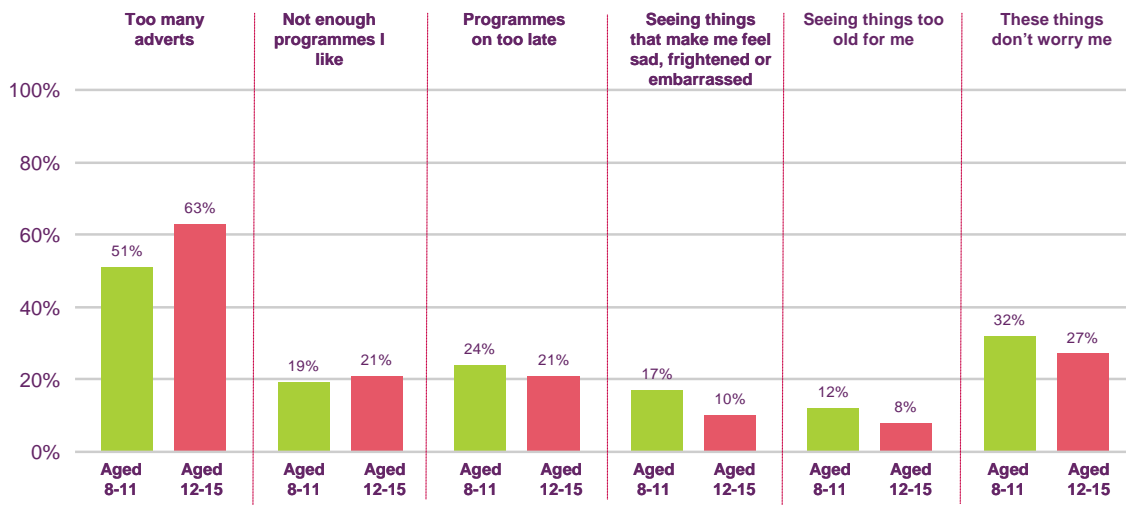
Around one in three children aged 10-12 with a profile on Facebook/ Bebo/ MySpace dislike the possibility that sometimes people get bullied on these sites (33%) or that strangers might find out information about them (32%). One in four don't like the possibility that people can send hurtful messages to other people (26%), or that someone might pretend to be their age and attempt to get to know them (24%), or that people can get a bad reputation from other people posting comments about them (24%). However, since 2009 there has been no change in dislikes about social networking sites among 10-12s with a profile on Facebook/ Bebo/ MySpace.

For television, the most common dislike among the majority of both 8-11s and 12-15s is that there are too many adverts. Older children are more likely than younger children to dislike this (63% vs. 51%). One in six 8-11s (17%) dislike seeing things on television that make them feel sad, frightened or embarrassed; this is significantly higher than for 12-15s (10%). 8-11s are also more likely than 12-15s to dislike seeing things that are too old for them (12% vs. 8%). Compared to 2009, there has been no change across the key dislikes for either 8-11s or 12-15s.

Across the key dislikes, girls aged 8-11 and 12-15 are more likely than boys in each category to dislike seeing things that are too old for them (15% vs. 9% for 8-11s and 11% vs. 5% for 12-15s).

Children aged 8-15 in AB households are more likely than all children aged 8-15 to dislike seeing things that make them feel sad, frightened or embarrassed (19% vs. 14%) while those in C1 households are less likely to dislike seeing things that are too old for them (6% vs. 10%).

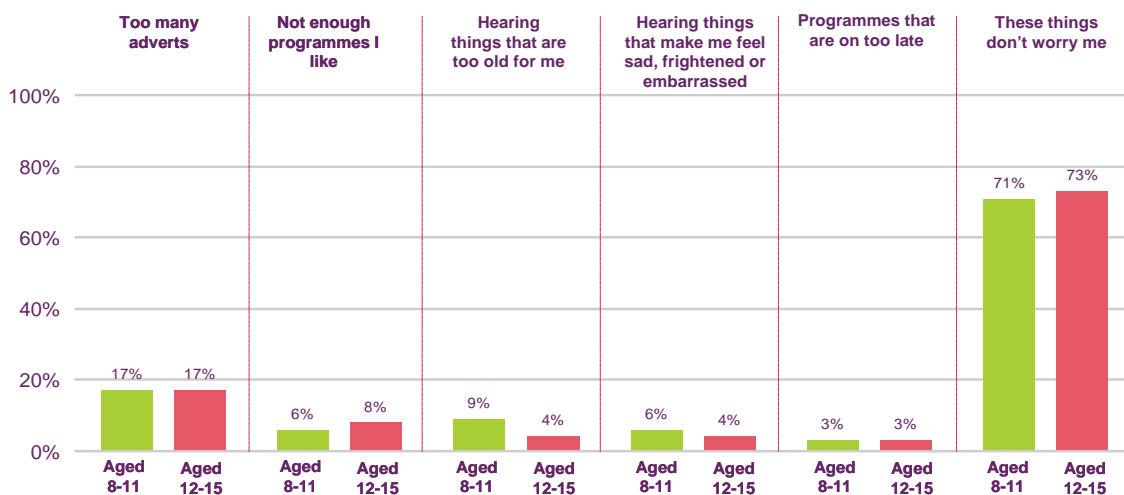
**Figure 61: Children's dislikes about television, by age: 2010**



QC5 – Which of these things if any, are things you don't like about TV? (prompted responses multi-coded)  
 Base: Children aged 8-15 who watch TV at home (753 aged 8-11, 751 aged 12-15)  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

Children aged 8-15 were prompted with the same list of dislikes for radio. Around seven in ten children aged 8-11 (71%) and 12-15 (73%) say that “these things don't worry me”. Twice as many 8-11s as 12-15s dislike hearing things that are too old for them (9% vs. 4%) while comparable proportions of 8-11s and 12-15s dislike hearing things that make them feel sad, frightened or embarrassed (6% vs. 4%). There are no differences by gender or by household socio-economic group. There have also been no changes in dislikes about radio since 2009.

**Figure 62: Children's dislikes about radio, by age: 2010**



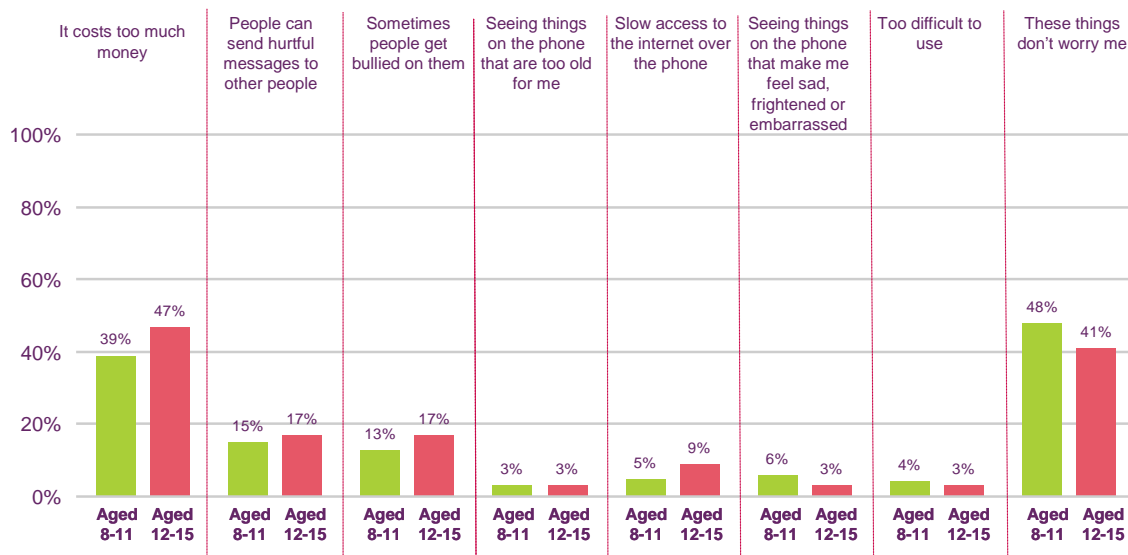
QC9 – Which of these things if any, are things you don't like about radio?  
 Base: Children aged 8-15 who listen to radio at home (297 aged 8-11, 370 aged 12-15)  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

When looking at dislikes about mobile phones, cost issues prevail, with around four in ten 8-11s (39%) and almost half (47%) of 12-15s stating this as a dislike. A similar proportion of 8-11s and 12-15s dislike the fact that people can send hurtful messages to other people (15%

for 8-11s and 17% for 12-15s) or that people can sometimes get bullied via the mobile phone (13% vs. 17%). Dislikes about seeing things on their phone that are too old for them or seeing things on their phone that make them feel sad, frightened or embarrassed are limited to around one in twenty (5%) or less in each age group. In 2010 there are no differences by gender, by age or by socio-economic group, and no changes in the level of any mobile-related dislike since 2009.

The only dislike that is more prevalent among smartphone users aged 8-15 compared to all mobile phone users is "slow access to the internet over the phone" (13% vs. 7%).

**Figure 63: Children's dislikes about mobile phones, by age: 2010**



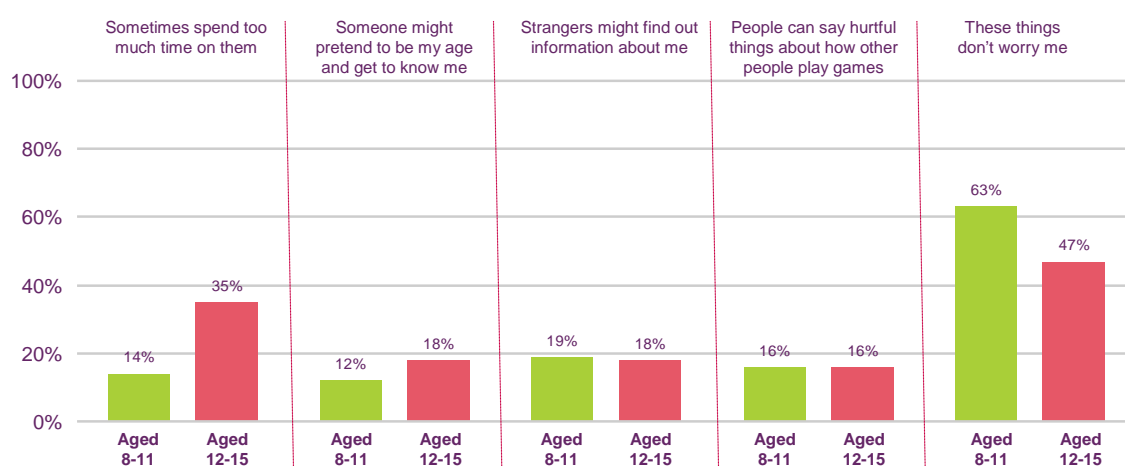
QC38 – Which of these things if any, are things you don't like about mobile phones?  
 Base: Children aged 8-15 who have a mobile phone (339 aged 8-11, 654 aged 12-15)  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

Children who ever play games online through a gaming device were also prompted with a list of four possible dislikes about online game playing and asked which, if any, applied to them (Figure 64).

One in eight 8-11s (12%), and slightly less than one in five 12-15s (18%), dislike the possibility that someone might try to befriend them. A similar proportion of both 8-11s and 12-15s dislike the possibility that strangers might find out information about them (19% for 8-11s and 18% for 12-15s). There has been no change since 2009 in any of these dislikes about online gaming among 8-11s or 12-15s.



**Figure 64: Children's dislikes about online gaming, by age: 2010**



QC33 – Which of these things if any, are things you don't like about playing games over the internet?  
 Base: Children aged 8-15 who ever play games online (184 aged 8-11, 299 aged 12-15)  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

### 6.5 Children aged 12-15 are less inclined to tell someone if they find something online that is worrying, nasty or offensive

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

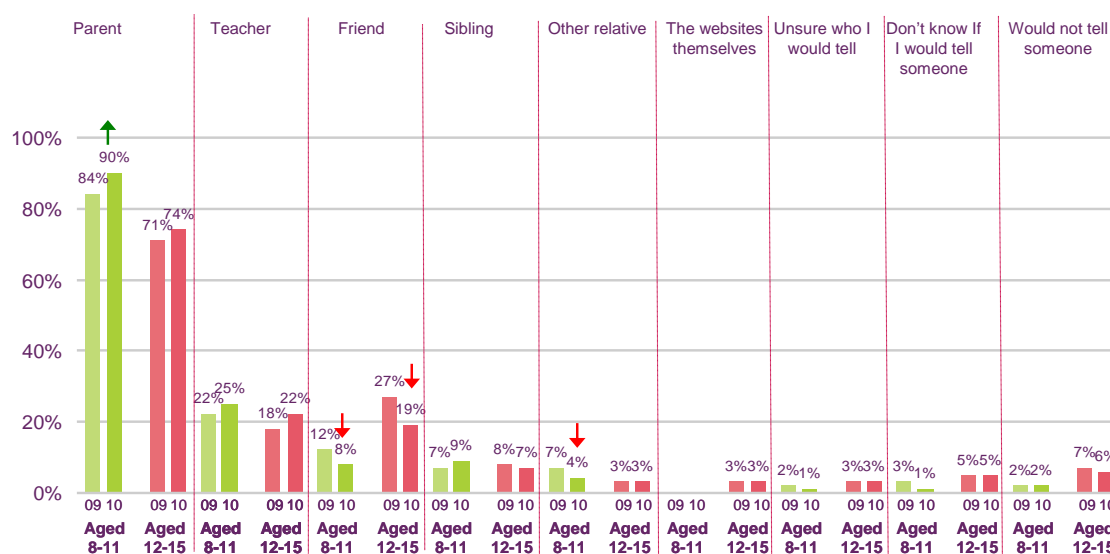
Nearly all 8-11s (97%) and close to nine in ten 12-15s (89%) say that they would tell someone<sup>39</sup>. The majority of both age groups of children would tell a parent, with younger children being more likely to do so than older children (90% vs. 74%). Older children would be more likely than younger children to tell a friend (19% vs. 8%). There is only one difference by gender, with girls aged 12-15 being more likely to tell parents than boys of this age (77% vs. 70%). There are no differences by household socio-economic group.

Children aged 12-15 are more likely than 8-11s to say they would not tell someone (6% vs. 2%) or to be unsure about whether they would tell someone (5% vs. 1%). A significant minority of children aged 12-15 (11%) who use the internet at home would therefore not necessarily tell someone if they saw something online that they found to be worrying, nasty or offensive. There are no differences by gender or by household socio-economic group.

Compared to 2009, while the overall incidence of children reporting anything that they saw which was worrying, nasty or offensive has not changed, children aged 8-11 are now more likely to tell a parent (90% vs. 84%) and less likely to tell a friend (8% vs. 12%) or other relative (4% vs. 7%). Children aged 12-15 are also less likely to tell a friend (19% vs. 27%).

<sup>39</sup> Included in this group are the 1% of 8-11s and 3% of 12-15s that have said they are unsure who they would tell.

**Figure 65: Reporting online content that is considered by the child to be worrying, nasty or offensive, by age: 2009 and 2010**



QC26 – If you saw something online that you found worrying, nasty or offensive in some way, would you tell someone about it? IF YES – Who would you tell? (Shows spontaneous responses from > 1% of all internet users aged 8-15) (spontaneous responses, multi-coded)  
 Base: Children aged 8-15 who use the internet at home (581 aged 8-11 in 2009, 597 aged 8-11 in 2010, 645 aged 12-15 in 2009, 665 aged 12-15 in 2010) –significance testing shows any difference between 2009 and 2010  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

## 6.6 Around one in ten 8-15s say they forget about the safety rules when using the internet

Children aged 8-11 and 12-15 who use the internet at home were prompted with a series of statements about the internet and were asked which ones, if any, they agreed with (Figure 66):

- Talking or chatting on the internet is less satisfying than in real life.
- It's easier to keep things secret or private on the internet than in real life.
- It's fun being silly or rude on the internet.
- It's easier to talk about personal things on the internet.
- When I'm on the internet I forget about the safety rules.
- I feel more confident on the internet than I do in real life.

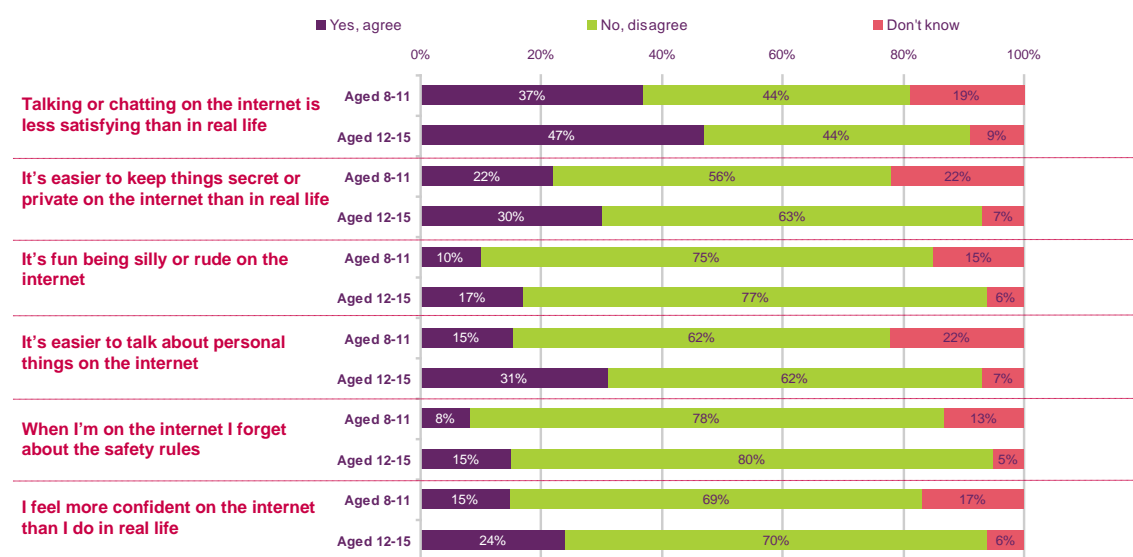
Children aged 12-15 are more likely than those aged 8-11 to agree with each of these statements<sup>40</sup>. Twice as many 12-15s as 8-11s agree that: "It's easier to talk about personal things on the internet" or that: "When I'm on the internet I forget about the safety rules". A sizeable minority in both age groups agree that: "It's easier to keep things secret or private on the internet than in real life" (22% for 8-11s and 30% of 12-15s). Slightly more than one in ten children aged 8-15 (12%) agree that: "When I'm on the internet I forget about the safety rules", which equates to around one in twelve 8-11s (8%) and around one in six 12-15s (15%). There is only one difference by gender. Boys aged 12-15 are more likely than girls of this age to agree that when they are on the internet they forget about the safety rules (18%

<sup>40</sup> This is not because younger children are more likely to disagree, but instead are more likely to be unsure.

vs. 12%). There are no differences by household socio-economic group for this or any other statement.

When looking at how the group aged 8-15 who forget about the safety rules respond to the other statements, we find that they are also much more likely (compared to all 8-15s who use the internet at home) to agree with four of the remaining five statements; namely: "It's easier to keep things secret or private on the internet than in real life" (41% vs. 26%), "It's fun being silly or rude on the internet" (31% vs. 14%) "It's easier to talk about personal things on the internet" (52% vs. 24%) and "I feel more confident on the internet than I do in real life" (46% vs. 20%).

**Figure 66: Children's opinions of the internet, by age: 2010**



NQC15 – Here are some things that people have said about the internet. As you read each one could you please give me a Yes or No for each one depending on whether you agree? (prompted responses, single coded)  
 Base: Children aged 8-15 who use the internet at home (597 aged 8-11 in 2010, 665 aged 12-15 in 2010)  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

## 6.7 Close to half of children aged 12-15 know of someone who has experienced gossip being spread about them via digital media

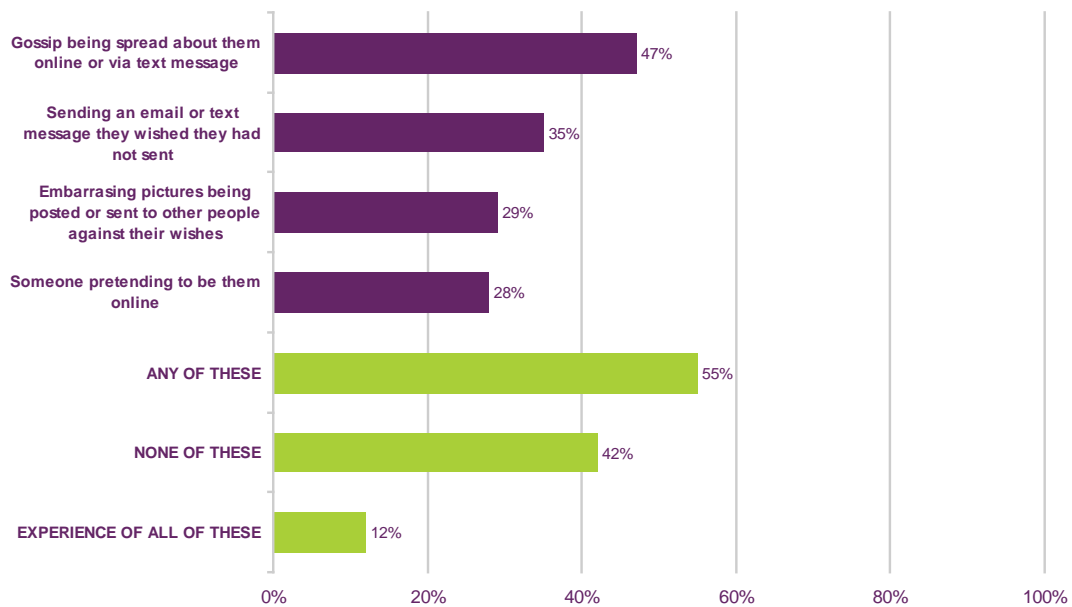
At the second wave of research in 2010 a new question was added to the survey; children aged 12-15 were asked whether they personally knew of anyone who, in the past year, had experienced online, or through a mobile phone, any of the following:

- Gossip being spread about them online or via text message.
- Sending an email or text message that they wished they hadn't sent.
- Embarrassing pictures being posted or sent to other people against their wishes.
- Someone pretending to be them online.

Figure 67 shows that close to half of all children aged 12-15 (47%) say they know of someone who has had gossip spread about them, around one in three (35%) know of someone who has sent an email or text message they regretted, and slightly less than three in ten know of someone who has experienced embarrassing pictures being made public (29%) or of someone pretending to be them (28%). One in eight children know of someone who has experienced all of these (12%) and more than half (55%) know someone who has

experience of at least one of them. There are no differences by gender or by socio-economic group.<sup>41</sup>

**Figure 67: 'Indirect' experience of negative types of online/mobile phone activity: 2010**



NQC45 – Do you personally know anyone who has experienced any of the following things in the last year, either online or via a mobile phone?  
 Base: Children aged 12-15 (376)  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in September to October 2010

<sup>41</sup> Base sizes for comparison are limited due to the question only being asked of 12-15s and at one wave of research.

## Section 7

# Parental mediation strategies

The extent of parental concern about various platforms is detailed above. This section examines the types of rules and restrictions that parents put in place for their children across various media<sup>42</sup>. It also looks at the type of controls and filters that are in place and the levels of guidance provided by parents in helping their child stay safe online.

### Key findings

- Close to four in five parents of children aged 5 -15 who use the internet at home (78%) say they have put in place any rules about internet use. These rules are more common for children aged 5-7 (80%), or 8-11 (89%), than for children aged 12-15 (66%). There has been no change since 2009 in the overall incidence of rules in place for each of the media that children use at home except that 5-7s are now less likely to have rules in place for gaming.
- Nearly one quarter (23%) of 12-15s say they go online via a mobile phone. However, only one in five (21%) of parents of 12-15s with such phones say that access to over-18 online material has been restricted.
- There has been an increase in setting parental controls on multichannel TV, from 32% of households with 5-15s in 2009 to 36% in 2010. This is driven by parents of children aged 5-7 being more likely to have controls set in 2010 (38% vs. 30%).
- Among parents of children aged 5-15 who use the internet at home, there has been a decrease in the use of internet controls or filtering software (37% vs. 43%), which is driven by a decrease among 8-11s (42% vs. 49%) and 12-15s (35% vs. 41%). The likelihood of having controls set or software loaded does not vary by the household socio-economic group or by the child's gender. Compared to 2009, parents of 8-11s are now more likely to state that controls are not in place because their child is normally supervised (54% vs. 44%) and parents of 8-11s are now less likely to be unaware of how to set such controls (9% vs. 17%).
- The majority of parents of 12-15s whose child watches / downloads content from broadcasters' websites are aware that broadcasters show guidance labels (62%). However, a smaller proportion, one in eight parents of 12-15s (13%), has actually set up a PIN which needs to be entered before viewing programmes that have a guidance label. There has been no change in awareness of or use of a PIN compared to 2009.
- Parental controls for television and the internet are now at similar levels – previously internet controls were more likely to be set.

<sup>42</sup> More information about children's attitudes and concerns about their use of the internet and how these may vary by the presence of rules, controls and parental guidance can be found in the publication *Parental mediation and children's online safety*, to be published in May 2011.

## 7.1 The majority of parents have rules in place for their child's use of television, internet, mobile phones and gaming

Parents of children aged 5-15 were prompted with a list of rules and restrictions relating to each of the key media platforms (television, radio, internet, games consoles/ players, mobile phone) that their child used, and were asked to say which rules they had in place for their child (see Figures 68 to 74).

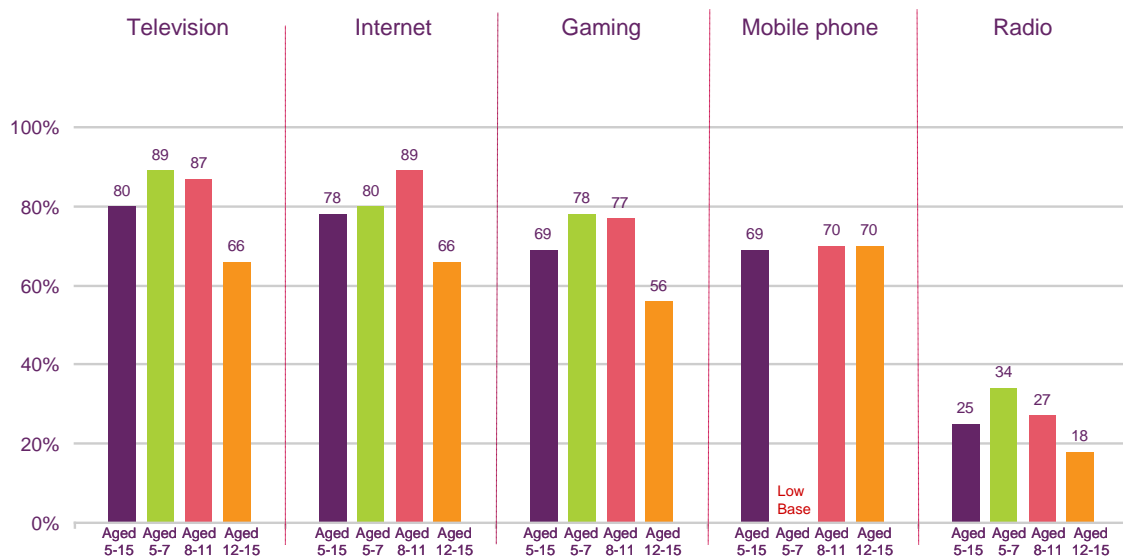
The majority of parents have rules in place concerning access to, and use of, each of the platforms apart from radio, with rules for television and the internet the most common. For all platforms, with the exception of mobile phones, younger children (aged 5-7 and 8-11) are more likely to have rules in place compared to older children (12-15).

When comparing by household socio-economic group, AB parents of children aged 5-15 are more likely, compared to all parents, to have rules in place for three media: television (85% vs. 80%), gaming (76% vs. 69%) and radio (37% vs. 25%). They are, however, no more likely to have rules in place for the internet.

When comparing by gender, among all 5-15s, households with boys aged 5-15 are more likely than households with girls to have rules in place for gaming (73% vs. 66%).

Compared to 2009, the only statistically significant change is that children aged 5-7 are now less likely to have rules in place for gaming (78% vs. 85%).

**Figure 68: Parental rules about use of media, by age: 2010**



QP9/ QP17 /QP24 / QP37/ QP46 – Do you have any of these rules or restrictions about the (MEDIA) that your child watches/ listens to/ uses?  
 Base: Parents of children aged 5-15 who use each medium at home (VARIABLE BASE)  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

## 7.2 Rules about television viewing have remained consistent since 2009

Household rules for television viewing are more likely to be in place for 5-7s (89%) and 8-11s (87%) than for 12-15s (66%). This is also true of nine of the ten individual rules that parents were prompted with. The exception is that the rule relating to PIN/ password controls to watch certain channels/ films is equally likely to be in place for all age groups (13% for 5-7s, 16% for 8-11s and 13% for 12-15s).

The most common rule relating to television viewing for children of all ages relates to not viewing television after a certain time of day. This is a rule for two in five 12-15s (41%) and around three in five 8-11s (58%) and 5-7s (60%). No other rule is in place among the majority of parents with children in any of the three age categories.

As mentioned earlier, children aged 5-15 in AB households are more likely to have any rules in place compared to all children (85% vs. 80%), with seven of the ten rules relating to television viewing being more common in AB households. Compared to 2009, there has only been one change: the rule about no programmes with nudity/ sexual content is now more common for 12-15s (27% vs. 21%).

**Figure 69: Parental rules for television, by age: 2010**

	Aged 5-7	Aged 8-11	Aged 12-15
Rules in place about TV			
Any rules or restrictions	89%	87%	66%
No TV after a certain time	60%	58%	41%
No programmes with nudity/ sexual content	44%	43%	27%
Only DVDs/ videos with an appropriate age rating	37%	34%	21%
No programmes with swearing/ bad language	43%	39%	18%
Regularly check on what they are watching	40%	39%	24%
No programmes with violence	40%	34%	17%
Only children's TV programmes/ children's channels	37%	20%	3%
Need a PIN/ password to watch certain channels/ certain movie ratings	13%	16%	13%
Only DVD/ video that an adult or parent has watched first	12%	13%	7%
Can only watch when supervised/ not on their own	8%	7%	3%

QP9– Do you have any of these rules or restrictions about the TV, videos and DVDs that your child watches? (prompted responses, multi-coded)

Base: Parents of children aged 5-15 whose child watches TV at home (554 aged 5-7, 753 aged 8-11, 751 aged 12-15)

Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

## 7.3 A minority of parents have rules in place about radio

As with television, rules are more likely to be in place for radio among 5-7s (34%) or 8-11s (27%) than for 12-15s (18%) who listen to the radio at home. The most common rule among parents of 8-11s and 12-15s relates to not listening after a certain time of day. This rule is also popular among parents of 5-7s, as is regularly checking on what they are listening to. Parents of 5-15s in AB households are more likely than all parents to have rules in place (37% vs. 25%). There has been no change in the overall incidence of rules, or in the incidence of any individual rule, since 2009 for any of the three age groups.

**Figure 70: Parental rules for radio, by age: 2010**

	Aged 5-7	Aged 8-11	Aged 12-15
Rules in place about radio			
Any rules or restrictions	34%	27%	18%
No radio after a certain time	15%	14%	11%
No music with swearing/ bad language	9%	7%	3%
Regularly check on what they're listening to	11%	5%	2%
Can only listen when supervised / not on their own	9%	3%	1%
Only certain radio stations/ shows	5%	4%	2%
Only children's radio stations/ shows	1%	1%	1%

QP17– Do you have any of these rules or restrictions about radio that your child listens to? (prompted responses, multi-coded)  
 Base: Parents of children aged 5-15 whose child listens to the radio at home (183 aged 5-7, 299 aged 8-11, 368 aged 12-15)  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

## 7.4 The majority of parents of children aged 5-15 have rules in place about their child's internet use

Close to four in five parents of children aged 5 -15 who use the internet at home (78%) say they have put in place any of the internet rules they were asked about. These rules are more common for children aged 5-7 (80%), and 8-11 (89%), than for children aged 12-15 (66%).

The rule in place relating to regularly checking what their child is doing online is in place among half of all parents of an 8-11 year old child (52%), but only 36% of parents of a 5-7 year old and 34% of parents of 12-15s. Parents of 8-11s are also more likely than parents of 5-7s and parents of 12-15s to have a rule about no internet after a certain time (35% for 8-11s compared to 26% for 5-7s and 29% for 12-15s).

There are some differences by gender. Parents of boys aged 8-11 are more likely than parents of girls aged 8-11 to have rules in place about being allowed to use the internet for only a certain amount of time (29% vs. 20%), about using the internet only when supervised and not on their own (23% vs. 16%), and to have the 'no social networking' rule (30% vs. 17%). Four internet rules are more likely to be in place among parents of boys aged 12-15 than among parents of girls aged 12-15: no purchasing from websites (27% vs. 18%), being allowed to use the internet for only a certain amount of time (22% vs. 15%), only using it when supervised/ not on their own (8% vs. 3%) and only visiting websites stored in their Favourites list (6% vs. 2%). Neither the overall incidence of having rules in place, nor the incidence of any individual rule for home internet use, varies according to the household socio-economic group.

There are a number of differences compared to 2009 among parents of 5-7s and 8-11s. The overall incidence of rules among both of these groups has not changed, but parents of a 5-7 year old child are now more likely to have a rule in place relating to the use of PIN / passwords to enter websites that are not already approved (18% vs. 8%)<sup>43</sup>. Parents of 8-11s are more likely to say their child is allowed to use the internet only for a certain amount

<sup>43</sup> While this specific rule has seen an increase among parents of children aged 5-7 that use the internet at home compared to 2009, the overall incidence of setting internet controls or filtering software has not changed since 2009 for children aged 5-7 (see section 7.8). Both questions would not necessarily elicit a consistent response from parents, as they are asking about different aspects of parental mediation with regard to their child's use of the internet.



of time (25% vs. 19%) or not allowed to use social networking websites (24% vs. 17%) or Instant Messaging sites (17% vs. 11%)

**Figure 71: Parental rules for the internet, by age: 2010**

	Aged 5-7	Aged 8-11	Aged 12-15
Rules in place about internet			
Any rules or restrictions	80%	89%	66%
Regularly check what they're doing online	36%	52%	34%
No internet after a certain time	26%	35%	29%
No purchasing from websites	16%	27%	22%
Only children's websites	46%	28%	5%
Only allowed to use the internet for a certain amount of time	21%	25%	19%
Can only use when supervised/ not on their own	31%	20%	6%
Only talk/ chat with friends/ people they already know	9%	19%	17%
No social networking websites	18%	24%	7%
PIN/ Password required to enter websites unless already approved	18%	17%	11%
No Instant Messaging/ MSN	14%	17%	5%
Only websites stored in their Favourites list	11%	10%	4%
Only use for homework	5%	8%	4%

QP24 Do you have any of these rules or restrictions about the access that your child has to the internet? (prompted responses, multi-coded)  
 Base: Parents of children aged 5-15 whose child uses the internet at home (343 aged 5-7, 597 aged 8-11, 665 aged 12-15)  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

A further rule about their child's use of the internet was asked of parents of 8-15s who are aware that their child has a profile on a social networking website. These parents were asked whether they check what their child is doing online when visiting these types of sites.

Ninety-four per cent of parents of a child aged 5-15 with an active social networking site profile are aware that their child has such a profile, so around one in twenty of these parents (6%) say their child does not have a profile or are unsure whether they have a social networking profile. Ninety per cent of parents of an 8-11 year old with an active social networking profile are aware of this profile, as are 95% of parents of 12-15s.<sup>44</sup> Slightly more than nine in ten (92%) parents of a child aged 10-12 with a profile on Facebook/ Bebo/ MySpace are also aware of their child's profile.

As shown in Figure 72, parents of children aged 8-11 are more likely than parents of a 12-15 to check what their child is doing (89% vs. 73%). There are no differences in whether checks are made by the child's gender or by the household socio-economic group.

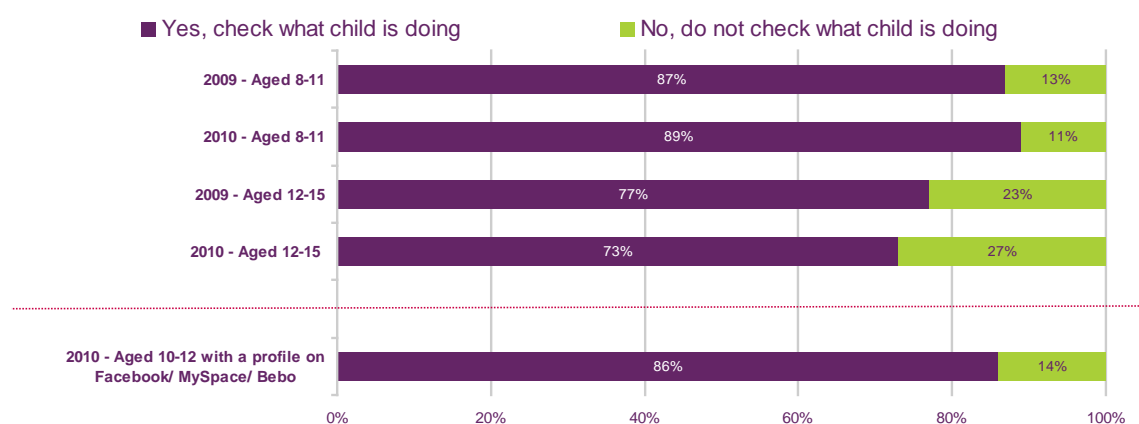
There has been no change in the proportion of parents who make checks since 2009, for either age group of child<sup>45</sup>.

<sup>44</sup> It is not possible to report a figure for 5-7s due to a low base of children of this age with an active social networking site profile.

<sup>45</sup> The question wording changed in 2010, in 2009 it asked about parental checking of visits to websites that can be used to 'chat to other users'.

Eighty-six per cent of parents of children aged 10-12 with a profile on either Facebook/ Bebo/ MySpace also check what their child is doing when visiting these sites.

**Figure 72: Parental checking of social networking site activity, by age: 2009 and 2010**



NQP29B – Do you tend to check what they are doing online when they are visiting these types of sites? – NB QUESTION WORDING CHANGED IN 2010 – In 2009 it asked about visits to sites that can be used to 'chat to other users'  
 Base: Parents of children aged 8-15 who are aware their child has a social networking site profile/ whose child visits sites that can be used to chat to other users (255 aged 8-11 in 2009, 171 aged 8-11 in 2010, 440 aged 12-15 in 2009, 499 aged 12-15 in 2010, 217 aged 10-12 with a profile on Facebook/ MySpace/ Bebo) – significance testing shows any differences between 2009 and 2010  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

## 7.5 Parents of 5-7s are now less likely to have rules in place about game playing

Most parents whose child plays games on a gaming device (fixed or portable games console/ computer/ mobile phone/ portable media player) have rules or restrictions about the games their child plays. Rules are more likely to be in place for children aged 5-7 (78%), and 8-11 (77%), than for children aged 12-15 (56%).

Around half of parents of 5-7s have rules restricting the games played to those with an appropriate age rating (53%), as do at least two in five parents of 8-11s (44%), although this is less common among parents of 12-15s (28%). Two in five parents of 5-7s set rules about the type of content of the games played (39% for no games with nudity/ sexual content, 40% for no games with drugs use and 39% for no games with swearing/ bad language) as do around one in three parents of 8-11s (36% for no games with nudity/ sexual content, 35% for no games with drugs use and 34% for no games with swearing/ bad language) and one in five parents of 12-15s (23% for no games with nudity/ sexual content, 20% for no games with drugs use and 18% for no games with swearing/ bad language)

When comparing by gender, the overall incidence of having rules in place is higher among parents of boys aged 5-7 compared to parents of girls aged 5-7 (83% vs. 72%), but no single rule regarding game playing is more prevalent for boys aged 5-7 compared to girls aged 5-7. There are no other differences in rules about game playing by gender within age.

When comparing by household socio-economic group, rules are more common in AB households (76%) and less common in DE households (64%), when compared to all households (69%). Parents in AB households are more likely to have the rule that the child can only play games with an appropriate age rating (49% vs. 40%). It is less common for DE households to have a rule relating to 'no games after a certain time' (27% vs. 33%) and to have a rule about 'no online game playing with people they don't already know' (10% vs. 14%).

Compared to 2009, at an overall level rules are less common among parents of children aged 5-7 (78% vs. 85%). However, for this age group three rules relating to gaming content have increased - no games with nudity / sexual content (from 31% to 39%), no games with drug use (from 30% to 40%) and no games with swearing/ bad language (from 31% to 39%). There has been no change since 2009 among parents of 8-11s and parents of 12-15s.

**Figure 73: Parental rules for gaming, by age: 2010**

	Aged 5-7	Aged 8-11	Aged 12-15
Rules in place about game playing			
Any rules or restrictions	78%	77%	56%
Only games with appropriate age rating	53%	44%	28%
No games after a certain time	38%	37%	25%
No games with nudity/ sexual content	39%	36%	23%
No games with drug use	40%	35%	20%
No games with swearing/ bad language	39%	34%	18%
No games with violence	38%	34%	18%
Regularly check on what they're playing	32%	33%	22%
No online game playing	18%	17%	8%
No online game playing with people they don't already know	16%	15%	11%
Only a game that an adult or parent has played/ tried first	15%	11%	5%
Can only play when supervised/ not on their own	18%	9%	3%

QP46 Do you have any of these rules or restrictions about the games that your child plays – whether on a games console, a computer or any other device? (prompted responses, multi-coded)

Base: Parents of children aged 5-15 whose child ever plays games (451 aged 5-7, 710 aged 8-11, 683 aged 12-15)

Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

## 7.6 The majority of parents of 8-11s and 12-15s have rules in place about their child's mobile phone use

Most parents whose child has their own mobile phone have put in place at least one of the rules that we asked about; with parents of 12-15s as likely to have rules in place as parents of 8-11s (70%)<sup>46</sup>. Many of the rules and restrictions for mobile phone use relate to the cost associated with using the phone rather than the possibility of encountering inappropriate or potentially harmful content.

When comparing by gender, parents of boys aged 12-15 are more likely than parents of girls aged 12-15 regularly to check what their child is doing with the phone (16% vs. 10%), while parents of girls aged 8-11 are more likely than parents of boys to have the rule that the child is responsible for top-ups/ the mobile phone bill (11% vs. 4%). There are no differences by household socio-economic group.

Parents of children aged 8-11 are more likely now than in 2009 regularly to check what their child is doing with the phone (21% vs. 13%).

<sup>46</sup> No data are shown for children aged 5-7 for mobile phones as there were only 47 children of this age with their own mobile phone.

The overall incidence of rules is no different among parents of 5-15s with a smartphone than among parents of children with a mobile phone. However, as might be expected, children aged 5-15 with a smartphone are less likely to have the rule in place about them being allowed only to make/ receive voice calls or text and nothing else (3% vs. 14%).

**Figure 74: Parental rules for mobile phones, by age: 2010**

	Aged 8-11	Aged 12-15
Rules in place about mobile phones		
Any rules or restrictions	70%	70%
Limit how often credit can be put on the phone	38%	35%
No calls to premium rate numbers	18%	17%
Regularly check what they are doing with the phone	21%	13%
Child is responsible for paying top -ups/ bills	8%	21%
No texts to premium rate numbers	17%	15%
Only to make/ receive voice calls or send texts, nothing else	16%	13%
Only calls/ texts to an agreed list of people	20%	8%
No internet sites/ no WAP browsing	11%	12%

QP37– Do you have any of these rules or restrictions about the use that your child makes of his/ her mobile phone ? (prompted responses, multi-coded)  
 Base: Parents of children aged 8-15 whose child has their own mobile phone (339 aged 8-11, 654 aged 12-15)  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

## 7.7 Parents of children aged 5-15 are now more likely to have access controls set on their digital television service

As well as having rules relating to their child's use of different media, parents may also employ more technical measures to control their child's access and use. As noted earlier, almost all 5-15s (95%) live in a household with a multichannel television service. Parents of children in these households were asked whether they had any controls on their service so that their child could watch particular channels or types of programmes only once a PIN number or password had been entered.

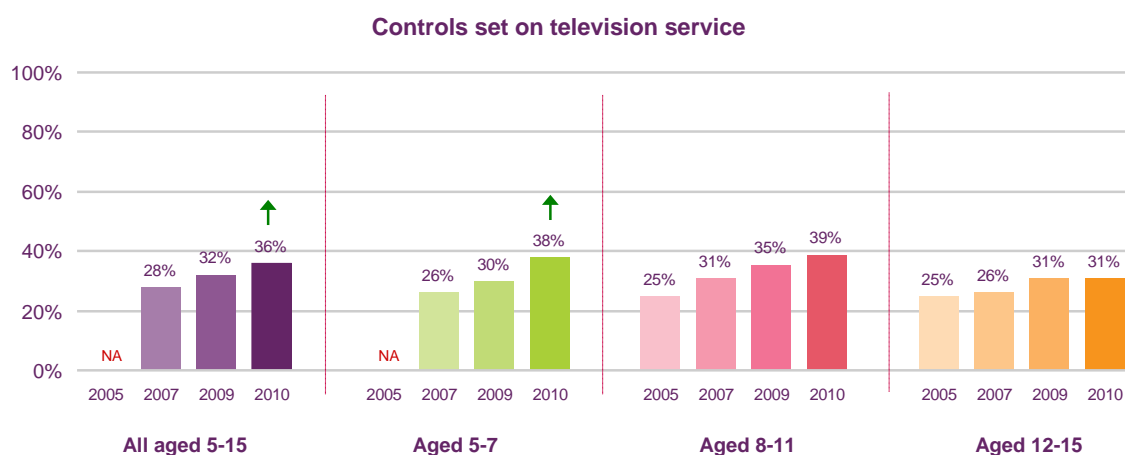
More than one in three households with a multichannel television service have set these controls (36%), and this is more likely among parents of 5-7s (38%) and 8-11s (39%) than among parents of 12-15s (31%). There has been an increase in the incidence of setting access controls for multichannel television services since 2009 among households with children aged 5-15 (36% vs. 32%); this is because in 2010 parents of children aged 5-7 are more likely to have controls set (38% vs. 30%).

Access controls are more likely to be set in households with a satellite (46%) or cable television service (43%), and are considerably less likely to be set in households with Freeview (22%)<sup>47</sup>. Since 2009, there has been an increase in the incidence of using access controls for satellite services (46% vs. 40%) and in Freeview households (22% vs. 18%). Access controls are also more likely to be in place in households with a DVR than in those without (48% vs. 21%).

There are no differences in the incidence of access controls by household socio-economic group or by the child's gender.

<sup>47</sup> This could be because parental control functionality is not universal for set-top boxes or digital televisions that offer Freeview television services.

**Figure 75: PIN or password controls set on television services: 2005, 2007, 2009 and 2010**



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? WORDING IN 2005 - Have you or has anyone in your household set any controls on your TV service so that particular channels can only be watched by using a PIN number or password? (prompted responses, single coded)

Base: Parents of children aged 5-15 with multi-channel TV in the household and whose child watches TV at home (3219 aged 5-15 in 2007, 1936 aged 5-15 in 2009, 1963 aged 5-15 in 2010, 825 aged 5-7 in 2007, 517 aged 5-7 in 2009, 528 aged 5-7 in 2010, 513 aged 8-11 in 2005, 1173 aged 8-11 in 2007, 702 aged 8-11 in 2009, 719 aged 8-11 in 2010, 521 aged 12-15 in 2005, 1221 aged 12-15 in 2007, 717 aged 12-15 in 2009, 716 aged 12-15 in 2010) – significance testing shows any change between 2009 and 2010

Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

Parents with controls in place on their multichannel television service were prompted with five types of control and were asked to select which ones they had in place at home. Figure 76 shows their responses<sup>48</sup>. Only one control varies by the age of the child: blocking films depending on their age rating - this is more likely to be in place among parents of 5-7s (35%) compared to either parents of 8-11s (24%) or parents of 12-15s (23%).

Parents with a DVR that has television controls enabled were asked about a further access control that can be used with a DVR. Around half of this group (52% for 8-11s and 49% for 12-15s) ensure that a PIN is required to view a recording that was originally broadcast after 9pm.

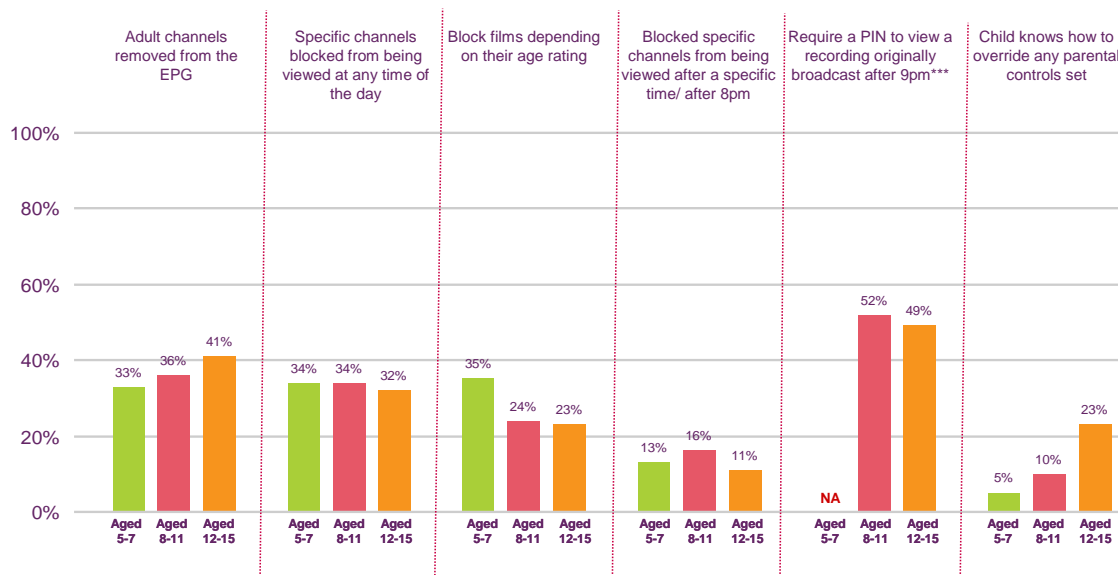
Given the lower base size of all parents of 5-15s that have controls in place, it is not possible to look at any differences by gender within age. There are, however, no differences in the type of television control used by the parents of boys aged 5-15 and of girls in this age group. There are also no differences by household socio-economic group.

Parents with access controls in place were also asked whether their child knows the PIN or password necessary to override the television access controls; the responses are shown in Figure 76. Knowledge about how to override these access controls increases with the age of the child, accounting for one in twenty 5-7s (5%), one in ten 8-11s (10%) and nearly one in four 12-15s (23%).

Compared to 2009, parents of children aged 5-7, 8-11 and 12-15 are no more or less likely to use any of these specific types of controls. Children in each of these three age categories are also as likely as they were in 2009 to know how to override any parental controls set.

<sup>48</sup> The access control 'require a PIN to view a recording originally broadcast after 9pm' was only asked of those with television controls and a DVR.

**Figure 76: Types of access controls in place among parents with controls set on their multichannel television, by age: 2010**



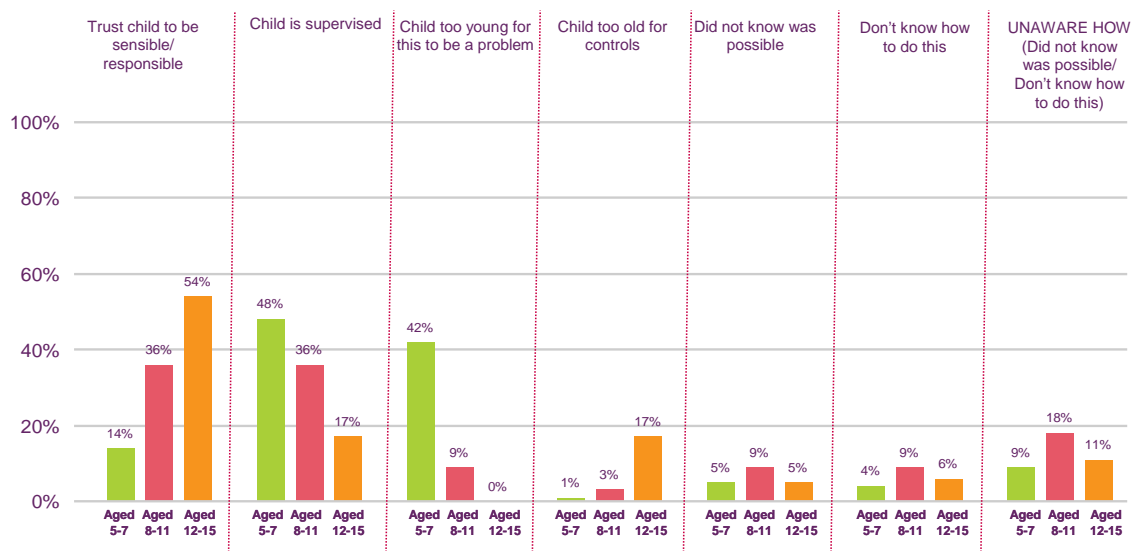
QP13/QP14 – Do you use these parental controls in any of these ways? (prompted response, multi-coded) / Does the child know the PIN or password to override these controls? (spontaneous response, single coded)  
 Base: Parents of children aged 5-15 with multichannel TV in the household and parental controls set (184 aged 5-7, 256 aged 8-11, 215 aged 12-15) / \*\*\* Base represent all children aged 5-15 with multichannel TV in the household and a DVR, with parental controls set (189 aged 8-11, 156 aged 12-15)  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

Those parents who do not have any access controls set up for their multichannel television service were asked to say why (Figure 77). Their reasons tend to differ depending on the age of the child. Parents of older children are more likely to say that they trust their child to be sensible/ responsible, while parents of younger children are more likely to say it is because their child is supervised, or that the child is too young for a lack of controls to be a problem.

Some parents responded that they did not know how to set access controls, or did not know that these settings were possible. Being unaware of access controls in either of these ways accounts for 13% of all parents of children aged 5-15 who do not have these settings in place, and is more common among parents of 8-11s (18%) than parents of 5-7s (9%) or parents of 12-15s (11%). Those in households with a Freeview service are also more likely to be unaware of access controls in either of these ways (19% vs. 13%).

There are no differences by household socio-economic group. Compared to 2009, parents of children aged 5-7 are now less likely to say they are unaware of access controls (9% vs. 17%).

**Figure 77: Reasons for not having controls in place for multichannel television, by age: 2010**



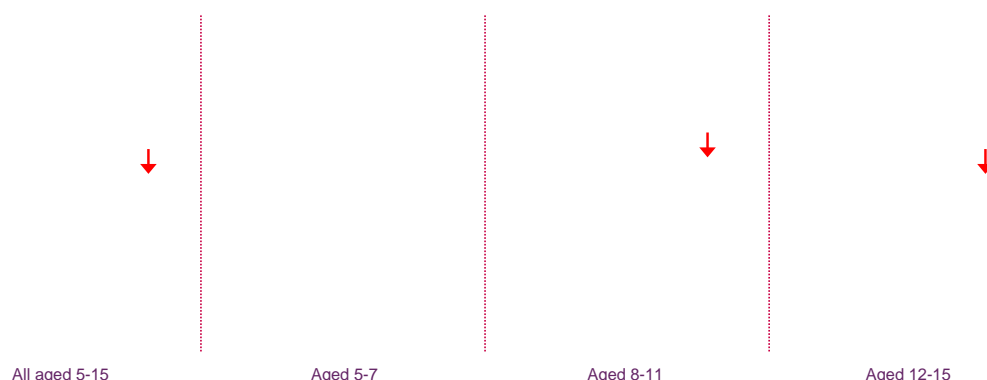
QP12- Can you tell me why that is? (spontaneous responses, multi coded) – only responses shown where >5% of all parents have given that answer  
 Base: Parents of children aged 5-15 who have multi-channel TV in the household and no controls set (334 aged 5-7, 453 aged 8-11, 486 aged 12-15)  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

## 7.8 Internet controls are now less likely to be in place for children aged 5-15 who use the internet at home

Parents of children who use the internet at home were asked whether any controls are set or any software loaded to stop their child viewing certain types of website. Some 37% have these controls in place, and this is more likely among parents of 8-11s (42%) than among parents of 5-7s (34%) or 12-15s (35%). The likelihood of having controls set or software loaded does not vary by the household socio-economic group or by the child's gender.

Since 2009, the incidence of having internet controls or filtering software has decreased among parents of 5-15s (37% vs. 43%); this is driven by a decrease among 8-11s (42% vs. 49%) and 12-15s (35% vs. 41%).

**Figure 78: Internet controls/ filtering software loaded, by age: 2007, 2008, 2009 and 2010**



NQP26– Are there any controls set or is any software loaded to stop your child viewing certain types of websites? (prompted responses, single coded)  
 Base: Parents of children aged 5-15 who use the internet at home (2397 aged 5-15 in 2007, 1449 aged 5-15 in 2008, 1567 aged 5-15 in 2009, 1605 aged 5-15 in 2010, 477 aged 5-7 in 2007, 308 aged 5-7 in 2008, 340 aged 5-7 in 2009, 343 aged 5-7 in 2010, 875 aged 8-11 in 2007, 527 aged 8-11 in 2008, 582 aged 8-11 in 2009, 597 aged 8-11 in 2010, 1045 aged 12-15 in 2007, 614 aged 12-15 in 2008, 645 aged 12-15 in 2009, 665 aged 12-15 in 2010). Significance testing shows any changes between 2009 and 2010  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

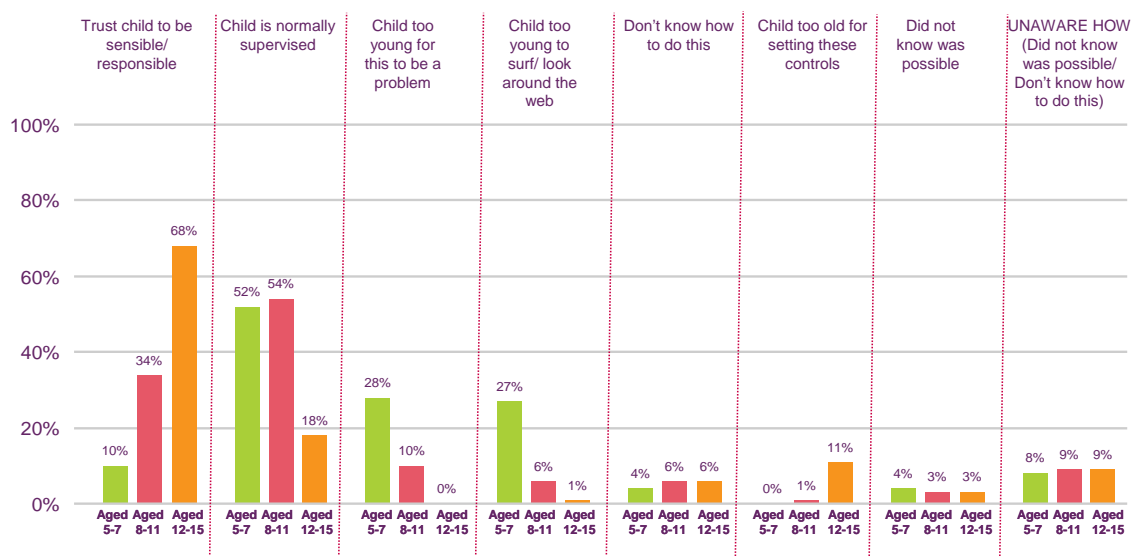
The reasons given by parents for not setting internet controls or filtering software tend to differ by the age of the child, as Figure 79 sets out. The main reason given by around half of all parents of 5-7s (52%) and 8-11s (54%) is that their child is normally supervised when using the internet. Among parents of 12-15s, close to seven in ten (68%) say they trust their child to be responsible, with nearly one in five (18%) stating that they do not set internet controls because their child is normally supervised.

Some parents do not use internet settings or filtering software, either because they don't know how to do this, or are not aware that it is possible. Being unaware of internet controls in either of these ways accounts for one in ten (9%) parents of 5-15s who do not have settings in place, and this is comparable across each of the three age groups of children. There are no differences in reasons for not having internet controls in place by household socio-economic group.

Compared to 2009, parents of 8-11s are now more likely to state that controls are not in place because their child is normally supervised (54% vs. 44%) and parents of 8-11s are now less likely to be unaware of how to set such controls (9% vs. 17%).



**Figure 79: Reasons for not having Internet controls/ filtering software loaded, by age: 2010**

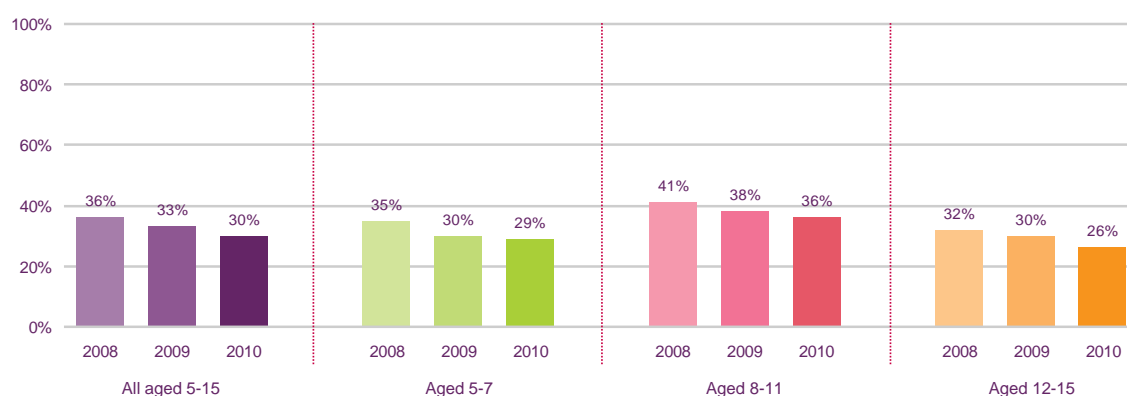


QP27– And can you tell me why that is? (spontaneous responses, multi-coded) – only responses shown where >5% of all parents have given that answer  
 Base: Parents of children aged 5-15 without any controls set or software loaded to stop their child viewing certain types of websites (210 aged 5-7, 313 aged 8-11, 402 aged 12-15)  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

Parents of children aged 5-15 who use the internet at home were also asked whether they had settings that allow only safe searches on search engine websites. Three in ten parents of 5-15s say they use safe search settings. As with internet controls, this is more likely among parents of 8-11s (36%), than among parents of 5-7s (29%) or 12-15s (26%). As with internet controls/ filtering software, there are no differences in the likelihood of having safe search settings by the child's gender or by household socio-economic group.

There has been no statistically significant change in the incidence of having safe search settings in place since 2009, across any of the three age categories of child.

**Figure 80: Use of safe search settings on search engine websites, by age: 2008, 2009 and 2010<sup>49</sup>**



QP28 – Do you have settings that allow only safe searches on search engines such as Google? (prompted responses, single coded)  
 Base: Parents of children aged 5-15 who use the internet at home (1449 aged 5-15 in 2008, 1567 aged 5-15 in 2009, 1605 aged 5-15 in 2010, 308 aged 5-7 in 2008, 340 aged 5-7 in 2009, 343 aged 5-7 in 2010, 527 aged 8-11 in 2008, 582 aged 8-11 in 2009, 597 aged 8-11 in 2010, 614 aged 12-15 in 2008, 645 aged 12-15 in 2009, 665 aged 12-15 in 2010). Significance testing shows any changes between 2009 and 2010  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

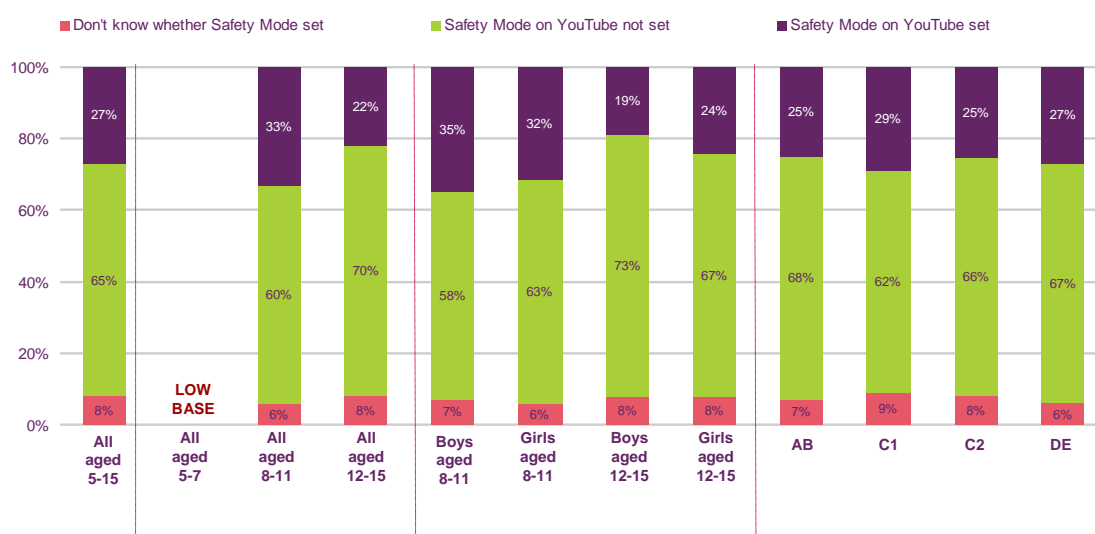
In 2010, parents of children aged 5-15 who use the internet at home were asked about whether their child visits the YouTube website. Half of all children aged 5-15 (52%) visit YouTube, with the likelihood of visiting increasing with the age of the child, accounting for one in five 5-7s (19%), close to one in two 8-11s (47%) and three in four 12-15s (75%).<sup>50</sup>

Parents of children who visit this site were then asked whether they had enabled YouTube's Safety Mode to prevent their child viewing some videos. Figure 81 shows that slightly less than three in ten parents (27%) of a 5-15 who visits the YouTube website has Safety Mode set. Parent of 8-11s are more likely to have Safety Mode enabled, compared to parents of 12-15s (33% vs. 22%). There are no differences in having Safety Mode enabled by gender within age or by socio-economic group.

<sup>49</sup> In 2008 and 2009, this question was only asked of parents who say they had any internet controls or filters in place, while in 2010 it was asked of all parents. In order to show meaningful comparisons over time, the 2010 data has been shown based on the response of those parents who say they did not have any internet controls or filters in place. The percentages shown for all three years are however all expressed as a proportion of all children aged 5-7, 8-11 or 12-15 that use the internet at home.

<sup>50</sup> Earlier in this report (Figure 26) 37% of children aged 8-11 and 66% of children aged 12-15 who use the internet at home said they ever watched or downloaded videos made by the general public on sites like YouTube. The figures mentioned here are different as they were asked of parents rather than children and parents were asked specifically about the YouTube website as opposed to sites like YouTube.

**Figure 81: Use of Safety Mode on the YouTube website, by age, gender and socio-economic group: 2010**

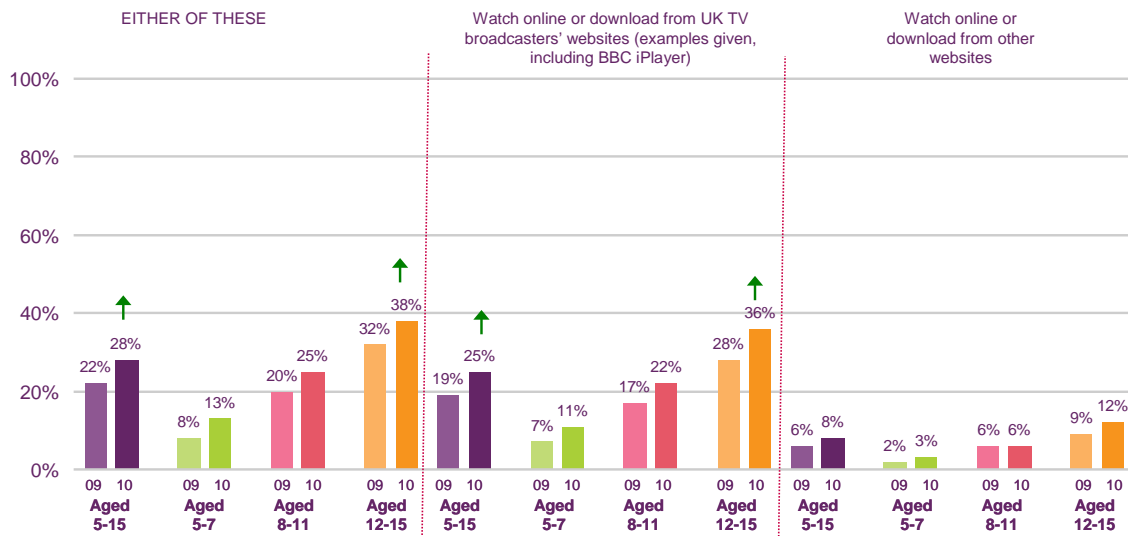


NQP28B Have you enabled the Safety Mode on YouTube to prevent your child viewing some videos? (spontaneous responses, single coded)  
 Base: Parents of children aged 5-15 whose child visits the YouTube website (833 aged 5-15, 276 aged 8-11, 489 aged 12-15, 143 boys aged 8-11, 133 girls aged 8-11, 247 boys aged 12-15, 242 girls aged 12-15, 193 AB, 256 C1, 169 C2, 215 DE) - significance testing shows any difference by gender within age or by SEG compared to parents of all children aged 5-15  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

## 7.9 One in six parents whose child watches /downloads content from UK television broadcasters' websites uses parental controls on these sites

Parents of children who use the internet at home were asked whether their child ever downloads or watches TV programmes or films over the internet. One in four children aged 5-15 (25%) now watch television content via UK television broadcasters' websites, according to their parents, and the incidence increases with age, with this activity undertaken by slightly more than one in ten 5-7s (11%), slightly more than two in ten 8-11s (22%) and more than one in three 12-15s (36%).

**Figure 82: Watching television programmes and films online, by age: 2009 and 2010**



QP31 – Does your child watch TV programmes or films in any of the following ways? (prompted response, multi-coded)  
 Base: Parents of children who use the internet at home (1567 aged 5-15 in 2009, 1605 aged 5-15 in 2010, 340 aged 5-7 in 2009, 343 aged 5-7 in 2010, 582 aged 8-11 in 2009, 597 aged 8-11 in 2010, 768 aged 12-15 in 2009, 645 aged 12-15 in 2009, 665 aged 12-15 in 2010) – significance testing shows any difference between 2009 and 2010  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

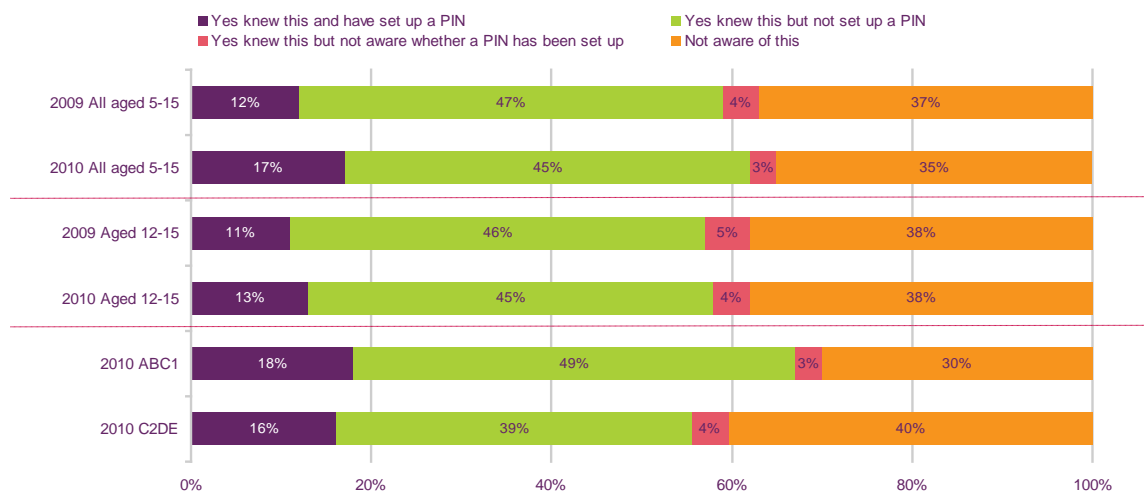
Parents of children aged 5-15 in AB households are more likely than all parents to say their child undertakes this activity (33% vs. 25%). Compared to 2009, the overall incidence of watching television content via UK television broadcasters' websites has increased among all 5-15s (25% vs. 19%) which is driven by an increase among 12-15s (36% vs. 28%).

Parents of children aged 5-15<sup>51</sup> whose child watches/downloads content from broadcasters' websites were asked whether they were aware that these sites show guidance labels for programmes which may include content unsuitable for young audiences. These parents were also asked whether they had set a PIN that needed to be entered before viewing programmes that had a guidance label.

The majority of parents of 12-15s whose child watches / downloads content from broadcasters' websites are aware that broadcasters show guidance labels (62%). A smaller proportion; one in eight parents of 12-15s (13%), have actually set up a PIN that must be entered before viewing programmes which have a guidance label. There has been no change in awareness or use of a PIN compared to 2009. Awareness and use of a PIN does not vary when comparing ABC1 and C2DE households with children aged 5-15.

<sup>51</sup> Figure 83 only shows data for all 5-15s and 12-15s because of the low base of only 28 parents of children aged 5-7, and 90 parents of children aged 8-11 at this question in 2009.

**Figure 83: Awareness and use of PIN controls on broadcasters' websites, by age: 2009 and 2010**



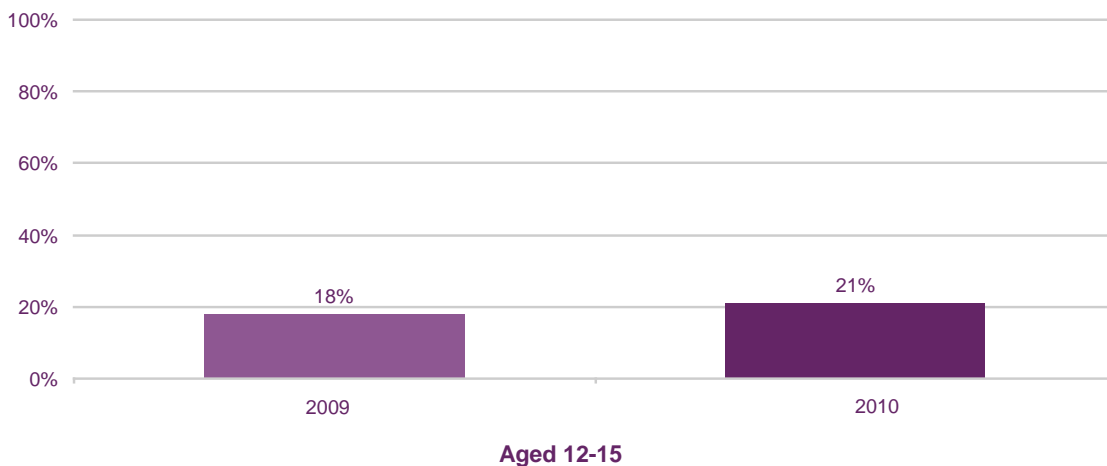
QP32/ 33 – Did you know that the broadcaster's websites like the BBC iPlayer and ITV Player show Guidance labels for programmes that may include content that is unsuitable for young audiences, (such as violence, sex, drug use or strong language)? / Have you set a PIN on the websites that you or your child use to watch or download TV programmes or movies – which needs to be entered before viewing programmes that have a Guidance label? (spontaneous responses, single coded)  
 Base: Parents of children aged 5-15 whose child watches TV programmes or movies online / downloaded from TV broadcaster's website (292 aged 5-15 in 2009, 397 aged 5-15 in 2010, 174 aged 12-15 in 2009, 230 aged 12-15 in 2010, 246 ABC1, 150 C2DE) - significance testing shows any difference between 2009 and 2010 and by ABC1s compared to C2DE's in 2010  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

## 7.10 One in five parents of a 12-15 year old with a mobile phone have limited their child's access to the internet

Parents whose child has their own mobile phone which can be used to get onto the internet were asked whether they, or anyone else in the household, had limited the access to the internet on their child's phone to exclude websites that are aimed at people aged 18 and over<sup>52</sup>.

One in five parents of children aged 12-15 (21%), whose mobile phone can be used to access the internet, say that this filter is in place. This incidence has not changed since 2009.

**Figure 84: Use of filters for mobile phone content among 12-15s: 2009 and 2010**



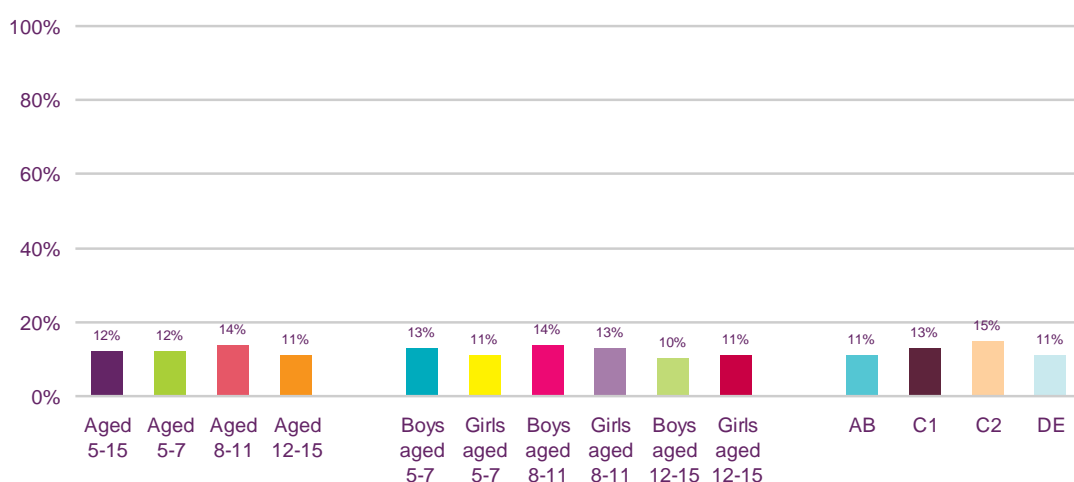
NQP40B – Have you or has anyone else in your household limited the access to the internet on your child's phone, to exclude websites that are aimed at people aged 18 and over? – Question wording changed at Wave 2 2010  
 Base: Children aged 12-15 with a mobile phone that can be used to go online (482 aged 12-15 in 2009, 139 aged 12-15 in 2010)  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

<sup>52</sup> The question wording and routing was amended at Wave 2 2010 to bring the question about mobile phone filters more into line with the way in which filters and controls are asked about for other media. As such the data reported here are based on only one wave of research in 2010, and the base sizes are too low to report on for 8-11s. Despite question wording and routing amendments in 2010, the comparison to 12-15s in 2009 remains a valid one.

## 7.11 One in eight parents of children aged 5-15 with a games console have set parental controls

In 2010, parents of children aged 5-15 with either a fixed games console (connected to a television) or a portable / handheld games console were asked whether they had set parental controls. Figure 85 shows that around one in eight parents of a 5-15 year old (12%) has set controls and, unlike for internet controls, there is no variation by the child's age. There are no differences by gender within age or by household socio-economic group.

**Figure 85: Parental controls on fixed or portable games consoles, by age and demography: 2010**



NQP47D – Do you have any parental controls set on the games console? IF NECESSARY – To stop your child playing games or watching DVDs above a certain age rating or to restrict or prevent them going online (spontaneous responses, single coded)  
 Base: Parents of children aged 5-15 with a fixed or portable games console (1805 aged 5-15, 444 aged 5-7, 692 aged 8-11, 669 aged 12-15, 233 boys aged 5-7, 211 girls aged 5-7, 369 boys aged 8-11, 323 girls aged 8-11, 366 boys aged 12-15, 303 girls aged 12-15, 371 AB, 497 C1, 362 C2, 574 DE) – significance testing shows any difference by gender within age or by SEG compared to all parents of children aged 5-15  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

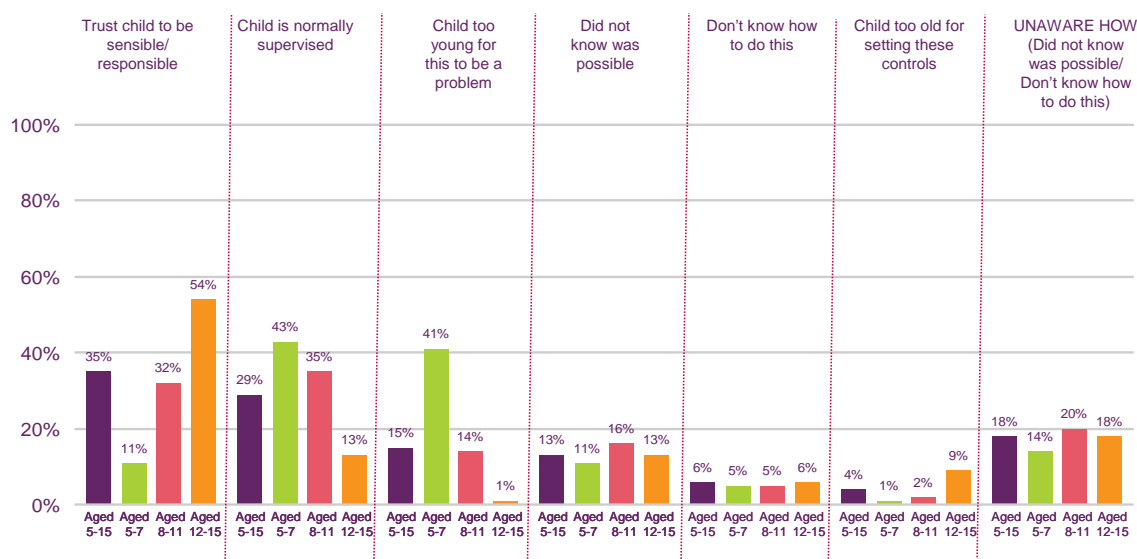
Parents without controls were asked why they had not set controls on their child's fixed or portable games console.

Parents of 5-7s are most likely to say this is because their child is normally supervised (43%) or their child is too young for this to be a problem (41%). Parents of 8-11s are most likely to say it is because their child is normally supervised (35%) or because they trust their child to be sensible/ responsible (32%). The majority of parents of 12-15s say that they do not have controls set on their child's fixed or portable games console because they trust their child to be sensible/ responsible (54%).

Around one in five parents (18%) without controls say that it is because they either did not know controls could be set or that they don't know how to set them. The proportion of parents who are unaware of how to set controls does not vary by the age of the child.

There is only one difference by household socio-economic group. Parents of children aged 5-15 in AB households without controls set are less likely than all parents without controls to say that it is because they were unaware of how to set such controls (12% vs. 18%).

**Figure 86: Reasons for not having controls set on fixed or portable games consoles, by age: 2010**



NQP47F— And can you tell me why that is? (spontaneous responses, multi-coded) – only responses shown where >4% of all parents have given that answer  
 Base: Parents of children aged 5-15 who have not set parental controls on the games console (1494 aged 5-15, 361 aged 5-7, 561 aged 8-11, 572 aged 12-15)  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

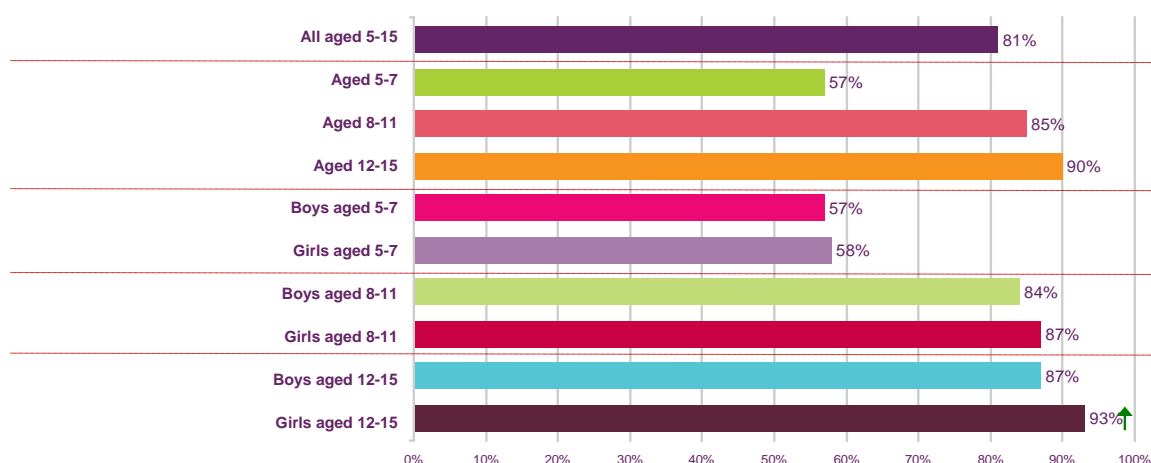
## 7.12 One in five parents of a child aged 5-15 who uses the internet at home have not spoken with their child about staying safe online

In the 2010 *Media Literacy Audit* two additional questions were asked of parents of children aged 5-15 who used the internet at home, with a view to understanding how parents support their child's safe use of the internet. The two questions are: "Have you talked to your child about staying safe when they are online?" and "Generally speaking, do you feel you know enough about how to help your child stay safe online?"

Figure 87 shows that the majority of parents of 5-15s who use the internet at home (81%) say that they have spoken to their children about staying safe online. This overall incidence varies by the age of the child, accounting for close to three in five parents of a 5-7 year old (57%), more than four in five parents of 8-11s (85%) and nine in ten parents of a 12-15 year old (90%). Looking at gender within age, there are no differences among parents of younger children (aged 5-7 or 8-11), but parents of girls aged 12-15 are more likely than parents of boys of this age to have spoken to their child (93% vs. 87%). There are no differences by household socio-economic group.



**Figure 87: Parents who have spoken to their child about staying safe online, by age and gender: 2010**

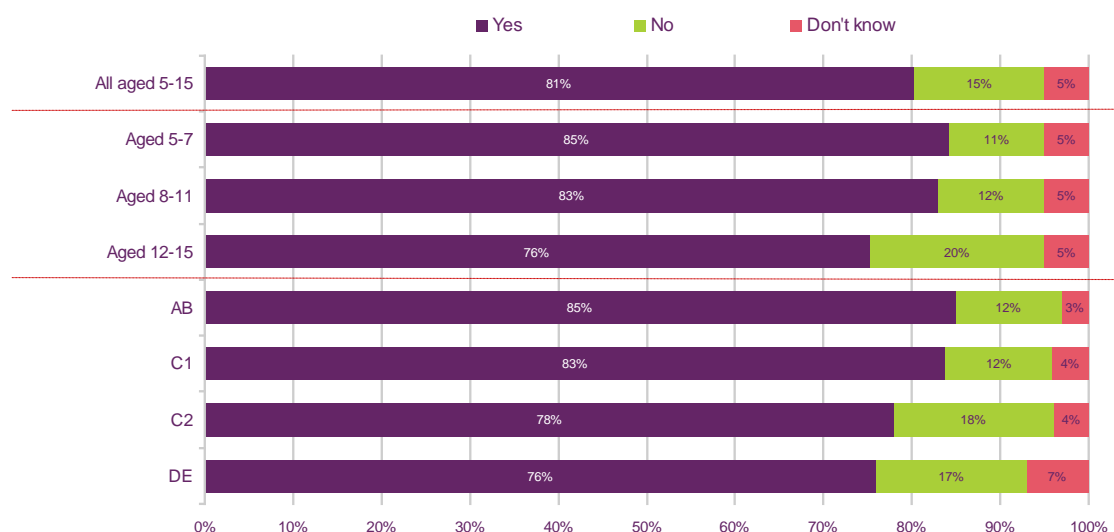


NQP33A – Have you talked to your child about staying safe when they are online? (spontaneous responses, single coded)  
 Base: Parents of children aged 5-15 whose child uses the internet at home (1605 aged 5-15, 343 aged 5-7, 597 aged 8-11, 665 aged 12-15, 173 boys aged 5-7, 170 girls aged 5-7, 314 boys aged 8-11, 283 girls aged 8-11, 340 boys aged 12-15, 325 girls aged 12-15). – significance testing shows any differences by gender within age  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

Figure 88 shows that four in five parents (81%) of children aged 5-15 feel they know enough about how to help their child stay safe online. This measure does vary by the age of the child; parents of children aged 12-15 are less likely to say they are knowledgeable, compared to parents of 5-7s (76% vs. 85%) and parents of 8-11s (76% vs. 83%).

There are no differences by household socio-economic group.

**Figure 88: Parents who feel they know enough about how to help their child to stay safe online, by age and socio-economic group: 2010**



NQP33B – Generally speaking, do you feel you know enough about how to help your child to stay safe when they are online? (spontaneous responses, single coded)

Base: Parents of children aged 5-15 whose child uses the internet at home (1605 aged 5-15, 343 aged 5-7, 597 aged 8-11, 665 aged 12-15, 373 AB, 479 C1, 325 C2, 427 DE). – significance testing shows any differences between each SEG group shown and all aged 5-15

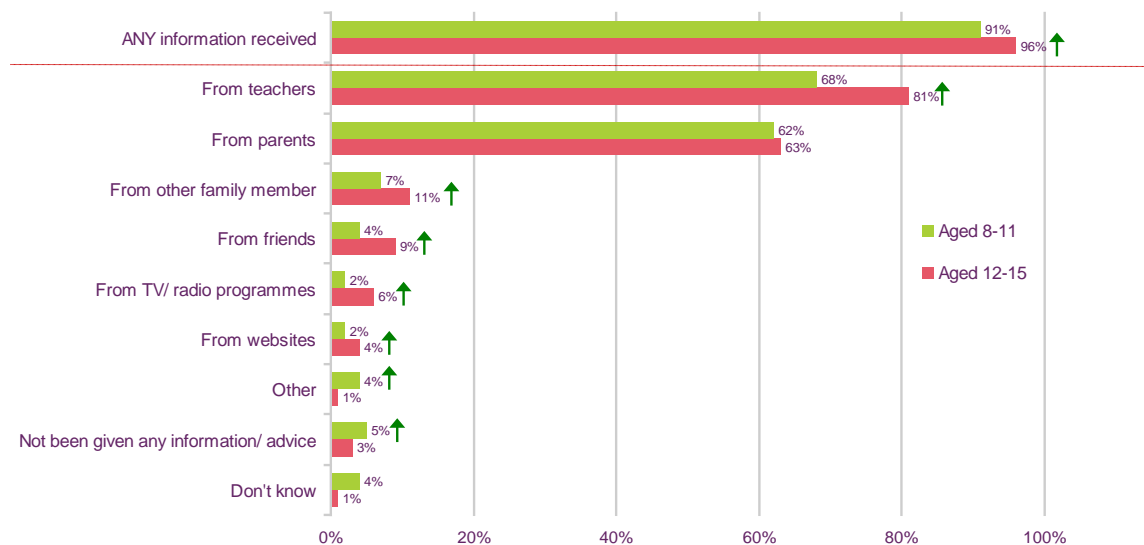
Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010

In 2010, children aged 8-15 who use the internet at home or elsewhere were also asked about whether they had ever been given any information or advice about staying safe online. If they said they had, they were asked who had given them the advice. Nine in ten children aged 8-11 (91%) recall receiving such advice, as do nearly all 12-15s (96%). More than three in five children aged 8-11 (62%) and aged 12-15 (63%) recall receiving advice from parents<sup>53</sup>. 12-15s are more likely than 8-11s to recall receiving advice from teachers (81% vs. 68%), from other family members (11% vs. 7%), from friends (9% vs. 4%), from TV/ radio programmes (6% vs. 2%) and from websites (4% vs. 2%). In contrast, 8-11s are more likely to say they have not been given any information or advice (5% vs. 3%).

There are no differences in the overall incidence of receiving any advice, or in the sources of advice, when looking at the child's gender by age. Children aged 8-15 in AB households are, however, more likely than all children to recall receiving advice from parents (71% vs. 63%) or from friends (11% vs. 7%).

<sup>53</sup> These incidences are lower than those reported at Figure 87. This could be attributable to the different way in which the question was asked of parents (directly) and of children (indirectly).

**Figure 89: Children stating they have been given any information or advice about staying safe online: 2010**



NQC26A – Have you ever been given any information or advice about how to stay safe while you are online? (spontaneous responses, multicoded)  
 Base: Those children aged 8-15 who use the internet at home or elsewhere (698 aged 8-11, 737 aged 12-15) Significance testing shows any difference between children aged 8-11 and aged 12-15  
 Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter-Base in April to May and September to October 2010