Children's Media Lives

Ofcom

Wave 10: Discussion guide

Project Objectives

The overarching goal of this project is to be able to provide Ofcom with ethnographic insight into how children of different ages and living in a range of different situations are using digital media. This involves:

- Understanding and tracking the media lives of our participants over time, identifying new and emerging trends, and potentially risky online behaviours.
- What new digital behaviours (and offline behaviours) they are adopting for socialising, relaxation, education and other activities.
- What new digital spaces they are exploring – and whether they are encountering increased risk or pressure.
- Evaluating their level of media literacy and self-awareness about what they consume online.
- How their digital activities fit into their wider life, including their hopes for the future.

The guides are designed to be used flexibly. Researchers will allow participants to guide the conversation, responding to interviewee's comments and following up areas which seem interesting and most relevant to the research objectives. We see the questions in this guide as **tools** for us to open conversations about these challenging subjects, rather than as questions we can objectively answer.

Given the age of some participants, **we don't expect all of them to have the level of self-reflection and/ or the verbal skills necessary to give clear responses to all of these questions**.

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Initial interview

Guide Overview (Total time ~2hrs)

RR researchers will have recapped on what we know about participants from previous waves, and make sure to prompt around these areas to explore what has changed / remained consistent

Section	Detail	Additional data capture
Introduction and life updates *15 mins*	• Check-in and introduction • Their current routine • Digital access and devices • Reflections on schooling • Family dynamics • Friends and social life • Hopes for the future and how they feel about growing up	List of devices Weekly routine data capture Social network map
Content, Preferences, and behaviours *20 mins*	• Viewing routine and screentime • Length of time watching content • Content & platform preferences • Representation & relatability	
Social media & gaming *40 mins*	• Social media habits, including more niche platforms • Online identity • Gaming routine, attitudes and behaviours • Exploring knowledge and experiences around worrying content and interactions using age-appropriate stimulus • Additional focus on body image / importance of 'look' • Additional probes around goals / self-promotion and monetisation • Social media interactions • Online friends • Potential for online harms, such as unsolicited contact from strangers/adults, and 'nasty' interactions online • Additional probes around the importance of gaming to friendships • Additional probes around the content they see and how it informs their ideas about the future for themselves and the world	Social media platforms Key social media features Gaming flashcards
Media literacy, engagement with the news & critical thinking	• News habits & attitudes: • Wider media reflections • Sources & critical thinking: • How platforms work	News topics News providers

15 minutes	• Advertising • Online safety • Privacy of data • School education around media literacy	Current/recent news stories
Online health and wellbeing / final reflections *10 mins*	• Positives /negatives of being online • Recap on hopes for the future • What would be an 'ideal' internet? What would they change in their current online activities?	
Parents *10 mins*	• Updates to family life • Education & schooling • Their child's future • Online activities / online safety • Reflections on responsibility for positive online experiences • How do they see an 'ideal' internet?	
Diary task setup *5 mins*	• Researcher to explain different components of tracking tasks to parent and child, and ensure capture of key behaviours	
Consent, social media tracking and close	• Researcher to go through consent forms and social media tracking with participants and parent / responsible adult	

Introduction and life updates (15 mins)

Researchers to prompt participants to:

- Use a mic
- Do the call in the quiet room
- Use a laptop / desktop

Researchers to <u>pin</u> participants on zoom and <u>record</u> the call

Lead question: How have you been since we last spoke?

- What's the biggest thing that's happened to you since the summer?
- How's school / college / work?
- How's your family?
  - o Has anything new happened since our last interview?

Lead question: Can you tell me about what you're up to at the moment?

- Can you talk me through a typical weekday?
- How have you been spending most of your time?
- [*If relevant*] Where does school fit into your day?

- Can you talk me through a typical weekend day?
- What sort of hobbies are you doing at the moment?

DATA CAPTURE:

Weekly routine

- Have you tried anything new recently?

- How do you feel about your routine at the moment?
- What's your favourite part of it?
- Is there anything you don't enjoy or find frustrating about your routine?
    - Why is this?
- Is there anything that you'd like to change about your routine?
    - How might you go about doing this?
    - How do you think your routine will change as you get older?

> Observation Point (throughout): What is their general wellbeing like? Seeming positive? Happy or Sad?

Lead question: What has been on your mind recently?

- How are you finding school / college / at the moment? *[May not be relevant for all, e.g. participants in work]*
- What is going well?
- Are you finding anything difficult?
- What are the big things that are coming up this year?
    - PROBE: Exams, moving between classes, competitions
- How are you feeling about this?

Lead question: How are you spending time with your family at the moment?

- What kind of things are you doing together?
    - PROBE: Going out, watching TV, meals, sports, chores
- How well is everyone getting on at the moment?
    - PROBE: Any clashes?
- How do you stay in touch with family when you're not together?
    - PROMPT: Calls, Social Media, Facetime

Lead question: Can you tell me about your friends?

- Who are you closest friends with at the moment?
- How do you spend time with your friends?
- Are you doing anything new together?
    - PROMPT: Using new ways to communicate, playing new games together, new areas of interest
- How often do you speak to them?
- How much do you speak to them online compared to in person?
- To what extent has your friendship circle changed in the last few months/ years?
    - PROBE: Becoming less close to certain people / making new friends
- Why do you think this has happened?
- Have you made any friends online in the last year?
    - Are these people you did not know before?
    - How did you meet them?
    - Probe: gaming, social media, etc

> DATA CAPTURE:
>
> Social Network Map

Lead question: What are you looking forward to at the moment?

- How are you feeling about the coming year?
    - What are you feeling positive about?
    - What are you feeling negative about?
- Is there anything you're trying to achieve at the moment?
- How is this going?
- What is helping you achieve this goal?

- Is there anything that stops you or makes it more difficult to achieve this goal?

Lead question: **How do you feel about growing up?**

- What does being a grown up mean to you?
  - Where do you get ideas about growing up?
    - PROBE: family, friends, content, characters, etc.
    - Do you see much about being a grown up online?
- How much do you think about the future?
- What sort of things do you think about?
  - Probe: areas in the wheel of life
  - How far away does the future feel?
  - Do you know what you want to be in the future?
- Do you ever see things about 'the future' online?
  - What kinds of things?
  - What do you think about it?
  - How does it make you feel?
  - Are you hopeful about anything?
  - Are you worried about anything?
- Do you talk about the future with other people?
  - When?
  - Can you give me an example?
  - How much do your friends / family think about the future?

Lead question: **What are some of your goals?**

- PROBE: hobbies, work, travel, family/friends, etc.
- Do you ever think of what job you'd like when you grow up?
  - What job do you think you might want? Why?
  - Where did you hear about this?
  - Do you know anyone or heard of anyone with this job?
    - Probe: in person or online
  - How much do you see stuff around work and jobs online more generally?

Lead question: What technology are you currently using?

- Do you share these with anyone else?
  - If so, who?
- When did you get it?
- Who got it for you?
- How often do you use it?
- What do you like / dislike about it?
- What's your favourite device at the moment?
  - Why?
- Are you able to use all of your devices as you would like to?
  - PROBE: Necessary internet connection, privacy, shared access to devices

Content, preferences and behaviours (20 mins)

Overview of screentime

Researcher to use this to inform subsequent sections

Lead question: What are your favourite activities at the moment?

- How often do you do these activities?

- How do they fit into your routine?

Lead question: What about your favourite online activities at the moment?

  - o PROBE: gaming, social media, watching shows/TV, app, reading, streaming
- How often do you do these activities?
- How do they fit into your routine?
- Are you doing anything / looking at anything new recently that you weren't before?
  - o PROMPT: reading, seeing more news, posting more etc.

Content & platform preferences

Lead question: What do you usually watch things on at the moment?

PROBE: Different sources, including Netflix, Live TV, YouTube, Social Media, streaming platforms (*Participants may see this as their primary place to watch things*)

Researcher to repeat for main platforms mentioned:

- What do you like about this platform?
- What do you dislike?
- What makes that platform different or more fun than others?

> STIMULUS:
>
> Range of platforms

Lead question: What are you watching at the moment?

- What do you like about this content?
  - o Who makes this content?
  - o Do you watch anything else from that creator? Why?
- Do you think the content you see is different or similar to your friends?
- Do you and your friends talk about what you watch?

- Do you ever do anything else while watching this?
- Do you ever use multiple screens when you are watching TV/gaming/on YouTube?
- Have you changed the content you like to view recently?
- How do you think what you watch now compares to a year ago?
  - o Why do you think there is a difference between before and now?

Lead question: How long do you spend watching content?

  - o PROBE: short form (TV, Reels etc), long form (films etc)
- When do you tend to watch things?
- How does this compare to your friends?
- How do you feel about how much you watch content?

Lead question: Why do you like to watch content?

  - o PROBE: they are funny, because someone else mentioned it, to pass time, they want to stay informed, they want to learn new things, they enjoy dramatic content/gossip, etc.
- [If they like dramatic content] What type of 'drama' do you like watching? Where would you watch this?
  - o What do you like most about it?
  - o What sort of things does it focus on?
  - o How does it compare to other things you watch? Is it more or less interesting?
- [If they watch to learn new things] What sort of things do you want to learn about?
  - o PROBE: exercise videos, gaming hacks, news and politics, etc.
- Which online content creators do you like the best for learning about new things?
  - o What is it about their content that you like the most?
  - o How often do you trust what they are saying?

- o How do you know if what they are saying is true?
- Do your friends watch similar content?

Lead question: Do you ever listen to content?

  - o PROBE: songs, radio show, music
- What device do you use to listen?
  - o PROBE: smart speaker, phone, laptop, desktop, radio
- What platform do you use?
- Do you ever use the radio?
  - o Where?
  - o Probe: at home, in the car
  - o How do you choose what to listen to on the radio?
  - o Is this something you like to do by yourself with your family and/or friends?
  - o What do you think about the radio compared to other devices?
- Do you have a smart speaker? Do you use this?
  - o What do you use it for?
  - o How do you choose what to listen to on the smart speaker?
  - o Have you come across something that you didn't want to listen to?
  - o What happened?

Representation & relatability

Lead question: What do you think of the types of people who appear in the content you watch?

  - o PROMPT: Characters in shows, or Content creators (e.g. YouTubers, Streamers)
- How similar do you think these people are to you?
  - o PROBE: People their age, living in the same area of the country, doing the same sorts of things,
- How do you feel about this?
  - o PROBE: Is it important to be able to relate to people?

Lead question: Who are your favourite content creators?

  - o PROBE: TV, social media (vloggers, people on Instagram, YouTubers, gamers, streamers)
- What do you like about them?
- What kind of content do you think creators should put online?
- Are there any types of content that you don't want to see?
  - o Why?
- Have you ever encountered them before?
- How did it make you feel? What do you think makes a content creator popular?
  - o PROBE: The way they look, should they promote causes, give political opinions?
  - o What kind of content do you want more creators to make?

STIMULUS:

Content creators

Lead question: Is there anyone you look up to online?

- What things do you admire about them?
- [If they are celebrities/people they don't know personally] How have you heard about them?
- What sorts of things do you see about them?
- Why do you like them?
  - o PROBE: similar values, similar background, etc
- Are there any people that you used to look up to but not anymore?

STIMULUS:

Flashcards of people they may look up to, e.g., parents, friends, celebrities, politicians

Lead question: Is there anyone online that you do not like?

- Why don't you like them?
- What do other people think about them? (probe: friends, family, others on the internet)
- When did you first hear about them or see them?
- Can you give me an example of what sorts of things they say / post?
- Why do you think they're making this type of content?

Social media & gaming (40 mins)

Social media habits:

Lead question: What social media platforms do you use the most?

- PROMPT: use stimulus showing different social media platforms, including more niche / unregulated ones

Repeat for key platforms mentioned:

- What do you usually use it for?
  - PROMPT: Catching up with friends, finding out about the world, passing time, watching content, etc.
- How long do you spend on it?
- When do you use it throughout the day?
- What do you like about it?
- What do you dislike?
  - PROMPT: Online drama, offensive/inappropriate content, content they aren't interested in, spending too much time online, etc.
- Do you have any social media accounts that you have but don't use as much?
  - PROMPT: Facebook, Triller etc
- Why?
- When you do use it, how long do you spend?
- When you do use it, what kinds of things do you use?
- Why do you like using the other platforms more?

> STIMULUS:
>
> Social Media Platforms

Lead question: What features do you use the most on this platform? *Repeat for key platforms mentioned*

- PROMPT: Likes, comments, filters, group chats, re-sharing
- [For each thing they mention] How much do you do these things?
  - What do you use these for?
  - Do your friends also use these?
  - What do you like or dislike about these features?
- Is there anything you wish the platform could do but doesn't?
- How much do you post online?
  - Probe: on their feed vs on time limited mechanisms (e.g., 'stories')
  - How do you feel about posting online? Why?

> ACTIVITY:
>
> Ask participants to share screen and show researcher a favourite account that they follow

Lead question: What sorts of people do you follow?

- What sorts of people do you follow?
  - PROMPT: Friends, organisations, celebrities
- What are your favourite accounts that you follow?
- Why do you like these?
- Are there any people that your friends follow but you don't want to?
  - Why?

Lead question: What sort of social media content do you see?

- PROMPT: Selfies, news, memes, funny videos, lifestyle images

- What do you like about these?
- Why?

Lead question: What sorts of topics do you see online?

- PROBE: school, work, mental health, growing up, the future, the environment, the world, sports, humour, identity issues, etc.
- [For each topic] What sort of thing do you see? Who posts about it?
- What do you think about it?
- When was the first time you saw this sort of thing? How did you see it the first time?
  - Probe: search, recommended by algorithm, discover pages, shared by friends etc
- Why do you think you first saw this kind of content?
- Have you seen it since then?
  - How often?
  - (If yes) How did you come across this topic again?
  - Probe: search, recommended by algorithm, discover pages, shared by friends etc
  - Why do you think you've come across this topic again?

- How much content do you see about current affairs?
  - What kind of things do you see?
    - PROBE: politics, national news, international news, world events, economy, environment, etc.
  - What is the content saying?
  - What are other people saying about this topic?
  - Have you seen something about this topic giving a different perspective?
  - Where?
  - How often do you see this?
  - What do you think of it?
  - (If participant does not see content offering a different POV): Why do you think this is?
  - What has this content taught you about these events?
  - Has it shifted your outlook?
  - Have you learned anything new?
  - Do you hear about these events anywhere else?
- How often do you see it ?

> STIMULUS:
>
> Flashcard of a range of topics about the world to use as prompts

[Specifically about the future]

- How much do you see around growing up or the future?
  - What kind of stuff do you see?
  - Around what topics?
  - Who is talking about the future/growing up?
  - What is the content saying/doing?
- What do you think about it?
  - Probe: hopeful, excited, worried

- Do you see any content discussing the role of media generally?
  - PROMPT: positives and negatives of social media, the onset of AI, etc.
- What do you think about your use of media?
- What role do you see media having in your future?
- Do you think your use of media will change as you get older?
  - How?
  - Why?

Lead question: **Do you ever see adverts?**

- How often?
- Where do you see these?
    - PROBE: online, Social media, TV, apps, games, vlogs, elsewhere
- What kinds of adverts do you see?
    - Brands, styles, formats, age-appropriateness
- How do you feel about these adverts?
    - Like/dislike them? Read/ ignore?
    - How much do you notice them?
- What are the signs that something is an advert?
    - *NB researcher to probe around sponsored content from influencers*
- Can you show me an example?
- What can you tell me about sponsorship/ sponsored content?
- How often do you see sponsored content?
- What do you think about it when you see it?

ACTIVITY:

Ask participants to share screen and show researcher advertisements on social media

Lead question: Have you bought something online recently?

- If so what? How?
- Did you ask for permission/check this with anyone else first?
- Why did you buy it?
- Where did you first see this product?
    - Probe: friend, influencer, advert, peers online, family etc
- How did you know the person who was selling you something was trustworthy?

Researcher to probe around more niche platforms (if mentioned)

Lead question: How did you hear about these platforms?

- How did you first see these platforms?
    - PROBE: saw it elsewhere online, saw it on other social media, found out through friends, or directed from another site / link.
    - *If through other social media/elsewhere online/via a link:* What sort of thing did you first see on the platform?
    - Did you need an account to see the content?
        - *If no account*: What things are you able to see without an account?
        - What things can't you see if you don't have an account?
- Who uses these platforms?
    - Do your friends use them?
- What sort of things do you use them for?
- What sort of content do you see?
- What do you like about them?
- What do you dislike about them?

- Who else uses these platforms online?

Lead question: Are there any trends on social media which are popular at the moment?

- o PROBE across different platforms: social justice issues, TikTok trends
- Where do you see these trends?
  - o PROBE: Videos, pictures, captions, in people's bios
- What do you think of this?
- Have you joined in the trend?
- If so, why?
- Do you remember something that was trending a while ago but you've not seen much of now?
- Why do you think trends come and go?

Lead question: What do you think makes someone popular online?

- What does their content usually look like?
- Can you give me an example of someone who is popular online?
- What makes someone your age popular online?

Lead question: How do you feel about how people look online?

- How do the people that you see online tend to look?
  - o Can you think of an example?
- Who do you think looks good? Who doesn't?
  - o Why do you say so?
- How does this make you feel?
- Does it make you do anything differently?
- Do you think there are any positive / negative consequences of this?

Online identity

Lead question: What would you say your online profiles say about you?

- How many profiles / accounts do you have on different platforms?
  - o Probe around different platforms i.e.: Instagram – do they have a Finsta? Or a 'dump' account on Tik Tok?
- What do you want other people to think when they see your profile?
- What is something you would not want people to see about you on social media?
- Do you take inspiration from anything/anyone when making your profile?
  - o NOTE: Researchers to take note and follow up in the second interview around how this fits in with the feeds being more professionalised.
- (Ask participants that have said they post on social media in the section above) Can you show me something that you have posted recently?
  - o Why did you post this?
- What are the key things that you think about when posting or sharing something on social media?
  - o PROMPT with key considerations when sharing / posting something
  - o Which is most / least important of these?
- How much do your friends post online? Is this more or less than you?
- Why do you think some people post more?
- Why do you think some people post less?

Lead question: Do you have any goals on social media?

- o PROBE: Becoming popular / making new friends / expressing yourself / making money / learning new things
- How are you working towards this?

- Is this something your friends are also interested in?
- Why do you want to achieve this goal?

Lead question: How do you feel about how many followers you have online?

- How many do you have?
- Do you have a goal of how many you would like to have?
- What is a really good amount of followers to have?
- Do you think it's important to have enough followers?
    - Why? Why not?

Lead question: What sort of content do you like or comment on online?

- How often do you comment on your friends' posts?
- What about other people's posts?
- What kind of comments do you make?
- Why do you do this?
    - Probe: starting a conversation, engaging in a topic, positive reinforcement

Lead question: How many likes or comments do you usually get on your posts?

- What do the comments usually say?
- How does getting comments or likes make you feel?
- What is a good number of likes to get on a post?
- Do you ever worry about how many likes your post will get?
- How do you feel about likes not being shown?

Online interaction and concerns

Lead question: Who do you tend to speak with on online?

    - [Researcher to ask about social media, search, gaming etc]
    - PROBE: Known friends, new online friends, strangers
- Are you part of any online communities?
    - PROBE: Discord, Reddit, Facebook groups, dating apps
- What types of people are in these communities?
- What do you talk about?
- Do you ever speak to people you don't know on social media?
    - What platforms does this happen on most?
- Who tends to start the conversation?
- What do you talk about?
- How does it make you feel?
- How do you decide which people to speak to online that you don't know otherwise?
- Do you ever get contacted by people you don't know who you don't want to speak to?
    - What platforms does this happen on most?
- What do say?
- How often does it happen?
- What do you in this situation?

Lead question: Have you ever seen people being nasty, mean or unkind to each other on social media?

- PROBE: Unpleasant / cruel messages/ posts, links to websites / pages that are negative, criticise others, trolling?
- Can you tell me about it?
- How did you/ your friends deal with it?
- Do you think people are more mean online or offline?
    - Why?

- When someone says 'online safety' what do you think that means?
- When someone says 'online harms' what do you think that means?

Lead question: **Have you seen anything online recently that worried you?**

Researcher to prompt participants with age-appropriate stimulus of harmful content they may have experienced online.

If they have experienced harmful content listed in stimulus:

- What did you see?
- When did this happen?
- What platform was this on?
- How did this make you feel?
    - PROBE: Negative emotions
- Is this something that other people you know have also seen?
- What do they think of it?
- What did you do when you saw this?
- Are there particular platforms where you more regularly see things that worry you?

> STIMULUS: Potential harmful content they may have seen – stimulus to be age-appropriate, e.g. self harm and unrealistic body images for 13+ participants

If they have not experienced harmful content listed, researcher to prompt with age-appropriate content – e.g. for 13+ Self harm and unrealistic body ideals:

- Has anyone you know seen anything online that worried them?
- What do you know about this?
- What platform was this on?

Lead question: what do you do when you see something that worries you or that you don't think is right?

- PROMPT: Ignored it, reported it, told your parents / friends
- Would you report it?
    - How often do you report things?
    - Why do you think some people report things more than others?
    - What kind of content / people get reported?
    - What do you think happens if someone/or a piece of content is reported?
- Would you speak to someone about it?
    - E.g. schools, parents, friends, support groups, online forums, etc.
    - Who would you feel comfortable speaking to?
    - Why?
- [If they don't feel comfortable sharing it] Why?
    - What about it is uncomfortable?
        - PROBE: embarrassing, wouldn't change anything, private, they wouldn't get it, don't need to, etc.
- What kind of person would you trust to talk about your concern with?
    - Do you know of any organisations you could speak to or report content to?
- What would be an example of the sort of thing that would worry you online?

Online privacy

Lead question: **What do you understand by the term 'online privacy'?**

- Do you think being private is important?
- What are the risks around not being private online?
    - PROBE: Scams, Identity fraud, advertisements, damage to your reputation

Lead question: **How private are your social media accounts?**

- When you first created the account, did you set it to public or private?
    - Why?

- What are your accounts set to now?
  - *Probe – If change, why is this?*
- How does this compare to your friends?
- Are there any other measures you take to make your accounts more private?
  - What are they?
  - Where did you hear about doing this?

Gaming routine, attitudes and behaviours

Lead question: What games are you currently playing or streaming?

- Can you tell me about them?
- How do they work?
- What do you like about them?
- What do you dislike about them?

- How often do you play games?
- How much time do you spend gaming vs. other things?
  - PROBE: social media, spending time family/friends, other hobbies, etc.

- Who do you play with?
  - PROBE: Alone, friends, strangers
- Why do you like playing with these people?
- Do you have any gaming friends you've never met?
  - How do you keep in touch with them?
  - Probe: games, chat function, other platforms
- Have you ever had any strange interactions with people online whilst gaming?
  - If so, what happened?
  - How did you react?
  - Did you do anything about it?
  - How did this make you feel about gaming?

- How does your gaming compare with your friends?
- How does gaming make you feel?
  - PROBE: Escapism, Fantasy, Teamwork, Fast paced, Competition, Frustration
- What do you like most about gaming?
- How does gaming compare with other online usage?
  - Is there anything you prefer about gaming compared to other online platforms?
  - Is there anything you prefer about gaming compared to other activities/hobbies?
- Are there any times where you have feel frustrated when gaming?
  - If so, when?
  - Why?

Lead question: Do you like gaming with your friends / family?

- How often do you play with your friends?
- Do you play the same sorts of games?
- Do you prefer gaming alone or with friends? Why?
- How much do you talk to your friends whilst gaming?
- How important is gaming in your friendships?

Lead question: How has the way you game changed?

- Do you have any new devices or ways of playing them?
- How do you think your gaming habits will change in the future?
  - Why do you think this>

- What do you think gaming might look like in the future?
    - Probe: in 3 years time, 5 years, 10 years, 20 years?
    - For you? For your friends? For the gaming companies?
        - Why do you think this?
    - What technologies do you think will exist?

Engagement with news and critical thinking (15 mins)

Lead question: How do you learn about what goes on around the world, in the UK, or closer to home?

- PROBE: news, social media, parents, school, books
- How do you hear about what's happening?
    - What kind of news is it? PROBE: local, national, global
- What kinds of stories do you see/hear about?
    - PROBE: sports, current affairs, politics, climate change, celebrities
    - Do you want to hear about these things?
    - How interesting do you find them?
        - How much do you want to learn about them?
        - Why do you want to / not want to?
    - Are they in the background?
    - Do you search for these stories?
        - If not, how do you come across them?
- How does this make you feel about the future?
    - Probe: excited, happy, hopeful, worried, scared etc

> STIMULUS:
> News topics prompts

Lead question: Do you ever see/hear something that is untrue/exaggerated online?

- How reliable do you think the online sources you look at are in general?
- Why do you say that?
- What makes you trust a piece of content?
    - What about it makes it trustworthy?
- How common is it that something might be false in these places?
- What kind of things make you distrust something online?
- Have you ever seen something that you thought was untrue/exaggerated?
    - If so, what was it? How did you react to it?
    - Why did you think it was untrue/exaggerated?
    - Why do you think someone would share it if it is untrue?

> STIMULUS:
> News sources

Lead question: Why do you think you're seeing the content that you're seeing?

- How much do you look for content when you go online?
    - PROBE: actively searching vs. passively consuming
    - (If actively searching) What motivates you to look for it?
- Do you feel that you sometimes see things that you don't search for?
    - What kind of things?
    - Why do you think this is?
- Do you generally like the content you see online?
- How varied do you think the content is that you see online?
- Are there things you'd like to be seeing more of?
    - Why do you think you're not seeing it now?
- Are there things you'd like to see less?
    - Why do you want to see less of it?

Online health and wellbeing / final reflections (10 mins)

Lead question: **What is the best thing about doing stuff online/ being online?**

- What do you like doing the most?
  - Why do you like this?
- How much do you enjoy spending time online?
- What things have you learnt about being online?
- What things do you think it allows people to do that you can't do otherwise?

Lead question: How much time do you think people your age usually spend online?

- How do you feel about the amount of time you spend online?
- Do you think this is similar to other people your age?
- How do you feel about your online and offline balance?
- Are there any differences in how you act online and offline?
- What would your day look like without being online?
- Is there anything you'd like to be doing more of online?
  - What about less?

Lead question: How much time do you think your parents/guardians spend online?

- Do you think this is similar to other people your age?
- How do you feel about the amount of time your parents spend online?
  - Why do you say this?
- Do you ever wish that your parents/guardians spent less time online?
  - Why do you say this?

> **Note to researcher:**
>
> This question will be asked in interview 2 if not asked in interview 1 (it will be added to DG2 to make sure this happens)

Lead question: Do you think spending time online has any negative impacts?

- How so?
  - PROMPT: Impact on other friendships / other hobbies, self-esteem
  - Why do you think this?
  - Have you heard much about negative impacts of spending time online?
  - From who? From where?
- What do you think the longer term impacts might be?
  - For you?
  - For other children?
- Does anything worry you about your online life?

Lead question: What do you think your use of technology and media will look like in the future?

- Probe: gaming, social media, communication tech, AI
- What do you think will change about it? Why?
  - Do you think you'll use it more? Use it less?
  - In what ways do you think you'll use it?

Lead question: If you could change anything about the internet, what would you change?

- What would you change about social media?
  - Why do you say this?
- What would you change about how you watch things?
  - Why do you say this?
- What would you change about the games you play?
  - Why do you say this?

Parent interview (10 mins)

Updates to family life:

Lead question: **How is family life at the moment?**

- Have there been any changes to your home/family/work?

Lead question: How has XX been doing?

- What are XX's newest interests?
- What are they doing with the majority of their time?

Education & schooling:

Lead question: **How is XX doing at school / college?**

- How much of XX's schooling is happening remotely/online?
- How well is this working?
- How are they doing academically?
- How are they doing socially?
- Have there been any significant changes for them since last year?

Thinking about the future:

Lead question: Do you ever talk about the future with [name]?

- What do you talk about?
    - PROBE: jobs, school/university, life goals, etc.
    - How often?
- How do you feel about [name] growing up?
    - How much do you think being online has had an impact on how [name] has grown up?
    - How do you think [name] being online might impact their future?
        - Probe: work, education, sense of self, responsibility, views on the world

Online activity:

Lead question: How do you feel about your child's online life at the moment?

- Have you noticed any changes in their behaviour?
- How do you think the way that your child uses technology compares to other children?

Lead question: Do you have any worries about your child being online at the moment?

- Have you changed any rules around their use of technology?
    - Are there any specific ways you try to limit their time?
        - E.g. phone cages, taking their phone away, app limits, etc.
    - Are there any ways they unwind without technology?

Lead question: How much do you feel you understand about your child's activity on social media?

- PROMPT: different platforms, types of content they engage with, things they do on those platforms, people they talk to, etc.

Lead question: How much do you feel you understand about your child's gaming activity?

- PROMPT: different platforms, different games, things they do on those platforms/games, people they talk to, etc.

Lead question: Where do you learn about online safety?

- PROMPT: Through school, online resources, other parents
- How useful do you find this information?
- Have you ever researched something about online safety?
  - What was it?
- What do you think makes a good online safety resource?
- Has your child ever spoken to you about being safe online?
- How confident do you feel about your children's online activities?

Lead question: Whose responsibility do you think it is to make sure your child has a safe and positive experience online?

- How much responsibility do you think you should have?
- How much responsibility should social media platforms / tech organisations have?
- Have you seen anything in the news about the role of these organisation in keeping children safe online?
- Do you think anything about their online activity has changed since we last spoke?

Lead question: If you could change anything about the internet, what would you change?

- What would you change about platforms/games that your child uses?
- Why do you say this?

Diary task set up (5 mins)

Researcher to walk participants and parent through the diary task, explaining the different activities, and ensuring they capture key behaviours of interest.

Close, consent and social media tracking

Researcher to talk parent and participants through consent forms, remind them about the safeguarding process, and explain social media tracking.

Researcher to thank participants and close interview.

Children's Media Lives

Ofcom

Wave 10: Discussion guide 2

Project Objectives

The overarching goal of this project is to be able to provide Ofcom with ethnographic insight into how children of different ages and living in a range of different situations are using digital media. This involves:

- Understanding and tracking the media lives of our respondents over time, identifying new and emerging trends, and potentially risky online behaviours.
- What new digital behaviours (and offline behaviours) they are adopting for socialising, relaxation, education and other activities.
- What new digital spaces they are exploring – and whether they are encountering increased risk or pressure.
- Evaluating their level of media literacy and self-awareness about what they consume online.
- How their digital activities fit into their wider life, including their hopes for the future.

Objectives for this guide

- Encourage respondents to reflect on their behaviour captured during the tracking phase (diaries, screen record and social media tracking)
- Explore and gather more data on emerging themes from analysis
- Gather overall reflections on positives and negatives of media usage and online life
- Ask the respondent questions that are pertinent to their own activity and the things we have learned specific to them from the diary tasks and screen record / social media tracking

Note: This guide will only be used for 'established' participants. New participants will not be doing follow up interviews.

Guide Overview (Total time ~ 1hr)

Section	Objective
Catch up *5 mins*	- Make the respondent feel at ease - See what has happened since interview 1 - Has anything changed at home or at school?
Diary task and screentime review *10mins*	- Get their overall reflections on the diary task - Is there anything that may have surprised them about their activity? - Was there anything unusual during that week? - Gather their reflections on screen time - Reflections on their screentime across devices (ie: TV, online, gaming) - Reflections on most used applications - How did this compare to what they expected? - Was there anything unusual during that week?

Social Media tracking review
 	
15 mins
	• Encouraging respondents to reflect on their behaviour seen during social media tracking
	    o What were their reasons for posting what they posted?
	    o What thoughts go into how they present their profile?
	    o Was there anything they thought about posting but didn't? Why?

Reviewing screen record
 	
25 mins
	• Reviewing their screen record with them and asking follow-up questions based on the <u>specific content</u> they viewed
	    o Researcher to probe around what content the respondent saw, their views on sponsored ads, any specific features they engaged with most, what they think about various different accounts they follow, etc.
	    o Researcher to probe around how they feel about what they view and if anything in particular makes them feel uncomfortable or weird
	
	Analysis of specific themes
	
	• Deep dive into <u>certain behaviours</u> the researcher has seen in screen record and social media tracking
	    o Researcher to have selected some behaviours to explore further (*e.g. understanding of motivational/self-help content*)
	• **Researcher to probe about how their media consumption fits into their future / aspirations**
	• Researcher will ask respondent to screenshare and show them how they interact with the app and why

Asking about themes and content seen across the sample *15 mins*	• Discussion of key types of content and media seen across the sample. o Researcher to ask respondent if they have seen or engaged with certain types of content and probe further about key areas of interest which have emerged through analysis.

Online health and wellbeing
 	
5 mins
	• Covering how they portray themselves online and how they feel about being online. Researcher to probe around:
	    o Their perception of their usage / engagement with online activities and how these have changed
	    o Online safety concerns
	    o Social aspects of using devices
	    o Any changes they might have experienced since last year

Catchup (5 mins)

Lead Question: How have you been since the last interview?

- Has anything exciting or new happened?
    - At home?
    - At school?

Researcher to follow up on anything they said would be happening between the interviews

Diary task and screentime review (10 mins)

Objectives: Get their overall reflections on the diary task and gather their reflections on screen time

Lead Question: How did you find doing the diary task?

- Was there anything that surprised you when you were doing it?
    - PROMPT: Time spent doing certain things
    - How did you feel about this?
    - Was there anything that you hadn't realised you were doing?

*Researcher to ask respondent to share their screen and **access their screentime for the diary period.***

- How do you feel about the amount of time you spent online for those 6 days?
    - Was this what you expected?
    - How do you feel about the split between how much time you spent on different online activities? (Probe: gaming, on the phone, radio, watching TV)
    - Was there anything unusual or different during this period?
    - Were you surprised by anything?
    - How does this compare to last year? (e.g. screentime, content watched, use of apps/devices, etc.)
        - Why do you think there has been a change?

Lead Question: How much time do you think people your age usually spend online?

- How do you feel about the amount of time you spend online?
- Do you think that spending time online impacts the rest of your life?
    - In what way?
- Changing friendships / impact on other hobbies
- What do you think about this?

Lead Question: Do people your age ever do things to limit the time they spend online?

- Have you ever thought about this?
    - Why / why not?
- What do you think the benefits of this would be?
- Have you heard of things like digital detoxes?
    - What do you think about it?

Ask only if not asked in 1st interview

Lead question: How much time do you think your parents/guardians spend online?

- Do you think this is similar to other people your age?
- How do you feel about the amount of time your parents spend online?
    - Why do you say this?
- Do you ever wish that your parents/guardians spent less time online?
    - Why do you say this?

Social media tracking review (15 mins)

> Objective: Encouraging respondents to reflect on their behaviour seen during social media tracking

Researcher to share screen to prompt respondent with specific content seen in social media tracking

Lead Question: Tell me about this person/page

- What type of content do they post?
- Do you remember the first time you encountered their account?
- Why did you decide to follow them?
- How much do you engage with their content?

Lead Question: What did you think about [Piece of content person/page posted]?

- Can you describe what's happening in this piece of content?
- Why do you think they posted it?
- What do you think about it? / How do you feel about it?
    - Probe around: how it makes them feel about themselves, about the people around them, about the world
    - What do you like about it?
    - What do you dislike about it?
    - Does this make you reflect about the future/growing up? How so?

Lead Question: Tell me about [posts / stories seen during social media tracking]

- Why did you decide to post this?
    - Why did you decide to post it on this platform / on this function? (e.g., Stories v grid post)
    - Is this typical of the type of thing you post?
- Did anyone/anything inspire you to make this post?
    - Why do you generally like to post?
        - PROMPT (if required): because they want to show people the content, because other people do, because they feel they should, because they want to get likes, etc.
- How did you decide on a caption / editing the photo / the dance performed?
- How did you feel about the reception the post received?
    - PROMPT: Bio, profile picture, number of posts
    - PROMPT: Comments, direct messaging, group messaging, number of likes

Lead Question: What do you normally think about or consider before posting something?

- PROMPT: likes, comments, general reception, reputation
- You posted X amount of times during this period
    - How typical is this for you?
- Has there been a time recently when you wanted to post something but then decided against it?
    - If so, why?
    - How often does this happen?

Lead Question: Tell me about your profile

- How did you decide to make your profile like this?
    - PROMPT: Bio, profile picture, number of posts, pinned stories
- Did anything inspire you to do this?
    - Who / what?
- What do you think your profile says about you?
- How do you feel about your profile online?

- o Probe: do they like it, do they dislike it, does it feel like them, do they have any worries about it, etc.

Researcher to prompt respondent to reflect if their behaviour differs from what stated in interview 1

Reviewing social media screen record (25 mins)

Objective: Reviewing their screen record with them and asking follow up questions based on their behaviour

Researcher to share screen to prompt respondent with specific content seen in social media screen record tasks, e.g. posts from friends, ads, news stories

- What did you think of this content at the time?
    - o What did you like / dislike about it?
    - o How did seeing this piece of content make you feel? [Probe: unsure, uncomfortable, funny, confused, interested, find it weird]
- What did you think about the person / organisation who posted it?
- How does this compare to what your friends see/ do?

Researcher to repeat for sponsored content / ads

- What did you think of this bit of content?
- Where did it come from?
    - o What do you think about that?
- How do you feel seeing this bit of content?
- Do you want to see more or less of it? Why?

Researcher to prompt respondents with features they used, e.g. likes, friend requests, snap streaks

- Can you tell me about why you used this feature?
    - o When and where did you learn how to use this feature?
    - o How has this feature (or the way you use it) changed over time?
- What do you like / dislike about it?
- PROBE: safety features e.g., Mute, Block, Report

Researcher to repeat for different favourite accounts shown

- How long have you followed this account?
    - o Where did you first hear about them?
- What do you like about this account?
    - o PROBE: Funny, educational, aspirational
- Do your friends follow this kind of account?

Analysis themes specific to this individual / demonstrating key behaviours

Researcher to have selected some behaviours to explore further and ask them about these

Lead Question: Can you tell me about XX?

- Where did you first hear about this?
- Can you talk me through how it works?
- What do you think of this?
- How does it make you feel right now?

Researcher to have selected some behaviours to explore further (e.g. understanding of motivational/self-help content) and ask the respondent to screenshare and explain what they are doing:

Lead Question: Can you tell me about what you're doing?

- What do you like about this?
- Is there anything you dislike?

Lead Question: How much of your online activity makes you think about the future?

- What in particular?
    - Probe around certain topics: learning skills, knowledge about the world, impact on them, shaping behaviour, etc.

Asking about themes and content seen across the sample (15 mins)

Objective: To gather more data about trends and types of online content seen in the first-round interviews

Lead question: Have you ever seen any of the following types of things online?

- Transition videos
- ASMR
- Online debates
- Videos or pictures about mental health
- Online challenges
- Pictures or videos raising awareness about something
- Self-help advice and motivational content
- Information on social and political issues
    - E.g., Israel and Palestine
- Content related to your hobbies or passions
- Fan made content / fanfiction edits
- POVs / role play
- TikTok lives

Stimulus:

Flashcards showing the types of content

Focus in on 2 or 3 trends or types of content (underlined above) which the respondent says they have seen.

Lead question: Tell me a bit more about XX kind of content that you see.

- How common do you think it is for people to make and share content like this?
- What kind of content creators are making these kinds of content?
    - Who do you think follows content creators like this?
    - Do you follow anyone specifically because of the content they share related to XX?
- How frequently will *you* see things like this?
    - How do you come across content like this?
    - How do you feel when you see content like this?
- Have you learned anything new from the things you have seen?
- Have you ever searched for more content like this? How? Why?
- Have you seen anything offering a different perspective to this content?
- How do you think this type of content might be impacting you?
    - Probe: Your views, your behaviours, the things you like and don't like, how you use media, how you interact with others
    - Probe: Long term impacts vs short term impact?
    - What about how it might impact other young people seeing it?

Online health and wellbeing (5 mins)

Objective: Collecting Final reflections on how they feel about being online

Lead Question: How do you think people tend to treat each other online?

- PROBE: Is this different to offline?
- How do you feel about the way people behave online?
- Do you ever feel pressure to behave in different ways when you are online?

Lead Question: How do you feel about online safety?

- Has this changed over time?
- How do you feel compared to last year?
- What about 3 years ago?
- Why do you say this?
- How do you think online safety will progress in the future?
    - Do you see anything about the future of tech online?
    - If so, what?
    - How do you think it will impact the future? PROBE: for yourself, for others, for wider world

Lead Question: If you could change anything about the internet, what would you change?

- What would you change about social media?
    - Why do you say this?
- What would you change about where you watch things?
    - Why do you say this?
- What would you change about the games you play?
    - Why do you say this?