



Children and parents: Media use and attitudes in the nations

2012 Metrics Bulletin

Research Document

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Section 1

Introduction

1.1 Scope of the report

This purpose of this bulletin: *Children and parents: Media use and attitudes 2012* is to provide a single home for a number of key media metrics relating to parents and children in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales, as well as across the UK. It is designed to be a reference document for our stakeholders.

It provides data on:

- Media access and consumption among 5-15 year olds in each of the four nations and across the UK, including: access to and use of the internet on a range of devices including tablets and mobile phones as well as PCs/laptops/netbooks; mobile phone ownership; TV watching on devices other than a TV set; and hours spent using the internet, gaming and watching TV per week.
- The prevalence of social networking profiles among 5-15 year olds in each of the four nations, and online confidence among 8-11 year olds in each of the four nations.
- Which regularly-used device children aged 5-15 in each of the four nations would miss the most if it was taken away.
- The proportion of parents of 5-15 year olds in each of the four nations who are: concerned about content on TV, on the internet, on mobile phones and in games; have rules about their children's use of TV, the internet, mobile phones and gaming; have parental controls set on the TV, PC/laptop/netbook; child's mobile phone and gaming device used by their child; and who have talked to their child about staying safe online.
- Attitudes towards their child's internet use, among parents of 5-15 year olds in each of the four nations.

1.2 Sources used

- The metrics set out here come from Ofcom's 2012 media literacy survey of children and parents¹, conducted in March 2012.

1.3 Understanding the results

- Within each section, comparisons are made between the nation response and the all-UK figure. Where a response differs from the all-UK figure, the cell has been coloured green (if the nation response is higher than the all-UK figure) or red (if it is lower), as shown in the example below. Where there are differences between nations these are highlighted in footnotes to the relevant figures. Differences are statistically significant at the 95% level.

¹ <http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/market-data-research/statistics/stats12/>

xx	Signifies higher response
xx	Signifies lower response

- Tracking sub-groups over time requires large base sizes in order that percentage changes can be deemed statistically significant. All significant changes since 2011 are indicated within each section in the rows labelled '% change' for the UK overall figure.
- The number of interviews conducted with the different sub-groups of parents and children detailed in this report is indicated in the rows labelled 'base'. Where a sub-group base size resulted in fewer than 100 interviews, these responses have been excluded from the analysis and are indicated: '**' within the grid of measures.

1.4 Key findings

- In each of the four nations over 90% of children aged 5-15 have access to, and over 80% of children use, the internet at home. In Scotland and Wales both these measures have increased since 2011.
- Children aged 5-15 in England and Wales are more likely than the UK average to own a mobile phone, and smartphone ownership among 5-15s has increased in all four nations since 2011.
- 5-15 year-olds in Northern Ireland are more likely than the UK average to go online using a mobile phone and a tablet, and 5-15s in Wales and Northern Ireland are more likely than the UK average to watch TV on a device other than a TV set.
- 5-15 year olds in England and Northern Ireland spend more time using the internet in a week than they did in 2011 (an increase of 1.1 hours to 11.5 hours per week in England and an increase of 1.9 hours to 10.7 hours in Northern Ireland).
- 5-15 year olds in Wales are more likely than the UK average to say that of all regularly-used media, they would miss TV the most if it was taken away (48% v. 38%). Children in England are more likely than they were in 2011 to say they would most miss their mobile phone, and less likely than in 2011 to say they would most miss the internet.
- Parents of children aged 5-15 are more likely than the UK average to be concerned about the content their child sees on television (36% vs. 23%) and more likely than the UK average to have rules in place about their child's television use (91% vs. 83%). Parents of 5-15s in Scotland and Wales are less likely than the UK average to have parental controls set on the television used by their child (40% and 37% vs. 50%). Concern about content on TV has fallen since 2011 among parents in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, but not in Scotland.
- Parents of children aged 5-15 in Wales are more likely than the UK average to have concerns about content on the internet (25% vs. 17%) and parents of 5-15s in Wales and Northern Ireland are more likely than the UK average to have rules in place about their child's internet use (87% and 88% vs. 79%). Concern about content on

the internet has fallen since 2011 among parents in England and Northern Ireland, but not among parents in Scotland and Wales.

- Parents of 5-15 year olds in Wales are less concerned than they were in 2011 about gaming content. There has been no statistically significant fall among parents of 5-15s in England, Scotland or Northern Ireland. Parents of 5-15s in Wales and Northern Ireland are more likely than the UK average to have rules in place about their children's gaming (86% and 84% vs. 76%). The use of rules has increased in Wales since 2011.
- Parents of 5-15 year olds in Wales are more likely than the UK average to say that they talk to their child about staying safe online at least monthly (59% vs. 44%).
- Parents of 5-15 year olds in Northern Ireland are more likely than the UK average to agree with the statements: "My child knows more about the internet than I do" (57% vs. 46%) and "My child helps me with using the internet" (46% vs. 37%).

Section 2

Children's media use: 2012

This section provides information about children's media use and attitudes for the UK and each of the four nations, and shows how this has changed since 2011. It sets out the percentage of children aged 5-15 who have access to, and use, a range of media, who have a social networking profile and who say they would most miss different types of media platform or device. It also sets out the percentage of 8-15 year olds who consider themselves confident internet users. Coloured cells indicate whether the nation response is different to the all-UK figure². We also indicate, via footnotes, where the nations are different to each other.

Media access and consumption					
	%	Nation			
% of all respondents	All UK	England	Scotland	Wales	N Ireland
Base (all parents of children aged 5-15)	1717	1137	224	174	182
Child's access to the internet at home (PC/laptop/netbook based)³	91	91	92	93	95
% change since 2011	0	-1	+11	+8	+3
Child's use of the internet at home (PC/laptop/netbook based)⁴	82	81	84	83	87
% change since 2011	0	-3	+17	+9	+6
Child owns a mobile phone⁵	49	48	47	57 ⁶	59 ⁷
% change since 2011	-3	-3	-9	-2	+6
Child's mobile phone is a smartphone⁸	28	28	26	34	34
% change since 2011	+8	+7	+12	+10	+18

²Differences are statistically significant at the 95% level. Red cells signify lower and green cells signify higher. For the nations comparisons are to the UK average.

³QP3C – 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)

⁴(TT Q1 2012, QE9) Q: Which of these methods does your household use to connect to the internet at home?

⁵(TT Q1 2012, QD28) Q: Which, if any, of the following activities, other than making and receiving calls, do you use your mobile for?

⁶Also significantly higher than England

⁷Also significantly higher than England and Scotland

⁸(TT Q1 2012, QE3) Q: Do you ever access the internet anywhere other than in your home at all?

Child goes online using a mobile phone/smartphone	22	22	16	22	31 ⁹
% change since 2011	+8	+7	+6	+10	+17
Child goes online using a tablet	9	9	10	8	14 ¹⁰
% change since 2011	+7	+7	+7	+6	+10
Child ever watches TV on device other than TV set⁷	34	33	35	45 ¹¹	44 ¹²
% change since 2011 ¹³	-	-	-	-	-
	hours				
Base (parents whose child watches TV at home)	1709	1129	224	174	182
Hours spent watching TV per week	16	16	16.2	15.5	15.9
change since 2011	-0.3	-0.3	-0.3	-0.3	+1.5
Base (parents whose child uses the internet at home)	1424	934	178	149	163
Hours spent using the internet per week	11.5	11.5	11.9	11.1	10.7
change since 2011	+1.2	+1.1	+1.9	+1.0	+1.9
Base (parents whose child ever plays games at home on any type of game playing device)	1506	977	204	156	169
Hours spent gaming per week	8.7	8.7	8.8	9.5	8.3
change since 2011	-0.5	-0.6	-0.4	+1.4	-1.1

⁹ Also significantly higher than England and Scotland.

¹⁰ Also significantly higher than England

¹¹ Also significantly higher than England

¹² Also significantly higher than England

¹³ Question not asked in 2011.

Online behaviour					
	%	Nation			
	All UK	England	Scotland	Wales	N Ireland
<i>% of all respondents</i>					
Base (children aged 5-15 who use the internet at home)	1424	934	178	149	163
Has active social networking profile¹⁴	43	42	48	47	50
<i>% change since 2011</i>	+1	+1	-7	-3	+9
Base (children aged 8-15 who use the internet at home)	1048	685	129	112	122
Confident staying safe online	88	88	90	89	90
<i>% change since 2011</i>	0	0	+2	+1	+2

¹⁴ Base for this question is comprised of parents of children aged 5-7 and children aged 8-15.

Attitudes to media					
	%	Nation			
	All UK	England	Scotland	Wales	N Ireland
<i>% of all respondents</i>					
Base (all children aged 5-15)	1717	1137	224	174	182
Would most miss TV if taken away	38	38	37	48 ¹⁵	41
% change since 2011	+4	+4	+8	+10	-1
Would most miss playing computer or video games if taken away	20	19	24	20	18
% change since 2011	-3	-3	-7	+3	+4
Would most miss using a mobile phone if taken away	16	17	15	13	21 ¹⁶
% change since 2011	+3	+4	+3	+1	0
Would most miss the internet if taken away	13	13	11	12	12
% change since 2011	-3	-4	+2	-2	+3

¹⁵ Also significantly higher than England and Scotland.

¹⁶ Significantly higher than Wales.

Section 3

Parents' concerns and mediation: 2012

This section provides information about parents' concerns about, and strategies for mediating, their children's media use: in the UK and in each of the four nations, and shows how this has changed since 2011. It covers television, mobile phones, the internet and gaming. It also sets out the extent to which parents in the UK and the four nations talk to their children about staying safe online, and whether they agree with a range of statements about their children's internet use. Coloured cells indicate whether the nation response is different to the all-UK figure¹⁷. We also indicate, via footnotes, where the nations are different to each other.

TV					
	%	Nation			
	All UK	England	Scotland	Wales	N Ireland
<i>% of all respondents</i>					
Base (parents whose child watches TV at home)	1709	1129	224	174	182
Concerned about content on TV	23	23	20	28	36 ¹⁸
% change since 2011	-8	-7	-6	-11	-14
Have rules about TV	83	83	80	84	91 ¹⁹
% change since 2011	+2	+2	-1	+5	-1
Have parental controls on TV set (NB base here is among those with multi channel TV)	50	52 ²⁰	40	37	56 ²¹
% change since 2011	+6	+8	-4	+5	0

¹⁷Differences are statistically significant at the 95% level. Red cells signify lower and green cells signify higher. For the nations comparisons are to the UK average.

¹⁸Also significantly higher than England and Scotland.

¹⁹Also significantly higher than England and Scotland.

²⁰Significantly higher than Scotland and Wales.

²¹Significantly higher than Scotland and Wales.

Mobile					
	%	Nation			
	All UK	England	Scotland	Wales	N Ireland
% of all respondents					
Base (parents whose child has a mobile phone)	771	484	91	95	101
Concerned about what they see or read on their mobile phone ²²	17	18	-	-	21
% change since 2011	+1	+2	-	-	- ²³
Have rules about mobile phone use	72	71	-	-	76
% change since 2011	+2	+1	-	-	- ²⁴
Base (parents who say that their child's mobile phone can be used to go online)²⁵	433	274	44	56	59
Have mobile phone filters in place	32	33	-	-	-
% change since 2011	-3	-2	-	-	-

²² Sample sizes too small to report on Scotland or Wales

²³ Sample size too small to report on Northern Ireland in 2011

²⁴ Sample size too small to report on Northern Ireland in 2011

²⁵ Sample sizes too small to report on Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland

Games					
	%	Nation			
	All UK	England	Scotland	Wales	N Ireland
<i>% of all respondents</i>					
Base (parents whose child plays games at home, any device)	1506	977	204	156	169
Concerned about gaming content	16	17 ²⁶	10	20 ²⁷	18
% change since 2011	-3	-2	0	-12	-9
Have rules about gaming	76	75	73	86 ²⁸	84 ²⁹
% change since 2011	+1	-1	+2	+15	+1
Base (parents whose child plays games at home, portable/handheld)	1085	700	142	110	133
Have parental controls on portable/handheld games console	14	14	13	8	17 ³⁰
% change since 2011	+2	+2	+2	-8	+8
Base (parents whose child plays games at home, fixed)	1254	813	164	131	146
Have parental controls on fixed games console	16	17	11	11	19
% change since 2011	+1	+2	-4	-5	+1

²⁶ Significantly higher than Scotland.

²⁷ Significantly higher than Scotland.

²⁸ Also significantly higher than England and Scotland

²⁹ Also significantly higher than England and Scotland

³⁰ Significantly higher than Wales

Internet					
	%	Nation			
	All UK	England	Scotland	Wales	N Ireland
% of all respondents					
Base (parents whose child uses the internet at home)	1424	934	178	149	163
Concerned about content on internet	17	17	13	25 ³¹	19
% change since 2011	-6	-6	-3	-4	-19
Have rules about internet	79	78	82	87 ³²	88 ³³
% change since 2011	-3	-3	-1	+6	+2
Have parental controls on PC/laptop/netbook ³⁴	46	46	41	52	46
% change since 2011 ³⁵	-	-	-	-	-
Talk to child about staying safe online at least monthly	44	43	48	59 ³⁶	41
% change since 2011 ³⁷	-	-	-	-	-
Agree that benefits of the internet outweigh the risks	70	70	69	63	71
% change since 2011	+5	+4	+7	-1	+13
Agree that 'I trust my child to use the internet safely'	84	84	79	90 ³⁸	86
% change since 2011	+3	+3	+2	+12	+11
Agree that 'My child knows more about the internet than I do'	46	45	50	52	57 ³⁹
% change since 2011	-3	-4	+7	-4	-1
Agree that 'My child helps me with using the internet'.	37	37	35	39	46 ⁴⁰
% change since 2011 ⁴¹	-	-	-	-	-

³¹ Also significantly higher than England and Scotland.

³² Also significantly higher than England.

³³ Also significantly higher than England.

³⁴ Base here is parent whose child uses one of these devices at home

³⁵ Change to question wording in 2012 means 2011 and 2012 figures are not directly comparable.

³⁶ Also significantly higher than England, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

³⁷ Parents were not asked frequency of talking to their child in 2011.

³⁸ Significantly higher than Scotland.

³⁹ Also significantly higher than England.

⁴⁰ Also significantly higher than England and Scotland.

⁴¹ New question in 2012.

