Children's Passive Online Measurement

Published 21 May 2026

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Introduction

Ofcom is the regulator for online safety in the UK. Our role is to make sure online services, like websites and apps, meet their duties to protect their users under the Online Safety Act 2023 ('the Act'). To support this work, it is essential that we have a robust evidence base on people's – including children's - online experiences, which services they are using, and for how long. It is for this reason that Ofcom has carried out the **Children's Passive Online Measurement** (CPOM) study. We conducted a nationally representative sample for the first time in 2025, and this is the second phase of the study, which complements our broader programme of children's research and engagement.

Ofcom currently uses Ipsos iris to understand which websites and apps are visited by UK internet users aged 15+. The aim of CPOM is to use a similar passive measurement solution to Ipsos iris to measure the internet use of UK children aged 8-14. In this study we collected data from a nationally representative sample of 701 children, passively measuring their use of websites and apps across the smartphones, tablets and computers that they use to go online. Last year, when we first conducted a nationally representative sample and published our first CPOM study report, equivalent data was not available for under-15s. As is standard in research, changes and improvements to the fieldwork and data processing are implemented over time, especially with such a novel approach, and we have made changes since our first report. Based on the learnings from our initial study we have refined the methodology. This means that like-for-like comparison with data published last year is not possible.

There was a change in the recruitment approach for phase 2. While the sample source, recruiter and quotas remained similar, in phase 1, the recruitment involved an initial simple qualification screener, captured by the recruiter via telephone. In phase 2, the recruiter sent out an email link with the questionnaire which contained drop-down lists for most of the questions. This revised approach ensured more consistency in the information received that was used for both quotas and quality checks. In phase 2 data collection was monitored during fieldwork, so that panellists who did not meet the requirements of the study could be removed from participation during fieldwork, with another child taking their place to meet our sample target. With this revised approach a small number of panellists included in the phase 1 sample would not have met the final sample threshold had the phase 2 criteria been applied. While we are unable to quantify the impact of these changes, it is likely that these may have some impact on the higher figures observed for some services in this report compared to what was published in our first report. The phase 1 panel are therefore not comparable with phase 2. Further details on these changes can be found in the Methodology.

Ipsos iris is endorsed by UKOM as the industry standard for online audience measurement and is based on passively measuring the internet use of a nationally representative panel of users across the PCs, smartphones and tablets that they use. We report this in our annual Online Nation report, and in order to present a full set of the available children's data we have included Ipsos iris data from 15-17-year-olds in this report. As data for 15–17-year-olds is not obtained from our study, comparisons with our findings should be interpreted with caution.

Passive measurement of children's online use is an important tool in our broader programme of children's research which informs our work across online safety, broadcasting and media literacy. It is our intention to carry out future studies of CPOM to further develop and fine-tune an ongoing audience measurement system for UK children's use of the internet, complementing the data that we collect through other research methods.

We welcome feedback on this research. It should be sent to: market.research@ofcom.org.uk.

Key considerations

Strengths and limitations of this study

There are advantages in using a passive measurement methodology like CPOM to produce robust evidence on the services children use, and the time they spend on them. The data collected is a detailed and factual representation of what the panellists have done online. It mitigates issues around recall associated with surveys, or the filtered responses that children may give in surveys, for example not volunteering their use of adult spaces. And whereas it is only practical in survey-based research to ask about a small number of services, passive monitoring captures usage across the wide range of less frequently used website and apps.

As noted in the Introduction above, passively measuring children's internet use is innovative research and we have learned from our first phase of research and made some methodological changes which mean that like-for-like comparisons between this research and data published last year are not possible. See Methodology for further details on the changes.

Our passive measurement study is currently limited in terms of the number of devices it monitors for an individual. The parents/legal guardians completed an initial screener providing details on the devices used by the child panellist to go online and the frequency of use as well as demographic information about the panellist. Panellists were then asked to install the passive tracker on at least one device that was used by the child at least a few times a month and were encouraged to include all the devices that were reported in the screener that were used mostly by the child. In this study most of the 701 panellists included in the research had one device measured, with 142 panellists having two or more devices measured. Panellists may have used other devices during the study period that met the threshold of being used at least a few times in a month to go online, but which were not tracked. Devices available at school but not at home are not within the scope of this study. The passive technology is unable to measure internet use on Amazon fire tablets or Chromebooks (56 and 98 parents/legal guardians respectively reported that their child used an Amazon fire tablet or Chromebook). The study also does not include games consoles (398 parents/legal guardians reported that the child used a games console), which is a key online activity for some children. Our Children's and Parents' Media Use and Attitudes Report includes a broad overview of children's self-reported online use, including on games consoles.

To align with the UKOM-endorsed Ipsos iris reporting, all visits of >1 second are included in the data but clearly this threshold does not necessarily show that a visitor is actively using a service – accidental visits, visits that can't get beyond a log-in page, visits that are blocked by age assurance and visits to sites that are used to authenticate access to another site are all included and contribute to the visitor numbers we report. Our Children's Online Safety Tracker report includes children's recalled usage of services, which is another measure of the reach of services.

A strength of this research is that it measures the time that children spend on services. However, we observe in the data that there is very uneven distribution, with some children spending a lot of time on services and other children very little. As such, averages should be treated with caution. To illustrate this, for many services we have included analysis by upper quartile (top 25% of users by time spent) and lower quartile (bottom 25% of users by time spent).

All research methods are subject to non-response bias, so although the sampling and weighting ensures that the data is demographically representative of UK online children aged 8-14, the sample

is still defined by those who are willing to take part. Monitoring research is also subject to the Hawthorne effect, whereby participants adapt their behaviour because they know they are being tracked, even though they are told that the data will be anonymised. Although this is likely to diminish over time, as participants forget they are being tracked, it is possible that some data may be affected.

Some panellists may have used VPNs[1] during the study. On iOS devices, turning on a personal VPN automatically turns off the passive VPN tracker used for data collection. If a panellist then later re-enables the study's tracker, any internet activity that occurred while it was deactivated would not be captured. As a result, some usage may be under-reported.

For further detail see the Methodology.

Data definitions

Unless specified, this report refers to websites and/or apps as services or sites.

In this study, each child completed 28 consecutive days of the study with the first child starting on 9 October 2025 and the last child completing on 7 March 2026. This may not be representative of internet use at other times of the year, for example during exam periods or school holidays outside of the fieldwork period. We note that 68 panellists took part in the study during the holiday period Saturday 20th December 2025 and Sunday 4th January 2026, with 51 completing before 25th December 2025. As the sample taking part during this period is small, changes in behaviour due to this holiday period would not have impacted the overall results.

When we report on the proportion of children visiting a service in a month, this is the proportion of children in the specified age group that opened an app or website at least once during the specified 28-day period. A 'month' refers to the 28-day period.

A threshold of 1 second is applied for a visit to be counted. This might include only one fleeting visit in 28 days, so it is important to look at the proportion of online visitors and time spent *together* to get a full picture of breadth and depth of service use.

Time spent recorded by this study and Ipsos iris is counted as soon as a website or app is opened.

Where time spent data is referred to as 'per day', this is based on the total time spent by visitors in the 28-day measurement period, divided by 28, unless specified otherwise. This includes days when service users did not visit the service.

Where figures do not add up to 100% this may be due to rounding.

Online use on games consoles, TV sets and smart devices are not within the scope of this study.

[1] A virtual private network (VPN) creates an encrypted connection that hides a device's online activity and location.

Overview

What we have found – in brief

Children aged 8-14 spent an average of 3 hours 36 minutes a day online across smartphones, tablets or computers. Time spent increases with age: 8-9-year-olds spent the least amount of time online per day, averaging 2 hours 53 minutes, rising to 3 hours 34 minutes for 10-12-year-olds, and to 4 hours 19 minutes a day for those aged 13-14. These averages mask big variations: 8-14-year-olds in the top quartile by time spent were online for an average of 6 hours 42 minutes per day, whereas those in the bottom quartile were online for an average of 51 minutes per day.

Use of services extended into late-night hours. Eight- and nine-year-olds spent an average of 14 minutes a day online in the late-night period (23:00-04:59), with 13-14s online for an average of 24 minutes a day in this late-night period.

Online use varied by day of the week, with higher engagement during the weekend. 8-14-year-old internet users spent 43 minutes more per day online during the weekend compared to a weekday: an average of 3 hours 24 minutes per day online during a weekday and 4 hours 7 minutes per day during a weekend.

Alphabet-owned services were the most widely visited. Almost all online 8-14-year-olds visit Google Search (94%) and YouTube (93%) in a month. YouTube was the service where children spent the most time, an average of 49 minutes a day across all the 8-14s in the study, and an average of 52 minutes a day for those who used it. Snapchat was second by time spent, an average of 39 minutes a day across all the 8-14s, and an average of 1 hours 27 minutes a day for the 44% of 8-14s that visited the service across a month. Overall, 41% (1 hour 28 minutes) of the total time that children spent online was on these two services.

Messaging and calling services were widely visited, with 88% of online 8-14-year-olds visiting at least one service. WhatsApp is the most widely visited messaging and call service (69%), with visitors on average visiting the service 16 times a day and spending an average of 29 minutes per day on the service.

Gaming and artificial intelligence services feature prominently in children's online lives. Roblox is the most widely visited games app, used by 58% of online 8-14-year-olds across smartphones and tablets. Eight to-fourteen-year-old Roblox players spent on average 26 minutes per day on the games app. Fifty-five per cent of online 8-14-year-olds visited a standalone AI service in a month. ChatGPT (33%) is the most widely visited AI service among 8-14-year-olds. The proportion visiting increases with age, with around a half (48%) of 13-14s visiting ChatGPT, followed by 35% of 10-12s and 16% of 8-9s. On average, an 8-14-year-old ChatGPT user visited the service 45 times during the month, with an average single-visit length of two minutes, spending on average 1 hour 3 minutes on the service in a month.

The online landscape for children

Time spent online

Eight to nine-year-olds spent nearly 3 hours a day online across smartphones, tablets and computers, rising to over 4 hours for 13-14s

Our study found internet users aged 8-14 spent an average of 3 hours 36 minutes a day online across smartphones, tablets and computers. Eight and nine-year-olds spent the least amount of time online per day, averaging 2 hours 53 minutes, rising with age to 3 hours 34 minutes for 10-12-year-olds, and to 4 hours 19 minutes a day for 13-14-year-olds. In separate research conducted by Ipsos iris, 15-17-year-olds were found to have spent an average of 6 hours 20 minutes per day in May 2025.[2]

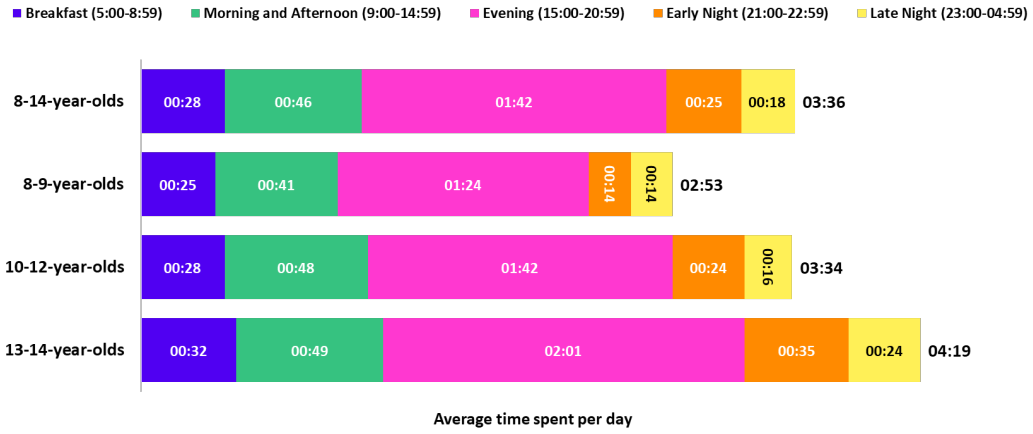
There were substantial differences in daily time spent online between lighter and heavier internet users. Among online 8-14-year-olds, children in the bottom quartile spent an average of 51 minutes per day online, compared with 6 hours 42 minutes per day among children in the top quartile.[3] This pattern was observed across age groups: among 8-9-year-olds, bottom-quartile users spent 42 minutes per day compared with 5 hours among top-quartile users; among 10-12-year-olds, 58 minutes compared with 6 hours 59 minutes; and among 13-14-year-olds, 52 minutes compared with 6 hours 56 minutes per day.

On average, nearly half (47%) of the time spent online per day by 8-14s was during the evening period (15:00-20:59) (1 hour 42 minutes). Online 8-14-year-olds spent on average 8% (an average of 18 minutes a day) of their internet usage during the late-night period (23:00-04:59); as age increases, the average amount of time spent during the late-night period also increases, with 8-9s spending 14 minutes online late at night, and 13-14s spending 24 minutes (9%).

[2] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, May 2025, age: 15-17, UK, internet users. Note: Custom data supplied by Ipsos

[3] Children were grouped into quartiles based on their total time spent across all measured apps and websites over the 28-day period. 'Lighter users' refer to children in the bottom quartile (lowest 25%) by total time spent, while 'heavier users' refer to children in the top quartile (highest 25%)

Figure 1: Average time spent online on smartphones, tablets and computers, per online child, per day: by age and daypart (hours:minutes)



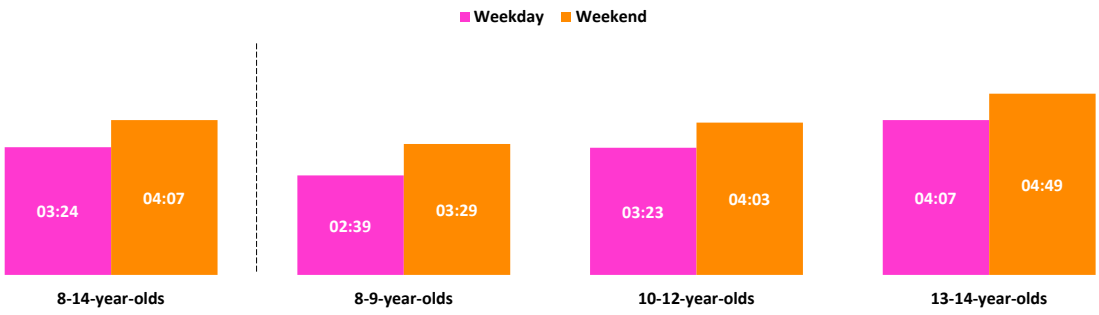
Note: Use measured across smartphones, tablets and computers, other devices such as TV sets, games consoles and smart speakers not included. Due to rounding totals may be slightly over/under.

8-14-year-olds spent almost an hour more per day online during the weekend compared to a weekday

Our study found 8-14-year-olds spent 3 hours 24 minutes per day online during a weekday but spent 43 minutes more during the weekend (4 hours 7 minutes per day) across smartphones, tablets and computers. The 13-14-year-olds spent 4 hours 49 minutes online per day during the weekend, an additional 42 minutes compared to weekdays.

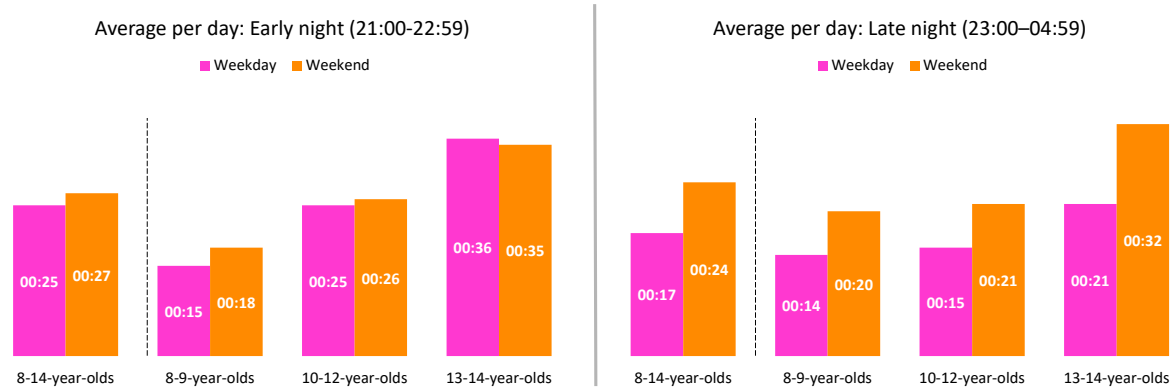
Time spent online during both the early-night (21:00-22:59) and late-night (23:00–04:59) periods was slightly higher on weekends than on weekdays. Among 8-14-year-olds, average early night use increased from 25 minutes on weekdays to 27 minutes at weekends, while average late night use increased from 17 minutes on weekdays to 24 minutes at weekends.

Figure 2: Average time spent online on smartphones, tablets and computers per online child, per day, weekday vs. weekend, by age



Note: Use measured across smartphones, tablets and computers, other devices such as TV sets, games consoles and smart speakers not included.

Figure 3: Average time spent online on smartphones, tablets and computers, per online child, per day during early night and late night: by age and weekday/weekend (hours:minutes)

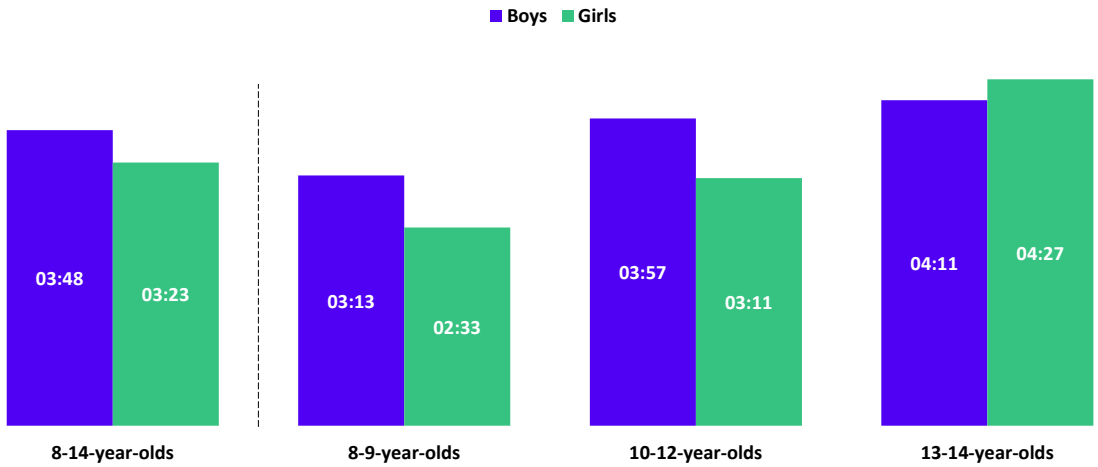


Note: Use measured across smartphones, tablets and computers, other devices such as TV sets, games consoles and smart speakers not included.

8-14-year-old boys spent more time online than girls across smartphones, tablets and computers

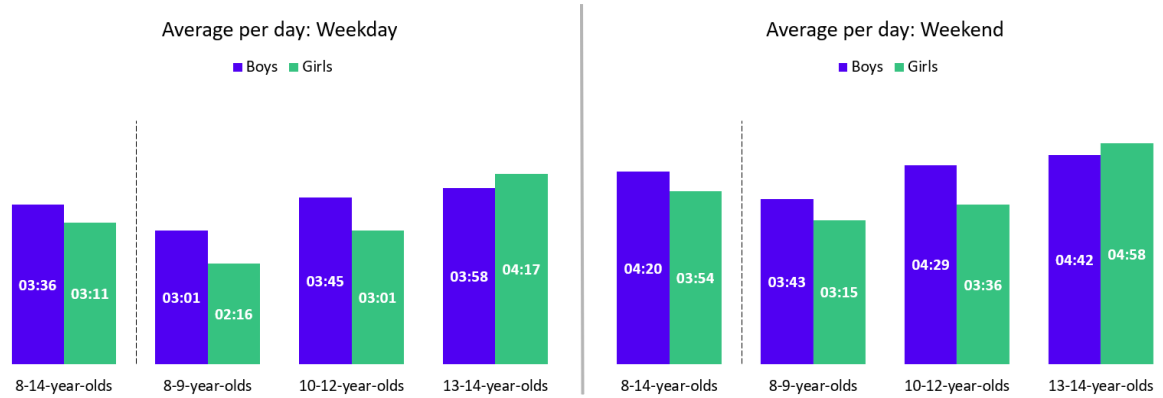
Our study found 8-14-year-old boys on average spent 3 hours 48 minutes per day online, 25 minutes more than girls (3 hours 23 minutes). Among the younger ages, boys consistently spent more time online per day than girls on the devices measured. This pattern changes for teens, with 13-14-year-old girls spending on average 16 minutes more online per day than boys. Some of this shift may be explained by some of the older boys' online time moving to games consoles, which were not measured as part of this study. Our Children's Media Use and Attitudes research has found that boys aged 10 and over are more likely than girls of the same age to use games consoles, and boys in this age group are also more likely to play games online.

Figure 4: Average time spent online on smartphones, tablets and computers, per online child, per day, by gender



Note: Use measured across smartphones, tablets and computers, other devices such as TV sets, games consoles and smart speakers not included.

Figure 5: Average time spent online on smartphones, tablets and computers, per online child, per day, weekday vs. weekend, by age and gender



Note: Use measured across smartphones, tablets and computers, other devices such as TV sets, games consoles and smart speakers not included.

Over half (55%) of total time spent online by 8-14s is on social media and video-sharing services – most of it on YouTube and Snapchat

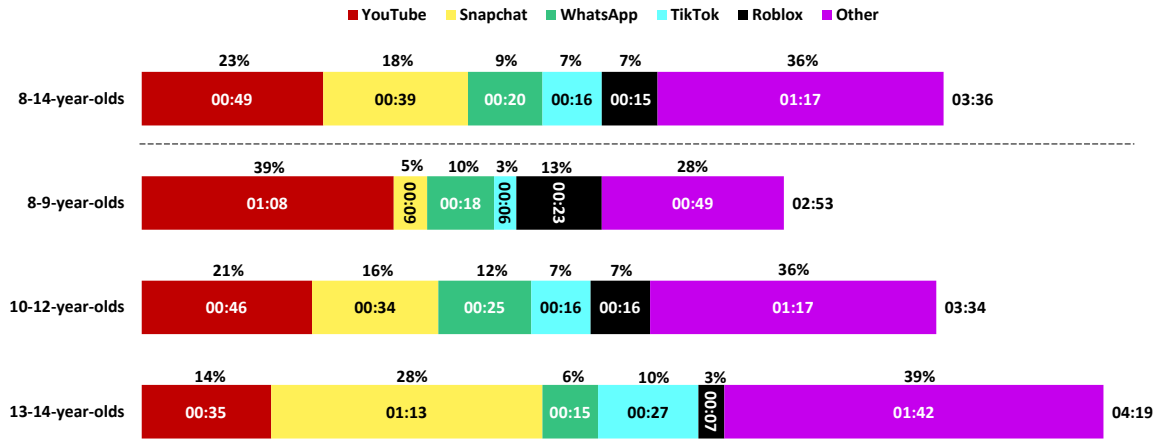
Our study found there were large differences in time spent on social media and video-sharing services between lighter and heavier users. Among online 8-14-year-olds, the average time spent by visitors on social media and video-sharing services was 1 hour 59 minutes per day. Children in the top 25% by time spent - the heaviest users, were online for an average of 3 hours 57 minutes a day on social media and video-sharing services, while those in the bottom 25% - the lightest users, spent an average of 15 minutes per day.

YouTube and Snapchat are the leading services in terms of time spent. Combined, they accounted for 41% (an average of 1 hour 28 minutes per day) of the total time spent by online 8-14-year-olds – see Figure 6. On an individual basis, YouTube accounted for 23% (49 minutes) of average time 8-14-year-olds spent online, followed by Snapchat at 18% (39 minutes). Time spent on Snapchat is high, particularly among 13- and 14-year-olds, despite Snapchat not being one of the top ten most widely visited services overall, with less than half (44%) of online 8-14-year-olds visiting the service (ranked 13th) (see Top services by audience size and Social media and video-sharing services for proportions of visitors and time spent data). YouTube and Snapchat were followed by messaging and call service WhatsApp (9%, 20 minutes), then TikTok (7%, 16 minutes) and Roblox (7%, 15 minutes). Among 8-14s, share of online time on YouTube and Roblox decreases as age increases[4], while share of online time on Snapchat and TikTok increases with age.[5]

Analysis of online 15-17s' data from Ipsos iris found that 28% of average daily time spent online (6 hours 20 minutes) was spent on YouTube (1 hour 46 minutes), followed by 13% on TikTok (50 minutes); 9% Instagram (36 minutes) and 9% on Snapchat (35 minutes).[6]

[4] Note: Use on TV sets games console and smart speaker/display use not measured.
[5] This average time is based on all online 13-14-year-old children, whether or not they visited Snapchat. See Figure 11 for average time spent by users of the service.
[6] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, organisations, time on smartphones, tablets and computers only, May 2025, age 15-17, UK internet users. Other includes services outside the top ten. Audio play when Spotify app is closed is not measured; only foreground app use is measured.

Figure 6: Share of average time spent online per day by online children aged 8-14, by service (hours:minutes) and age



Note: Use measured across smartphones, tablets and computers, other devices such as TV sets, games consoles and smart speakers not included. Average time by internet user is based on all online 8-14-year-old children whether or not they visited the service.

Top services[7] by audience size

Alphabet-owned Google and YouTube were used by almost all 8-14-year-olds during a month

This was followed by Meta's Facebook (including Messenger)[8] and WhatsApp. The top four services visited by children are also the top four visited by adults, as measured by Ipsos iris.[9] However, unlike for adults, Roblox, Apple Music, TikTok, and Temu appear in the online 8-14-year-olds' top ten.

Figure 7: Top ten services, by proportion of online 8-14-year-old that visited in a month

Rank	Service	Proportion of online 8-14-year-olds that visited service in a month	Average time spent by visitors to service per day (hours: mins)
1	Google - Search	94%	00:03
2	YouTube (incl. Kids)	93%	00:52
3	Facebook (incl. Messenger)	80%	00:08
4	WhatsApp	69%	00:29
5	TikTok	65%	00:25
6	Roblox	59%	00:26
7	Apple Music	57%	00:03

[7] Visits via website or app. Our Children's and Parents' Media Use and Attitudes Report includes a broad overview of children's self-reported online use.
[8] Facebook (incl. Messenger) includes visits to any of the following services: Facebook website, Facebook app or Messenger app.
[9] Proportion of UK online adult visitors in November 2025: Google 99%, YouTube 94%, Facebook & Messenger 94% and WhatsApp 91%. Source: Ipsos iris online measurement service, November 2025, internet users aged 18+, UK.

Rank	Service	Proportion of online 8-14-year-olds that visited service in a month	Average time spent by visitors to service per day (hours: mins)
8	**Amazon**	51%	00:02
9	**Instagram**	49%	00:13
10	**Temu**	45%	<00:01

Note: Use measured across smartphones, tablets and computers, other devices such as TV sets, games consoles and smart speakers not included. Visitors to Apple Music may not have an Apple Music subscription and may be using the service to access downloaded content and listen to/view this content offline. All visits of >1 second are included in the data but this does not imply that a visitor is actively using a service – accidental visits, visits that can't get beyond a log-in page, visits that are blocked by age assurance and visits to sites that are used to authenticate access to another site are all included in the visitor numbers.

Top apps by audience size[10]

8-14-year-old smartphone and/or tablet users visited on average 28 apps in a month

Our study found most (95%) time spent online by 8-14-year-olds was on apps. Eight to fourteens spent on average 3 hours 25 minutes of their internet time via apps compared to 10 minutes via websites per day. Eight to fourteen-year-old smartphone and/or tablet users visited on average 28 apps in a month. As children's age increases, so does the average number of apps they visit in a month. On average, 8-9-year-olds visited 22 apps, 10-12-year-olds 29 apps and 13-14-year-olds 34 apps. For 15-17-year-olds the figure jumps to 41 according to data from Ipsos iris, in line with the 42 apps visited by adults aged 18 and over within a month.[11]

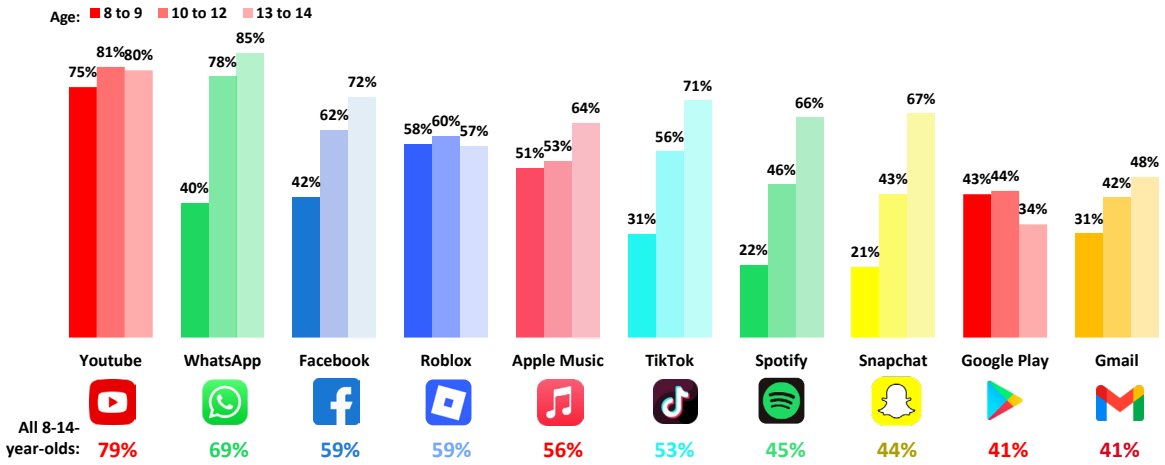
YouTube is the most widely visited app

Our study found 79% of online 8-14-year-olds visited the YouTube app in a month. YouTube was the most widely visited app among 8-9-year-olds (75%) and 10-12-year-olds (81%), and second among 13-14-year-olds (80%). WhatsApp app (85%) had the largest proportion visiting among 13-14-year-olds and was second for online 10-12s (78%). Roblox (59%) was fourth in terms of audience size among 8-14s, and second among 8-9-year-olds (58%).

[10] Smartphone or tablet using base: 687.

[11] Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, app, any device, May 2025, UK internet users. Note: Custom data supplied by Ipsos.

Figure 8: Top ten apps by proportion of online 8-14-year-old that visited in a month, by age



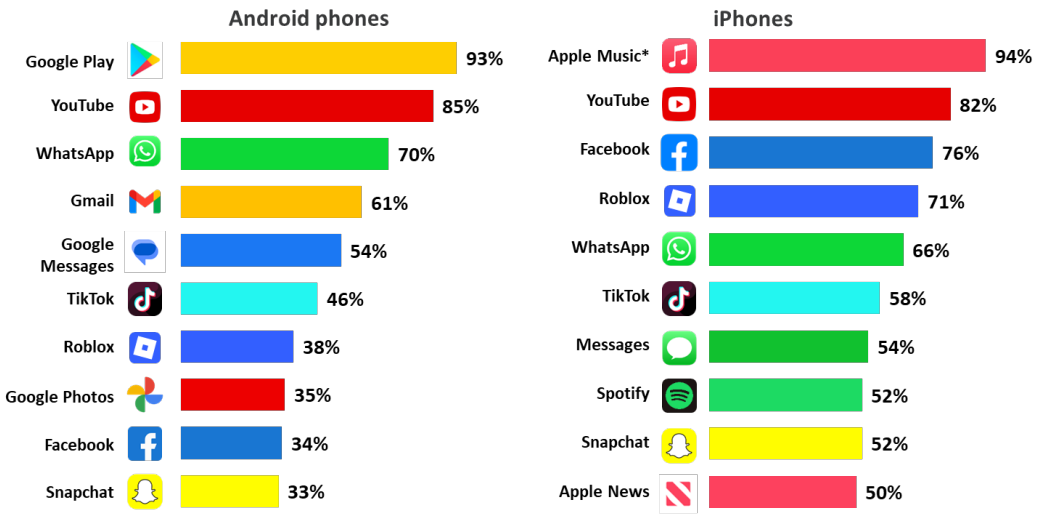
Note: Use measured across smartphones and tablets, other devices such as TV sets, games consoles and smart speakers not included. Visitors to the Apple Music app may not have an Apple Music subscription and may be using the app to access downloaded content and listen to/view this content offline. All visits of >1 second are included in the data but this does not imply that a visitor is actively using a service – accidental visits, visits that can't get beyond a log-in page, visits that are blocked by age assurance and visits to sites that are used to authenticate access to another site are all included in the visitor numbers.

Facebook and Roblox apps are more widely used among iPhone users compared to Android phone users

Our study found there is a notable difference in the most widely visited smartphone apps when comparing Android phones with iPhones. Facebook and Roblox both appear in the top ten for Android and iPhone 8-14-year-old users, however these apps are more widely used by iPhone users compared to Android, 76% and 71% of iPhone users visited Facebook and Roblox respectively, while 34% and 38% did the same on Android phones. Five of the top ten Android apps are owned by Alphabet (Google Play, YouTube, Gmail, Google Messages, Google Photos). Apple Music and Apple News were the only two Apple apps in the iPhone top ten apps.

Google Play (Google's digital marketplace offering apps, games, books and films), was the most widely visited app (93%) on Android phones. Overall, 43% of online 8-14-year-olds visited the Google Play store across smartphone, tablet and computer, spending on average 22 minutes in the store in a month. In comparison, 1% of 8-14-year-old iPhone users visited the Apple app store, a digital marketplace for downloading apps on Apple devices. Overall, 2% of 8-14-year-olds visited the Apple App store across smartphone, tablet or computer, spending on average 6 minutes in the store in a month.

Figure 9: Top ten smartphone apps, Android phones vs iPhones, based on a proportion of the total selected smartphone app universe: 8-14-year-olds (in month)



*Note: *Visitors to the Apple Music app may not have an Apple Music subscription and may be using the app to access downloaded content and listen to/view this content offline. Base: Android phone: 238; iPhone 283. All visits of >1 second are included in the data but this does not imply that a visitor is actively using a service – accidental visits, visits that can't get beyond a log-in page, visits that are blocked by age assurance and visits to sites that are used to authenticate access to another site are all included in the visitor numbers.*

Online sectors

Introduction

This chapter explores the services visited by children and the time spent on them by sector. The online sectors explored are: social media and video sharing services; messaging and calls; search; artificial intelligence; email; games; football; education; and retail.

Social media and video-sharing services

Online 8-14-year-olds spent on average almost 2 hours on social media or video-sharing services per day

Our study found social media and video-sharing platforms are visited by almost all online 8-14-year-olds: 97% of 8-9-year-olds, 99% of 10-12-year-olds and 98% of 13-14-year-olds visited any social media or video-sharing service. Online 8-14-year-olds spent on average 1 hour 58 minutes on social media or video-sharing services per day, with the amount of time spent on these services rising with age: online 8-12-year-olds spent on average 1 hour 42 minutes per day while 13-14s spent 2 hours 38 minutes.

Snapchat visitors spent on average 1 hour 27 minutes on the service per day

Overall, our study found 44% of online 8-14-year-olds visited Snapchat, with all (44%) specifically visiting the Snapchat app which is an indicator that these are children that are actively engaging with the service and not just coincidentally navigating to the website but not proceeding beyond login. Figure 10 includes the proportion of children visiting the most widely visited social media services (website or app) and includes the proportion that visited the app version of the service.

Most Snapchat visitors used Snapchat daily, with 35% of all online 8-14s visiting the service per day. In comparison, 62% visited YouTube per day, 39% Facebook (incl. Messenger), 31% TikTok and 20% Instagram.

On average, an 8-14-year-old Snapchat user visited the service 688 times during the month – 25 times a day. YouTube users visited this site on average 244 times in a month; TikTok 189; Instagram 140; and Facebook (incl. Messenger) 105 times.

Snapchat visitors aged 8-14 spent on average 1 hour 27 minutes on the service per day. Time spent per day was highest among 13-14s, with 67% of online 13-14-year-olds visiting Snapchat in a month and spending an average of 1 hour 49 minutes a day on the service.[12]

There was a slight difference in ranking among 15-17-year-olds, with Ipsos iris data finding that among online 15-17s, LinkedIn and Quora were ranked 9th and 10th, visited by 41% and 22% respectively, with Twitch and Nextdoor not far behind in the rankings, with 14% and 12% of online 15-17s visiting the services respectively.[13] Our study found that 4% of online 8-14s visited LinkedIn.

[12] This average time is based on only those who visited Snapchat. See Figure 6 for average time spent by all internet users whether or not they visited Snapchat.
[13] Ipsos, Ipsos iris online measurement service, November 2025, internet users aged 15-17, UK.

Figure 10: Top ten social media and video-sharing services by proportion of online 8-14-year-olds that visited in a month

	Proportion visiting in a month (website or app)				Proportion visiting in a month (app only)				Proportion visiting in November 2025 (website or app)*
Age:	**8-14s**	**8-9s**	**10-12s**	**13-14s**	**8-14s**	**8-9s**	**10-12s**	**13-14s**	**15-17s**
YouTube	93%	91%	94%	95%	79%	75%	81%	80%	97%
Facebook (incl. Messenger)	80%	71%	80%	87%	62%	47%	65%	74%	92%
TikTok	65%	43%	69%	80%	53%	31%	56%	71%	79%
Instagram	49%	30%	47%	69%	39%	21%	37%	60%	91%
Snapchat	44%	22%	43%	67%	44%	21%	43%	67%	73%
Reddit	27%	12%	25%	44%	4%	1%	2%	10%	71%
Pinterest	27%	11%	28%	39%	22%	7%	23%	35%	41%
X	15%	9%	15%	22%	8%	3%	9%	10%	45%
Nextdoor	9%	1%	7%	19%	8%	<1%	7%	19%	12%
Twitch[1]	5%	1%	4%	10%	4%	<1%	3%	8%	14%

*Source: Ofcom Children's Passive Online Measurement Study, age: 8-14 internet users, fieldwork October 2025 – March 2026, each panellist completed 28 consecutive days of study. Base 701. *Ipsos, Ipsos iris online measurement service, November 2025, internet users aged 15-17, UK. 8-14-year-old data note: Average time spent per day calculated using total time spent over 28 days divided by 28 days. All visits of >1 second are included in the data but this does not imply that a visitor is actively using a service – accidental visits, visits that can't get beyond a log-in page, visits that are blocked by age assurance and visits to sites that are used to authenticate access to another site are all included in the visitor numbers.*
[1]Twitch is largely accessed by a computer/laptop, only 50 computers/laptops were measured in this study. Use measured across smartphones, tablets and computers, other devices such as TV sets and games consoles not included. YouTube includes YouTube Kids.

Heavy Snapchat users spent over four hours a day on the service

Comparing the time spent by heavy users of social media (top 25% by total time spent) with light users (bottom 25%) highlights the huge variation in children's use. Among Snapchat users, children in the top quartile spent, on average, 4 hours 12 minutes per day on the service, compared with 1 minute per day among bottom-quartile users. A similar pattern was observed for YouTube, where top-quartile users spent an average of 2 hours 38 minutes per day, compared with 1 minute per day among children in the lowest-use quartile. Large disparities were also observed for Facebook (including Messenger): top-quartile users spent around 30 minutes per day on the platform, while bottom-quartile users had less than a minute per day. Similar patterns appeared for TikTok and Instagram. Top-quartile TikTok users averaged 1 hour and 31 minutes per day, compared with less than a minute among the bottom quartile, while Instagram usage was 47 minutes per day for the top quartile again versus less than a minute for the bottom quartile.

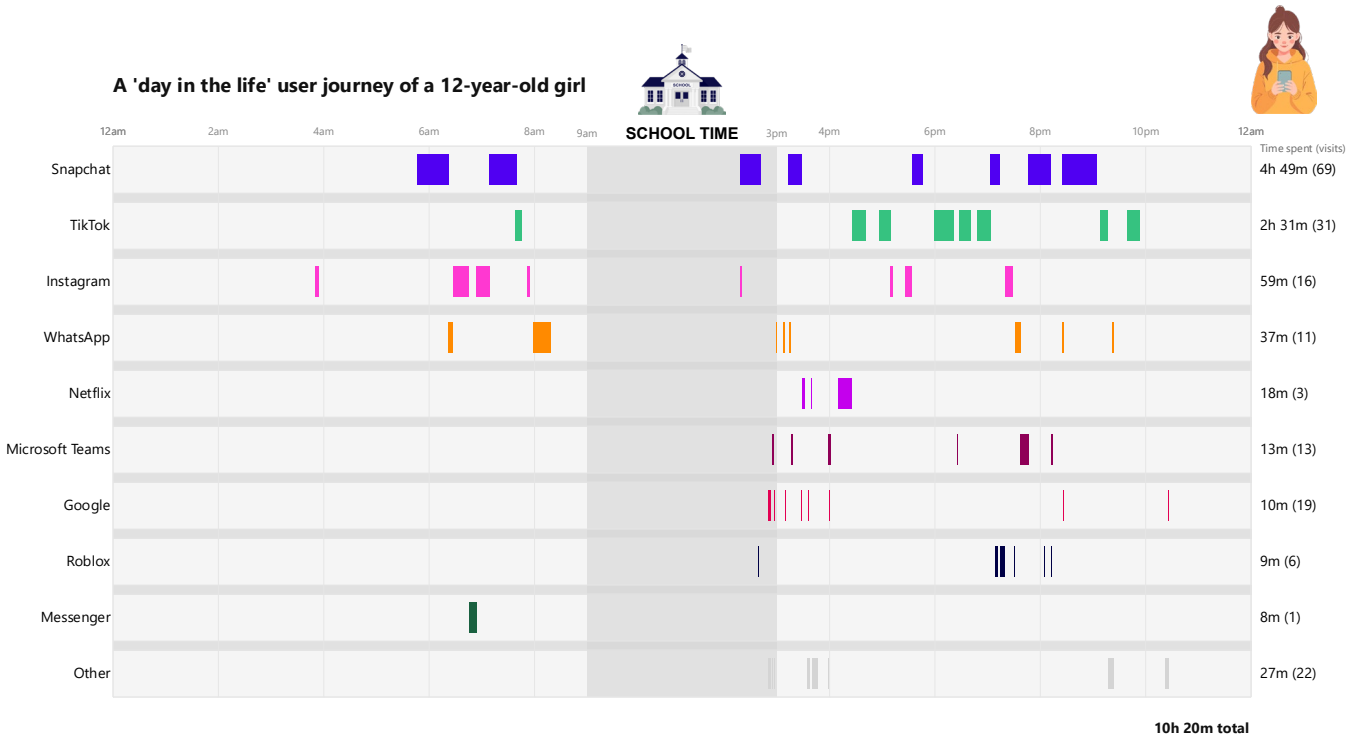
Figure 11: Average time spent per day across a month to the top ten social media and video-sharing services by proportion of online 8-14-year-olds that visited in a month

	Average time spent by visitors to service per day (hours:minutes)				Average time spent per day by lower quartile of visitors (hours:mins)	Average time spent per day upper quartile of visitors (hours:mins)	Average time spent by visitors to service per day (hours:minutes)
Age:	8-14s	8-9s	10-12s	13-14s	8-14s	8-14s	15-17s*
YouTube	00:52	01:15	00:49	00:37	00:01	02:38	01:29
Facebook (incl. Messenger)	00:08	00:10	00:10	00:04	<00:01	00:30	00:13
TikTok	00:25	00:14	00:23	00:34	<00:01	01:31	00:58
Instagram	00:13	00:03	00:08	00:21	<00:01	00:47	00:42
Snapchat	01:27	00:42	01:19	01:49	00:01	04:12	00:45
Reddit	<00:01	<00:01	<00:01	<00:01	<00:01	00:01	00:04
Pinterest	00:04	00:01	00:05	00:05	<00:01	00:15	00:02
X	00:07	<00:01	00:03	00:12	<00:01	00:27	00:07
Nextdoor	<00:01	<00:01	<00:01	<00:01	<00:01	00:01	<00:01
Twitch[1]	00:01	<00:01	<00:01	00:01	<00:01	00:03	00:04

*Source: Ofcom Children's Passive Online Measurement Study, age: 8-14 internet users, fieldwork October 2025 – March 2026, each panellist completed 28 consecutive days of study. *Ipsos, Ipsos iris online measurement service, November 2025, internet users aged 15-17, UK. 8-14-year-old data note: Average time spent per day calculated using total time spent over 28 days divided by 28 days. All visits of >1 second are included in the data but this does not imply that a visitor is actively using a service – accidental visits, visits that can't get beyond a log-in page, visits that are blocked by age assurance and visits to sites that are used to authenticate access to another site are all included in the visitor numbers. Average time spent by visitors to service is only based on those who visited the service. [1]Twitch is largely accessed by a computer/laptop, only 50 computers/laptops were measured in this study. 15-17-year-old note: Average time spent is time spent per day calculated dividing average time spent per visitor in November 2025 by 30 days. Both sources: Where <00:01 in table this equates to less than 30 seconds. Use measured across smartphones, tablets and computers, other devices such as TV sets, games consoles and smart speakers not included.*

Figure 11 is a visual representation of a 12-year-old child's smartphone use over 24 hours on Tuesday 14 October 2025. This panellist was in the top quartile (top 25%) of children, by total time spent on social media and messaging services. On this day, the child visited Snapchat more than 60 times, spending almost 5 hours in total across multiple sessions. TikTok was visited over 25 times, with a total time spent of about 2 hours 30 minutes, while Instagram was accessed over 15 times, accounting for about an hour of use. Messaging services were also used frequently: WhatsApp was visited ten times (37 minutes in total) and Facebook (including Messenger) was accessed multiple times, contributing around 10 minutes of the day's total internet use. In addition, the child made several visits to Netflix, Roblox, Spotify, and Google Search, each contributing a small amount of time throughout the day.

Figure 12: A 'day in the life' user journey: One panellist's smartphone use over 24 hours, a girl aged 12 on Tuesday 14 October 2025



Note: Netflix use while in picture-in-picture mode is not measured.

Ninety-seven per cent of 8-12s visited at least one of the top five social media and video sharing services in a month, despite the minimum age requirement of 13+

Although most social media and video-sharing services have a minimum age requirement of 13+, our study found that 97% of online 8-12-year-olds visited at least one of the following: YouTube (excluding YouTube Kids), Facebook (incl. Messenger), TikTok, Instagram and Snapchat.

YouTube (excluding Kids) is the most widely visited social media or video-sharing service among online 8-12-year-olds, visited by 90%, spending an average of 55 minutes per day on it.[14] A much

[14] Users must be at least 13 years old to use YouTube. Under 13s may use YouTube through a supervised account (with parental consent). This study is unable to establish the extent to which under 13s were accessing YouTube via their own accounts or a supervised account.

smaller proportion (14%) of 8-12s visited YouTube Kids, YouTube's service specifically for children aged 12 and under, spending on average 30 minutes per day on the service.

Our research does not include viewing on a television set. Data from Barb[15] has found that children aged 8-17 spent a daily average of 29 minutes watching YouTube on a TV set in 2025. Viewing time was highest among the youngest groups and declined steadily with age: on average 8-9-year-olds watched for 39 minutes, 10-12-year-olds for 35 minutes, 13-14-year-olds for 25 minutes, and 15-17-year-olds for 18 minutes.[16]

While the other social media and video sharing services in the top ten have a minimum age requirement of 13, Nextdoor, a social media service designed to connect residents with neighbours and local businesses, has a minimum age requirement of 18+ in the UK. Our study found that this service was visited by 9% of online 8-14s, the ninth most visited social media and video sharing service.

Figure 13: Proportion of online 8-12-year-old visiting in a month to social media and video-sharing services with a minimum age requirement of 13

Service	Proportion of online 8-12-year-old visiting in a month	Average time spent per visitor per day (hours:mins)	Average time spent per day by lower quartile of visitors (hours:mins)	Average time spent per day by upper quartile of visitors (hours:mins)	Proportion of 8-12-year-olds visiting via app in a month
	(Website or app)				(App only)
YouTube (excl. Kids)	90%	00:55	00:01	02:40	79%
Facebook (incl. Messenger)	76%	00:10	<00:01	00:37	58%
TikTok	59%	00:20	<00:01	01:13	46%
Instagram	40%	00:07	<00:01	00:25	30%
Snapchat	35%	01:10	00:01	03:24	34%
Reddit	20%	<00:01	<00:01	00:01	2%
Pinterest	21%	00:04	<00:01	00:14	17%
X	12%	00:03	<00:01	00:09	6%

Note: All visits of >1 second are included in the data but this does not imply that a visitor is actively using a service – accidental visits, visits that can't get beyond a log-in page, visits that are blocked by age assurance and visits to sites that are used to authenticate access to another site are all included in the visitor numbers. Average time spent per day calculated using total time spent over 28 days divided by 28 days. Where <00:01 in table this equates to less than 30 seconds.

[15] Barb Audiences Ltd is the UK's official organisation for measuring television and video viewing audiences across broadcast and on-demand platforms.

[16] Barb as-viewed, YouTube viewing via TV set connected to home wi-fi network only.

Eight per cent of 8-14-year-olds' time on YouTube is between 11pm and 5am

Our study found that almost half (49%) of online 8-14-year-olds visited YouTube at least once across the month during the late-night period (23:00-04:59), and on average they visited the service 21 times during the month, during this period. Among YouTube visitors (93% of all online 8-14s), on average 4 minutes (8%) of their total daily YouTube time (52 minutes) was spent during the late-night period.

Thirty-four per cent of online 8-14-year-olds visited Snapchat at least once in the month during the late-night period (23:00-04:59); on average, they visited the service 54 times during the month in this period. Among Snapchat visitors (44% of all online 8-14s), on average 6 minutes (7%) of their total daily Snapchat time (1 hour 27 minutes) was spent during this late-night period.

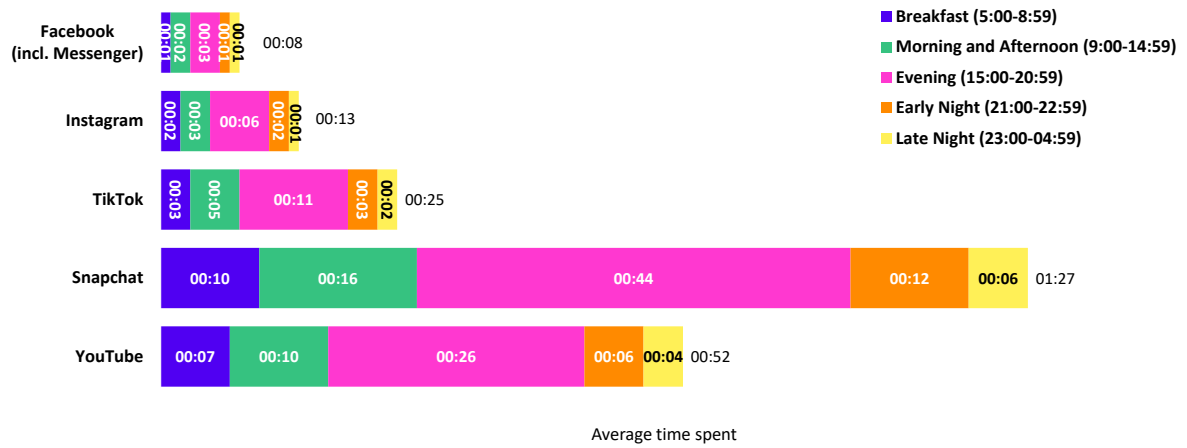
The most frequent time for 8-14-year-olds to visit the top five social media services was in the evening (15:00-20:59).

Figure 14: Proportion of online 8-14-year-old visitors and number of visits in a month, by daypart

Service	Online 8-14-year-olds		Average number of visits across a month for children visiting each service by daypart,	
	Proportion making early-night visits (21:00-22:59)	Proportion making late-night visits (23:00-04:59)	Early night (21:00-22:59)	Late night (23:00-04:59)
Facebook (incl. Messenger)	52%	36%	15	12
Instagram	27%	21%	31	18
Snapchat	37%	34%	104	54
TikTok	41%	31%	41	29
YouTube	72%	49%	33	21

Note: Proportion making visits is based on panellist visiting the service at least once during the daypart in a month. Average number of visits is only among those who visited the service during the specified daypart at least once in the month. Use measured across smartphones, tablets and computers, other devices such as TV sets, games consoles and smart speakers not included.

Figure 15: Average time spent per day by 8-14-year-old visitors to the top five most widely visited social media and video sharing services, by daypart

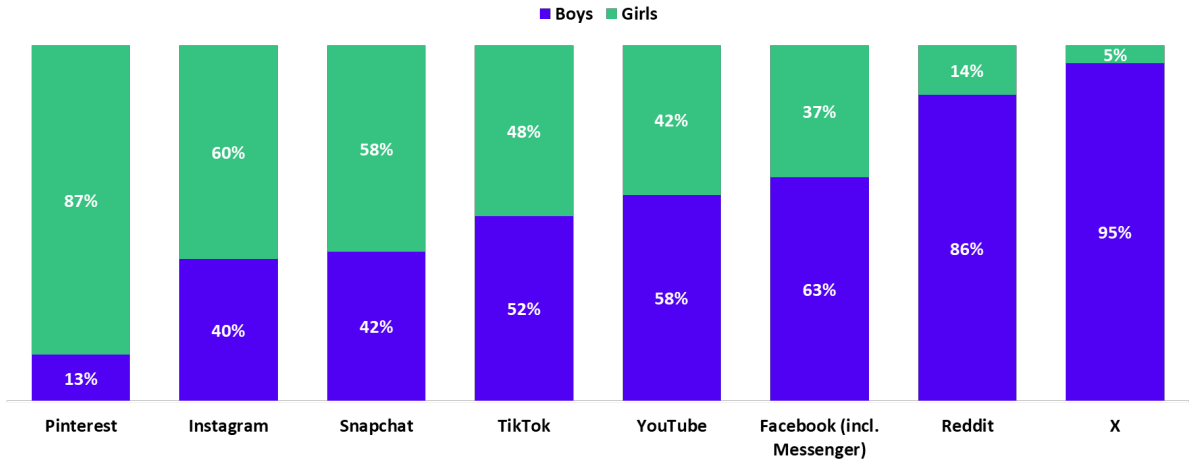


Note: Average time spent per day calculated using total time spent per visitor over 28 days divided by 28 days. The average is calculated based only on visitors who accessed the specified service during the month; not all service visitors necessarily used the service within the selected daypart. Use measured across smartphones, tablets and computers, other devices such as TV sets, games consoles and smart speakers not included. Due to rounding totals may be +/-1 minute.

Girls aged 8–14 spend much more time than boys on Pinterest and Instagram; boys spend much more time on X and Reddit

While 19% of 8-14-year-old boys in our study visited X, and on average spent 10 minutes per day on the service, just 11% of 8-14-year-old girls visited it, spending an average of one minute per day. Visits to Pinterest among our panellists followed the opposite pattern, with 38% of 8-14 girls spending 6 minutes per day on the service, compared to 16% of the 8–14-year-old boys in our study spending an average of 2 minutes per day.

Figure 16: Share of total time spent by children aged 8-14 in a month on selected social media and video-sharing services, by gender



Note: Use measured across smartphones, tablets and computers, other devices such as TV sets, games consoles and smart speakers not included.

Messaging and calls

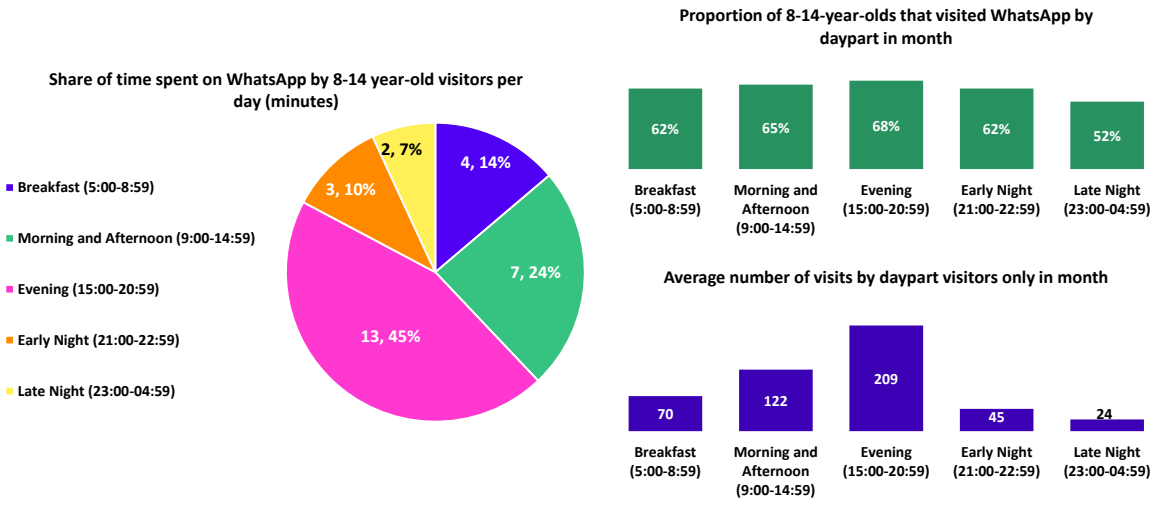
WhatsApp 8-14-year-old visitors spent an average of 29 minutes a day on the service

Eighty-eight per cent of online 8-14-year-olds visited a messaging and call service in a month; 69% visited WhatsApp. As age increases, the proportion of panellists that visited WhatsApp increases: 8-9s (40%), 10-12s (78%) and 13-14s (85%). At the time of the study WhatsApp's[17] minimum age requirement was 13, although 63% of 8-12s visited the service in a month.

Fifty-seven per cent of 8-14-year-olds visited WhatsApp per day: 28% of 8-9s, 65% of 10-12s, and 72% of 13-14s. On average 8-14-year-old WhatsApp visitors visited the service 16 times a day and spent 29 minutes on it a day. WhatsApp users aged 13-14 visited the service 13 times per day (8-9s: 17, 10-12s: 17), with girls aged 13-14 visiting on average 13 times and boys aged 13-14 visiting 12 times.

Fifty-two per cent of online 8-14-year-olds visited WhatsApp at least once across the month during the late-night period (23:00-04:59); on average, they visited the service 24 times during the month (average once per day) in this period. Among all WhatsApp visitors (69% of online 8-14s), on average 2 minutes (7%) of their daily WhatsApp time (total: 29 minutes) was spent during the late-night period. The top quartile of WhatsApp visitors, spent on average 1 hour 28 minutes per day on the service (41 hours 6 minutes per month), compared with 2 minutes per day among bottom-quartile users (43 minutes per month).

Figure 17: Online 8-14-year-olds' use of WhatsApp



Note: Proportion is based on visitor going to the service at least once during the daypart in a month. Average number of visits is only among those who visited the service during the specified daypart at least once in the month. Average time spent per day calculated using average total time spent per visitor over 28 days divided by 28 days. The average is calculated based only on visitors who accessed WhatsApp during the month; not all service visitors necessarily used the service within the selected daypart.

Sixteen percent of online 8-14s visited Discord across a month, ranking it fifth in terms of proportion of 8-14s visiting it. However, within the top ten Discord ranked second in terms of number of visits per visitor, with on average 9 times per day among the 8-14-year-old visitors. The top quartile users

[17] As of March 2026, WhatsApp is introducing 'parent-managed' accounts for users under 13, allowing parents to control contact lists and monitor activity.

of Discord (28 children within our panel) spent 29 hours 48 minutes per month (1 hour 4 minutes per day), compared with 2 minutes per month among the bottom quartile.

Telegram was visited by 10% of 8-14s, despite a minimum age requirement of 18.[18] Telegram visitors slightly skews male; 59% of Telegram's 8-14-year-old visitors are boys (41% girls). Most Telegram 8-14-year-old visitors also visited WhatsApp, with 70% of Telegram visitors visiting WhatsApp in the month. Telegram top quartile users spent 4 hours 37 minutes on the service per month compared with just less than a minute among the bottom quartile.

Children also use other services which have messaging functions. For example, 18% of online 8-14s visited Life360, a family locator app that allows users to share their location with family members and friends and includes a group messaging feature. Children under the age of 13 are permitted to use Life360 with their parent's/guardian's consent.[19] Its highest visitation was among online 13-14-year-olds (26%), compared to 15% of online 8-12s.

[18] Telegram, Terms of Service, accessed 8 April 2026
[19] Life360, Life360 Terms of Service, 11 December 2025

Figure 18: Top ten messaging and call services by proportion of online 8-14-year-old visiting in a month

	8-14-year-olds			15-17-year-olds*	
Service	**Proportion visiting in a month**	**Average time spent by visitors to service in a month (hours:minutes)**	**Average number of visits per visitor in a month**	**Proportion visiting in November 2025**	**Average time spent by visitors to service in November 2025 (hours:minutes)**
WhatsApp	69%	13:36	440	91%	05:39
Messages	32%	00:06	4	-	-
Facebook Messenger App	19%	00:40	35	42%	02:14
Google Messages App	23%	00:14	30	21%	00:52
Discord	16%	07:49	261	42%	08:15
Microsoft Teams	11%	00:59	33	36%	01:06
Telegram	10%	01:17	41	8%	00:31
Google Phone	9%	01:31	144	-	-
Zoom	7%	01:03	21	16%	00:38
Google Meet	4%	00:10	5	7%	00:59

*Source: Ofcom Children's Passive Online Measurement study, age: 8-14 internet users, fieldwork October 2025 – March 2026, each panellist completed 28 consecutive days of study. * Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, November 2025, age: 15-17 internet users, UK. Note: Facebook messaging service can be accessed via the main Facebook platform and is not counted here. Microsoft Teams desktop app use not measured. Messaging functionality is also available on multi-service sites such as social media services, which include messaging and call functionalities as part of their overall proposition e.g. Snapchat chat and Instagram direct messages. All visits of >1 second are included in the data but this does not imply that a visitor is actively using a service – accidental visits, visits that can't get beyond a log-in page, visits that are blocked by age assurance and visits to sites that are used to authenticate access to another site are all included in the visitor numbers. This study and Ipsos iris are unable to measure use of messaging services within sites. Ipsos iris does not include Messages and Google Phone as part of its measurement.*

Search

Almost all (96%) 8-14-year-olds visited a search service

Our study found Google search was visited by 94% of online 8-14s. On average, an 8-14-year-old Google search user visited the service 145 times during the month, spending 1 hour 31 minutes in the month on the service (equivalent to about 5 visits and 3 minutes per day).

The top 25% of online 8-14-year-old Google Search visitors spent significantly more time on the service than those in the bottom quartile. Top-quartile visitors on average spent 4 hours 16 minutes across a month (around 9 minutes per day), compared with just 2 minutes across a month among the bottom-quartile visitors. While time spent is lower overall on other search services, a similar pattern is evident. For example, top-quartile Bing users spent around 29 minutes per month compared with less than a minute among bottom-quartile users.

Figure 19: Top five search services by proportion of online 8-14-year-olds that visited the services

Search service	Proportion of online 8-14-year-olds visiting service in a month	Average number of visits by 8-14 visitors to service in a month	Average time spent by 8-14 visitors of service in a month (hours:minutes)	Proportion of online 15-17-year-old visiting in November 2025*
Google search	94%	145	01:31	98%
Bing	28%	13	00:06	35%
Yandex	13%	17	00:06	3%
Yahoo	6%	7	00:02	4%
DuckDuckGo	2%	77	00:14	3%

Source: Ofcom Children's Passive Online Measurement Study, age: 8-14 internet users, fieldwork October 2025 – March 2026, each panellist completed 28 consecutive days of study. Ipsos, Ipsos iris online measurement service, November 2025, internet users aged 15-17, UK. Note: All visits of >1 second are included in the data but this does not imply that a visitor is actively using a service – accidental visits, visits that can't get beyond a log-in page, visits that are blocked by age assurance and visits to sites that are used to authenticate access to another site are all included in the visitor numbers.*

Artificial intelligence[20]

Over half of 8-14s visited an AI service in a month

Our study found 55% of online 8-14-year-olds visited a standalone artificial intelligence (AI) service in a month: 40% of 8-9s, 54% of 10-12s and 72% of 13-14s. ChatGPT[21] was the most widely visited (33%) AI service among 8-14s – visited by 48% of 13-14s, 35% of 10-12s and 16% of 8-9s in a month. Data from Ipsos iris found that ChatGPT was visited by 60% of online 15-17s[22] and 31% of online adults in November 2025.[23]

On average, an 8-14-year-old ChatGPT user in our study visited the service 45 times during the

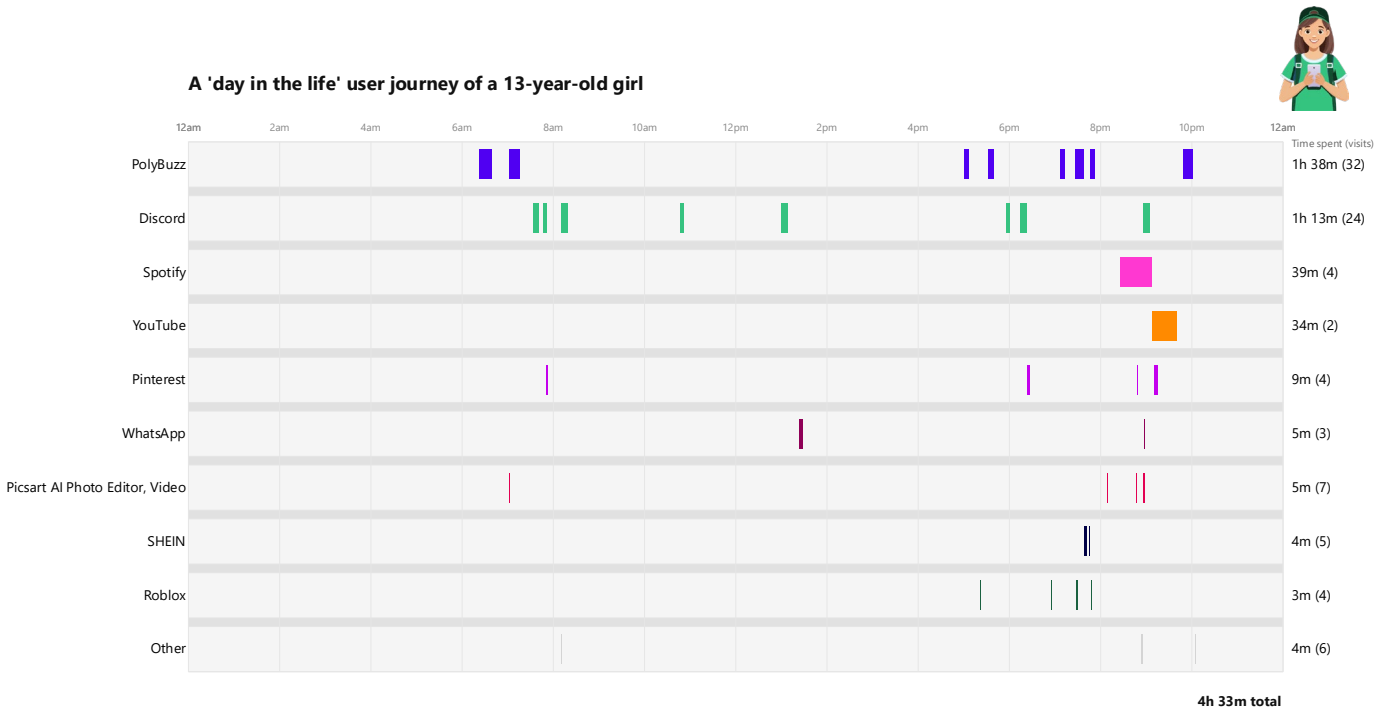
[20] AI functionalities and summaries built into existing services e.g. Snapchat My AI, Meta AI or Google Search Gemini summaries cannot be reported on via this study.
[21] Website or app only. Does not include ChatGPT available as a plugin on other services.
[22] Ipsos, Ipsos iris online measurement service, November 2025, internet users aged 15-17, UK.
[23] Ipsos, Ipsos iris online measurement service, November 2025, internet users aged 18+, UK.

month, with an average single-visit length of two minutes, spending on average 1 hour 3 minutes on the service in a month. ChatGPT users in the top quartile spent 3 hours 54 minutes per month (around 8 minutes per day), compared with less than a minute per month among bottom-quartile users. After ChatGPT there is a long tail of AI services, each visited by 7% or less of online 8-14-year-olds.

Some services operate as AI character bot services, where users can engage in text-based and audio interaction with virtual characters. PolyBuzz and Character AI are examples of such services both ranking within the top ten AI services among the 8-14s. Character AI ranked as the 7th highest-visited AI service, visited by 2% of the online 8-14-year-olds in our study. On average, 8-14-year-old visitors to Character AI visited the service on 16 days over a month, averaging 6 minutes time spent on the service on the days visited.

PolyBuzz (ranked 5th) was visited by 2% of our panel of online 8-14-year-olds in a month. Figure 20 is a visual representation of a 13-year-old girl's iPhone use on Monday 27 October 2025. This panellist uses PolyBuzz, in total visiting the service 32 times during the day, first in the morning and then again during the evening and night-time. In total she spent 1 hour 38 minutes on the service on this day, 11 hours and 46 minutes in total over the course of the month, visiting the service most days (24 out of 28 days recorded).

Figure 20: One panellist's smartphone use over 24 hours, a girl aged 13 on Monday 27 October 2025



Note: Audio play when Spotify app is closed is not measured, only foreground app use time is measured.

Figure 21: Top ten AI services by proportion of online 8-14-year-olds visiting in a month

Rank	AI service	Proportion visiting in a month				Average time spent by visitors to service in the month (hrs:mins)	Proportion visiting in November 2025*	Average time spent by visitors to service in November 2025 (hrs:mins)*
		8-14s	8-9s	10-12s	13-14s	8-14s	15-17s	15-17s
1	ChatGPT	33%	16%	35%	48%	01:03	60%	02:18
2	Microsoft Copilot	6%	4%	6%	9%	00:14	6%	00:43
3	AI Gallery	5%	7%	6%	2%	00:33	-	-
4	Google Gemini	5%	3%	5%	7%	00:03	11%	00:13
5	PolyBuzz	2%	1%	2%	4%	02:10	1%	07:19
6	Grok	2%	2%	3%	1%	00:22	2%	00:10
7	Character AI	2%	<1%	2%	3%	02:58	2%	02:56
8	Deepseek	1%	1%	2%	2%	01:57	4%	00:58
9	Perplexity	1%	1%	2%	1%	00:44	3%	00:26
10	DeepAI	1%	1%	<1%	2%	00:01	<1%	00:01

*Source: Ofcom Children's Passive Online Measurement Study, age: 8-14 internet users, fieldwork October 2025 – March 2026, each panellist completed 28 consecutive days of study. *Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, November 2025, age: 15-17 internet users, UK. AI functionalities and summaries built into existing services e.g. Snapchat My AI, Meta AI, Grok on X or Google Search Gemini summaries, cannot be reported on via this study. <1% equates to proportion visiting below 0.5%, dashes mean that no child in our study visited the service on the tracked devices or no reportable data within Ipsos iris. All visits of >1 second are included in the data but this does not imply that a visitor is actively using a service – accidental visits, visits that can't get beyond a log-in page, visits that are blocked by age assurance and visits to sites that are used to authenticate access to another site are all included in the visitor numbers.*

Email

Fifty-eight per cent of 8-14-year-olds visited an email service

Our study found Google's Gmail was the most widely visited email service (43%) among online 8-14-year-olds in a month. Gmail visitors spent on average 1 hour 14 minutes in a month on the service, compared with 35 minutes for the 17% of 8-14-year-olds that visited Microsoft Outlook.

Figure 22: Top five email services by proportion of online 8-14-year-old visiting in a month

Service	Proportion of online 8-14-year-olds visiting in a month	Total number of visits per 8-14-year-old visitor in a month	Proportion of online 15-17-year-old visiting in November 2025*
Gmail	43%	62	78%
Outlook	17%	29	65%
Spark Mail	4%	11	<1%
Yahoo Mail	2%	67	8%
Apple Mail	1%	31	1%

*Source: Ofcom Children's Passive Online Measurement Study, age: 8-14 internet users, fieldwork October 2025 – March 2026, each panellist completed 28 consecutive days of study. *Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, November 2025, age: 15-17 internet users, UK. All visits of >1 second are included in the data but this does not imply that a visitor is actively using a service – accidental visits, visits that can't get beyond a log-in page, visits that are blocked by age assurance and visits to sites that are used to authenticate access to another site are all included in the visitor numbers.*

Games

The following section focusses largely on games app visits across smartphone and tablet. We recognise this is a partial picture of children's online gaming as our study does not include measurement of games consoles (398 parents/legal guardians reported that the child used a games console), which is a key online activity for some children. Our Children's and Parents' Media Use and Attitudes Report includes a broad overview of children's self-reported online use, including on games consoles.

Eight-to-nine-year-old Roblox players spent 40 minutes per day on the app across smartphone and tablet

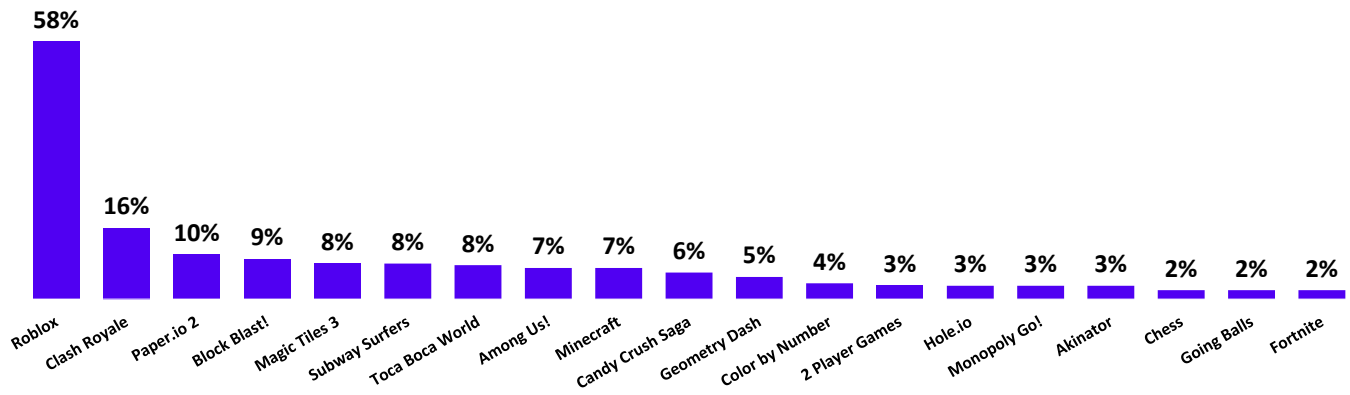
Among gaming services, Roblox had the highest proportion visiting for all three child age groups (8-9s: 58%, 10-12s: 60% and 13-14s: 57%). Roblox players aged 8-14 spent on average 26 minutes on the game via the app per day. Of these, 8-9s spent the most time - 40 minutes per day, followed by 10-12s at 27 minutes and 13-14s at 12 minutes. Online 8-14-year-old app gamers in the top quartile, spent on average 1 hour and 19 minutes per day on the Roblox app (36 hours 48 minutes per month), compared with 1 minute per day among bottom-quartile users (22 minutes per month). Boys spent more time than girls on the app (an average of 34 minutes vs 19 minutes a day).

After Roblox there is a 'long tail' of games apps (see Figure 23). Clash Royale was the second most widely visited games app, with 16% of online 8-14-year-olds visiting the service. It was most popular among the 13-14s (25%) followed by the 10-12s (17%) and 8-9s (5%). Eight to fourteen-year-old boys were more likely than girls to visit the app (28% vs. 3%). On average, 8-14-year-old Clash Royale visitors spent 12 minutes on the game per day.

As with Roblox, there was big variation in the time spent by heavy and light users of gaming services. On Clash Royale, top-quartile players spent an average of 15 hours 52 minutes per month (34 minutes per day), compared with 8 minutes per month among bottom-quartile users; top-quartile Minecraft players spent 14 hours 36 minutes per month (31 minutes per day) compared with 1 minute a month among lower-quartile users.

The composition of the top ten games apps varied by age group. Color by Number and Hole.io were ranked within the top ten gaming apps for the 8-9-year-old panellists, visited by 7% (9th) and 6% (10th) of 8-9s respectively. Geometry Dash was ranked 10th for 13-14-year-olds, visited by 5% of this age group.

Figure 23: Top twenty gaming apps by proportion of online 8-14-year-old visiting in a month



Note: All visits of >1 second are included in the data but this does not imply that a visitor is actively using a service – accidental visits, visits that can't get beyond a log-in page, visits that are blocked by age assurance and visits to sites that are used to authenticate access to another site are all included in the visitor numbers. Does not include games console use.

A small proportion of children also visited the websites or apps associated with games consoles. Thirteen per cent of online 8-14-year-olds visited the Xbox website or app, 9% visited the PlayStation website or app, 4% visited the Nintendo website or app and 5% visited the Steam website or app, or the Epic Games website or app, across smartphone, tablet or computer.

Figure 24: Top ten gaming apps by proportion of online 8-14-year-old visiting in a month

Rank	Games app	Proportion visiting in a month				Average time spent by visitors to service in a month (hrs:mins)	Proportion visiting in November 2025*	Average time spent by visitors to service in November 2025 (hrs:mins)*
		8-14s	8-9s	10-12s	13-14s	8-14s	15-17s	15-17s
1	Roblox	58%	58%	60%	57%	12:18	15%	07:14
2	Clash Royale	16%	5%	17%	25%	05:33	8%	04:24
3	Paper.io 2	10%	11%	10%	8%	00:36	1%	00:07
4	Block Blast!	9%	8%	10%	9%	00:57	2%	01:24
5	Subway Surfers	8%	10%	8%	7%	00:42	2%	00:31
6	Magic Tile 3	8%	11%	7%	5%	00:24	1%	00:24
7	Toca Boca World	8%	11%	7%	5%	02:12	1%	00:51
8	Among Us!	7%	4%	8%	9%	00:37	2%	00:19
9	Minecraft	7%	8%	7%	5%	04:46	2%	02:00
10	Candy Crush Saga	6%	8%	6%	4%	05:05	1%	04:42

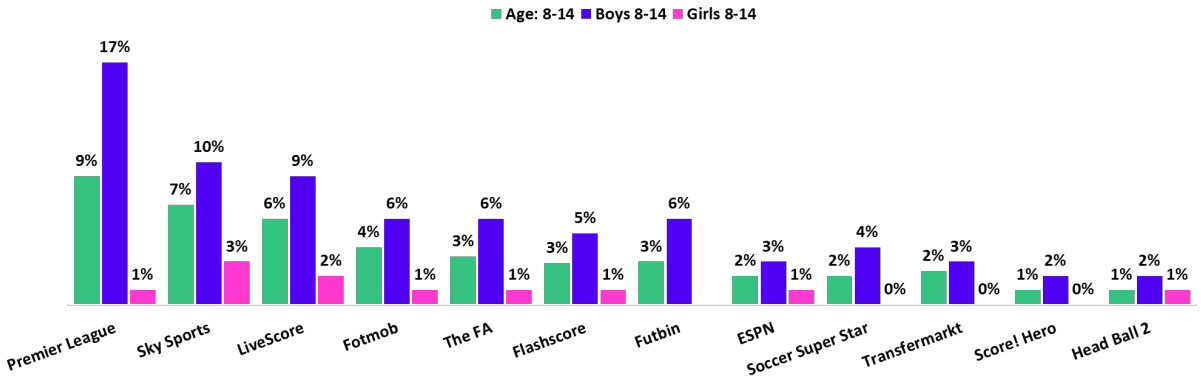
*Source: Ofcom Children's Passive Online Measurement Study, age: 8-14 internet users, fieldwork October 2025 – March 2026, each panellist completed 28 consecutive days of study. * Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, November 2025, age: 15-17 internet users, UK. Note: All visits of >1 second are included in the data but this does not imply that a visitor is actively using a service – accidental visits, visits that can't get beyond a log-in page, visits that are blocked by age assurance and visits to sites that are used to authenticate access to another site are all included in the visitor numbers. Does not include games console use.*

Football

Visitors to online services related to football, such as games or football news, skewed towards boys

Premier League was the football-related service with the highest proportion of the online 8-14-year-olds in our study visiting in a month (9%), with most visitors being boys: 17% compared to 1% of girls. The 8-14-year-old boys visited Premier League on average on six days a month, for an average of 2 minutes on these days.

Figure 25: Top football-related services, by proportion of online 8-14-year-olds visiting in a month and by gender



Note: Visitors may not necessarily have visited Sky Sports or ESPN for Football related reasons as these cover news on a variety of sports. All visits of >1 second are included in the data but this does not imply that a visitor is actively using a service – accidental visits, visits that can't get beyond a log-in page, visits that are blocked by age assurance and visits to sites that are used to authenticate access to another site are all included in the visitor numbers.

Education[24]

Seventy-two percent of 8-14-year-olds visited an education-related service in a month

Sparx, an online education platform for UK secondary students (ages 11-16) focusing on maths, science and reading, and was found in our study to be the highest ranked education service by the proportion of our panellists visiting: 21% of online 8-14s visited the service in a month. Sparx' maths, science and reader services were visited by 16%, 3% and 3% of 8-14s respectively. Sparx was the highest-ranked education service by proportion visiting for the 10-12s (23%) and 13-14s (36%) in our panel. The 8-14-year-old visitors of Sparx spent on average 50 minutes on the service in a month, while visitors of Duolingo (15%) spent on average 1 hour 47 minutes.

TT Rockstars, a service aimed to help children with their multiplication and division learning, was the highest-ranking education service by proportion visiting among online 8-9-year-olds, visited by 19% of them, who spent on average 39 minutes on the service in a month.

[24] Devices that are available at home were measured in the study, but websites and apps visited on school devices are not captured. We might therefore want to consider the proportion figures of some education services as potentially lower-bound estimates.

Figure 26: Top ten education services by proportion of online 8-14-year-old visiting in a month, by age 8-14s

Rank by proportion of 8-14s visiting	Service	Proportion visiting in a month			
		8-14s	8-9s	10-12s	13-14s
1	Sparx	21%	1%	23%	36%
2	Duolingo	15%	10%	16%	19%
3	Wikimedia*	13%	4%	17%	18%
4	Wikipedia*	12%	6%	12%	18%
5	Google Classroom	10%	4%	11%	15%
6	Gauth	9%	-	7%	19%
7	ClassCharts	8%	-	10%	14%
8	TT Rockstars	7%	19%	4%	2%
9	Seneca Learning	6%	1%	6%	11%
10	Blooket	5%	1%	7%	6%

*Note: - represents no data from the study. *Wikimedia Foundation Inc., which includes Wikipedia and Wikimedia, was visited by 19% of UK online 8-14-year-olds. All visits of >1 second are included in the data but this does not imply that a visitor is actively using a service – accidental visits, visits that can't get beyond a log-in page, visits that are blocked by age assurance and visits to sites that are used to authenticate access to another site are all included in the visitor numbers.*

Retail

Eighty-four per cent of 8-14-year-olds visited a retail service in a month

Amazon was the highest-ranked (48%) retail service by proportion of online 8-14-year-old visiting in a month. Twenty-six per cent of online 8-14s visited Shein in the month, spending on average 4 minutes on the service per day, the highest average time spent on a retail service among the top ten services.

Figure 30: Top ten retail services by proportion of online 8-14-year-old visiting in a month

Service	Proportion visiting in a month			Average number of visits by visitors to service in a month	Total number of visits per 8-14-year-old visitor in a month
	8-14s	8-9s	10-12s	13-14s	8-14s
Amazon	48%	30%	52%	62%	39
Temu	45%	37%	46%	50%	12
Apple	43%	44%	37%	51%	8
Shein	26%	11%	27%	40%	71
eBay	19%	6%	21%	27%	21
Vinted	15%	2%	11%	32%	50
Argos	10%	8%	11%	10%	7
AliExpress	9%	5%	8%	14%	13
MyShopify	9%	4%	8%	14%	2
Boots	8%	6%	9%	9%	11

Annex

The following Figures provide the proportion visiting by age group for UK online population aged 8+. The lists include the most widely visited services among 8-14-year-olds in the selected sectors. The last column in the tables show the proportion of visitors in a month who were children out of all the visitors aged 8+.

Figure 31: Social media and video-sharing services, by proportion of online visitors ages 8+ in a month

	Proportion of UK internet users visiting in a month: by age						
Service	**8-12s**	**13-14s**	**15-17s**	**8-17s**	**Age 18+**	**Age 8+**	**Proportion of aged 8+ visitors aged 8-17**
YouTube	91%	94%	97%	93%	94%	81%	14%
Facebook (incl. Messenger)	77%	86%	93%	83%	94%	81%	13%
TikTok	59%	79%	79%	69%	57%	49%	17%
Instagram	41%	68%	91%	61%	81%	69%	11%
Snapchat	35%	66%	73%	53%	23%	19%	28%
Reddit	20%	43%	71%	40%	59%	51%	10%
Pinterest	22%	39%	41%	31%	25%	21%	17%
X	12%	22%	46%	24%	39%	34%	9%
Nextdoor	4%	19%	12%	9%	19%	16%	8%
Twitch	3%	10%	14%	8%	5%	4%	20%

Figure 32: Online messaging and call services, by proportion of online visitors ages 8+ in a month

	Proportion of UK internet users visiting in a month: by age						
Service	**8-12s**	**13-14s**	**15-17s**	**8-17s**	**Age 18+**	**Age 8+**	**Proportion of aged 8+ visitors aged 8-17**
WhatsApp	63%	83%	91%	76%	91%	88%	12%
Facebook Messenger app*	14%	32%	42%	26%	56%	52%	7%
Google Messages	24%	20%	21%	22%	33%	32%	10%
Microsoft Teams*	8%	18%	33%	18%	19%	19%	13%
Discord	13%	23%	42%	24%	16%	17%	20%
Zoom	7%	5%	16%	9%	15%	14%	9%
Telegram	10%	8%	8%	9%	7%	8%	17%
Google Meet	4%	6%	4%	4%	5%	5%	13%

Source: Ofcom Children's Passive Online Measurement study, age: 8-14 internet users, fieldwork October 2025 – March 2026, each panellist completed 28 consecutive days of study. Ipsos, Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, November 2025, age: 15-17 internet users, UK. Note that the fieldwork period of the data for Ipsos iris and Ofcom's Children's Passive Online Measurement study do not match. The totals should be taken as indicative. Note: Messages,

*Google Phone are not reported in Ipsos iris. *Facebook messaging service can be accessed via the main Facebook platform and is not counted here. *Microsoft Teams desktop app use not measured. All visits of >1 second are included in the data but this does not imply that a visitor is actively using a service – accidental visits, visits that can't get beyond a log-in page, visits that are blocked by age assurance and visits to sites that are used to authenticate access to another site are all included in the visitor numbers.*

Methodology

Objectives

Study summary

The requirements of the study were to measure, across a robust UK representative sample of online children aged 8-14, their use of websites and apps across smartphones, tablets and computers. The measurement was to include the websites and apps that were visited on the device(s) used by the child panellist and how long was spent on the services visited. To collect this data the recruited children had passive monitoring software installed on the devices they used to go online, with the data being reported back anonymously. The children's internet use was measured over a period of 28 consecutive days for each panellist, with fieldwork conducted between 9 October 2025 and 7 March 2026, which means that all results reflect usage patterns over that period, but are not necessarily representative of their use over a whole year.

This study used a single-source sample in which each panellist had one or more devices tracked.[25] This method results in more accurate deduplicated figures for the proportion of online visitors for the devices tracked.

The sample was drawn using UK census data to ensure we obtained a nationally representative sample of 8-14-year-old children. Weighting for age, gender and household socio-economic group was applied using the Office of National Statistics (ONS) 2024 Mid-Year Estimates and the NRS (National Readership Survey) to align the final sample of 701 children with the known UK population of 8-14-year-olds. Population figures were further adjusted using responses to question QP1 from Ofcom's Children and Parents' Media Literacy Tracker, which reports the proportion of children who go online.

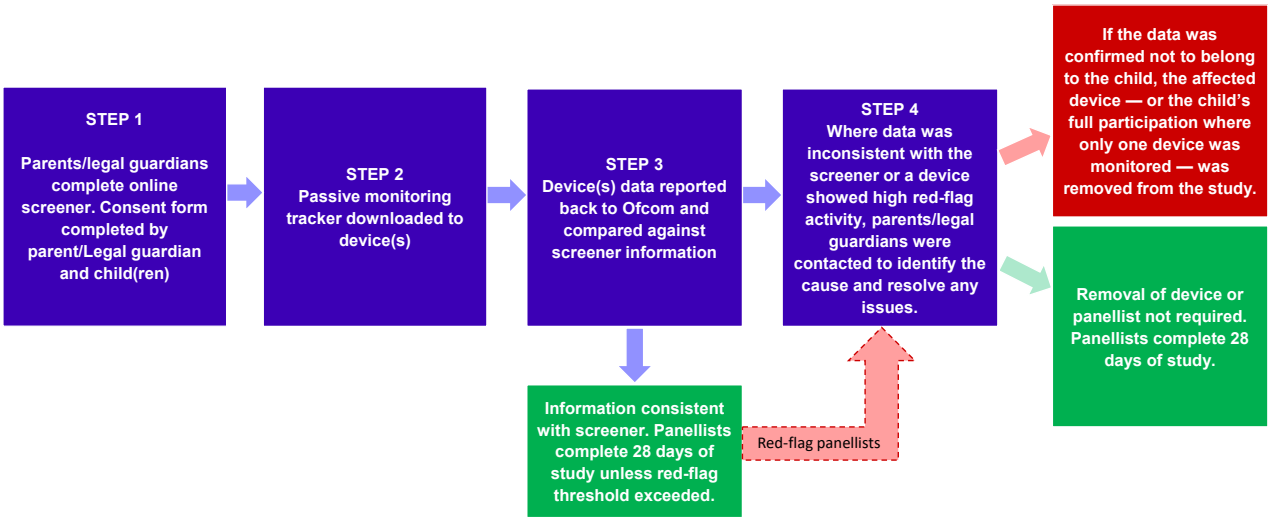
Ofcom commissioned RealityMine and Yonder Consulting to conduct the research, with RealityMine providing the passive monitoring technology and Yonder Consulting conducting the recruitment.

Fieldwork

Yonder undertook a qualitative recruitment exercise to ensure demographic requirements were met. Yonder recruited a total of 831 children aged 8-14 living in the UK via their parents/legal guardians, with a total of 701 complying with the study requirements.

The overall process of recruiting, verifying and monitoring the panellists is set out in the diagram below.

[25] Rather than multiple panels based on each device type (smartphone, tablet and computer) with the panels subsequently fused together to provide the final sample results. The advantages of a more modelled approach would be to address the problem of missing devices, which is very difficult to address in a single source panel. It would not be cost-effective to measure all devices for a significantly-sized single-source panel.



Step 1 – Completion of screener and consent forms

The parents/legal guardians completed an initial screener providing details on the devices used by the child panellist to go online and the frequency of use as well as demographic information about the panellist. Informed consent was provided by both the parent/legal guardian and the child panellist, and relevant data protection and safeguarding procedures were implemented.

There was a change in the recruitment approach for this second phase. While the sample source, recruiter and quotas remained similar, in phase 1, the recruitment involved an initial simple qualification screener, this was followed by the recruiter contacting the parent or legal guardian to go through the more detailed screening process which captured the devices used by the child panellist to go online and the frequency of use as well as demographic information about the panellist. All this information was manually captured by the recruiter via telephone. In phase 2, parents or guardians were recruited by the same recruiter and using the same sample source but rather than the recruiter calling the parent or legal guardian via telephone and manually capturing the screener information the recruiter sent out an email link with the questionnaire which contained drop-down lists for most of the questions. This revised approach ensured more consistency in the information received that was used for both quotas and quality checks. While we are unable to quantify the impact of this change, it is likely that this may have some impact on the higher figures observed for some services in this report compared to what was published in our first report, as panellists recruited online could be more digitally engaged.

Siblings were allowed to be recruited within the same household provided they were the target age and used one or more devices that were not shared with their sibling panellist.

Step 2 – Passive Monitoring Tracker installed

The RealityMine monitoring app/VPN was downloaded to at least one device that was used by the child at least a few times a month. Devices included were smartphones, computers/laptops and tablets, across operating systems iOS, Android and Windows. The passive tracker cannot measure Amazon Fire Tablet and Chromebook use, so these are not included as part of the study. While games consoles can be used to go online, these devices were not included in the passive measurement, so any online activity via consoles is outside the scope of this study. For a breakdown of total number of devices by type see Device Sample.

Steps 3 and 4 – Data collection and monitoring

Once the RealityMine technology was set up, this automatically collected passive metering data of websites and apps visited on devices, frequency of visits and time spent on these platforms.

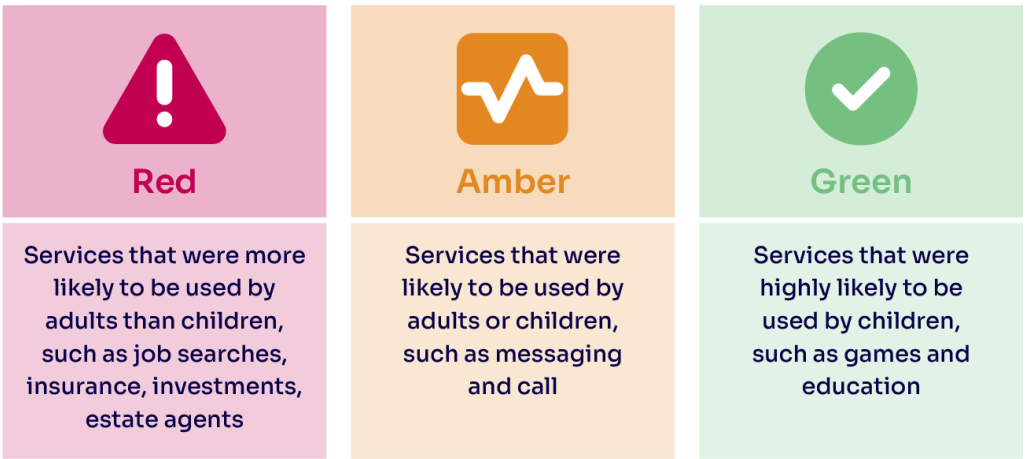
The fieldwork process in phase 2 was also enhanced to monitor the data collection during fieldwork, so that panellists who did not meet the requirements of the study could be removed from participation during fieldwork, with another child taking their place to meet our sample target. For instance, in the screener, parents/legal guardians reported how often the panellist used each device that was to be monitored. This information was compared against the passive data reported back from the devices during the study. Where parents/legal guardians reported daily or near-daily use but the passive data showed activity on far fewer days, these panellists' parents/legal guardians were followed up to confirm whether the recorded behaviour was a true reflection of the panellists' use rather than a technical issue, and if found not to be, the panellists were potentially removed if no other resolution could be achieved (e.g. the discrepancy may have been because the tracker was installed on the parent's device instead of the child's). As a small number of panellists included in the phase 1 sample would not have met the final sample threshold had the phase 2 criteria been applied, the results from the phase 1 panel are therefore not comparable with phase 2.

Where parents/legal guardians mentioned in the screener that the child used more than one device they were encouraged to have the passive tracker installed on all the listed devices that were used a few times a month, but as a minimum, if only one device was tracked, this must be the main device used by the child panellist.

From our pilot study in 2023 we understood that using devices shared between parents and children is common, especially for younger children (8-10-year-olds), who may not have their own devices. Checks were therefore put in place to monitor the level of 'adult' use. A rules-based approach was developed to flag potential adult usage data.

The sites (websites and/or apps) that had been measured during the study were categorised in their relevant sector or 'best fit' e.g. Gauth was categorised as education. First, all sites that appeared in the phase 1 study retained their assigned category from phase 1 during the fieldwork monitoring process. Sites were assigned to one sector category.

The categories were assigned a red/amber/green (RAG) colour and in some cases specific sites within a category were independently assigned a colour; e.g. banking was categorised as amber but child banking service GoHenry was categorised as green. This RAG system was used to categorise sites and sectors that were likely to be used by children and those most likely to be used by adults.



Using the RAG system, any panellist whose red-flagged activity exceeded 3% of total app and website visits on a tracked device had their data investigated in more detail. Where adult usage was

identified this was followed up with the parents/legal guardians during fieldwork to check whether the device was being used by the child. If the usage did not correspond with the child panellist the device was removed from the study. Ofcom processed and summarised these panellists' internet use to understand the proportions of use under each flag colour and all the services that were visited on each of these panellists' devices.

Recruitment was conducted on a rolling basis with the first panellist starting on 9 October 2025 and the last completing on 7 March 2026, each participant's data collected for 28 consecutive days.

The fieldwork monitoring process identified and removed 130 panellists and 226 devices, leaving the unweighted base at a total of 701 8-14-year-olds with data across 787 devices.

Demographic sample profile

Weighting for age, gender and household socio-economic group was applied using the ONS 2024 Mid-Year Estimates and the NRS survey to align the final sample of 701 children with the known UK population of 8-14-year-olds. In addition, population figures were adjusted using responses to question QP1 from Ofcom's Children and Parents' Media Literacy Tracker, which reports on the proportion of children who go online.

A total of 157 households included two children participating in the study.

Soft quotas were also set to ensure that a broad mix of respondents took part in the study. This consisted of those living in urban/rural areas, a mix of ethnic backgrounds and disabilities/limiting conditions.

Age	Female	Male	Total
8	48	52	100
9	48	37	85
10	52	68	120
11	48	47	95
12	54	58	112
13	49	51	100
14	49	40	89
8-14 Total	348	353	701

Demographic	Demographic	Total Number of panellists
Geography	England	630
	Wales	19
	Scotland	40
	Northern Ireland	11
Ethnicity	White	485
	Asian	75
	Black	76

Demographic	Demographic	Total Number of panellists
	Mixed	57
	Other	8
	Total ethnic minority	216
Socio-economic group	ABC1	395
	C2DE	306
Disability	Disability/limiting condition	80
	No disability/no limiting condition	613
	Prefer not to say	8

Device sample profile

Most children had one device monitored as part of the study. A total of 860 devices were monitored.

Number of devices per child	1	2	3	4
Number of 8-14-year-olds	559	126	15	1

According to data from The Insights Family, for the first seven months of 2025, UK 8-14-year-old smartphone users' share by operating system was as follows: Apple (52%), Android (47%) and Huawei (1%). An Apple and Android share of 50:50 was used as a soft quota for devices monitored during the study. An Apple and Android share of 55:45 was achieved.

Device operating system

	IOS/OSX	Android/Windows	Total
Smartphone	312	257	569
Tablet	169	58	227
Computer	8	56	64
Total	489	371	860

Smartphone type, by age

Age:	8-9	10-12	13-14
iPhone	37	161	114
Android phone	55	136	66
Smartphone total	92	297	180

The parents/legal guardians were asked in the screener whether the devices used by the panellist were shared with others. This information was used to inform investigations of red-flag behaviour (see Fieldwork). There was a total of 131 shared devices. Total figures may not equal the number of devices monitored in the study, as a small proportion of panellists did not report whether the device was shared in the screener.

Device sharing

	Owned by child, not shared with others	Owned by child, but sometimes shared with others	Owned by someone else in household, but shared with child
Total 8-14	790	21	25
8-9	174	10	15
10-12	379	9	5
13-14	225	2	5
Smartphone 8-9	81	2	6
Smartphone 10-12	284	5	3
Smartphone 13-14	178	1	1
Total smartphone 8-14	543	8	10
Tablet	197	8	13
Computer/laptop	49	5	2

Where parents/legal guardians stated a device was "*Owned by child, but sometimes shared with others"* or *"Owned by someone else in household, but shared with child"* a follow-up question was asked to understand who the device was shared with. This information was used to inform investigations of red-flag behaviour.

Who the device is shared with	Smartphone	Tablet	Laptop/computer	Total
With children aged 7 or under	4	10	12	57
With children aged 8-14	14	15	54	73
With children aged 15-17	1	4	15	20
With adults (aged 18+)	26	26	94	146

The passive technology cannot be used to measure internet use on Amazon fire tablets or Chromebooks. We asked parents/legal guardians whether these devices were used by the child to understand the scale of the internet use we were unable to measure. Although consoles can be used to go online, these devices were not included in the passive measurement, so any online activity via consoles is outside the scope of this study.

The table below shows the number of panellists in the study whose parent/legal guardians stated in the screener that they also use other devices which cannot be monitored in this study.

	Amazon Fire Tablet	Chromebook	Games Console
Total 8-14	**56**	**98**	**398**
8-12	46	68	287
13-14	10	30	111
Boys 8-14	26	46	271
Girls 8-14	30	52	127

Parents/legal guardians were asked whether parental controls were enabled on the device. Parental controls allow parents to manage, monitor, and restrict a child's digital activity. The responses are in

the table below, but it should be noted that the passive monitoring tracker does not inform us whether parental controls are in place on the device. Forty-two per cent of smartphones and 39% of tablets measured were reported by parents/legal guardians as having parental controls in place. A total of 45% of panellists had parental controls enabled on at least one device.

		Parental Controls enabled	Parental Controls not enabled	Don't know
Age	**Total 8-14**	**319**	**332**	**68**
	8-9	80	82	20
	10-12	168	140	31
	13-14	71	110	17
Device	**Smartphone**	239	239	37
	Tablet	88	99	31
Smartphone by age	**8-9**	30	41	11
	10-12	142	107	15
	13-14	67	91	11