
Ofcom's Children's and Parents' Media Literacy research 2022 Technical Report

To accompany the Children's and Parents' Media
Literacy data tables

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Preface

The Children's and Parents' Media Literacy Research 2022 tracking studies are run by Critical Research on behalf of Ofcom. The key objective of the surveys is to provide robust research into the different elements of children's media literacy. More specifically, the surveys provide data about children's media use, attitudes and understanding, parents' views about their children's media use, and the ways that parents seek to – or decide not to – monitor or limit use of different types of media. The surveys cover children aged 3 to 17, although not all questions are asked of all age groups.

Following an enforced change in data collection method in 2020 due to the impact of Covid-19 on face to face data collection, the surveys were moved online. We have chosen to remain using this data collection method.

Further information about each of these studies is summarised in the next section, followed by a more detailed overview for each of the three studies.

Summary of approach

Parents' Media Literacy study	
Respondent	Parents of 3 to 17 year old children
Content	Children's use of media devices and gaming (as reported by parents), parental mediation and supervision of their child's online behaviour, rules for going online and parents' attitudes towards their children's online activities and behaviour
Method	In 2021, as in 2020, it had not been possible to conduct the research face-to-face as had been intended, so an alternative approach was adopted. In 2022 it was decided to continue with this alternative approach in order to maintain comparability between the survey findings in 2021 and in 2022. A postal approach was used which invited parents of 3 to 17 year olds to complete the survey online. Additional online interviews were conducted with parents of 3 to 17 year olds through a research panel.
Interviews	A total of 2,526 interviews were conducted (1,358 postal survey respondents completing online and 1,168 online panel interviews).
Fieldwork dates	All fieldwork was conducted between 3 rd October and 30 th November 2022

Children's and Parents' online behaviours and attitudes study (COBA)	
Respondent	Parents of 3 to 17 year old children and also their child if aged 8 to 17
Content	Media use and attitudes among children and young people aged 3-17 and covers children's use of watching/ uploading videos, watching/ sharing live stream videos, sending messages or making video/ voice calls or social media use
Method	All interviewing was conducted through an online panel; interviewing parents of 3 to 17 year olds and also their child if aged 8 to 17 years old.
Interviews	Wave 1 (3,378 interviews), Wave 2 (3,417 interviews), combined Waves 1 and 2 (6,795 interviews)
Fieldwork dates	Fieldwork was conducted over two waves of research from 5 th to 27 th May 2022 and from 3 rd to 24 th November 2022

Children's online knowledge and understanding study (COKU)	
Respondent	Children aged 8 to 17 years old
Content	Children's knowledge and understanding of social media and the online market place, trust and misinformation when going online and personal safety, personal data, privacy and security. This particular survey also incorporates scenario testing to provide measures of critical understanding regarding misinformation within social media posts, fake social media profiles, advertising within search engine results, and product endorsement by influencers.
Method	All interviewing was conducted through an online panel; interviewing children aged 8 to 17 years old via their parents
Interviews	2,087 interviews
Fieldwork dates	From 13 th October to 14 th November 2022

Significance testing

Due to the mixed method approach adopted for the **Parents' Media Literacy study**, significance testing for these data tables is applied at the 99% level¹. For **COBA** and **COKU** (as single methodology studies), testing is applied at the 95% level.

Trend reporting

The methodological approach for each of the three studies (**Parents' Media Literacy study**, **COBA** and **COKU**) was identical between 2021 and 2022 and it is therefore possible to draw comparisons over time where questions have been kept consistent.

¹ Testing at 99% can be a preferred methodology when using mixed mode to recruit and interview respondents. The rationale is that the mixed effect means that there are unquantifiable design effects due to the fact that online panels may be attitudinally different to those responding to push to web or encountered face-to-face. Testing at a higher level means those design effects are accommodated for and there is certainty that any reported differences by demographic are significant.

Financial vulnerability

We have included in each set of data tables a measure for household financial vulnerability, ranging from most to least vulnerable. This analysis is based on household income and household composition (i.e. size and number of children) and can only be run on the data where respondents have given a response at each of these questions. We are able to show the financial vulnerability measure for 84% of respondents on the Parents' Media Literacy Survey, 92% for COBA and 91% for COKU. The following breakdown shows the detailed definitions for each group.

Most financially vulnerable	Potentially financially vulnerable	Least financially vulnerable
Household income under £10,399	Earning between £10,400 - £25,599	Earning between £26,600 - £36,399
All respondents	1 adult, 0-1 child	1 adult, 0 children
Earning between £10,400 - £25,599	2 adults, 0-1 child	Earning between £36,400 - £51,999
1 adult, 2+ children	3 adults, no children	1 adult, 0-1 child
2 adults, 2+ children	Earning between £26,000 - £36,399	2 adults, 0 children
3 adults, 1+ children	1 adult, 1 to 3 children	Household income over £52,000
4+ adults, 0+ children	2 adults, 0 to 3 children	All households
Earning between £26,000 - 36,399	3 adults, 0 to 1 child	
1 adult, 4+ children	4 adults, no children	
2 adults, >3 children	Earning between £36,400 - 51,999	
3 adults, 2+ children	1 adult, 2-3 children	
4 adults, 1+ children	2 adults, 1-2 children	
5+ adults, 0+ children	3 adults, 0-2 children	
Earning between £36,400 - 51,999	4 adults, 0-1 child	
1 adults, >3 children	5 adults, 0 children	
2 adults, 3+ children		
3 adults, 3+ children		
4 adults, 2+ children		
5 adults, 1+ children		
6+ adults, 0+ children		

Common questions across studies

A small number of questions were asked on more than one of the three surveys, in order to filter respondents to subsequent questions within that particular survey. These common questions have been removed from the data tables for **COBA** and **COKU** and are shown within the **Parents Media Literacy study** reporting and data tables; as this study has the broadest audience through using a mixed methodology combining a postal and online panel approach.

Interviewing children and obtaining consent

Interviewing on the COBA and COKU surveys is conducted online with children aged from 8 to 17. These children are contacted via their parent through online panel providers. The parent is given clear information about the project and asked for their consent to interview the child participant aged 8 to 17. The child participant aged 8 to 17 is also be provided with an overview of the study, and provided with appropriate assurances and the ability to opt-out if they do not wish to take part. The child is explicitly asked if they give consent to take part in the survey.

The Parents' Media Literacy study

Critical Research interviewed a sample of 2,526 parents of 3 to 17 year olds. Interviews were carried out across the UK and all interviews were conducted between 3rd October and 30th November 2022.

Details of the sample design, research methodology, and weighting procedures for this study are outlined in the following pages. A note on statistical reliability is also included.

Sample Design

In previous years this research has been conducted face to face, in-home using Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI) and this was the intended approach. However, in 2021, as in 2020, it had not been possible to conduct the research in this way, due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The alternative approach that was used for the study in 2021 was repeated for the 2022 study, in order to maintain comparability of the research findings in 2021 and 2022. An online-only approach is appropriate for this survey as virtually all parents of 3 to 17 year olds are online.

For this study, a combination of a postal sample with respondents completing the survey online and an online panel were used. The postal sample was drawn across the whole of the UK, stratified by nation, region and urbanity, with fixed quotas by nation to meet interviewing requirements. In order to achieve as many interviews as possible within the initial fixed cost of the mailouts, the postal sample excluded households located in Super Output Areas/ SOAs which had fewer than 15% of households with children, according to the 2011 Census.

Sample for the online panel part of the study was provided via online consumer panels. The sample was de-duplicated to ensure that respondents could not complete the survey more than once.

Overall quotas were set for the child's gender within age, age within nation and socio-economic group for the overall sample. Within England soft quotas were set to ensure a good mix by English region

Fieldwork

The postal sample of households was contacted at the start of the fieldwork period. The invitation letter asked parents or guardians of a 3 to 17 year old to complete an online interview using a unique login and password supplied in the letter. The interviewing through online panels started towards the end of the postal approach fieldwork period. The purpose of this online panel interviewing is to meet all remaining minimum samples specified for this study in a cost effective manner.

Weighting

The combined panel and postal data are weighted within nation to the correct profile of age and gender and urbanity, and overall to the correct SEG profile based on Census 2011 data. The following table shows the initial unweighted sample and the final weighted sample profile for the final sample.

Figures are based on UK children aged 3-17	Interviews achieved	Interviews achieved
	Unweighted	Weighted
Boys aged 3-4	11%	7%
Girls aged 3-4	11%	7%
Boys aged 5-7	10%	10%
Girls aged 5-7	10%	10%
Boys aged 8-11	10%	13%
Girls aged 8-11	10%	13%
Boys aged 12-15	10%	13%
Girls aged 12-15	10%	13%
Boys aged 16-17	9%	7%
Girls aged 16-17	8%	7%
SEG – AB	30%	28%
SEG – C1	28%	24%
SEG – C2	20%	21%
SEG – DE	22%	26%

Guide to Statistical Reliability

The variation between the sample results and the “true” values (the findings that would have been obtained if everyone had been interviewed) can be predicted from the sample sizes on which the results are based, and on the number of times that a particular answer is given. The confidence with which we can make this prediction is calculated at the 99% limit for this 2022 data due to the mixed method approach. This means that the chances are 99 in 100 that the “true” values will fall within a specified range. However, as the sample is weighted, we need to use the effective sample size (ESS) rather than actual sample size to judge the accuracy of results.

The following table compares ESS and actual samples for some of the main analysis groups within the main sample.

	Actual	ESS
Total 3-17s	2,526	1,260
Age: 3-4	554	263
Age: 5-7	515	269
Age: 8-11	513	278
Age: 12-15	514	258
Age: 16-17	430	397
Boys aged 3-4	276	132
Girls aged 3-4	278	131
Boys aged 5-7	256	133
Girls aged 5-7	259	136
Boys aged 8-11	258	140
Girls aged 8-11	255	138
Boys aged 12-15	256	129
Girls aged 12-15	258	129
Boys aged 16-17	217	199
Girls aged 16-17	213	198
SEG – AB (aged 3-17)	752	435
SEG - C1 (aged 3-17)	701	340
SEG - C2 (aged 3-17)	495	235
SEG – DE (aged 3-17)	547	272

The table below illustrates the required ranges for different sample sizes and percentage results at the "99% confidence interval".

Approximate sampling tolerances applicable to percentages at or near these levels

Effective sample size	10% or 90%	20% or 80%	30% or 70%	40% or 60%	50%
	±	±	±	±	±
1,260 (Total aged 3-17)	2.2%	2.9%	3.3%	3.6%	3.6%
140 (Boys aged 8-11)	6.5%	8.7%	10.0%	10.7%	10.9%
272 (SEG DE aged 3-17)	4.7%	6.2%	7.2%	7.7%	7.8%

For example, if 30% or 70% of a sample of 1,260 gives a particular answer, the chances are 99 in 100 that the "true" value will fall within the range of +/- 3.3 percentage points from the sample results.

When results are compared between separate groups within a sample, different results may be obtained. The difference may be "real", or it may occur by chance (because not everyone has been interviewed). To test if the difference is a real one – i.e. if it is "statistically significant" – we again have to know the size of the samples, the percentages giving a certain answer and the degree of confidence chosen. If we assume "99% confidence interval", the difference between two sample results must be greater than the values given in the table below to be significant:

Differences required for significant at or near these percentages

Sample sizes being compared	10% or 90%	20% or 80%	30% or 70%	40% or 60%	50%
	±	±	±	±	±
435 vs. 272 (AB vs. DE aged 3-17)	6.0%	8.0%	9.1%	9.8%	10.0%
140 vs. 138 (Boys vs. Girls aged 8-11)	9.3%	12.4%	14.1%	15.1%	15.4%

The Children's and Parents' online behaviours and attitudes study (COBA)

Critical Research collected data from 6,795 parents of 3 to 17 year olds, answering all questions for children aged 3-7 and standard demographic questions only for 8-17 year olds who answered the main survey questions themselves. Interviewing was conducted across two waves:

- Wave 1 fieldwork from 5th to 27th May 2022 – 3,378 interviews
- Wave 2 fieldwork from 3rd to 24th November 2022 – 3,417 interviews

All interviews were carried out across the UK through an online panel. Parents of children aged 3-17 were invited to take part. Parents whose child is aged 3 to 7 would answer about their child and where the child concerned was aged 8 to 17, both the parent and the child would be invited to take part. Where the child concerned was aged 8 to 17, the child would answer the survey-specific questions and the parent would answer questions relating to demographics - which include questions that children will not know the answer to, for example, household income.

Overall quotas were set for gender within age, age within nation and socio-economic group for the overall sample. Within England soft quotas were set to ensure a good mix by English region

Weighting

The data at each wave are weighted within nation to the correct profile of age and gender and urbanity, and overall to the correct SEG profile based on Census 2011 data. The overall targets for each wave were identical, with the two waves weighted separately. This means the combined tables produced are simply the sum of the two waves. As mentioned earlier, Wave 1 and Wave 2 data tables are published separately, together with a combined set of data tables.

The table on the following page the initial unweighted sample and the final weighted sample profile for the final sample.

Figures are based on UK children aged 3-17	Interviews achieved	
	Unweighted	Weighted
Boys aged 3-4	10%	7%
Girls aged 3-4	9%	7%
Boys aged 5-7	11%	10%
Girls aged 5-7	11%	10%
Boys aged 8-11	12%	13%
Girls aged 8-11	12%	13%
Boys aged 12-15	11%	13%
Girls aged 12-15	11%	13%
Boys aged 16-17	6%	7%
Girls aged 16-17	6%	7%
SEG – AB	30%	28%
SEG – C1	27%	25%
SEG – C2	21%	21%
SEG – DE	21%	26%

Guide to Statistical Reliability

The variation between the sample results and the “true” values (the findings that would have been obtained if everyone had been interviewed) can be predicted from the sample sizes on which the results are based, and on the number of times that a particular answer is given. The confidence with which we can make this prediction is calculated at the 95% limit for this online panel-only study in 2022. This means that the chances are 95 in 100 that the “true” values will fall within a specified range. However, as the sample is weighted, we need to use the effective sample size (ESS) rather than actual sample size to judge the accuracy of results.

The following table compares ESS and actual samples for some of the main analysis groups within the main sample.

	Actual	ESS
Total 3-17s	6,795	5,378
Age: 3-4	1,305	836
Age: 5-7	1,509	1,171
Age: 8-11	1,645	1,385
Age: 12-15	1,540	1,285
Age: 16-17	796	748
Boys aged 3-4	666	419
Girls aged 3-4	639	416
Boys aged 5-7	764	590
Girls aged 5-7	745	581
Boys aged 8-11	826	693
Girls aged 8-11	819	692
Boys aged 12-15	777	640
Girls aged 12-15	763	645
Boys aged 16-17	402	378
Girls aged 16-17	394	370
SEG – AB (aged 3-17)	2,066	1,649
SEG - C1 (aged 3-17)	1,855	1,469
SEG - C2 (aged 3-17)	1,415	1,126
SEG – DE (aged 3-17)	1,431	1,180

The table below illustrates the required ranges for different sample sizes and percentage results at the "95% confidence interval".

Approximate sampling tolerances applicable to percentages at or near these levels

Effective sample size	10% or 90%	20% or 80%	30% or 70%	40% or 60%	50%
	±	±	±	±	±
5,378 (Total aged 3-17)	0.8%	1.1%	1.2%	1.3%	1.4%
693 (Boys aged 8-11)	2.2%	3.0%	3.4%	3.6%	3.7%
1,180 (SEG DE aged 3-17)	1.7%	2.3%	2.6%	2.8%	2.9%

For example, if 30% or 70% of a sample of 5,378 gives a particular answer, the chances are 95 in 100 that the "true" value will fall within the range of +/- 1.2 percentage points from the sample results.

When results are compared between separate groups within a sample, different results may be obtained. The difference may be "real", or it may occur by chance (because not everyone has been interviewed). To test if the difference is a real one – i.e. if it is "statistically significant" – we again have to know the size of the samples, the percentages giving a certain answer and the degree of confidence chosen. If we assume "95% confidence interval", the difference between two sample results must be greater than the values given in the table below to be significant:

Differences required for significant at or near these percentages

Sample sizes being compared	10% or 90%	20% or 80%	30% or 70%	40% or 60%	50%
	±	±	±	±	±
1,649 vs. 1,180 (AB vs. DE aged 3-17)	2.2%	3.0%	3.4%	3.7%	3.7%
693 vs. 692 (Boys vs. Girls aged 8-11)	3.2%	4.2%	4.8%	5.2%	5.3%

The Children's online knowledge and understanding study (COKU)

Critical Research interviewed a sample of 2,087 children aged from 8 to 17 years old. All interviews were carried out across the UK through an online panel. In all instances the child aged 8 to 17 was recruited through their parent who had opted in to receive survey invitations from the research panel. Fieldwork was conducted from 13th October to 14th November 2022.

Overall quotas were set for gender within age, age within nation and socio-economic group for the overall sample. Within England soft quotas were set to ensure a good mix by English region

Weighting

The data is weighted within nation to the correct profile of age and gender and urbanity, and overall to the correct SEG profile based on Census 2011 data. The following table shows the initial unweighted sample and the final weighted sample profile for the final sample.

Figures are based on UK children aged 8-17	Interviews achieved	Interviews achieved
	Unweighted	Weighted
Boys aged 8-11	21%	20%
Girls aged 8-11	21%	20%
Boys aged 12-15	20%	20%
Girls aged 12-15	19%	20%
Boys aged 16-17	10%	10%
Girls aged 16-17	10%	10%
SEG – AB	30%	28%
SEG – C1	28%	25%
SEG – C2	21%	21%
SEG – DE	21%	26%

Guide to Statistical Reliability

The variation between the sample results and the “true” values (the findings that would have been obtained if everyone had been interviewed) can be predicted from the sample sizes on which the results are based, and on the number of times that a particular answer is given. The confidence with which we can make this prediction is calculated at the 95% limit for this online panel-only study in 2021. This means that the chances are 95 in 100 that the “true” values will fall within a specified range. However, as the sample is weighted, we need to use the effective sample size (ESS) rather than actual sample size to judge the accuracy of results.

The following table compares ESS and actual samples for some of the main analysis groups within the main sample.

	Actual	ESS
Total 8-17s	2,087	1,664
Age: 8-11	860	681
Age: 12-15	815	637
Age: 16-17	412	349
Boys aged 8-11	430	338
Girls aged 8-11	430	343
Boys aged 12-15	411	320
Girls aged 12-15	404	317
Boys aged 16-17	212	175
Girls aged 16-17	200	174
SEG – AB (aged 8-17)	636	490
SEG - C1 (aged 8-17)	581	463
SEG - C2 (aged 8-17)	437	355
SEG – DE (aged 8-17)	429	371

The table below illustrates the required ranges for different sample sizes and percentage results at the "95% confidence interval".

Approximate sampling tolerances applicable to percentages at or near these levels

Effective sample size	10% or 90%	20% or 80%	30% or 70%	40% or 60%	50%
	±	±	±	±	±
1,664 (Total aged 8-17)	1.4%	1.9%	2.2%	2.4%	2.4%
338 (Boys aged 8-11)	3.2%	4.3%	4.9%	5.2%	5.3%
371 (SEG DE aged 8-17)	3.1%	4.1%	4.7%	5.0%	5.1%

For example, if 30% or 70% of a sample of 1,664 gives a particular answer, the chances are 95 in 100 that the "true" value will fall within the range of +/- 2.2 percentage points from the sample results.

When results are compared between separate groups within a sample, different results may be obtained. The difference may be "real", or it may occur by chance (because not everyone has been interviewed). To test if the difference is a real one – i.e. if it is "statistically significant" – we again have to know the size of the samples, the percentages giving a certain answer and the degree of confidence chosen. If we assume "95% confidence interval", the difference between two sample results must be greater than the values given in the table below to be significant:

Differences required for significant at or near these percentages

Sample sizes being compared	10% or 90%	20% or 80%	30% or 70%	40% or 60%	50%
	±	±	±	±	±
490 vs. 371 (AB vs. DE aged 8-17)	4.0%	5.4%	6.2%	6.6%	6.7%
338 vs. 343 (Boys vs. Girls aged 8-11)	4.5%	6.0%	6.9%	7.4%	7.5%