

Young People and ICT 2002

Findings from a survey conducted in Autumn 2002

A report to the DfES by Bruce Hayward, Carys Alty, Stephen Pearson and Chris Martin,
NFO System Three Social Research

Summary

In July 2002 the Department for Education and Skills commissioned NFO System Three to undertake the second Young People and ICT survey, which updates the baseline Young People and ICT survey conducted in autumn 2001. The survey explored the attitudes and experiences of young people aged 5-18 and their parents, in relation to the use of information and communications technology (ICT) by young people at home and at school. Parents of 3-4-year-olds were also interviewed.

This leaflet presents headline findings from the research, which was carried out in September and October 2002. Full results have been published as part of the ICT in Schools Research and Evaluation series. The full report is available on the Becta Research web site at www.becta.org.uk/research/youngpeopleict.

Other publications in the ICT in Schools Research and Evaluation series are also available on the Becta Research web site.

Findings

The main findings reported in this summary are based on 5-18-year-olds and their parents. Findings relating to parents of 3-4-year-olds are reported in a separate section at the end of the summary.

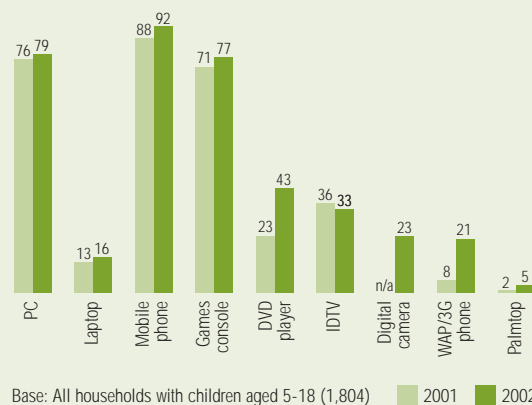
Access to ICT at home

Household access to most forms of ICT equipment has increased since 2001 (see Figure 1).

81% of households had access to a personal or laptop computer in the home, compared with 78% in 2001. There was a strong relationship between access to ICT in the home and social grade of the household's chief income earner, with ownership levels higher for a majority of items among those in higher social grades. Parents aged 35+ in social class AB were the group most likely to have a computer at home (96%). Those aged under 35, in social class DE and with no educational qualifications

Access to ICT at home

Figure 1 *All figures as a percentage*



were the least likely (33% overall). Access to a home computer increased with key stage, from 68% of those in Key Stage 1 to 87% of those in Key Stage 4 and post-16s.

68% of households had access to the Internet at home, compared with 64% in 2001.

Like access to a computer, Internet access at home increased in line with social grade, educational qualifications of the parents and key stage, rising from 56% of those in Key Stage 1 to 76% of post-16s. 92% of AB households, compared with 78% of C1, 64% of C2 and 43% of DE households, had access to the Internet.

82% of households with Internet access at home accessed the Internet via a telephone line using a modem, although the proportion using ADSL/broadband increased from 6% in 2001 to 10% in 2002.

Financial barriers, mentioned by 63% of respondents, remained the overriding factor that prevented parents who did not have a computer at home from buying one.

Presence of a computer at home, and in particular, a computer that had Internet access, enhanced a child's perception of their computing skills.

Young people's use of computers

Almost all young people aged 5-18 (98%) used computers at home, at school or elsewhere and there was no evidence of change in patterns of use since 2001.

92% of young people used computers at school and 75% used them at home. 49% of young people used computers in a location other than at home or at school.

22% of 5-18-year-olds used computers at school but not at home.

On average, young people in Key Stage 3 and above spent around 10 hours using computers in the week prior to the survey. Of these, 6 hours were spent using computers at home, 3 hours using them at school and 1 hour using them elsewhere. About a third of the time was accounted for by games playing.

The amount of time spent using computers increased with key stage, ranging from 7.6 hours in

the week prior to the survey among those in Key Stage 3 to 12.8 hours among post-16s. Boys spent more time than girls using computers at all key stages, although much of this difference was accounted for by boys spending more time than girls playing games.

Young people's use of the Internet

84% of young people used the Internet at home, at school or elsewhere, compared with 73% in 2001. The proportion of young people using the Internet has increased since 2001, both at home, from 45% to 56%, and at school, from 56% to 71% (see Figure 2).

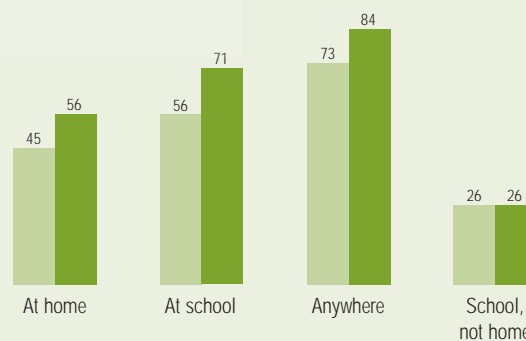
26% of young people used the Internet at school but not at home.

The proportion of young people that used the Internet generally increased with age, from 42% of those at Key Stage 1, to 84% at Key Stage 2, 94% at Key Stage 3, 97% at Key Stage 4 and 96% among post-16s.

Use of the Internet in different locations

Figure 2

All figures as a percentage



Base: All children aged 5-18 (1,804)

2001 2002

Use of computers for schoolwork

In 2002, young people of all ages undertook a wider range of computer activities at home than in 2001. Among children in Key Stage 2 who used a computer at home, 40% – compared with 7% in 2001 – said that they did homework on the computer.



Among those in Key Stage 3 and above who used a computer at home, 90% used it for schoolwork. The subjects in which this group was most likely to do homework on a computer were English, science, history and ICT.

Among children in Key Stage 2 who used computers at school, 56% said that teachers used computers in English lessons, with science lessons mentioned by 43% and mathematics lessons by 41%.

At Key Stage 3 and above, computers were most widely used in ICT lessons, mentioned by 87% of respondents who took this subject. Computers were also widely used in English (52%), design and technology (49%), science (47%) and mathematics lessons (43%).

As in 2001, the main factors that prevented greater use of computers at school among those in Key Stage 3 and above were lack of time, mentioned by 36% of respondents, and the limited number of computers, mentioned by 25%.

Attitudes towards computers and the Internet

As in 2001, the attitudes of both parents and children towards computers were generally positive.

54% of parents without a computer at home felt that their child would achieve better results at school if they had access to a computer at home. Among parents with access to a computer at home, 41% felt that this helped their child achieve better results at school. Among both groups, only 1% thought that access to a computer led to, or would lead to, their children achieving worse results at school.

76% of children in Key Stages 1 and 2 said that using computers made schoolwork more fun and 89% of those in Key Stage 3 and above said that they enjoyed using computers.

87% of children in Key Stage 3 and above felt that computers would be at least 'quite important' in their future working lives.

57% of parents said that they thought their child knew how to use the Internet safely. This proportion

was lowest among parents of children in Key Stage 1 (15%) and highest among parents of children in Key Stage 4 (88%).

82% of young people in Key Stage 3 and above who were aware of Internet safety issues agreed that it was very important to be aware of these issues.

Early years and ICT

Among parents of 3-4-year-olds, 64% had a personal or laptop computer at home.

84% of parents of 3-4-year-olds with a computer at home (45% of all parents of 3-4s) said that their child used a computer at home.

56% of parents of 3-4-year-olds had Internet access at home.

70% of parents of 3-4-year-olds who attended an early years setting said that their child used computers in at least one of the settings that they attended.

Methodology

The survey was conducted using in-home face-to-face paired interviews with young people in England aged between 5 and 18 in full-time education and one of their parents. Young people studying away from home and those in tertiary education were excluded. In addition, interviews were undertaken with a sample of parents of 3-4-year-olds.

The research was undertaken using computer-assisted personal interviewing (CAPI), between 4th September and 21st October 2002. 2,073 interviews were completed in 262 sampling points. A random location sample design was used, with quotas set on gender and key stage of the child and on the parents' working status.

Figure 3 shows the relationship between age, school year and key stage.

Figure 3: Relationship between age, school year and key stage

Date of birth	Age	School year	Key Stage
1/9/97 – 31/8/99	3-5	Early years	Foundation
1/9/95 – 31/8/97	5-7	1-2	1
1/9/91 – 31/8/95	7-11	3-6	2
1/9/88 – 31/8/91	11-14	7-9	3
1/9/86 – 31/8/88	14-16	10-11	4
1/9/84 – 31/8/86	16-18	12-13	Post-16

The summary report makes references to social grade, which is based on the chief income earner in the household – that is, the person with the largest income, whether from employment, pensions, state benefits, investments or any other source. Figure 4 provides definitions of the social grade groups.

Figure 4: Definition of social grade

Social Grade	Social Status	Chief Income Earner's Occupation
A	Upper Middle Class	Higher managerial, administrative or professional
B	Middle Class	Intermediate managerial, administrative or professional
C1	Lower Middle Class	Supervisory or clerical, and junior managerial, administrative or professional
C2	Skilled Working Class	Skilled manual workers
D	Working Class	Semi and unskilled manual workers
E	Those at lowest level of subsistence	State pensioners or widows (no other earner), casual or lowest grade workers