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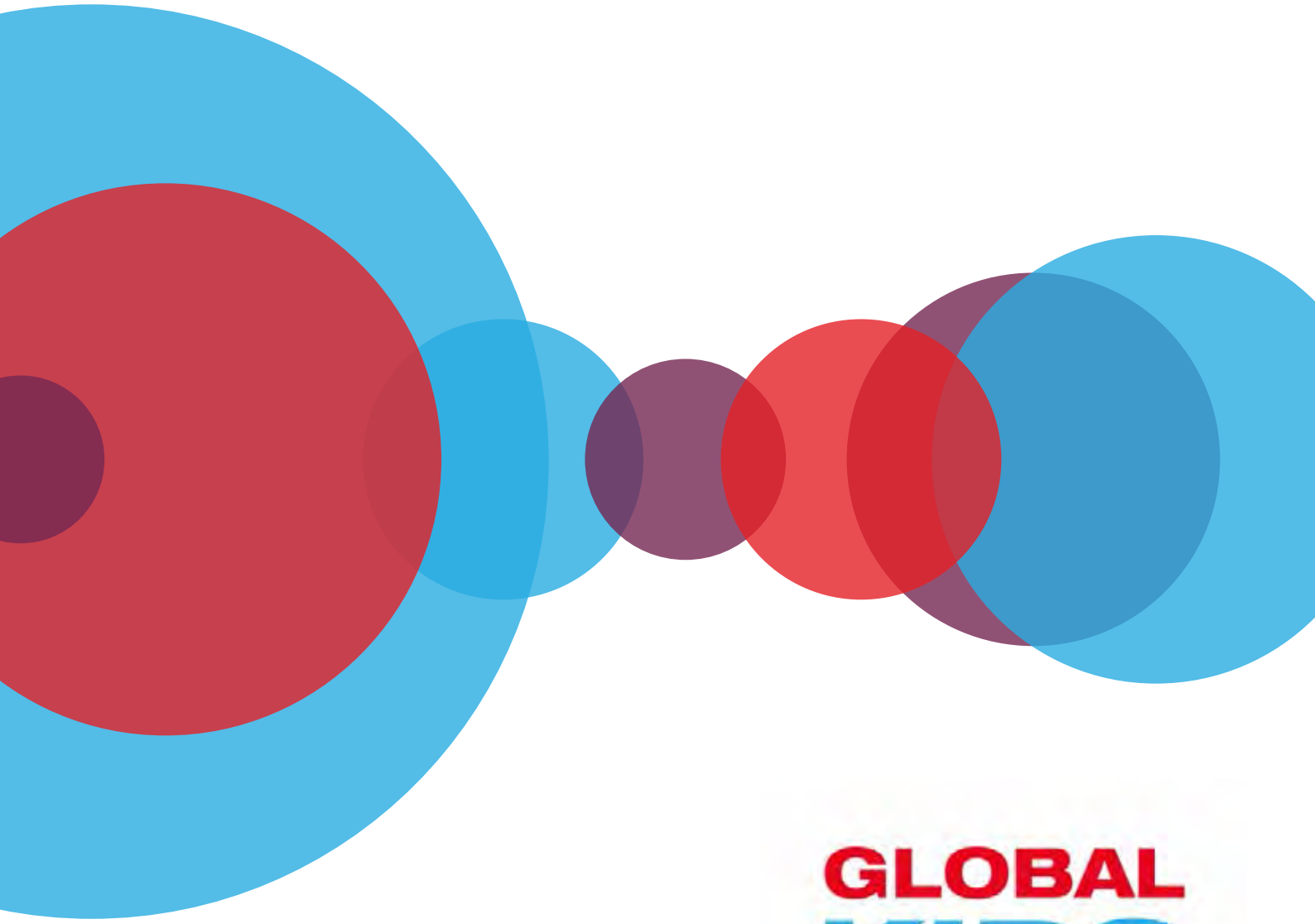
Global Kids Online South Africa: barriers, opportunities and risks. A glimpse into South African children's internet use and online activities

Monograph (Technical Report) (Published version)

South African Kids Online: Barriers, opportunities & risks.

A glimpse into South African children's internet use and online activities.

Technical Report



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CENTRE FOR JUSTICE AND CRIME PREVENTION
Safety has no boundaries

GLOBAL KIDS ONLINE

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GLOBAL KIDS ONLINE – Fact Sheet

A digital toolkit to promote quality global research on children's online experience

Background

The internet is beginning to significantly impact all societies in numerous profound and dynamic ways, regardless of location, infrastructure and economic level. Recent global estimates suggest that one in three internet users is a child and that the proportion of child internet users is likely to be higher in developing countries.

Yet, there is a lack of robust evidence on the impact of internet use on children's well-being and rights, in particular in developing countries. There is an urgent need to gather rigorous data and develop evidence-informed policy that strengthens online safety, digital citizenship and all other aspects of child rights that are impacted in our digital age.

What is Global Kids Online?

- A global research network that brings together national research institutions to build cross-national robust evidence base. It makes research tools (surveys, guidelines, con sent forms, checklists, sampling frames, etc.) available for researchers in any country.
- GKO resources will be accessible via the website www.globalkidsonline.net to help conduct quality research on children's internet use and use the research findings to influence policy making
- Research instrument design is flexible and can produce data that is relevant in any country or context, and still allows comparability across countries and regions.
- Major national research and statistical bodies that meet criteria may apply for membership through the GKO website. Other interested parties can freely access and download high quality research tools without registration.

- Pilot research studies have been conducted in Argentina, the Philippines, Serbia and South Africa
- Results from the pilot studies will form the basis of a global synthesis report to be published by UNICEF Innocenti
- GKO will be launched in late October 2016 via www.globalkidsonline.net

The overall aim of the Global Kids Online research toolkit is to help spur new research initiatives on children's experiences online across a wide variety of countries and contexts.

The objective is to support the development of sound, evidence based policy and programme decisions to ensure that children's rights are safeguarded in the digital space. This will be crucial to help promote healthy and positive child and adolescent internet use.

Global Kids Online was developed by the UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti in collaboration with London School of Economics and Political Science, the EU Kids Online network and four pilot countries: Argentina, the Philippines, Serbia and South Africa

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Executive summary

Introduction

The impact of the internet on the lives of children is a significant concern globally, both in terms of opportunities it provides and its potential to put children in risky situations. Understanding how these opportunities and risks interact, especially in contextually nuanced ways, is essential to ensuring that children are able to maximise the benefits of these information and communication technologies (ICTs) to their lives. [i] While much work has been done to delineate these dynamics and develop appropriate policies in the global North, the nature of children's ICTs use in the global South is less well understood.

In recent years, efforts have been made to ensure that children's offline rights are extended to the online world, including the rights to protection, participation and the chance to benefit from the opportunities the internet provides.[1] While South Africa has some of the most advanced and rights-oriented legislation relating to children more broadly, it is only beginning to develop policies that sufficiently address children's online rights to safety, freedom of expression and privacy. Indeed, a significant drawback in South Africa's current legislation is the extent to which it includes consensual sexual interactions between minors online within its definitions of child sexual abuse materials, unnecessarily criminalising developmental normal behaviours and infringing on children's digital rights.

Aims and objectives

This study, conducted by the Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention (CJCP) and the United Nations Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) South Africa, forms part of a global research project, Global Kids Online, coordinated by the UNICEF Office of Research and the London Schools of Economics and Political Science (LSE). The study had two objectives:

a. to pilot and test appropriate qualitative and quantitative research tools exploring children's access to, use of and experiences of ICTs and social media, to be used in lower income countries, and

b. to gather rigorously obtained and cross-nationally comparable evidence on the nature of child internet use in South Africa.

In addition, the study explored South African parents' internet use and to what extent parents mediate children's online experiences.

As this was a pilot study and implemented in only three of the nine provinces in South Africa, the data is not nationally representative, but rather provides a snapshot of findings across urban and rural settings.

Methodology

Data collection consisted of qualitative and quantitative components, with children (aged nine to seventeen) and their parents being sampled. In the qualitative component, focus groups discussions were conducted, with seven child and four parent focus groups taking place. A total 49 children and 20 parents were interviewed in the qualitative component of the study. In the quantitative component of the study 913 children and 532 parents were interviewed in their homes using questionnaires. The study sampled children and parents who used the internet, and children and parents who did not.

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[i] We use the term ICTs in this document to refer to the internet and the communication technologies that emerge from it. It includes all devices that host the internet and applications that use the internet, including search engines and the websites accessed via these tools. Older technologies like landline telephony and text message services are not included in the definition in this report.

Data collection took place in three South African provinces, Gauteng, the Eastern Cape and the Western Cape. The quantitative component was conducted in both an urban and rural setting and the qualitative component was just conducted in an urban setting.

Findings

Five key content areas were investigated in this study: access, opportunities and practices, skills, risks and vulnerabilities, and protective factors. The findings for each of these sections are outlined below.

In terms of **access** to the internet, of the children were interviewed, 70.4% used the internet, while 29.6% did not. Fewer young children used the internet or had access to their own device than older children. Nearly one in two internet child users (46.0%) were able to access the internet whenever they wanted. For those internet child users who could not always access the internet, it was most often because of the cost of data (47.3%). Child non-users were most frequently unable to access the internet because the adults in their lives would not allow them to (51.2%). Another main barrier to internet access among child non-users was the cost of devices (37.1%).

The children most often accessed the internet via smartphones, and devices like laptops, tablets and desktop computers were used much less frequently. Very few went online at school, but they frequently accessed the internet at home or when they were somewhere by themselves. Fewer parents used the internet than children (34.2% did not use the internet). But of those who did, almost all used the internet at least every week (88.5%) and two out of three parents (69.9%) were able to go online without any help.

In terms of the **opportunities** children accessed online, most child participants (95.6%) reported that they sometimes or always had fun when they went online. Socialising, especially via instant messaging, learning and school work were popular activities among these internet users, while civic and community participation online were not. Language and lack of culturally appropriate content was also identified as a barrier, with one in two children and two in three parents saying it was difficult to find content online in their first language.

Nearly two in three child participants (59.4%) stated that they knew a lot of things about using the internet and one in two said that they knew more about using the internet than their parents (52.1%), suggesting that a majority were confident in their technical **skills**. That said, most children reported being unable to perform more sophisticated tasks online, like using programming language or designing a website. They were adept at everyday online activities, such as saving a photograph from the internet, opening downloaded files and managing their settings of their social media accounts.

Despite their children's poor opinion of their technical skills, when asked the same skills questions as their children, parents who did used the internet tended to be roughly as skilled as their children, and sometimes more skilled.

Most children (86.3%) had an account on a social networking site and the most popular ones were WhatsApp (94.2%), Facebook (68.5%) and Instagram (18.0%). More than one in three children (40.1%) said that their profiles were set to private, with only friends being able to see it. One in three child participants (33.6%) said that they would only accept a contact if they knew them and 25.4% said that they would only accept a contact if they knew them very well. Nearly half of the participants (46.0%) reported having used privacy settings on social networking sites, with 49.4% of participants having had a reason to use the blocking tools these sites.

The children were asked detailed questions on a range of potential **risks** they faced online.

Nearly half of the participants (45.6%) thought that there were things on the internet that bother or upset people their age and a little over one in four (27.1%) had personally been bothered by something on the internet in the past year.

One in three (34.5%) child participants had been exposed to hate speech, and to gory images online (32.7%). Many children reported experiencing some indicators of excessive internet use. This included having a fight with family because of the time they spent online (34.5%) and trying to use the internet less but not being able to do so (29.3%). Nearly one in two (49.0%) felt they had to constantly check their device to make sure they were up to date, although this may be more a sign of the omnipresent role of the internet in people's lives. Both parents and children reported that their use would often become detrimental, causing children to avoid their chores and homework and get less sleep at night.

About one in five of all child participants who use the internet in this study (21.9%) reported having being treated in a hurtful or nasty way in the past year (either face to face or online). When asked if they had ever had contact with someone online that they had never met face to face before, 41.2% said that they had at least once in their life time. Of those children who said they had had contact with a stranger online, half (54.0%) said that they had met with someone that they first got to know online in the past year.

When asked if they had seen any sexual images online in the past year, 51.2% of child participants reported that they had and one in three had received a sexual message (30.5%). One in five (20.5%) child participants had been sent a message they did not want with advertisements for or links to x-rated websites, 19.2% opened a message or a link in a message that showed pictures of naked people or of people having sex that they did not want and 20.3% had seen or received a sexual message, image or video about someone else that they did not want. More boys than girls experienced this kind of unwanted sexual contact, but more girls than boys had been asked unwanted sexual questions about themselves.

Most parents (86.7%) thought that their child had not experienced anything that bothered them online in the past year and did not think it was likely that something would bother them in the coming months (80.6% not likely at all and not very likely). When asked if their children had experienced any specific victimisation online, most parents were confident to say that their children had not, even when they had the option to say that they did not know whether their child had experienced anything.

To investigate the factors that protect and make children vulnerable online, the study explored the role of parents, teachers and friends. Nearly one in two (48.1%) child participants said that they never or hardly ever spoke to their parents about their internet use and 60.5% were never or hardly ever encouraged by their parents to explore and learn new things online. According to their children, 42.0% of parents never suggested ways for their children to use the internet safely and 49.1% never spoke to their children about what do if something online bothered or upset them. Parents scored themselves even worse on their mediation, with 57.0% of parents (compared to 42.0% of children) saying that they had never suggested ways to use the internet safely. However, parents did show a deep concern for their children's online wellbeing in the focus group discussions, but this did not necessarily translate into tangible mediation practices. Only one in two (53.2%) parents reported having ever had any guidance on how to support and mediate their children's internet use.

A significant number of children reported that their teachers did not play a substantial role in mediating and guiding their internet use, even when it came to things like learning, with 46.4% of children saying they had never been encouraged by a teacher to explore and learn things on the internet.

Nearly two in three children (60.0%) reported that their friends had never helped them in the past when something had bothered them on the internet. That said, friends were often reported as the people children were most likely to turn to when they had a negative experience online.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this pilot study, the following recommendations can be made for policy and practice.

Recommendations for policy

- A common child ICTs strategy needs to be developed that allows for a standardised and integrated approach across South Africa's policy and legislation landscape, a goal that speaks to so the aims of the Department of Telecommunications and Postal Services' strategic plan (2015-2020). This strategy must uphold children's digital rights and avoid unnecessarily punitive measures to maintain child online safety.
- It is necessary to formally map out how South Africa's policy and legislation framework should be enacted in relation to cases of child harm online. Clarifying the roles of different stakeholders and the necessary pathways of action in relation to forms of online victimisation will ensure that children are able to access professional support and legal solutions.
- It would be valuable to formalise standardised indicators of children's internet access, usage and online experiences, to be used across various settings. This would allow for consistent and regular data collection to be undertaken, against which interventions and changes over time can be measured.
- In line with the goals of South Africa's National Development Plan 2030 and the Department of Telecommunications and Postal Services' strategic plan (2015-2020), establishing universal internet access at competitive prices is essential to ensure that no child is prevented from benefiting from the opportunities the internet affords. The child participants in this study reported that cost of data was a significant barrier to their internet access overall, and that it limited the amount of time they could spend online.
- Public awareness must be raised around the importance of children's digital rights and all discourse and messaging must take a balanced approach to children's online safety. Excessively inflammatory reports of online harm should be avoided and instead, messaging should focus on reporting accurate data and advice that does not impinge upon children's rights.

Recommendations for practice

- South African parents should play a far greater role in mediating and supporting their children's internet use. Regardless of their level of technological savvy, parents have the necessary life experience to teach their children to be good digital citizens.
- There is a need to find ways to increase access to the internet children have in schools and provide them with technical support. Teachers can also be encouraged to play a greater role in ensuring that children benefit more from the learning opportunities the internet provides, even if this is via the child's own private device.
- Age appropriate internet use should be encouraged in general, in order to build the technical skills of children from an early age. Where possible, parents should provide age-appropriate mediation of their children's internet use, rather than preventing them from accessing the internet all together.
- It would be worthwhile to provide children with opportunities to grow their technical skills, for example, through initiatives that teach coding and other sophisticated skills.

- Discourse and interventions around child exposure to sexual content and sexual experiences online must consider that as many boys as girls are exposed to these risks but that the type of harms experienced by each gender may be different.
- Programmes and messaging that encourage peers to take a more active role in providing support for each other should be promoted, so that when children are exposed to harm online, they have a source of support. In particular, children need guidance on how best to provide this support in a sensitive manner, and also when to seek out an adult or professional's help to ensure that the victim is adequately treated.

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1. Introduction and project context

Internet use is a global phenomenon that has become embedded in the lives of children and adults indiscriminately. While ICTs use is established and almost universal in the global North, in many parts of the global South internet access is relatively new and continues to expand. The impact of internet on the lives of children in these low income countries is currently not well understood, with much of the available evidence of the effects of the internet access coming from the global North.[2] Thus, while the number of child internet users in low income settings continues to grow, arguably already dwarfing the number of child internet users in the global North, little is known about how internet use differs across these settings.

While the ICTs use of children is often associated with negative outcomes like cyberbullying or access to inappropriate materials, the internet also expands the opportunities available to children for learning, participation and creativity. These form part of children's digital rights, the extension of children's basic offline rights into the online realm. These rights have broadly been defined as extending from the general rights outlined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), of which South Africa is a ratified member, and the rights provided for children by a state.[3] Thus, in South Africa, children's digital rights include the right to protection from all forms of abuse online and the provision of opportunities for learning, participation and leisure activities online.[4] Understanding these complexities and the extent to which children are currently realising these rights is essential for the development of appropriate policy and provision of suitable care for children in any country.

This study formed part of a global effort, developed and co-ordinated by the United Nations Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) to obtain evidence of how the internet is being used by children in the global South for the purpose of determining whether children's digital rights are currently being realised.

1.1.1. Global research project on the use of ICTs among children

Global Kids Online developed out of the EU Kids Online project, co-ordinated by the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE), which gathered data on the nature and extent of children's internet use in a number of countries in the European Union. Having identified the significant gap in research on children's internet use outside the global North, the Global Kids Online project was established in early 2015 to research the impact of the internet on the lives of children who live in the global South and provide policy makers and stakeholders with the necessary evidence to inform the promotion of children's digital rights in this setting.

The study was coordinated by the UNICEF Office of Research and the LSE, and involved the collaboration of a number of researchers and experts from different countries, including the UNICEF country offices. A key goal of the project was to develop, test and refine a set of qualitative and quantitative tools that included standardised and locally adapted measures on the practices, attitudes and experiences of young people who use ICTS, to be administered to children and their parents or caregivers in the prospective global South countries. The development and piloting of these tools would lead to evidence of how best to conduct research on ICTs use in countries where access to these technologies is not universal and where internet use may follow different norms to those identified in the global North. In addition, this research was intended to fill the large gap in knowledge of children in South Africa's access to, usage of, and experiences on the internet.

1.1.2. Multi-country research into children's digital rights

For the initial pilot of the research tools, four countries participated in the project. These countries were included because they fell within the low to middle income categorisation and formed part of the global South. The research was conducted in four pilot countries:

- the Philippines
- Argentina
- Serbia, and
- South Africa.

Research activities took place over the course of 2015 and 2016, with each country conducting their pilot study at different times. As pilot studies, only one was nationally representative (Argentina), with the rest only being conducted with smaller samples. Each pilot country was provided with an initial toolkit of research instruments, along with guidance and support for the project Steering team. The countries then adapted and piloted the tools, and in the process, tested and refined the tools for use in various settings. The toolkit was then amended using the lessons learned in this process and was established as an international resource that could be adopted by any global South country interested in exploring children's internet use.

The ultimate goal of this process is to generate a globally comparable body of evidence on children's online usage, based on rigorous research studies conducted in many countries, using the common indicators contained in the project's toolkit. This evidence will be invaluable in understanding the impact of the internet on the global South and for the development of appropriate national (as well as regional and global) policies that uphold children's digital rights in these contexts.

1.2. The South African country context

South Africa is home to 54.4 million people. The population is diverse and is made up of 80.1% people of African heritage, 8.9% 'coloureds' (or people of mixed race), 2.5% of Asian or Indian heritage and 8.3% whites or people of European heritage.[5] Since the end of the apartheid regime and first democratic election in 1994, efforts have been made to integrate the previously excluded black majority into the economic realm and produce a more equal society. However, despite some progress, the society as a whole remains extremely unequal, with blacks still bearing the brunt of this inequality.[6] This impacts on the extent to which South Africans can access the internet and fully enjoy the opportunities it affords.

1.2.1. Children and the internet in South Africa

1.2.1.1. Children

In South Africa a child is legally defined as anyone under the age of eighteen years. [7]The country is home to approximately 20.6 million people are below the age of twenty years old (37.9% of the population).[8] This means that South Africa has a relatively young population, with large numbers of potential internet users under the age of twenty.

Only 34.9% of children in South Africa live with both their parents.[9] The highest number of children live with their mother only (40.6%), while 3.7% live with their father only, and 20.9% of children live with neither parent. In a sizable proportion of households male caregivers appear to be totally absent, with 40.3% of all South African households being female-headed.[10] This suggests that the majority of South African children are raised by a range of different caregivers, and often only a single biological parent. Although this may not mean that children are raised in single caregiver households, this could have implications for the amount of time and involvement caregivers can provide to their children, because they may need to work long hours to make ends meet or look after a number of children on their own.

Currently, the overall unemployment rate in South Africa is 26.7%.[11] Nearly one in three South Africans (30.1%) receive a social grant, or 45.5% of households, to supplement or sometimes constitute their monthly income.[12] The majority of these (70.5%) are child support grants, issued to children in low income families.[13] However, in most cases (65.5% of households), salaries are

the main source of income.[14] According a 2011 study 64.6% of South Africans have a monthly income of R1113.0 or less per capita (the equivalent of approximately 75 US dollars), an estimated upper bound poverty line for the time.[15] While this amount will have changed in the five years since this data was collected as a result of inflation, it suggests that a majority of South Africans face challenges meeting their basic needs.

From the age of seven to fifteen years, school attendance in South Africa is almost universal.[16] However, after the age of fifteen years old, attendance at an educational facilities drops off, with many South Africans failing to complete their secondary schooling.[17] Among individuals aged twenty years and older, 37.1% have only attained some secondary schooling, almost 10.0% more than have completed their schooling (28.0%).[18] Thus, many South African children face challenges completing their final stages of schooling.

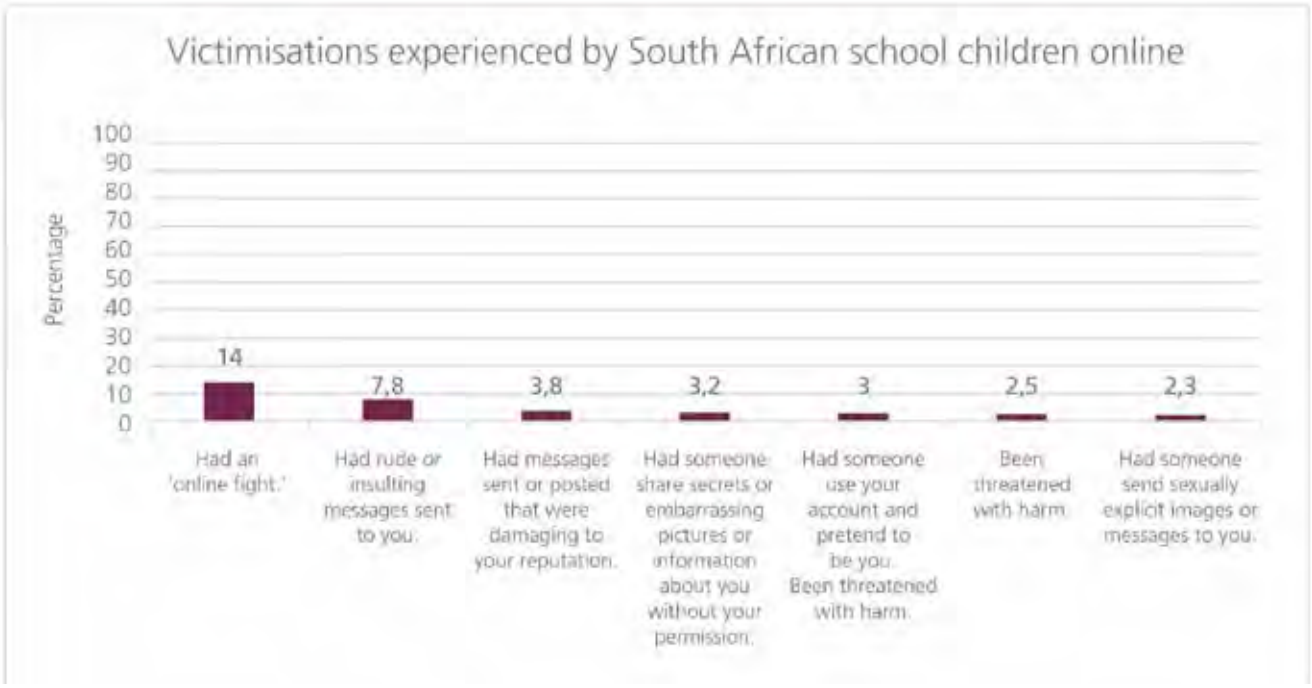
1.2.1.2. Internet use

Best estimates suggest that 20.7% of people living in Africa have access to the internet.[19] South Africa accounts for 8.1% of Africa's internet users, coming in fourth after Nigeria (28.0%), Egypt (14.6%) and Kenya (9.7%).[20] South Africa has approximately 26.8 million internet users and the number of users in the country has increased by roughly 24 million since 2000.[21]

While 96.5% of households in South Africa have access to either landline telephones or mobile phones, in only 53.5% of these households do at least one member have access to the internet.[22] This includes people who could only access the internet via a place of work, a place of study or an internet café and not just those who have their own devices.[23] One in two (47.6%) South Africans who access the internet tend to do so via their mobile phone, compared to one in ten who can access the internet at home.[24] According to the Department of Basic Education's (DBE) most recent estimates, 19.4% (n=4599) of South African public schools have access to the internet for the purpose of teaching and learning, with slightly more (24.7%) having access to the internet for the purpose of administrative functions as well.[25] From the available statistics the exact percentage of children using the internet in South Africa is unknown, but the statistics suggest that access is not universal, and that those children using the internet may go online using a mobile phone.

South Africa has one of the highest homicide rates in the world, (32.8 per 100 000 people in 2014/2015), and has garnered a reputation of being a violent country and particularly a country where high numbers of women and children are victims of violence.[26] However, there is currently little data on whether the attitudes that produce gender-based violence and violence against children offline translate into online violence. A study on school violence in South Africa conducted by the CJCP in 2013 found that 20.9% of learners reported experiencing some form of online victimisation, compared to 22.2% experiencing offline victimisation.[27] As can be seen in the disaggregated categories below, a minority of South African teenagers reported experiencing some form of ICTs related violence.

Figure 1: Online victimisations in the National School Violence Study 2013



1.2.2. Policy context and key stakeholders

South Africa's legislation framework features multiple laws and policies that pertain to the rights of children but very few that directly address their digital rights. In recent years, there has been a move towards developing a more comprehensive approach to the promotion of online safety and wellbeing, but currently, the bulk of policies address the rights in terms of promoting safety, but not access, skills and opportunity. Indeed, the rights of children to benefit from the internet are not explicitly enshrined anywhere in South African legislation.

The Constitution of South Africa, 1996, addresses children's rights thoroughly, specifically in Chapter 2 of the Constitution, the Bill of Rights. Within this chapter, it is stated that children have the same constitutional rights as adults and these include the right to have their dignity respected, the right to freedom and security and the right to be free of all forms of violence including torture or any cruel, degrading or inhumane punishment.[28] The Bill of Rights also, importantly, enshrines the right to privacy and of particular relevance to ICTs use, the privacy of their communications. That said, because this document was written during the early days of the internet, it understandably does not explicitly address the digital rights of children.

The Children's Act of 2005 augments these basic rights and provides the legal definitions of abuse and the necessary procedures to act in the best interests of the child and provide them with care and protection. The Act's definition of abuse includes:

a. assaulting a child or inflicting any other form of deliberate injury to a child;
b. sexually abusing a child or allowing a child to be sexually abused;
c. bullying by another child;
d. a labour practice that exploits a child; or
e. exposing or subjecting a child to behaviour that may harm the child psychologically or emotionally.

Most, if not all of these forms of abuse can be interpreted in terms of the types of harms perpetrated online. However, this is not explicitly laid out within the Children's Act. The Department of Social Development is the custodian of the Children's Act and therefore the government body charged with the protection of children and the promotion of their rights and wellbeing in South Africa.

Although this does not expressly include the promotion of online safety and digital rights, protection of children from any form of harm, including online harm, is this Department's mandate.

Another critical stakeholder in promoting children's wellbeing is the Department of Basic Education, which is tasked with the education of children from pre-school age to the completion of secondary school. Currently, the Department has a number of policies and guidelines in place to manage the use of digital technologies in schools, including guidelines for e-safety in schools.[29] This document outlines the benefits of digital technologies to education and the potential risks attached to their use in the school environment, indicating the steps to be taken in all government funded schools to manage the use of these technologies in this context. However, the extent to which this policy is followed is not known, especially considering relatively few schools have internet access for educational purposes.

The Department of Telecommunications and Postal Services recently launched its own Children and ICTs Strategy, which seeks to provide a coherent approach to the empowerment of children in the ICTs sector for the Department itself and its subsidiaries.[30] This strategy takes a rights-based approach to children's internet use and promotes internet access by vulnerable groups such as disabled children, children living in rural areas and girl children. While the strategy is still in the process of being implemented and its effects are not yet known, its existence suggests steps towards a more inclusive and rights-based approach to children's ICTs use in South Africa.

There are a number of laws that deal directly with the potential crimes and abuses committed via the internet. The Protection from Harassment Act of 2011, for example, includes in its definition of harassment, harassment via electronic communication. It allows for an individual to obtain a court protection order against the harasser, as one would in an offline harassment scenario. It also allows for the victim to be furnished with the contact details of their harasser by the service provider through which harassment is being perpetrated, should that person's identity be unknown, a very valuable addition for cyber harassment cases. The law provides that "any child, or person on behalf of a child, may apply to the court for a protection order without the assistance of a parent, guardian or any other person." This ensures that in all cases of harassment, but of particular relevance here, is that children themselves can combat online harassment, without parental consent.

A number of other potential legal remedies against online harassment and bullying in South Africa exist, although none of these were explicitly created for this purpose. For example, an individual can be criminally charged with the following offences depending on the kind of bullying perpetrated:

- crimen injuria (or the violation of the dignity or privacy of another person),
- assault (where the perpetrator inspires a belief or fear in the victim that they will be physically harmed),
- criminal defamation (where the perpetrator seeks to seriously injure the victims reputation),
- and extortion.[31]

Success in prosecuting these charges depends on how the bullying was perpetrated and whether the bullying can reasonably be considered to fall within the definition of the charges listed above. There have been a number of South African cases of online victimisation where prosecutions were successful.[32] However, an important caveat to this is that when criminal charges are laid against a minor in South Africa, the Child Justice Act of 2008 comes into effect. This Act created a separate criminal justice system for children that, where possible, promotes the principles of restorative justice.[33] Thus, while children may face criminal charges as a result of cyberbullying,

the justice system will, where possible, avoid unnecessarily criminalising them.

This becomes especially significant when considering one of the more problematic aspects of South African law in relation to children's technology use, the fact that the legal framework does not distinguish between producing child sexual abuse materials and consensual sexting between minors. The Films and Publications Act of 1996 states that any person who:

"unlawfully possesses; creates, produces or in any way contributes to, or assists in the creation or production of … knowingly makes available, exports, broadcasts or in any way distributes or causes to be made available … any film, game or publication which contains depictions, descriptions or scenes of child pornography or which advocates, advertises, encourages or promotes child pornography or the sexual exploitation of children, shall be guilty of an offence." Similarly, the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act of 2007 defines child sexual abuse materials as:

"any image, however created, or any description or presentation of a person, real or simulated, who is, or who is depicted or described or presented as being, under the age of 18 years, of an explicit or sexual nature, whether such image or description or presentation is intended to stimulate erotic or aesthetic feelings or not …"

This law states that exposing a child to child sexual abuse materials, under the inclusive definition above, renders the individual guilty of an offense, no matter their age. And if this individual is found guilty under the Sexual Offences Act, their name will be added to the national register of sex offenders. These laws do not provide for circumstances where child sexual abuse materials are produced in the context of a consensual romantic relationship and where this behaviour could be argued to be part of normal and healthy sexual development among minors in the digital age.

In 2013, sections 15 and 16 of the Sexual Offences Act were contested in South African's Constitutional Court for unduly criminalising normal consensual sexual activity between teenagers aged twelve to seventeen years old. A unanimous judgment was handed down that sections 15 and 16 of the Act were constitutionally invalid in terms of their criminalisation of consensual sexual conduct between children.[34] The Act was then amended to reflect these changes in 2015.[35] However, the Act is very clear that these amendments only apply to sections 15 and 16 and sections relating to the prosecution of the offences defined in these sections, and not to the sections of Act that refer to the production of child sexual abuse materials. It was argued that in their original form, sections 15 and 16 conflicted with children's constitutional rights to dignity, privacy and bodily and psychological integrity, and a key principle of the Constitution, that a child's best interests must be the crucial factor in all matters concerning the child. The reasons why these considerations were not extended to the consensual production of sexual images among teens is unclear, although it may in part be a result of concern around the unintended negative effects of such activities, such as sharing of images without permission.

The Film and Publications Act is also currently undergoing a process of review and initial drafts have been subject to much criticism. The amended Bill still criminalises children who engage in consensual [i]sexting among peers, along with those who are coerced into producing sexually explicit content of themselves for adults.

[i] 'Sexting', a combination of the words 'sex' and 'texting', refers to the consensual sending of sexual messages via ICTs, which can include images or videos (Mitchell et al, 2012). Sexting forms part of an interaction between individuals that is a simulacrum of sex or sexual foreplay, not dissimilar to the notions of 'cybersex' or 'telephone sex.'

A submission by Media Monitoring Africa and SOS Coalition argues that the law should make clear that those children who produce child sexual abuse material in circumstances where they are coerced and exploited, even if this was seemingly consensual and the child profits in some way from it, should not be criminalised, and the child should instead be considered a victim of abuse.[36] This consideration should extend to children engaging in consensual, developmental normative, private sexual experimentation via digital technologies, but not where images or videos are made without the child's consent. The law is therefore still in need of refining and public consultation on its content is ongoing.

While there are a number of laws and policies addressing the digital rights and protection of children, and indeed all persons, in South Africa, the framework that is currently available is far from comprehensive. In addition, the inability of legislation to distinguish between the production of child sexual abuse materials and consensual sexting between minors is unnecessarily punitive of normal sexual development and can be perceived as infringing on children's digital rights. Although there is an ongoing challenge in implementing these laws, this is evidence of the need for South African law to reform to better manage the complexity of online victimisation and uphold children's right to enjoy the opportunities the internet affords them.

1.3. Report structure

In the report that follows, the authors present the findings of the study contextualised in this chapter.

Chapter two consists of the findings of this study, beginning with a brief description of the methodology used. The chapter is structured around the five key content areas of the study: access; opportunities and practices; skills; risks; and vulnerabilities and protective factors. Within each of these sections the quantitative and qualitative data collected from children and parents is presented. However, in line with the aims of the study and the amount of data amassed from the various tools, priority is given to presenting the findings of the child quantitative instrument, with the findings of the parent survey being presented in smaller sections of the chapter. The findings of the qualitative study have also been included to provide contextualisation for some of the quantitative findings.

Chapter three presents the conclusions of the study and the recommendations to be made based on the study. The chapter includes thoughts for future research.

Finally, a number of appendices are presented at the end of this report. These include a more detailed outline of the study's methodology, as well as data tables featuring some of the core variables of this study. The appendices also include a proposed tool for non-internet users and a reference list.

2. Key findings

2.1. Research aims and methodology

Within the Global Kids Online project, each of the pilot countries contributed to the adaptation and development of a Global Kids Online survey toolkit, which once tested and refined, could be adopted by any country to examine the ICTs use of children in that context.

The South African study had the following objectives:

1) Develop, test and refine a set of qualitative and quantitative tools that could be used to conduct research on children's internet use in global South countries. This involved adapting an internationally developed and tested toolkit to the South African context and piloting it.

2) This research was also intended to fill the gap in knowledge on children in South Africa's access to, usage of, and experiences on the internet and social media. Although the study was a pilot and did not include a nationally representative sample, the tools were designed to be exploratory and allow the researchers to access a wide range of information regarding children's internet use. This study sought to examine South African children's internet use with a focus on:

    a. The extent to which children accessed the internet and the barriers they faced to this access.
    b. How access to the internet and internet use changed in different age groups.
    c. Urban and rural differences in internet use.
    d. Opportunities children accessed online.
    e. Data on the technical skills children possess.
    f. The risks children are exposed to or are taking online.
    g. Parents' knowledge of their children's internet use and how they mediate this use.

The findings of this study were intended to inform the design and implementation of a nationally representative Global Kids Online study.

The study sampled children of both genders between the ages of nine and seventeen in three South African provinces, the Western Cape, Eastern Cape and Gauteng. Within each province, qualitative and quantitative data was collected, with quantitative data being collected in urban and rural sites, and qualitative data in only urban sites. Parents and caregivers of between 21 and 74 years old were also sampled. [i]The parents or caregivers interviewed tended to be female, usually because male caregivers were unavailable at the time of the interview. Caregivers were only interviewed if one of their children had also taken part in the study. The sample of children and caregivers or parents included participants who did not use in the internet.

[i]When sampling parents in this study, the main concern was not whether a child's caregiver was a biological parent, but whether this person played an engaged and active role in caring for that child's wellbeing and monitoring their behaviour, As discussed in the first chapter of this report, many South African children do not receive their primary care from their biological parents and so it was necessary for the study's sampling framework to be flexible enough to take this into account. As a result, the 'parents' or caregivers sampled in this study included biological parents and older sisters or brothers, aunts, uncles and grandparents, as well as people who were not related to the child. The terms 'parent' and 'caregivers' are used interchangeably in this study to refer to child participants'' primary caregivers.

The number of participants who used the internet was randomly decided, with participants' willingness to take part being the only factor that determined whether they were sampled.

Child and parent participants were interviewed in focus group discussions in the qualitative component of the study and through face-to-face interviews in the quantitative study. The qualitative participants were accessed with the assistance of schools or NGOs, and participants in the quantitative component were sampled as the result of door to door visits by trained enumerators. Both the qualitative and quantitative components of the study were conducted using instruments adapted for the South African context using the Global Kids Online toolkit. A more detailed description of the methodology used in this study can be found in **appendix 4.1.**

TOTAL SAMPLE CHILDREN
Aged nine to seventeen years, boys and girls.

QUANTITATIVE
913 children
(643 of whom used the internet)

QUALITATIVE
49 children (7 focus groups)

PARENTS
Fathers, mother and other caregivers who were the primary guardians of children.

QUANTITATIVE
532 parents
(351 of whom used the internet)

QUALITATIVE
20 parents (4 focus groups)

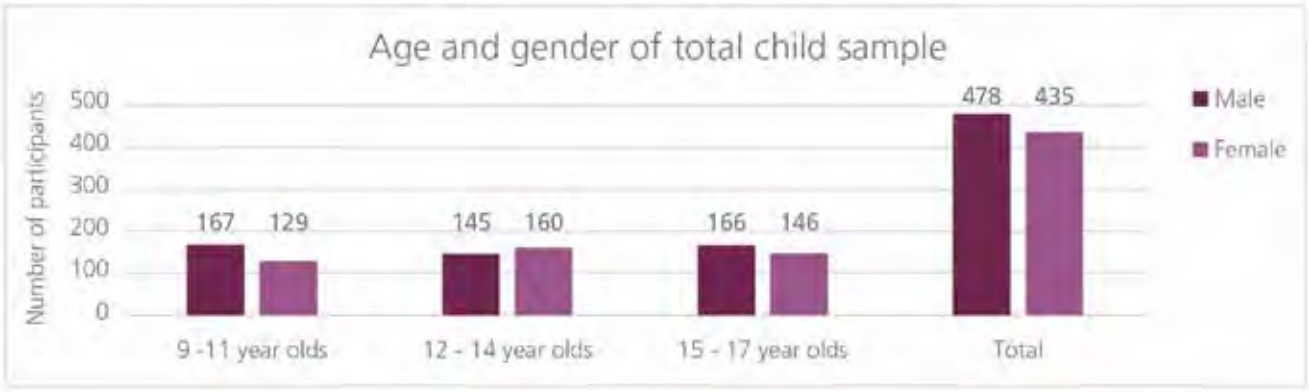
When interpreting the findings of this study, a number of limitations must be borne in mind. This study was not representative of the child population of South Africa and therefore no conclusions can be drawn about the overall patterns of internet use in South Africa. However, this study does provide some insight into some of the dynamics that may impact internet use in South Africa, and indicates the value of exploring this topic at a nationally representative level.

The researchers faced some challenges in the conceptualisation and implementation of the study which made data collection more complicated and may have impacted on the quality of the data. One such challenge was the decision to include non-internet users in the sample, which proved useful in terms of gathering information on patterns of access, but made data collection procedures more time consuming than necessary. Another challenge was the lack of already translated instruments: enumerators had to translate the survey instrument during interviews with participants who were more comfortable speaking a language other than English. While enumerators were trained to provide translations with comparable and standardised meanings, not providing an already translated instrument meant that these interviews could become time consuming and that meanings may have varied, affecting the responses participants provided. A more detailed discussion of the lessons learned in the implementation of this study can be found on page **92 of appendix 4.1.**

2.1.1. Participant demographics

In this section the characteristics of the participants sampled in this study is discussed in greater detail in order to provide some context for the findings that follow. The child sample consisted of more boys than girls, but girls accounted for slightly more of the age group of twelve to fourteen year olds (see figure 2).

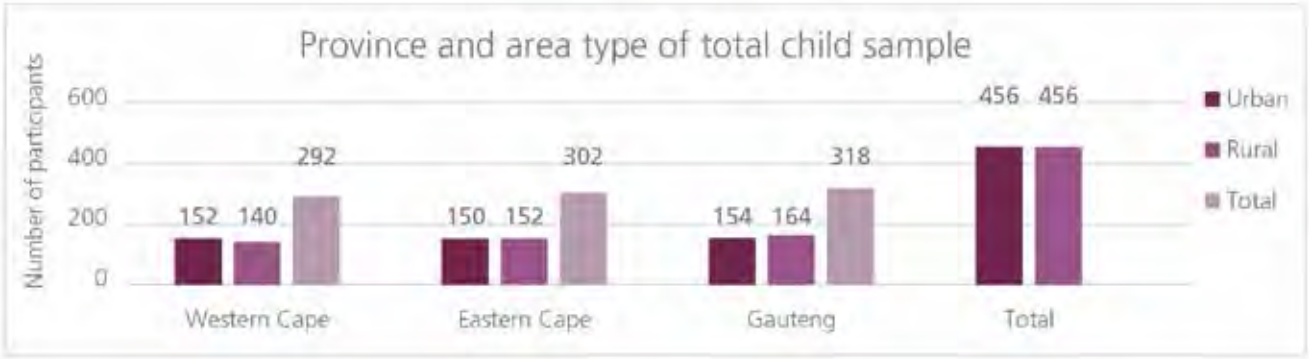
Figure 2: Age and gender of total child sample



All children 9 – 17 years old (N=913).

Out of the total child sample there was an even distribution across urban and rural areas. When compared with provinces this was also fairly even, with Gauteng having a slightly larger rural sample than urban. The sample sizes across provinces were also similar.

Figure 3: Province and area type



All children 9 – 17 years old (N=913).

In terms of access to material resources, most participants reported that they always had their basic needs met (see table 1). Almost all participants reported having consistent access to shelter (96.5%) and access to medical care (80.0%) but fewer respondents reported certain access to a cash income (65.8%) and electricity (56.1%).

Table 1: Access to material resources among child participants

In the last year, how often have you and your family…	Never
Gone without enough food to eat	73.8%
Felt unsafe from crime in your home	77.8%
Gone without medicine or medical treatment that you needed	80.0%
Gone without a cash income	65.8%
Gone without enough clean water to drink and cook with	75.2%
Gone without shelter	96.5%
Gone without electricity in your home	56.1%
Gone without enough fuel to heat your home or cook your food	79.4%

All children 9 – 17 years old (N=913).

Child participants were asked who they lived with and two out of three (66.4%) reported living with siblings. A little over half of the respondents lived with both parents (54.5%), while a third (34.2%) lived with just their mother.

Table 2: Household composition of child participants

Thinking about the home where you live most of the time, can you tell us who lives with you?	
Mother	34.2%
Father	4.8%
Both parents	54.5%
Step or foster mother	1.0%
Step or foster father	2.4%
Grandparents	22.2%
Aunt or uncle	16.1%
Siblings	66.4%
Cousins	19.6%
Other relatives	1.8%
My sibling's/cousin's partner	0.4%
My sibling's/cousin's children	0.4%

All children 9 – 17 years old (N=913).

In the parent survey, parents were asked about their employment status as a way of determining their basic economic status. The highest percentage of participants were employed fulltime (41.5%), but one in five (22.4%) were unemployed and seeking work, suggesting that these parents experienced financial constraints and challenges.

Table 3: Parent/caregiver occupational status

What is your current occupational status?	
Full-time employed	41.5%
Part-time employed	5.8%
Self-employed	5.3%
Retired/pensioner	9.2%
Housewife	10.9%
Unemployed seeking work	22.4%
Unemployed not seeking work	4.5%
Temporary or seasonal labour	0.8%

All parents (N=523)

Thus, the sample consisted of slightly more boys than girls, from an even spread of loacations, who tended to have their basic needs met. Although not all children lived with both biological parents, the number of children living with both parents in this study was higher than the national average. Grandparents lived with one in five children (22.2%), and aunts and uncles with roughly one in six (16.1%). Most children lived with siblings and some also lived with counsins (19.6%), suggesting that extended family members were not uncommon household mememberss for the participants in this study. Some parents may have faced challenges providing a cash income for their families, which reflects national trends on unemployment.

2.2. Access

Key findings

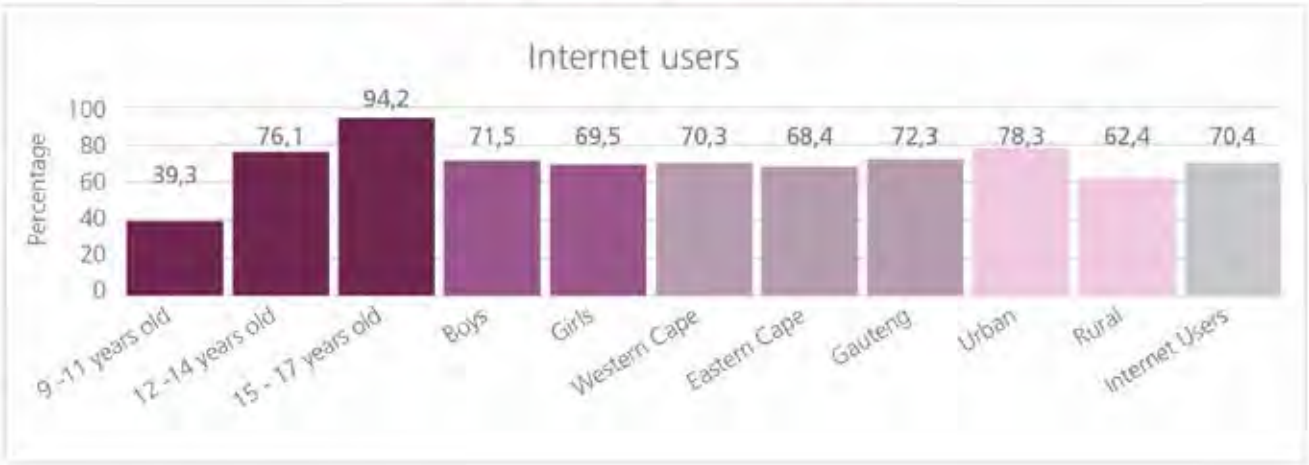
- Of the children interviewed, 70.4% used the internet.
- The number of children using the internet increased with age.
- Nearly one in two internet users (46.0%) was able to access the internet whenever they wanted.
- For those child internet users who could not always access the internet, it was most often because of the cost of data (47.3%) and for non-users, it was because the adults in the child's life would not let them use the internet (51.2%).
- Most child participants accessed the internet via smartphones (80.2%) and did so at home (90.9%) or when they were somewhere by themselves (79.1%).
- Most child participants owned their own device (83.8%), and a larger number of older children (92.5%) had a device to themselves than younger children (68.7%).
- One in three (34.2%) parent participants did not use the internet. But of those who did, almost all used the internet at least every week (88.5%) and two out of three parents (69.9%) were able to access the internet by themselves.

2.2.1. Children

2.2.1.1. Internet use

The study found that 70.4% of the children interviewed used the internet. A larger number of older children used the internet than younger children. A big jump in the rates usage was seen between the nine to eleven year olds and twelve to fourteen year olds, suggesting that younger children may not have the interest, the permission or the access to devices to allow them to use the internet. Similar numbers of boys and girls used the internet and the rates across provinces also did not vary substantially. However, slightly more urban dwelling participants were found to use the internet than participants living in rural areas.

Figure 4: Percentage of internet use

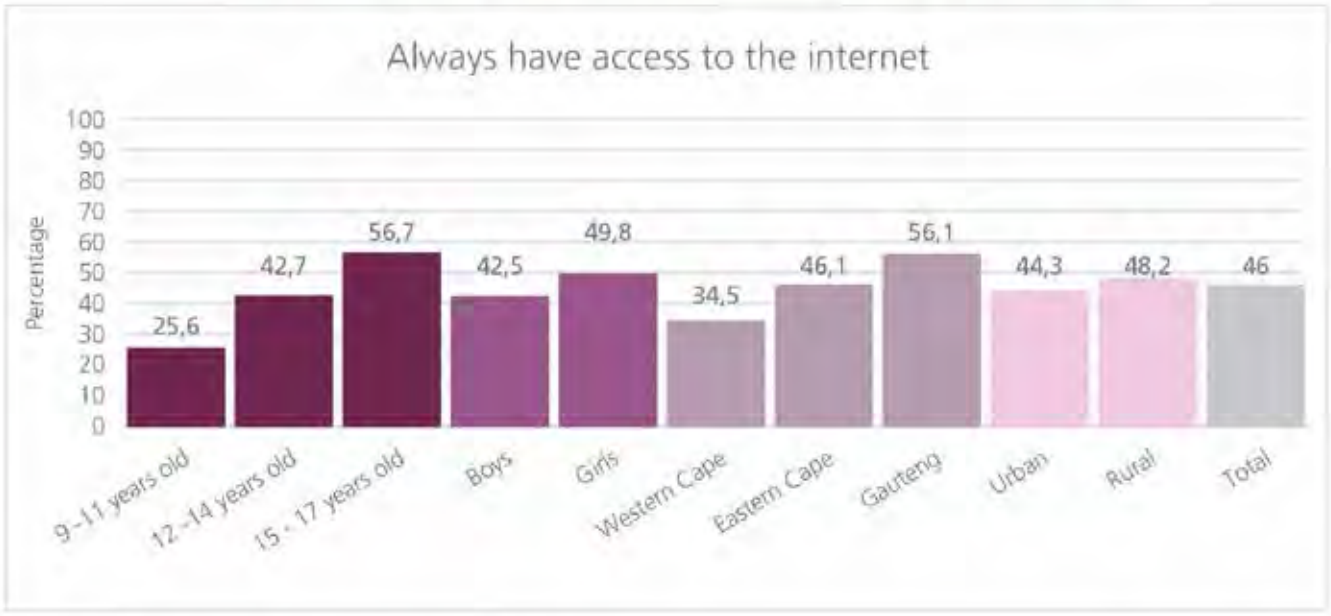


All children 9 – 17 years old (N=913)

2.2.1.2. Barriers to access

Nearly half of all child participants who used the internet (46.0%), stated that they could always access the internet when they needed to or wanted to. As can be seen in figure 5, older participants had dependable access in greater numbers than younger children. There were also great differences in the percentage of child participants who always had access to the internet across different provinces.

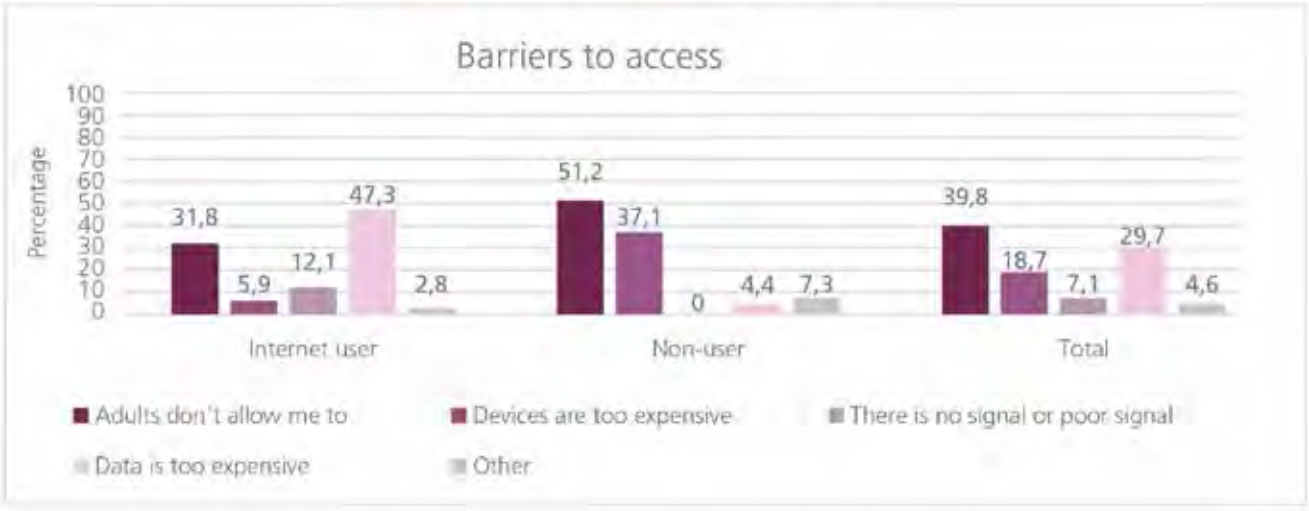
Figure 5: Percentage children who always have access to the internet



All children 9 – 17 years old who use the internet (N=643).

The participants who did not always have access to the internet were asked what barriers prevented them from accessing the internet (this included participants who did not use the internet, and participants who responded 'never', 'sometimes' or 'often' to the question 'are you usually able to access when you want or need to?').

Figure 6: Percentage barriers to internet access



All children 9 – 17 years old who said they did not use the internet/did not always have access to the internet (N=617).

As can be seen in figure 6, internet users and non-users differed in the barriers they faced to access. Almost half (47.3%) of participants who used the internet stated that the cost of 'data'[i] was a barrier to internet use. This finding was substantiated by findings from the qualitative component of the study, where participants expanded on these challenges.

[i] 'Data' is a colloquial term for prepaid internet that is accessed via a mobile network and is typically used on smartphones or tablets.

Eastern Cape, 16-18 year olds:
Interviewer (I): "How often would you say you use these [social media apps and websites]?"
FR: "Every day."
FR: "Whenever I have data."
FR: "Ja [yes]."
I: "Is data a big problem?"
FR: *Laughs*
FR: "Yes."

Eastern Cape, 14-17 year olds:
FR1: "I wish that some of the programs, like the learning programs on the internet were free. 'Cos some of us need it then don't have data to download it. Get it?"

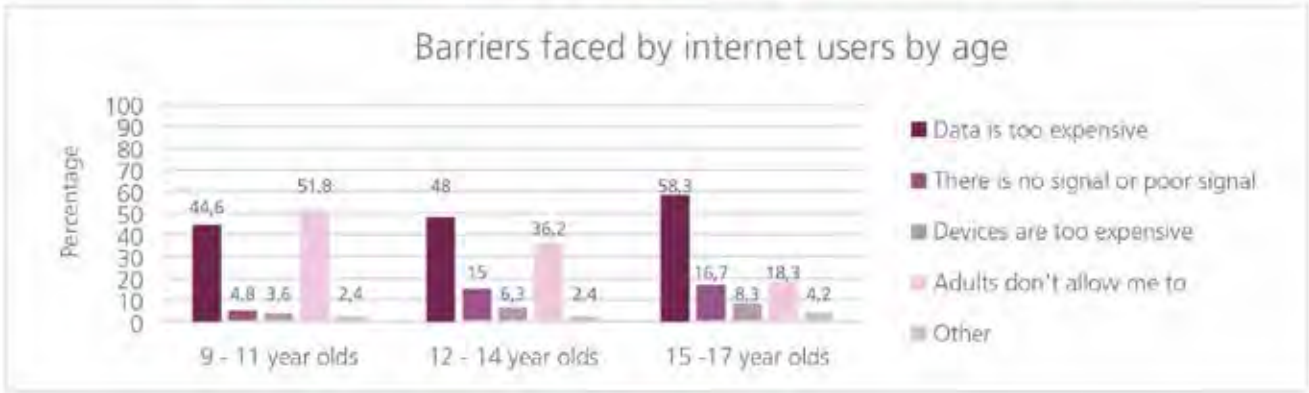
Eastern Cape, 16-18 year olds:
I: "Do you guys download music?"
FR2: "Yes."
I: "Where do you download from?"
MR2: "Tubidy."
I: "Oh, I've never heard of these things."
MR2: "Ja, its fast and easy."
FR2: "It's faster and saves your data."
MR2: "Saves data."

Participants' reported being frustrated by the cost of mobile internet access because it limited the time they were able to spend chatting via the internet, accessing movies, music and games and generally exploring the web. Indeed, findings in the qualitative study suggested that this was the key barrier that impinged on all access to opportunities for these respondents, with one participant saying access to "free data" would be the key thing she would change about the internet if she could change anything.

The second important barrier identified in the survey component of the project was obtaining a parent or adult's permission to access the internet (31.8% among internet users and 51.2% among non-users). Within this question, the term 'adults' was not delineated and so this could refer to parents, caregivers, teachers or other significant adults in the child's life. There was also no question to clarify why the child thought adults were restricting their internet usage, whether this related to issues of safety, cost, adult's lack of knowledge about ICTs or any other factor.

Obtaining adults' permission was by far the most common barrier among nine to eleven year old internet users and non-users. For older participants, the price of devices among non-users and the price of data among internet users were the greatest barriers, showing the role expense

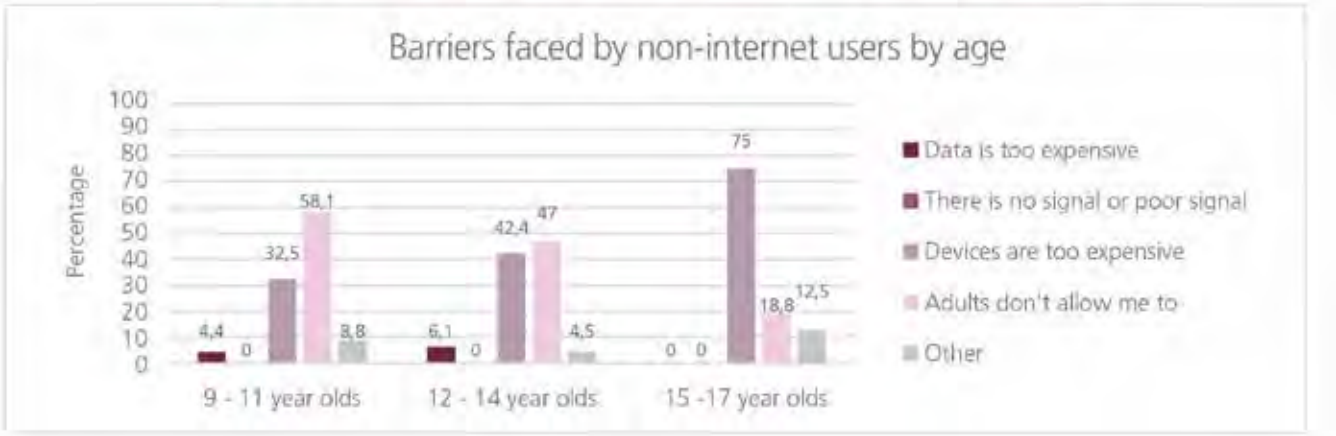
Figure 7: Percentage barriers to internet access by age among internet users



All children 9 – 17 years old who use the internet and do not always have access to the internet (N= 347)

played in limiting participants' use. Figure 7 shows a direct relationship between the cost of internet use and the participants' age and an inverse relationship between adults' permission and the participants' age.

Figure 8: Percentage barriers to internet access by age among non-users



All children 9 – 17 years old who did not use the internet (N=270).

Findings from the qualitative interviews also provided some explanation for why adults might restrict young children's internet use. As can be seen below, some parents' prohibited access in place of more active mediating strategies because they perceived themselves to be ill-equipped to successfully manage their children's internet use:

> **Western Cape, parent focus group:**
> FR: "Because for us parents, older parents, it's difficult to access the new web [internet] because we weren't raised with it. So we don't know what rules to put in place [to monitor children's use] because we weren't raised in the modern times, so we don't understand it. The children end up explaining to you how things work. So you don't know how to respond to the wrong things [that can happen on the internet]. So then I rather not buy my child a cell phone because I am afraid [of what can happen online] and I can't tell him how he should use it safely."

Although parental mediation[i] will be discussed in greater detail in later in this report, adults appeared to be an important gatekeeper to children's internet use, and their restrictive mediation practices seem to stem from a self-perceived lack of ICTs knowledge. These findings on barriers suggest that children may go from total restriction and no access to a device, to access to a device with little guidance on how to use the internet safely. This has implications for how prepared children are for the internet when they do finally access it and their resilience[ii] when using the internet.

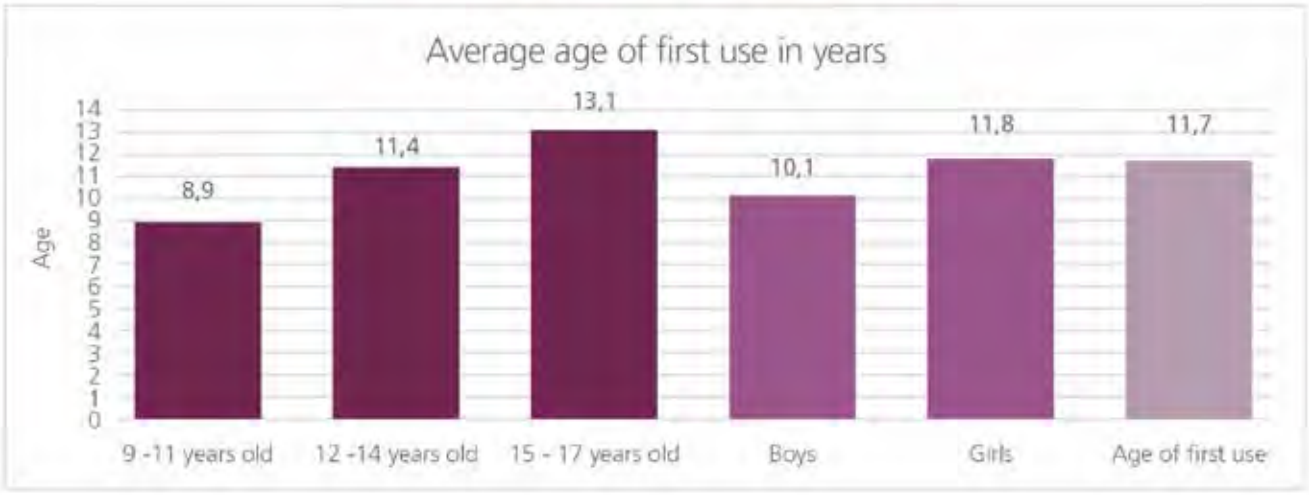
2.2.1.3. The nature of respondents' internet use

The remaining discussion in this chapter of the report includes the findings from only those children who reported using the internet.

[i] Parental mediation is a term that refers to efforts by parents to manage their children's internet use, usually to maintain their safety and wellbeing (Livingstone et al. 2015). This can consist of a number of different strategies, including monitoring children's internet use with or without their knowledge, active mediation where a parent engages with their child to learn about their internet use and assist them, and restrictive mediation where a parent limits the time a child can spend online and sets rules about what content a child can view online (Mesch, 2009).
[ii] Resilience is the ability to cope with adversity and 'bounce back' from negative experiences. This can be used to describe the ability of a child to be exposed to negative or risky situations online and avoid being harmed by them. This can include engaging in coping strategies to avoid being upset by the content or negative experiences the child is exposed to online (d'Haenens, Vandoninck & Donoso, 2013).

The average age at which participants started using the internet was 11.7 years old, with the youngest age being six and the oldest being seventeen years. The age at which children began using the internet appeared to correlate with the age of the participants, as can be seen in figure 9, with younger children starting to use the internet at a younger age than older children. However, fewer younger children used the internet than older children: 115 nine to eleven year olds compared to 232 twelve to fourteen years olds and 293 fifteen to seventeen year olds. So, those young children captured here may be the few young children who had less restrictive caregivers, better access to devices or data and therefore better opportunity to start using the internet at a younger age than average. Boys in this study reported starting to use the internet almost two years earlier than girls.

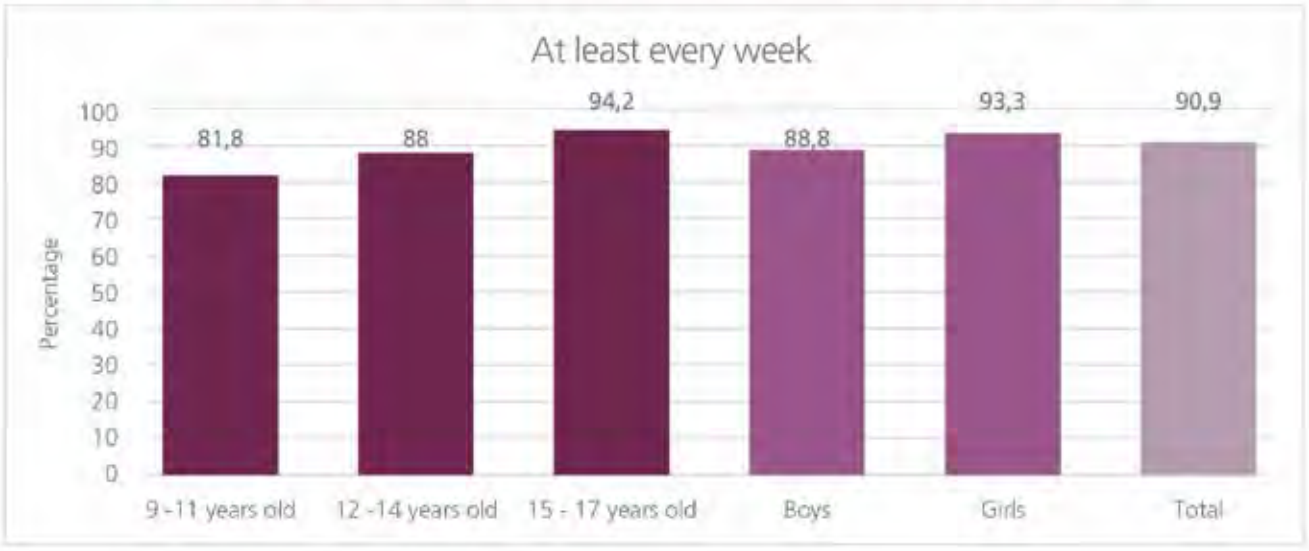
Figure 9: Average age of first internet use



All children 9 – 17 years old who used the internet (N=643).

In terms of the participants' frequency of use, 90.9% of internet users reported using the internet at least once a week, if not more frequently. This use occurred daily or almost every day for 39.8% of these respondents, and 28.1% stated that they used the internet several times a day. A larger number of older participants used the internet at least once a week than younger participants and slightly more girls used the internet at least once a week than boys.

Figure 10: Percentage of participants who use the internet at least every week



All children 9 – 17 years old who used the internet (N=643).

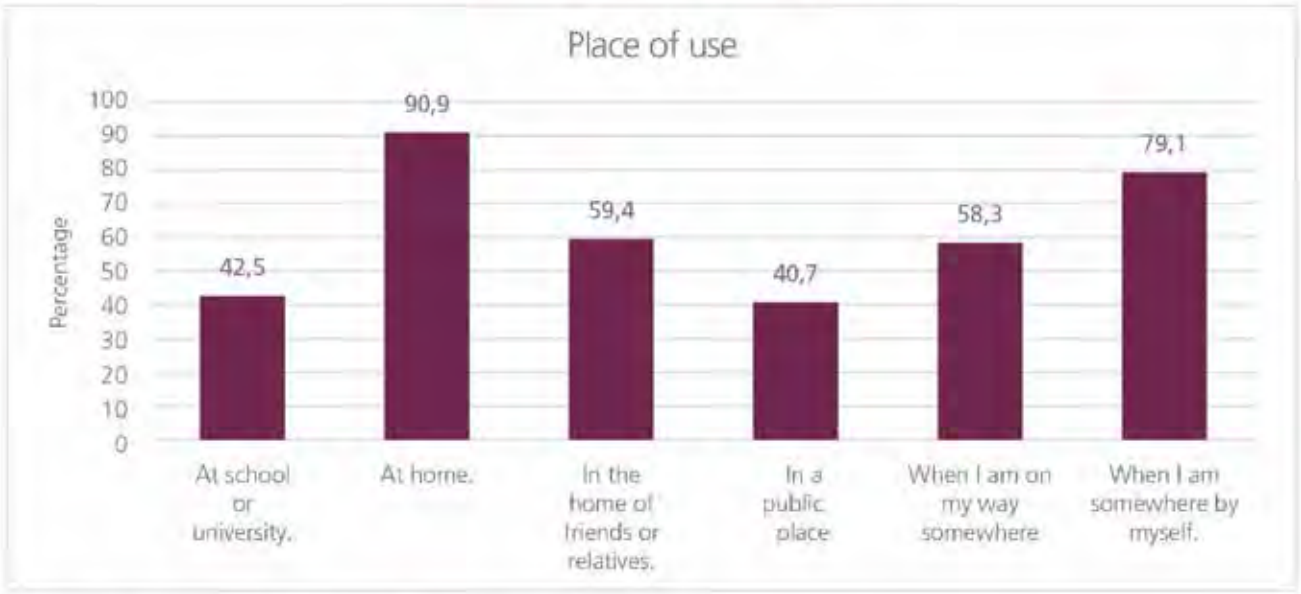
Although not all participants in the qualitative study reported using the internet frequently, often because of barriers like access to devices or data, some participants reported using the internet almost constantly, suggesting the extent to which it is integrated into their daily lives.

Eastern Cape, 16-18 year olds:
I: "How often do you go, you said you go on the internet every day, hey?"
FR2: "Yes."
FR1: "Like every minute."
I: *Laughs*
FR2: "No."
FR1: "Every hour."
I: "When you can?"
FR1: "Even in class……even in class."
FR2: "Free time."

Children who used the internet at least once a week mainly did so at home, when they were by themselves, or at the home of friends or relatives. Fewer participants used the internet in a public place or when they were at school or university. These findings show that internet use was more commonly associated with participants' leisure spaces than with formal learning spaces. This may reflect an absence of devices and internet connections with schools, or rules that prohibit the use of personal devices.[i]

A large number of children reported using the internet when they were by themselves, indicating that most respondents had the opportunity to use the internet in total privacy. This may suggest low levels of caregiver involvement in children's internet use, and perhaps have implications for their safety online.

Figure 11: Frequency of use by place

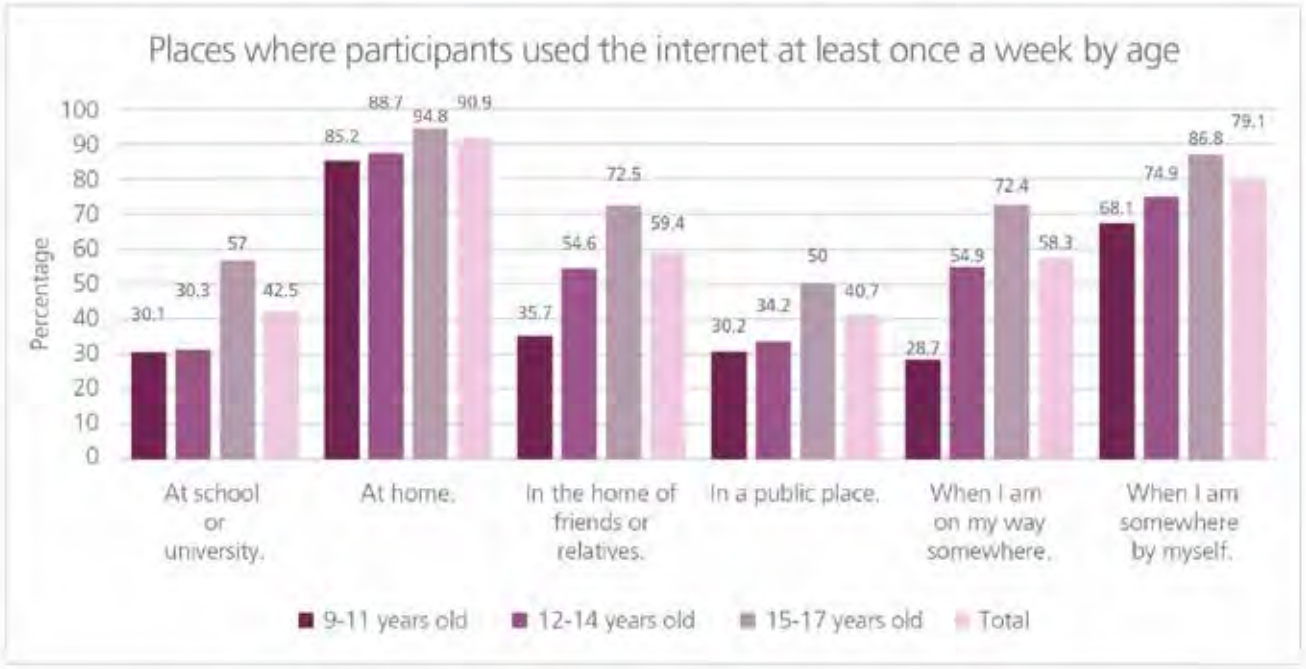


All children 9 – 17 years old who used the internet (N=643).

[i] As mentioned on p.3, only 19.4% (n=4599) of South African public schools have access to the internet for the purpose of teaching and learning, with slightly more (24.7%) having access to the internet for the purpose of administrative functions as well (DBE, 2015).

Almost all fifteen to seventeen year olds who used the internet did so at home (94.8%), with slightly fewer nine to eleven year olds (85.2%) doing so. In general, many more older children used the internet in all places than younger children, with the largest difference being the number of children who used the internet on their way somewhere.

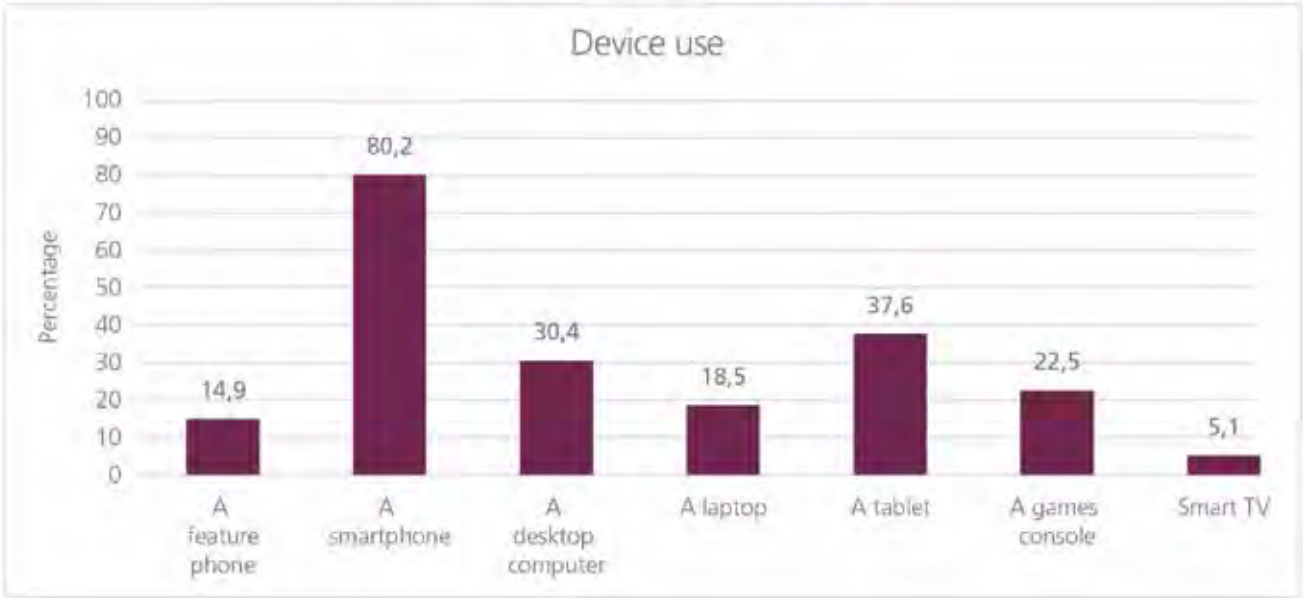
Figure 12: Places of use at least once a week by age



All children 9 – 17 years old who used the internet (N=643).

Children reported smartphones as being by far the most frequently used device to access the internet at least once a week. Far fewer respondents reported using tablets and desktop computers, with even fewer using luxury technologies like smart televisions. These results suggest that mobile technology and portable internet were essential to participants' internet access.[i]

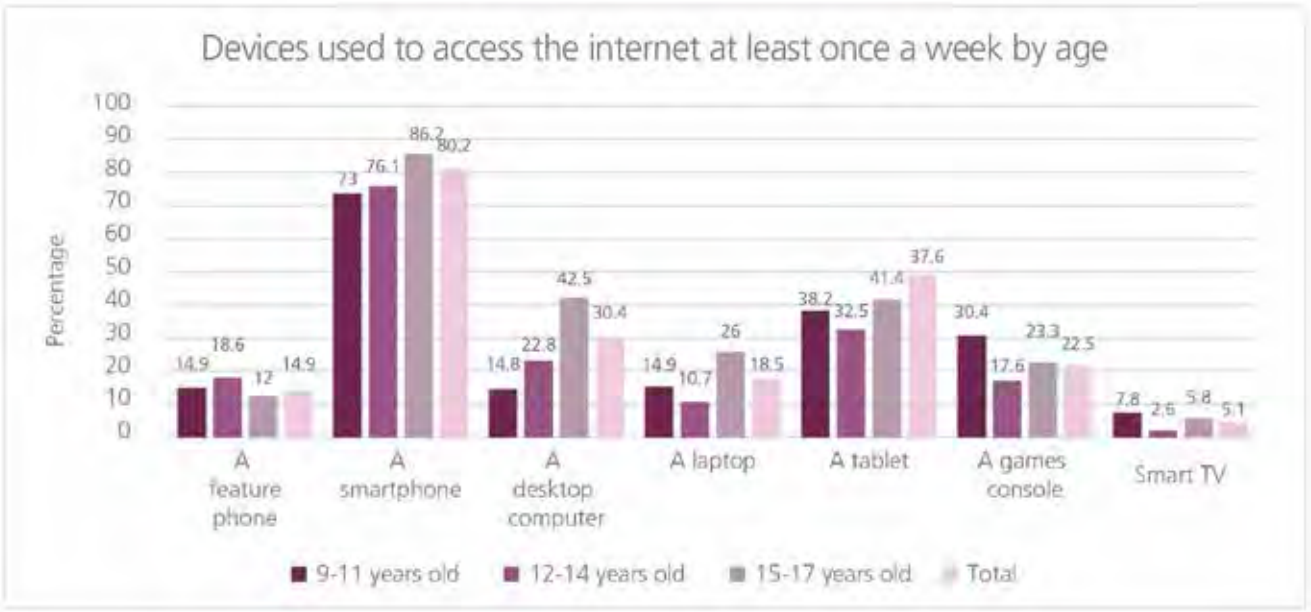
Figure 13: Frequency of use by device



All children 9 – 17 years old who used the internet (N=643).

[i] The available statistics on mobile technology use in South Africa substantiates this, with 20.3% of South African households owning one or more computers compared to 47.6% accessing the internet via mobile devices (Statistics South Africa, 2016a).

Figure 14: Devices that participants used by age

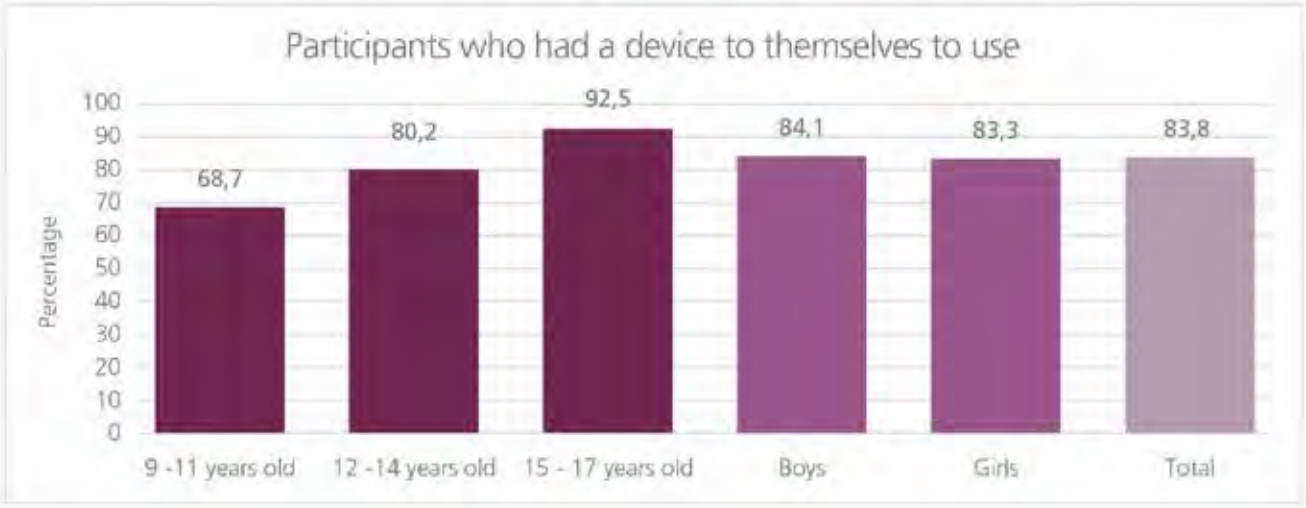


All children 9 – 17 years old who used the internet (N=643)

When looking at the devices children reported using disaggregated by age, more older children than younger children used all these different devices. Larger numbers of twelve to fourteen and fifteen to seventeen year olds, for example, used desktop computers than nine to eleven year olds. The small difference in the overall trend was noted in relation to feature phones, which were used by more twelve to fourteen year olds than fifteen to seventeen year olds. This may suggest that some children start off using a feature phone but switch to using a more expensive smartphone by the time they are fifteen or sixteen years old.

More than four in five participants (83.8%) who used the internet reported that they had their own devices, which only they used. For 63.0% of these participants, this device was a smartphone and for 16.7% this was a tablet. A much smaller 16.2% of participants used the internet on devices they shared with other people, most often their parents (65.9%) or siblings (17.1%).

Figure 15: Device for own use



All children 9 – 17 years old who used the internet (N=643).

Access to their own, personal device was much greater among older children, with almost all fifteen to seventeen year olds (92.5%) reporting having their own device. Very little difference was identified across genders.

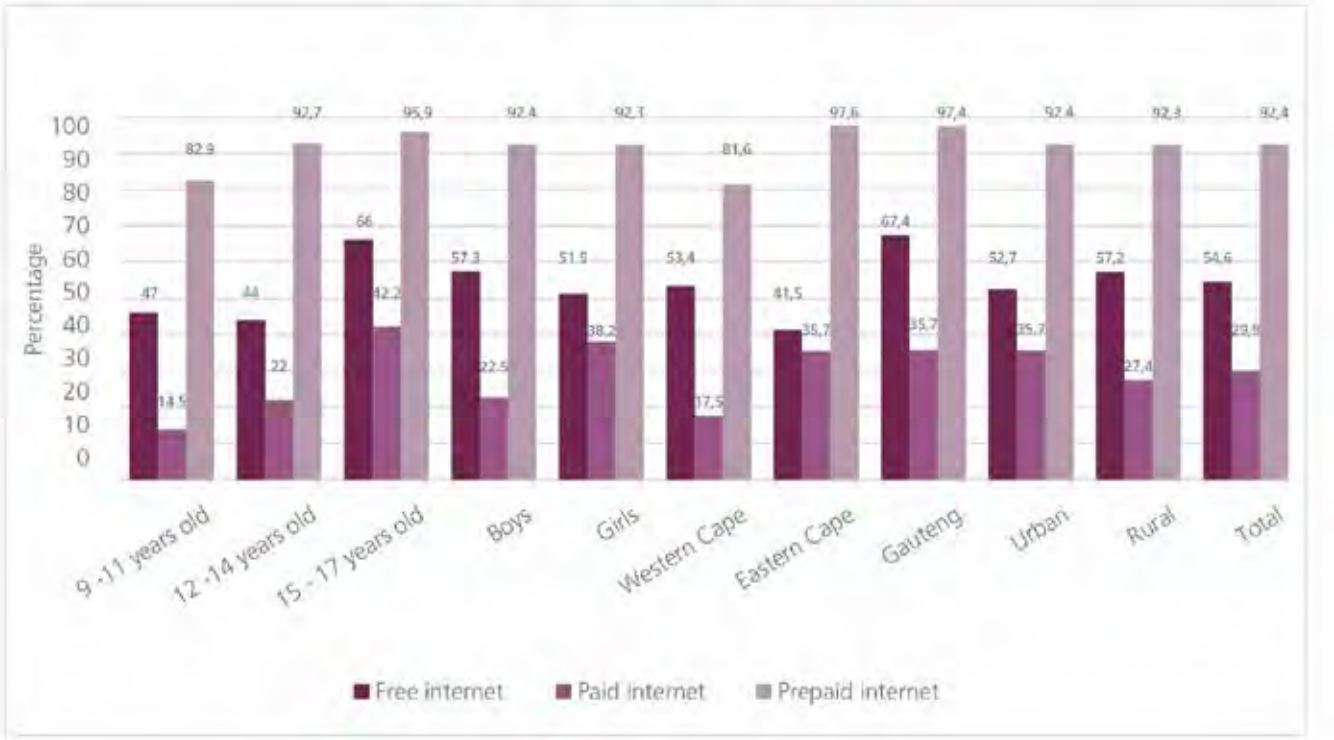
When asked how they accessed the internet, most participants (92.4%) stated that they used prepaid internet to connect, with 54.6% using free internet and 29.9% paying to use the internet. These categories were not mutually exclusive and so it was possible for participants to report using all three methods.

FREE INTERNET:
Internet that is available for free e.g. at school, in libraries in shops.

PREPAID INTERNET:
Internet accessed via a mobile service provider's network ('data') or via broadband on a home modem that is pre-purchased.

PAID INTERNET:
Internet that is paid for as it is used (e.g. at an internet café).

Figure 16: Method of internet access



All children 9 – 17 years old who used the internet (N=643).

This pattern of use remained unchanged even when the data was stratified. While fifteen to seventeen year olds used all three methods of connecting in larger numbers, prepaid internet had an overwhelming lead among all age groups. More girls than boys had access to paid internet but more boys than girls used free internet. Participants in Gauteng mostly used both free internet and data, whereas those in the Eastern Cape and Western Cape mostly used data. There was very little variation in the participants' methods of internet access across urban and rural areas.

Comparing the prominence of 'data' here to the extent to which participants were concerned about its cost as a barrier to their use, suggests that some participants may not have had access to lower cost options like free internet or cheap paid internet (broadband).

More than two in three participants (69.9%) said that they did not need any help to access the internet and could do it on their own. A smaller number (28.9%) said that they often helped their friends go online and 25.9% of participants said that they helped their friends with their online settings and safety settings.

2.2.2. Parents

Parents and caregivers of children were also asked about their access to the internet. Slightly fewer parents (65.3%) than children (70.4%) reported using the internet. Only one in five (19.2%) parents stated that they had used the internet for the past few years, with most (34.7%) reporting having used the internet for only the past few months.

Considering that most children reported having started using the internet two or more years earlier, these findings may suggest that many children began using the internet before their parents or caregivers. That said, most parents reported using the internet frequently, with 88.5% of those parents who did use the internet accessing it at least every week or more often. More than two in three (69.9%) parents who did use the internet said that they were able to access the internet themselves, without any help, while 17.4% only went online when their children helped them.

These findings show that while fewer parents used the internet than their children and most had only started using the internet recently, they used the internet often and were, in most cases, skilled enough to connect to it on their own. These were perhaps not always the impressions children had of their parents and caregivers, as can be seen in the extract from the qualitative study below:

> **Western Cape, 11-12 year olds:**
> FR1: "My mother doesn't even know how to turn her phone." *Laughs*

Like their children, parents tended to use smartphones and tablets to access the internet rather than more formal devices like laptops and desktop computers. Most parents who used the internet used a smartphone almost every day, daily or several times a day (65.5%) and 22.2% used a tablet almost every day. One in three parents (33.6%) used the internet at work at least every day. Two in three parents (63.9%) used the internet at home almost every day and 54.7% used the internet when they were somewhere by themselves almost every day.

2.3. Opportunities and practices

KEY FINDINGS

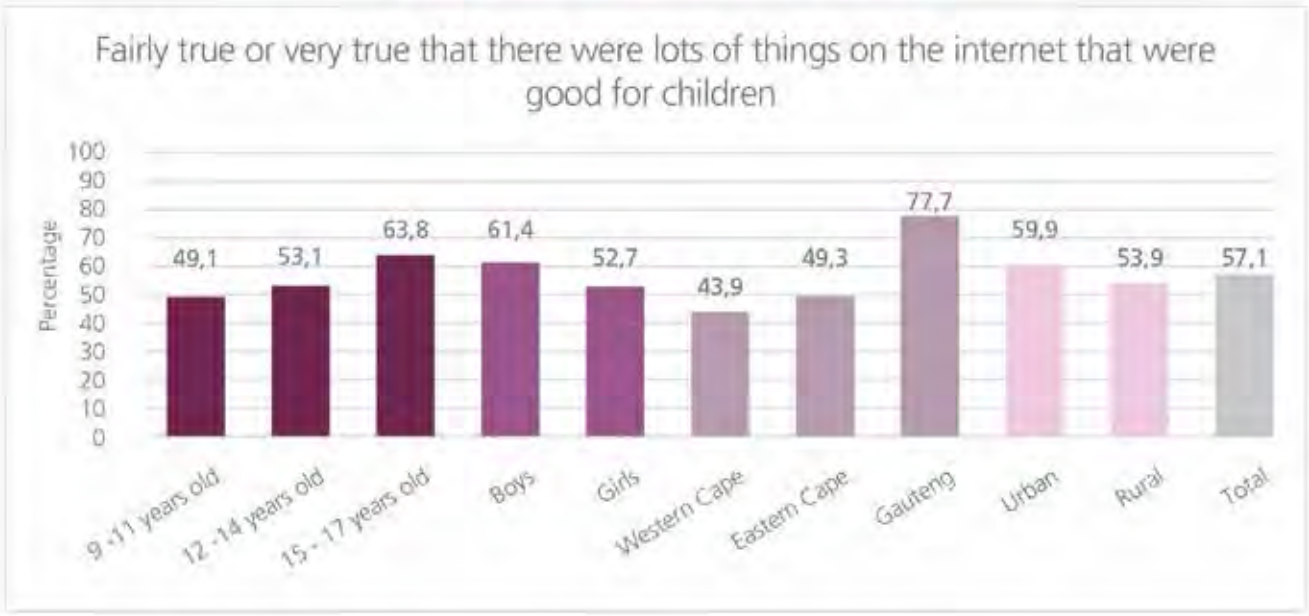
- Most child participants (95.6%) said that they sometimes or always had fun when they went online.
- Socialising, especially via instant messaging, learning and school work were popular activities among internet users, while civic and community participation online were not.
- Of the participants whose first language was not English, one in two (51.7%) children and one in three (34.5%) parents said it was difficult to find content online in their first language.

2.3.1. Children

The internet affords users many opportunities and these can involve a number of domains, including learning, communication, creativity and entertainment.[37] For children, these opportunities can be especially appealing. They allow children to develop their skills and learn on their own terms, and to do so via a medium through which they can potentially escape the constraints and demands of their offline life, which builds their autonomy.[38]

Participants in this study evaluated these opportunities favourably, with most participants (95.6%) reporting that they sometimes or always had fun when they went online. More than half (57.1%) of children felt that it was fairly true or very true that there were lots of things on the internet that were good for children.

Figure 17: Fairly true or very true that there were lots of the things on the internet that were good for children



All children 9 – 17 years old who used the internet (N=643).

In most cases, more than half the participants felt it was fairly true or very true that there were things online that were good for children. A greater number of older children had this positive attitude than younger children, suggesting that perhaps children's enjoyment of the internet increased with age. Nearly 10.0% more boys than girls had positive attitudes towards the internet. Participants from Gauteng and urban areas reported more positive attitudes towards the internet.

Of those children who thought that the internet was good for children, the following trends were coded from their open ended responses to the question: "What things on the internet do you think are good for children your age?" Nearly one in two participants (49.9%) liked the internet because of the opportunities it gave them for learning, 30.4% enjoyed accessing various forms of entertainment online (music/movies/games etc.), 16% enjoyed being able to socialise online and 1.5% thought the internet was good because it helped them with basic administration and errands (like banking).

"I can learn about South African history."

-Girl, 12 years old

"You can find explanations for words you don't understand."

-Boy, 17 years old

"You can search for things rather to go to the library."

-Boy, 17 years old

"Information about bursaries, you can see places you've never been, talk to people you don't know, watch the news."

-Boy, 15 years old

"Playing games, doing school work, doing puzzles, looking for a love partner."

-Boy, 15 years old

"Finding pictures and information for school, it's even better than teachers."

-Girl, 16 years old

In the qualitative interviews the participants mentioned multiple opportunities they accessed online, all of which mirrored the findings of the quantitative study. There was mention of the importance of the internet to school work and broadening their knowledge on various subjects, accessing entertainment, socialising and access to educational opportunities. All these themes can be seen in the extracts below.

Eastern Cape, 16-18 year olds:
MR: "You can also catch up with uhm...like soapies [soap operas] if it's your favourite soapie."
FR: "The latest."
I: "So you can read up on what happened?"
MR: "Yes."
FR: "Latest trends, what's trends."
MR: "Fashion."

Western Cape, 14-16 year olds:
I: "Okay. Downloading soccer videos. Tell me a bit more about this?"
MR: "It's very interesting… I have a passion for soccer, I love playing… Tricks and so on."
I: "Okay. So is this to teach yourself how to do tricks?"
MR: "To improve."
I: "Okay. How did you find out where to find those videos?"
MR: "Maybe a friend or so… possibly a website to which I go."

Western Cape, 16-18 year olds:
I: "Or perhaps I should rather say, what value has the internet brought to your life? If you think about what difference it has made?"
MR: "Just that you know more about things you do not know much about."

Eastern Cape, 16-18 year olds:
I: "So talking about feelings, uhm…how would you feel if you couldn't go on the internet at all?"
MR: "Yoh!"
MR: "Yoh!"
MR: "I will feel like…"
FR: "Bored!"
FR: "Bored!"
I: "So it's important just for entertainment to keep you…"
FR: "Occupied"
I: "Uhm…connected?"
FR: "Ja."

Eastern Cape, 16-18 year olds:
FR1: "We won't be able to do project work."
I: "If there's no internet?"
FR1: "Ja."
MR2: "Ja."
I: "So, it's good for uhm..."
FR2: "School work."

The types of opportunities accessed by participants in the qualitative survey were found to differ slightly with age. While older children reported specific activities they enjoyed or benefited from online, for younger children, the main benefit was the social capital of merely having access to these technologies.

Eastern Cape, 9-11 year olds:
I: "Do you Instagram?"
FR1: "I have the app but I haven't gone on there yet."
I: "Are you allowed to go on there?"
(Group collectively say "yes")
FR1: "And Skype!"
I: "Who do you talk to on Skype?"
FR1: "Well I have the app but I don't use it."

In the qualitative study, young participants reported having multiple applications and social networking accounts but did not report ever actually using them, seeming to be satisfied to 'collect' applications instead. However, younger participants did report playing online games and getting much enjoyment out of this activity, while older participants deemed this past-time decidedly 'uncool'.

Access to the internet was clearly very important to those participants who used it. This was especially emphasised in a Gauteng focus group, where when children were asked whether there was anything else they wished they knew how to do on the internet, they reported wanting to able to steal airtime, in order to ensure their access to the internet remained uninterrupted. These participants also wished they could hack into or unlock other people's phones in order to spy on them, specifically to keep track of romantic partners. The interest in these opportunities, though unorthodox and invasive, shows the extent of the participants' belief in the potential of the internet to meet their every need, but also reflects the need for raising awareness and educating children on individual user rights, and responsible usage of technology and appropriate online behaviour.

The opportunities pursued by children online were delineated in the quantitative component of the study, where participants were asked how often they engaged in specific online activities in the last month. Table 4 presents the full list of online opportunities accessed. As with the opportunities already discussed, the rates of participants' engagement varied substantially across the range of different opportunities. This suggested that not all the opportunities the participants were asked about were valuable to them, or perhaps they were simply activities that the participants used less frequently than every week. In general, more than half the respondents used the internet for learning and social activities but commercial, civic and community participation was much less frequent.

It is noteworthy that so few participants joined protests, signed petitions or joined civic groups online, considering that South Africa has seen an increase in youth social justice movements in the past few years, and many of these made use of the internet to further their cause (for example, the #rhodesmustfall and #feesmustfall movements).[39] Although these movements were led by university students, one might expect some trickle down to school children, especially as the outcomes of these efforts impact directly on the future opportunities of children.

It is also worth highlighting that it is not known to what degree barriers like data cost and parents' permission impacted on children's access to opportunities.

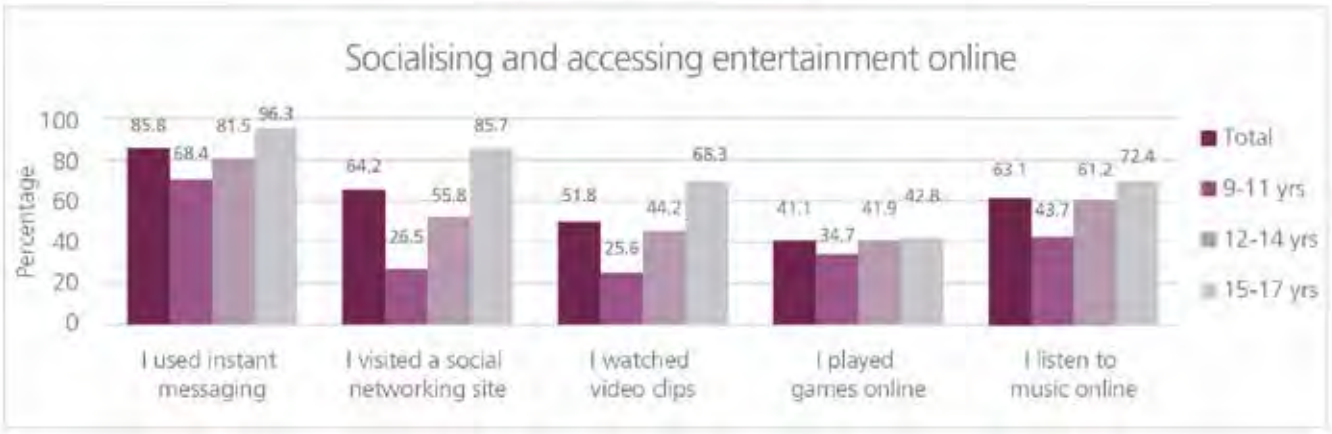
Table 4: Opportunities children accessed online

How often have you done these things online in the past month?	More than once a week
Learning	
I learned something new by searching online	76.5%
I used the internet for school work	70.0%
I looked for information about work or study opportunities	45.2%
Community participation	
I looked for resources or events about my local neighbourhood	16.3%
I got involved online in a local organisation or charity	6.7%
I used the internet to help somebody else	42.0%
I used the internet to talk to people from places or backgrounds different from mine	43.8%
Civic participation	
I looked for the news online	34.7%
I discussed political or social problems with other people online	17.0%
I got involved online in a campaign or protest	4.2%
I signed a petition online	6.1%
I used the internet to join a civic, religious or political group	7.3%
Creative participation	
I posted videos or music created by someone else	34.2%
I created my own video or music and uploaded it to share	33.0%
I created a blog or story or website online	18.0%
Social relationships	
I used instant messaging	85.8%
I visited a social network site	64.2%
I helped someone else who needed or wanted to go online	46.1%
I talked to family or friends who live further away	63.5%
I commented on the updates that friends or family have put online	59.6%
I showed my friends or family something that I saw online	56.7%
I visited a chatroom to meet new people	31.5%
Entertainment	
I watched video clips	51.8%
I played online games alone	49.9%
I played games with other people online	23.1%
I listened to music online (by downloading or streaming)	63.1%
Personal	
I posted photos or comments online (e.g. on Facebook or a blog)	58.1%
I looked for health information for myself or someone I know	28.9%
I participated in a site where people share my interests or hobbies	32.6%
Commercial	
I browsed for things to buy	22.9%
I checked out what things cost by looking online	32.3%

All children 9 – 17 years old who used the internet (N=643).

As can be seen in table 4, instant messaging was the most popular activity online, with 85.8% of respondents reporting that they used instant messaging at least every week, if not more frequently. When disaggregated by age (figure 18), almost all (96.3%) fifteen to seventeen year olds used instant messaging at least every week, with younger children using this service slightly less. Social networking was also reported to be a popular activity (64.2%) but there was a greater spread across the different age groups, with far fewer younger children using the internet than older children. Indeed, when looking at a range of different activities, fifteen to seventeen year olds were the most likely to engage in all activities, but in some cases, the differences were greater than others. For example, while substantially more older children watched video clips and listened to music online, the differences in the number of children who played games online did not vary much across age groups, suggesting that children of different age groups had different tastes in online opportunities.

Figure 18: Online opportunities - socialising and entertainment

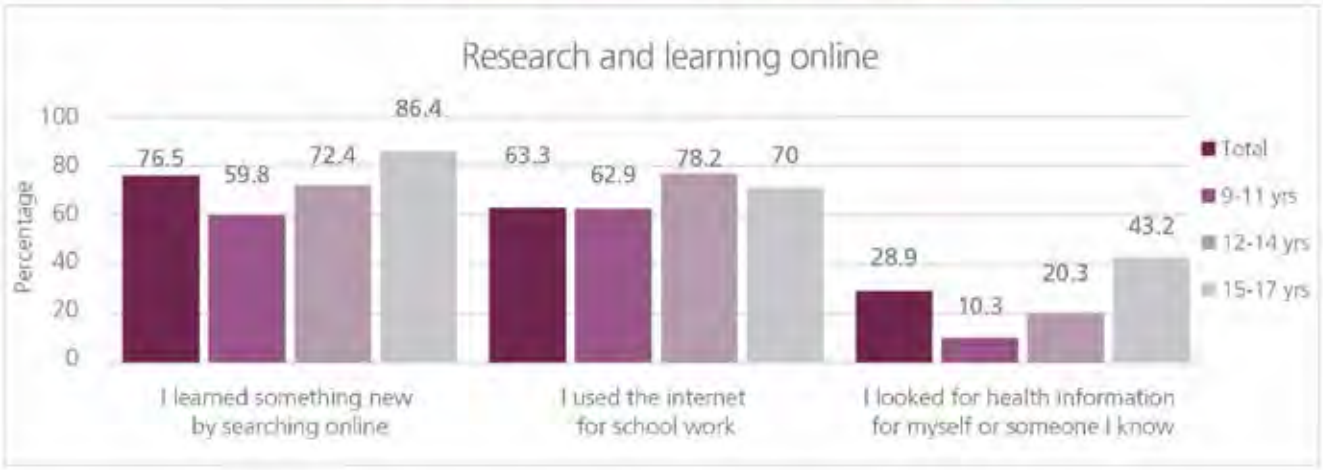


All children 9 – 17 years old who used the internet (N=643).

The majority of participants reported using the internet at least once a week to learn something or for school work. Here again, larger numbers of older children used the internet for this purpose, although the majority of younger children still engaged in this activity. Just under a third of participants (28.9%) looked for health information online at least once a week, an opportunity that has particular significance in the South African context.[i] Very few nine to eleven year olds engaged in this activity, perhaps understandably, with far more fifteen to seventeen year olds doing this online.

i South Africa performs poorly on a number of health indicators and has some of the highest rates of HIV/Aids and tuberculosis in the world. South Africans also experience high rates of non-communicable diseases such as diabetes, cardiovascular diseases and cancer (Statistics South Africa, 2013). Using the internet to find out more about these diseases for themselves or family members therefore has the potential to be an exceptionally valuable opportunity afforded to children by the internet in South Africa.

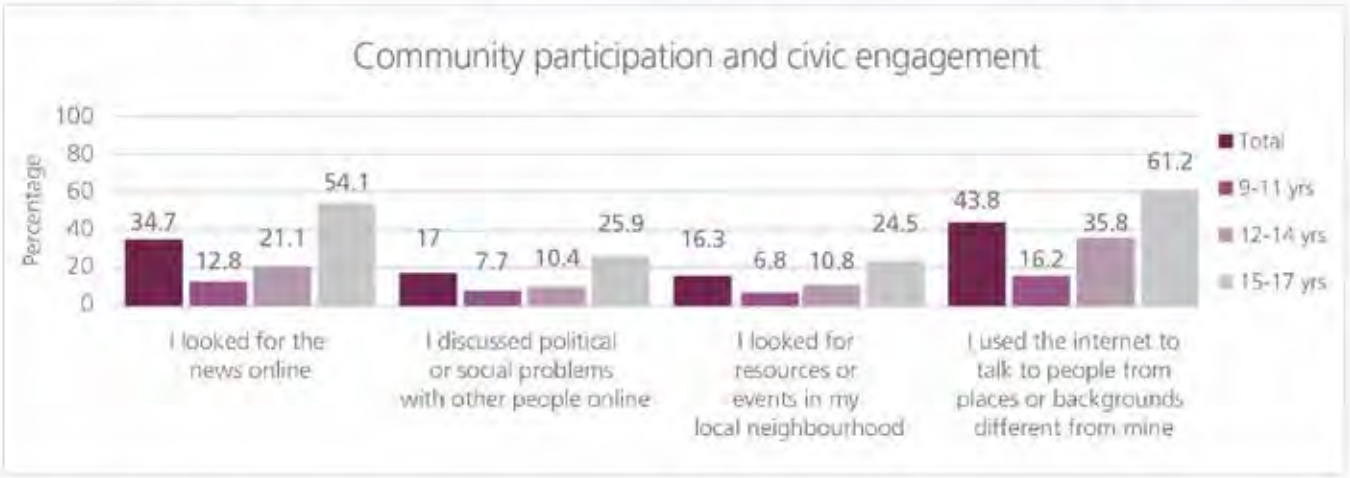
Figure 19: Online opportunities - research and learning



All children 9 – 17 years old who used the internet (N=643)

Compared to some of the other activities discussed, very few participants reported accessing community participation and civic related opportunities online. That said, more than half of fifteen to seventeen year olds (54.1%) looked for the news online at least every week and one in four discussed political or social problems with other people online (25.9%) and looked for resources or events in their local neighbourhood (24.5%). More than a third of participants (43.8%) spoke to someone from a different background to theirs at least once a week, suggesting that many participants took up the opportunities offered by the internet to expand their world view and social circles.

Figure Figure 20: Online opportunities - community participation and civic engagement



All children 9 – 17 years old who used the internet (N=643)

When asked what online activities were important to them, the participants' responses echoed the findings on their engagement in online activities. Respondents felt it was important for them to be able to learn online (73.7%), access information or resources that interested them online (63.7%) or socialise online (64.2%). Although only a few participants reported engaging in creative activities online, 51.3% of participants felt it was important to be able to be creative online. Participants did not appear to prioritise engaging in commercial activities, political or social discussion, or community participation online, as was the case when looking at their activities in the previous table.

Table 5: Importance of online opportunities to respondents

How important is it for you to be able to do these things...	Fairly or very important
Learn online.	73.7%
Participate in your community online.	28.0%
Participate in politics online and talk about social issues.	25.5%
Be creative online.	51.3%
Socialise online.	64.2%
Access entertainment online.	50.7%
Access information or resources that interest you online.	63.7%
Buy or sell things online.	23.8%

All children 9 – 17 years old who used the internet (N=643).

In order to explore the social opportunities the participants' accessed online further, the participants were asked who specifically they were frequently in contact with via their phone. Perhaps unsurprisingly, almost all participants (81.6%) reported being in contact with a caregiver at least every week, with slightly fewer being in regular contact with a friend around the same age (71.4%). A small but noteworthy number of participants reported being in regular contact with a stranger they met online (12.9%), with double (24.7%) reporting being in contact with someone they met online but who was connected in some way to people in the child's offline life. This suggested that children were engaging with wider communities and meeting new people online, although it is more likely than not that these new people were associated with their offline lives in some way.

Table 6: People children talk to via their phones

How often are you in contact with the following people by talking on a mobile phone/smartphone...	At least every week or more often...
My mother, father or other caregiver.	81.6%
My brother or sister (or other similarly-aged relatives).	62.5%
A friend around my age.	71.4%
A teacher.	8.9%
Another adult I trust.	35.9%
Someone I first met on the internet, but who is friends or family of other people I know in person.	24.7%
Someone I first met on the internet, but who has no other connection to my life outside of the internet.	12.9%

All children 9 – 17 years old who used the internet (N=643).

Participants were also asked more detailed questions about how they may have used the internet to further their learning and complete their school work. More than half the participants (58.4%) reported using the internet at least every week to practise something they were learning and nearly half (49.6%) used it to write things like essays. The participants also reported using the internet to communicate around their school work, and even engage in group work, with 40.9% of participants reporting doing so at least once a week. These findings suggest that although not universally, the internet was a valuable support in many of the participants' education.

Table 7: School related internet activities

How often do you use the internet for the following activities at school…	At least every week or more often…
Making presentations.	34.2%
Writing things (like essays or projects).	49.6%
Making pictures.	51.7%
Practising something I am learning (e.g. maths or a language or music).	58.4%
Checking out information on the school website.	31.8%
Doing group work with other students.	40.9%
Chatting online at school.	17.0%
Communicating with teachers (e.g. submitting homework).	15.9%
Contributing to a school blog or online discussion.	16.6%

All children 9 – 17 years old who used the internet (N=643).

As has already been discussed, access to the internet in schools is limited in South Africa, but these findings suggest that this is not entirely preventing children from using the internet for educational purposes. This is a useful insight considering the importance children placed on using the internet for learning. Findings from the qualitative study shed some light on this dynamic, with resources already available to children – their phones – being reported as the devices on which they engaged internet searches for learning purposes and group work.

> **Eastern Cape, 16-18 year olds:**
> I: "Do any of your teachers or anyone like that ever talk to you about how to be safe on the internet?"
> MR1: "Yes."
> FR1: "Not really."
> FR2: "Not really."
> FR1: "But at some point they encourage us to be on social media. I think it was Tuesday when we went to the matric meeting and the headmaster was like, when we have WhatsApp we can connect with our friends like if we don't go to school you can talk to your friend and find out what you missed and stuff. So it's important to like have your friend's WhatsApp numbers and stuff."

Participants were asked some questions about whether they felt the content available to them online was socially and culturally relevant to their own identity and whether they were able to access resources and information that was socially and culturally useful to them. Two in three participants (69.7%) said that they were always or at least sometimes able to find information online about their community, culture or lifestyle. More than half (58.3%) said that they wished there were more information resources available online that was relevant to their identity and situation. Roughly half of the participants (51.7%) whose home language was not English stated that it was easy to find information and resources online in their home language (only 15.0% of respondents stated that English was their first or home language). This suggests that there is content online in the participants' language and of relevance to their culture, but that children may benefit from access to more.

2.3.2. Parents

Parents were not asked as many questions about the opportunities they accessed online, although they were asked similar questions about accessing content and resources online that were relevant to their cultural identity. Of the parents who used the internet, 59.6% said that

they were always or at least sometimes able to find information online about their community or culture or lifestyle and 72.4% said that they wished there were more information resources available online relevant to their unique identity. One in three parents (34.5%) whose home language was not English stated that it was easy to find information and resources online in their home language (12.2% of parents reported that their home language was English). These rates are far lower than their children's, suggesting that parents found the content available on the internet to be less relevant to them, or were less able to find relevant content.

In the qualitative interviews the parents mentioned many opportunities they accessed online and ways that the internet improved their lives. Parents tended to describe themselves as less internet savvy than their children and the way the internet benefited them often reflected this, with parents using the internet in more practical or goal-orientated ways than their children. Parents discussed using the internet to access emails, look for jobs or maintain relationships with family members who lived far away. No parent mentioned doing things like playing an online game or searching for music, and usually their key activity was instant messaging, which they saw as a useful means of organising their lives, as well as socialising.

Western Cape, parent focus group:
FR1: "A person can't always get in touch with your people [e.g. family or friends etc.], to say "happy birthday" or if someone is ill [you are able to stay in contact with them], so it's a positive."
I: "So one can actually say that it brings family members closer to each other?"
FR1: "Closer to each other yes."
FR3: "Yes."

The focus groups also provided an opportunity for parents to reflect on the opportunities the internet provided their children, with all parents mentioning aspects of the internet they perceived as of benefit to their children. These usually related to the potential to improve their child's education, as well as their child's ability to socialise. Two parents in the Western Cape also discussed the benefits of ICTs to their children who had special needs, namely that it allowed them to be entertained by games and music.

Eastern Cape, parent focus group 1:
I: "Do you think kids can be better students because they can be better, perform better at school because they can access all this information?"
FR: "Yes they can…I think so…it's my opinion, I do not know. I think they can because I saw with my two teenagers…you know? If they don't know something they just google and then they get better marks……because sometimes we as parents don't know the things they are doing at school now. They are doing advanced stuff that we don't know."

Western Cape, parent focus group:
FR2: "The internet makes the children very clever."
I: "Okay….what do you mean by that aunty?"
FR2: "Knowledge. With their school work. And they don't understand something now, then they go in. Knowledge. It gives them knowledge."

Eastern Cape, parent focus group 1:
FR: "And secondly, they learn here at uhm..... Red Tree primary school. So for them it helps to get the English.....first of all. They are very brilliant. When they play the game, they go straight to the internet and get the games and they're making them very....bright and brilliant for their English to be perfect. So I think it's very good for them like that."

Western Cape, parent focus group:
FR2: "And then I also have a boy but he isn't one, he is just for music on the phone. He is at the thingy school [special needs school]. I always tell him "learn to write on the phone" for him to build up his writing…but I don't even believe he can go on WhatsApp because he is at the special needs school and can't read properly. He is more with music."
FR1: "Like me. Now I also have one that also goes to a special needs school now. He's also all about music…that's why they sit like that….and play games and music."

Eastern Cape, parent focus group 1:
FR2: "For example for the farewell."
FR1: "Yes, she's also doing that now."
FR2: "He googled for his outfit."
Group laughs
FR2: "For the farewell. But we didn't have that kind of money for the thing that he wanted to wear. And then he had to have a second choice....to go with something else."

2.4. Skills

KEY FINDINGS

- Nearly two in three (59.4%) children stated that they knew a lot of things about using the internet. One in two (52.1%) children said that they knew more about using the internet than their parents.
- Most child participants reported knowing how to do things like saving a photograph from the internet, opening downloaded files and managing th settings of their social media accounts. That said, the majority of child participants reported being unable to perform more sophisticated tasks online, like using programming language or designing a website.
- When asked the same skills questions as their children, parents tended to be roughly as skilled as their children, and sometimes more skilled.
- Most children (86.3%) had an account on a social networking site and the most popular ones were Whatsapp (94.2%), Facebook (68.5%) and Instagram (18.0%).

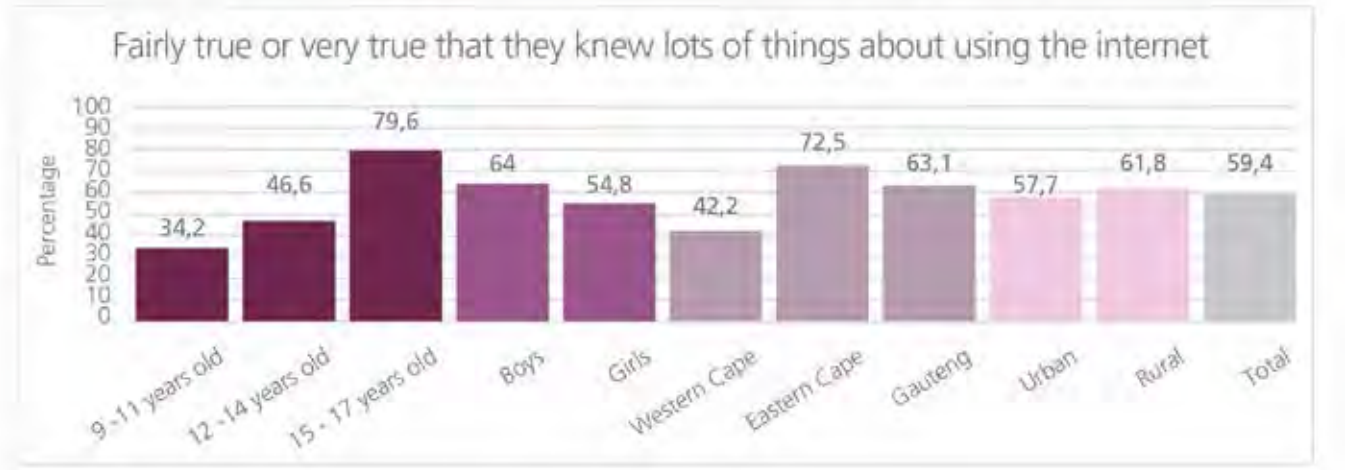
2.4.1. Children

2.4.1.1. Skills

The child participants in this study were generally confident that they were skilled internet users and indeed, 59.4% of participants said that it was fairly true or very true that they knew lots of things about using the internet.

Older children were far more confident in their knowledge than younger children, with four out of five (79.6%) fifteen to seventeen year olds reporting knowing lots of things about using the internet. Boys were nearly ten percentage points more confident than girls about their internet knowledge. Participants in Gauteng were also confident in their abilities (72.5%), far more than participants in the Western Cape (42.2%). Children in rural areas reported knowing slightly more about using the internet (61.8%) than participants in urban areas (61.8%).

Figure 21: Fairly true or very true that they knew lots of things about using the internet



All children 9 – 17 years old who used the internet (N=643).

One in two (52.1%) participants also said that it was fairly true or very true that they knew more about the internet than their parents or caregivers. This finding reiterates an attitude expressed throughout this study, that parents are not as knowledgable about the internet as their children. This opinion was also found in the qualitative interviews, as can be seen in the following extracts:

Eastern Cape, 14-17 year olds:
I: "Do you ask your teachers for help?"
FR: "They ask me."
FR: "They always ask us."

Eastern Cape, 16-18 year olds:
I: "Okay so do you think your parents know as much as you about the internet? Or do you know more?"
FR: "I know more."
FR: "I'd say the generation of today knows more than our parents. Like we're much smarter than the previous generation."

These extracts suggest that some participants had great confidence in their internet knowledge when compared to the adults in their lives. That said, there were some exceptions to this view, as can be seen below.

Eastern Cape, 14-17 year olds:
I: "Do you think your parents know more about the internet or less than you?"
FR1: "More!"
I: "Really?"
FR1: "Yes."
I: "So your parents use the internet a lot?"
FR1: "Yes."
MR2: "Ja."

When looking at the findings of the quantitative study, the participants' confidence in their internet skills did not always translate into a high level of technical skill. Almost all participants knew how to do some tasks online, while very few reported being able to do other tasks. These differences may have highlighted the tasks the participants had had cause to practise, or perhaps, the type of tasks the devices the children used allowed them to practise.
The participants were asked about their operational, information, social, creative and mobile skills

on the internet. Most participants (80.5%) stated that they knew how to save a photo they found online and how to remove people from their contact lists (83.5%). However, far fewer participants (23.8%) knew how to use programming language or knew how to design a website (23.5%). It seemed that most participants in this study did not have the need or opportunity to develop these more technically advanced skills. Or indeed, the fact that only 41.2% of participants knew how to use shortcut keys may simply suggest the rest of the participants did not use a computer regularly enough to become familiar with short cut keys. However, as can be seen in table 8, there were a number of skills that the majority of participants reported having, suggesting that the participants' confidence was not entirely misplaced.

Table 8: Children's online skills

Think about how you use the internet. How true are these things for you?	Fairly true for me or very true for me
Operational skills	
I know how to save a photo that I find online	80.5%
I know how to change my privacy settings (e.g. on a social networking site)	72.5%
I know how to use a programming language	23.8%
I know how to open downloaded files	66.1%
I know how to use shortcut keys (e.g. CTRL -C for copy, CTRL-S for save)	41.2%
I know how to open a new tab in a browser	49.2%
Information/browsing skills	
I find it easy to find a website I have visited before	58.0%
I find it easy to check if the information I find online is true	45.1%
I find it easy to choose the best keywords for online searches	47.3%
Sometimes I end up on websites without knowing how I got there	53.1%
Social skills	
I know which information I should and shouldn't share online	73.1%
I know how to remove people from my contact lists	83.5%
I know how to change who I share content with (e.g. friends, friends of friends or everyone)	71.8%
Creative skills	
I know how to create something new from video or music that I found online	38.7%
I know how to post online videos or music that I have created myself	41.2%
I know which different types of licences apply to online content	20.7%
I know how to design a website	23.5%
Mobile skills	
I know how to install apps on a mobile device (e.g. phone or tablet)	60.0%
I know how to keep track of the costs of mobile app use	40.3%

All children 9 – 17 years old who used the internet (N=643).

Figure 22: Operational and information skills by age

All children 9 – 17 years old who used the internet (N=643).

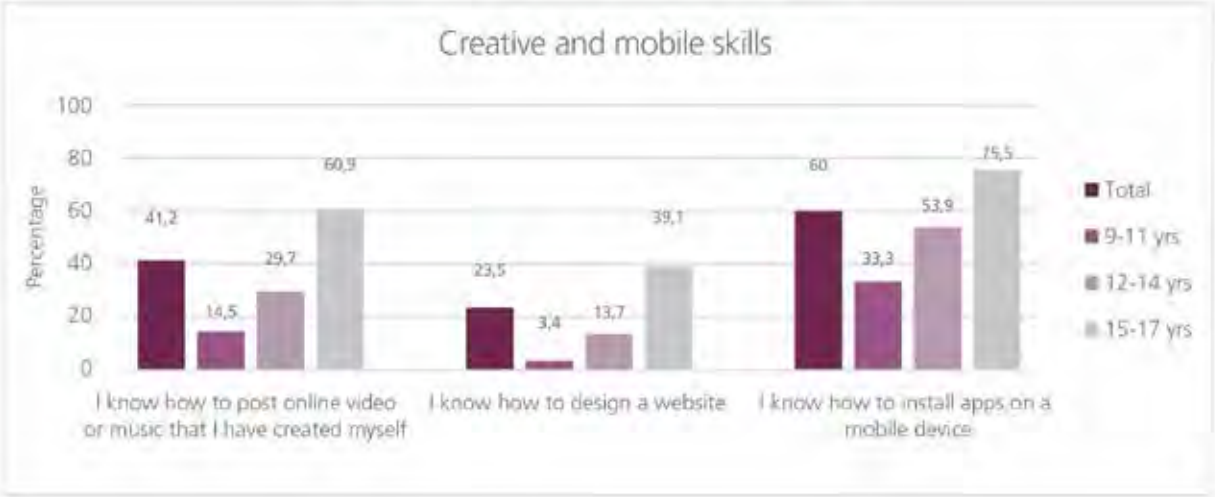
In terms of children's skills relating to their social skills online, half of nine to eleven year olds (52.1%) reported that they knew what information they should and shouldn't share online, a little more than half (56.9%) knew how to remove people from their contact list and less than half (41.0%) knew how to change who they shared their content with on social media. Meanwhile, almost all fifteen to seventeen year olds knew how to perform these tasks. Considering these differences in the context of social media use suggests that younger children may not be suitably skilled to manage their profiles successfully, or perhaps this was an indication that younger children did not use social media much. By the same token, this finding shows that older children were clearly frequent and effective managers of their social media accounts.

Figure 23: Social skills by age

All children 9 – 17 years old who used the internet (N=643)

Similar trends were identified when looking at age breakdowns across different creative activities online or the use of mobile apps. While relatively fewer children reported being able to post a video online that they had created themselves or to design a website, more older children reported being able to perform these tasks than younger children. One in three (33.3%) nine to eleven year olds knew how to install an application, a useful skill, but this was still fewer than the two in three (75.5%) fifteen to seventeen year olds who knew how to perform these tasks. Overall, these findings suggest that age, or perhaps time spent online, had a significant role to play in the extent to which children developed their online skills.

Figure 24: Creative and mobile skills by age

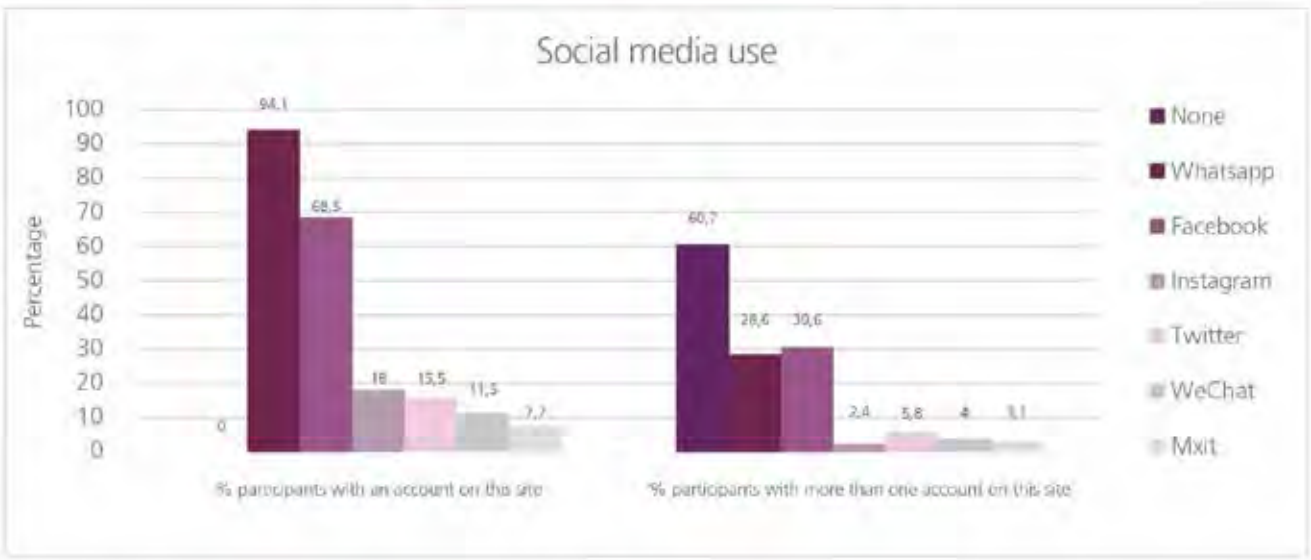


All children 9 – 17 years old who used the internet (N=643).

2.4.1.2. Social media usage

When asked about their use of social networks, 86.3% of participants stated that they had a profile on a social networking website. When looking at the different social networking sites used by the participants, the findings show that Mxit, a previous favourite for instant messaging in South Africa, was only used by 7.7% of participants, with the highest proportion of participants (94.1%) using Whatsapp.[40] More than two in three participants (68.5%) with a social networking account used Facebook, with far fewer using Instagram (18.0%) and Twitter (15.5%). The majority of participants (60.7%) did not have more than one account on any of the social networks they used.

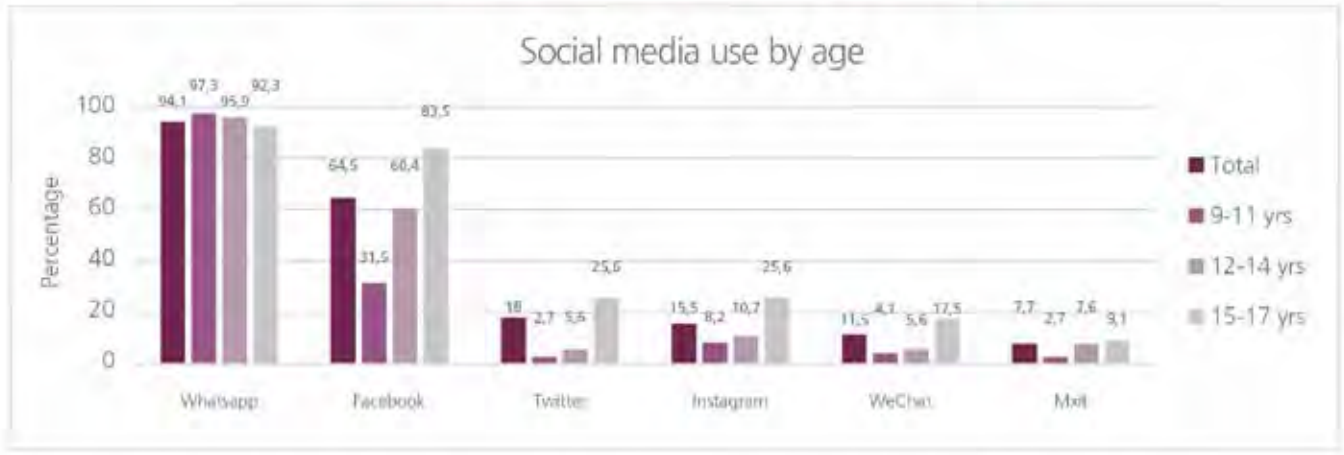
Figure 25: Participants social media use



All children 9 – 17 years old who used the internet and had an account on a social networking site (N=555).

When looking at children's social media use across their age groups (figure 26), it is clear that different social networking sites were popular with different age groups. For example, although the difference is small, WhatsApp use was found to decrease with age among participants. One reason for this may have been the fact that many more older children reported using other social networking sites than younger children, with these other social networks possibly taking the place of WhatsApp. This can be seen in the more than a 50.0% difference between the number of nine to eleven year olds (31.5%) and fifteen to seventeen year olds (83.5%) who used Facebook. This may also suggest that WhatsApp was the only social networking site used by many nine to eleven year olds.

Figure 26: Participants' social media use by age



All children 9 – 17 years old who used the internet and had an account on a social networking site (N=555)

When asked how many contacts the participants had on the profile they used most often, 34.9% said that they had between ten and fifteen contacts. The majority of participants (40.1%) said that their profiles were set to private, with only friends being able to see it. One in three participants (33.6%) reported that they would only accept a contact if they knew them and 25.4% said that they would only accept a contact if they knew them very well. However, in the qualitative study, older participants in Gauteng mentioned that they would accept a request if the person was attractive. This suggests that children may accept strangers as contacts in some exceptional cases.

Table 9: Use of safety features on social networking sites

Thinking about your use of social networking or gaming sites, have you seen any of these online?	I don't know what it is	No, I haven't seen it	Yes, I have seen it	Yes, I have used it
Blocking button (to block contacts).	5.6%	4.5%	40.5%	49.4%
Report button (to tell someone if you are being treated badly online).	14.4%	20.2%	52.1%	13.3%
Help centre or link to a helpline (to contact someone who can help you).	11.9%	22.7%	47.4%	18.0%
Safety centre (to get information or advice).	15.7%	21.5%	45.8%	17.0%
Privacy settings (that allows you to change who can view your account etc.)	9.7%	8.5%	35.7%	46.0%

All children 9 – 17 years old who used the internet and had an account on a social networking site (N=555).

Participants were also asked if they knew how to use or had used any of the safety features available on many social networking sites. Most respondents reported being aware of these features and most had at least seen them. The fewest number of participants had used the reporting button on a social networking site (13.3%), with a much larger number having used a blocking button (49.4%). This indicates that a large number of participants may have had unpleasant interactions online that caused them to block an individual.

In the qualitative interviews participants also actively discussed the measures available to them to protect themselves on social networking sites and seemed to be knowledgeable about options available to them should they face any difficulties.

Eastern Cape, 9-11 year olds:
I: "What are some of the things you would do if bad things happen to you on the internet? Like if someone wants to talk to you that you don't know...like block them?"
FR1: "Ja.....you can report them."
MR1: "I will delete them."

Eastern Cape, 16-18 year olds:
I: "So no one ever says anything like "you must make sure you have privacy settings"?"
FR2: "Ja. Facebook always tells you that…..and your….password."
Eastern Cape, 14-17 year olds:
I: "What are some of the things you can do to be safe……on the internet?"
FR5: "You can uhm….not accept friend requests from people you don't know."
I: "Ja…..ja."
FR3: "And talk to people that you don't know. You can block them on WhatsApp."
I: "You can block them?"
FR3: "Or report them on Facebook if they say things they shouldn't..."

Eastern Cape, 16-18 year olds:
FR2: *LAUGHS* "I will report them on Facebook first."
MR1: "Yes."
FR1: "And then block them."
I: "If it gets worse?"
FR2: "Ja."
MR2: "Report and block."

2.4.2. Parents

When discussing their children's internet skills in the qualitative component of the study, parents tended to be very complimentary of their children and be surprised by the extent of their knowledge. However, this also often involved a degree of concern, as can be seen in the first extract below, that this eagerness to use the internet may be excessive and possibly harmful, especially among younger children.

Western Cape, parent focus group:
FR2: "My girl has a daughter of six years old ... the mother sleeps at night and she takes the cellphone under the mother's pillow, then she goes in [and unlocks the phone]."
I: "And she knows how to do this?"
FR2: "Yes she knows. I don't even know how. I don't know how to go in [into the phone]. T hen she tells me her mother scolds at her. If she wants to look, her mother says "don't go into the stuff!"….she turned six now…she's going to be in grade one now."

Eastern Cape, parent focus group 1:
I: "Do they [children] help you sometimes?"
FR1: "Ja…..ja they help us most of the time."
MR1: "You'll be surprised, sometimes you'll find they know the phone more than you do."
Eastern Cape, parent focus group 1:
FR1: "They used to take some phone and play and get the videos and all that stuff. So they are very clever these kids these days."

Despite perceptions that parents were not as digitally literate as their children emerging elsewhere in this study, an examination of individual skills from the quantitative component suggests that parents were in fact as skilled online as children, and in some instances more so (see table 10 below). For example, parents were less likely to know how to open a new tab in a browser, post

a video or music online that they had created themselves or install an app on their mobile device. However, they were more likely to know how to check if the information they found online was true, remove people from their contact lists and keep track of the costs of mobile app use. It is important to note that the samples of parents and children are not directly matchded, as because more children than parents were interviewed, some children's parents were not interviewed. Therefore, while comparisons between samples can be made, they should be made with some caution.

Table 10: Parents' online skills

Think about how you use the internet. How true are these things for you?	PARENT True for me	CHILD True for me
Operational skills		
I know how to save a photo that I find online	81.2%	80.5%
I know how to change my privacy settings (e.g. on a social networking site)	72.1%	72.5%
I know how to use a programming language	25.1%	23.8%
I know how to open downloaded files	63.9%	66.1%
I know how to use shortcut keys (e.g. CTRL -C for copy, CTRL-S for save)	41.1%	41.2%
I know how to open a new tab in a browser	42.3%	49.2%
Information/browsing skills		
I find it easy to find a website I have visited before	57.7%	58.0%
I find it easy to check if the information I find online is true	49.2%	45.1%
I find it easy to choose the best keywords for online searches	46.9%	47.3%
Sometimes I end up on websites without knowing how I got there	56.6%	53.1%
Social skills		
I know which information I should and shouldn't share online	75.4%	73.1%
I know how to remove people from my contact lists	88.3%	83.5%
I know how to change who I share content with (e.g. friends, friends of friends or everyone)	73.6%	71.8%
Creative skills		
I know how to create something new from video or music that I found online	30.0%	38.7%
I know how to post online video or music that I have created myself	33.2%	41.2%
I know which different types of licences apply to online content	22.0%	20.7%
I know how to design a website	26.3%	23.5%
Mobile skills		
I know how to install apps on a mobile device (e.g. phone or tablet)	49.3%	60.0%
I know how to keep track of the costs of mobile app use	46.4%	40.3%

All parents who used the internet (N=351).

Contrary to the opinions of parents and children discussed earlier in this section, these results suggest that parents who used the internet had sufficient skills to match, and sometimes exceed, their children's internet skills. While this dynamic could be investigated further, these findings suggest that parents may have far more potential to actively engage with their children around their internet use than they currently realise.

2.5. Risks

KEY FINDINGS

- Nearly half of the participants (45.6%) thought that there were things on the internet that bother or upset people their age and a little over one in four (27.1%) had personally been bothered by something on the internet in the past year.
- One in three (34.5%) child participants had been exposed to hate speech, and to gory images online (32.7%).
- Many children reported experiencing some indicators of excessive internet use. This included having a fight with family because of the time they spent online (34.5%) and trying to use the internet less but not being able to do so (29.3%).
- When asked if they had ever had contact with someone online that they had never met face to face before, 41.2% of respondents who used the internet said that they had. Of those who said they had had contact with a stranger online, half (54.0%) said that they had met with someone that they first got to know online in the past year.
- When asked if they had seen any sexual images online in the past year, 51.2% of participants reported that they had and nearly one in three had received a sexual message (30.5%).
- One in five (20.5%) participants had been sent a message they did not want with advertisements for or links to x-rated websites, 19.2% opened a message or a link in a message that showed pictures of naked people or of people having sex that they did not want and 20.3% had seen or received a sexual message, image or video about someone else that they did not want.
- Most parents (86.7%) thought that their child had not experienced anything that bothered them online in the past year and did not think it was likely that something would bother them in the coming months (80.6% not likely at all and not very likely). These figures roughly matched the reports of their children.

2.5.1. Children

While ICTs provide children with many opportunities, the use of these technologies can also expose children to risks that may ultimately lead them to be harmed. Three categories of risk have been identified:

- content risk (the risk of exposure to content that children may find upsetting),
- contact risk (the risk of interacting with individuals with dubious motives), and
- conduct risk (the risk of children themselves behaving irresponsibly or aggressively online).[41]

Exposure to the risks that fall into these three broad categories is inevitable when children use the internet, but this exposure is not necessarily harmful to children, because children develop coping strategies that allow them to avoid harm. The participants in this study were asked whether they were exposed to a range of risks, and whether they were upset by this experience, in order to determine the harmful nature of this exposure.

2.5.1.1. Being bothered or upset by something online

Participants were asked whether they thought that there were things on the internet that bother or upset people their age and 45.6% agreed. When asked what specifically the respondents thought bothered young people, the participants gave a wide range of responses to the open-ended question, including things like internet scams, 'pop-up adverts' that were pornographic, cyberbullying, unpleasant or scary news or pictures, harrassment or sexual harrassment by strangers and people sharing too much personal information online.

"Most people type sexual things that are not meant for the eyes."

-Girl, 12 years old

"Gossiping about other people and there are ugly comments about other people."

-Girl, 14 years old

"Frequently having older strangers inviting me, seeing nude adverts."

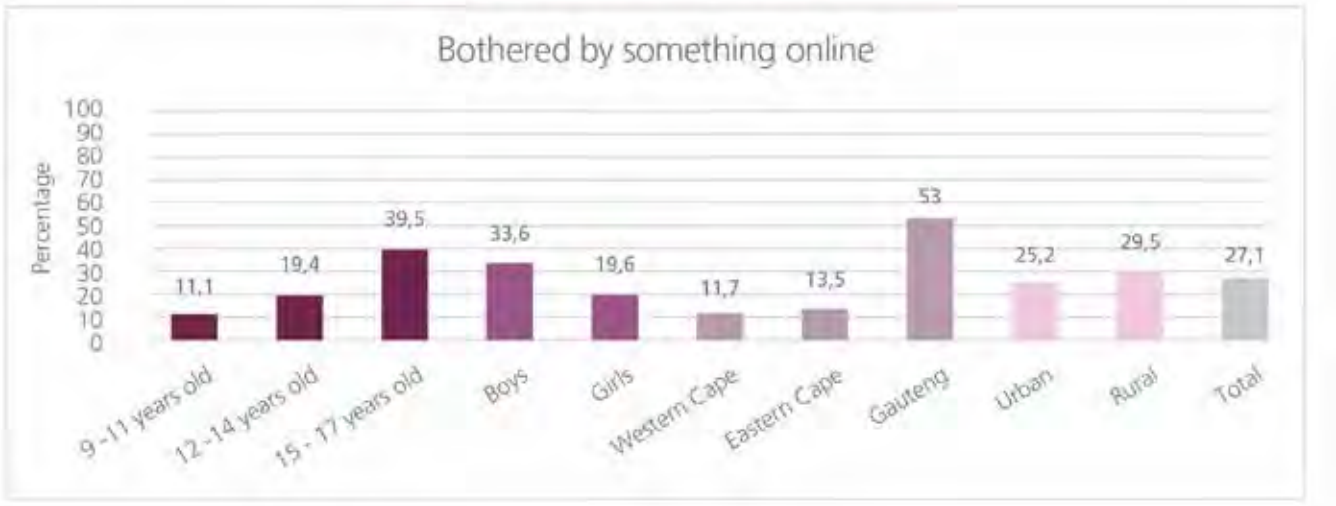
-Girl, 17 years old

"Lies. People pretend they are what they are not."

-Boy, 14 years old

Fewer participants (27.1%) stated that they had been personally bothered or upset by something online in the past year.

Figure 27: Bothered by something online



All children 9 – 17 years old who used the internet (N=643).

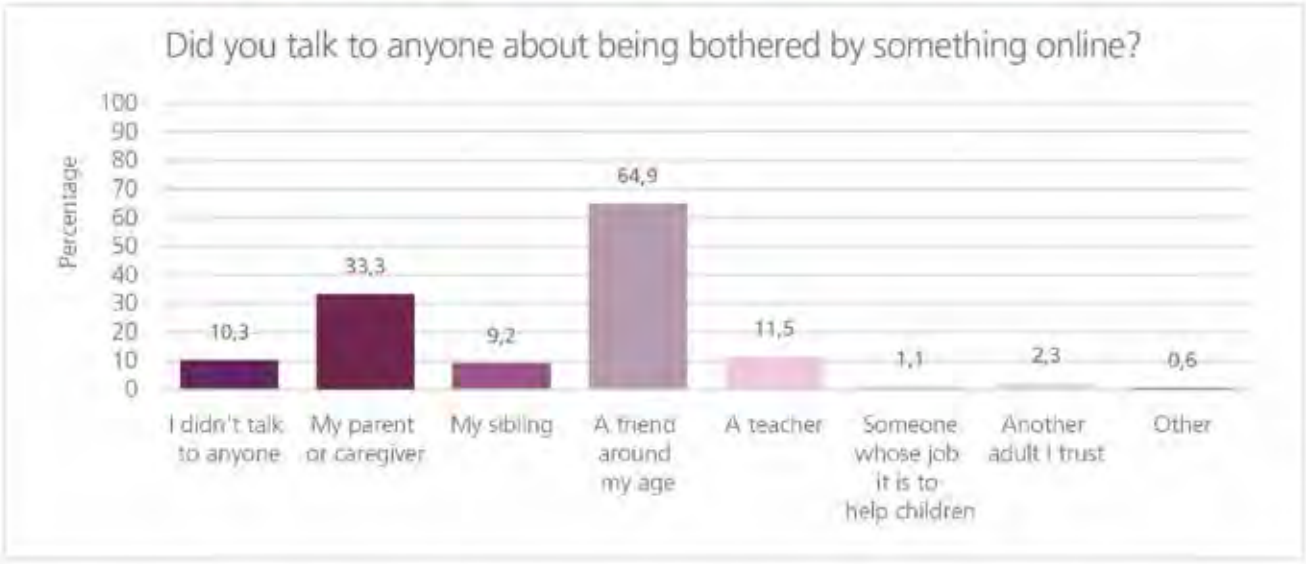
The findings show that a larger number of older children had been bothered by something online in the last year than younger children. This contrasts with what might be expected to occur, namely that younger children tend to be more bothered by what they see online and that resilience to harmful content increases with experience.[42] There may be many explanations for this finding. One may be that parents' restrictive mediation practices with younger children (noted on p. 15) extends to young children's internet activities but falls away as children age and become more sophisticated users. Researchers have identified this phenomenon elsewhere.[43] Other reasons may be that older children were exposed to or sought out more adult content, or simply used the internet more.

A larger number of boys than girls reported being bothered by something online in the last year. This may have been an indication of culturally normative gender practices playing a role in what boys and girls were exposed to, with boys potentially having more wanted and unwanted

exposure to pornographic and violent content, especially with peers.[44] Indeed, a recent study on sexual abuse in South Africa found that boys were more likely to have unwanted exposure to sexual content than girls.[45]

Of those child participants who had been bothered by something online, most (71.3% or 122 respondents) had only been bothered by something once or twice and only 11.1% (n=19) had been bothered daily or almost everyday. In terms of the emotions this experience elicited, In terms of the emotions this experience elicited, 48.6% (n=106) of participants had felt very upset by this experience, 16.5% (n=36) felt very embarrassed and 12.8% (n=28) felt very afraid.
While 7.8% (n= 18) of child participants did not speak to anyone about this experience, 48.7% (n= 113) spoke to a friend their own age, 25.0% (n= 58) to their parents and caregivers and 8.6% (n= 20) to their teacher. . This finding shows that adults are not always the first port of call when children are upset by something online and in fact, that children tend to favour their friends and peers as a source of support over adults.

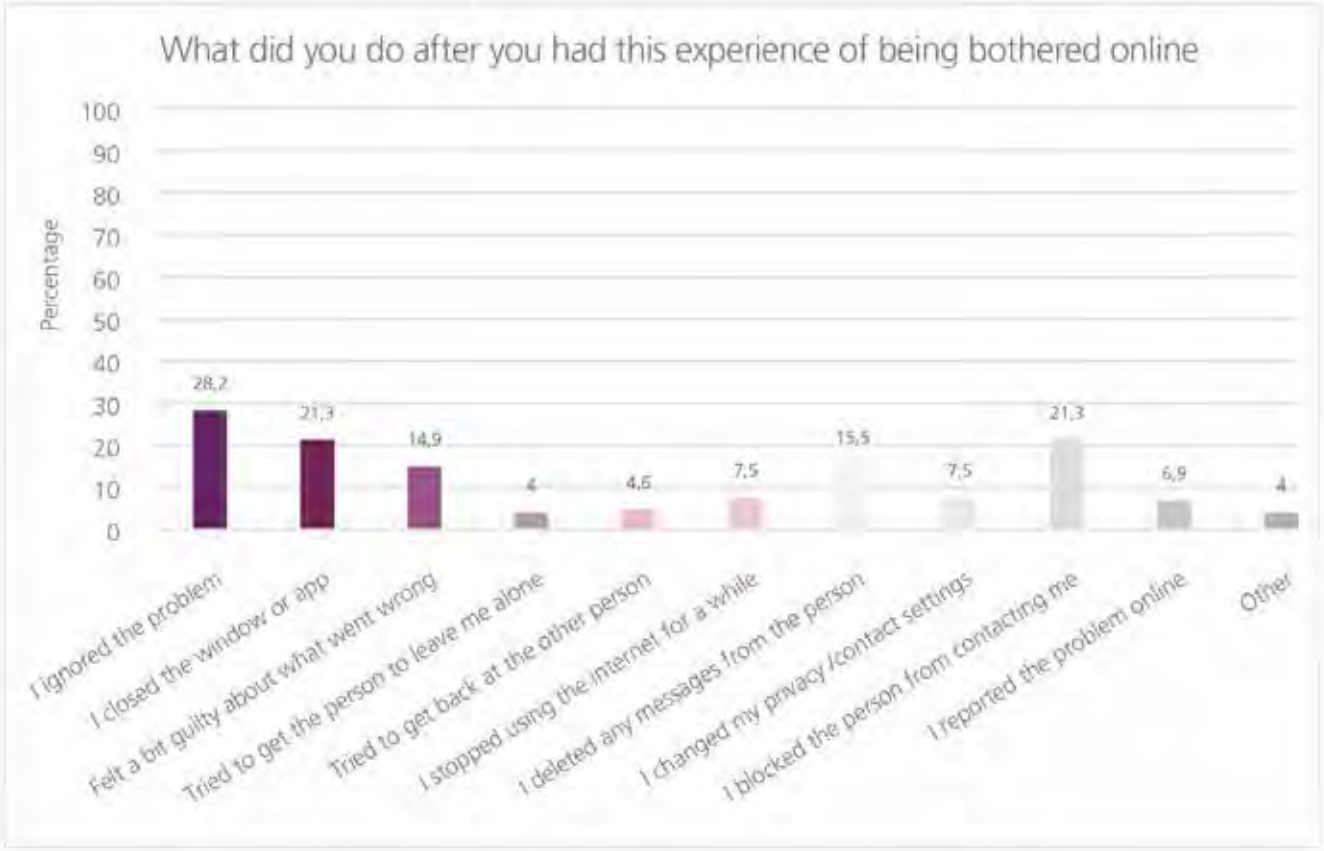
Figure 28: People participants spoke to as a result of this experience



All children 9 – 17 years old who said they had been bothered by something online in the past year (N=180).

When asked what strategies the children used to manage unpleasant online situations, most children responded that they just ignored the problem (20.8% or n=49). Some said they closed the app or window where this experience had occurred (15.7% or n=37), others blocked the person from contacting them (15.7% or n=37) and 11.4% (n= 27) said they deleted any messages from the person. When asked whether taking their chosen reaction had helped the unpleasant situation, 87.5% (n=140) of responents said that it had.

Figure 29: Actions taken by participants after this experience



All children 9 – 17 years old who said they had been bothered by something online in the past year (N=180).

2.5.1.2. Risky behaviour and exposure to dangerous content

Small but still noteworthy numbers of participants reported engaging in social interactions online that were potentially risky. One in five (20.5%) child participants had sent a a video or photo of themselves to someone they didn't know more than once a month month (a total of 34.5% of all child internet users had done this in their lifetime) and nearly one in three (30.2%) had added people to their contact list that they had never met face to face. This suggests that not all participants were as careful with who they made friends with online as reported in the social media discussion on page 36.

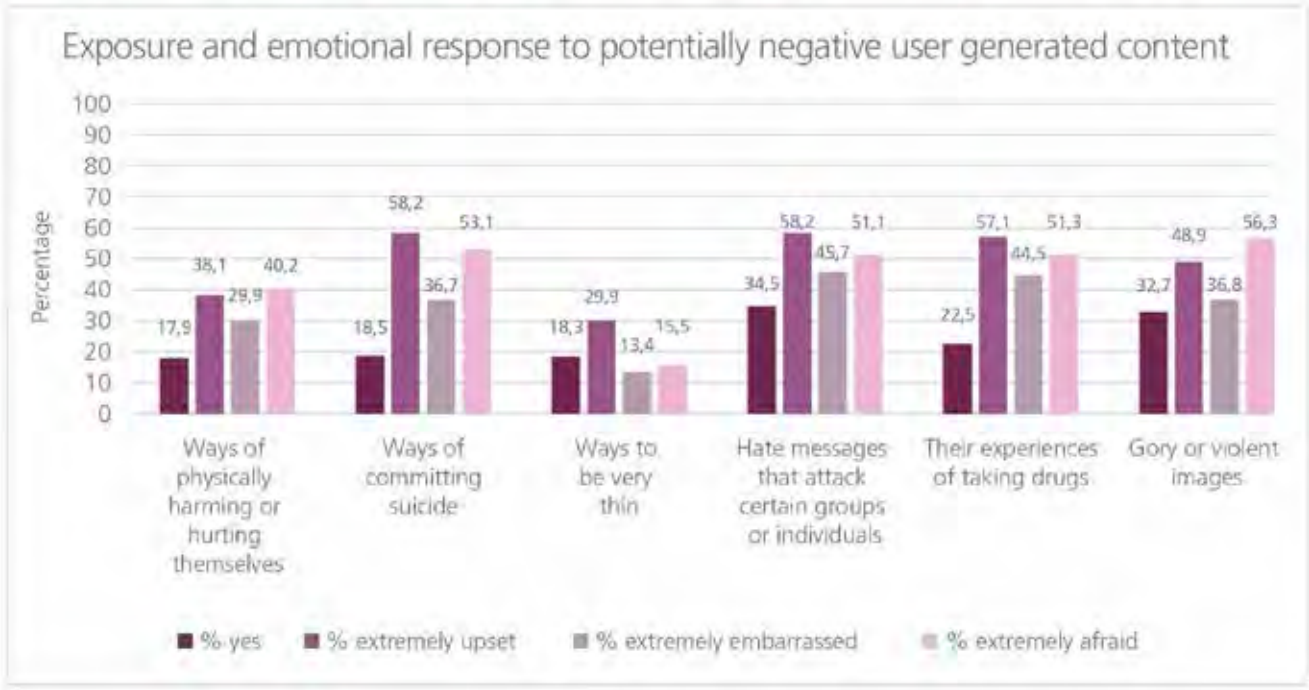
Table 11: Risky online opportunities

In the past year, how often have you done the following things online?	More than once a month
Looked for new friends or contacts on the internet.	47.3%
Sent my personal information (e.g. my address or phone number) to someone that I have never met face to face.	14.3%
Added people to my friends or contacts whom I have never met face to face.	30.2%
Pretended to be a different kind of person online from who I really am.	16.5%
Sent a photo or video of myself to someone I have never met face to face.	20.5%

All children 9 – 17 years old who used the internet (N=643).

Children were asked about their exposure to negative user generated content, including distressing materials, such as discussions about self-harm, gory images or hate speech (see figure 30 below). The participants who had been exposed to this type of content were also asked to rate their emotional responses to this experience and depending on the type of content, half or more of these respondents had had an extreme emotional reaction to this exposure. Indeed, the rates for extreme emotions presented here represent the highest possible option on a five point scale, with the remaining participants still expressing some negative emotion.

Figure 30: Potentially negative user generated content exposure and responses in the last year

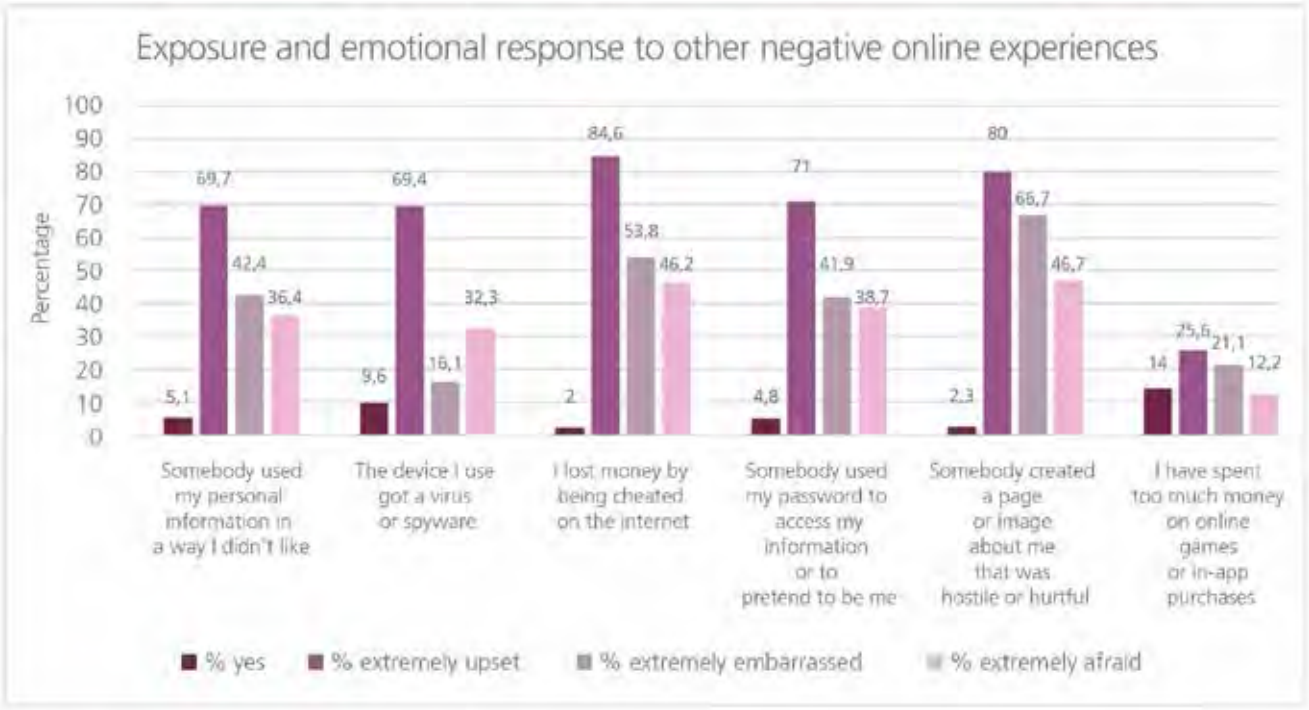


Children 12 – 17 years old who used the internet (N=531)

Various forms of self-harm, including suicide and eating disorders, were reported at relatively lower rates, with hate speech and gory and violent images being reported at the highest rates. A possible explanation for this finding may be that South Africa's violent and, at times, politically volatile context may permeate into the online world in the form of hate speech and violent content. For example, many of the racial tensions that characterised the Apartheid era in South Africa continue to influence public discourse in the post-Apartheid era, along with new hot-buttoned issues like xenophobia and economic redress policies. South African children may be exposed to and distressed by heated debates online, or even videos or photos of violent incidents experienced in the country. This finding suggests that South African children may benefit from greater support in how to interpret this kind of content when they are exposed to it and perhaps, strategies to avoid particularly upsetting content.

Participants' exposure to other negative online experiences and their emotional responses to these experiences were also investigated (figure 19). Examples of negative experiences questioned about were spending too much money on games and getting a virus. Although the greatest number of participants spent too much money on online games, they did not experience any severely negative emotion as a resut of this. The largest number of participants were upset by being cheated online, although this occurred for the fewest number of participants. Overall, participants reported feeling high levels of negative emotions as a result of these experiences, suggesting that they were harmful.

Figure Figure 31: Exposure to other negative online experiences within the past year



All children 9 – 17 years old who used the internet (N=643)

The participants were also asked about whether their internet use ever became uncontrollable, especially to the point where it may have negatively impacted on their lives. Table 12 below shows that a fair number of participants reported having some difficulty managing their own internet use, to the point that for some it impacted their relationship with their family (34.5%), their self care (22.0%) and even their school marks (12.8%). These results are difficult to interpret because the internet is often a persistent feature in people's lives, with offline and online activities regularly merging. So for example, while one might consider the finding that almost half of all participants (49.0%) felt the need to check their devices frequently as a troubling sign of internet addiction, considering its value in performing even basic daily functions, this may simply be an indication that the participants in this study had integrated the internet into their lives.

Table 12: Excessive internet use with the past year

In the past year, how often have these things happened to you?	Sometimes and often
I have gone without eating or sleeping because I spent most of my time on the internet.	22.0%
I have had fights with my family or friends because of the time I spent on the internet.	34.5%
My marks have dropped because of the time I spent on the internet.	12.8%
I have tried to use the internet less but I couldn't do it.	29.3%
I think the amount of time I spend on the internet causes problems for me.	31.7%
I feel I have to check my device (e.g. phone or computer) to see if anything new has just happened.	49.0%

All children 9 – 17 years old who used the internet (N=643).

Excessive internet use was also a theme that emerged in the qualitative study, with children reporting that the internet often got in the way of their daily activities.

Eastern Cape, 16-18 year olds:
FR: "Uhm, they waste your time, because like, instead of, you get tempted to use social media even though you have homework."

Western Cape, 11-12 year olds:
I: "Okay but why would they take the phone? What are you doing on the phone?"
FR1: "WhatsApp with everyone."
FR2: "Then you forget about your schoolwork."
FR3: "Then you fail the year… then that is a whole of your life that you've wasted."

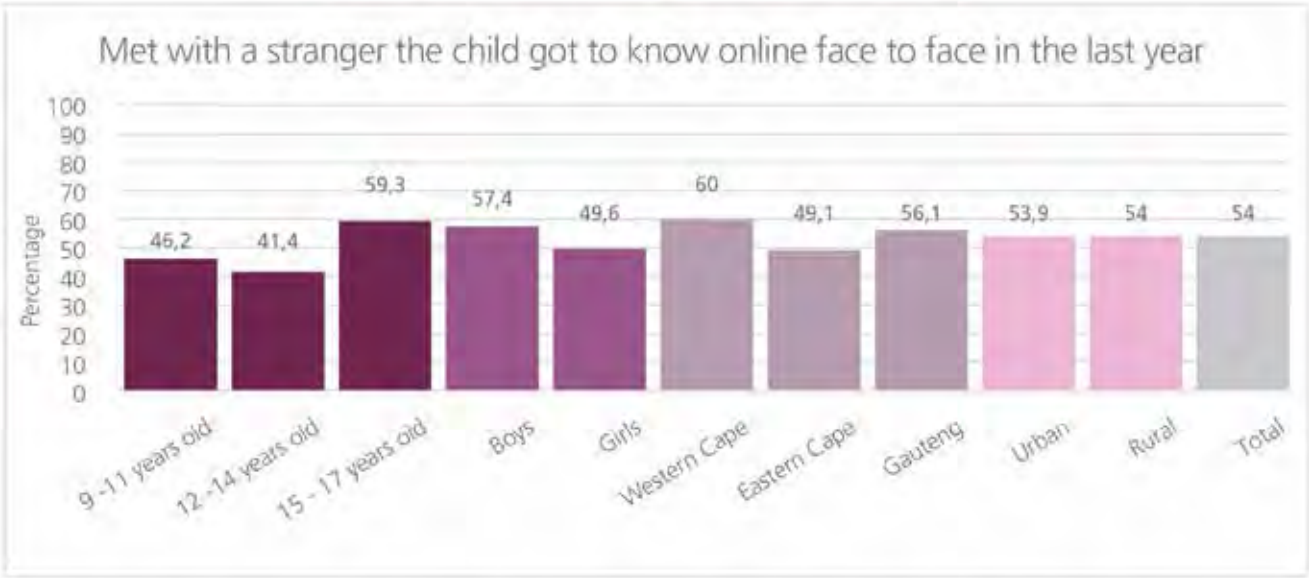
Western Cape, parent focus group:
I: "And communication between mothers and children? Or fathers and children? Has technology made it harder? Or has technology made it easier?"
FR2: "Made it harder."
FR1: "Mmh."
I: "Harder?"
FR2: "Mmh."
I: "Okay, so why is it harder these days?"
FR2: "Because the kids are more into their phones now."
FR1: "And then they will never speak."

As can be seen in these extracts, both parents and children asserted that children did not always use the internet appropriately and would evade other responsibilities to spend more time online. Most parents mentioned this as a point of conflict, with children avoiding chores, lying about completing their homework and being found using their phones under the sheets of their bed at all hours of the night. Some parents reported attempting to control this use, but this often just involved taking the device away until the child had completed the necessary task or had a good night's sleep. Parents also attempted to speak to their children about why this behaviour was problematic at times. These tensions give meaning to the finding that one in three participants (34.5%) fought with family or friends online and suggests that for some participants, their extent of use may have been counter-productive because of the degree to which it impacted on their daily lives.

2.5.1.3. Meeting a stranger face to face

When asked if they had ever had contact with someone online that they had never met face to face before, 41.2% (n= 265) of child respondents who used the internet said that they had at least once in their life time. Of those who said they had had contact with a stranger online, 54.0% (n= 143) said that they had met with someone that they first got to know online in the past year. When asked who initiated this offline meeting, there was almost an even split, with 50.3% (n= 72) saying they had initiated the meeting and 48.3% (n =69) saying the other person had initiated the face to face contact.

Figure 32: Met with a stranger offline in the last year



Children 9 – 17 years old who used the internet and reported EVER having met with a stranger offline (N=143).

In figure 32, the small number of participants who had met with a stranger in the past year is disagregated. While roughly half of all children in each age category reported meeting with strangers offline, there was a vast difference in the sizes of the groups, with only thirteen nine to eleven year olds reporting having met a stranger, compared to seventy twelve to fourteen year olds and 182 fifteen to seventeen year olds. The findings also show that more boys than girls met with a stranger offline, which may possibly be explained by differing social attitudes to girls and boys regarding safety and the abilities to protect themselves.

One in two participants (50.3% or n=76) said that they had first got in contact with this person via a social networking site. Most respondents reported feeling 'fine' about this face to face meeting (61.7% or n=87), suggesting that these were not unpleasant experiences in many cases and that it perhaps even felt good about being able to extend an online friendship to the offline world (as some of the responses provided in the 'other' write-in option suggested). However, 11.3% (n=16) of respondents said they felt a bit afraid about this meeting.

Only 4.9% (n=7) of respondents met with an adult at this face to face meeting. The rest met with people of similar ages to them (69.7% or n=99), with a teenager older than them (18.3% or n=26) or with a teenager younger than them (7.0% or n=10).

Participants in the qualitative component of the study expressed concern over the potential dangers of meeting with strangers offline, and some parents and children gave first and second hand accounts of negative offline meeting experiences.

> **Eastern Cape, 9-11 year olds:**
> I: "So what are some of the bad things that can happen to you if you're using your phone?"
> MR2: "Illuminati."
> MR1: "You can get into contact with someone that you don't even know and then they ask you questions and then you answer them and then they come and kill you."

For most however, especially in the Eastern Cape and Gauteng, their knowledge of this issue came from the American reality television show 'Catfish', based on the movie with the same title. The show follows people who develop relationships with strangers online who meet with

these individuals for the first time offline, and often discover that they were decieved in some way by this stranger. Parents and children in a number of interviews immediately mentioned this show when asked about the risks associated with internet use, indicating the impact of this show on their understanding and awareness of the dangers of meeting with a stranger offline and perhaps, the ways in which exposure to the show warped their views on what could occur if they met a stranger offline.

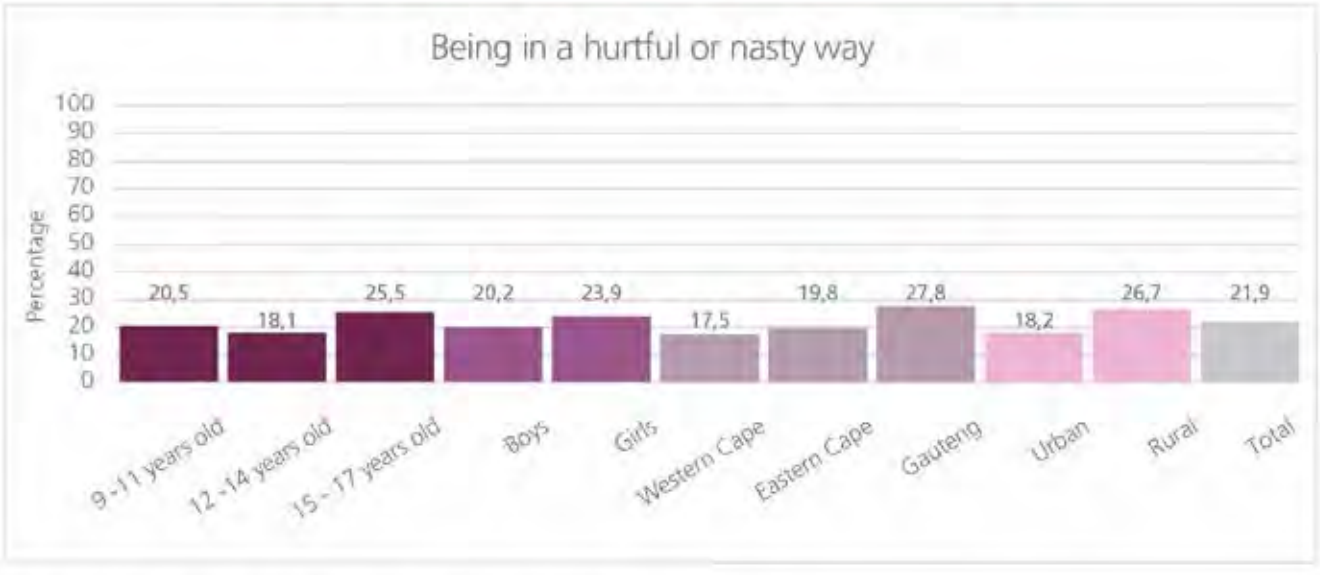
In other cases, meeting with strangers offline was reported as being an entirely positive experience. Parents in the Gauteng qualitative interviews reported using the internet to connect and meet with clan members and family members. These were often group meetings, where clan members could reconnect or families could get to know a new member. Children also reported using the internet to connect with friends of friends and developing offline friendships out of these contacts.

These findings suggest that meeting with a stranger offline was considered both an opportunity, and a risk by the participants in the qualitative study. The findings of the quantitative study show that children of all ages, genders and locations were meeting with strangers offline, potentially exposing themselves to harm. However, the nature and purpose of these meetings is not known and understanding this would certainly clarify why children were putting themselves in situations that their own reports suggest were known to them to be risky.

2.5.1.4. Being treated badly or treating others badly online

One in five participants (21.9%) reported having being treated in a hurtful or nasty way in the past year (either face to face or online). For most respondents, this happened just once or twice (74.5% or n=105) but for a small few, this was an everyday occurance (2.1% or n=3). As can be seen in figure 33 below, the variation across different categories was minimal for this question, with the largest differences being between the number of children in Gauteng and other provinces who experienced nastiness and the larger number of rural children who experienced some form of nastiness when compared to urban children. Fewer twelve to fourteen year olds reported experiencing nastiness, suggesting that nastiness decreased marginally with age until the age of fourteen or fifteen when it increased. Slightly more girls than boys reported experiencing nastiness.

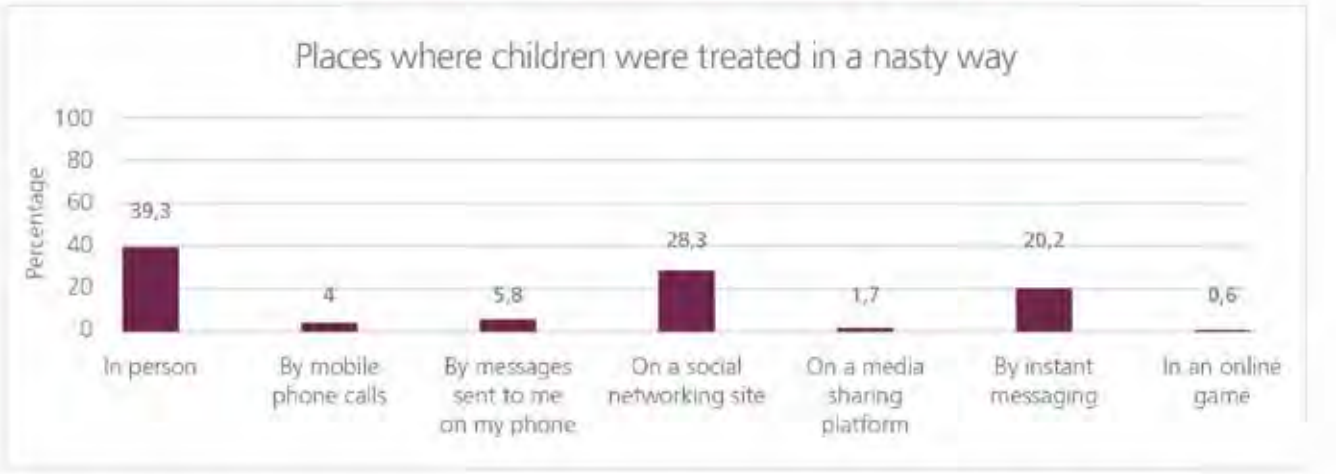
Figure 33: Being treated badly by age, gender, province and area



All children 9 – 17 years old who used the internet (N=643)

For many of the respondents, this bad treatment took place in person (39.3% or n=68), but for some it took place via the internet, namely on social networking sites (28.3% or n= 49) or instant messaging services (20.2% or n=35).

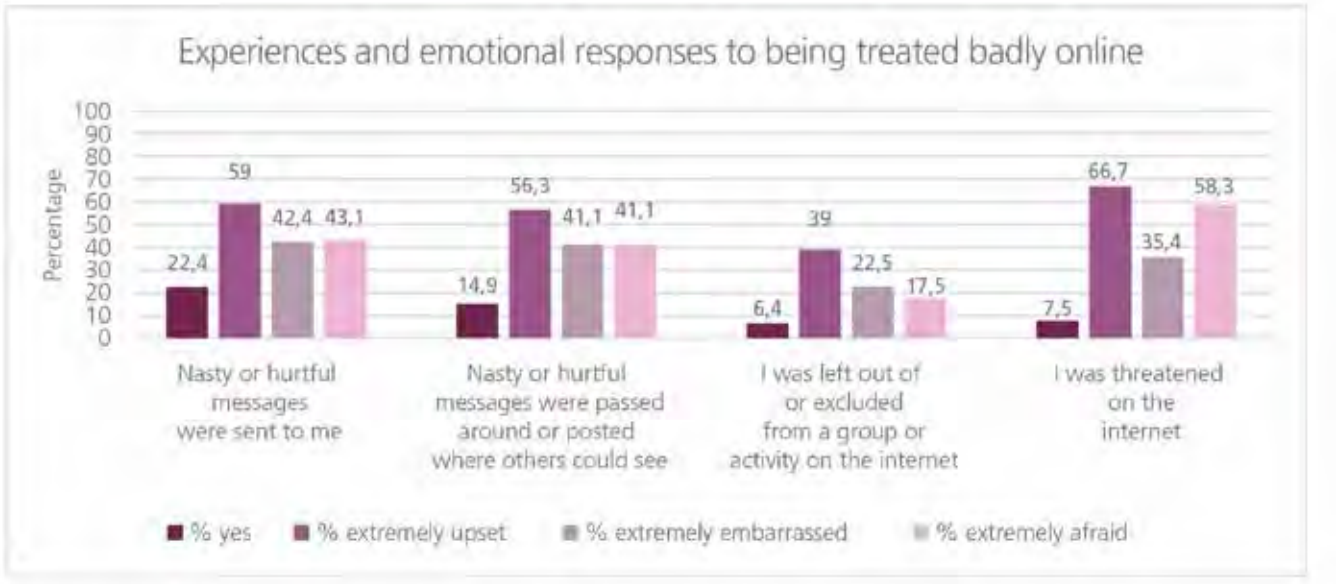
Figure 34: Places where children were treated in a nasty way



Children 9 – 17 years old who used the internet and were treated in nasty way (N=138 respondents / 173 responses; multiple response question)

Participants were also asked about specific experiences of being treated in a hurtful way online, presented in figure 35. One in five (22.4%) reported being sent hurtful messages and 14.9% reported having hurtful or nasty messages about them being posted where others could see or passed around. Participants felt particularly strong emotions after being threated, perhaps expectedly, as being threatened suggests the potential for future victimisation as well. Less extreme emotion was reported for being left out of group activity online, suggesting that this was not as distressing an experience.

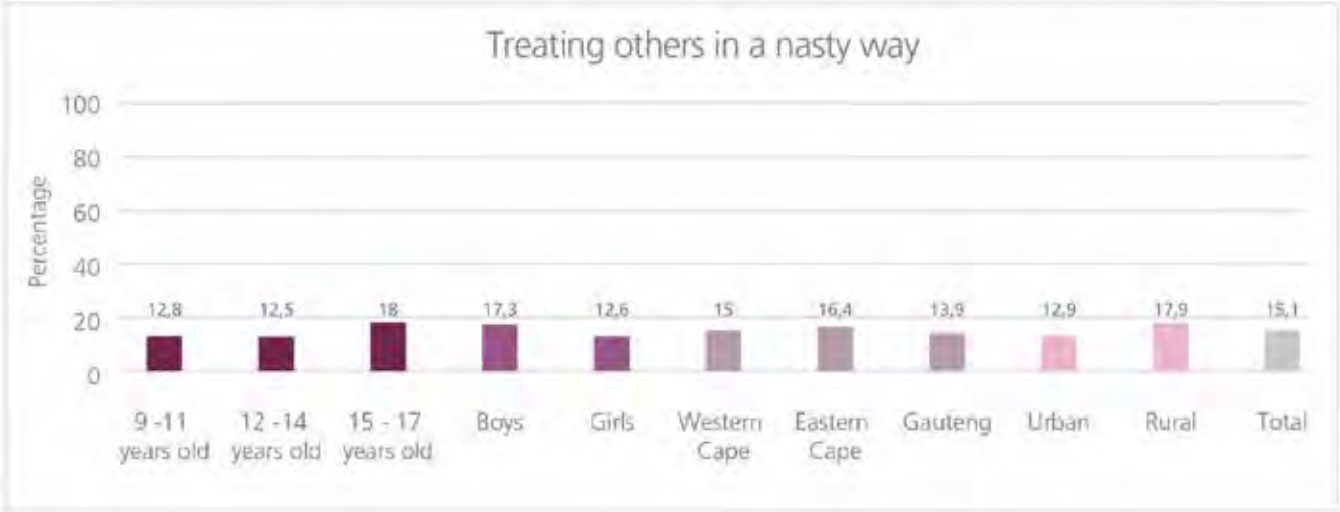
Figure 35: Being treated in a hurtful or nasty way by others online



All children 9 – 17 years old who used the internet (N=643)

More than one in ten participants (15.1%) stated that they had treated someone else in a hurtful or nasty way in the last year. For 71.9% of respondents this occurred just once or twice, with 3.1% (n=3) saying that they had treated someone in a hurtful or nasty way daily or almost every day.

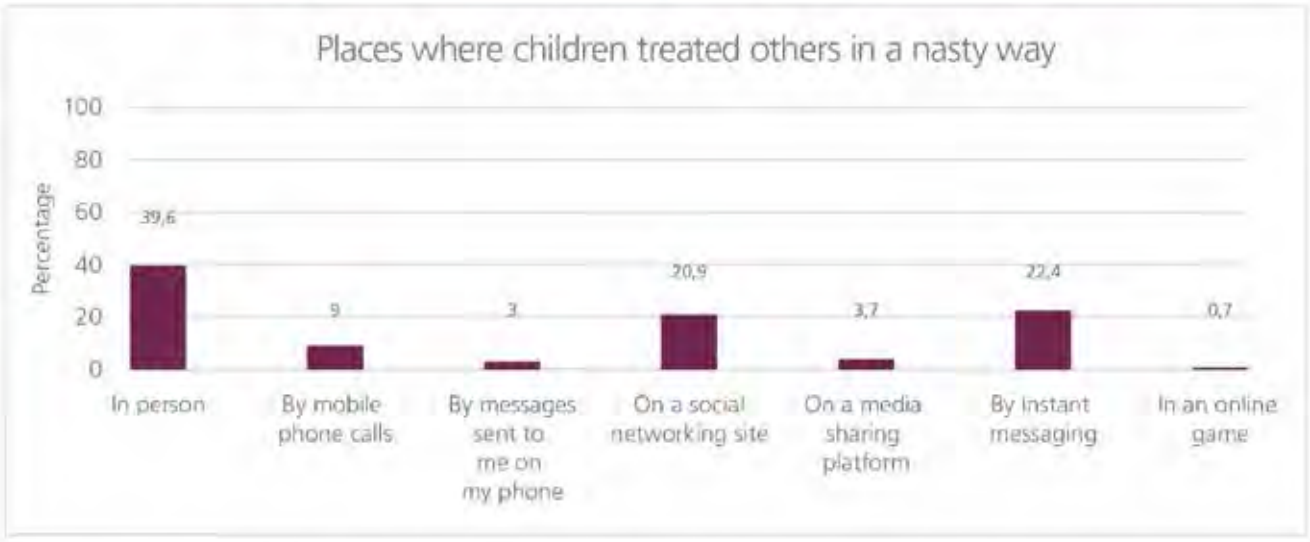
Figure 36: Treated others in a hurtful or nasty way by age, gender, province and area type



All children 9 – 17 years old who used the internet (N=643)

In the majority of cases, this took place in person (39.6% or n=53), but in some instances it took place via instant messaging (22.4% or n=30) or a social networking site (20.9% or n=28).

Figure 37: Places where children treated others in a hurtful or nasty way online



Children 9 – 17 years old who used the internet and treated others in a nasty way (N= 96 respondents / 134 responses, multiple response question)

Out of all the children who used the internet, 11.2% (n=72) had both been treated in a nasty way by others and also treated others in a nasty way. More boys (14.0%) fell within this group than girls (8.0%), and more were fifteen to seventeen year olds (14.3%) than twelve to fourteen year olds (8.2%) and nine to eleven year olds (9.4%).

Participants described being treated in a hurtful or nasty way online as a common experience in the qualitative interviews. Indeed, participants even reported that some local platforms exist primarily for the purpose of gossiping annoymously about people, often in a mean way. Participants in the Western Cape mentioned the site 'outoilet',[i] as one such space.

[i] Outoilet', meaning 'old toilet' in Afrikaans, is a reportedly Russian website popular in South Africa where users can anonymously gossip or chat with prospective sexual partners. The website has gained some infamy and local news reports suggest that there have been incidents of severe bullying via the website (Mtolo, 2010).

Western Cape, 11-12 year olds:
FR: "On Opera-Mini you can go onto 'ou toilet.'"
I: "Okay. Ok, so say if you go onto 'ou toilet', who do you speak to on 'outoilet'?"
FR: "You see all the, the, the peoples stuff."
FR: "They gossip about each other."
FR: "But you don't put your name there."
FR: "They gossip about each other but you don't put you names there."
I: "Oh. How does that work??"
FR: "So for example you can post something bad about her [points to one of the other participants] on 'ou toilet' but I don't put my name there, I don't put any other details, then she won't know it was me."

Participants in the qualitative study frequently mentioned unkind treatment online as being a key negative aspect of internet use and were familiar with its harmful effects.

Eastern Cape, 14-17 year olds:
I: "Do you think there's a difference between when someone is mean to you in person and when someone is mean to you on the internet? Like if someone says something horrible about you to your face and if someone says something horrible about you on the internet. Is it different?"
MR: "Yes it is different."
I: "So how is it different?"
MR: "Cos in your face it's mostly verbal but on the internet it's a lot of people."
I: "So everyone can see it?"
MR: "Yes."
MR: "Ja."
FR: "Yes. Everybody knows your business."

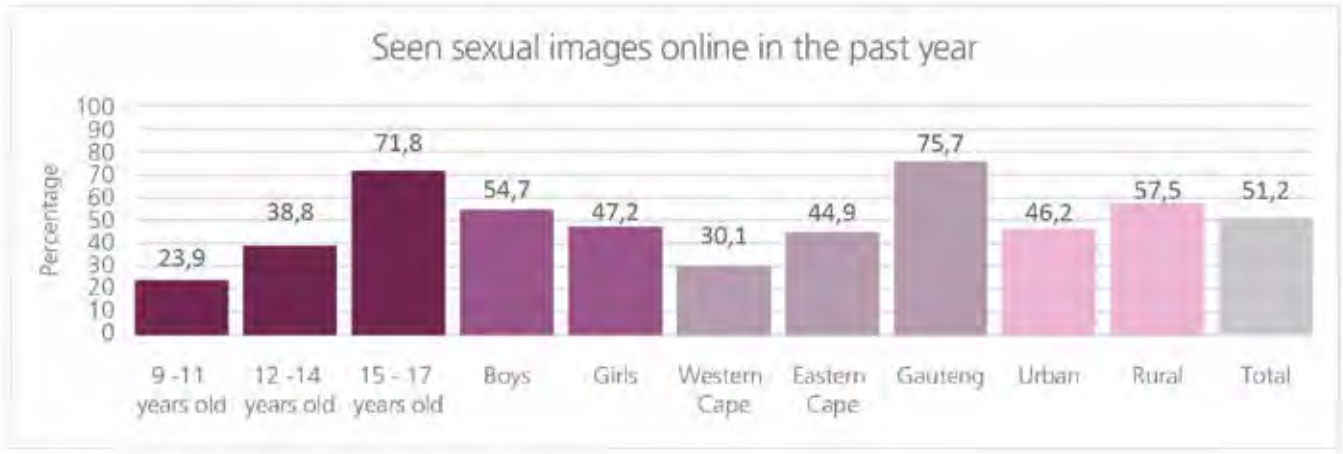
While no participants reported experiences of what might typically be considered cyberbullying[i], participants' discussions in the qualitative component of the study, suggested regular personal experiences of, or witnessing of, nasty and hurtful treatment online. This was also a form of risk that was frequently worried about by the adults in the children's lives, perhaps because of the degree to which it is publicised as a major risk of the internet, with participants mentioning their parents and teachers as being concerned about their exposure to cyberbullying.

2.5.1.5. Online sexual experiences

Participants were asked some basic questions about their exposure to sexual content offline and online. Half of the participants (51.2%) reported seeing a sexual image in the past year. When stratifying the responses, many more older children had seen sexual images than younger children. There were also great differences in the numbers of children who had seen sexual images across provinces. Of the participants who had been exposed to sexual images, 58.7% said that this had happened just once or twice but 16.1% stated that this occurred daily or almost daily.

i Cyberbullying is defined as a behaviour that is intentionally aggressive or has the intention of doing harm, which is repeatedly acted out over time and where there is some imbalance of power that places the bullied individual at a disadvantage (Vandebosch & Cleemput, 2009).

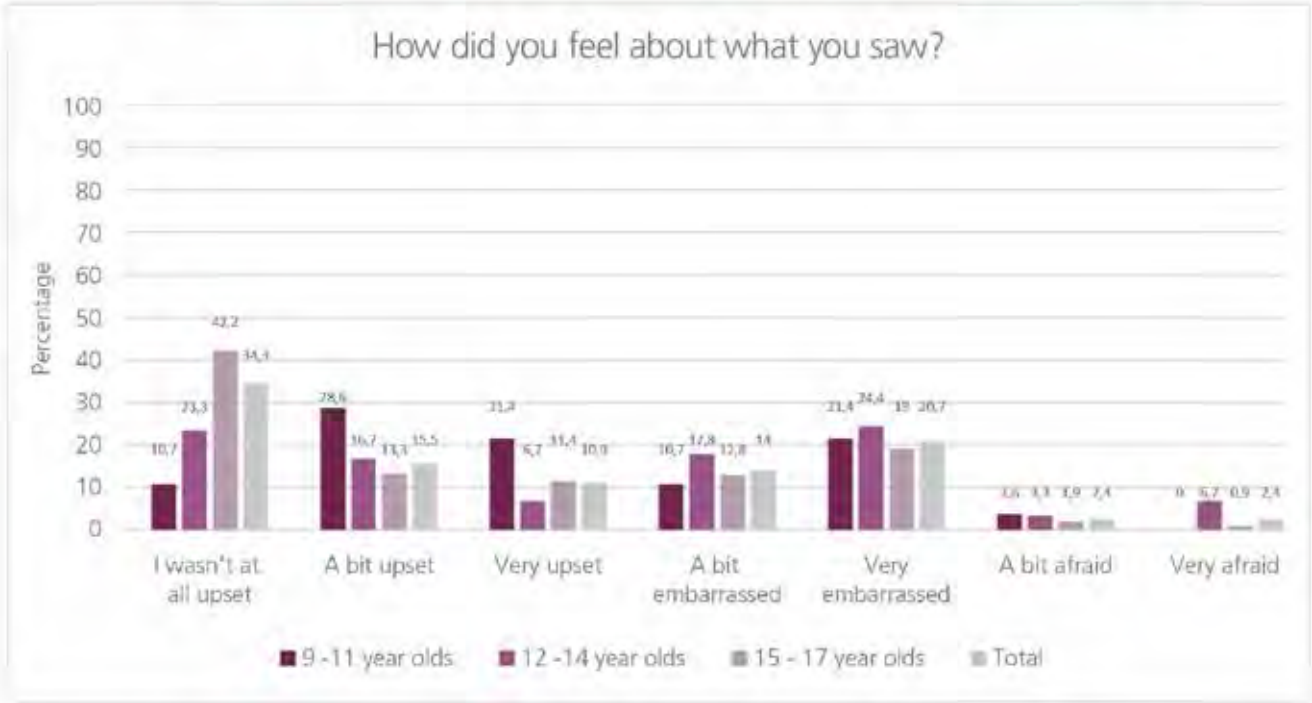
Figure 38: Participants who had seen sexual images on the internet



All children 9 – 17 years old who used the internet (N=643)

When asked how they felt about being exposed to sexual images online, 34.3% (n=113) said they weren't upset in any way. More older children reported feeling fine about seeing sexual images, with almost half of the fifteen to seventeen year olds (42.2%) feeling perfectly fine as a result of this exposure, compared to only 10.7% of nine to eleven year olds. One in ten respondents (10.9% or n=36) said they felt very upset by this exposure and 20.7% (n=68) felt very embarrassed. Only a small number felt very afraid as a result of this kind of exposure (n=8).

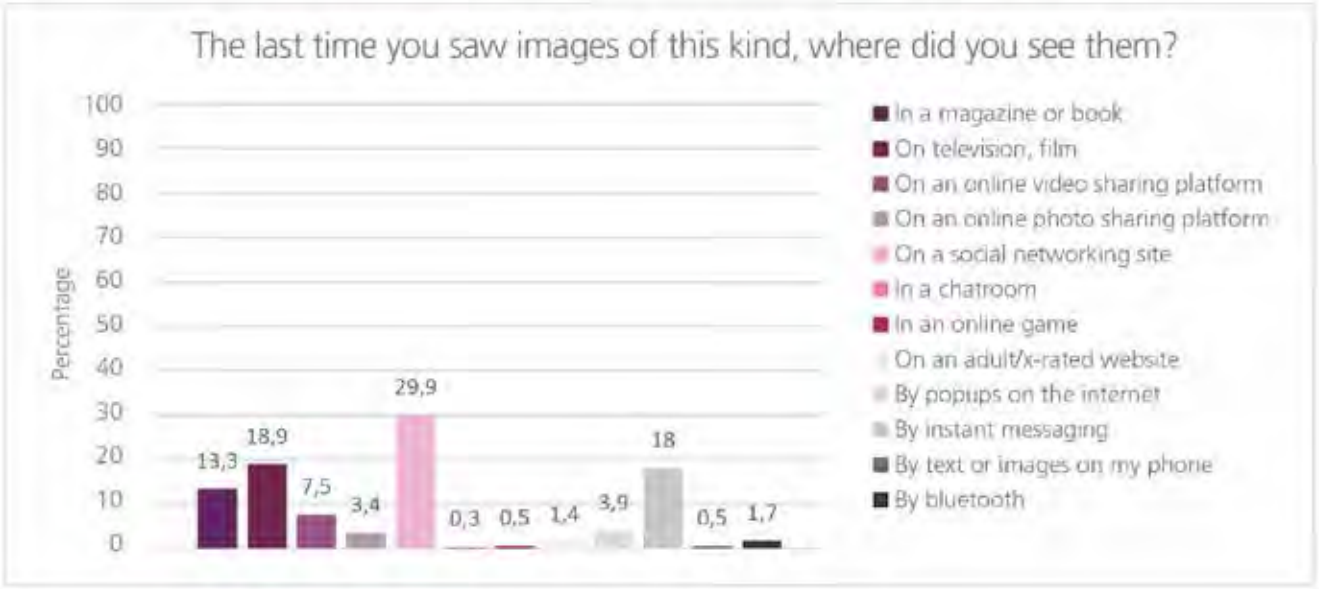
Figure 39: Participants' emotional responses to exposure to sexual images online



All children 9 – 17 years old who reported having seen a sexual image (N = 329)

The participants were asked where this exposure had happened most recently, including contexts other than the internet. Nearly one in three participants (29.9% or n=176) reported that they had seen sexual images on a social networking site and 18.0% (n=106) reported seing sexual images via instant messaging. These findings suggest that children are most often exposed to sexual materials via direct social interactions (possibly including sexting) and public sharing of sexual content, rather than via more involuntary means like pop-up adverts (3.9% or n=23).

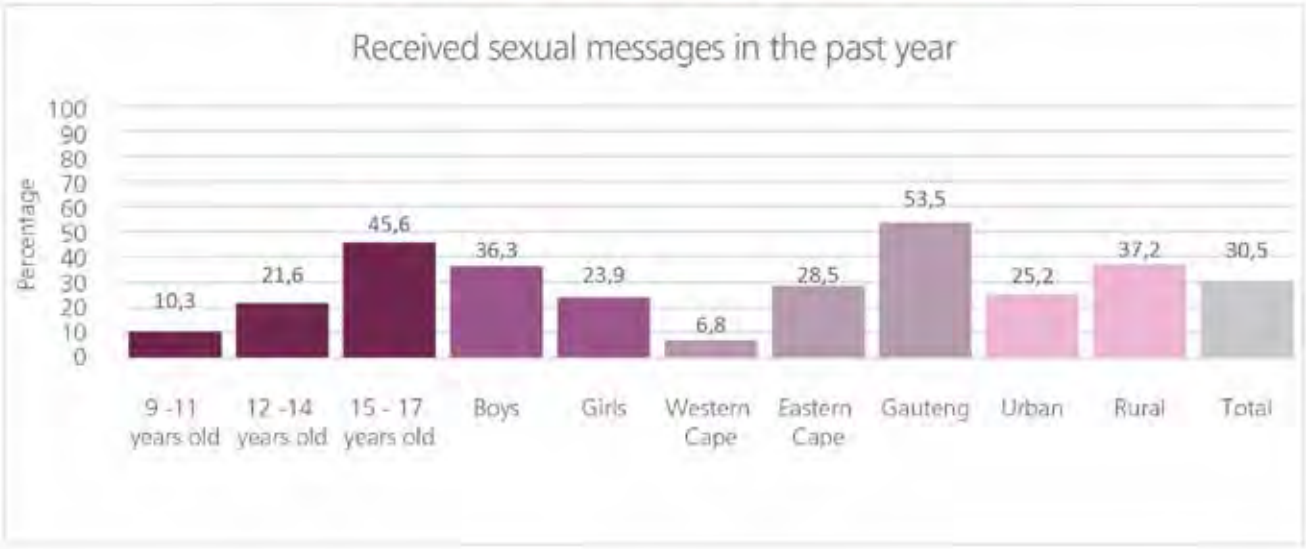
Figure 40: Places where participants most recently saw sexual images



All children 9 – 17 years old who had seen sexual images (N = 329).

Nearly one in three participants (30.5%) reported receiving a sexual message in the last year. A greater number of older children received a sexual message in the last year than younger children and more boys received messages than girls. For more than half the people who received a sexual message (59.8% or n=116), this happened just once or twice. A small proportion of respondents (14.9% or n=29) reported that this occurred daily or almost daily.

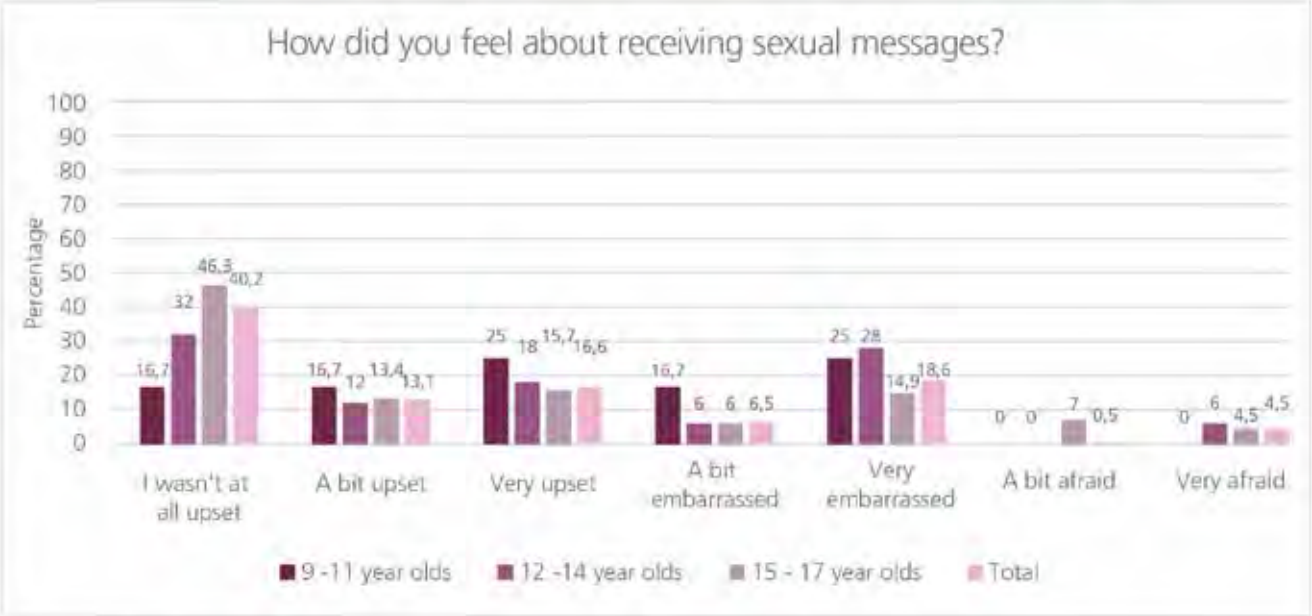
Figure 41: Participants who received sexual messages



All children 9 – 17 years old who used the internet (N=643)

The majority of participants said they weren't bothered or upset in any way by this experience (40.2% or n=80). The most frequent emotion was embarrassment, with 18.6% (n=37) saying they were very embarrassed by receiving a sexual message.

Figure 42: Participants' emotional responses to receiving sexual messages



All children 9 – 17 years old who received sexual messages (N=196).

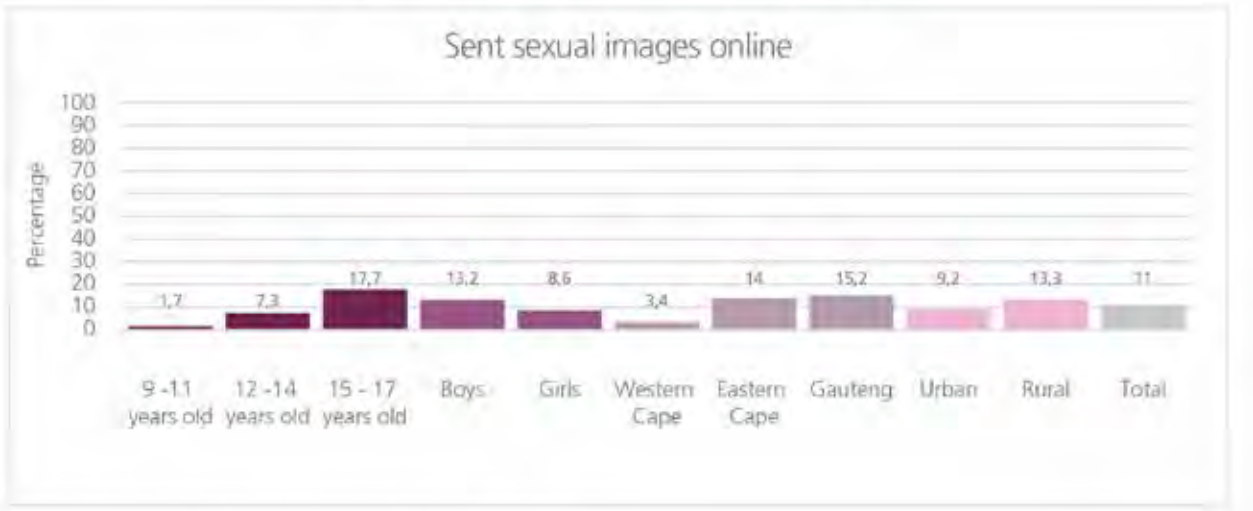
These messages were typically received via instant messaging (52.8% or n=143) and social networking sites (32.1% or n=87), with very few being received via text (5.2% or n=14), calls (2.6% or n=7) or pop-ups (2.6% or n=7). These findings reflect those on the locations where children are exposed to sexual images, suggesting that social networking sites and instant messages are the prominent platforms for young people's engagement and exposure to sexual interactions online.

Figure 43: Location where child received sexual messages

All children 9 – 17 years old who received sexual messages (N=196).

The participants were also asked if they had themselves had sent or posted any sexual messages to anyone else in the past year. Just over one in ten (11.0%) of all respondents stated they had sent a sexual message. Again, more older children than younger children had sent sexual messages, perhaps suggesting a developmental normal increase in interest in sexual interactions as children aged. Of the participants who said they had sent a sexual image, 47.9% (n=34) stated that this had happened just once or twice and 26.8% (n=19) said that this happened at least every week.

Figure 44: Participants who sent sexual messages



All children 9 – 17 years old who used the internet (N=643)

Out of all the children who used the internet, one in ten (10% or n=64) reported having both sent and received sexual images on the internet, suggesting that almost all children who sent sexual images had also received them. More boys (12.0%) reported doing both these activities than girls (7.6%), and many more fifteen to seventeen year olds (16.3%) than twelve to fourteen year olds (6.0%) and nine to eleven year olds (1.7%).

In the focus group discussions, children were in most cases very conscious of the presence of sexual content online, and many participants did not enjoy exposure to sexual content. Some younger participants even objected to the presence of dating websites online, finding them to be offensive and overly sexual. Participants discussed their knowledge and opinions on sexting but none reported doing it themselves. This tended to be a topic that was joked about and discussed less seriously, but participants were familiar with some of the dangers of online sexual interactions.

Eastern Cape, 16-18 year olds:
FR: "But you can also like, you mustn't post pictures online that you…can like….never d elete. Like you post something, you post a nude picture of yourself and people react to it and stuff…its forever gonna be online on google and stuff. It's gonna carry on."

Eastern Cape, 16-18 year olds:
I: "Do you think there's ever, is there ever a situation where you'll go look something up and it won't be what you wanted. It was a disturbing picture or video or…"
MR2: "Ja."
FR1: "Because we are exposed to porn."
MR2: "Ja. Pornography."
I: "Ja." (writes on flipchart paper)
FR2: "Yoh! I had this app where you try to download something then this [inaudible] comes up."

I: "When you try to download something and it's like full on porn?"
FR2: "Ja."
MR2: "Yes eish, it's a bad image. When err…..the internet gets slow and then it eats your data."

2.5.1.6. Unwanted sexual experiences

The survey included an additional module that explored the unwanted sexual experiences children may have had online. Because of the sensitive nature of these questions and because they referred to activities only internet users would engage in, these questions were only asked of respondents who used the internet and who were aged twelve years old and over. The module was divided into questions on participants' exposure to unwanted sexual content and participants being asked to provide sexual content of themselves, when they did not want to do so.

The tables below show the number of participants who responded yes to certain questions and their follow up questions. In most cases very few participants responded yes to these questions (n values have been included to demonstrate this) and where fewer than ten participants responded yes, their responses to the follow up questions have not been included.

One in five participants (20.5%) within this reduced sample of children had received unsolicited adverts or links to pornographic websites, usually from friends or strangers they had met online (table 13). No follow up questions were asked about who these strangers were, and so it cannot be determined whether this interaction was in any way dubious or dangerous for the participant. This may be evidence of some sort of grooming[i] practice, or perhaps be the best way for participants to categorise being exposed to pop-ups and other solicitations to peruse pornographic websites. More participants reported having some negative emotional response to this than did not, although there were those who did report feeling fine about the experience. Participants tended to tell their friends about receiving these messages, perhaps because they were also likely to have received the message from a friend. The adults in the children's life were very rarely told about this experience, but older siblings and adult relatives were more likely to be told than the children's mother or father.

Table 13: Unwanted sexual experiences – unsolicited links to x-rated websites

In the past year, has any of the following happened to you on the internet…			
I was sent a message that I did not want with advertisements for or links to x-rated websites		%	n
% yes		20.5%	108
% boys saying yes		23.8%	64
% girls saying yes		17.1%	44
Of those children who responded yes:			
Device being used when this took place	Smartphone	79.6%	86
	Tablet	11.1%	12
Person who sent this	A friend (under 18 years old)	34.3%	37
	A stranger you met online	26.9%	29
	A child in your family	12.0%	13

[i] Child grooming is defined as the process by which a potential abuser, prepares a child and aligns circumstances, to allow this abuse to take place (Carven, Brown & Gilchrist, 2007). This can include things like accessing the child and building a degree of trust and co-operation, as well as ensuring the child keeps these interactions secret.

How upset were you?	Extremely upset	37.0%	40
	Very upset	26.9%	29
	Not upset at all	14.8%	16
How embarrassed were you?	Extremely embarrassed	39.3%	42
	Very embarrassed	25.2%	27
	Not embarrassed at all	20.6%	22
How afraid were you?	Extremely afraid	28.7%	31
	Very afraid	18.5%	20
	Not afraid at all	36.1%	39
Did you tell anyone what happened?	I didn't tell anyone about it	22.2%	24
	A friend or acquaintance	59.3%	64
	Mother/female caregiver	1.9%	2
	Father/male caregiver	0.0%	0
	A younger sibling	2.8%	3
	Sibling (18 or older)	5.6%	6
	Other adult relatives	5.6%	6
	Teacher/ educator	0.0%	0
	Other adult you trust (e.g. coach, neighbour, doctor)	0.9%	1

All children 9 – 17 years old who used the internet (N=643).

A little less than one in five participants (19.2%) opened a link or message that resulted in exposure to pornographic content (table 14). Again, this was most often sent by a similarly aged friend, and usually resulted in some negative emotions, notably being extremely upset. Again, participants shared this experience with friends.

Table 14: Unwanted sexual experiences - opened an unsolicited message with pornographic images

In the past year, has any of the following happened to you on the internet…			
I opened a message or a link in a message that showed pictures of naked people or of people having sex that I did not want		%	n
% yes		19.2%	101
% boys saying yes		21.6%	58
% girls saying yes		16.7%	43
Of those children who responded yes:			
Device being used when this took place	Smartphone	77.2%	78
	Tablet	15.8%	16
Person who sent this	A friend (under 18 years old)	35.6%	36
	A stranger you met online	28.7%	29
	A friend (over 18 years old)	11.9%	12
How upset were you?	Extremely upset	37.6%	38
	Very upset	26.7%	27
	Not upset at all	23.8%	24

How embarrassed were you?	Extremely embarressed	31.7%	32
	Very embarrassed	27.7%	28
	Not embarrassed at all	25.7%	26
How afraid were you?	Extremely afraid	25.7%	26
	Very afraid	18.8%	19
	Not afraid at all	40.6%	41
Did you tell anyone what happened?	I didn't tell anyone about it	32.7%	33
	A friend or acquaintance	50.5%	51
	Mother/female caregiver	1.0%	1
	Father/male caregiver	0.0%	0
	A younger sibling	2.0%	2
	Sibling (18 or older)	5.9%	6
	Other adult relatives	4.0%	4
	Teacher/ educator	1.0%	1
	Other adult you trust (e.g. coach, neighbour, doctor)	2.0%	2

Children 12 – 17 years old who used the internet (N=527).

When asked if they had seen or received a sexual message about some else, when they did not want to, 20.3% of participants said they had (table 15). Again this was usually from similarly aged friends and resulted in some negative emotion. Most participants discussed this experience with their friends, with very few talking to adults.

Table 15: Unwanted sexual experiences - sent unsolicited sexual message about someone else

In the past year, has any of the following happened to you on the internet…			
I have seen or received a sexual message, image or video about someone else that I did not want		%	n
% yes		20.3%	107
% boys saying yes		21.2%	57
% girls saying yes		19.4%	50
Of those children who responded yes:			
Device being used when this took place	Smartphone	75.5%	80
	Tablet	17.0%	18
Person who sent this	A friend (under 18 years old)	36.8%	39
	A stranger you met online	22.6%	24
	Someone you met online who was a contact of a friend or family member	16.0%	17
How upset were you?	Extremely upset	50.5%	54
	Very upset	24.3%	26
	Not upset at all	13.1%	14

How embarrassed were you?	Extremely embarressed	35.5%	38
	Very embarrassed	30.8%	33
	Not embarrassed at all	17.8%	19
How afraid were you?	Extremely afraid	31.8%	34
	Very afraid	17.8%	19
	Not afraid at all	37.4%	40
Did you tell anyone what happened?	I didn't tell anyone about it	18.9%	20
	A friend or acquaintance	65.1%	69
	Mother/female caregiver	0.9%	1
	Father/male caregiver	0.0%	0
	A younger sibling	0.0%	0
	Sibling (18 or older)	8.5%	9
	Other adult relatives	2.8%	3
	Teacher/ educator	0.9%	1
	Other adult you trust (e.g. coach, neighbour, doctor)	0.9%	1

Children 12 – 17 years old who used the internet (N=527).

Very few (5.1%) respondents stated that they had been asked for sexual information about themselves when they felt uncomfortable about answering such questions (table 16). This was done by a combination of strangers, older peers and younger peers, suggesting that participants were talking about a range of different experiences, some of which may have put the child in danger. This again did elicit some negative affect and repondents told their friends rather than parents or teachers about these experiences. Only 7.4% of the 5.1% (or two respondents) actually shared this sexual information with the person asking.

Table 16: Unwanted sexual experiences - asked for sexual information when did not want to answer

In the past year, has any of the following happened to you on the internet…			
I have been asked for sexual information about myself when I did not want to answer such questions		%	n
% yes		5.1%	27
% boys saying yes		4.9%	13
% girls saying yes		5.4%	14
Of those children who responded yes:			
Device being used when this took place	Smartphone	81.5%	22
	Tablet	11.1%	3
Person who sent this	A friend (under 18 years old)	18.5%	5
	A stranger you met online	18.5%	5
	A friend (over 18 years old)	18.5%	5
How upset were you?	Extremely upset	37.0%	10
	Very upset	29.6%	8
	Not upset at all	22.2%	6
How embarrassed were you?	Extremely embarressed	51.9%	14
	Very embarrassed	11.1%	3
	Not embarrassed at all	25.9%	7

How afraid were you?	Extremely afraid	33.3%	9
	Very afraid	7.4%	2
	Not afraid at all	29.6%	8
Did you tell anyone what happened?	I didn't tell anyone about it	37.0%	10
	A friend or acquaintance	48.1%	13
	Mother/female caregiver	0.0%	0
	Father/male caregiver	0.0%	0
	A younger sibling	7.4%	2
	Sibling (18 or older)	3.7%	1
	Other adult relatives	0.0%	0
	Teacher/ educator	0.0%	0
	Other adult you trust (e.g. coach, neighbour, doctor)	3.7%	1
If the participant responded YES to the previous question, they were asked:			
I have SENT sexual information about myself when I did not want to		%	n
% yes		7.4%	2
% boys saying yes		7.7%	1
% girls saying yes		7.7%	1

Children 12 – 17 years old who used the internet (N=527).

Again, only 5.1% of respondents said they had been asked to talk about sexual acts with someone on the internet when they did not want to (table 17). This tended to be with people the child only knew online and resulted in negative emotions, indicating that this was not a pleasant experience. A majority of children who experienced this did not tell anyone about it. Of the 5.1%, more than a fifth (22.2% or six respondents) responded to the person and discussed sexual acts when they did not want to, tended to be upset or embarrassed by it and did not tell anybody about it.

Table 17: Unwanted sexual experiences - asked to talk about sexual acts when did not want to

In the past year, has any of the following happened to you on the internet…			
I have been asked to talk about sexual acts with someone on the internet when I did not want to		%	n
% yes		5.1%	27
% boys saying yes		4.5%	12
% girls saying yes		5.8%	15
Of those children who responded yes:			
Device being used when this took place	Smartphone	57.7%	15
	Feature phone	23.1%	6
Person who sent this	A friend (under 18 years old)	19.2%	5
	A stranger you met online	34.6%	9
	Someone you met online who was a contact of a friend or family member	23.1%	6
How upset were you?	Extremely upset	53.8%	14
	Very upset	30.8%	8
	Not upset at all	7.7%	2

How embarrassed were you?	Extremely embarressed	65.4%	17
	Very embarrassed	15.4%	4
	Not embarrassed at all	7.7%	2
How afraid were you?	Extremely afraid	38.5%	10
	Very afraid	11.5%	3
	Not afraid at all	34.6%	9
Did you tell anyone what happened?	I didn't tell anyone about it	57.7%	15
	A friend or acquaintance	23.1%	6
	Mother/female caregiver	0.0%	0
	Father/male caregiver	0.0%	0
	A younger sibling	7.7%	2
	Sibling (18 or older)	11.5%	3
	Other adult relatives	0.0%	0
	Teacher/ educator	0.0%	0
	Other adult you trust (e.g. coach, neighbour, doctor)	0.0%	0
If the participant responded YES to the previous question, they were asked:			
I have TALKED about sexual acts with someone on the internet when I did not want to		%	n
% yes		22.2%	6
% boys saying yes		16.7%	2
% girls saying yes		26.7%	4

Children 12 – 17 years old who used the internet (N=527).

A very small number of respondents (1.5%) were asked to do something sexual with someone via the internet when they did not want to. Of that 1.5%, three respondents actually did something sexual as a result of being asked to by someone via the internet.

Table 18: Unwanted sexual experiences - asked to do something sexual when did not want to

In the past year, has any of the following happened to you on the internet…		
I have been asked by someone on the internet to DO something sexual when I did not want to	%	n
% yes	1.5%	8
% boys saying yes	1.5%	4
% girls saying yes	1.6%	4
If the participant responded YES to the previous question, they were asked:		
I have DONE something sexual on the internet when I did not want to	%	n
% yes	37.5%	3
% boys saying yes	25.0%	1
% girls saying yes	50.0%	2

Children 12 – 17 years old who used the internet (N=527).

Finally, 3.8% of participants had been asked for a photo or a video of their private parts when they did not want to send one. This tended to be asked for by friends and resulted in participants' feeling extremely upset, embarrassed and afraid. The respondents did share this information with a friend. Of the 3.8%, 10.0% reciprocated with a picture or video (two respondents).

Table 19: Unwanted sexual experiences - asked for image or video showing private parts when did not want to

In the past year, has any of the following happened to you on the internet…			
I have been ASKED on the internet for a photo or video showing my private parts when I did not want to		%	n
% yes		3.8%	20
% boys saying yes		3.7%	10
% girls saying yes		3.8%	10
Of those children who responded yes:			
Device being used when this took place	Smartphone	52.6%	10
	Feature phone	31.6%	6
Person who sent this	A friend (under 18 years old)	31.6%	6
	A stranger you met online	21.1%	4
	Someone you met online who was a contact of a friend or family member	21.1%	4
How upset were you?	Extremely upset	78.9%	15
	Very upset	10.5%	2
	Not upset at all	5.3%	1
How embarrassed were you?	Extremely embarrassed	84.2%	16
	Very embarrassed	5.3%	1
	Not embarrassed at all	5.3%	1
How afraid were you?	Extremely afraid	68.4%	13
	Slightly afraid	5.3%	1
	Not afraid at all	26.3%	5
Did you tell anyone what happened?	I didn't tell anyone about it	36.8%	7
	A friend or acquaintance	47.4%	9
	Mother/female caregiver	5.3%	1
	Father/male caregiver	0.0%	0
	A younger sibling	0.0%	0
	Sibling (18 or older)	10.5%	2
	Other adult relatives	0.0%	0
	Teacher/ educator	0.0%	0
	Other adult you trust (e.g. coach, neighbour, doctor)	0.0%	0
If the participant responded YES to the previous question, they were asked:			
I have SENT someone a photo or video showing my private parts when I did not want to		%	n
% yes		10.0%	2
% boys saying yes		10.0%	1
% girls saying yes		10.0%	1

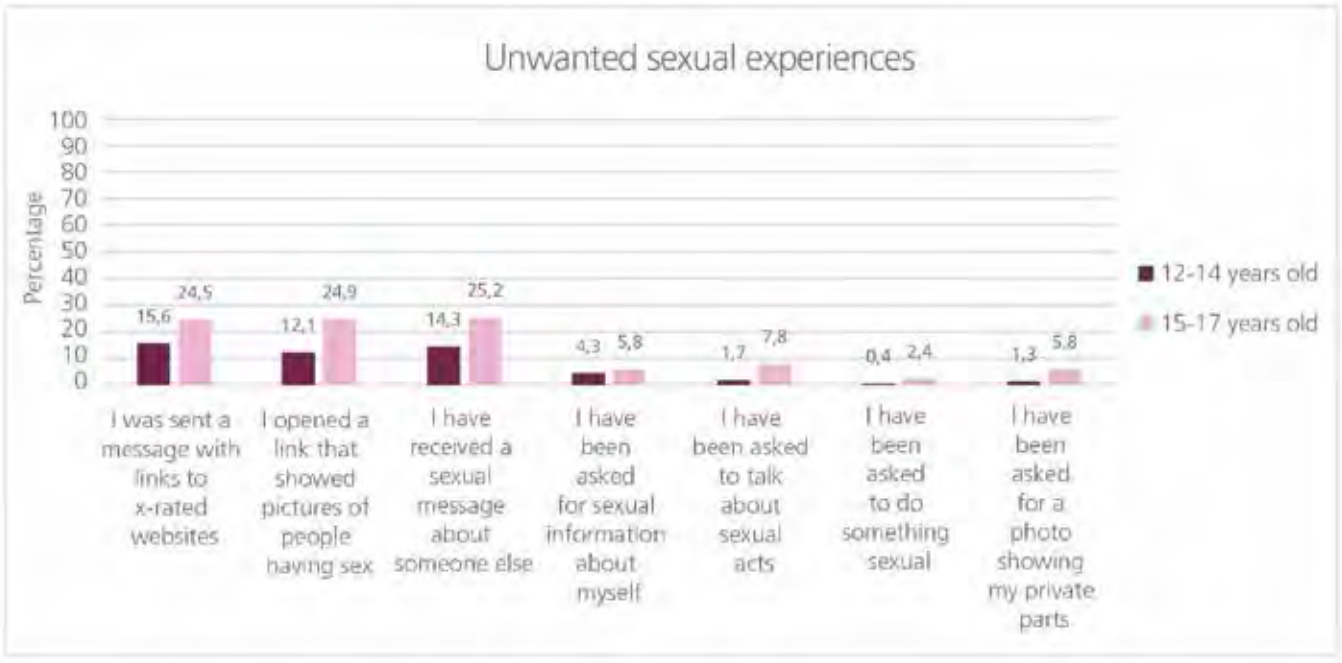
Children 12 – 17 years old who used the internet (N=527).

The data collected on unwanted sexual experiences suggests that only a minority of respondents ever had any unwanted sexual experiences online and the most potentially harmful were experienced by very few respondents. That said, the follow up responses given by respondents suggest that these experiences were fraught with some extreme negative emotions, with the implication being that these were harmful experiences. Although it is unknown how frequently participants were exposed to unwanted sexual content or sexual advances, one might imgaine that these experiences may become traumatic over time. And the fact that only a minority ever spoke to an adult about their experiences suggests that most children choose to cope without adult support or insight.

On the other hand, the finding that many of these experiences were initiated by friends and later discussed with friends, suggests that for some children this may have been part of some sort of sexual interaction between peers. This may have been in the interest of obtaining actual offline sexual contact, an inquisitive investigation into sexual life or the sharing of sexual content as a joke to shock or amuse a peer. Thus, although all interactions were unsolicited, the contexts and motives behind these experiences are not clear and while some participants appeared to be traumatised by the experience, others were not.

When looking at the ages at which children had these experiences, generally a larger number of older children than younger children reported having these experiences. In some instances the gap was larger than others, with little more than a percentage point between the number of twelve to fourteen year olds and fifteen to seventeen year olds who had been asked for sexual information about themselves.

Figure 45: Unwanted sexual experiences by age



Children 12 – 17 years old who used the internet (N=527).

2.5.2. Parents

Parents were not asked about their own risk taking behaviour or exposure to risk online in the qualitative and quantitative interveiws. However, in general, parents were concerned about their children's safety online and particularly, the risk of their exposure to and engagement in discussions around sexual content.

Western Cape, parent focus group:
FR3: "Children that go and meet someone else and so something can happen…especially…"
FR2: "WhatsApp."
FR3: "WhatsApp and that."
I: "So if they go and meet strangers?"
(Group collectively answers yes)
FR1: "Yes…yes because one time I heard about uhm, uhm, about let's meet each other. Like that, WhatsApp with each other for boyfriends. Almost like, like they are looking for…"
FR3: "A WhatsApp friend."
FR1: "You are looking for a friend 'cos you are alone now you're looking for a friend. I send a picture and he sends his picture. And then he sends a picture.."
FR4: "Of someone else."
FR1: "Of someone else then he's an old man. Then he sends me a picture then he says "come we meet one another" then I'm a young girl, a nice slender young girl, and then I send my picture. I say for real who I am but he is using a young thingy's picture to get to me. Someone was murdered like that. It was at a time when, because they had to meet each other….then it was a grown man. So the man got her somewhere then he raped her and he killed her. That is a big disadvantage [of the internet]."

Eastern Cape, parent focus group 2:
FR4: "Like my daughter, it happened two days ago, I think it was on.....Sunday. She was on WhatsApp and she was chatting with this boy, this boy is in Grahamstown. They were busy talking, it was around twenty past ten and it was so annoying for me. And then, she just screamed! Straight to my room and said "mummy this guy is asking for a picture! What must I do?" "
FR3: "Does she know this guy?"
FR4: "She doesn't know the guy! They know each other just through the internet. The guy is in grade 10, he's saying she must take a picture while we are sleeping. That boy doesn't want a good picture!"

Parents tended to have far more clarity about the risks their children could be exposed to online than the opportunities the internet afforded them. What is more, their discussion usually focused on the extreme forms of risk, which none of their children were reported as having actually experienced, rather than the less obvious risks that may directly affect their child's life.

A less obvious risk that was identified was the risk that children would become too immersed in their devices and forget their chores, lie about doing their homework and stay up late at night doing things on their phones, making them tired at school the next day. Parents often reported feeling quite helpless to prevent this and struggled to find ways to enforce discipline in their child's device use.

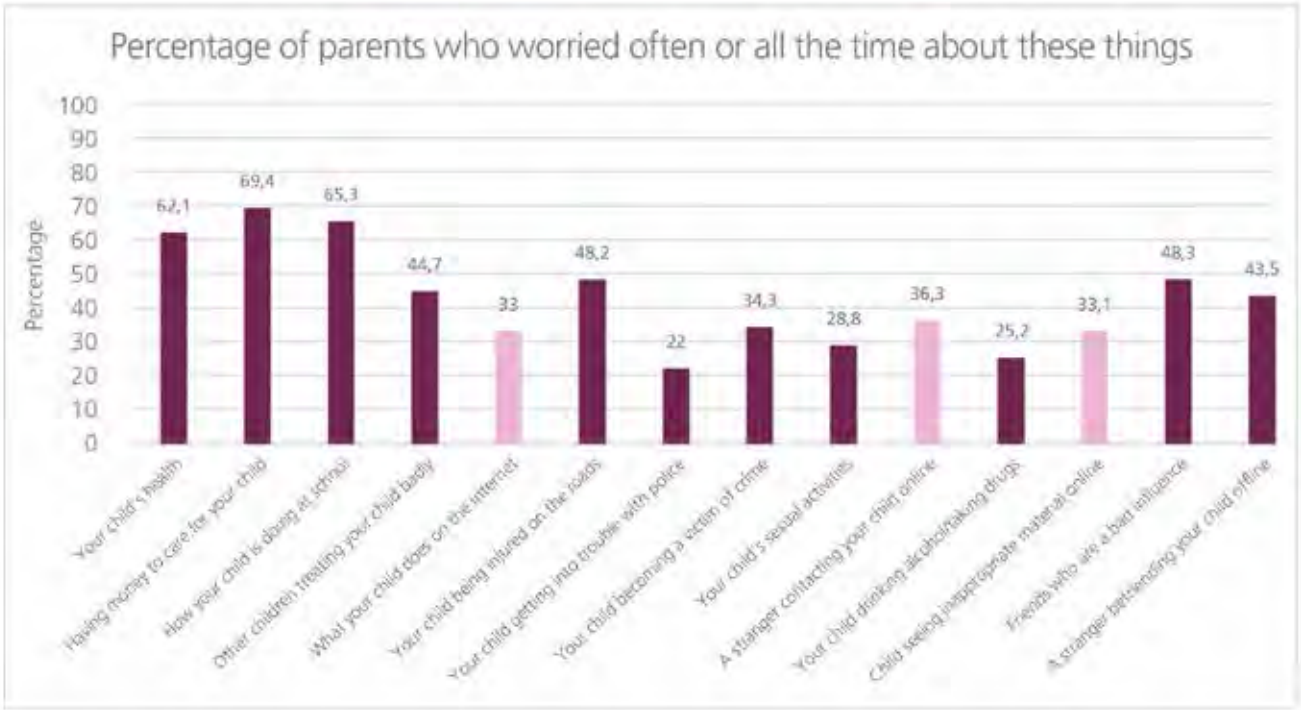
Eastern Cape, parent focus group 1:
I: "So then it's hard for you to even check if they're doing."
FR2: "And then they tell you that "my phone is my privacy so you can't touch my phone". Like my 15 year old. We always fight because of her phone because sometimes I want to know "why are you on the phone until late?" She tells me "mummy it's my privacy you can't always look at my phone and check what is going on in my phone" so…."
MR1: "That's one of the challenges we go through. They sometimes go sleep late."
FR2: "Ja."
I: "So they're tired the next day and it affects…..they can't concentrate at school."

Western Cape, parent focus group:
FR2: "A lot of the children are so sneaky, they take their phones everywhere, even into the toilet. How can you get your hands on it? They sleep with it under their pillows."

Eastern Cape, parent focus group 1:
FR2: "For me, it's for them to use the phone up until the late night, because my younger one now is also sleeping with her phone. When I'm making up her bed now I can see the phone under her pillow. That's what worries me now….she's getting addicted to this now."
FR1: "And sometimes when they wrote the test….they can't even read…….then you tell them "go to your books and study", "yes mommy I'm going to do it". Then when you go to his or her room, he's busy playing on the phone while he is writing the exam tomorrow. Look at that danger….you can fail mos."

In the quantitative survey, parents were asked about what they worried about in relation to their child's wellbeing (figure 46). The worries in relation to internet use are differentiated by their colour. Parents were most likely to worry about their child's health (62.1% often or all the time), having enough money to care for their child (69.4% often or all the time) and the child's school performance (65.3% often or all the time), worries central to parents' most basic care. However, parents did seem to be concerned about their children's online safety, with 36.3% worrying about a stranger contacting their child online, 33.1% worrying about their child seeing inappropriate material online and 33.0% worrying about what their child did on the internet. Although the data shows that parents were more likely to worry about strangers offline than strangers online, these findings suggest parents were not totally unconcerned about their child's online safety.

Figure 46: Parents' worries about their children



All parents (N=523)

Parents were also asked more detailed questions about their knowledge of their child's exposure to risks online, which might suggest the extent to which parents and children communicated about the child's online experiences. Most parents (86.7%) thought that their child had not experienced anything that bothered them online in the past year and didn't think it was likely that something would bother them in the coming months (80.6% not likely at all and not very

likely). Few parents (27.4%) felt that they would not be able to help their child cope if something did bother them online, with 54.2% saying they would be able to help. Some parents (28.8%) thought that their child would not be able to cope with anything that bothered or upset them online, but 50.1% said they thought their child would be able to cope.

Table 11 outlines the parents' responses to other questions about their knowledge of their children's exposure to danger online. Here, participants were given the option to say that they simply did not know. The majority of parents were confident enough to say that their child had not experienced that specific thing online. The rates at which children reported experiencing these various events online has also been included to allow for comparison. Where cells are empty in this column, no comparable data was available in the child survey. Again, it must be noted that the samples are not directly matched, as for some children, no parents were interviewed. Comparisons should therefore be made with some caution.

The number of positive responses were very low for these questions, with the highest rate (11.1%) being for something parents would typically find out about, their child spending too much money on apps. Indeed, parents grossly underestimated children's exposure to risk online, with children's reported rates being higher than their parents believed they were in all cases. This may be explained by a finding identified elsewhere in this section (p. 55), that children tend not to talk to adults about their negative online experiences. As a result, parents may feel confident to assume that their child has not had a certain experience, when in fact their child has simply not confided in them. If this is the case, this has implications for the support and guidance children are currently receiving from parents when faced with unpleasant online experiences.

Table 20: Parents' awareness of their children's exposure to risky situations online

As far as you are aware, in the past year, have any of these things happened to your child[ren] on the internet at least once?	Don't know	No	Yes	Child responses
Has your child[ren] had contact on the internet with someone he/she had not met face to face before?	28.2%	63.2%	8.6%	41.2%
Been treated in a hurtful or nasty way on the internet by someone?	25.8%	71.6%	2.6%	19.2%
Treated someone else in a hurtful or nasty way on the internet?	26.9%	72.4%	0.8%	12.9%
Met anyone face to face that your child[ren] first got to know on the internet?	30.8%	67.7%	1.5%	
Somebody used his or her personal information in a way he or she didn't like.	18.2%	80.5%	1.3%	5.1%
The device he/she uses got a virus.	19.5%	75.8%	4.7%	9.6%
He/she lost money by being cheated on the internet.	19.5%	78.4%	1.1%	4.8%
Somebody used your child[ren]'s password to access his or her information or to pretend to be him or her.	20.1%	80.3	0.9%	2.3%
Somebody created a page or image about him or her that was hostile or hurtful.	18.8%	69.2%	11.1%	14.0%
He/she spent too much money on online games or in-app purchases.	19.7%	69.2%	11.1%	14.0%

He/she was asked to make an in-app purchase when playing an online game (e.g. to progress faster in the game).	20.9%	75.2%	3.9%	
Someone found out where your child[ren] was because they tracked his/her phone.	17.3%	82.3%	0.4%	
He/she has seen images on the internet that are obviously sexual.	32.5%	61.8%	5.6%	51.2%
He/she has received a sexual message (this could be words, pictures or videos.)	32.0%	63.5%	4.5%	30.5%
He/she has sent or posted a sexual message.	29.7%	69.4%	0.9%	11.0%
He/she was sent a message that he/she did not want with advertisements for or links to porn websites.	28.2%	67.9%	3.9%	20.5% (12-17 year olds)
He/she opened a message or a link in a message that showed pictures of naked people or of people having sex that he/she did not want.	31.8%	63.7%	4.5%	19.2% (12-17 year olds)
He/she has seen or received a sexual message, image or video about someone else that he/she did not want.	30.3%	65.8%	3.9%	20.3% (12-17 year olds)
He/she has been asked for sexual information about him/herself when he/she did not want to answer such questions.	31.2%	68.4%	0.4%	5.1% (12-17 year olds)
He/she has been asked to talk about sexual acts with someone on the internet when he/she did not want to.	30.6%	69.0%	0.4%	5.1% (12-17 year olds)
He/she has been asked by someone on the internet to do something sexual when he/she did not want to.	29.9%	69.7%	0.4%	1.5% (12-17 year olds)
He/she has been asked on the internet for a photo or video showing her/his private parts when they did not want to.	30.3%	68.9%	0.8%	3.8% (12-17 year olds)

All parents (N=523).

2.6. Vulnerabilities and protective (enabling) factors

KEY FINDINGS

- Children reported high rates of feeling safe (95.5%), being heard (82.4%) and helped (90.4%) by their families but most parents did not actively mediate their internet use.
- Parents were likely to rate themselves as worse mediators than their children did.
- Most parents reported wanting access to more advice on how to support and guide their children's internet use.
- Most teachers (69.3%) never asked children to use devices in class to complete assignments but more than half (53.6%) encouraged children to learn online.
- Children tended to turn to their friends to get advice on how to use the internet (62.8%), but not to get support in relation to negative experiences (30.0%).

2.6.1. Family environment and parent mediation

As noted earlier in this document, this study used a holistic definition of 'parent', including not only biological parents but other kinds of primary caregivers too, including siblings, grandparents

and others. Both children and parents were asked about their relationship with each other in their respective surveys and, in particular, how parents mediated their children's internet use.

When asked about how their parents and family treated them generally, 80.2% of children felt it was easy or very easy to speak to their parents. When asked whether their family listened to what they said when they spoke, 82.4% felt that it was fairly true or very true that their family did listen to them. Almost all participants (90.4%) felt that it was fairly true or very true their family really tried to help them and 95.5% stated that it was fairly true or very true that they felt safe at home. A lower number of children, 68.1%, reported being praised by their parents for behaving well often or very often. Most parents (72.3%) set rules about what could be done in the home often or very often. In general, therefore, child participants lived in homes where they felt cared for and supported. A recent nationally representative study found similarly high percentages of children feeling acceptance and support in their home environment.

That said, according to the child participants, most of their parents were not actively involved in mediating their internet use. Almost half of participants who used the internet (48.1%) said that they never or hardly ever spoke to their parents about their internet use and 60.5% were never or hardly ever encouraged by their parents to explore and learn new things online. More than two in three participants (70.3%) reported that their parents never or hardly ever stayed nearby while they used the internet and 63.6% said they had never or hardly ever done shared activities online with their parents. According to their children, 42.0% of parents never suggested ways for their children to use the internet safely and 49.1% never spoke to their children about what do if something online bothered or upset them. 61.1% of participants never or hardly ever started a discussion with their parents about what they did on the internet and 76.8% never or hardly ever told their parents about things that bothered or upset them online.

Unsurprisingly then, 60.4% of respondents thought that their parents knew nothing or just a little bit about what they did on the internet and a majority (52.2%) would have liked their parents' interest in what they did online to stay the same. One in four respondents (26.9%) wanted their parents to take less interest in their internet use and only one in five (20.9%) wanted their parents to take more interest. Thus, most children were satisfied with the level of interest their parents had in their internet use.

When comparing child and parent impressions of the quality of parents' engagement in their child's internet use, parents had a slightly worse impression than their children did (see table 12). It must be noted again that these two groups are not directly matched, and so comparisons should be read with caution.

Table 21: Comparison between child and parent impressions of parent engagement in child internet use

How often do parents or caregivers…	PARENT Never and hardly ever	CHILD Never and hardly ever
Talk to you about what you do on the internet.	54.4%	48.1%
Encourage you to explore and learn things on the internet.	65.2%	60.5%
Stay nearby when you use the internet.	74.6%	70.3%
Do shared activities together with you on the internet.	69.7%	63.6%
Suggest ways to use the internet safely.	57.0%	42.0%
Talk to you about what to do if something online bothers or upsets you.	68.0%	49.1%

How often have you…	PARENT Never and hardly ever	CHILD Never and hardly ever
Started a discussion with your parents/caregivers about what you do on the internet.	64.2%	61.1%
Told your parents/caregivers about things that bother or upset you on the internet.	81.7%	76.8%

All parents (N=523), all children 9 – 17 years old who used the internet (N=643

An important barrier to using the internet was obtaining adult permission. When asked whether they needed permission to perform certain activities online, children tended either to never be able to do something, or to not need permission or supervision, as table 13 shows. Only 14.2% of participants needed to obtain permission or be supervised when using a webcam, 18.8% when watching video clips, 17.0% for downloading music, 12.0% for playing games with other people online, 12.0% when visiting a social networking site, 10.3% when instant messaging, 10.2% to read news online, 10.7% when using the internet for schoolwork and 13.3% to post photos, videos or music online to share with others.

Fewer parents than children said that permission or supervision was required to do the activities below. The only exception was posting content online, where parents were slightly more likely to say their children required their permission than the children did.

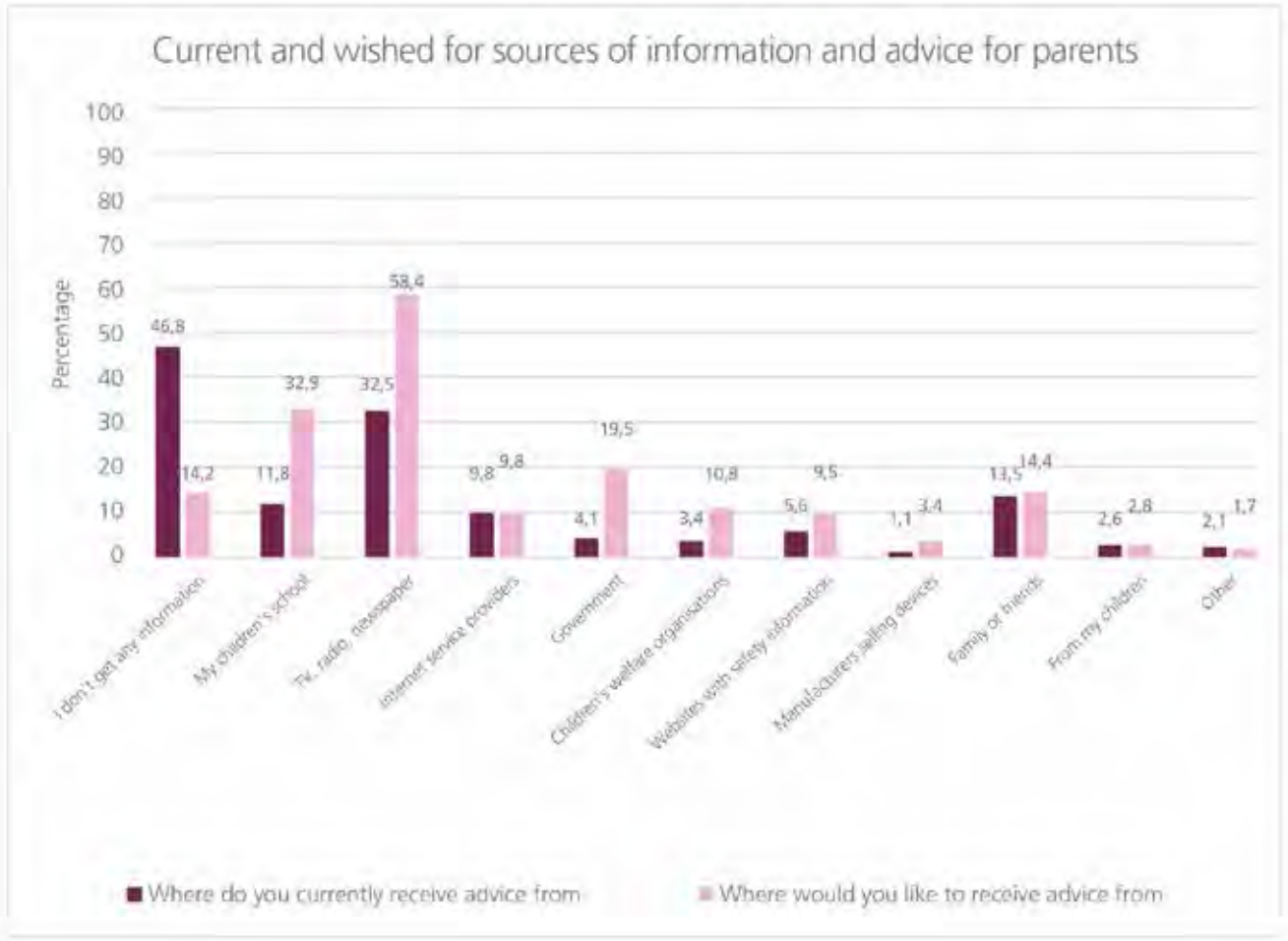
Table 22: Comparison between child and parent impressions of which activities children need permission to engage in online

Do you need your parents' permission/supervision when engaging in the following activities online…	PARENT			CHILD
	Can never do this	Don't need permission	Permission	Permission
Use a webcam.	59.8%	30.1%	10.2%	14.2%
Watch video clips.	42.7%	42.5%	14.8%	18.8%
Download music or films.	38.5%	47.6%	13.9%	17.0%
Play games with other people online.	50.2%	39.5%	10.3%	12.0%
Visit a social networking site.	40.0%	49.2%	10.7%	12.0%
Use instant messaging.	29.1%	62.0%	8.8%	10.3%
Read/watch news online.	47.6%	44.0%	8.5%	10.2%
Use the internet for school work.	30.1%	60.3%	9.6%	10.7%
Put (or post) photos, videos or music online to share with others.	41.5%	44.9%	13.5%	13.3%
Use the internet for school work.	30.1%	60.3%	9.6%	10.7%
Put (or post) photos, videos or music online to share with others.	41.5%	44.9%	13.5%	13.3%

All parents (N=523), all children 9 – 17 years old who used the internet (N=643

Within the parent survey, parents were also asked whether they ever got any information or advice on how to help and support their children online and if so, from where they received this support.

Figure 47: Sources of advice for parents



All parents (N=523).

As can be seen in figure 47, nearly one in two parents (46.8%) never received any advice or support on this topic, perhaps suggesting why internet use was rarely discussed between parents and children. By far the most common sources of information for respondents were media like television, radio and the newspaper (32.5%), followed by their friends and family (13.5%), their children's school (11.8%) or internet service providers (9.8%).

When asked if they would like to receive any information about this, only 14.2% of respondents said they wouldn't, with 58.4% saying they would like receive guidance via television, radio and the newspaper, 32.9% from their children's school, 19.5% from the government and 14.4% from family and friends. These findings suggest that parents would like to be exposed to more guidance about how to support their child online but that they may prefer to receive this passively, via the media, or through active support from their child's school or other sources.

In the focus group discussions with parents, participants tended to express a sense of helplessness around managing their children's internet use, especially when the child had a device that only they used.

Eastern Cape, parent focus group 2:
FR3: "Like me....that's what I'm worried about because I'm getting fed up so easily.... because even if I buy a phone, she will have Facebook, WhatsApp…"
I: "Even if you say no?"
FR3: "Even if. Because I'm giving up so easily! I can say 'okay do whatever you want to do

but when you have a problem don't come to me' and my daughter will say 'I will come...I will come."
Group laughs

Western Cape, parent focus group:
FR1: "…We don't know the internet, we don't know where to press to go in to look while they aren't there. We must also almost know how it works before we can say "how can we help?", because we can't help if we don't know, how to go into the phone or the thing, or the Facebook network, to secretly look to see what the child is busy with. You see? We don't know what to press."
I: "Ja. And I think it is also important because a person also wants to know, do parents feel they have enough knowledge to know?"
FR1: "So it's pointless. We can do but we don't know how to work with the stuff. We must first be helped before we can know what to do with the thing because they say we can do this or do that but we don't have the knowledge to be able to do it."

Eastern Cape, 14-17 year olds:
I: "Okay, so your parents never check what you do online or anything like that?"
FR: "No I'll probably me murdered if they check." *Laughs*

Western Cape, 14-16 year olds:
I: "Okay and the other people? Are there other people you can talk to?"
MR: "Parents."
I: "Do you think your parents know enough about Facebook? And about WhatsApp?"
FR2: "No. There are plenty things that I need to hide from them."
MR3: "They mustn't go on your phone."

As can be seen above, parents felt a responsibility to keep their children safe and assist but struggled to find ways to impose structure onto their child's internet use and monitor what they were doing. Children, on the other hand, were aware that they engaged in activities their parents wouldn't approve of and relied on their superior knowledge of how to use the technology to hide what they did online. The relationship presented in the qualitative discussions was therefore one where parents felt somewhat powerless to manage and guide their child's internet use and where children avoided the input of their parents because they assumed they knew the online world better. Evidence of parents' frustration can be seen in the quotes above and provides a possible explanation for why most parents reported being interested in obtaining more advice and guidance on how to support their child's internet use in the quantitative survey.

Eastern Cape, parent focus group 2:
FR1: "I also think that parents need a education on this because we are not more advanced than them you know? Some of us maybe did go as far as grade 12 but we don't know the things they are doing now."
MR1: "And how do you correct them if you don't even know how it's done?"
FR2: "Because instead of us teaching them, they are the ones teaching us, you know?"

That said, there were instances where parents reported themselves, and were reported by their children, as taking some action to manage their children's internet use, as can be seen below.

Eastern Cape, parent focus group 1:
FR2: "Ja with my 15 year old ja…I take her phone sometimes, if I see that she doesn't want to listen, she doesn't want to do what I'm telling her to do. Because she's still a child. She must obey my rules. Because sometimes that phone can get her in trouble and then I must

solve that troubles of hers also."
MR1: "Sometimes you're left with no choice but to take that phone. And then also, I also teach them what to do with the phones and what not to do 'cos sometimes there are these messages, I don't know where they come from, that say "reply yes or no". I found out afterwards they always reply yes."

Eastern Cape, parent focus group 1:
I: "Are there any rules for them while they're using their phones?"
FR2: "Yes we do have. Like for example my daughter, I'm telling her that, she's 15 now she must know how to cook food. And then if she doesn't want to cook I will take the phone. Then I'll put it in my room and I will lock it. Then she must go and wash the dishes…. because she's a girl, she must wash dishes, she must cook supper."

Eastern Cape, parent focus group 1:
I: "Do you know what your kids do on their phones? Or do you have no idea? Do you ask them about it ever?"
FR2: "Sometimes when they are not there, I'm just stealing their information to see what they are doing you know? To steal their information to see if they are on the right track or what. But now they are having this……"
FR1: "Secret codes."
FR2: "They are locking them now."

Eastern Cape, parent focus group 2:
FR4: "For me personally, my 15 year old is not allowed to have Facebook because I know at that age, she doesn't have the will or.....what can I say?....She's still 15. For me, I'm an adult if I see a bad picture I'll just think it's not for me, but for her, she's gonna want to see it, she'll be interested. She can WhatsApp but not Facebook because there are consequences of having Facebook at that age."

Eastern Cape, 9-11 year olds:
I: "Do any of your parents take away your phones?"
FR1: "Well she takes away my phone when we writing exams."

Eastern Cape, 14-17 year olds:
I: "Do you talk to your parents?"
FR1: "I talk to my mum."
I: "Oh, does she ever give you advice?"
FR1: "She says "leave these social networks!""

Eastern Cape, 14-17 year olds:
I: "So your parents can't go on your phones and look what you're doing?"
FR4: "Ja."
FR1: "My mom knows how to open my [inaudible] I don't know how she knows that. But she didn't [inaudible] she just opened it."
I: "Wow. So she looks at what you're doing?"
FR1: "Not really. Just to scare me."

While in many cases parents' mediation of their internet use was restrictive, in some instances, there were indications of parents engaging more actively in their children's internet use. The extracts above suggest that parents took an interest in managing their children's internet use to the extent they could, even if this simply meant embargoing a phone until exams were over.

2.6.2. School and peers

2.6.2.1. School

Child participants were asked about their relationship with their school and peers in terms of their wellbeing and their internet use. Most participants reported that they felt like they belonged at their school (90.7% very true for me or fairly true for me), that their teachers cared about them as a person (83.8% very true for me or fairly true for me) and that there was at least one teacher they could go to if they had a problem (83.9% very true for me or fairly true for me). There also tended to be rules about how children used their devices at school (85.1%) and teachers tended to check learners had their devices off in class (61.2%), make rules about how mobile phones are used at school (77.6%) and when necessary, take phones away for a period (83.2%). Nearly one in four teachers (24.8%) also took it upon themselves to look on children's phones to see who they were in touch with and what they were doing, a possible indication of an overstepping of boundaries.

Despite these rules, teachers didn't seem to play as a big a role as they could in encouraging and guiding internet use for educational purposes in the school environment.

Table 23: Online engagement at school

Have your teachers ever done any of these things or wanted you to do any of these things?	Never or hardly ever
Helped me when I found something difficult to do or to find on the internet.	53.3%
Suggested ways to use the internet safely.	52.5%
Encouraged me to explore and learn things on the internet.	46.4%
Suggested ways to behave towards other people online.	56.8%
Collaborate with other students over the internet.	61.3%
Use smartphones/tablets/computers for assignments in class.	69.3%

All children 9 – 17 years old who used the internet (N=643).

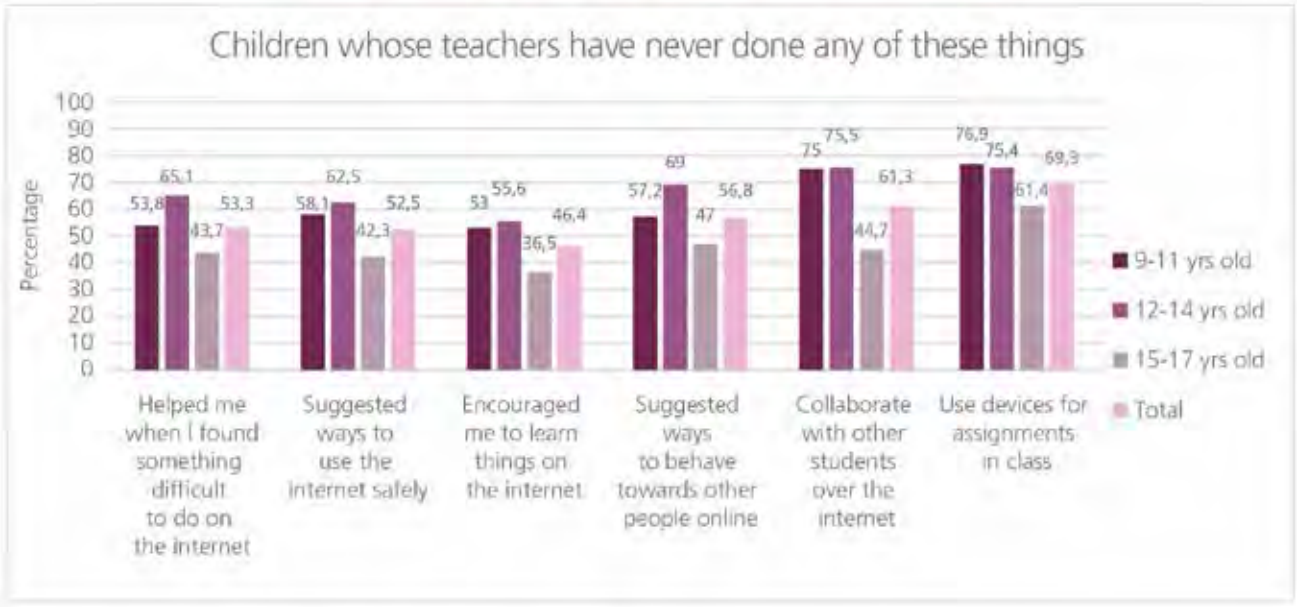
At least half of the children who used the internet did not receive any support or guidance from their teachers about internet use. Teachers were least likely to allow children to use devices for assignments in class (69.3% reported that they never or hardly ever did this) and most likely to encourage children to explore and learn new things online (46.4% reported that they never or hardly ever did this). A possible explanation for this finding may be that schools do not have their own devices and so while teachers may see the benefit of children accessing educational resources online, it is not feasible to engage in these activities at school.

Considering how much children and parents emphasised the value of the internet to children's education, these findings suggest that online learning rarely took place in the school environment. They indicate that online learning was more likely to happen outside of school and to be self-motivated, rather than as a result of teachers' encouragement. Large numbers of children seem therefore not to be benefiting from any guidance or support from their teachers around their internet use, as well as the opportunity to use the internet to further their education in the school environment. Indeed, findings in the opportunities section of this report (p. 29) show that participants did use the internet to write essays, practise their maths skills and do group work, but the findings in this section suggest that these activities most likely took place in the home, rather than at school.

Disaggregating participants' responses by age (figure 48), shows that twelve to fourteen year olds accounted for the largest proportion of children to not receive support and guidance from teachers around their internet use. Far more fifteen to seventeen year olds reported having

access to this support than the other age groups, showing that older children got more guidance from teachers, and also the opportunity to use the internet for school work in larger numbers. These findings suggest that teachers may be overlooking younger internet users when they think about providing support around internet use, possibly because they do not know that they are regular internet users. This is a significant oversight because younger children are typically more inexperienced and vulnerable internet users. It is also a lost opportunity as young children would benefit from guidance around how to be a good digital citizen, and providing this guidance would possibly impact the child's online interactions for many years to come.

Figure 48: Children never or hardly ever helped by a teacher by age



All children 9 – 17 years old who used the internet (N=643)

In the qualitative component of the study, participants suggested that teachers did actively manage mobile phone usage at school and provide some information about the risks children should be weary of online. However, besides the extract presented elsewhere in the report (p. 29), participants did not share examples of their teachers encouraging them to benefit from the opportunities afforded by the internet for their education.

Eastern Cape, 14-17 year olds:
I: "Do you talk to your teachers about it?"
(Group collectively say "no")
FR2: "She will talk to your mum and then your mum will take your phone away."

Eastern Cape, 14-17 year olds:
I: "Does anyone ever talk to your teachers about how to be safe on the internet?"
FR1: "Ja. They talk about it all the time."
I: "What do they say?"
FR1: "Just……about cyber bullying."
Eastern Cape, 14-17 year olds:
FR1: "Even in class……even in class."
FR2: "Free time."
I: "Don't your teachers take away your phones at school?"
MR1: "No."
FR2: "No."
I: "They don't?"
FR1: "They just like…"

MR2: "Mr [inaudible name] does but he says…"
FR2: "They tell you that you can bring your phone for like emergencies and stuff."
I: "Ja."
FR2: "But then it mustn't be visible, and they mustn't see you like, playing with it and if it like, makes a sound in class then they confiscate it for like a week."
MR2: "Mmh."
I: "Oh ok….Gees so it's very strict."
FR2: "Yes."

3.2.2.2. Friends and peers

In terms of the quality of their friendships, nearly two thirds of participants felt their friends really tried to help them (62.3% very true for me or fairly true for me), about half thought that they could count on their friends when things go wrong (51.3% very true for me or fairly true for me) and that they could talk to their friends about their problems (48.9% very true for me or fairly true for me). These rates were nit as high as those of parents and teachers, suggesting that participants' relationships with their friends were not always supportive or secure. Perhaps this is not surprising considering the typical volatility of friendships during the teenage years. Indeed, 42.0% of all participants worried about their friends having fun without them, suggesting a degree of insecurity in these relationships.

In terms of their internet use, more than half the participants who used the internet reported not being assisted in any way by their friends, as can be seen in table 15 below:

Table 24: Friends' input in children's internet use

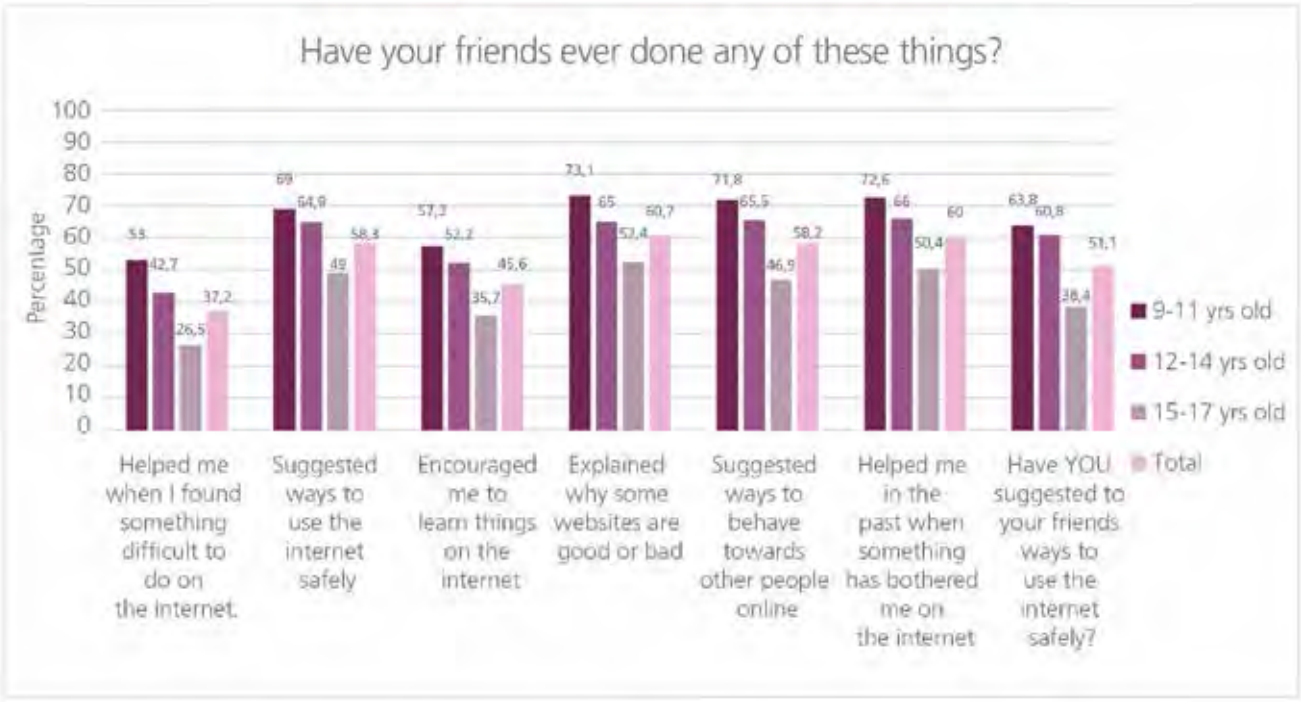
Have your friends ever done any of these things?	Never or hardly ever
Helped me when I found something difficult to do or to find on the internet.	37.2%
Suggested ways to use the internet safely.	58.3%
Encouraged me to explore and learn things on the internet.	45.6%
Explained why some websites are good or bad.	60.7%
Suggested ways to behave towards other people online.	58.2%
Helped me in the past when something has bothered me on the internet.	60.0%
Have YOU suggested to your friends ways to use the internet safely?	51.1%

All children 9 – 17 years old who used the internet (N=643).

Participants were most likely to receive support from their friends when they found something difficult to do online (37.2% never or hardly ever) but least likely to receive guidance around which websites are good and bad (60.7%) or help when it came to being bothered by something online (60.0%). These findings conflict somewhat with the findings described in the risks section of this document (p. 55), where children were reported as being most likely to discuss negative online experiences with their friends. This may suggest that not all children received such support from friends, or possibly, may just be a reflection of the fact that not all children who used the internet had experienced anything negative online. It may be that a portion of respondents had not had need to call upon their friends to support them. Nevertheless, the fact that children tended to turn to friends for support, suggests that this may be a critical area of intervention in order to ensure that children do receive sound advice, and are referred to necessary support services should they be in need of such intervention.

Larger numbers of younger children did not receive support from their friends compared to older children. For example, 69.0% of nine to eleven year olds never or hardly ever had their friends suggest ways to use the internet safely compared to 49.0% of fifteen to seventeen year olds. These findings suggest that older children tended to engage more with their friends around how to use the internet safely and that perhaps this because they were using the internet more than younger children. It could be that the reason nine to eleven year olds and twelve to fourteen year olds didn't get support from their friends was because they didn't need any. Regardless of the reason, this finding shows again that like teachers (p. 73), friends may also need to be made more conscious of the benefits of providing each other with support from a younger age. Children would benefit from receiving advice on how to provide good support to their friends, so that those who are not currently providing support to their friends become more likely to do so, and those who are currently providing support are able to provide better quality support.

Figure 49: Children never or hardly ever helped by a friend by age



All children 9 – 17 years old who used the internet (N=643)

3. Conclusion, key recommendations and looking ahead

3.1. Conclusions

Within this study, the authors set out to investigate how ICTs can both positively and negatively impact on the well-being of child users in South Africa, and how best to approach researching this topic in the global South. Although this study was a pilot study and was not representative of the South African population, the findings provide some insight into the role played by ICTs in children and parent's lives.

Access: Access to the internet was found to be greatly influenced by the age of the child, with 94.2% of children using the internet by the time they got to fifteen to seventeen years old. This access was not mediated by cost as much as one might expect in a global South context, but rather by adults, who played the greatest role in determining when children could start using the internet and how often they used it once they were online. Language and lack of culturally appropriate content was also identified as a barrier, with one in two children and two in three parents saying it was difficult to find content online in their first language.

Child participants were found to mainly use the internet at home and by themselves, rather than in public spaces such as their school. The majority of participants accessed the internet via smartphones, with far fewer participants regularly using devices like computers or tablets. A larger number of older children had these devices than younger children, and more older children had access to a device of their own.

Opportunities and practices: Child participants were not universally enthusiastic about the benefits of the internet in this study, but did report benefiting from the opportunities for learning, socialising and accessing entertainment provided by the internet. However, the quantitative and qualitative components of the study suggested that the devices children used and the high monetary cost of internet access imposed limitations on the extent to which children could explore these opportunities, or access more sophisticated ones.

Skills: The child participants reported being confident that they knew a lot about the internet and a majority were found to possess some basic technical skill. However, only a minority reported being able to complete more complex tasks, such as designing a website.

While children in this study were also confident that their technical skills surpassed their parents', the findings show that those parents who used the internet were by and large just as technically skilful as their children. The implication of this is that parents may be able to provide children with more technical advice than they currently assume they can. This is particularly the case with skills that are enhanced by life-experience, such as knowing which information to share online.

In terms of social media usage, WhatsApp was found to be the most widely used application. Socialising via this application proved to be one of the key opportunities afforded by the internet to the study's participants. In fact, anecdotal evidence from enumerators suggests that for a portion of respondents, WhatsApp, or indeed, instant messaging, was the limit of their internet use.

Risks: The majority of participants had not personally been bothered by anything online in the last year but participants did reported engaging in risky behaviours like sharing personal information with strangers online, or being exposed to content that they found distressing. In both the quantitative and qualitative studies, it was noted that there were children who used the internet in ways that impacted negatively on their daily functioning and relationships.

Many participants, even of young ages, reported meeting a stranger face to face that they first got to know online. The reasons for these meetings were unknown and so it cannot be speculated as to whether they endangered participants in any way. Nasty or hurtful treatment was also reported as being common online.

Exposure to sexual content and engaging in sexual exchanges were also found to occur, particularly on instant messaging and social networking platforms. Lower numbers of participants reported having more severe unwanted sexual experiences.

Vulnerabilities and protective factors: This study found that parents tended to take a more passive approach to mediating their children's internet use, and in fact, appraised themselves as being slightly less involved than their children rated them as being. While they expressed worry and concern over their children's online practices, their excessive use and the risks they may have been exposed to, the majority of parents did not report managing or supervising their children's internet use. Most parents did report wanting more advice about how to support their children's internet use and safety online.

The children reported that their teachers do not encourage or guide their children's internet use and the internet generally did not form part of their learning experience at school. This was the case despite the fact that most participants reported using the internet for educational purposes.

When asked directly about their friendships, only approximately half the participants felt supported by friends. A minority also reported getting help from their friends when something bothered them online or guidance around internet safety from friends. That said, elsewhere in the findings, specifically in the risks section, the majority of participants named their friends as the people they spoke to when they were exposed to an online risk. So while friends were generally considered an uncertain source of support, participants did seem to turn to them, rather than any adults, when having a negative experience online.

3.2. Recommendations

Based on the findings of this pilot study, a number of preliminary recommendations can be made.

3.2.1. Recommendations for policy

- As discussed in the outline of the policy framework in South Africa, the current policy and legislation framework on children and the internet is fragmented and does not always work in children's best interests. **It is therefore essential that a common ICTs strategy be developed that speaks to the wellbeing of children, to allow for a standardised and integrated approach across South Africa's policy landscape**, in line with the goals of the Department of Telecommunications and Postal Services' strategic plan (2015-2020). It is also vital that this strategy protects children's digital rights and avoids unnecessarily punitive or restrictive measures to maintain child online safety.
- Following from the previous recommendation, **it is necessary to formally map out how the policy and legislation framework should be enacted in relation to cases of child harm online.** Currently, the roles of various stakeholders such as parents, teachers, police, social workers and the legal system more broadly are not clear and the legal remedies for different online victimisations are either non-existent or not widely publicised. Clarifying the roles of these stakeholders and the necessary pathways of action in relation to these forms of victimisation will ensure that children are able to access professional support and legal solutions to harm the experience online. South Africa has some of the most advanced and rights-oriented legislation and policy relating to children more broadly, but this does not explicitly consider children's use of ICTs and the internet, or the implications of the increasing integration of ICTs into the daily life of children. Existing policies and legislation should be reviewed with an "online" lens, and any necessary amendments integrated as part of upcoming policy review processes.
- Along with establishing a standardised strategy and standardised procedures, **it would be valuable to standardised indicators of children's internet access, usage and online experiences, to be used across various settings. This would allow for consistent and regular data collection to be undertaken, against which progress of interventions and changes over time can be measured.** This could include data collection via administrative services, such as helplines and hotlines, and more formalised studies on child ICTs use, including national surveys.
- In line with the goals of South Africa's National Development Plan 2030 and the Department of Telecommunications and Postal Services' strategic plan (2015-2020), **establishing universal internet access at competitive prices is essential in ensuring that no child is prevented from benefiting from the opportunities the internet affords.** The participants in this study reported that the cost of data was a significant barrier to their internet access overall, and that it limited the

amount of time they could spend online. Creative, low-cost solutions such as free public WiFi provided by NGOs could be expanded to further democratise internet access more broadly. Other solutions could include incentivising the provision of free WiFi in public spaces or the provision of low cost services in under resourced areas by service providers. The reach of low cost broadband must also be extended.

- **Public awareness must be raised around the importance of children's digital rights and all discourse and messaging must take a balanced approach to children's online safety.** Excessively inflammatory reports of online harm should be avoided and instead, messaging should focus on accurate data and advice that does not impinge on children's rights. Parents and children's detailed knowledge of the extreme dangers of the internet identified in this study is evidence of the extent to which media reports currently opt for sensationalist reporting of worst case scenarios, and neglect to provide balance or show restraint in this reporting.

3.2.2. Recommendations for practice

- **South African parents should play a far greater role in mediating and supporting their children's internet use.** Currently, parents seem to feel powerless to both assist their children and manage their internet use, yet according to this study parents may be more technically skilled than they or their children realise. Regardless of their level of technological savvy, parents have the necessary life experience to teach their children to be good digital citizens.
- The findings of this study suggest that parents are currently restricting younger children's internet access as a way of mediating their use at this vulnerable age. Age appropriate internet use should be encouraged in general, in order to build the technical skills of children from an early age. **Where possible, parents should provide age-appropriate mediation of their children's internet use, rather than preventing them from accessing the internet all together.** Parents are in need of more support to assist them in providing age appropriate mediation of their children, so that they do not have to resort to restrictive measures to ensure their children's safety.
- **There is a need to find ways to increase the access to the internet children have in schools and provide them with technical support. Teachers must be encouraged to play a greater role in ensuring that children benefit from the learning opportunities the internet provides.** This may involve guidance around specific classroom management techniques to ensure that internet is beneficial to learning and not disruptive. Children would benefit from teachers providing them with guidance on how to use the internet safely and also how to use the internet optimally for learning purposes.
- Child participants reported poor advanced technical skills, possibly because they simply had no need to develop these skills. **It would be worthwhile to provide children with opportunities to grow their technical skills, which become highly valuable as children finish school and enter the labour market.** This could be done via initiatives that teach these technical skills, such as coding.
- **Discourse and interventions around child exposure to sexual content and sexual experiences online must consider that as many boys as girls are exposed to these risks but that the type of harm experienced by each gender may be different.**
- Friends currently appear to be the primary source of support for children who are victimised online. **Programmes and messaging that encourage peers to take a more active role in providing support for each other must be promoted, so that when children are exposed to harm online, they have a source of support.** In particular, children need guidance on how best to provide this support in a

sensitive manner, and also when to seek out an adult or professional's help to ensure that the victim is adequately treated.

3.3. Future research

While this study has provided some indication of the dynamics around children's internet use in the global South, it also raised further questions that might be explored in future research. It would be especially valuable to integrate these new areas of investigation into a nationally representative Global Kids Online study.

- Future research could explore parents' attitudes and behaviours around mediation in greater depth. The passive and restrictive methods of mediating children's internet use identified in this study are not currently well understood, as parents may prevent children from accessing the internet out of concern for their safety, or because devices are too expensive. It is not currently clear whether parents were avoiding engaging in active mediating strategies because they lack the knowledge to do so or because they do not feel their children are at risk. Interrogating the reasons behind parents mediating strategies might allow for appropriate intervention and support.
- The dynamics around children's online risk taking behaviours could certainly be explored further, especially the nature of their excessive internet use as this seems to currently be a site of conflict between parents and children.
- A critical area of future exploration would be understanding the circumstances under which children meet face to face with strangers they met online. Anecdotal evidence suggests that for some participants this may be a wholly innocent and welcomed activity, but the intentions of the stranger may never be completely transparent. It may therefore be useful to unpack the purpose of these meetings and explore their outcomes.

4. Appendices

4.1. Methodology

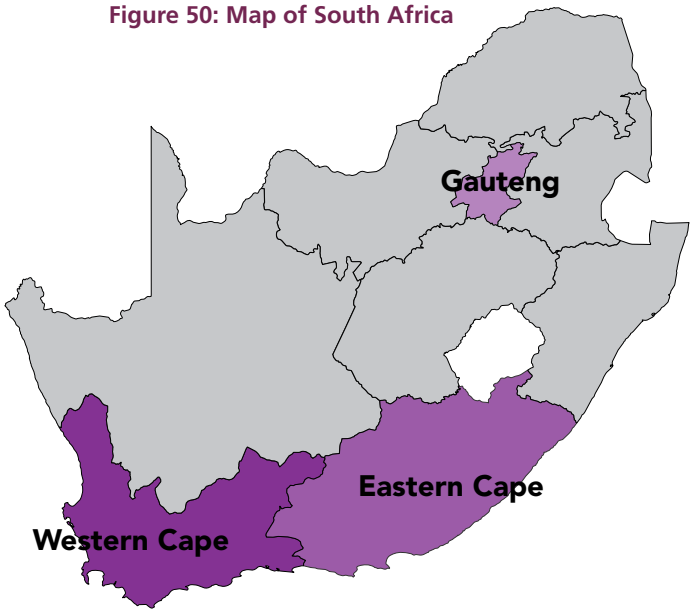
The aims and objectives of this study, as well as a brief description of its methodology, have been outlined in the findings chapter in the body of this report (p. 8). In this appendix the methodology used in this study discusses it in greater detail.

4.1.1. Sampling

The study sampled children between the ages of nine and seventeen years old and their parents or caregivers. Research on the ICTs use of children usually samples children during their mid to late teenage years, as this is seen as the period when children are at greatest risk of being harmed online. However, internet use often starts much earlier and as has been found in this study, the nature of children's internet use changes as they age.[i] For this reason, it was decided that all studies conducted within the Global Kids network would sample children between the ages of nine and seventeen, and the authors adopted this sampling guideline for the South African study.

Although the South African study was a pilot study, the authors were interested in accessing a diverse sample of participants. For this reason, three out of South Africa's nine provinces were selected as data collection sites, rather than just one. The provinces selected, Gauteng, the Eastern Cape and the Western Cape, were chosen in part out of convenience (the authors knew reliable and skilled enumerators based in each province) but in part because they represented a wide range of socio-economic contexts and large swathes of the country's total population. An urban and a rural site were selected in each province. Only the quantitative component was conducted in both sites, with qualitative data collection taking place in an urban centre.

Figure 50: Map of South Africa



The authors also made the choice to include children and parents who did not use the internet in the South African sample, something that was not mandatory within the Global Kids guidelines. A key motivation for this was to understand the barriers non-internet users faced which prevent them from using the internet. However, an added benefit of including this group in the sample was that it allowed the enumerators to identify which participants really didn't use the internet and those who did.

[i] Research on the internet use of children younger than nine years shows that some children use the internet to play games, watch videos, do their homework and socialise from very young ages (Holloway, Green & Livingstone, 2013).

Anecdotal evidence from enumerators showed that there were many internet users in the study who did not consider themselves to be internet users, because what they used their device for was not, to them, accessing the internet. For example, when enumerators asked if they used the internet many participants said no immediately, because they considered using the internet as sitting down at a computer and using a search engine. However, when probed by the enumerators, specifically with questions around their activities on their mobile phones (e.g. "Do you use WhatsApp?"), participants reported engaging in online activities, like instant messaging. Thus, asking all participants a series of questions about their exposure to various devices allowed the enumerators to determine for certain which participants did and did not use the internet.

4.1.1.1. Qualitative component

The authors planned twelve focus group discussions, two with children and two with parents in each province. Sampling for these interviews was largely convenience based. The authors engaged with schools or community-based non-governmental organisations who worked in or near the chosen urban site for the project to access children and parents. NGOs selected (in the Western Cape and Eastern Cape) provided afternoon activities for children and so the authors arranged to conduct the interviews when the children would otherwise be involved in activities with the NGO. In Gauteng, the authors engaged with schools and arranged for learners and parents to attend focus groups discussions after school. Children of all relevant age groups were accessed in these discussions. Typically, parents were only interviewed if their children had also been interviewed or if their children fell within the relevant age range. The focus groups were distributed as follows:

- Western Cape: Two child focus groups, one parent focus group.
- Eastern Cape: Three child focus groups, two parent focus group.
- Gauteng: Two child focus groups, one parent focus group.

49 children and 20 parents were interviewed in the qualitative component of the study.

4.1.1.2. Quantitative component

The quantitative toolkit was piloted in the same three provinces, in one urban and one rural site. As this was a pilot study, these sites were selected on the basis of ease of access utilising existing networks, rather than randomly selected. Within each of these sites, children and parents were randomly sampled directly from their households. Enumerators selected areas within the site to visit in a random manner, and once in an area, would visit every house on the street, interviewing any parent and child who were eligible and willing to participate in the study. From time to time, this required enumerators to arrange an interview appointment for a later time or date because the child or parent were currently unavailable.

In general, enumerators were encouraged to interview equal numbers of boys and girls and similar numbers of children in different age groups, so that no group was over represented in the data. Enumerators provided daily reports on the numbers, ages and genders of participants they interviewed in order to keep a tally of the sample. Where necessary, enumerators were asked to interview more boys or girls or participants of various ages. The resulting data set was more or less evenly representative of all age groups and genders, as was shown in the first findings chapter (p. 10).

Amongst the adults, more female caregivers were interviewed than male caregivers, most often because female caregivers were at home and available for interviews. Enumerators asserted that male caregivers were not unwilling to participate, but were simply not available in the home as often as female caregivers.

Initially, a total sample of 600 interviews was planned, with approximately 300 children and 300

parents. However, considering that the inclusion of non-internet users would reduce the pool of internet users in the sample and that the data would be collected across a range of contexts, the authors opted to expand the sample size to 900 children and 450 parents. The views of parents were intended to supplement the child data, rather than constitute a significant portion of the study. These targets were exceeded in data collection, with a final sample size of 913 children and 532 parents.

Table 25: Breakdown of sample size

	CHILD	PARENT
Total	900	450
Province	300	150
Site	150	75

4.1.2. Fieldwork

Fieldwork activities on the qualitative study began in December 2015 and was completed in mid-February, having been paused over the Christmas break. The quantitative survey component of the study commenced towards the end of February, once schools had returned and settled into term, allowing some of the findings from the qualitative study to be integrated into the quantitative instrument. Quantitative fieldwork ran for approximately a month coming to a close towards the end of March 2016.

4.1.2.1. Qualitative component

Using the adapted qualitative instrument, focus group discussions were conducted with parents and children in each of the three provinces. Focus groups were planned to last 90 minutes, with some running slightly longer and some running shorter. The interviews were facilitated by a researcher from the CJCP, assisted by a local, skilled facilitator. These discussions were audio recorded, and notes were taken by the person assisting the facilitator. An exception to this was the Gauteng interviews, where there was too much background noise in the school environment to allow for audio recording. In these interviews detailed notes were taken of the discussions, but this limited the extent to which direct quotes could be recorded.

Participants were grouped according to age with the help of the NGO or school assisting the researchers so that the discussions would be age appropriate. Between six and eight participants took part in each focus group discussion. Participants were informed about the study several days in advance and consent documents (featuring a detailed explanation of the study) were sent home with each respondent for their parents to sign.

The facilitator would begin the focus group discussion by explaining the purpose of the study and confirming that all participants assented to participate and that their parents had consented to them participating. This would involve collecting all the consent documents. The facilitator would then begin the activities with the participants, encouraging as much interaction as possible and engagement with the topic. The focus group would end when the activities had been covered and the participants felt satisfied that they had shared all reflections and comments. While no incentive was given for participation, because the discussions took place after school, participants received snacks and juice before the focus group, so that they would not be distracted by hunger. The same procedures were followed in the parent interviews.

During the data collection process, the authors could already identify themes and interesting nuances to inform the design of the quantitative tool. These included issues like the cost of data impacting on the extent that children could use the internet. The process of developing the quantitative tool therefore led on directly from the completion of the qualitative study.

4.1.2.2. Quantitative component

Within the quantitative component fieldwork began with training enumerators on the research tools and planning field activities and procedures. In each province, a team of five enumerators conducted the data collection process, with one of the five enumerators serving as the team supervisor. Once trained on the tools, the enumerators visited the urban and rural site, which were usually areas with which they were familiar and where they would be socially accepted. Once there, the enumerators went door to door, seeking suitable respondents at a household level. The only criteria for participation in an interview was a respondent being between the ages of nine and seventeen years old, and both the respondent and their guardian being willing for them to participate. Parents and children were matched, with parents only being interviewed if their child was interviewed. As a rule, only one child was interviewed per household, even if more than one eligible child was present. The first child identified meeting the sampling criteria (age and gender) was interviewed.

As a result of their experience working in the field on numerous other studies, the enumerators adopted a number of strategies in the field to make the process of data collection easier. This included things like working in pairs, which served the dual purpose of making fieldwork safer for the enumerators and allowing them to interview parents and children at the same time. This shortened the length of time enumerators spent in each household and made it easier to prevent parents from listening in on their children's responses. Enumerators also used procedures such as obtaining a letter from the local police station to provide evidence that the study was legitimate and the enumerators were not criminals, and contacting the street safety committee or other community leaders to obtain permission and support for the research activities. Visiting every house on the street formed part of these strategies, as if enumerators skipped houses, neighbours may have become suspicious of their activities and assume there was something wrong with the people in the houses they visited.

Because research was done in people's homes, it worked best to conduct interviews in the afternoons, evenings and weekends, when children were home from school and parents were home from work. Enumerators would begin by explaining the study to respondents and then asking children and parents to sign a consent document. After finding a quiet and private place to interview the respondent (whether it be a parent or a child), the interview commenced. Interviews with children typically took between 40 minutes and an hour while interviews with parents took 20 to 30 minutes. Participants were encouraged to ask questions if they did not understand a concept and were given the option to end the interview if they felt uncomfortable. No incentives were given to participants.

When the day was complete, enumerators quality controlled the completed questionnaires to ensure that the instruments were filled in correctly. These were then given to the field supervisor, who again checked the data for any errors and where errors were located, returned the questionnaire to the enumerator to correct these errors.

At the end of the fieldwork process debriefing meetings were held with all the enumerators, where their experiences in the field were discussed and reflected upon. Through this process, enumerators advised the authors as to the issues they faced with the study methodology and the tools, as well as things that worked well in research. This allowed the authors to access the insights of the enumerators to be used both in conceptualising the results of the current study and making recommendations for future work.

4.1.3. Data processing and analysis

4.1.3.1. Qualitative component

The recordings from the qualitative interviews were transcribed in verbatim form and the notes

from the interviews were compiled. All notes were anonymised. The data was then read and re-read by two authors and compiled into themes. The researchers grouped data in ways that complimented the themes of this document: access, opportunities and practices, skills, risks and mediating factors. The authors also attempted to identify quotes that did not fit with these themes so as to explore the variation within the participants' responses.

4.1.3.2. Quantitative component

While in the field, enumerators and fieldwork supervisors checked all completed questionnaires for errors. Once a batch of questionnaires was completed, these were returned to the CJCP main office. At the office, a sample of questionnaires was checked by one of the authors and where there were errors in the questionnaire, the author liaised with the team supervisor to ensure that enumerators avoided making errors in future. Where teams were still in the originating site for the batch, errors were corrected where possible.

Once questionnaires were checked, they were captured onto a standardised data structure using the statistical programme SPSS. Data capturers also checked for quality issues as they entered the data into the programme. When the capturing of the parent and child questionnaires was complete, the data was checked for any capturing errors or inconsistencies, and if errors were identified, they were corrected by referring back to the paper questionnaire.

Once the data was cleaned, basic analyses were run on the data, including frequencies of variables and comparisons between different variables.

4.1.4. Adapting the toolkit

The South African authors were provided with qualitative and quantitative toolkits, developed by the Global Kids Online Steering Group and Expert Group, to guide the development of locally appropriate research instruments. Each tool comprised of:

- Core questions – questions essential to the tool that would be used for cross-region comparison.
- Optional questions – questions that could be included and excluded from the questionnaire depending on the research interests of the country. These included sensitive questions that may not have been appropriate for younger participants and therefore could be excluded for ethical reasons.
- Adaptable questions – suggestions for questions that could be included and should be adapted to be made more appropriate for the relevant country context.

Based on this guidance and a pre-existing knowledge of internet use in the South African context, the tools were constructed and adapted. Key concerns throughout were balancing the need to obtain as much useful and interesting data as possible and making the tools user friendly and time efficient in implementation. Below, the adaptation process for the qualitative and quantitative tools is discussed.

While all tools were adapted where necessary to make them more appropriate for the English used in South Africa, none of the tools were translated into additional languages. However, enumerators were encouraged to conduct interviews in whatever language participants were most comfortable speaking, with all enumerators being bi-lingual or multi-lingual. Enumerator training involved detailed discussions as to how best to translate the interview questions so that they still retained their original meaning. This involved forward and back translating of key terms, to ensure that a standardised meaning was obtained. The qualitative interviews were conducted in both English and Afrikaans, while between the participants in the quantitative interviews thirteen different languages were reported as being home languages. Enumerators

therefore conducted interviews in a range of different languages to assist with the comfort of the participants.

4.1.4.1. Qualitative component

This component was intended to supplement the quantitative data collected, providing more in-depth data on the specific practices and experiences of South African children online. It was also intended to enhance the design of the quantitative tool, as it would allow for the researchers to explore contextual nuances they might otherwise not have been aware of and where relevant, include them in the new survey tool. While it was not essential to do so, the South African team opted to interview children and parents in this component, constructing a tool appropriate for parents and a tool appropriate for children.

The South African authors chose to use focus group discussions as our data collection method, because of its utility in obtaining the input of many people in short periods of time and allowing for a shared construction of meaning and common experience. Drawing on the questions and content areas provided by the co-ordinating office, the authors developed an interview guide for parents and children. The adaptation and design of the tool for the study was motivated by the need to make the questions appropriate for the South African context; by the challenge of making questions suitable for the wide age range of children being researched; and by the necessity of making the tool relevant for the focus group format. As a result, the tools for parent and child focus group discussions featured activities through which the critical content areas could be covered.

Child tool: The child sample included children of a range of ages and so the qualitative tool needed to be engaging on a number of levels to sustain the interest of the participants. For this reason, the content areas of interest were integrated into two activities.

The first, the 'H assessment' involved participants listing their subjective and personal experiences of what they considered the positive and negative aspects of the internet in columns set up on flipchart paper. Participants were then asked to list what they thought were some of the things they would like to change about the internet, and whether they would like more information and support to assist with their internet use. The second activity involved a body map, where participants drew a person's body on flipchart paper and then were asked to discuss the feelings that negative content online elicit (heart), who they might talk to about negative experiences (mouth), what they have done in response to any negative experience online (hands and feet), what they have learned as a result of their exposure to negative experiences online (head) and whether adult input has influenced their behaviour online (ears). The focus groups also began with a discussion of what devices the children accessed and how they used them.

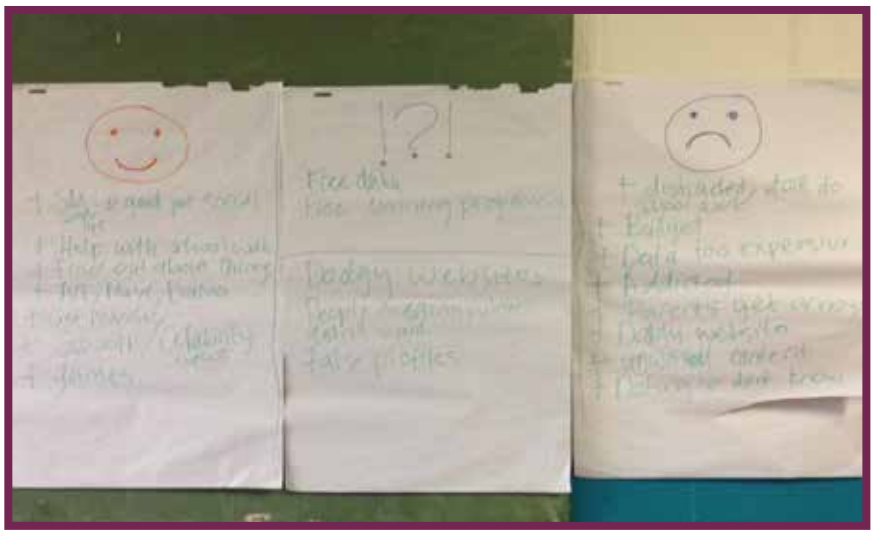


Figure 51: H-assessment activity

Figure 52: Body mapping

These activities proved valuable in condensing the many potential questions that could be asked of respondents into manageable themes and sustaining participants' interest. However, it was necessary to adapt the implementation of the focus group guide depending on the age of the participants. For example, younger participants (nine to eleven year olds) lacked some of the maturity needed to engage with the concepts being discussed and as a result easily lost interest with the discussion at hand. Younger children could not be expected to provide detailed reports of their online experiences and often their input was superficial. This was also influenced by the fact that in some cases participants did not use the internet, or used it very little, and therefore could not meaningfully engage in the discussion.

A related difficulty was that children tended to have different levels of access to devices and the internet and so some children did not feel they could contribute to the discussion or felt bad about themselves for not having the same resources as other children. Thus, it was necessary to manage the discussion in a way that no value was placed on who had sophisticated devices so as to ensure that no participants left the focus group feeling bad about themselves.

These difficulties highlighted that future research on this topic would benefit from simpler research tools that are easier for younger children to engage with and from sampling only children who used the internet, to avoid any participants feeling unable to contribute.

Parent tool: The parent tool focused on exploring both parents use and knowledge of the internet and their mediation and awareness of their children's internet use. This tool involved one activity, the 'hot air balloon', which used the image of a hot air balloon to generate discussion around a number of topics. These included the things on the internet that were good for their children (the sun), bad for their children (the clouds), what they and their children did on the internet (the segments of the balloon), their mediation of their children's use (the basket) and their support and guidance of their children (the grass). Participants were divided into two groups and worked in these groups to make a list of the things they thought were good about the internet for their children and the things they thought were bad about the internet for their children. These two lists were then presented to the group and discussed. Participants then discussed the remaining parts of the balloon, prompted by the focus group facilitator. These activities worked well to bring focus to the participants' discussion and allow them to conceptualise the relationship between the internet and their mediation of their children's internet use.

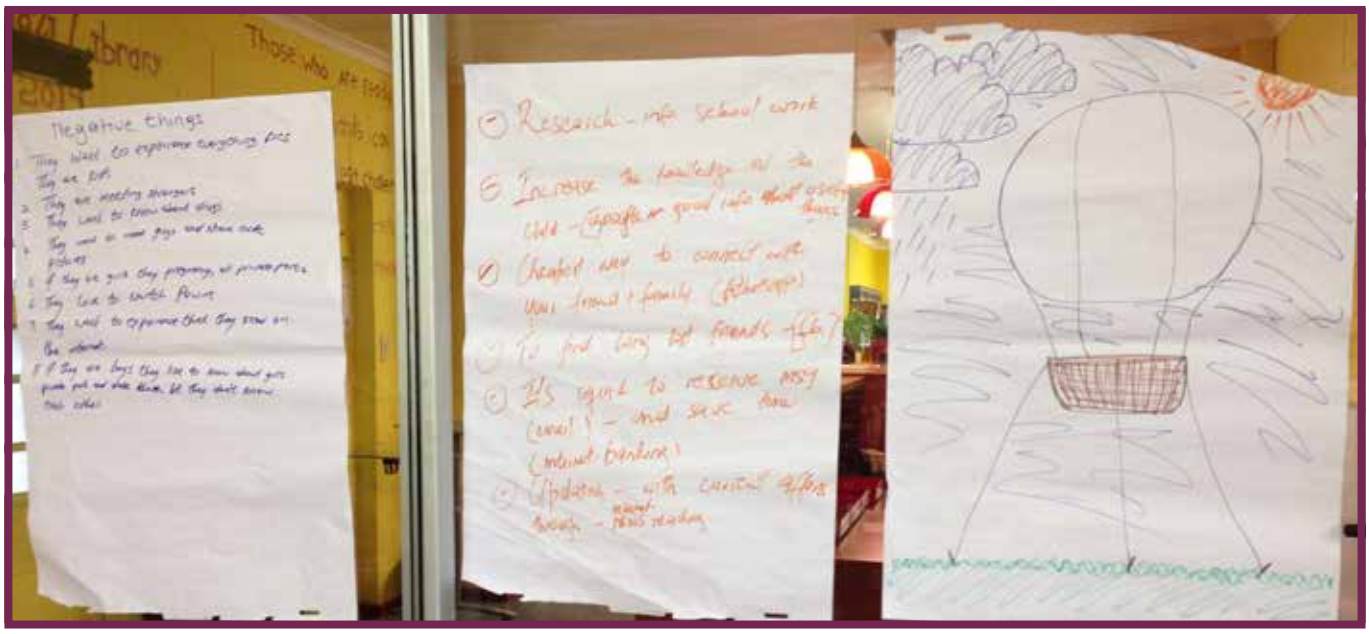


Figure 53: Hot air balloon activity

The dynamic of unequal access also became apparent in parent interviews, with some parents providing their children with more devices than others, at times engendering an atmosphere of competition. This was potentially damaging to the rapport of the interview and the ease with which participants interacted. This kind of comparison of resources seems to be an inevitable part of ICTs research, but it must be managed in a way that prevents it from becoming counter-productive.

4.1.4.2. Quantitative component

Designing the quantitative tools involved three key concerns:

- Following the guidelines provided in the toolkit so as to ensure that the comparable data was obtained.
- Making the most of the opportunity to obtain a greater understanding of child internet use in South Africa by asking as many questions of the participants as was feasible. This meant including many of the optional questions, making adaptations to the questions and including new, locally relevant questions.
- Ensuring that the questionnaire was not too complex or long and that it was easily understandable for the participants and enumerators.

As a result of these concerns, efforts were made to ensure that the tools were structured in a straightforward way and were not too long or bulky. One way in which this was achieved was shortening some of the response options. For example, in many of the response options of the core questions provided by the Global Kids Online Steering group, the responses of "I don't know" and "I would prefer not to say" were given. These responses were removed from those specific items and instead given a unique code, which could be applied throughout the questionnaire. The code for these response options was placed at the bottom of each questionnaire page throughout the survey as a reminder to enumerators. Other changes to make the questionnaire more easily translatable and understandable were made.

No changes were made to the core questions, although some of the phrasing was adapted to be more culturally relevant. However, the core and optional questions were moved around or grouped together in order to produce a logical flow in the questionnaires. For example, rather than be constructed as a module of the child questionnaire, the parent tool was constructed

into its own questionnaire, with modules for demographics, parents' internet use and parents' knowledge of their children's internet use. The risks module of the child tool was also rearranged, so that it ran from least sensitive to most sensitive questions, as interpreted by the authors, in order to manage the child's comfort level during the interview.

Most optional questions were included in the interview and where necessary these were also adapted to make them more culturally relevant. Optional questions were only excluded from the questionnaire when they were thought too repetitive, unnecessarily detailed or irrelevant for a South African sample. The optional addition made by the South African authors was the module on unwanted sexual experiences. This was included because, as indicated in the discussion on the South African context (p. 3), violence and particularly sexual violence against women and children is common in South Africa and the authors were interested in determining whether this translated into online violence in any way.

In terms of unique additions made by the South African authors, the child questionnaire included a question on the barriers children might face to accessing the internet and questions on whether they were able to access content online in their home language (when this was not English), and access content that they felt was culturally and socially relevant to them. The latter two questions were also included in the parents' questionnaire.

The question on barriers was inspired by discussion in the focus groups with young people about the challenges they faced just getting to access the internet. Indeed, from these informal conversations it became apparent that for many children, a discussion of the various risks and opportunities they were exposed to via the internet was moot because they so rarely had access to sufficient data or the use of a device for long enough to form an opinion on internet use.

The questions on access to culturally relevant content or content in one's home language come out of similar discussions. During the course of the focus groups it became apparent that much of the content children reported accessing online seemed to be generated in the global North, highlighting the absence of opportunities to engage with more socially and culturally relevant content. As a result of this observation, the authors included three questions inquiring about the access children (and parents) had to content in their home language and about things that were immediately relevant to their culture, interests and lifestyle (including members of the LGBTI and immigrant communities). Below the additional questions are presented:

Table 26: Additional questions

QUESTION	RESPONSE OPTIONS
Are you usually able to access the internet when you want to or need to?	1 = Never 2 = Sometimes 3 = Often 4 = Always → SKIP to section 3 X = Other (please specify)
If NEVER, SOMETIMES or OFTEN to the previous question, what is the main barrier that prevents you from accessing the internet?	1 = Adults like teachers or parents don't allow me to 2 = Devices are too expensive 3 = There is no signal or poor signal 4 = Data is too expensive X = Other (please specify)

Is it easy to find information or resources about your community/your culture/your lifestyle online?	1 = Yes, always 2 = Yes, sometimes 3 = No, not always 4 = No, never
Do you sometimes feel like you wish there were more resources online that were relevant to your community/your culture/your lifestyle?	1 = Yes 2 = No 3 = Not sure
Ask if the child's home language is not English: Is it easy to find information or resources in your home language online?	1 = Yes, always 2 = Yes, sometimes 3 = No, not always 4 = No, never

A further addition made by the authors was to include a list of broad opportunities, constructed out of the many more specific questions about opportunities, where participants could rate the importance of each opportunity to them. This was included to get a sense of the importance of different opportunities overall to each participant. The questions can be seen below:

Table 27:The values placed by participants on various opportunities

QUESTIONS	RESPONSE OPTIONS
How important is it to you for you to be able to do the following things…	
Learn online.	1 = Not at all important 2 = A bit important 3 = Fairly important 4 = Very important
Participate in your community online.	
Participate in politics online and talk about social issues.	
Be creative online.	
Socialise online.	
Access entertainment online.	
Buy or sell things online.	

When constructing the questionnaire the authors encountered difficulties with the material deprivation questions provided, as although these were core questions, they were considered inappropriate for the South African context. The authors opted instead to insert different material deprivation indicators, which, having been tested and developed in the South African context, were considered more appropriate.[47] The questions used in the tool were considered to be less value laden in the South African context. The proposed questions and the new questions used in the questionnaire are outlined below:

Table 28: Changes to material deprivation questions

Proposed questions	Used questions
	How often have you…
How often do you get some new clothes to wear?	Gone without enough food to eat.
How easily can you find a quiet place to study or do homework?	Felt unsafe from crime in your home.

How often do you have fresh fruit and vegetables to eat?	Gone without medicine or medical treatment that you needed
Do you have at least two pairs of properly fitting shoes? [include: boots, sandals, trainers, etc.]?	Gone without a cash income
How often do you get some new games or toys to play with?	Gone without enough clean water to drink and cook with.
	Gone without shelter.
	Gone without electricity in your home.
	Gone without enough fuel to heat your home or cook your food.

While this indicator measured children's access to material resources adequately, identifying which children had their basic needs met and which did not, they did not allow for any differentiation between participants beyond this basic level of access. That is, it did not work well to divide the participants into three evenly sized groups that indicated low, medium and high access to material resources, which could be used to show the degree to which access to material resources impacts on access to the internet, a person's technical skills and the risks a child is exposed to. The majority of participants reported that they had never or hardly ever gone without any of the things in the questions, making it impossible to distinguish any difference in socio-economic status on the basis of these measures. In part this may be explained by the massive roll-out of basic services, including shelter, water and electricity, over the past 22 years in South Africa.

The choice to include non-internet users also affected the construction of the questionnaire. The questionnaire was divided into questions that could and could not be asked of internet users and this proved tedious to implement in data collection, capturing and cleaning. Each question was given a designation indicating who could be asked the question. These designations were also given based on the sensitive nature of the questions, with younger children not being asked the more distressing questions. The designations were:

- ask all respondents,
- ask only respondents who use the internet,
- ask all respondents aged twelve years old and over and
- ask only respondents aged twelve years old and over who use the internet.

These questions were often interspersed among each other, making it difficult at times for the enumerator to keep track of the questions while interviewing a respondent. Some questions were arduous to ask of non-internet users, as they so obviously would be answering no to the question. However, they were included because the authors were interested in capturing any interesting or undocumented dynamics occurring around children and parents internet use.

4.1.5. Research ethics

In both the qualitative and quantitative components of the research, strict ethical procedure was followed to maintain the wellbeing of respondents. As this was a pilot study, an expedited review of the planned study and the research instruments was provided by the University of Cape Town, and the study was given approval to proceed.

When developing the research instruments, it was important to ensure that the participants were never upset or traumatised by the questions they were asked. For this reason, questions about distressing content or experiences were only asked of older participants, those aged twelve years

and up. This included questions on user generated content, including discussions about self-harm, and questions on unwanted sexual experiences online. Efforts were also made to ensure that the questionnaire ran from least sensitive to most sensitive so that the participants would have time to get comfortable with the questionnaire before being asked the more sensitive questions.

All respondents were required to be fully informed about the study and provide written consent to participate in it. Under South African law children are not considered able to provide written consent and for this reason, no child could take part in the study unless a parent or guardian had signed their consent.[48] The child was also required to sign their assent to take part, once their parent's or guardian's consent was obtained.

There were some instances during fieldwork were difficulties arose as a result of this procedure. The enumerators met with some parents who agreed to take part in the study but refused to sign any physical document. One parent stated that they had been asked to fill in some personal information on a consent document for another study, and as a result had been the victim of an identity theft scam. In some cases the enumerators treated these concerns as indications of a 'soft' refusal to participate in the study (a participant being uncomfortable to say outright that they did not want to take part and so finding another way to refuse participation). Participants were informed that their consent documents would be stored safely and privately and would never be used in any way to identify them. The participants' signed consent forms were stored separately to their questionnaires so that their anonymity could be protected.

It was also important to maintain confidentiality and privacy in all interviews. In focus group discussions, this is always challenging, however, participants were asked keep the content of the discussions to themselves and all recordings of discussions were transcribed and anonymised, and then stored safely. Recordings of interviews were only made when consent was obtained from all participants to do so.

In the survey component, privacy and confidentiality were in theory easier to maintain, as the participants were interviewed in private and their names did not appear anywhere on the questionnaire documents. However, because of the small size of many of the homes visited and the interest parents had in what their children did online, enumerators often faced challenges finding a truly private space to interview children and convincing parents to respect their children's privacy. That said, enumerators only went ahead with interviews if they were certain they could maintain the child's privacy. One way in which this was achieved, as discussed on p. 83, was to interview parents and children at the same time, using two enumerators, and engaging parents in discussion until the child's interview was complete.

Although this study was interested in the more objective and descriptive aspects of children's internet use, discussing the participants' exposure to online risks and harms did have the potential to re-victimise any participants who had experienced severe online harms. The authors were also concerned that enumerators may step into a situation where participants were experiencing offline or online harms, or may, by interviewing the participants about their internet use, open the child up to more harm. While the risk of this happening was considered minor, these scenarios were covered in the enumerators' training. All enumerators were encouraged to be hypervigilant as to whether their interviewing a respondent may put the respondent at any kind of risk and if necessary, cease all research activities. As none of the enumerators were trained counsellors, they were unable to personally intervene to assist the participants and were trained to refer the participants to relevant counselling services instead. All enumerators used in this study have extensive experience in conducting research with children, particularly on sensitive and difficult subjects including violence and sexual abuse, and so were well equipped to handle any scenario

where abuse was reported. The enumerators were also instructed to inform the authors if a participant disclosed in an interview that they had experienced any severe form of online or offline abuse, so that help could be obtained for this child. In South Africa it is mandatory for research organisations to report ongoing child abuse to the relevant government departments, if they identify an unreported case.

The data on risks obtained in this study suggest that some of the participants may have had harmful experiences online. However, in no circumstances did the enumerators judge the participants to be in distress or in danger and so no referrals were made to any child protection agencies. That said, all participants were given a resource document that included information on the study and the contact details of the CJCP, ChildLine and local support services, so that should they feel distressed or in need of support as a result of participating in the study, they were able to get in contact. No child or parent contacted the authors.

4.1.6. Lessons learnt

A number of lessons were drawn from the process of conducting this pilot study.

- It was valuable to conduct the qualitative component of the study before the quantitative component as this allowed for the insights gained from this research to be applied to the quantitative toolkit. That said, it may also be valuable to conduct further qualitative research after the completion of the quantitative study, as this may allow researchers to investigate or contextualise the findings of the quantitative study. This may be a worthwhile approach in a future, national sweep of the Global Kids Online project, as conducting a pilot has already given the authors sufficient evidence upon which to construct a future quantitative tool. This method could be used to explore topics like the identity of the strangers children meet online, or why children develop certain online skills and not others.
- Using the same tool for internet users and non-internet users proved cumbersome. It was extremely useful to interview non-internet users but this might be better achieved by using a separate non-internet user module in the quantitative instrument, essentially resulting in questions for internet users and questions for non-internet users. To this end, a proposed non-internet user module has been constructed and can be viewed in appendix 4.3 (p. 120) of this document.
- It was valuable to include as many questions as possible in the quantitative instruments for this study, because it allowed the authors to identify what exactly children and parents did and didn't experience on the internet. However, in the child questionnaire in particular, such a long tool proved extremely time consuming to use, especially when enumerators had to translate the tool while conducting the interview. Using a shorter, more focused tool, which consists of the core questions and only a handful of additional questions would certainly remedy this challenge. More cognitive testing is also necessary to ensure that tools appropriate for the level of comprehension ability of children of all age groups. It may also be necessary to adapt the questionnaire to ensure that it is more appropriate for the nine to eleven year old age group.
- Related to this, it would be beneficial to provide enumerators with translated scripts to use when conducting interviews in different languages. This would guarantee a standardisation of the translations used by enumerators and allow enumerators to conduct the interviews faster. While it may not be possible to foresee all the languages participants speak, it is possible to develop scripts for the languages the enumerators speak.
- The questions included in this study to determine the participants' access to material resources did not prove adequate for useful exploration of the effect of

this access on the nature of children's internet use. This is an important variable in understanding children's internet use, and much of the data in this study suggested that it did have a role in children's internet use, for example, the cost of data and devices was a limitation on children's internet access. An adapted approach to render this variable more useful would involve changing the questions to make sure that they differentiate between a broader range of socio-economic levels and using a sample that is more representative of the broader population.

- And finally, while the study's tools should be shortened and simplified, the results of this study suggest some gaps in knowledge that should be addressed in future tools. For example, while this study asked about experiences of nastiness online, it may benefit from a question that contains the full definition of cyberbullying, so that claims can be made about cyberbullying online. Another potential question is about who the strangers were that children met with offline or who harassed children with unwanted sexual experiences. The use of the term 'stranger' as a response option may have been deceptive, especially in the case of the later set of questions, because participants may have chosen this option to refer to unwanted ads and pop-ups. Additional questions in some instances will certainly clarify these issues in future research.

4.2. Data tables

Below, a selection of data from the core variables of this study is presented.

4.2.1. Core questions - Access

1.1. How often do you use the internet

%	
Never	29.7
Hardly ever	2.5
At least every month	3.8
At least every week	16.2
Daily or almost daily	28.0
Several times each day	19.8
Valid (n)	910
Total (n)	913
% at least every week or more often	64.0
Gender	
At least every week	
Boys	63.5
Girls	64.5
Age	
At least every week	
9-11 yrs	34.7
12-14 yrs	66.9
15-17 yrs	88.7

1.2. How often do you go online or use the internet at the following places?

%	1.2.1. At school	1.2.2. At home	1.2.3. Home of friends	1.2.4. In public place	1.2.5. While travelling	1.2.6. By myself
Never	51.9	2.8	23.6	37.0	33.0	14.8
Hardly ever	Not included					
At least every month	5.6	6.3	17.0	22.3	8.7	6.1
At least every week	20.3	19.7	33.6	28.7	18.9	11.5
Daily or almost daily	19.1	49.5	23.0	8.7	31.1	33.1
Several times each day	3.1	21.7	2.8	3.3	8.3	34.5
Valid (n)	640	640	640	641	640	641
Does not apply	270*	270*	270*	270*	270*	270*
Total (n)	913	913	913	913	913	913
% at least every week or more often	42.5	90.9	59.4	40,7	58.3	79.1
Gender**						
At least every week or more often						
Boys	47.3	89.7	60.9	44.3	55.4	83.6
Girls	37.1	92.3	57.6	36.7	61.5	74.0
Age						
At least every week or more often						
9-11 yrs	30.1	85.2	35.7	30.2	28.7	68.1
12-14 yrs	30.3	88.7	54.6	34.2	54.9	74.9
15-17 yrs	57.0	94.8	72.5	50.0	72.4	86.8

*Note: 270 participants in the sample did not use the internet and therefore these questions were not applicable to them.

**Note: These cross tabulations were done with the smaller 'internet-user' sample.

1.3. When you use the internet, how often do you use any of these to go online

%	1.3.1. Feature phone	1.3.2. Smartphone	1.3.3. Desktop computer	1.3.4. Laptop computer	1.3.5. Tablet	1.3.6. Games console
Never	82.1	14.9	58.7	76.3	58.3	71.7
Hardly ever	Not included					
At least every month	3.0	4.9	11.0	5.2	4.1	5.8
At least every week	3.3	13.8	16.3	8.3	8.8	11.4
Daily or almost daily	9.9	39.4	13.0	8.5	20.2	8.6
Several times each day	1.7	27.0	1.1	1.7	8.6	2.5
Valid (n)	636	637	639	638	638	639
Does not apply	270*	270*	270*	270*	270*	270*
Total (n)	913	913	913	913	913	913
% at least every Week or more often	14.9	80.2	30.3	18.5	37.6	22.5
Gender**						
At least every week or more often						
Boys	15.7	79.5	36.2	22.1	44.8	33.8
Girls	14.1	81.1	23.7	14.4	29.5	9.7
Age						
At least every week or more often						
9-11 yrs	14.9	73.0	14.8	14.9	38.2	30.4
12-14 yrs	18.6	76.1	22.8	10.7	32.5	17.6
15-17 yrs	12.0	86.2	42.5	26.0	41.4	23.3

1.4. When you use the internet, how do you connect?

%	1.4.1. I use free internet (e.g. in school, libraries, shops etc.)	1.4.2. I pay to use the internet (e.g. at an internet café etc.)	1.4.3. I use prepaid internet (e.g. at home, on my cell phone).
Yes	54.6	29.9	92.4
No	45.4	70.1	7.6
Valid (n)	643	643	643
Does not apply	270*	270*	270*
Total (n)	913	913	913
% yes	54.6	29.9	92.4
Gender**			
% yes			
Boys	57.3	22.5	92.4
Girls	51.5	38.2	92.4
Age			
% yes			
9-11 yrs	47.0	14.5	82.9
12-14 yrs	44.0	22.0	92.7
15-17 yrs	66.0	42.2	95.9

4.2.2. Core questions - Opportunities

2.1. There are lots of things on the internet that are good for children of my age?

%	
Not true	28.8
A bit true	13.9
Fairly true	18.1
Very true	39.2
Valid (n)	618
Does not apply	270*
Total (n)	913
% fairly true or very true	57.3
Gender**	
% fairly true or very true	
Boys	61.4
Girls	52.8
Age	
% fairly true or very true	
9-11 yrs	49.6
12-14 yrs	53.1
15-17 yrs	63.8

*Note: 270 participants in the sample did not use the internet and therefore these questions were not applicable to them.

**Note: All cross tabulations for section C were done with the smaller 'internet-user' sample.

2.2. How often have you done these things ONLINE in the past month?

%	2.2.1. I learned something new	2.2.2. I looked for information about work or study opportunities	2.2.3. I looked for resources or events about my local neighbourhoods	2.2.4. I used the internet to talk to people from places or backgrounds different from mine	2.2.5. I looked for the news online
Never	10.9	44.8	70.0	42.5	51.9
Hardly ever	12.6	10.0	13.7	13.7	13.4
At least every month	Not included				
At least every week	44.6	21.2	11.7	16.6	15.7
Daily or almost daily	27.1	15.7	4.0	19.1	15.2
Several times each day	4.8	8.4	0.6	8.1	3.7
Valid (n)	643	643	642	643	643
Does not apply	270*	270*	270*	270*	270*
Total (n)	913	913	913	913	913
% at least every week or more often	76.5	45.3	16.3	43.8	34.6
Gender**					
At least every week or more often					
Boys	81.9	54.1	15.8	53.2	42.1
Girls	70.4	35.2	16.9	33.2	26.2
Age					
At least every week or more often					
9-11 yrs	59.8	26.5	6.8	16.2	12.8
12-14 yrs	72.4	31.9	10.8	35.8	21.1
15-17 yrs	86.4	63.3	24.5	61.2	54.1

2.2. How often have you done these things ONLINE in the past month? *CONTINUED*

%	2.2.6. I discussed political or social problems with other people online	2.2.7. I created my own video or music and uploaded it to share	2.2.8. I created a story or a website online	2.2.9. I visited a social network	2.2.10. I talk to family and friends who live far away
Never	74.9	54.4	74.5	30.8	27.5
Hardly ever	8.1	12.6	7.5	5.0	9.0
At least every month	Not included				
At least every week	10.6	15.1	10.1	15.6	23.2
Daily or almost daily	5.5	14.3	7.3	22.9	21.6
Several times each day	0.9	3.6	0.6	25.7	18.7
Valid (n)	642	643	643	642	643
Does not apply	270*	270*	270*	270*	270*
Total (n)	913	913	913	913	913
% at least every week or more often	17.0	33.0	18.0	64.2	63.5
Gender**					
At least every week or more often					
Boys	20.8	37.4	25.1	62.6	68.1
Girls	12.7	27.9	10.0	66.0	58.1
Age					
At least every week or more often					
9-11 yrs	7.7	15.4	1.7	26.5	34.2
12-14 yrs	10.4	28.9	10.3	55.8	58.2
15-17 yrs	25.9	43.2	30.6	85.7	79.3

2.2. How often have you done these things ONLINE in the past month?

%	2.2.11. I watched video clips	2.2.12. I play online games	2.2.13.I looked for health information for myself or someone I know	2.2.14. I participated in a site where people share my interests and hobbies
Never	34.2	38.9	56.9	53.7
Hardly ever	14.0	20.0	14.2	13.7
At least every month	Not included			
At least every week	31.2	26.1	19.3	15.1
Daily or almost daily	16.1	10.8	7.8	12.6
Several times each day	4.5	4.2	1.8	5.0
Valid (n)	641	643	643	643
Does not apply	270*	270*	270*	270*
Don't know	0	0	0	0
Prefer not to say	0	0	0	0
Total (n)	913	913	913	913
% at least every week or more often	51.8	41.1	28.9	32.7
Gender**				
At least every week or more often				
Boys	56.9	44.2	32.2	38.6
Girls	46.0	37.4	25.2	25.9
Age				
At least every week or more often				
9-11 yrs	25.6	34.7	10.3	12.0
12-14 yrs	44.2	41.9	20.3	21.6
15-17 yrs	68.3	42.8	43.2	49.7

4.2.3. Core questions - Skills

3.1. Think about how you use the internet. How true are these things for you?

%	3.1.1. I know how to save a photo that I find online	3.1.2. I know how to change my privacy settings	3.1.3. I find it easy to check if the information I find online is true	3.1.4. I find it easy to choose the best keywords for online searches	3.1.5. I know which information I should and shouldn't share online
Not true for me	8.7	19.6	32.0	30.4	15.7
A bit true for me	10.8	7.9	22.9	22.3	11.2
Fairly true for me	28.4	24.6	24.5	22.5	23.2
Very true for me	52.1	47.9	20.6	24.8	49.8
Valid (n)	641	643	641	641	642
Does not apply	270*	270*	270*	270*	270*
Total (n)	913	913	913	913	913
% fairly true or very true	80.5	72.5	45.1	47.3	73.1
Gender**					
% fairly true or very true					
Boys	78.0	71.1	43.7	50.0	71.8
Girls	83.3	74.1	46.7	44.1	74.4
Age					
% fairly true or very true					
9-11 yrs	49.6	37.6	19.0	29.1	52.1
12-14 yrs	76.6	65.9	34.6	35.1	65.9
15-17 yrs	95.9	91.5	63.6	64.2	87.0

*Note: 270 participants in the sample did not use the internet and therefore these questions were not applicable to them.

**Note: These cross tabulations were done with the smaller 'internet-user' sample

3.1. Think about how you use the internet. How true are these things for you? *CONTINUED*

%	3.1.6. I know how to remove people from my contact lists	3.1.7. I know how to post online a video or music that I have created myself	3.1.8. I know which different types of licences apply to online content	3.1.9. I know how to install apps on a mobile device	3.1.10. I know how to keep track of the costs of mobile app use
Not true for me	11.1	41.5	59.3	25.2	43.1
A bit true for me	5.5	17.3	19.9	14.8	16.5
Fairly true for me	17.2	18.0	12.0	21.2	19.8
Very true for me	66.3	23.2	8.7	38.9	20.6
Valid (n)	641	643	642	643	642
Does not apply	270*	270*	270*	270*	270*
Total (n)	913	913	913	913	913
% fairly true or very true	83.5	41.2	20.7	60.0	40.3
Gender**					
% fairly true or very true					
Boys	83.9	45.3	29.5	65.5	46.2
Girls	83.0	36.5	10.7	53.8	33.7
Age					
% fairly true or very true					
9-11 yrs	56.9	14.5	5.1	33.3	15.5
12-14 yrs	79.7	29.7	11.3	53.9	28.9
15-17 yrs	96.9	60.9	34.4	75.5	59.2

4.2.4. Core questions - Risks

4.1.1. Have you ever had contact on the internet with someone you have not met face to face before?

%	
Yes	41.2
No	58.8
Valid (n)	643
Does not apply	270*
Total (n)	913
% yes	41.2
Gender**	
Boys	43.3
Girls	38.9
Age	
9-11 yrs	11.1
12-14 yrs	30.2
15-17 yrs	61.9

4.1.2. In the PAST YEAR, have you ever met anyone face to face that you first got to know on the internet?

%	
Yes	54.0
No	46.0
Valid (n)	265
Does not apply	375***
Total (n)	913
% yes	54.0
Gender**	
Boys	57.4
Girls	49.6
Age	
9-11 yrs	46.2
12-14 yrs	41.4
15-17 yrs	59.3

*Note: 270 participants in the sample did not use the internet and therefore some of these questions were not applicable to them.

**Note: These cross tabulations were done with the smaller 'internet-user' sample.

***Note: This question was not applicable to participants who either didn't use the internet or hadn't responded yes to the question for which this question was a follow up question.

4.1.3. If you met anyone face to face that you first got to know on the internet, how did you feel about it?

%	
Fine	61.7
A bit upset	5.7
Very upset	2.8
A bit embarrassed	5.0
Very embarrassed	2.8
A bit afraid	11.3
Very afraid	1.4
Other	9.2
Valid (n)	141
Does not apply	499***
Total (n)	913
% fine	61.7
% upset	8.5

	% fine	% upset
Gender**		
Boys	73.3	4.7
Girls	43.6	14.5
Age		
9-11 yrs	25.0	25.0
12-14 yrs	50.0	21.4
15-17 yrs	66.1	4.6

4.2.1. In the PAST YEAR, has anything ever happened online that bothered or upset you in some way?

%	
Yes	27.1
No	72.9
Valid (n)	643
Does not apply	270*
Total (n)	913
% yes	27.1
Gender**	
Boys	33.6
Girls	19.6
Age	
9-11 yrs	11.1
12-14 yrs	19.4
15-17 yrs	39.5

4.2.2. In the PAST YEAR, how often did this happen?

%	
Just once or twice	71.3
At least every month	6.4
At least every week	11.1
Daily or almost daily	11.1
Valid (n)	171
Does not apply	739***
Total (n)	913

	Just once or twice	At least every month	At least every week	Daily or almost daily
Gender**				
Boys	67.3	4.4	13.3	15.0
Girls	79.3	10.3	6.9	3.4
Age				
9-11 yrs	84.6	0.0	15.4	0.0
12-14 yrs	65.9	11.4	13.6	9.1
15-17 yrs	71.9	5.3	9.6	13.2

4.2.3. The last time something happened online that bothered or upset you, did you talk to anyone of these people about it?

%	
I didn't talk to anyone	7.8
My parent or caregiver	25.0
My sibling	6.9
A friend around my age	48.7
A teacher	8.6
Someone whose job it is to help children	0.9
Another adult I trust	1.7
Other	0.4
Valid (n)	174 respondents / 232 responses (multiple response set)
Does not apply	739***
Total (n)	913
% yes	92.5

	Spoke to someone	I didn't talk to anyone	My parent or caregiver	My sibling	A friend around my age	A teacher	Someone whose job it is to help children	Another adult I trust	Other
Gender**									
Boys	96.7	10.4	32.2	9.6	66.1	16.5	0.9	3.5	0.0
Girls	86.8	10.2	35.6	8.5	62.7	1.7	1.7	0.0	1.7
Age									
9-11 yrs	95.8	15.4	53.8	23.1	30.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
12-14 yrs	91.4	17.8	35.6	6.7	51.1	6.7	0.0	2.2	2.2
15-17 yrs	92.3	6.9	30.2	8.6	74.1	14.7	1.7	2.6	0.0

4.3.1. In the PAST YEAR, has anyone ever treated you in a hurtful or nasty way?

%	
Yes	21.9
No	78.1
Valid (n)	643
Does not apply	270*
Total (n)	913
% yes	21.9
Gender**	
Boys	20.2
Girls	23.9
Age	
9-11 yrs	20.5
12-14 yrs	18.1
15-17 yrs	25.5

4.3.2. If someone has treated you in this way, how has it happened?

%	
In person	39.3
By mobile phone calls	4.0
By messages sent to me on my phone	5.8
On a social networking site	28.3
On a media sharing platform	1.7
By instant messaging	20.2
In an online game	0.6
Valid (n)	138 respondents / 173 responses (multiple response set)
Does not apply	775***
Total (n)	913

	In person	By mobile phone calls	By messages sent to me on my phone	On a social networking site	On a media sharing platform	By instant messaging	In an online game
Gender**							
Boys	44.1	4.4	7.4	33.8	2.9	30.9	0.0
Girls	54.3	5.7	7.1	37.1	1.4	20.0	1.4
Age							
9-11 yrs	70.8	4.2	8.3	29.2	0.0	12.5	0.0
12-14 yrs	57.5	2.5	7.5	20.0	2.5	25.0	2.5
15-17 yrs	37.8	6.8	6.8	45.9	2.7	29.7	0.0

4.4.1. In the PAST YEAR, have you ever treated someone else in a hurtful or nasty way?

%	
Yes	15.1
No	84.9
Valid (n)	643
Does not apply	270*
Total (n)	643
% yes	15.1
Gender**	
Boys	17.3
Girls	12.6
Age	
9-11 yrs	12.8
12-14 yrs	12.5
15-17 yrs	18.0

4.4.2. If you treated someone in this way, how did it happen?

%	In person	By mobile phone calls	By messages sent to me on my phone	On a social networking site	On a media sharing platform	By instant messaging	In an online game	Other
	39.6	9.0	3.0	20.9	3.7	22.4	0.7	0.7
Valid (n)	96 respondents / 134 responses (multiple response set)							
Does not apply	817***							
Total (n)	913							

	In person	By mobile phone calls	By messages sent to me on my phone	On a social networking site	On a media sharing platform	By instant messaging	In an online game	Other
Gender**								
Boys	46.6	13.8	3.4	34.5	6.9	37.9	1.7	0.0
Girls	68.4	10.5	5.3	21.1	2.6	21.1	0.0	2.6
Age								
9-11 yrs	93.3	0.0	0.0	6.7	0.0	6.7	0.0	0.0
12-14 yrs	55.2	13.8	3.4	24.1	6.9	27.6	3.4	0.0
15-17 yrs	44.2	15.4	5.8	38.5	5.8	40.4	0.0	1.9

4.5.1. In the PAST YEAR, have you ever seen any sexual images?

%	
Yes	51.2
No	48.8
Valid (n)	643
Does not apply	270*
Total (n)	913
% yes	51.2
Gender**	
Boys	54.7
Girls	47.2
Age	
9-11 yrs	23.9
12-14 yrs	38.8
15-17 yrs	71.8

4.5.2. If you have seen images of this kind, where did it happen?

%	In a magazine or book	On TV, film	On an online video sharing platform	On an online photo sharing platform	On a social networking site	In a chatroom	In an online game	On an adult/X-rated website	By popups on the internet	By instant messaging	By text, images or otherwise on my mobile phone	By bluetooth	Other
	13.3%	18.9%	7.5%	3.4%	29.9%	0.3%	0.5	1.4%	3.9%	18.0%	0.5%	1.7%	0.7%
Valid (n)	329 respondents / 588 responses (multiple response set)												
Does not apply	560***												
Total (n)	913												

	In a magazine or book	On TV, film	On an online video sharing platform	On an online photo sharing platform	On a social networking site	In a chatroom	In an online game	On an adult/X-rated website	By popups on the internet	By instant messaging	By text, images or otherwise on my mobile phone	By bluetooth	Other
Gender**													
Boys	19.3	41.2	12.8	5.9	48.7	1.1	1.1	3.7	7.0	37.4	0.0	3.7	0.5
Girls	29.6	23.9	14.1	6.3	59.9	0.0	0.7	0.7	7.0	25.4	2.1	2.1	2.1
Age													
9-11 yrs	35.7	46.4	14.3	0.0	35.7	3.6	0.0	0.0	14.3	28.6	0.0	0.0	3.6
12-14 yrs	26.7	31.1	8.9	4.4	48.9	0.0	2.2	1.1	4.4	25.6	1.1	2.2	2.2
15-17 yrs	20.9	33.2	15.2	7.6	57.8	0.5	0.5	3.3	7.1	35.5	0.9	3.8	0.5

4.6. In the PAST YEAR, have you ever received any sexual messages (this could be words, pictures or videos)?

%	
Yes	30.5
No	69.5
Valid (n)	643
Does not apply	270*
Total (n)	913
% yes	30.5
Gender**	
Boys	36.3
Girls	23.9
Age	
9-11 yrs	10.3
12-14 yrs	21.6
15-17 yrs	45.6

4.7. In the PAST YEAR, have you ever sent or posted any sexual messages?

%	
Yes	11.0
No	89.0
Valid (n)	643
Does not apply	270*
Total (n)	913
% yes	11.0
Gender**	
Boys	13.2
Girls	8.6
Age	
9-11 yrs	1.7
12-14 yrs	7.3
15-17 yrs	17.7

4.8. In the PAST YEAR, has any of the following happened to you on the internet?

%	4.8.1. Somebody used my personal information in a way I didn't like	4.8.2.The device I use got a virus or spyware	4.8.3. I lost money by being cheated on the internet	4.8.4. Somebody used my password to access my information or to pretend to me	4.8.5. Somebody created a page or image about me that was hurtful
Yes	5.1	9.7	2.0	4.8	2.3
No	94.9	90.3	98.0	95.2	97.7
Valid (n)	642	642	642	642	642
Does not apply	270*	270*	270*	270*	270*
Total (n)	913	913	913	913	913
% yes	5.1	9.7	2.0	4.8	2.3
Gender**					
Boys	5.9	10.6	2.6	3.2	1.2
Girls	4.3	8.6	1.3	6.6	3.7
Age					
9-11 yrs	1.7	0.9	0.0	1.7	0.9
12-14 yrs	3.4	8.2	1.7	3.4	2.6
15-17 yrs	7.8	14.3	3.1	7.1	2.7

4.2.5. Core questions – Parents and family

5.1. How easy is it for you to talk to a parent(s)/carer(s) about things that upset you?

%	
Very easy	46.1
Easy	34.1
Difficult	16.2
Very difficult	3.6
Valid (n)	909
Does not apply	0
Total (n)	913
% easy + very easy	80.2

	Very easy	Easy	Difficult	Very difficult
Gender				
Boys	44.1	33.4	17.4	5.0
Girls	48.3	34.9	14.8	2.1
Age				
9-11 yrs	53.1	28.4	13.4	5.1
12-14 yrs	43.3	36.4	17.4	3.0
15-17 yrs	42.3	37.2	17.6	2.9

5.2. When you use the internet does your parent/carer...?

%	5.2.1. Encourage you to explore and learn things on the internet?	5.2.2. Suggest ways to use the internet safely
Never	37.6	42.0
Hardly ever	22.9	15.7
Sometimes	20.5	20.8
Often	14.8	16.6
Very often	4.2	4.8
Valid (n)	643	643
Does not apply	270*	270*
Total (n)	913	913
% ever	62.4	58.0
Gender**		
Boys	43.3	46.5
Girls	35.2	37.5
Age		
9-11 yrs	49.6	50.4
12-14 yrs	40.1	42.2
15-17 yrs	35.0	39.1

5.3. Have you ever...?

%	5.3.1. Told my parent/carer about things that bother or upset me on the internet	5.3.2. Started a discussion with my parent/carer about what I do on the internet
Never	62.0	43.6
Hardly ever	14.8	17.4
Sometimes	14.6	27.4
Often	5.6	8.7
Very often	3.0	2.8
Valid (n)	642	642
Does not apply	270*	270*
Total (n)	913	913
% ever	38.0	56.4
Gender**		
Boys	22.5	44.4
Girls	24.0	32.7
Age		
9-11 yrs	33.3	42.7
12-14 yrs	23.8	40.3
15-17 yrs	18.7	36.4

*Note: 270 participants in the sample did not use the internet and therefore these questions were not applicable to them.

**Note: These cross tabulations were done with the smaller 'internet-user' sample.

5.4. For each of these things, please indicate if your parent(s)/carer(s) CURRENTLY let you perform them whenever you want, or let you do them but only with your parent'(s)/carer'(s) permission or supervision, or NEVER let you do them.

%	5.4.1. Use a webcam	5.4.2. Download music or films	5.4.3. Visit a social networking site
I can never do this	43.7	11.2	22.7
I can only do this with permission or supervision	14.2	17.0	12.0
I can do this any time	42.1	71.9	65.3
Valid (n)	643	643	643
Does not apply	270*	270*	270*
Total (n)	913	913	913
	Can do this anytime	Can do this anytime	Can do this anytime
Gender**			
Boys	41.2	70.8	63.5
Girls	43.2	73.1	67.4
Age			
9-11 yrs	10.3	35.9	20.5
12-14 yrs	32.3	68.5	54.7
15-17 yrs	62.6	88.8	91.5

4.2.6. Core questions – Schools and teachers

6.1. Have any teachers at your school done any of these things?

%	6.1.1. Suggested ways to use the internet safely	6.1.2. Encouraged me to explore and learn things on the internet	6.1.3. Made rules about what I can do on the internet at school
Never	56.3	52.1	58.0
Hardly ever	8.6	7.7	6.2
Sometimes	15.0	18.6	11.8
Often	13.3	14.0	12.8
Very often	6.7	7.5	11.3
Valid (n)	904	904	903
Does not apply	0	0	0
Total (n)	913	913	913
% ever	43.7	47.9	42.0
	Sometimes/often	Sometimes/often	Sometimes/often
Gender			
Boys	39.9	44.1	42.4
Girls	29.8	35.8	28.4
Age			
9-11 yrs	19.2	22.3	18.6
12-14 yrs	29.9	36.5	31.7
15-17 yrs	55.0	60.5	56.0

4.3. Non-internet user module

Below some suggested questions for non-internet users have been laid out. These questions would require testing before they can be used formally. They may also be adapted to match changes in the broader Global Kids Online Toolkit. This module would replace all questions relating to internet use but would be used in unison with modules on demographics and related topics.

Table 29: Suggested non-internet user module

NON-INTERNET USER MODULE						
Question		Response Options			Answer	
1.1	Do you ever use the internet?	1 = Yes 2 = No				
1.2	Would you like to use the internet?	1 = Yes 2 = No				
1.3	What are some of the barriers that prevent you from accessing the internet? (MULTIPLE RESPONSE: Can give more than one answer)	1 = My parents or caregivers do not allow me to use the internet 2 = My teachers do not allow me to use the internet 3 = Data is too expensive 4 = Devices are too expensive 5 = Poor signal 6 = I do not want to use it 7 = I do not know how to use it 8 = Other				
1.4	Of those barriers, which would you say is the main barrier?	1 = My parents or caregivers do not allow me to use the internet 2 = My teachers do not allow me to use the internet 3 = Data is too expensive 4 = Devices are too expensive 5 = Poor signal 6 = I do not want to use it 7 = I do not know how to use it 8 = Other				
How often do you use the following devices (for offline functions that do not require the internet).		Never	At least every month	At least every week	Daily or almost daily	Several times each day
2.1	Landline telephone	1	2	3	4	5
2.2	Feature phone	1	2	3	4	5
2.3	Smartphone	1	2	3	4	5
2.4	Desktop computer	1	2	3	4	5
2.5	Laptop computer	1	2	3	4	5
2.6	Tablet	1	2	3	4	5

2.7	If YES to any of these devices, which of these activities do you do using them? (MULTIPLE RESPONSE: Can give more than one answer)	1 = Make calls 2 = Send text messages 3 = Play games 4 = Listen to music 5 = Watch movies/series 6 = Type documents 7 = Other	
3.1	How many of your friends use the internet?	0 = None 1 = One of my friends 2 = Some of my friends 3 = Most of my friends 4 = All of my friends	
3.2	How many adults in your life use the internet?	0 = None 1 = One adult in my life 2 = Some adults in my life 3 = Most adults in my life 4 = All adults in my life	
3.3	How many people in your household use the internet?	0 = None 1 = One person in my household 2 = Some people in my household 3 = Most people in my household 4 = All people in my household	
4.1	Would you like to be able to use the internet?	1 = Yes 2 = No→ SKIP to Q5.1.	
4.2	If YES to 4.1, what would you like to do online? (MULTIPLE RESPONSE: Can give more than one answer)	1 = Do schoolwork using the internet 2 = Do general research using the internet 3 = Play games online 4 = Watch videos 5 = Listen to music 6 = Use social media 7 = Other	
5.1	Do you think that it is true that there are lots of things on the internet that are good for children of your age?	1 = Not true → SKIP to Q6.1. 2 = A bit true 3 = Fairly true 4 = Very true	
5.2	If A BIT TRUE, FAIRLY TRUE OR VERY TRUE in Q5.1, what things on the internet do you think are good for children your age?	Write answer.	

6.1	Do you think there are things on the internet that bother or upset children your age?	1 = Yes 2 = No → SKIP to Q7.1.	
6.2	If YES to Q6.1, what are some of the things you think bother or upset people online?	Write answer	
7.1	Have you ever been bothered by anything on the internet?	1 = Yes 2 = No → SKIP to Q8.1.	
7.2	If YES to Q7.1, how were you exposed to these things that bothered you? (MULTIPLE RESPONSE: Can give more than one answer)	1 = A similar aged friend showed me 2 = I borrowed someone's device and I saw something 3 = An adult showed me 4 = Other	
7.3	If YES to Q7.1, how many times did this happen in the past year?	1 = Just once or twice 2 = At least every month 3 = At least every week 4 = Daily or almost daily	
7.4	If YES to Q7.1, how did you feel about it? (MULTIPLE RESPONSE: Can give more than one answer)	1= A bit upset 2 = Very upset 3 = A bit embarrassed 4 = Very embarrassed 5 = A bit afraid 6 = Very afraid 7 = Other (please specify)	
7.5	If YES to Q7.1, did you talk to anyone about it? (MULTIPLE RESPONSE: Can give more than one answer)	0 = I didn't talk to anyone 1 = My parent or caregiver 2 = My sibling 3 = A friend around my age 4 = A teacher 5 = Someone whose job it is to help children 6 = Another adult I trust 7 = Other (please specify)	

8.1	In the past year, has anyone treated you in a hurtful or nasty way? (REMINDER: The question is about offline and online experiences)	1 = Yes 2 = No→ SKIP to Q9.1	
8.2	If YES to Q8.1, how many times did this happen in the past year?	1 = Just once or twice 2 = At least every month 3 = At least every week 4 = Daily or almost daily	
8.3	If YES to Q8.1, where did this person treat you in this way? (MULTIPLE RESPONSE: Can give more than one answer)	1 = In person 2 = By mobile phone calls 3 = By messages sent to me on my phone (SMS/TEXT or MMS) 4 = On a social networking site (e.g. Facebook, Twitter etc.) 5 = On a media sharing platform (YouTube, Instagram, Flickr) 6 = By instant messaging (MSN, What's app, Skype etc.) 7 = In a chatroom 8 = In an online game 9 = Other (specify)	
9.1	In the past year, have you SEEN any sexual images on the internet?	1 = Yes 2 = No→ SKIP to Q10.1	
9.2	If YES to Q9.1, how were you exposed to these things that bothered you? (MULTIPLE RESPONSE: Can give more than one answer)	1 = A similar aged friend showed me 2 = I borrowed someone's device and I saw something 3 = An adult showed me 4 = Other	
9.3	If YES to Q9.1, how many times did this happen in the past year?	1 = Just once or twice 2 = At least every month 3 = At least every week 4 = Daily or almost daily	

9.4	If YES to Q9.1, how did you feel about what you saw? (MULTIPLE RESPONSE: Can give more than one answer)	1 = Fine 2 = A bit upset 3 = Very upset 4 = A bit embarrassed 5 = Very embarrassed 6 = A bit afraid 7 = Very afraid 8 = Other (please specify)	
10.1	In the past year, have you RECEIVED any sexual messages?	1 = Yes 2 = No→ SKIP to Q11.1	
10.2	If YES to Q10.1, how did you receive these messages? (MULTIPLE RESPONSE: Can give more than one answer)	1 = Via SMS 2 = Via instant message on another's device 3 = Via another's social media page 4 = Other	
10.3	If YES to Q10.1, how did you feel about what you saw? (MULTIPLE RESPONSE: Can give more than one answer)	1 = Fine 2 = A bit upset 3 = Very upset 4 = A bit embarrassed 5 = Very embarrassed 6 = A bit afraid 7 = Very afraid 8 = Other (please specify)	
10.4	If YES to Q10.1, how many times did this happen in the past year?	1 = Just once or twice 2 = At least every month 3 = At least every week 4 = Daily or almost daily	
11.1	In the past year, have you SENT or posted any sexual messages?	1 = Yes 2 = No	
11.2	If YES to Q11.1, how did you send or post these messages? (MULTIPLE RESPONSE: Can give more than one answer)	1 = Via SMS 2 = Via instant message on another's device 3 = Via another's social media page 4 = Other	
11.3	If YES Q6.14.1, how many times did this happen in the past year?	1 = Just once or twice 2 = At least every month 3 = At least every week 4 = Daily or almost daily	

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