Together for a better internet

Impact report 2020/21

internet matters.org

Contents

''Protecting children and young people online is at the heart of a number of government priorities, and we remain absolutely committed to this goal. The internet brings many benefits but also many challenges. This is why we really value the incredible work that organisations such as Internet Matters do to support us in this aim. By working together, we can all play our part in ensuring the online world is a happy, positive and safe place for all children and young people to spend time.''

Will Quince MP, Minister for Children and Families
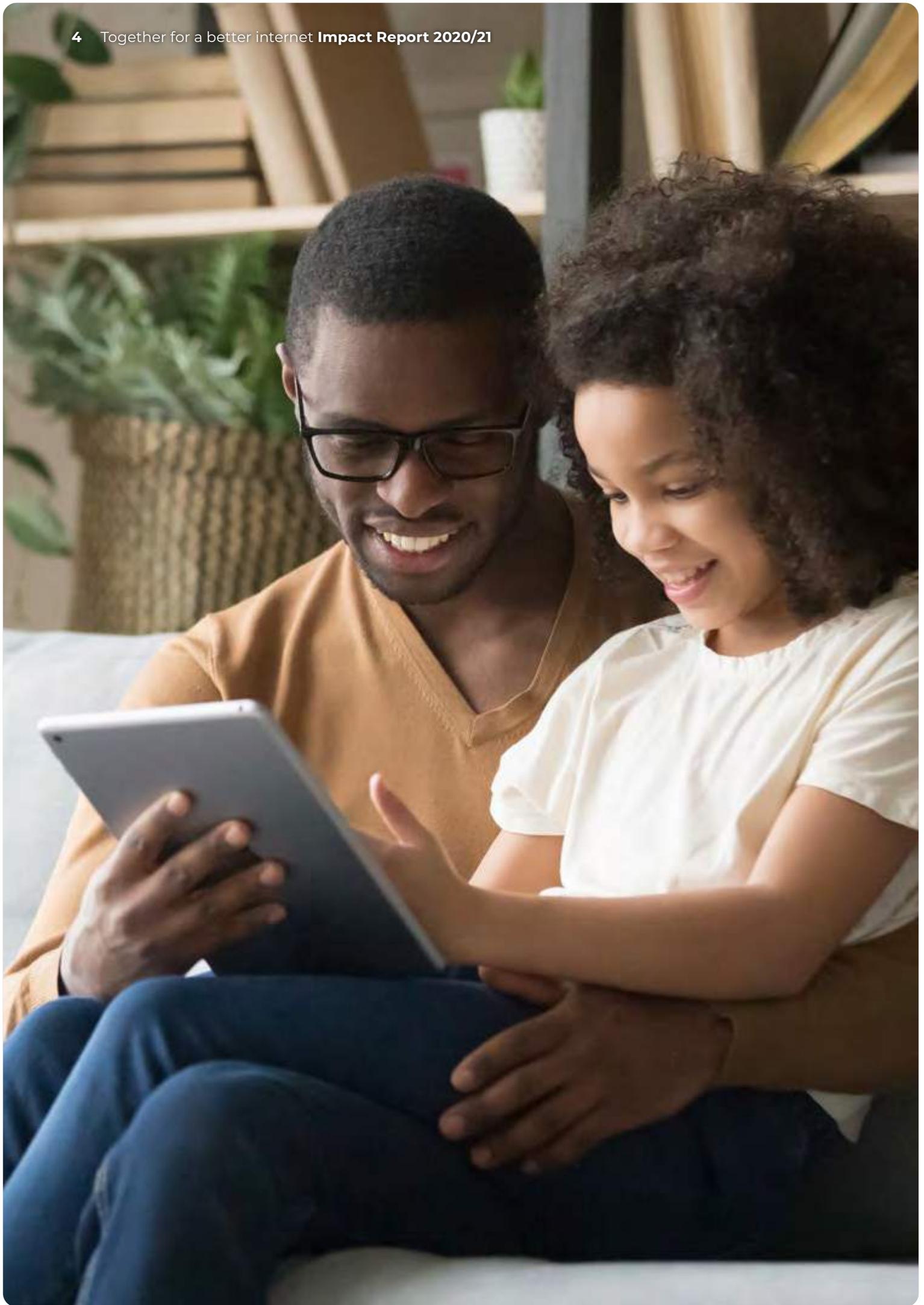
Foreword from the Board of Internet Matters

Margot James,
Internet Matters Chair

During the period covered by this report, the UK experienced multiple lockdowns and the impact on families was staggering. Within this context, I am so proud of the work of Internet Matters and all that they have achieved. The overnight shift to remote working challenged many organisations including our long-standing industry partners, but without a doubt, Internet Matters and the coalition adapted and in its 7th anniversary since launch, has had its most impactful year yet.

Families have never been more reliant upon technology to connect to the outside world and find some sense of normality in these uncertain times. Technology has been a lifeline for many to connect with friends and family, continue to work, home school children and be entertained.

Through initiatives such as Stay Safe Stay Home, Internet Matters provided key information and resources to families to ensure that their daily online lives during the pandemic were fulfilling and above all, safe. We have continued our work to support the most vulnerable young people online with new research and resources and supported those who were digitally excluded with safety information as they were gifted devices.

As lockdown restrictions gradually lifted, Internet Matters focussed on supporting parents in navigating their way through the impact that their children's increased digital connectivity had on their overall wellbeing. We will continue to work with our partners to connect with and support as many parents and their children across the UK as possible.

As we share this report, the long-awaited Online Safety Bill has been published and The Children's Code from the Information Commissioners Office is now in force. These are welcomed regulatory interventions and we look forward to seeing their impact over the coming years. We hope that together they make the internet a significantly safer place for young people. In the meantime, collaboration is at the heart of Internet Matters' work and we continue to work with a wide range of experts, academics, the third sector and industry. Protecting children's safety and wellbeing online is complex and our work is all the better because of their ongoing commitment and invaluable support.

Thoughts from our Board Members

"Our seven-year partnership with Internet Matters is more important than ever. So much of our life plays out over connected devices and, as the UK's number one fixed and mobile network, we take our responsibility to help protect children online incredibly seriously. Educating children on internet safety is vital. Our partnership enables us to come together with industry to play our part in the great work Internet Matters does, informs our Skills for Tomorrow programme of free online courses to help children and parents develop digital skills, and this year helped us get our Lockdown Learning support scheme off the ground."

Marc Allera, *CEO, BT Consumer Division*

"Over the last year Internet Matters has supported families during extraordinary times and helped them navigate the challenges of relying on the internet for large parts of their lives across education, employment and entertainment. As a founding member, Sky continues to be committed to giving families the safest connected online experiences possible."

Stephen van Rooyen, *EVP & CEO, Sky UK & Europe*

"Never in an ever-connected world has online safety been more important. Here at TalkTalk, we continue to stand by and support the great work of Internet Matters. Despite the challenges presented by a global pandemic, the coalition has achieved so much over the last 12 months. This report is testament to the industry continuing to come together and collaborate to make a meaningful difference in the online lives of children and young people today."

Tristia Harrison, *CEO, TalkTalk*

"Virgin Media O2's commitment to upgrade the UK with first-class gigabit and 5G connectivity goes hand-in-hand with our responsibility to help children and young people stay safe online. That's why we're proud to partner with Internet Matters whose work, campaigns and resources continue to play a vital role in supporting parents and young people, ensuring they get the most out of their ever-increasing online experiences in the safest way possible."

Lutz Schüler, *CEO, Virgin Media O2*

BBC
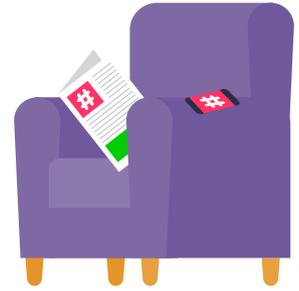
"At the BBC we recognise parents and teachers have a critical role in supporting children online; it goes hand-in-hand with the guidance and support we offer children through our educational services including BBC Own It, BBC Bitesize and BBC Teach. We are delighted to continue our work with Internet Matters to encourage parents, teachers and children to talk openly about their online lives, helping them make informed decisions about what they do and how they behave online."

Helen Foulkes, *Head of BBC Education and BBC Newsround*

Google

"We are proud to be part of Internet Matters, working together to ensure parents have the tools and resources they need to help keep their children safer online. We all want our families to have positive experiences online, and at Google we are conscious of our crucial role in shaping that and remain committed to supporting Internet Matters to help families benefit from and get the most out of their connected world."

Eileen Mannion, *Vice President Marketing, Google UK*

Our vision and strategy

We inspire leading organisations to create together a future where children and young people are prepared to benefit safely from the impact of connected technology

We exist to:

- Give parents, carers and professionals the evidence-based guidance they need to help children embrace the internet with confidence and to protect them from online harms

- Raise awareness through campaigns and industry partnerships so that children and young people can be happy and healthy online

- Ensure the views of parents and children are consistently and systematically heard by industry, policy makers and government

We'd like to take this opportunity to thank all our partners. Your support has been invaluable in helping us achieve so much in the most extraordinary circumstances.
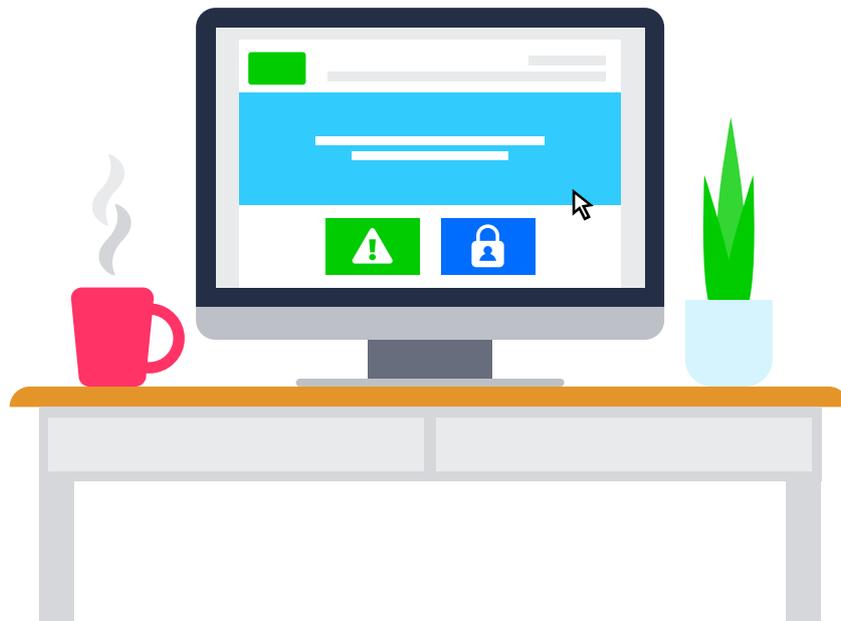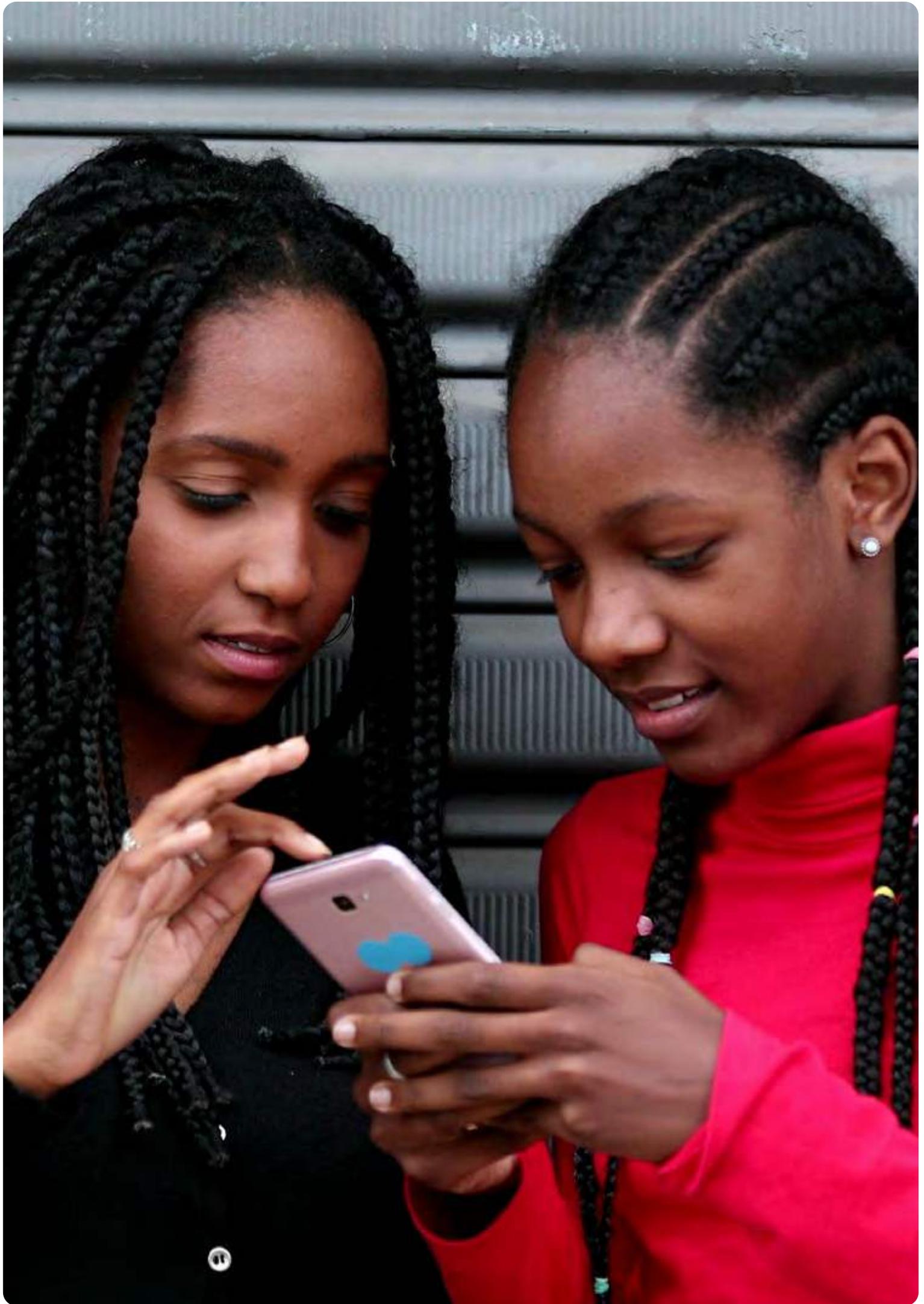
A year in numbers

Awareness and Usage

The challenge of helping children to remain happy and healthy online touches almost every family in the country, so expanding our reach to drive awareness is critical. Along with our partners we continue to collectively find innovative ways of reaching and engaging with parents.

50%
of families in the UK have heard of Internet Matters **(up +3% ppts from 2019/20)**

1,950+
mentions in the media including TV, radio, press and online

1 in 10
of every children's online safety media stories features Internet Matters

2.5 million+
watched one of our videos

6.9 million+
people visited and engaged with the resources on our website **(+97% growth since 2019/20)**

9.6 million+
pages of advice viewed by site visitors **(85% increase since 2019/20)**

90,000+
people and organisations follow us on social media

Source: All data recorded across April 2020 – March 2021

Almost **9 in 10 parents** would recommend Internet Matters

Impact and Action

Understanding the impact of Internet Matters is vitally important to ensure we continue to support the needs of parents and professionals. To do this, we work with an independent research agency who manage our Impact Assessment Programme.

Three times a year we talk to 2,000 parents of children aged 4-16 to ask them about what they think and feel about the resources available at internetmatters.org and what they do differently as a result.

67%
of parents are more likely to spend more time learning about online safety

89%
of parents are pleased there is an organisation that champions children's online safety like Internet Matters

65%
of parents are more likely to make use of privacy settings on social media

71%
of parents are more likely to talk to their children about staying safe online

82%
of parents feel better prepared to handle issues that might come up in the future

60%
of parents are more likely to make use of parental controls
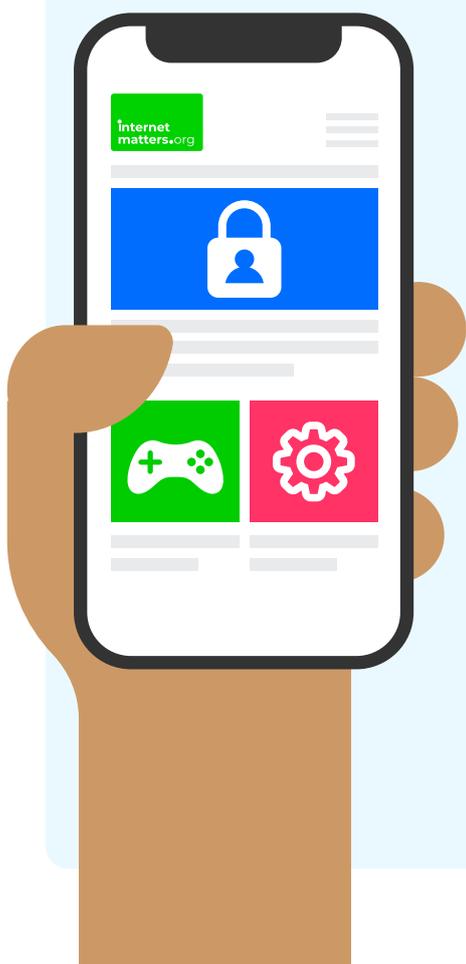
● Before visiting our site
● After visiting our site

Parents who felt confident in finding information needed to protect children online

35%
79%

Parents' knowledge of who to turn to for support in dealing with specific issues

33%
79%

Parents' level of knowledge about how to prevent and deal with issues children encounter online

40%
76%

Source: IM Wave 12 tracking report
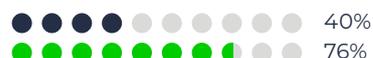
Lessons from lockdown

> *"Here is a great guide for parents by Internet Matters to help deal with school closure and tackle anxiety inducing fake news and scaremongering surrounding COVID-19."*
>
> **LGfl DigiSafe**

Without a doubt 2020 and 2021 have been incredibly challenging for families as they've grappled with the impact of lockdown restrictions on their day-to-day lives. As the world came to a standstill, we felt a sizeable shift in their reliance upon and use of technology, with it becoming a lifeline to continue to connect to the outside world. Throughout the last year we have been focussed on understanding the needs of parents and supporting them through these uncertain times.

Stay Safe Stay Home hub

In response to the first UK lockdown in March 2020, Internet Matters took action and launched a new hub, **#StaySafeStayHome**, consolidating our most relevant content to make life easier for parents adjusting to life at home. We worked closely with brand ambassador and child psychologist Dr Linda Papadopoulos on new content that focussed specifically on challenges parents were facing as a result of lockdown.

With the help of our experts, we created a video series, 'Dr Linda's Thursday sessions' and a range of written articles from our expert panel to provide further advice on tech and wellbeing. Topics included 'Adjusting to the new normal in lockdown', 'Supporting children's wellbeing during Covid-19' and 'Expert tips to help your family cope with stress'. The content was well received as the video series has been watched over 20,000 times to date.

To draw insight from the voices of our parent audience, we featured a range of articles from parents showcasing their experiences of home-schooling and tips that other parents could use to support their families.

In addition to this, we put a spotlight on our existing resources manage device safety, recommended apps to manage children's learning and wellbeing in the home and highlighted resources from third parties that families could benefit from.

105,000

parents were connect with our resources to support them during these unprecedented times

20,000

video views of our expert advice

For many, the digital divide became even more apparent during lockdown with some children unable to access home learning due to a lack of connected devices. We were delighted to support DevicesDotNow, providing online safety advice for parents whose children were being provided with their own device to allow them to access and participate in education.

"Talking to children about staying safe online is really important, especially now young people are spending more time at home and online. Internet Matters have a new Stay Safe Stay Home advice hub to help you help your children."

South Yorkshire Police

How lockdown impacted children's digital lives

At regular intervals between January 2020 and March 2021, we asked parents about their children's use of technology, their concerns and attitude to their children's online lives and perceptions of the impact on their wellbeing. This study gives a unique view into how the family relationship with technology has changed from the pre-pandemic world through various periods of lockdown and adjustment to a new way of living virtually.

Our **From Survive to Thrive** report confirmed that technology was a lifeline for us all, allowing us to connect with family and friends, for children to be educated through home learning and for everyone to be entertained and have fun in these uncertain times. It told a positive story with parents realising the true benefits of connected technology through each successive period of lockdown.

But with more time in front of a screen, it is not surprising that parents have become increasingly concerned about their children encountering harms.

For children themselves, the bigger changes were in the creation and viewing of user-generated content, which continued to grow. We saw a 43% increase in children watching live broadcasts and an 89% increase in children broadcasting their own videos live online. Unsurprisingly, parents also reported a significant increase in online spending.

And once again, a recurring theme throughout the report is that children with some form of offline vulnerability have been disproportionately affected by the impact of Covid-19 in relation to technology use and its effects. They need our support more than ever to enable them to have a safer online experience and to thrive in the digital world.

43%

increase in children watching live broadcasts

89%

increase in children broadcasting their own videos live online

Source: From Survive to Thrive, Internet Matters report, March 2021

"As children have come to rely on technology more than ever during the pandemic, and are therefore spending sometimes several hours a day online, it also gives them increased exposure to all of the risks that go with it. It's fantastic to see that 60% of parents have become more involved in their children's online activities, but it's important they keep this up as we come out of lockdown and make it a normality. It's a great opportunity to close the knowledge gap between parents and kids when it comes to devices, apps and games - yet parents need to seek out the right help to do this."

Dr Linda Papadopoulos, Internet Matters Ambassador

Supporting vulnerable children and young people

Our focus on supporting vulnerable children and young people, through the rainbow of adults that care for them, is grounded in insights and evidence that demonstrates they are more at risk. Our research consistently shows that vulnerable children and young people need more support in this area from the adults that care for them.

During the last 12 months, we have continued to chair the **UK Council for Internet Safety's Vulnerable Users Working Group** which brings together expert volunteers to implement initiatives to reduce the numbers of vulnerable users experiencing online harm.

We have published two key reports that reinforce that it is the most vulnerable children in society that are disproportionately affected by online harms.

We have also launched a significant set of new tailored resources for children and young people, delivered at a time when they needed them most.

We have particularly focussed on children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) for whom technology is a huge part of their lives and they are likely to spend more time online than their peers. The internet offers them fantastic opportunities to connect with friends, find online communities, play games and research information for schoolwork. Online life is a key component of social interaction for children more likely to experience social isolation and face challenges building friendships in the offline world.
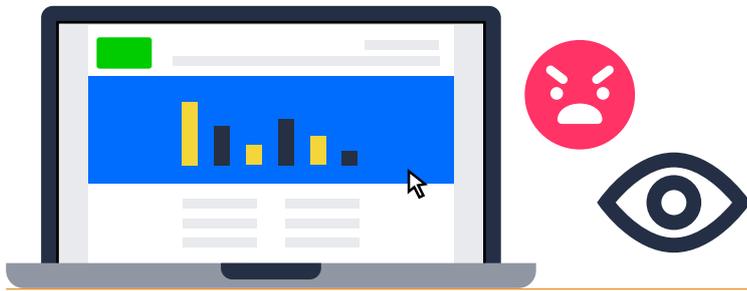
Refuge and Risk – Life Online for Vulnerable Young People

Building on our **In their own words report**, here we provide further evidence that online risk and harm are not evenly spread and that those with vulnerabilities offline are much more likely to encounter risks online. It also highlights that vulnerable children experience greater benefits and more positive outcomes from their engagement with connected technology, making it vital we ensure appropriate access for these young people.

Refuge and Risk details, by vulnerability, which risks children and young people face most. If we predict, we can intervene, and this report offers evidence-based recommendations to aid industry in ensuring safety by design, to assist professionals in identifying harms and devising support, and to help the public understand and access support. The study explored six risk categories including content, contact, conduct, compulsion, cyberaggression and cyberscams with conduct risk most likely to be experienced by vulnerable children and young people.
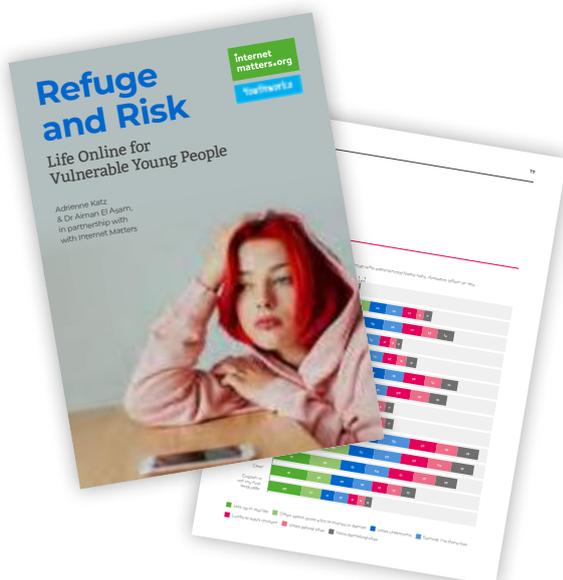
Of those who had viewed adult content:

23%
had an eating disorder

23%
were care experienced

4%
non-vulnerable
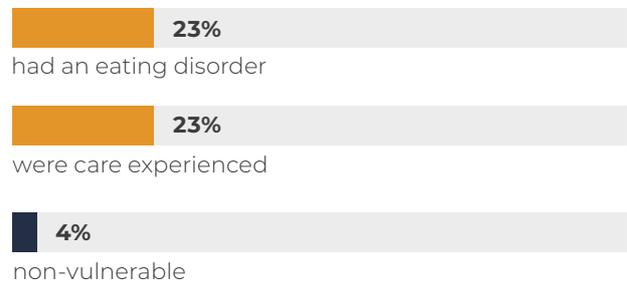
Of those who had been cyberbullied:

48%
had an eating disorder

43%
were care experienced

16%
non-vulnerable
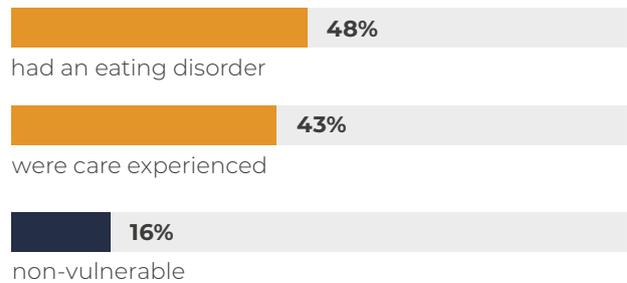
Of those who said their online life causes problems with family and friends:

22%
had an eating disorder

20%
were care experienced

3%
non-vulnerable
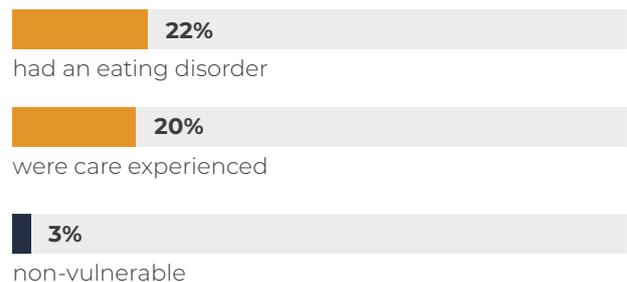
Benefits and positive outcomes from connected technology

Said being online helped them find and connect with people like them:

62%
children and young people with autism

61%
children and young people with hearing loss

48%
those without vulnerabilities
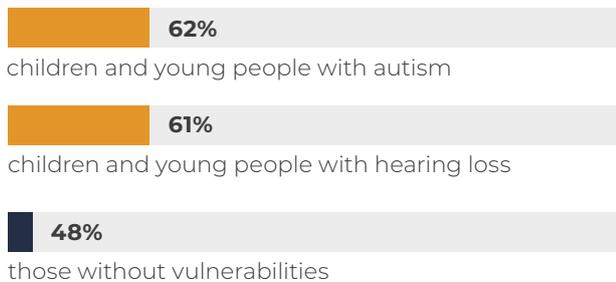
Said being online gives personal freedom:

44%
children and young people with an eating disorderer

42%
children and young people who are young carers

30%
those without vulnerabilities
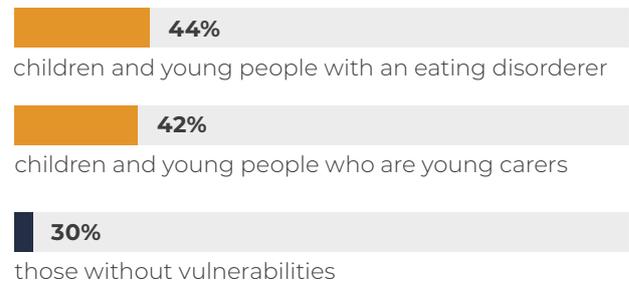
Said being online opens lots of possibilities:

86%
children and young people with autism

82%
children and young people with learning difficulties

62%
those without vulnerabilities
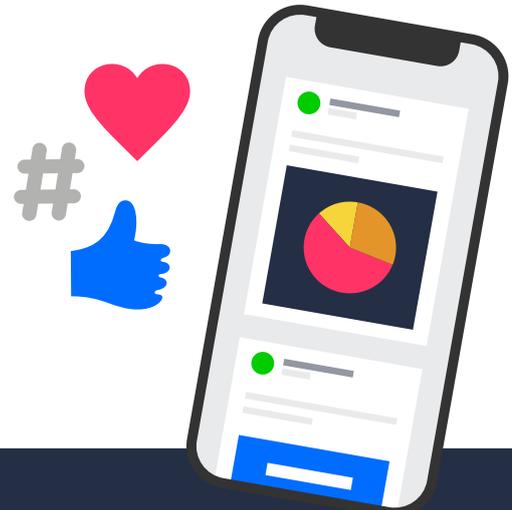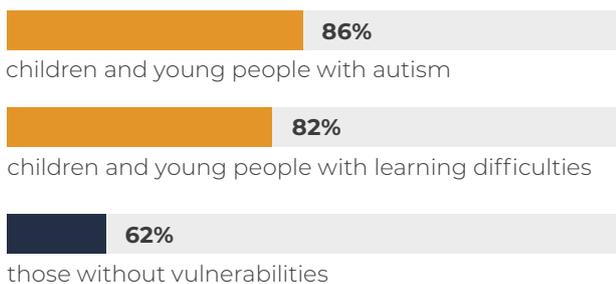
Key report findings and implications:

- Vulnerable young people are more likely to encounter harm online; with every additional vulnerability, the risk increases.

- Care experienced children and young people with eating disorders are of particular concern.

- Digital connectivity also provides important benefits for vulnerable young people.

- The report data can enable professionals to predict needs, plan prevention work and tailor interventions for young people.

(This sample of 14,994 includes respondents aged 11-17 with a range of abilities and offline vulnerabilities.)
Published in partnership with Youthworks and the University of Kingston.

Look At Me – Teens, Sexting and Risks

This report looked specifically into young people's thoughts on and experiences of sexting and sending nudes.

The Look at Me report presents insights from young people, some with vulnerabilities, in schools across the country and explores the risks and repercussions of sharing self-generated explicit images, videos or live streams.

## Sharing nudes split by age group:

4%
13 year-olds

7%
14 year-olds

17%
15+
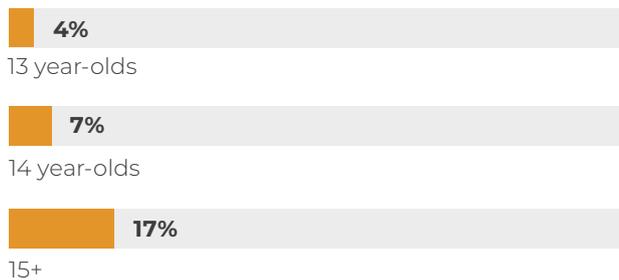
Reasons why teens shared nude or sexual images:

38%
were in a relationship and wanted to

31%
did so for fun

18%
felt pressured or were blackmailed to

15%
were tricked into doing so
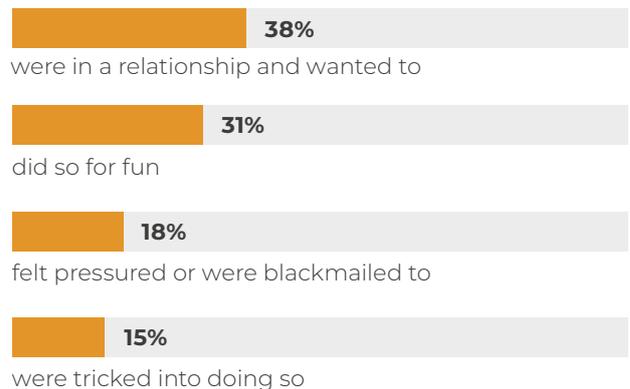
Of those pressured or blackmailed into it:
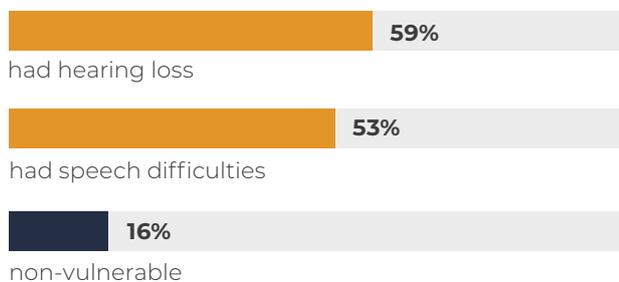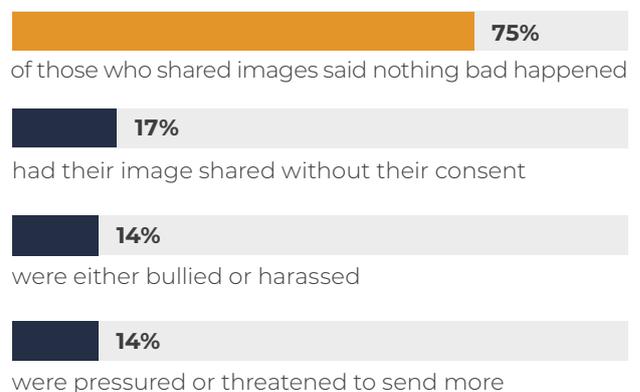
59%
had hearing loss

53%
had speech difficulties

16%
non-vulnerable

The consequences:

75%
of those who shared images said nothing bad happened

17%
had their image shared without their consent

**14%**
were either bullied or harassed

14%
were pressured or threatened to send more

(This sample of 14,994 includes respondents aged 11-17 with a range of abilities and offline vulnerabilities. Of that, 6,045 13 years and over answered question on relationships, meetups and sexting)

Published in partnership with Youthworks and the University of Kingston

Key findings include:

- Sexting is not widespread among all teens but worryingly prevalent for some – 17% of those aged 15+ said they had shared a nude or sexual photo of themselves.

- Among those who shared nudes, the majority did so willingly while 18% said they were pressured or blackmailed into it.

- Less than 1/3 of those who shared nudes followed the online safety advice they were taught, while 14% said they did not receive any.

- Ripples of risk make sexting a red flag for other harms. For example, sharers are around four times more likely to view self-harm content and to view pro suicide content.
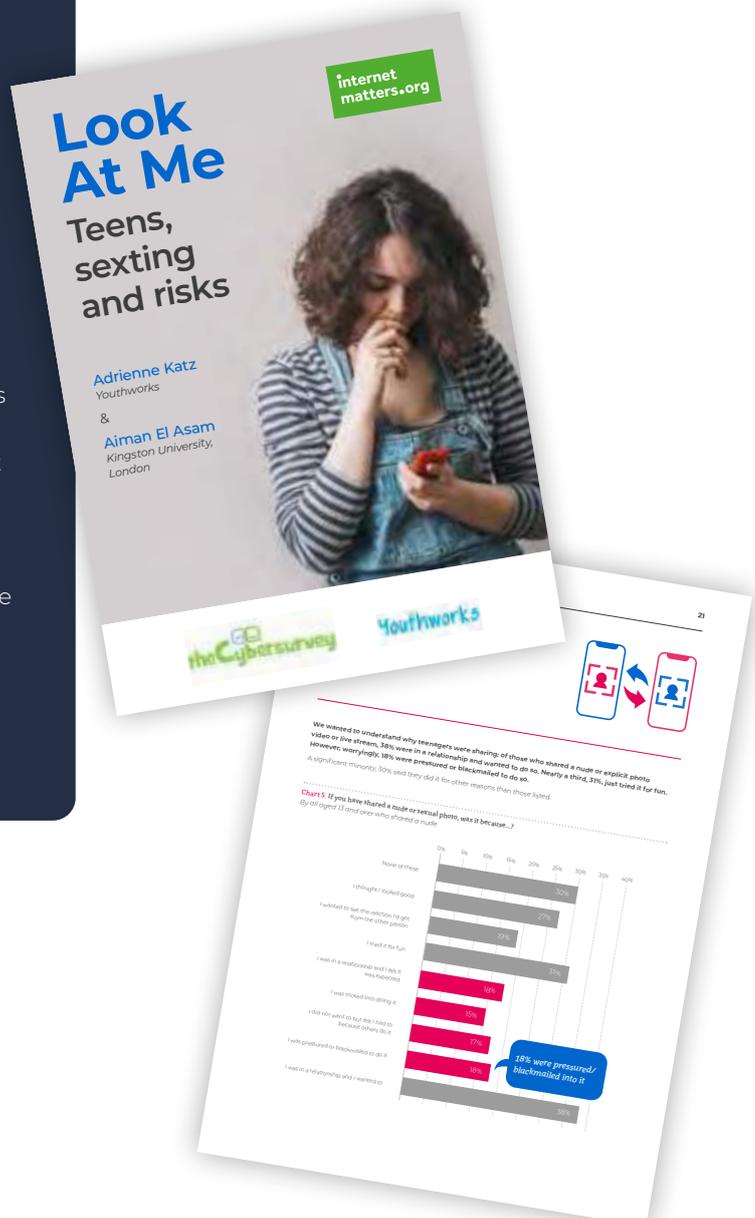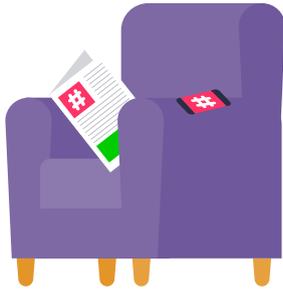
Connecting Safely Online

Supporting vulnerable young people online has never been more important. It was critical we created something that young people and their parents and carers would use – and would empower them to connect safely online. We carried out a series of workshops and focus groups with both children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and their parent/carers. Their views and experiences shaped the development of the Connecting Safely Online portal, a comprehensive hub of resources supporting young people with SEND.

The hub includes a suite of activities to encourage both adults and young people to learn together. The content was reviewed by the parents and young people themselves to ensure it met their needs and was delivered on a fully accessible AA rated website.
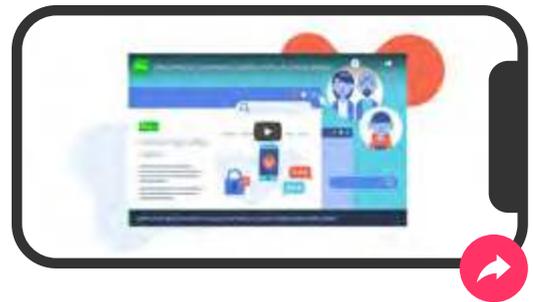
Over 124,000

visits to the site since launch.
The most sought out information
and advice was on social media use.
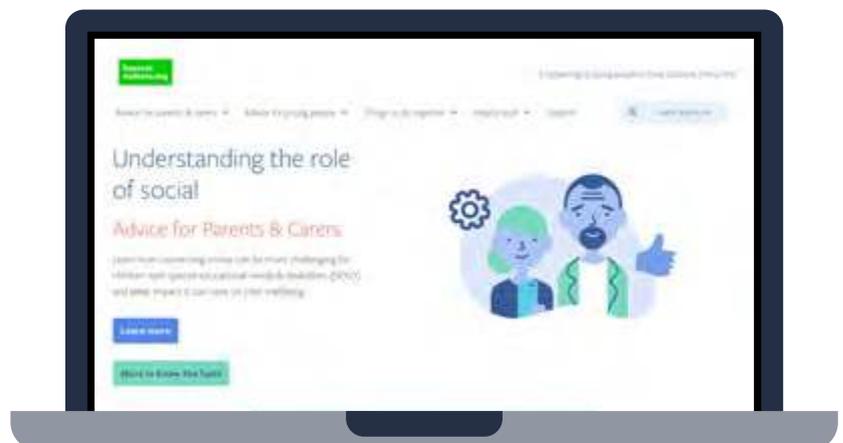
The Connecting Safely Online hub was delivered through funding from Facebook

> "Barnardos knows that some groups of children and young people are more vulnerable to online abuse and exploitation and need specialist tailored resources and advice to support them, their parents/carers and professionals working with them to navigate the online world safety. The Inclusive Digital Safety hub is a resource that does exactly that in a way that is clear and accessible to all. The range of issues covered on the hub are comprehensive and the quality of resources and support offered is excellent. We are very proud to be part of the UKCIS Vulnerable Working Group, chaired by Internet Matters."
>
> **Emma James, Senior Policy Advisor, Barnardos**

Inclusive Digital Safety in partnership with SWGfL

During the lockdown periods in the pandemic, there was increasing concern about the opportunities for child sexual abuse, particularly for the most vulnerable children. A number of groups were identified as being of concern which included children with SEND, those that had experience of being in care and young people from the LGBTQIA+ community. It was vital to ensure the professionals and parents supporting these young people felt knowledgeable and empowered to educate young people about the risk and to agree strategies to prevent them coming to harm.

The Inclusive Digital Safety Hub is a dedicated portal designed to inspire confidence amongst parents and professionals to have more meaningful conversations with children and young people about their online lives. Developed in partnership with South West Grid for Learning, the Hub provides bespoke resources for professionals and parents looking after children in the three areas: SEND, care-experienced and LGBTQ+.

The resources were seen as accessible and easy to use. As such, 80% of the parents, carers and professionals who took part in the review said they were useful or very useful.

Over 42,000

visits to the site since launch. Some of the most used resources were 'So you got naked online', which helps young people who may have lost control of an image or video of themselves.

> 'I value the user-friendly way that the information has been organised and categorised. It makes it much easier to navigate the site and find the information that you need much quicker.'
>
> **Professional**

> 'I think it is really important to provide information, guidance and support and this [online safety] is sometimes overlooked when thinking about the foster carers and care experienced young people – resources like this are very welcomed.'
>
> **Parent**

Home Office

The Inclusive Digital Safety hub was delivered through funding from the Home Office

Campaigns

Listening to the experiences and views of young people about their online lives is critical for anyone that engages with them. Therefore, Internet Matters was delighted to continue its partnership with Youthworks and the University of Kingston on the 2019 Cybersurvey, as nearly 15,000 schoolchildren participated.

In Their Own Words – The Digital Lives of Schoolchildren highlighted a number of important areas which we were able to then address through our campaigns through the year.

"Technology was very much becoming an integral part of families' new normal. Parents were understandably concerned with how this new normal may affect their child. This campaign from Internet Matters helped remind parents of the importance of online safety and empowered them to help their children navigate the use of connected technology smartly and safely during these intense periods of lockdown and increased tech usage."

Karl Hopwood, Online Safety Expert

The Online Facts of Life

As our world became more connected and 'switched on' than ever before, it was important to equip parents with the right tools and advice on how to manage their child's online world.

Insight

Our research with young people highlighted that parents could talk more to their children about online life in general, rather than only when giving specific advice. When asked, young people said that too few parents show an interest in their online life or discuss the digital world generally. Half of the young people we spoke with sometimes believe their parents do not understand enough about being online.

Campaign

It's a fact of life that at some point as our children get older, they will be exposed to some level of inappropriate content, contact or conduct online. However, being able to talk openly about subjects that are embarrassing or awkward isn't always easy. We **created a campaign** around real families talking about their own experiences in an attempt to normalise the conversations around online safety. Our hope was that parents didn't feel so overwhelmed and alone.

With the support of Head Teacher of Thornhill Academy, Mr Burton and Dr Linda Papadopoulos, we encouraged parents to stay switched on and adopt a collaborative approach to online safety, especially as tech was now playing a much bigger role in their child's everyday life.
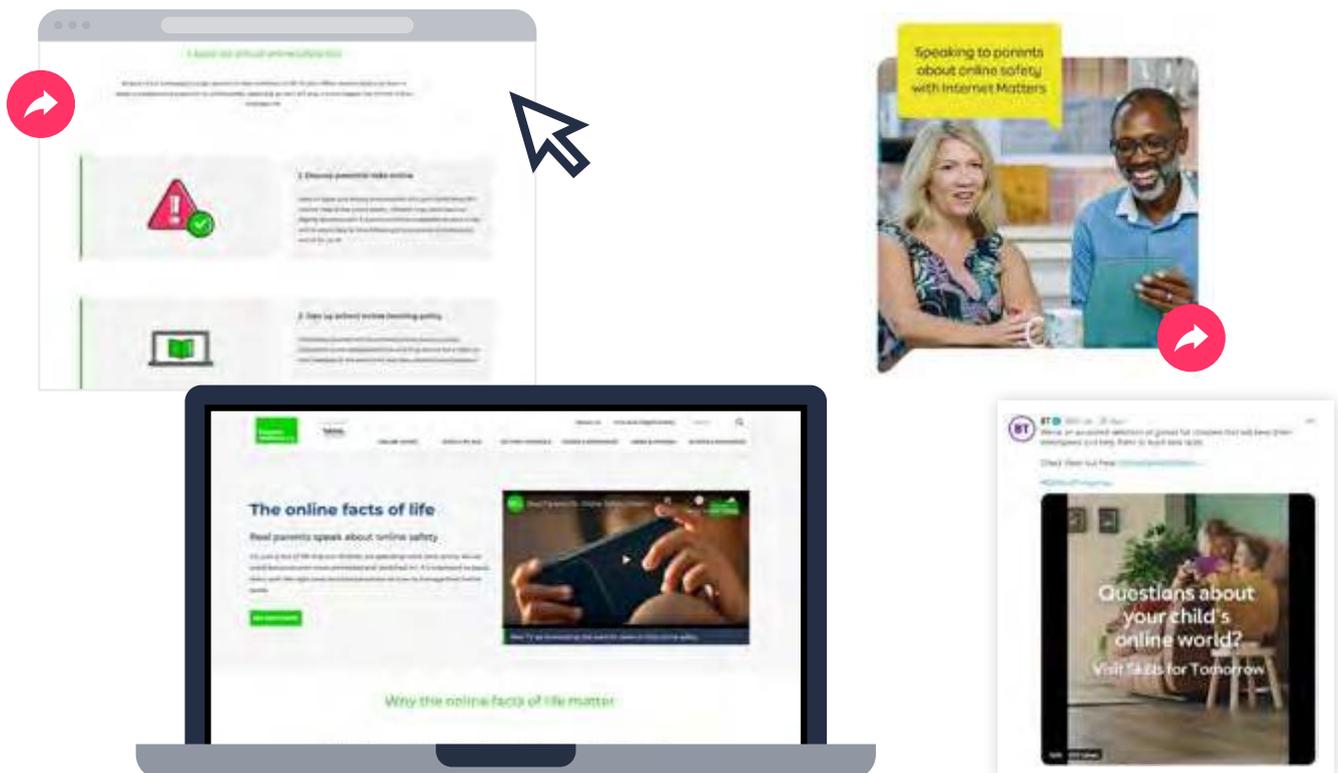
"Keep these events going. The more adults that learn and understand the dangers and what to look out for can share great ways and ideas of protecting our children through word of mouth to others; increasing awareness is key."

Webinar attendee

Amplification and impact

Our partners are resolutely focussed on creating an industrywide coalition dedicated to making the UK's parents and children the most knowledgeable and engaged in online safety in the world. By supporting our campaigns, their collective power allows Internet Matters the potential to reach every household in the UK with a unified message for families.

Partner support comprised of:

BT Group – Social posts and broadcast airtime

Digital inventory across the site, social posts, internal articles and internal articles, TV airtime and video-on-demand

TalkTalk
For Everyone

Digital banner onsite, customer newsletter, social posts and an internal webinar

Homepage takeover, social posts, video-on-demand, internal articles and an internal webinar

6 million+
video views of our campaign

9 million+
parents reached through our channels with 225 pieces of press coverage with over 1.4m views

390,000
parents visited our dedicated hub of advice

400,000
attendants for our partner exclusive webinars featuring both Dr Linda Papadopoulos and Karl Hopwood

We recognise that of our partners, a large proportion of their employee workforce are parents. A huge opportunity exists to educate them on keeping their children safe online, particularly over the course of this year where parents are having to juggle with working, homeschooling and, as a consequence, time spent on screens has increased exponentially. Over the course of this year, we have worked with all our partners to deliver comprehensive educational webinars on top tips to keep their children safe online and get the most out of their connected tech. Special thanks goes to Dr Linda Papadopoulos and expert Karl Hopwood for sharing their expertise and knowledge this year.

"It was very reassuring to hear from other parents with the same worries and concerns. Made me realise that we're all facing the same issues over keeping our kids safe online, particularly during lockdown."

Webinar attendee

> *"It's bright and colourful without being childish, which I think was important for older children. I've also passed it on to school as I think his teacher may get the kids to do it in class."*
>
> **Mother-of-three Harriet Shearsmith (@tobyandroo), a blogger whose children all took part in the quiz**

Google

Tackling misinformation and fake news

As our world became more connected and 'switched on' than ever before, it was important to equip parents with the right tools and advice on how to manage their child's online world.

Insight

Through our own impact tracking, we have seen the rise of parental concern about fake news, with three quarters of parents now concerned about the issue. This has risen through the pandemic and unsurprisingly 36% of parents were concerned about their child seeing misinformation about coronavirus. Once again, children's experience of seeing fake news is higher for more vulnerable children with 17% of parents of vulnerable children reporting their child has seen fake news, versus 9% for non-vulnerable.

Campaign

In partnership with Google, we collaborated on a project to help parents develop the tools to teach their families how to tackle fake news and misinformation. Upon reviewing the landscape of what is available around fake news, it was clear that there was a need to give parents a more in-depth understanding of the issue to support their children. In order to inform them of strategies to empower children and young people to recognise and report fake news online, we worked with Professor William Watkins at Brunel University to create a hub offering top tips, resources and expert advice on the issue including a new interactive **'Find the Fake' quiz.**
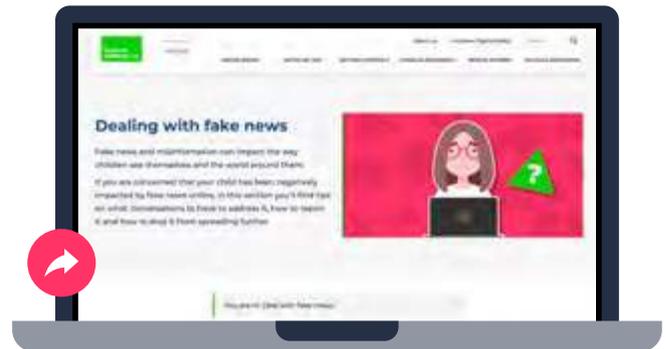
147,000
visits to the site since launch

37,000
quiz completions

300+
pieces of media coverage

> *"This is an excellent initiative! It's really worrying how many people just post and repost things without even bothering with a quick check to verify if they are remotely true. They should definitely be teaching critical and analytical thinking in schools from a young age."*
>
> **Parent**

Premier League

Teaching teens respect for themselves and others online

Insight

Our report **In Their Own Words** – The Digital Lives of School Children also shines a light on the racist and homophobic content far too many of our children either see or experience online. The normalisation of aggressive language and the impact of our ever more visual society combine to sometimes make online a challenging place to be. We saw children's experience of racist bullying or aggression online rise from 4% in 2015 to 13% in 2019.

Campaign

Through its community programme, the Premier League wanted to support children and their families with the issue of online behaviour and its impact on physical and mental health. The primary focus was on building respectful and tolerant relationships online, whilst encouraging young people to more actively manage their time spent online. We delivered lesson plans, presentations and briefing notes for coaches to be used at 91 Premier League and English Football League Clubs in the community Kicks programme.

Impact:

Like many others, the programme was impacted by Covid restrictions where we were unable to roll out the resources in a physical environment as planned. However, with the full support of the Premier League we transitioned the programme online, with a comprehensive training webinar for coaches to give them the confidence to deliver the resources and lessons digitally.

BARCLAYS
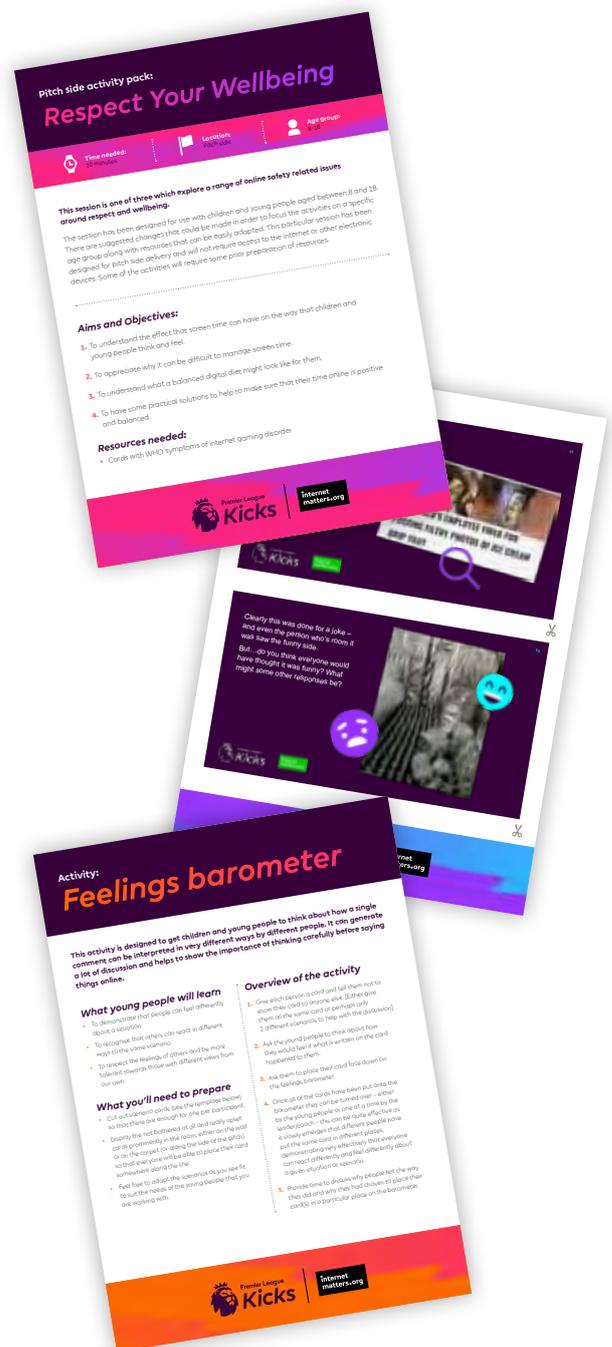
Building children's online money skills

Insight

Our research also showed that spending money in games is widespread and that children report they often spend 'quite a bit'. Over two fifths (43%) of all respondents have spent quite a bit of money in online games; 16% of them do this often. We also saw that 9% of children and young people have been tricked into buying fake goods. However this rises significantly for vulnerable children to 23% of those with an eating disorder and 22% of those with speech difficulties. 1 in 5 young people (20%) also stumble across sites trying to sell goods that might be illegal.

Campaign

Internet Matters were delighted to welcome Barclays as Corporate Partner this year. We worked together to develop our first set of **dedicated resources** to help parents empower their children to make the right choices about how they spend their money online and how to avoid online fraud and scams.

The new resources included practical steps and strategies parents can use to help their children learn about online money management, including in-game spending and loot boxes. Together, we hope we can support parents in having the right conversations about money with their children, so they can enjoy all that the online world has to offer safely.

27,000

visits to these pages since launch with advice on in-game spending being the most popular information parents are seeking out

Source: Research was commissioned by Internet Matters as part of its Impact Tracking by third party research partner Opinium in March 2021, who surveyed 2,006 UK parents
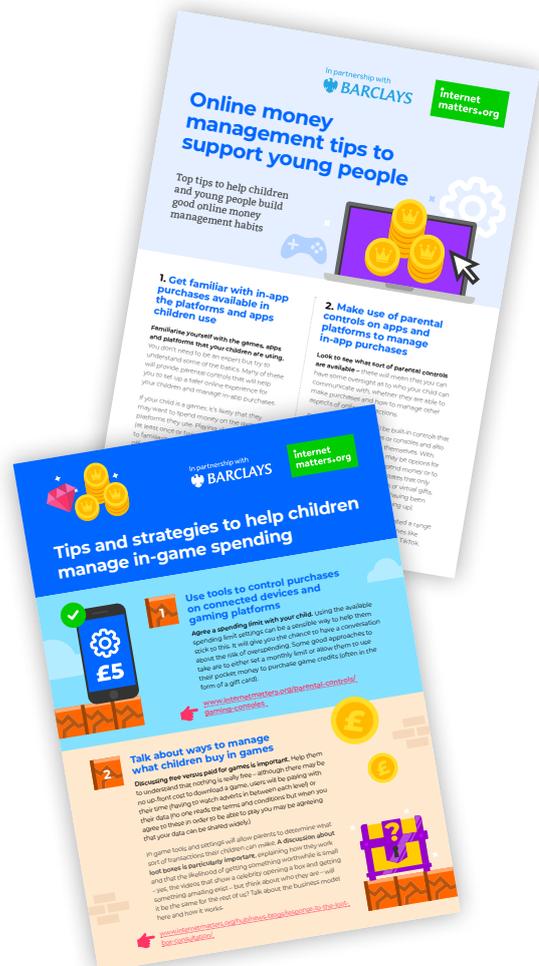
Working collaboratively with experts

We want to thank the members of our Expert Advisory Panel, whose continued contribution to our work has been invaluable. Their time and expertise allow the work of Internet Matters to be grounded in insight and be the best it can possibly be.

Alison Preston,
Co-Director and Head
of Research, Ofcom

Emma James,
Senior Policy
Advisor, Barnados

John Carr OBE,
Secretary, UK Children's
Charities' Coalition on
Internet Safety (CHIS)

Jonathan Baggaley,
CEO, PSHE Association

Lauren Seager-Smith,
CEO, Kidscape

Dr. Linda Papadopoulos,
Child Psychologist
and Internet Matters
Ambassador

Margot James,
Chair, Internet Matters

Marie Smith,
Head of Education,
CEOP

Mark Griffiths,
Professor/Director of
the Gaming Research
Unit, Nottingham Trent
University

Martha Evans,
Director,
Anti-Bullying
Alliance

Dr. Simon P. Hammond,
Lecturer in Education,
University of East Anglia

Simone Vibert,
Senior Policy and
Public Affairs Analyst,
Office of the Children's
Commissioner

Victoria Nash,
Deputy Director/
Associate Professor,
Oxford Internet Institute

Will Gardner OBE,
CEO, Childnet
and Director
at UKSIC

In addition to the Expert Advisory Panel, we also benefit from a range of expert contributors to the website. These are experts in their field who willingly give their insights to ensure children enjoy the benefits of connected technology. With thanks in particular to:

- **Rebecca Avery,** Education Safeguarding Adviser, Kent County Council

- **Laura Higgins,** Director of Community Safety & Digital Civility, Roblox

- **Karl Hopwood,** Independent Online Safety Expert

- **Sue Jones,** Global Deputy CEO, Ditch the Label

- **Parven Kaur,** Founder, Kids N Clicks

- **Catherine Knibbs,** Child Trauma Psychotherapist, Cybertrauma

- **Alan Mackenzie,** Online Safety Specialist

- **Dr Elizabeth Milovidov,** Law Professor and Digital Parenting Expert

- **Sajda Mughal OBE,** CEO, JAN Trust

- **Professor Andy Phippen,** University of Plymouth

- **Dr Tamasine Preece,** Head of Personal and Social Education

- **Andy Robertson,** Freelance Games Expert

- **Professor William Watkins,** Contemporary Philosophy and Literature, Brunel University

Advisory Roles

Of course, we recognise there are a range of panels beyond our own and to extend knowledge sharing and collaborative opportunities, this year we expanded the number of panels and advisory boards we participate in.

### Executive Board of the UK Council for Internet Safety

As part of our commitment to UKCIS and as members of the Executive Board, we created and chair the Vulnerable Users Group. In addition, we are also members of the UKCIS working group on Digital Resilience. We were pleased to support that group as it developed the Digital Resilience Framework.

Ofcom Making Sense of Media

In recognition of the ever-growing importance of digital literacy and informed by our research suggesting that too many children are not getting effective online safety education, we were delighted to be asked to participate in Ofcom's Making Sense of Media Panel. The panel was launched in July 2019 with the mandate to debate and inform the development of Ofcom's media literacy research and policy work.

Advisory Board for the UK Safer Internet Centre

We continue to be part of the UK Safer Internet Centre's Advisory Board, joining a number of other industry and third sector organisations, academics and experts and supporting their work.
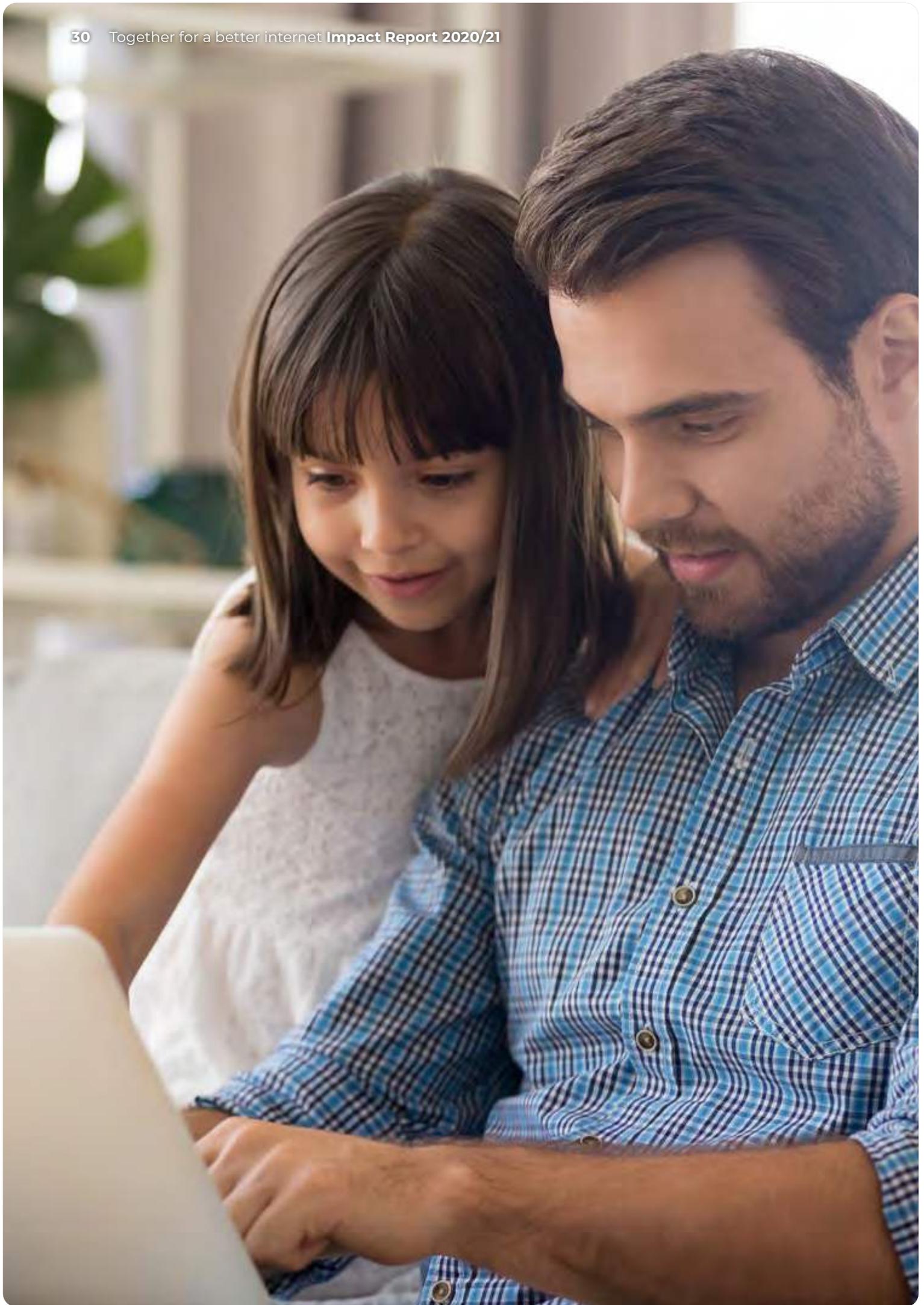
Looking forward

Carolyn Bunting MBE
CEO, Internet Matters

When we embarked on our working year back in 2020, nobody could have imagined the pandemic that tested, challenged and pushed organisations and individuals to new limits. But we have fallen back on our resilience and collectively found a new digital norm. Undoubtedly, this year has been tremendously tough for us all but Internet Matters has remained focused, continuing to bring together leading organisations to create a future where children and young people are prepared to benefit safely from the impact of connected technology.

Despite the pandemic we have grown significantly and welcomed new employees and new partners into the fold; I couldn't be prouder of where we are and what we have achieved together.

The last two years have shown us how digital services underpin our lives and in the coming year we aim to develop a much greater understanding of the impact of connected technology on digital wellbeing. This will be a vital evidence base to inform our work around media literacy, which we are pleased to see is a pillar of the forthcoming online safety bill.

We will continue to prioritise our very important work to support the most vulnerable children online.

We continue to see that although their risk of harm is disproportionately higher than their non-vulnerable peers, they also get greater benefits from being online, so it's imperative that we support these children in a way that allows them to thrive in the online world.

Finally, I'd like to thank everyone that we work with. Industry, policymakers, educators, parents – all of us have a collective responsibility to ensure children are happy, healthy and above all, safe online. I am delighted that Internet Matters plays an important role in this space and I look forward to making even more progress next year.