

# Keeping children safe online

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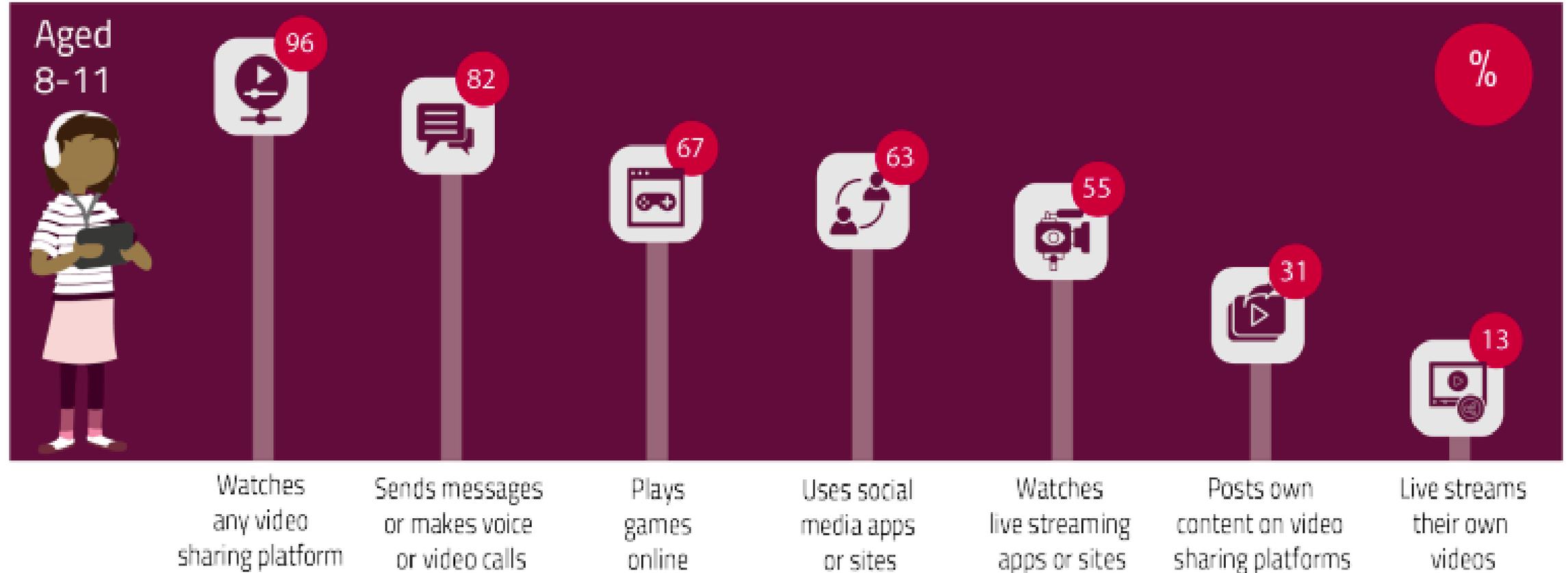
Summer 2023

# What we will be looking at

- Children's online lives
- Online exploitation
- How offenders operate
- Bullying online
- Critical thinking skills and resilience
- How parents and carers can help their children (and themselves)
- Support and advice services

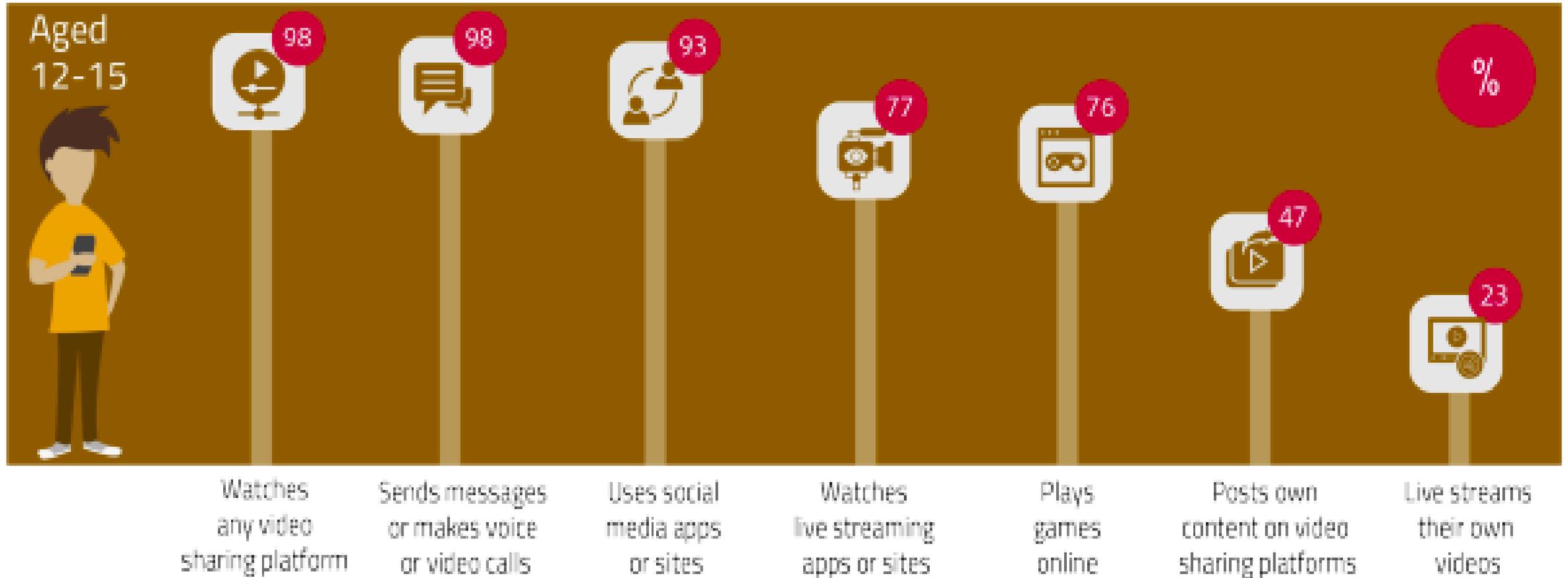
# Children's online lives

## Online activities of 8-11-year-olds



# Children's online lives

## Online activities of 12-15-year-olds



# Why do we need to understand more?

- It's not enough to just tell children what to do (in any situation!)
- They need to understand the potential dangers in order to be able to protect themselves
- Threats change, so children need to be able to recognise unsafe situations of all kinds
- Filters and settings don't solve everything and are not fool-proof

# The major threats children face online

- The sending/receiving of indecent images
- Exploitation (sexual and criminal)
- Bullying and abuse (again, can involve images)
- Criminal activity (children may not recognise it as such)

**Indecent images of children**

# Online sexual exploitation of children

- Online abuse frequently involves children being tricked or blackmailed into sending images or films of themselves
- Images and films can be shared between offenders
- They can also be put onto adult websites without the child's knowledge
- It can also lead to contact abuse in the real world

# The legal position

Taking, sharing or possessing an indecent image of a child under 18 is illegal...

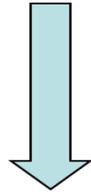
...even if it's your own body you are photographing

Children often don't think there is anything wrong with taking images

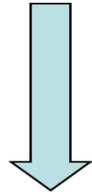


# Image risks

An image is sent to one person



Most images go no further, but...

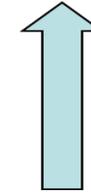


- Friends fall out...
- Friends lose their phones...
- Friends have poor security on shared devices ...

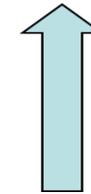


Images can be copied, harvested, shared or manipulated without the subject's knowledge

**The image stays public for ever**



Images can be used by bullies



# Image risks – how scattergun offenders operate

Catfish or bait videos – using images (maybe stolen) that a child will find attractive



**Offender**

Using a false identity

Using their own profile

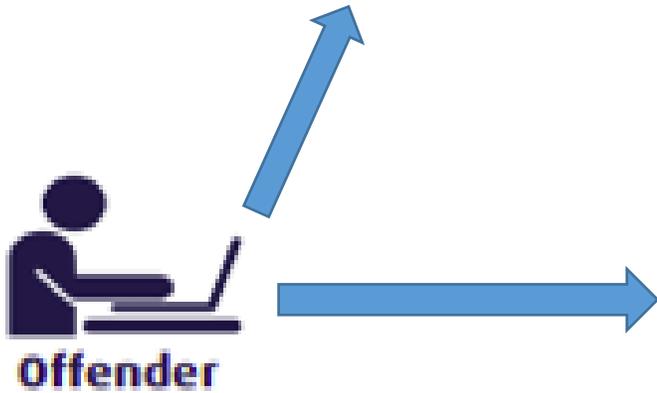
Pushing the child to move onto a private platform

Using gifts to bribe or entice the child

Remaining anonymous

# Image risks – targeted offending

**Capping** – secretly capturing self generated images, often with victims being told what to do



**Blackmail** – using images to force the child to carry out more acts or send more images

**Coercing or persuading** the child to meet for contact abuse

Do you get dressed  
in the garden every  
morning?

What about PE? Do  
you get ready in the  
road?

Why / why not?

Is it different online  
or on devices?

I never get undressed  
or change my clothes  
when I'm on camera



LGfL

DigiSafe

Watch the video, learn the song and then use the message to inspire best at school and at home.  
Download this poster from [children.lgf.gov.uk](http://children.lgf.gov.uk) or see more materials at [children.lgf.gov.uk](http://children.lgf.gov.uk)

# Roblox: 'I thought he was playing an innocent game'

By Rachel Stonehouse  
Victoria Derbyshire programme

Is your child suddenly secretive?

Are they sad or quiet but won't say what is worrying them?

Are they preoccupied?

Do they have mood swings?

Are they either suddenly more attached to their social media or are they unexpectedly avoiding it?



Call the NSPCC helpline or  
report to CEOP

# What can parents and carers do?

- Make sure your child knows they can always talk to you
- Remember that not all children are sharing images
- Try to keep calm – however hard this might feel!
- Be aware of what you share (about yourself and your child)
- Use the sources of advice and help at the end of this presentation

# Cyberbullying

# Forms of cyberbullying

- Creating fake online profiles in the victim's name
- Posting unkind/racist/homophobic comments
- Editing or sharing photographs/films without consent
- Spreading rumours
- Exclusion from groups

I sent a picture to my boyfriend of myself naked. I didn't want to even send it but he threatened me if I didn't. Now he has sent it to his friends and everyone at school has seen it. I feel so ashamed. He is asking me for more picture and I don't know what to do as he is very forceful. I don't really like having sex with him but when I say no he just carries on.

Girl, 13

# If your child is a bully...

- Explain why bullying is wrong
- Teach your child how it can affect victims
- Help your child understand that their actions are not okay
- Help them think about how they have affected the other person – sometimes children think that online comments are not as bad as something said face to face

- Explain what sanctions you are going to put in place at home
- Tell your child that you are going to support action by the school
- Try to stay calm and to have a constructive conversation – shouting puts up barriers



# If your child is a victim

- Reassure them that they have not done anything wrong
- Involve them in what you decide to do
- If they don't want to talk to you, tell them about ChildLine or the NSPCC
- Help them report bullying to sites or apps
- Don't take their phone away - this would feel like a punishment

# Child Criminal Exploitation

- Like all exploitation, involves an abuse of power
- Children can be groomed or blackmailed into criminal activity
- Many are recruited through social media – gangs monitor content
- Risks include county lines (drug running) or membership of gangs
- They can be victims of violence, encouraged to use drugs, or can end up owing large sums of money to the criminals
- Children can also be recruited into money laundering or stealing bank details

# Deets and Squares

- The child is encouraged to let criminals deposit funds into his or her account
- They will be given a small amount of money in payment
- They are accessories to a crime for allowing this to happen
- The criminals may blackmail the child into carrying out more or worse acts
- The child can end up with a criminal record and a badly damaged credit history

# Signs to look out for

- Changes in behaviour
- Going missing from school or home
- Suddenly having lots of money or new things like clothes or jewellery
- Unexplained injuries
- Carrying weapons
- Sudden interest in music or videos that feature gangs or violence

# Help your child

- Check their bank account regularly and ask about any unexpected payments
- Make sure they understand why they should never share their PIN or account details
- If they suddenly have new things, ask where they got the money
- Ensure they understand the long-term consequences
- If it looks too good to be true, it probably is!



# Online challenges

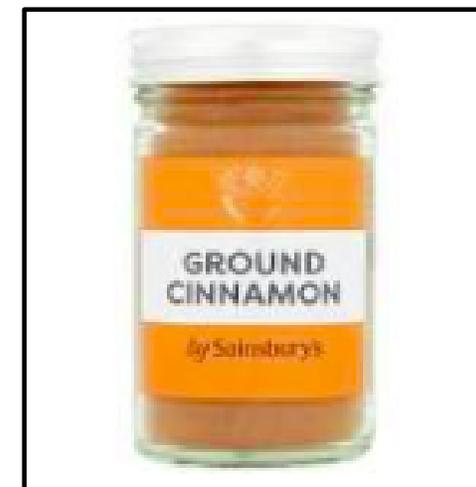
**No-makeup selfies raise £8m for Cancer Research UK in six days**

## **The 'Blackout Challenge' Has Resurfaced On TikTok, And It's Still Just As Dangerous As It Was 17 Years Ago**

*Another 12-year-old in Argentina has died, and her family says she tried the TikTok trend.*

**Remember the ice bucket challenge? It just funded an ALS breakthrough**

**Blue Whale: What is the truth behind an online 'suicide challenge'?**



# Talking to your child about challenges

- Some are harmless fun
- However many are hoaxes – there is no evidence that the Blue Whale challenge actually exists
- Even so, children may be scared or affected by things they see or read
- Hoaxes and harmful challenges try to cause panic and alarm – it's important to be reassuring and calm

## If you believe your child is looking at challenges

Don't send out messages warning other parents – this can add to the alarm and encourage young people to look at challenges

Speak to your child's school and ask them to look at the government guidance on challenges

Talk calmly to your child – be prepared that you may need to discuss distressing subjects such as suicide

Report any harmful content to the site or app – follow the safety link (probably at the bottom of the page)

# How to support your child

# How to support your child online

- Build your child's confidence
- Help them to understand the importance of consent – their own and other people's
- Help them to understand peer pressure, and how to challenge it
- Be interested in things your child does online
- Explain your decisions and set clear boundaries
- Be a positive role model in your own online life

# More ideas for supporting your child

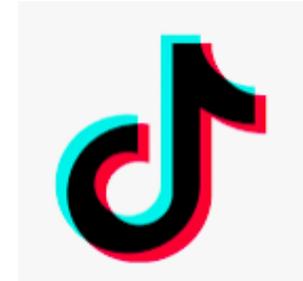
- Be honest about the positives as well as the negatives of social media

- Encourage them to have offline hobbies



- Be ready for the impact of secondary school, the increased peer pressure, and how this will affect their use of social media

# Remind your child about age limits



13



16

without parental consent – are you confident you know what your child is doing?

# Help your child to think critically

- What could happen if a stranger saw this?
- What's making me want to send this?
- Why is this person talking to me?
- How do I feel about this post being out there for ever?

# Help your child to think critically

- How could this make another person feel?
- Is someone making me do or say this, even if I don't want to?
- What could the consequences be if I send this?
- Where can I get help with this?

# If things go wrong

Use this button (at [thinkuknow.co.uk](https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk)) to report abuse or exploitation



A child protection adviser from CEOP will contact you

The police may get involved, but not always

It's never too late to report

ChildLine offers advice and help about online bullying



# Sources of help and advice



## Help your children get the most out of the Internet

<p>I'm concerned about my child</p> <hr/> <p>&gt; I'm concerned about my child</p>	<p>Reporting an incident to CEOP</p> <hr/> <p>&gt; Reporting an incident to CEOP</p>	<p>I'd like information and advice on keeping my child safe</p> <hr/> <p>&gt; I'd like information and advice on keeping my child safe</p>
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# Sources of help and advice continued...

- [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)
- [www.parentinfo.org](http://www.parentinfo.org)
- [www.saferinternet.org.uk](http://www.saferinternet.org.uk)
- [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)
- [www.pegi.info](http://www.pegi.info)
- <http://www.askaboutgames.com/>
- <https://www.common sense media.org/>
- [www.getsafeonline.org](http://www.getsafeonline.org)
- [www.mencap.org.uk/about-us/our-projects/safesurfing](http://www.mencap.org.uk/about-us/our-projects/safesurfing)
- [www.actionfraud.police.uk/scam-emails](http://www.actionfraud.police.uk/scam-emails)
- <https://parentzone.org.uk/home>

# Thank you

**Zoe Barkham Manlow**  
**Elizabeth Spendlove**