



## Digital Trend Report



St. Francis of Assisi National  
School, Belmayne

# INTRODUCTION



of pupils in 6th class have  
spoken or chatted to a  
stranger online\*

**Children's digital footprints are being created before they even learn to walk.** As parents and teachers we have the responsibility to teach our children how best to protect themselves online.

To truly master this we first must understand children's behaviours and attitudes online. Technology advances so quickly that online safety trends are constantly changing.

At Zeeko, we work with parents, children and teachers to stay at the forefront of these changes. **The aim of this Digital Trend Report is to help you decipher and understand your pupils' online world.** This information should highlight any areas of concern that you may need to delve into further with your pupils. We have findings and recommendations at the end of the report to guide teachers and parents.



of pupils in primary school  
have been cyberbullied\*

\* Zeeko, Everri, Marina; Park, Kirsty, 2018. Children's online behaviours in Irish primary and secondary schools

# WHAT IS A DIGITAL TREND REPORT



In class, self-reported, survey

## Objective, Up to Date, Insight

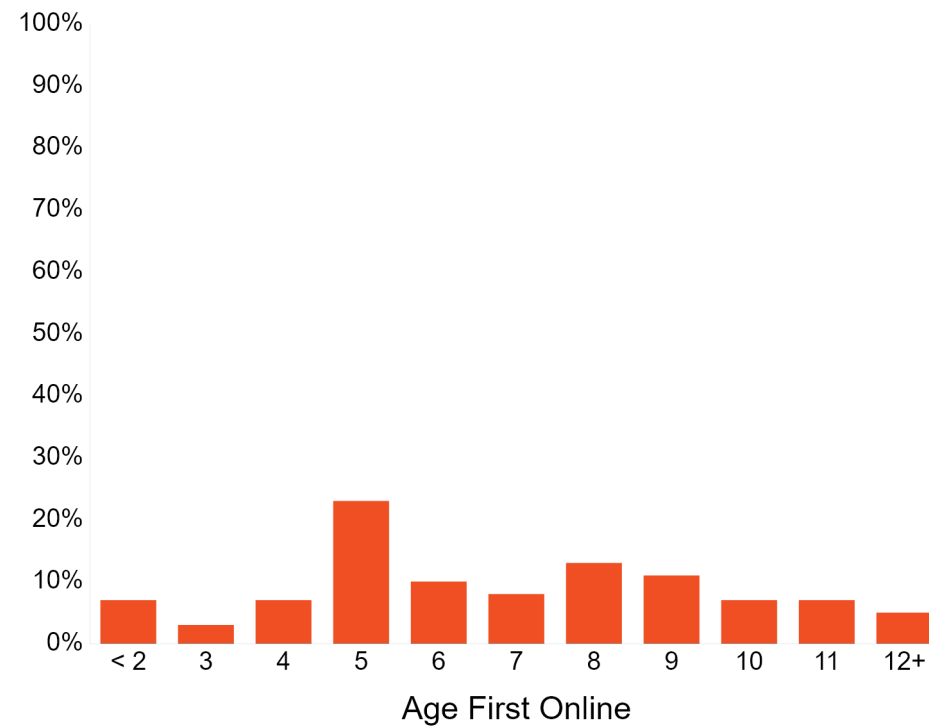
**A Digital Trend Report is a set of data collected from the pupils at your school/ organisation via an online survey.**

The survey is self-reported by means of a short online questionnaire (8 questions). This survey is anonymous. There are no names collected. Only gender and age are recorded. It is used to highlight to schools and families different areas that they may need to address with their pupils and any potential areas of concern.

The survey results from all the schools is collated into a general report called 'The Global Trend Report' on children's Internet usage. All the information remains anonymous, no school/ organisation names are disclosed (GDPR compliant). Only children's gender and age are used to decipher the data.

**This full report is used to highlight trends in Internet and Digital technology use amongst children, globally.**

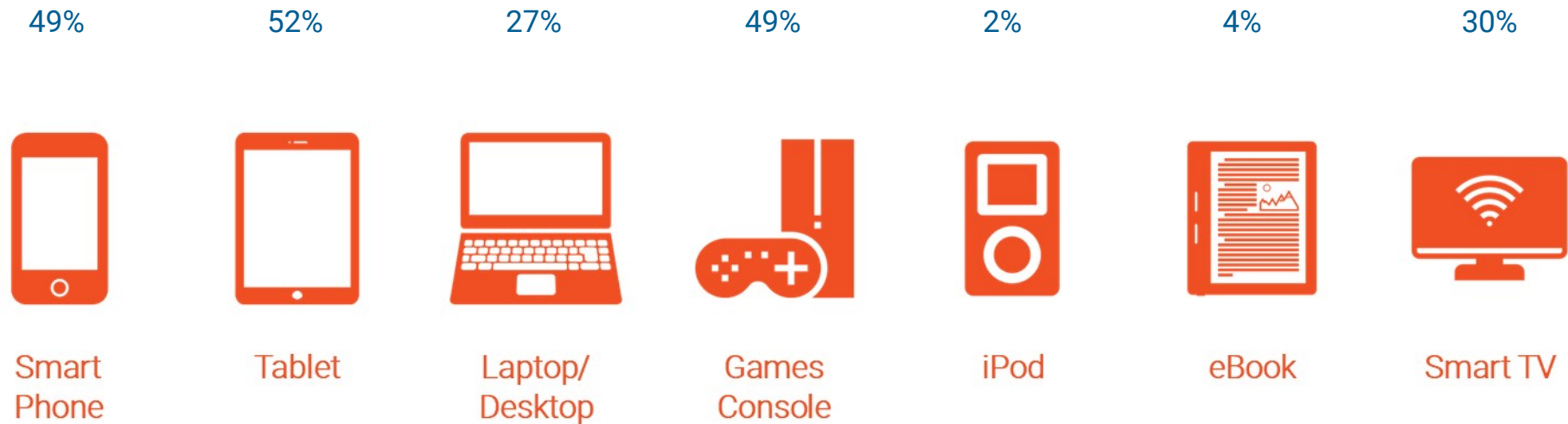
## Question 1: What age were you when you first started to use the Internet?



## Question 2: What devices do you use to access the internet, play games online, use apps etc.?

### St. Francis of Assisi National School, Belmayne

(School/ organisation statistics in navy)



### Global Statistics

(Global statistics in yellow)

## Question 1: What age were you when you first started to use the internet?

Among the children surveyed the average age that pupils started using the Internet was **6.94** years old. **6% of pupils reported they did not use the Internet.**



## Question 2: What devices do you use to access the Internet, play games online, use apps etc.?

**The children were multi device users**, with the vast majority of pupils having access to more than one device. These devices included smartphones, tablets, laptops/ desktops, games consoles, iPods, E-books and smart TVs. A **Tablet** was the most popular device with **52%** of pupils using it. The least popular device was the **Ipod** with a low percentage of **2%** of pupils using it.

## Question 3: What are your top 3 favourite apps, websites, online games or social media sites?

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(School/Organisation statistics in navy)

36%



27%



24%



22%



22%



22%



33%



17%



15%



12%



12%



10%

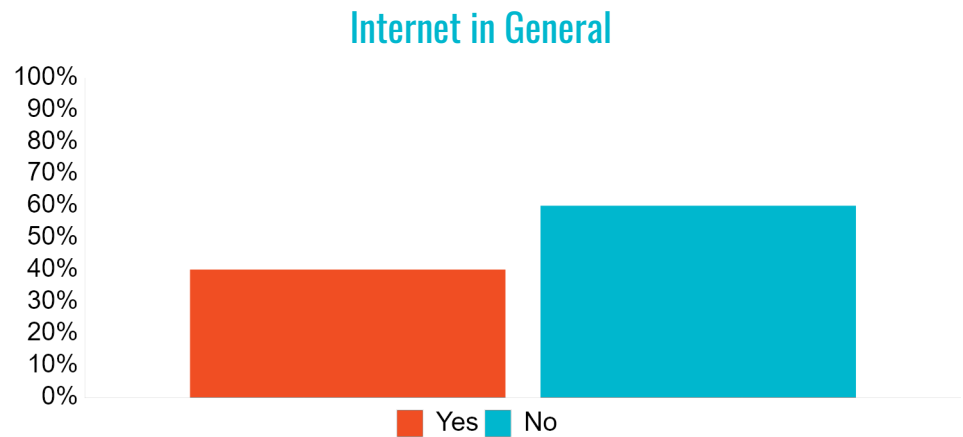
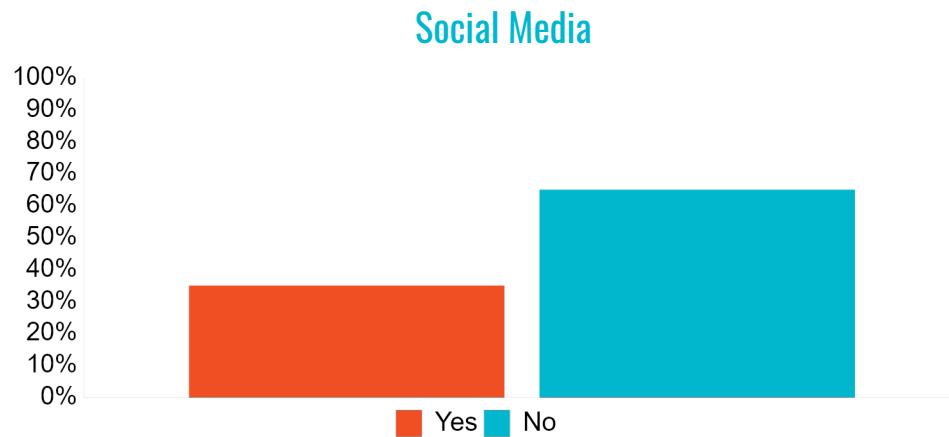
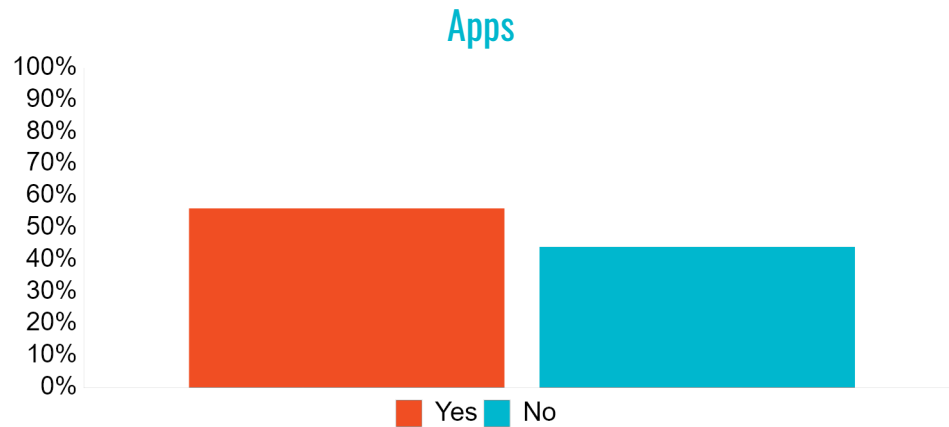


### Global Statistics

(Global statistics in yellow)

# DO YOU KNOW MORE

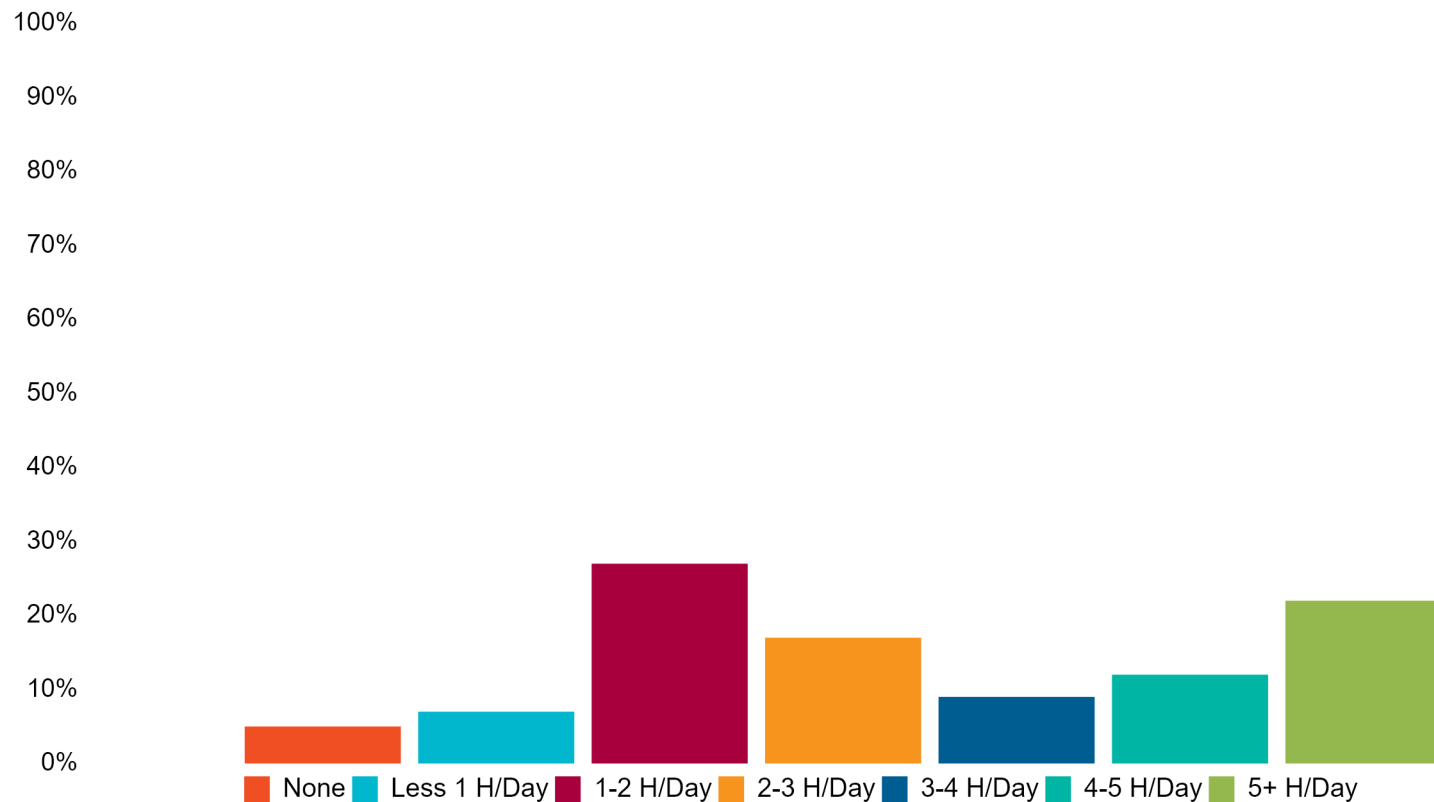
## Question 4: Do you think you know more than your parents about...?





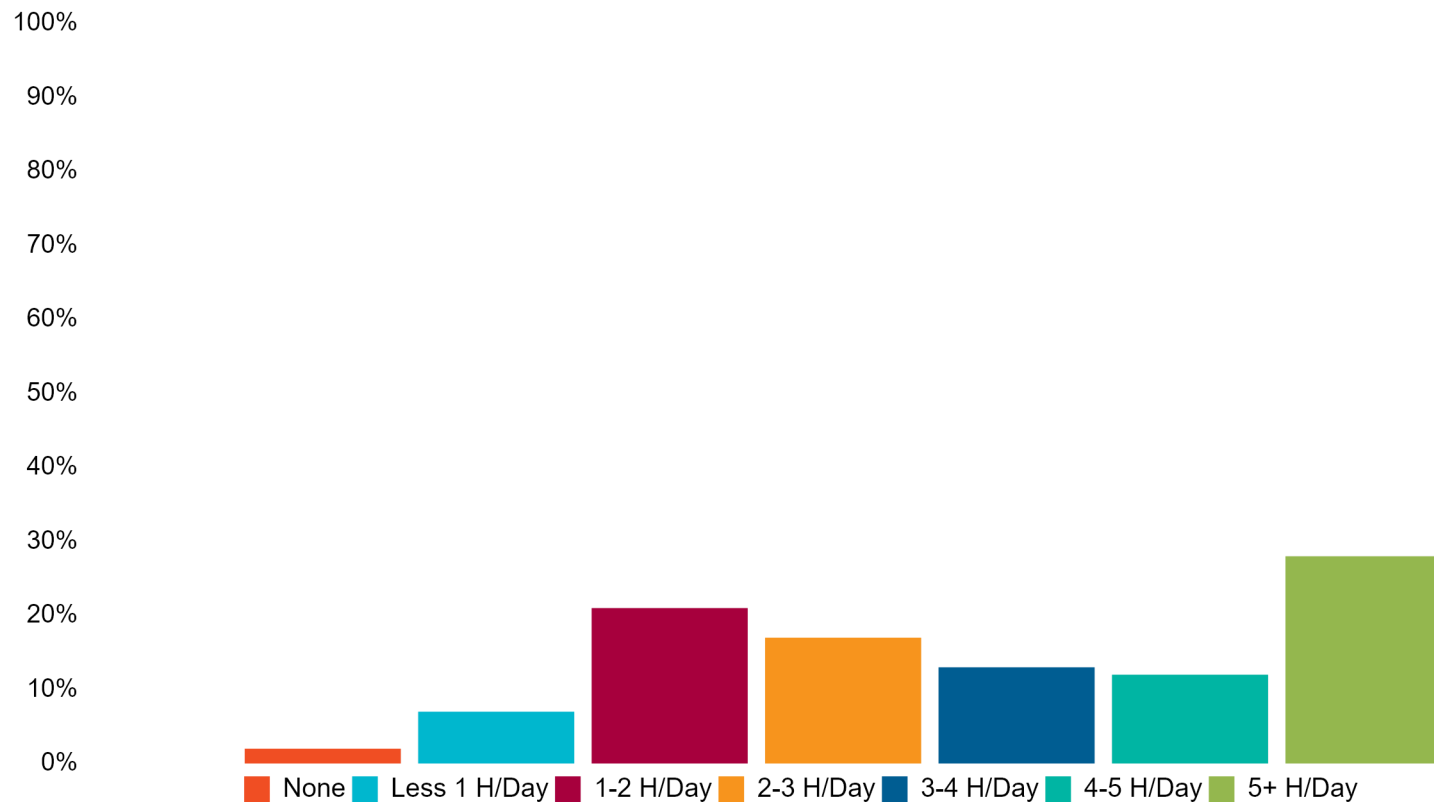
## SCREEN TIME - WEEKDAYS

Question 5: How much screen time do you usually get on WEEKDAYS (e.g. TV, phone, computer, video games, etc.)?



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## Question 3: What are your top 3 favourite apps, websites, online games or social media sites?

The children surveyed, reported that their favourite apps, online games/social media sites were **Roblox**, **FortNite**, **Youtube**, **Netflix**, **SnapChat** and **Tik Tok**. Some key points to note are below:

- **Roblox is the most popular app**
- **27% of pupils use FortNite**
- **24% of pupils use Youtube**



## Question 4: Do you think you know more than your parents about....?

**56%** of pupils claimed to know more about apps than their parents, **79%** said they knew more about online gaming, **35%** said they know more about social media and **40%** said they knew more about the Internet in general.

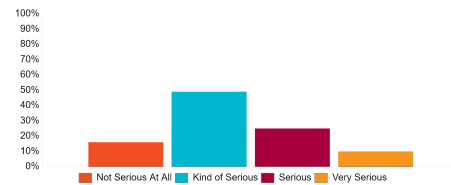
## Question 5: How much screen time do you usually get, e.g. TV, phone, computer, video games etc.?

**22%** of pupils said they were getting 5 or more hours of screen time a day during the week, while this percentage increased to **28%** at the weekend.

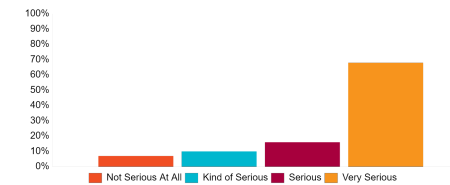
# HOW SERIOUS

## Question 6: How serious are the following?

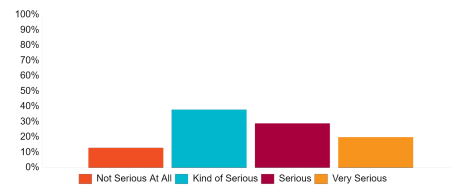
### Spending too long online



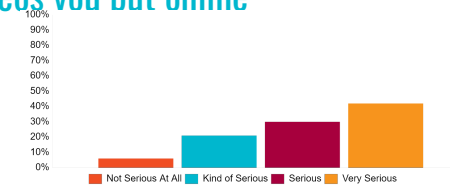
### Cyberbullying



### Talking to a person you first met online



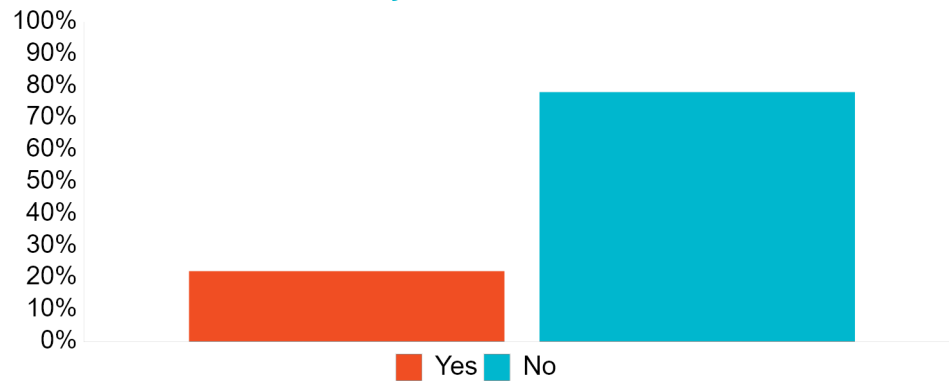
### To be careful with the posts, photos and videos you put online



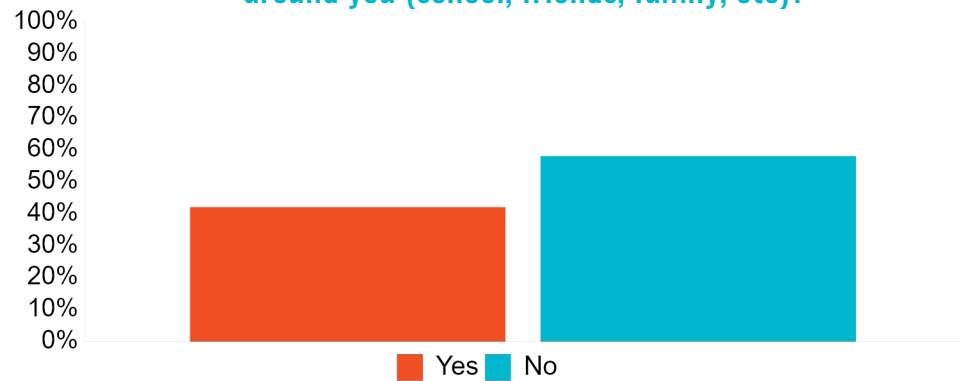
# HAVE YOU EVER

## Question 7: Have you ever...

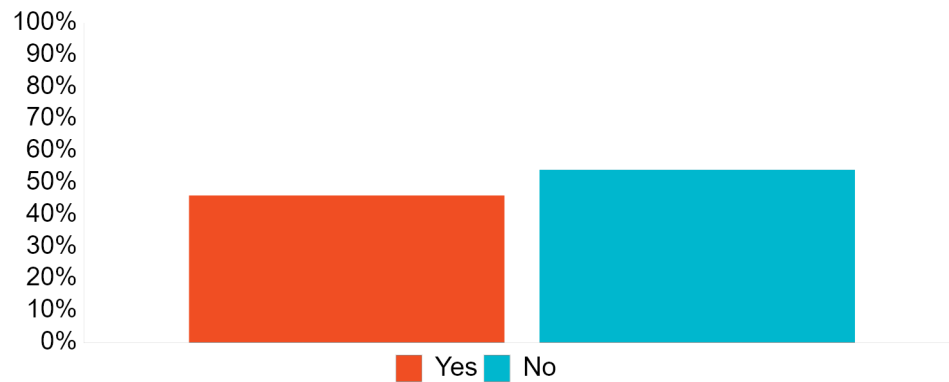
been cyberbullied?



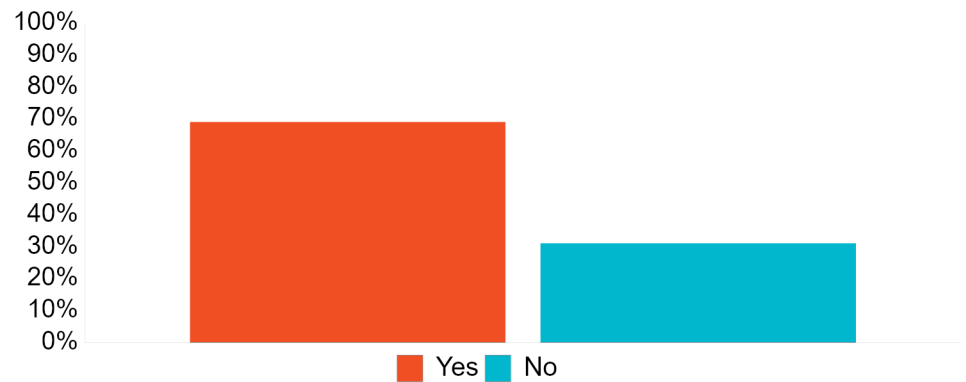
experienced cyberbullying happening to people around you (school, friends, family, etc)?



spoken/chatted to a stranger online?



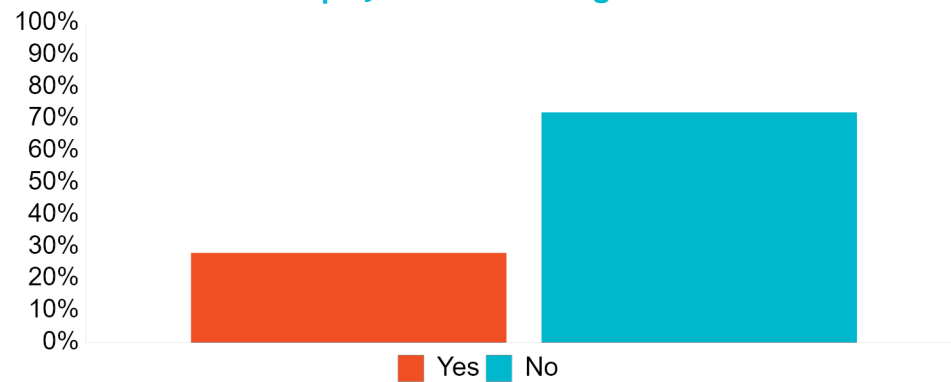
played with/against a stranger online?



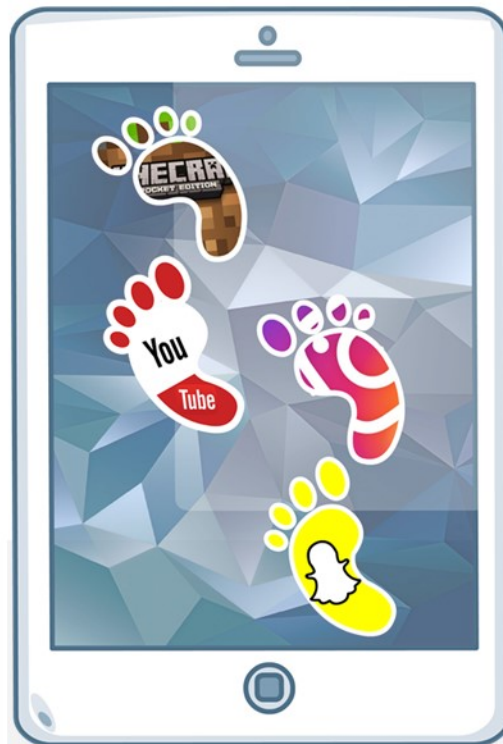
# HAVE YOU EVER

## Question 7: Have you ever...

played an over 18's game?



## Question 8: What is a digital footprint?



A digital footprint is a track of everything you do online

35% of pupils correctly identified the correct definition of a Digital Footprint

## Question 6: How serious are the following?

The pupils were asked to rate how serious they thought spending too long online; cyberbullying; talking to a person you first met online, and; to be careful with the posts, photos and videos you put online.

- The pupils rated the following issue as the most serious:  
**Cyberbullying**
- They rated the following issue as the least serious:  
**Spending too long online**



## Question 7: Have you ever...

**22%** of pupils have been cyberbullied before, while **42%** reported they have experienced cyberbullying happening to people around them. **46%** of children reported they had spoken or chatted to a stranger online, while **69%** had played with or against a stranger online. **28%** of children claimed to have played an over 18's game.

## Question 8: What is a Digital Footprint?

**35%** of pupils were correctly able to identify that a digital footprint is a track of everything you do online.



# FINDINGS SUMMARY

**Favourite Apps** - **Roblox** is the most popular app

**Internet Knowledge** - **79%** of pupils said they **knew more about online gaming** than their parents

**Screen time** - **28%** of students said that they were getting **5 or more hours of screen time** a day during the weekend

**Perception of online risks** - The pupils rated **Cyberbullying** as the most serious issue

**Experience of risky behaviour** - **22%** of pupils have been **cyberbullied**

**Digital footprint** - **35%** of pupils **correctly identified a digital footprint** is a track of everything you do online



# RECOMMENDATIONS - TEACHERS

1

Schools should start from an early age (e.g., junior infants) to develop curricula in which children are encouraged to talk about the Internet, technologies, and their online practices. **Media literacy should become an integral part of STEM programs.** This will ensure children develop better skills to safely benefit from the online world.



2

**Screen time, as well as cyberbullying and sexting, should be topics covered within the SPHE** (Social, Personal and Health Education) curriculum in every school. This would ensure that children have the skills to cope with these risks.

3

**Screen time** (underestimated by children and overestimated by adults) can be tackled by supporting children to develop the skills to better organise their time and to coordinate their online and offline activities.

4

**Online gaming**, which is a popular activity among young children (especially boys) should be included in formal education programs instead of being marginalised as a leisure activity. Minecraft is an exemplar case of an educational game that can productively stimulate children's creativity, reasoning and problem solving.

5

**The gender gap** observed in the usage of technologies and the Internet can be reduced using online games. Girls can be assisted in playing with educational and action games that can stimulate their learning; boys can facilitate this process making girls more "expert" in the field. Peer-learning can make children more competent in the usage of today's technologies.

**In summary**, if schools start to educate children at an early age, they will be prepared to deal with the future digitalisation of society and cope with risks as well as understand and harness the opportunities in a safe way.

# RECOMMENDATIONS - PARENTS

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1

**Parents and children should have more resources** to learn and cope with the Internet and technology.

2

The lack of parental knowledge often drives parents to restrict (e.g. banning smartphone use) or disregard what children do online. As a consequence in either case, **children are left alone in coping with their online experiences.**

3

ZEEKO's research findings showed that adolescents experience aggressions, experiment with sexuality and look for connections with strangers. This is not new, since adolescents have always done this in the past. **These behaviours are part of developmental tasks which allow children to transit into adulthood.** Therefore, the fact that children are living their lives and go through developmental tasks, also through the Internet, **should not be a cause for concern.** However, making sure that children understand the consequences and have the necessary tools to cope with these consequences is fundamental for their wellbeing and reputation.

4

**Parents should be curious about their children's interests and activities in the online world** (as well as offline world) and frequently take the opportunity to engage in conversations about their online activities, when it is possible. These conversations are a form of mediation that enable children to develop skills and to increase the quality of family communication.

5

Parents will never know everything and will never be able to control everything in their children's lives, particularly since children want to keep their own secrets and do not want parents to intrude into their private lives. This is part of the 'parent-child role game'. However, if **parents work to build a trusting relationship with their children when they are very young**, also relying on the support of educational agencies, children will be more confident in talking and sharing their experiences with adults.

# FOCUS ON SCREEN TIME

1

Consider **quality screen time** – limits on screen time can directly reduce your children's opportunity to learn and participate online.

2

**Restricting screen time does not protect children from harmful contact** (e.g., cyberbullying) and may lead children to evade parental rules.

3

If you are worried about screen time, ask yourself these five questions:

- Is my child physically healthy and sleeping enough?
- Is my child connecting socially with family and friends online and offline?
- Is my child engaged with and achieving in school?
- Is my child pursuing interests and hobbies (in any form)?
- Is my child having fun and learning in their use of digital media?

Only when your answers are mostly "no" do you need to address problematic use.

4

**Talk to your child be a Chatbudi.** A Chatbudi is someone that your child trusts and will talk to about the good stuff they do online and also if something is worrying them online.

5

**Talk to your child about the 5:1 rule.** They should have 5 hours of real world activity for every hour they have in front of a screen. Talk to them about their other hobbies that they enjoy doing. The key point is balance vs the specific number of hours online and offline.

6

**Encourage your child to take a break when they start to have negative feelings**, even if its just for a snack or a 5 minute chat with you. **Sit down and talk to our children about the negative feelings** they get from being online for too long. Explain to them that taking a break does not mean that they won't be allowed back online, but its important to take a break to help stop those negative feelings from happening.

7

The American Academy of Paediatrics (AAP) suggests a personalised **family media plan** including rules for children and their parents, and designated 'media free' times.

There are 3 main types of cyberbullies:

1

## The Accidental Cyberbully

- Likes or shares abusive content
- Participates without being aware

2

## The Angry Cyberbully

- Takes their anger out online, e.g. posting an embarrassing photo or a screen shot of a conversation online
- Acting on emotions without considering consequences

3

## The Real Cyberbully

- Engages in antisocial behaviour online out of boredom, malice or entertainment

Children can have stressful experiences of cyberbullying when it happens to them or someone they know. Zeeko's research has shown they can get very stressed when they are involved in cyberbullying and do not know how to remove themselves from it or make amends.

4

## Stop Block Tell

The Stop Block Tell rule is similar in principle to the Safe Cross Code. It is a rule to help guide young people when they come across digital threats.

The pupils have to **STOP** if anyone contacts them that they don't know, if they are cyberbullied or are involved in cyberbullying. They do not reply, they do not write anything back, just stop.

They then **BLOCK**. Every Social Media App and Game has a blocking feature. If pupils do not know how to do this, they can ask their Chatbudi or contact the site administrator.

The last part is **TELL**. They need to tell their Chatbudi or someone they trust. Tell them the whole story so they can help.



# RECOMMENDATIONS SUMMARY

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1

Safety settings will help but **will not prevent issues** with technology and the Internet

2

**Empower** your child to understand that they can talk to you

3

**Foster co-use and conversations** around your children's use of technology and the Internet

4

**Agree** on sites and apps

5

**Be a Chatbudi**

6

Give children specific steps to follow if they come across negative content, such as: Turn over the device and walk away to find someone to tell



## **ZEEKO**

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The project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 774928