

**Research of  
Internet Downside Issues  
August 2001**

**Submitted to the  
Internet Advisory Board  
by  
Amárach Consulting**

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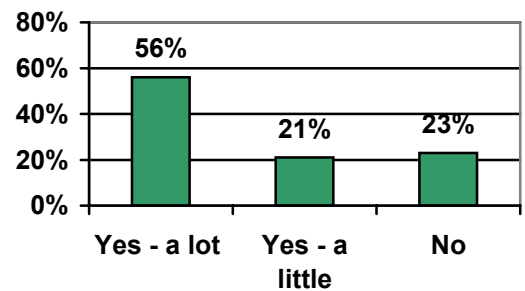
## Executive Summary

An estimated 30% of Ireland's 10-14 year olds are regular Internet users. This is equivalent to 132,000 young people online. Over the last number of years some concern has been expressed regarding the potential harmful aspects or "downsides" of Internet use, particularly among young Internet users. The Internet Advisory Board commissioned Amárach Consulting to conduct innovative and original research to explore Internet Downside issues among 10-14 year old Internet users and their parents. This is the first report of its kind in Ireland. This summary paper presents a brief overview of some of the key findings.

### The Knowledge Gap

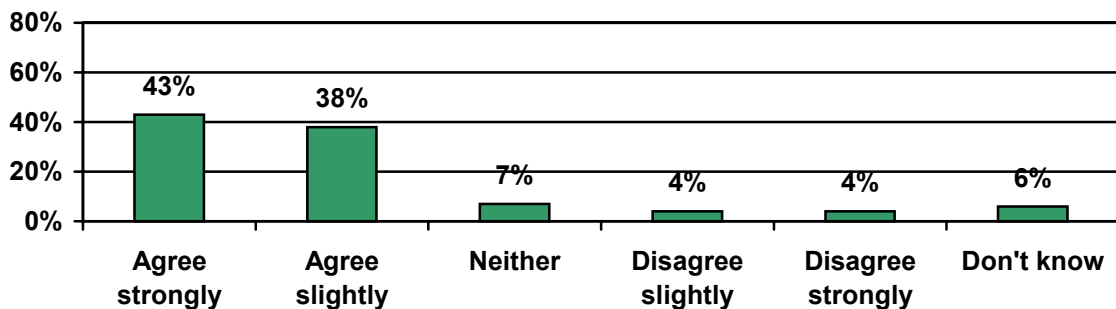
One of the most striking findings from the research is the lack of knowledge many parents have about the Internet when compared to their children. Only 23% of parents say they know more about the Internet than their child does. The research found that the parents who knew the most about the Internet were also the parents who were most capable of, and interested in, monitoring their child's Internet use.

Does your child know more about using the Internet than you do?



Parents are well aware of the challenge this knowledge gap poses. Eighty-one percent agree strongly or slightly with the following statement – "many parents are unable to control and monitor the Internet use of their children as they do not know enough about it".

Agreement with statement - "Many parents are unable to control and monitor Internet use of their children as they do not know enough about it"



### Rules Governing Children's Internet Use

Despite the knowledge gap, almost eight in ten (78%) parents do have rules for their children when they access the Internet at home. Of those who do impose rules, just over four-fifths restrict the websites visited by their children to those only authorized by a parent or another adult. About half allow their children to use the Internet only when an adult is present. However, when children were asked about the rules imposed on them, some inconsistencies were evident. Eighty-two percent of parents say their children can only visit websites they authorize, while only 56% of children seem to be aware of this rule.

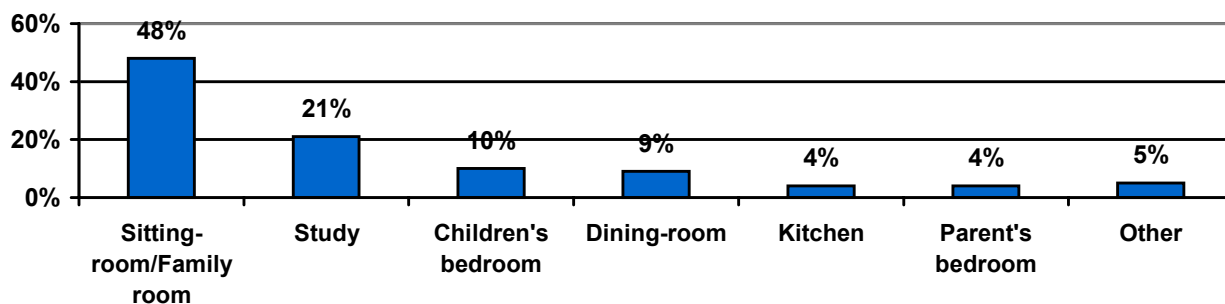
Just over half of the children surveyed who use the Internet say they can go online when an adult is not present. This was more prevalent among children who say they know a lot more about the Internet than their parents do and among children who visit chat rooms. Forty percent of children who use the Internet at home usually access it when alone.

**Location of Home PCs**

Where a home PC is located has clear implications for the ability of parents to monitor what their children are doing online. If a PC is located in a communal area of the home, for example in a family room, the opportunities for parents to communicate and discuss with their children what they are doing online are far greater than if the PC is in the child’s bedroom or in other isolated areas of the home.

A slight majority of home PCs are kept in “communal” areas, such as a family-room, kitchen or sitting room. About one in five are used in a study and one in 10 are in children’s bedrooms.

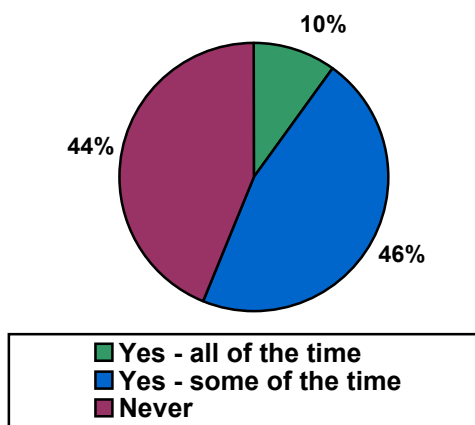
**Location of PC in the home**



**Accessing the Internet at Friends’ Homes**

Children are more likely to be adventurous and thrill seeking when they are online with friends than when they are on their own. With this in mind, one of the areas of possible vulnerability was found to be when children access the Internet at friends’ homes. Nearly half of the children surveyed say that they are never supervised when they access the Internet at a friend’s house. This is particularly evident among children who have not been spoken to by their parents about the potential dangers of Internet use. Those not supervised at friends’ houses are also more likely not to be supervised in their own homes.

**When you use the Internet at a friends' house does an adult supervise you?**



**What Are Parents Concerned About?**

What do parents consider to be negative about young people accessing the Internet? All parents were asked what they considered to be the main negative impact of Internet use among children aged 14 or under. Children having access to pornography was the most frequently cited downside. This was followed by access to material or information that was considered unsuitable. Just over one

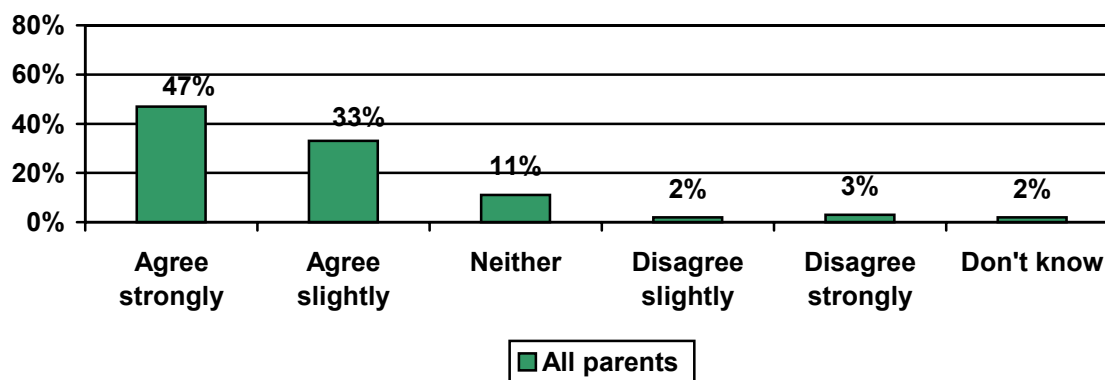
in ten (12%) expressed concern about children coming in contact with unsuitable people, such as paedophiles.

Main Negative Aspect of Internet Use	%
Access to pornography	44%
Access to unsuitable material/information	18%
Can be exposed to unsuitable people e.g. paedophiles	12%
Anti-social/insular activity	6%
Could spend the time more usefully	6%
Access to violent/hate material	5%
Makes them lazy about doing homework/ school projects	3%
Spend too much time playing games	1%
Too exposed to advertising	1%
Nothing	2%

*Base: All parents (n=312)*

The level of concern parents have is high. Eight in ten parents agree strongly or slightly with the following statement: "I am concerned that my child/children might access harmful material such as sexually explicit or violent material on the Internet". Only about 5% of parents seem to be unconcerned.

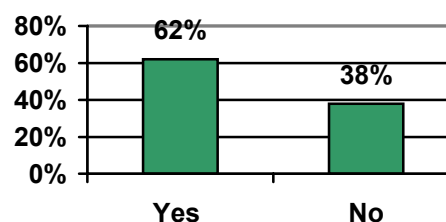
**Agreement with statement - "I am concerned that my child/children might access harmful material such as sexually explicit or violent material on the Internet"**



**Communication between Parents and Children**

With such high levels of concern, it is unsurprising to note that over six in ten (62%) parents say they have discussed with their child the potential dangers of Internet use. Parents who use the Internet and who consider themselves knowledgeable of the Internet are more likely to have discussed the potential dangers of Internet use with their child. This once again emphasises the impact of the knowledge gap.

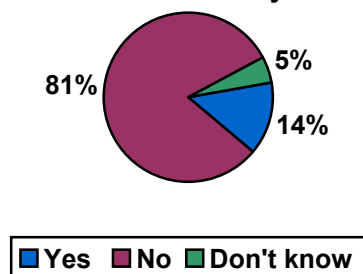
**Have you ever discussed with your child the potential dangers of Internet use?**



### Cause for Concern?

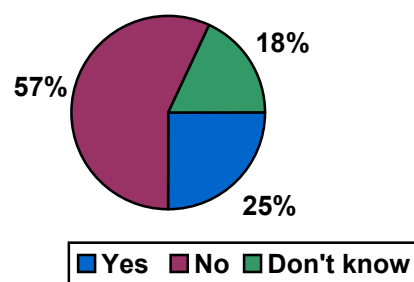
Amárach asked all children surveyed whether they had ever seen things on the Internet that their parents would not like them to see. Fourteen percent said they had. It is interesting to note that acknowledgement of seeing unsuitable material online was significantly higher among children who were responding to the survey without a parent present in the room – 21% of children who used the Internet at home and were surveyed without a parent present said yes. This suggests that the frequency of children coming across inappropriate material could in fact be quite a bit higher.

**Have you ever seen things on the Internet that you think your parents would not like you to see?**



One in four children say they know of friends or people in their class who have come across information or pictures on the Internet that their parents would not like them to see. Once again positive responses were significantly higher in interviews where no parent was present. It is likely that a much higher percentage of children are hearing about unsuitable online material from their friends and classmates.

**Do you know of any friends or people in your class who have come across information or pictures on the Internet that your parents would not like you to see?**



### Who's Responsible for Protecting Children?

Despite many parents not having a good understanding of the Internet, most consider that parents have the primary responsibility for protecting children when they use the Internet. Schools and teachers are also considered to have a major role to play. Nearly one in four said government and a similar number mentioned ISPs.

Who is responsible for protecting children online	Primary responsibility	Other persons responsible	Persons responsible – any mention
Parents	86%	11%	97%
Schools/teachers	5%	68%	73%
Older brothers/sisters	-	24%	24%
Government	2%	23%	24%
ISPs	4%	18%	22%
Website owners	2%	18%	20%
Neighbours/Friends parents	1%	19%	19%
Other	-	5%	5%
Don't know	-	5%	-

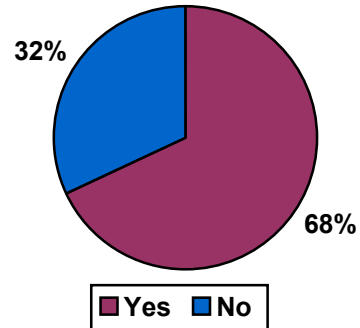
*Base: All parents (n=312)  
Note: Multiple responses allowed*

**Information Need**

When asked directly if they would like more information about how to protect their children online – seven in ten said they would.

Parents were also asked who they thought should provide information. Schools and government were the most frequently cited information providers.

**Would you like more information about how to protect your children online?**



Who should provide information?	%
Schools	49%
Government	37%
ISPs	34%
PC retail outlets/shops	31%
Media	19%
Website owners	16%
Other	6%
Don't know	6%

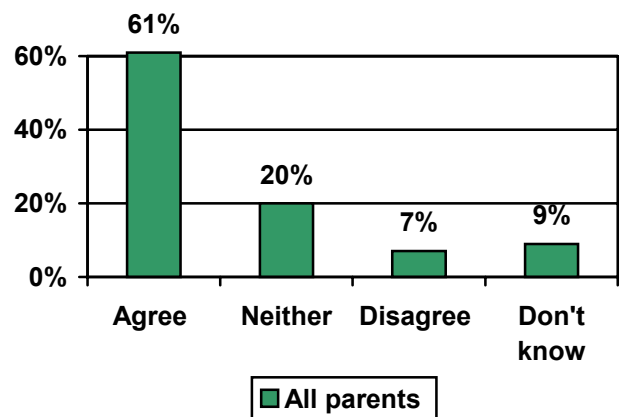
*Base: All parents (n=312)  
Note: Multiple responses allowed*

**Internet Upsides**

The focus of the research study was Internet downside issues. However, the Internet has many beneficial uses. Despite the high levels of concern parents have, six in ten agree that the positive aspects of Internet use among children outweigh the negatives. Only 7% disagree.

Similarly 70% of children agreed that the Internet is very important for their schoolwork.

**Agreement with statement - "The positive aspects of Internet use among children outweigh the negatives"**



### **SUMMARY OF KEY RESEARCH FINDINGS**

- Seventy-seven percent of parents surveyed feel their child knows more about using the Internet than they do.
- Forty percent of children who use the Internet at home usually access it alone.
- Mothers play a significantly larger role than fathers in supervising Internet use.
- Twenty-five percent of home PCs use software that restricts access to adult sites.
- The level of supervision and rules imposed when children access the Internet at school is very high.
- The level of supervision when children use the Internet at friends' homes is very low.
- Forty-four percent of parents cite access to pornography as the main negative aspect of Internet use among young children.
- Sixty-two percent of parents say they have discussed the potential dangers of Internet use with their child.
- Only a small minority (14%) of children say they have accessed unsuitable material online.
- The vast majority (86%) of parents feel they have primary responsibility for protecting their children online.
- Schools are also considered to have a major role to play in teaching children to behave sensibly online.
- Almost seven in ten parents surveyed would like more information on how to protect their children online.
- Schools and government are regarded as the key information providers.
- Sixty-one percent of parents agree that the positive aspects of Internet use outweigh the negatives.

## Methodology

### **Focus Groups –**

Prior to conducting the quantitative survey, four focus groups were held with parents who had at least two children aged 14 or under who used the Internet. Two groups were conducted in Dublin, one in Cork and one in Ennis. Each group had eight participants with an equal gender and social class mix. Relevant quotes from the focus groups have been used throughout the report to emphasise and humanise the findings.

### **Quantitative Survey –**

This report presents the findings from research carried out by Amárach Consulting. Two household surveys were conducted.

<b>Survey Summary</b>	<b><u>Survey Number 1</u></b>		<b><u>Survey Number 2</u></b>	
	<b>Home Internet Users</b>		<b>Out of Home Internet Users</b>	
<b>Sample Base</b>	10-14 year olds using the internet from home	One parent of each 10-14 year old using the Internet from home	10 – 14 year olds using the internet from a location other than their own home	One parent of each 10-14 year old using the Internet from a location other than their own home
<b>Sample Size</b>	210	210	102	102
<b>Fieldwork</b>	18 <sup>th</sup> June – 13 <sup>th</sup> July, 2001			

### **Survey Number 1**

The first survey was designed to be representative of the number of 10 to 14 year olds using the Internet from home living in the Republic of Ireland. Quota controls were set in terms of age within sex and social class within each region. Weighting was subsequently applied to social class, sex, age, region. These were weighted to the estimated total number of children aged between 10 and 14 years old, using the internet from home, representing 100,000 people according to the most recent forecasts published by the Central Statistics Office (Population and Migration Estimates Release - April 2000, published in September 2000) and data from Amárach Consulting's 'Generation T' report carried out amongst 12 to 14 year olds in April 2001.

The demographic profile of the parents was determined solely on the demographic profile of the 10-14 year old Internet users. The same weightings were applied to the parents as were applied to the children. The only extra demographic quota control imposed on parents was to attain an *approximate* equal gender split.

## **Survey Number 2**

The second survey was designed to be representative of 10-14 year olds living in the Republic of Ireland who use the Internet in any location other than at home. Quota controls were set in terms of age within sex and social class within each region. Weighting was subsequently applied to social class, sex, age, region. These were weighted to the estimated total number of children aged between 10 and 14 years old, using the internet from a location other than their own home, representing 32,000 people according to the most recent forecasts published by the Central Statistics Office (Population and Migration Estimates Release - April 2000, published in September 2000) and data from Amárach Consulting's 'Generation T' report carried out amongst 12 to 14 year olds in April 2001.

*Interviews were carried out firstly with the parents of children in the target population, ensuring the child to be interviewed was not present. The children's interview was then administered, and it was left to parents' own discretion whether they wished to be present while the child was being interviewed. In cases where the parent did wish to be present, the interviewer ensured that the parent did not offer any opinions, views or otherwise become involved in the child's own interview in order to avoid any bias on the child's part.*

## Explanation of Wording

A number of phrases are used throughout the report to help distinguish between the different survey participants.

- **Home access parents** - refers to parents surveyed who have at least one child aged between 10 and 14 who uses the Internet at home.
- **Home access children** – refers to children surveyed aged 10-14 who use the Internet at home. They can also be accessing the Internet from another location.
- **Out of home access parents** – refers to parents surveyed who have at least one child aged between 10 and 14 who uses the Internet anywhere but at home. Their household has no home Internet access.
- **Out of home access children** – refers to children surveyed aged 10-14, who use the Internet in any location other than at home. They have no home Internet access.

*At the start of the survey each parent, if they had more than one child aged between 10 and 14 who used the Internet, were asked to select which child would participate in the survey. Thereafter, when they were asked questions about their child's use of the Internet - they could only refer to the child that was going to participate in the survey and to not any of their other children.*

## OVERVIEW OF CHILDREN'S USE OF THE INTERNET

An estimated 30% of Irish 10-14 year olds use the Internet from any location. This is equivalent to 132,000 young children online.

This section presents a brief overview of where children use the Internet, how often they use it and what they use it for.

### Location of Internet Use

Among children who have home Internet access, 52% of them only use the web at home. Another 38% access it at school and 23% at a friend's house. Among children who do not have home Internet access 70% use the Internet at school and 37% at a friend's house. Almost one in five also use it at a relative's house.

Only a small number of children are using the Internet in "public" locations such as at a local library or an Internet café.

Location of Internet Use	Home access children	Out of home access children
Home	100%	-
School	38%	70%
Friend's house	23%	37%
Relative's house	6%	19%
A library	2%	9%
Internet café	-	3%
Childminder's house	1%	3%
Parent's work	1%	4%
Only at home	52%	-
<i>Base: Home access children (n=210)</i> <i>Base: Out of home access children (n=102)</i> <i>Note: Multiple responses allowed</i>		

### Frequency of Using the Internet

All children were asked how often they used the Internet. Those with home Internet access use the Internet at least twice as often as those who do not have access at home. Many of those who do not have access at home are using the Internet at school and seem to be using it primarily on a weekly basis.

Home access parents were asked how often their children use the Internet at home. Their perceptions of daily use were slightly lower than what their children said. This suggests that some children may be going online while their parents are unaware of it.

Frequency of Accessing the Internet	Home access children	What their parents said...	Out of home access children
Daily	23%	18%	2%
Every 2-3 days	36%	34%	17%
Weekly	26%	32%	50%
About every two weeks	14%	11%	31%
Don't know	-	5%	-
<b>Average number of times per week</b>	<b>2.33</b>	<b>2.95</b>	<b>1</b>
<i>Base: Home access children (n=210)</i> <i>Base: Home access parents (n=210)</i> <i>Base: Out of home access children (n=102)</i>			

### Length of Time Using the Internet

All children were asked when did they first start using the Internet. Those with home access have been using the Internet for an average of 6 months longer than those who use the Internet outside of the home.

Length of time using the Internet	Home access children	Out of home access children
Up to 6 months	17%	25%
7-12 months	31%	37%
1-2 years	26%	25%
2-3 years	9%	6%
3+ years	13%	5%
Don't know	5%	1%
<b>Average number of years</b>	<b>1.61</b>	<b>1.06</b>
<i>Base: Home access children (n=210)</i> <i>Base: Out of home access children (n=102)</i>		

## What do Children do Online?

School projects are the most commonly cited use of the Internet among 10-14 year olds. However after that very clear differences emerge in uses among those who have home access compared to those that don't. Those with home access are using e-mail, playing games and going to chat rooms a lot more than those who use the Internet elsewhere such as school or at a friend's house.

Purposes for which Internet is used	Home access children	What their parents said...	Out of home access children
School projects	55%	52%	58%
To send e-mail	43%	37%	6%
Playing games on my own	43%	36%	14%
To receive e-mail	<b>38%</b>	<b>32%</b>	4%
Homework	33%	33%	20%
Playing games with others	<b>30%</b>	<b>23%</b>	28%
Football/sports sites	22%	19%	14%
To chat with others in chat rooms	<b>21%</b>	<b>12%</b>	5%
Download music	19%	13%	8%
Hobbies	19%	15%	22%
Game cheats	12%	8%	8%
Read magazines online	8%	3%	4%
Listen to the radio	8%	4%	1%
School websites	8%	9%	19%
Information about products or services	7%	11%	15%
Exam revisions	5%	6%	6%
News about TV programmes	4%	2%	6%
Other	6%	5%	8%

*Base: Home access children (n=210)*  
*Base: Parents who's child uses the Internet at home (n=210)*  
*Base: Out of home access children (n=102)*

Home access parents were asked what their child uses the Internet for. Their responses are quite similar to what their children said, suggesting a reasonable level of awareness among home access parents about what their children are doing online. However, a few anomalies are evident. Parent's awareness of their child's use of the Internet for e-mail, chat rooms and playing games with others is significantly lower than what their children said. This strongly suggests that parents are less aware of the "leisure and entertainment" online activities that their children are engaged in than perhaps they should be.

*"My daughter would use it for school but also she's into pop stars and that kind of thing"*  
 – Mother in Cork

## OVERVIEW OF PARENT'S USE OF THE INTERNET

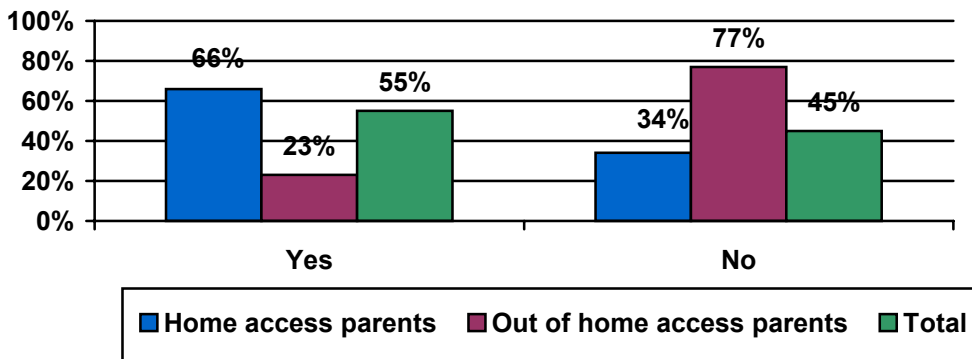
Parent's use of the Internet has a significant impact on their understanding of what their children do online and on their ability to control what their children use the Internet for. This section presents an overview of Internet use among the parents surveyed.

### Mixed Levels of Parental Use of the Internet

Just over half of the parents surveyed said they used the Internet. Use was found to be significantly higher among parents who had home Internet access – 66% were Internet users, compared to only 23% of parents with no home access.

Usage is higher in ABC1 households relative to C2DE and farm households. Usage is also strongly related to the level of education the parents had attained.

**Use of the Internet among parents of Internet using 10-14 year olds**



### Location of Internet use

Almost one in five (19%) of home access parents who use the Internet at work. They are more likely to be fathers, ABC1s, educated to 3<sup>rd</sup> level and to feel that they know more about using the Internet than their children.

The majority of out of home access parents who use the Internet, use it at work. Similar to the home access parents Internet use at work is highest among those in ABC1 households and those educated to third level.

Location of Use	Home access parents	Out of home access parents	All parents
Home	66%	-	50%
Work	19%	16%	18%
Schools/Colleges	2%	1%	1%
Friend's House	2%	4%	2%
Public Library	2%	-	1%
Cyber Cafes	1%	2%	1%
Elsewhere	-	1%	1%
On the move using portable equipment	6%	-	5%

*Base: Home access parents (n=210)*  
*Base: Out of home access parents (n=102)*

### Frequency of Accessing the Internet

Parents of home Internet-using children were asked how often they used the Internet. The level of frequency was high with over half using the Internet at least every 2-3 days. This suggests a high level of familiarity with the Internet among the majority of Internet-using home access parents.

Among parents who do not have home Internet access, but who use it somewhere else, the frequency of going online was considerably lower.

Frequency of usage was found to be strongly related to the parent's own perception of their Internet knowledge. Those most confident of their knowledge of the Internet tended to be the most frequent Internet users.

Frequency of Accessing the Internet	Home access parents	Out of home access parents
Daily	31%	14%
Every 2-3 days	29%	9%
Weekly	20%	25%
Fortnightly	2%	6%
Monthly	8%	16%
Less often than monthly	10%	29%
<b>Average number of times per week</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>1.67</b>
<i>Base: All Internet-using home access parents (n=138)</i>		
<i>Base: All Internet-using out of home access parents (n=27)</i>		

### Length of Time Using the Internet

All parents who use the Internet were asked how long had they being going online. Parents with home Internet access have been using the Internet slightly longer than those without home access.

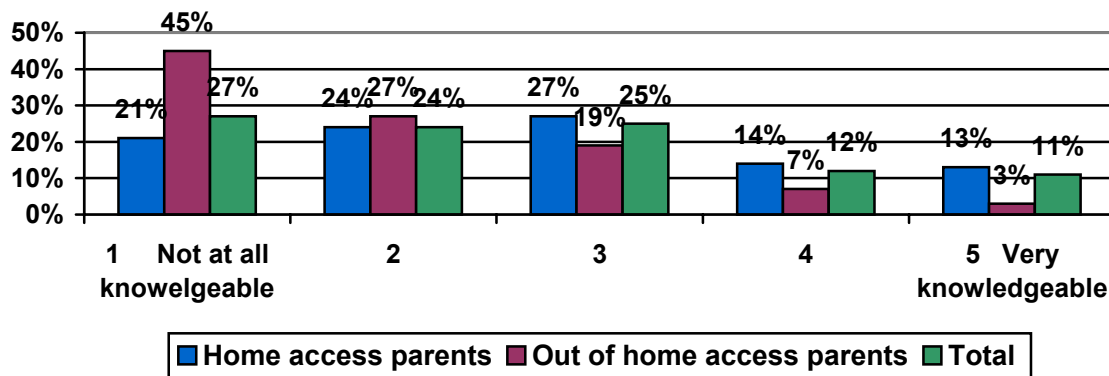
Length of Time Using the Internet	Home access parents	Out of home access parents
Up to 6 months	11%	13%
7-12 months	23%	23%
1-2 years	30%	35%
2-3 years	15%	19%
3-4 years	9%	-
4-5 years	3%	5%
5 years +	8%	3%
<b>Average</b>	<b>1.98</b>	<b>1.66</b>
<i>Base: All Internet-using parents of 10-14 year old home Internet users (n=138)</i>		
<i>Base: All Internet-using parents of 10-14 year old out of home Internet users (n=27)</i>		

### Parent's Knowledge of the Internet

All parents were asked to rate their own knowledge of the Internet i.e. their overall ability to use the Internet. They were asked to give their rating on a 5-point scale, where 1 equals not at all knowledgeable and 5 equals very knowledgeable. The graph below presents the findings of parents who have home Internet access, those that don't and a total column representing both parent groups.

*"The older kids help me use the Internet, I haven't much of a clue"*  
 – Mother in Cork

**Parents rating of their own knowledge of the Internet**



The most confident parents are those who use the Internet, in particular those who use the Internet at work. Among parents with home access, their perception of their ability to use the Internet had little impact on whether they set rules for their child's use of the Internet or if they ever discussed the dangers of Internet use with their child. However, among parents who did not have home access, their knowledge of the Internet had a significant impact on whether they set rules for their child's use of the Internet or whether they spoke to their children about the potential dangers of Internet use.

*"My 10 year old is teaching his grandmother who is 64."*  
 – Mother in Cork

**Implication:**

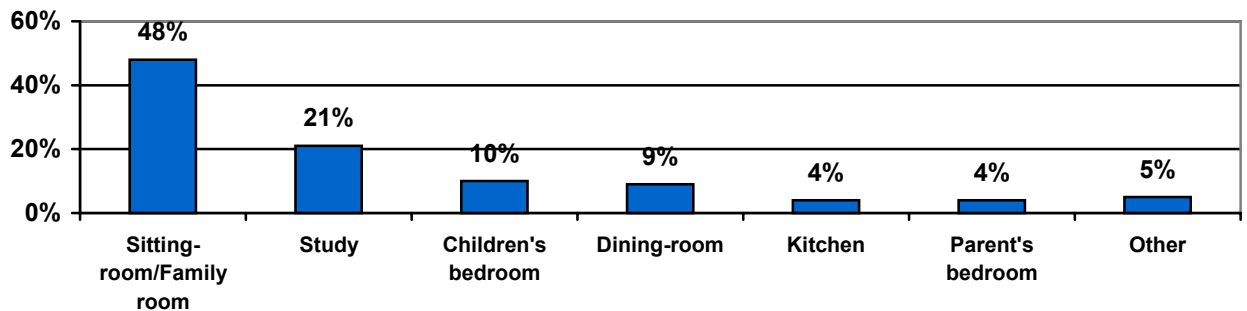
- Parents who use the Internet have a real advantage over those that do not, in terms of their ability to control and monitor what their children do online. Parents should be encouraged to learn more about the Internet both as a benefit to themselves and as a means of being able to monitor their children when they use the Internet.

## HOME INTERNET USE

### Location of Home PC

Where a home PC is located has clear implications for the ability of parents to monitor what their children are doing online. If a PC is located in a communal area of the home, for example in a family room, the opportunities for parents to communicate and discuss with their children what they are doing online are far greater than if the PC is in the child's bedroom or in another isolated area of the home.

**Location of PC in the home**



A slight majority of home PCs are kept in “communal” areas, such as a family-room, kitchen or sitting room. About one in five are used in a study and one in 10 are in children's bedrooms. A PC being left in a child's bedroom was most evident in households where the parents are not Internet users. These are the very parents who need to learn more about the Internet and have a better understanding about what their child does online.

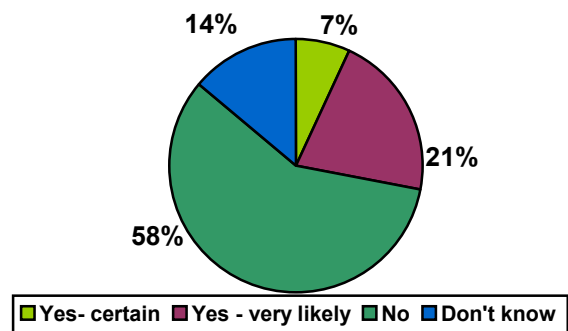
*“I keep a sharp eye on them, that's why I have it in the main room”*  
– Mother in Ennis

### Intention to Get a Home PC

Parents who do not have home Internet access were asked whether they intended to get it within the next 12 months.

Just over three in ten (31%) said they were certain to or likely to. A further 14% said they did not know. Interest in getting home Internet access was highest in ABC1 households, among parents who are using the Internet elsewhere and among those already knowledgeable about the Internet.

**Intention to get home Internet access within the next 12 months**



### Children's Educational Needs Drive Demand for Home Internet Access

All parents with home Internet access were asked why they got it. Just over one in four (26%) said that their main reason for getting home Internet access was for educational purposes for their children. A further 17% said that pressure from children was their main motivator.

Parents' own interest in using the Internet also plays a significant role. Over one in five said they got home access for their own educational or work needs. This was more common among fathers rather than mothers.

*"All education is focused around computers and technology nowadays. You have to have the Internet to help the children keep up"*  
 – Father in Cork

*"I'm constantly being asked when are we getting a computer and being told that everyone else has one."*  
 - Mother in Dublin

Parents who intend to get home Internet access in the next 12 months were asked why they planned to get it. Parents' own educational needs came slightly ahead of their children's needs. A significant minority also noted pressure from their children as the main motivator.

Main reason for having/intending to get Internet access at home	Parents who have Internet access	Parents who intend to get Internet access
For educational purposes for children	26%	20%
To seek information	17%	18%
Pressure from children	17%	16%
For educational purposes for myself	13%	27%
In order to work from home	8%	5%
It is now so cheap to access the Internet	4%	4%
A lot of people I know are on the Internet and I want to keep in touch	4%	2%
As a source of entertainment	2%	9%
My employer is providing me with Internet access	2%	-
To shop online	2%	-
Other	4%	-
Don't know	1%	-
<i>Base: Home access parents (n=210)</i> <i>Base: Out of home access parents (n=32)</i>		

### Barriers to Getting Home Internet Access

Parents who are not intending to get home Internet access in the next 12 months were asked why not. Almost half (47%) said they had no use for it or saw it as irrelevant. About four in ten said that it was too expensive and that they could not afford it. Just over one in five said they were concerned about their children's safety online.

Main reason for not intending to get Internet access at home	%
Have no use for it/see it as irrelevant	47%
It is too expensive/cannot afford to	41%
Concerned about children's safety online	22%
Can use the Internet in work/school/college	16%
Don't know anything about the Internet	14%
Have a computer but do not have a modem	9%
Would need to upgrade computer	6%
Not my decision	1%
Other	5%
<i>Base: All out of home access parents who are not intending to get home Internet access in the next 12 months (n=70)</i>	

#### **Implications:**

- Parents' awareness of the importance of keeping an Internet-enabled PC in a communal area needs to be raised. Keeping Internet access confined to communal areas should help all family members learn more about the Internet and will increase the likelihood of family members having open discussions about their online activities.
- Concern about children's safety online is preventing a significant minority of parents from getting home Internet access. They need to be made aware of the ways in which children can use the Internet in a productive and safe manner, to ensure that parents are not unnecessarily discouraged from getting home Internet access.

## RULES GOVERNING HOME INTERNET USE

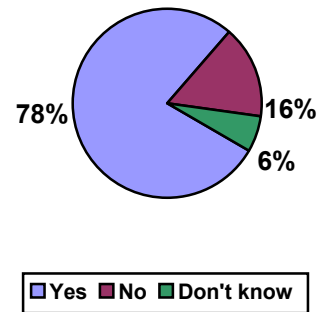
### High Use of Rules Governing Children's Home Internet Use

Almost eight in ten (78%) of parents said they had rules for their child when they access the Internet at home.

Rules were least prevalent among farm households and among parents who consider that their children know a lot more about the Internet than they do.

The table below presents the rules that are set by parents of home Internet using children. The two most commonly cited rules are practical, relating to the amount of time spent online and the time of day that the Internet may be accessed.

Use of rules when child uses the Internet at home



Rules governing children's use of the Internet	What the parents said	What the children said
The amount of time spent online is limited	90%	88%
The time of day or night that the child uses the Internet is specified	86%	79%
Can only visit specific websites authorised by a parent/adult	<b>82%</b>	<b>56%</b>
Can only use the Internet at home	69%	63%
Cannot use the Internet with friends in the house when an adult is not around	<b>59%</b>	<b>49%</b>
An adult is always present when the child accesses the Internet	52%	64%
Access to the PC is password protected	<b>50%</b>	<b>40%</b>
Can only go online for homework or school projects	45%	41%
<i>Base: All home access parents who impose rules on Internet use (n=163)</i>		
<i>Base: All home access children whose parents said they imposed rules on Internet use (n=163)</i>		

Just over eight in ten restrict the websites visited to those only authorized by a parent or another adult. About half allow their children to use the Internet only when an adult is present. This is most evident among households with 10 or 11 year olds and where the parents feel they know more about the Internet than their child does. Once again, this suggests that the parents with the highest level of Internet knowledge are best placed to supervise online activities. The parents who ensure that their child's use is supervised at home are also the group who are most concerned about their child accessing the Internet unsupervised outside of the home.

It is interesting to note that the children's perceptions of rules imposed are similar to what their parents said. However, some inconsistencies are evident. Eighty-two percent of parents say their children can only visit websites they authorize, while only 56% of children seem to be aware of this rule. Similarly 50% of parents say that access to the home PC is password protected, yet only 40% of children say it is. Sixty-three percent of the children said that they can only use the Internet at home, but in fact many of them also access it at school or at a friend's home. This suggests that many rules are not being followed through on or being effectively enforced.

***Implications:***

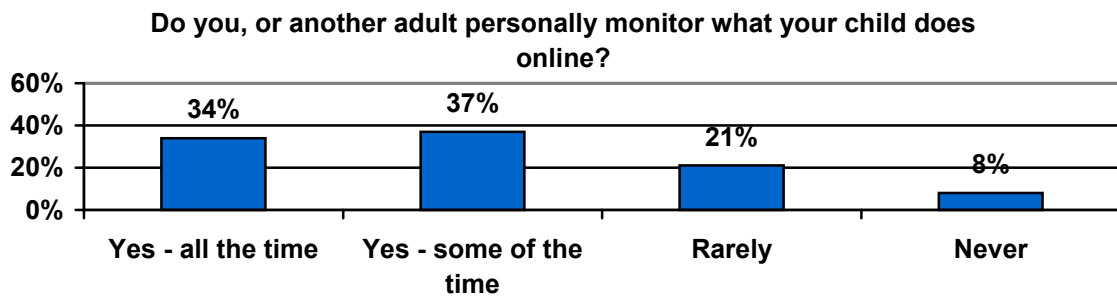
- Many parents need more guidance on the type of rules they should have in place for their children when they access the Internet.
- Parents should also be encouraged to broaden the range of rules they use and use best efforts to ensure that they are enforced.

## ADULT MONITORING OF HOME INTERNET USE

Adult monitoring of children while they are online is key to understanding what the children are doing and to ensure that they are not being exposed to unsuitable or harmful material.

*"I check the history button and I can tell where they've been."*  
- Mother in Cork

Parents were asked if they, or another adult in their home, personally monitored what their child does online, for example looking at what websites are visited, checking history files, checking phone bills. About a third (34%) said that this was done all the time, a further 37% said some of the time. Three in ten said rarely or never.



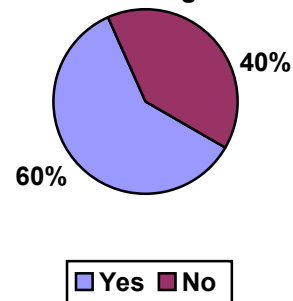
Parents who are not monitoring what their child does online are more likely to be in C2DE households and have little confidence in their knowledge of the Internet. They are also less likely to have discussed the potential dangers of the Internet with their child and be less concerned about their child accessing the Internet unsupervised outside of the home.

*"I let mine do their own thing. They would tell me to get lost"*  
- Father in Ennis

### Children's Use of the Internet on their Own

Just over half (51%) of all children who use the Internet at home say they are allowed to go online when they are on their own. This is most evident among 13-14 year olds and those in post-primary education. It is also most prevalent among children who say they know a lot more about the Internet than their parents do and among those who visit chat rooms.

**When you use the Internet at home is there usually someone else in the room with you who keeps an eye on what you are doing?**



This finding supports the argument that parental knowledge of the Internet is key to raising the level of supervision imposed on children going online.

Six in ten children say that someone keeps an eye on what they are doing when they access the Internet at home. Those who are left unsupervised are more likely to be those aged 13-14, those in post-primary education, those who know more about

*"I would be told it's very uncool to stay in their room, so I have to trust them that they are not up to anything they are not supposed to"*  
- Mother in Ennis

*“I am out on a Saturday night, the best way to find out if they are on the Internet is to ring the house and if the phone is engaged for an hour you know they are on it.”*  
 – Mother in Dublin

using the Internet than their parents do. Lack of supervision is also more evident among children who visit chat rooms and among those who have not been spoken to about Internet safety.

### Mother Most Likely to Supervise

Children who usually have someone in the room with them when they go online were asked who that person usually is. Mum was the most frequently cited person. One in four said Dad, and one in ten said brothers or sisters.

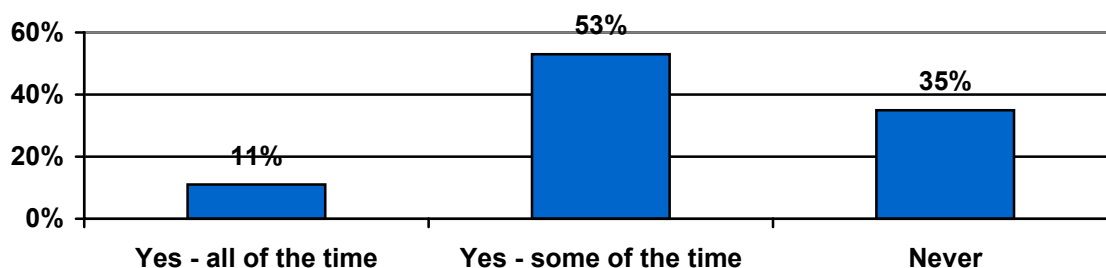
Who is usually in the room	%
Mum	61%
Dad	25%
Brothers/sisters	10%
Friends	1%
Other relatives	2%
Don't know	1%

*Base: All home access children who are usually supervised while online (n=126)*

Home Internet using children were then asked whether someone actually sits down and uses the Internet with them. About one in ten said all of the time, about half said some of the time and just over a third said never.

Thirty-four percent of parents say they do monitor what their children do online yet only one in ten children say that someone actually sits down and uses the Internet with them.

### When you use the Internet at home does someone actually sit down and use the Internet with you?



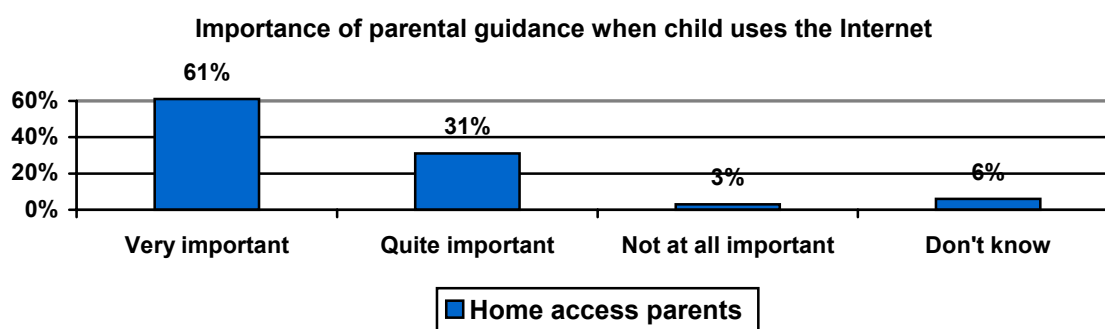
Who uses the Internet with you	%
Mum	56%
Dad	24%
Brothers/sisters	16%
Friends	4%

*Base: All home access children who use the Internet with someone else (n=137)*

Once again, Mum was cited as the person having the most involvement in their children's Internet use. Their likelihood of being actively involved was double the likelihood of a father being involved.

### Importance of Parental Guidance

Home access parents were asked specifically about the importance of parental guidance when their child uses the Internet. Six in ten felt it was very important and 31% considered it be quite important. Parents who consider themselves to be knowledgeable of the Internet were more likely to say that parental guidance is very important, when compared to parents who say they do not know much about the Internet.



#### ***Implications:***

- Parents need to be informed of simple ways they can monitor their children's Internet use, such as checking history files.
- Fathers in particular should be encouraged to play a greater role in their child's Internet activities. At its most basic, fathers do tend to know more about the Internet than mothers and are therefore best placed to monitor online activities.

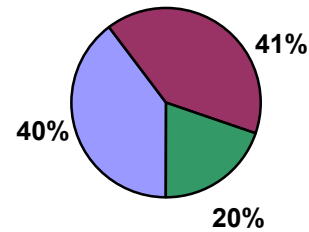
## PASSWORD PROTECTING PCs

Password protecting a PC is a simple way of controlling access to the Internet.

Children who use the Internet at home were asked if their PC is password protected to stop them using the Internet when they are on their own. Four in ten said it was. They were more likely to be in ABC1 households, where levels of adult supervision of the Internet is high and where parents tend to know more about the Internet than their children.

*"We put a password on our PC but our son figured out how to change it"*  
– Mother in Dublin

**Is your home PC password protected to stop you accessing the Internet when you are on your own?**



■ Yes ■ No ■ Don't know

However, among the children who have a password protected PC, almost a third (31%) said they knew the password. This clearly negates any effectiveness of having a password. Those who said they knew the password were more likely to be responding without a parent present in the room. This suggests that knowledge of passwords could in fact be considerably higher.

*"I personally don't know enough about protection and that's why I use a password – it's all I know how to do."*  
– Father in Dublin

### **Implication:**

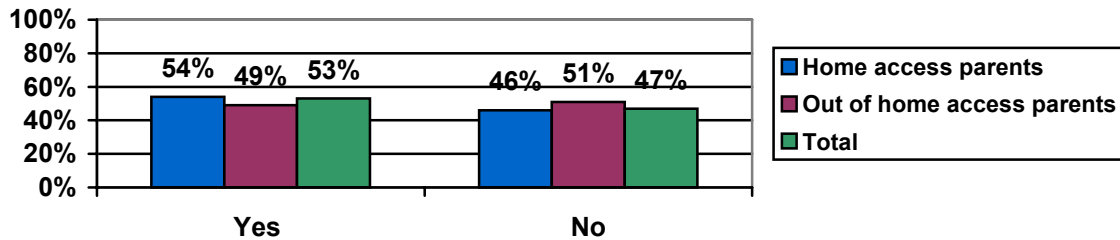
- Password protecting Internet access is a practical way of ensuring that young children do not access the Internet when an adult is not present. However, for this to be effective, parents have to ensure that the children do not find out what that password is and that the children are unable to change it without their parents finding out.

**PROTECTIVE SOFTWARE**

A range of questions were asked about the awareness and use of software, such as Net Nanny, which can block access to websites that may be considered harmful if accessed by young users.

About half of the parents surveyed said they were aware of such software. Awareness was slightly higher among home access parents, ABC1s, and Internet users. Awareness was also higher among parents who set rules for their children when they access the Internet and among those who have discussed the potential dangers of Internet use with their children.

**Are you aware of software, such as Net Nanny, which can be put on PCs to restrict access to adult sites?**

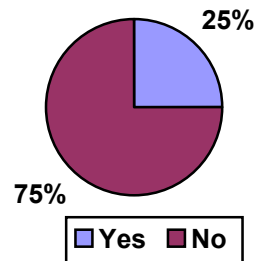


**Use of Restrictive Software**

Despite the reasonably high levels of awareness only one in four home access parents have installed software on their PC, such as Net Nanny, to limit access to “adult” websites.

When the children were asked if such software was on their home PC, 21% said it was – eighty-five percent of which tallied with their parents answers. Almost one in ten of the children who said no or don’t know have protective software according to their parents.

**Do you use restrictive software on your home PC?**

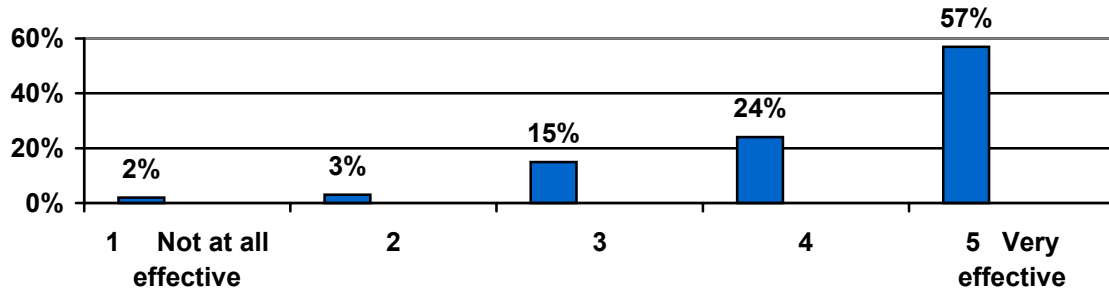


*“I know you can lock off certain sites. But you’d have to know the sites you were looking for to lock off .I just don’t know enough about it ”*  
- Mother in Dublin

### Effectiveness of Software

Parents who use software were asked to rate its effectiveness, using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 equals not at all effective and 5 equals very effective. The vast majority (82%) considered the software effective, awarding a rating of at least 4 out of 5.

Parents' rating of effectiveness of protective software



Parents who have installed software are more likely to have discussed the dangers of Internet use with their children. Those who believe the software to be very effective are less likely to be concerned that their children might access harmful material on the Internet.

*“Software information needs to be highlighted by the companies that sell you the access. It’s hard to find out about it when I know so little about the Internet”*  
- Father in Dublin

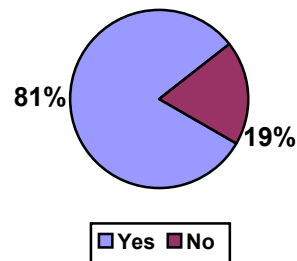
This suggests that using the software does give parents a certain degree of confidence and comfort. However, given that many of the children know more about using the Internet than their parents, how effective can the software really be if children are able to bypass it?

### Interest in Using Protective Software

Among those parents who do not currently use protective software, 81% say they would be interested in using software that blocked access to “adult” sites.

Interest in using software was highest among parents who do not currently impose any rules on their child concerning Internet access.

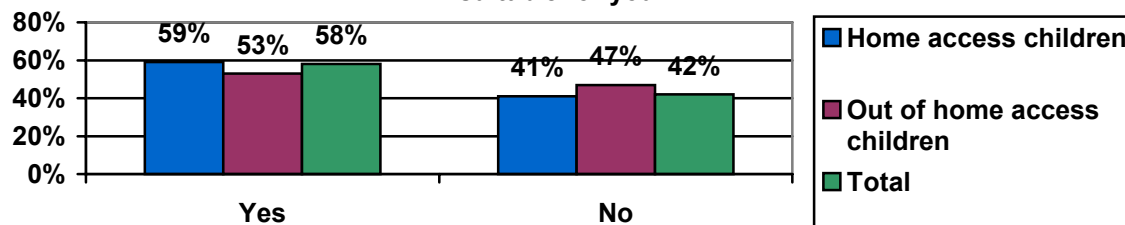
Interest in using restrictive software on home PC



### Children's Awareness of Software

Children were also asked about their awareness of software. A slight majority were aware of it. Those aware were more likely to be using the Internet at school, know a lot more about the Internet than their parents and were more likely to be allowed use the Internet on their own.

**Have you heard of software that can be put on a computer to protect you from seeing something or reading something that might not be suitable for you?**



#### **Implications:**

- If more parents were made aware of the software options that are available to them to restrict access to "adult" sites, use of such software is likely to rise significantly.
- The ease with which the software can be installed should be clarified so as not to put-off less Internet-savvy parents.
- In addition, there could be a good sales opportunity for ISPs and PC retailers to actively market and sell protective software when they are selling home PCs or setting up home Internet access.

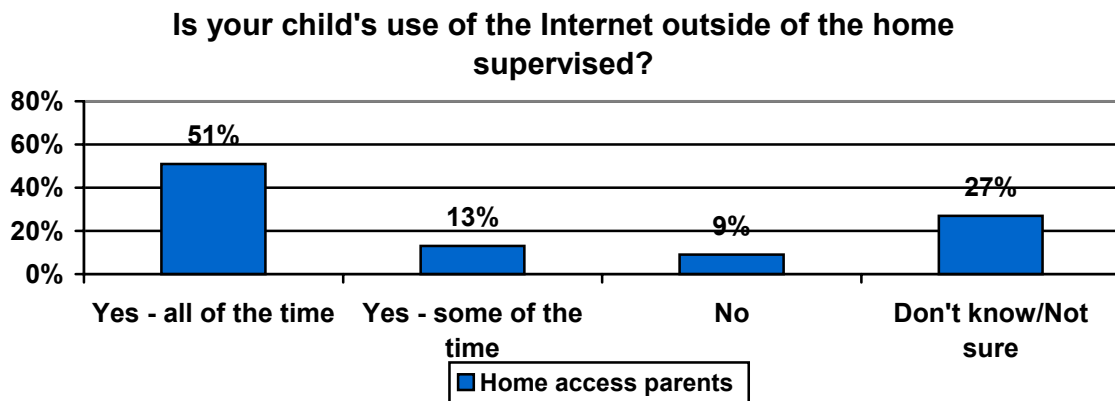
## OUT OF HOME INTERNET ACCESS

Parents, whose children use the Internet at home, were asked if their children access the Internet outside of the home. The table below presents the parents' answers against the children's responses. The responses are very similar and suggest that the vast majority of home access parents are aware of where their children are using the Internet outside of the home.

Location of Use	What the parents say	What the children say
School	41%	38%
Friend's House	20%	23%
Relative's house	-	6%
On the move using portable equipment	5%	-
Public Library	4%	2%
Cyber Cafes	2%	-
Work	1%	2%
Elsewhere	3%	-
<i>Base: All home access parents (n=210)</i> <i>Base: All home access children (n=210)</i> <i>Note: Multiple responses allowed</i>		

### Supervision Outside of the Home

All home access parents were asked if their child's use of the Internet outside of the home was supervised. Half (51%) thought that it was always supervised and 13% thought at least some of time they were supervised. Almost three in ten said they were unsure whether their child was supervised or not.

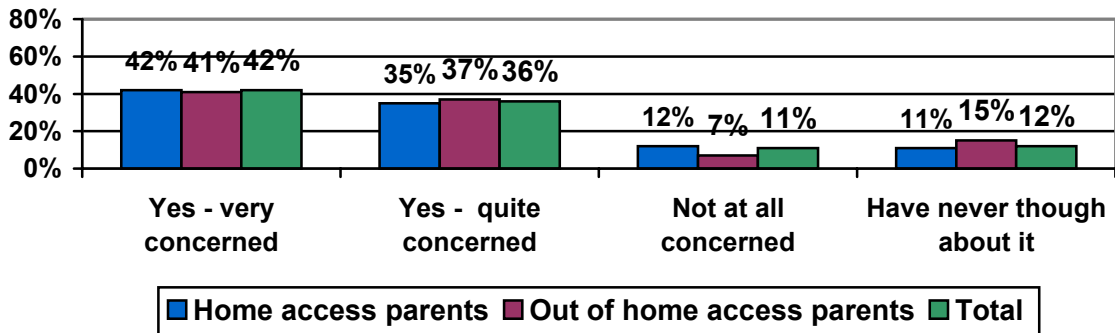


**Concern With Unsupervised Access**

All parents were asked if they would be concerned if their child was accessing the Internet unsupervised outside of the home. Almost eight in ten (76%) said they would be very, or quite concerned. Only about one in ten said they would be unconcerned and a similar number said they had never thought about it.

Parents seemed to be slightly more concerned about girls accessing the Internet unsupervised rather than boys. The parents who appeared to be most concerned were those who set rules for their children for when they go online and those who have discussed the potential dangers of Internet use with their children. This suggests that concern is highest among the most conscientious parents who have already made efforts to ensure that their child’s use of the Internet is safe.

**Would you be concerned if your child was accessing the Internet unsupervised outside of the home?**



**Implication:**

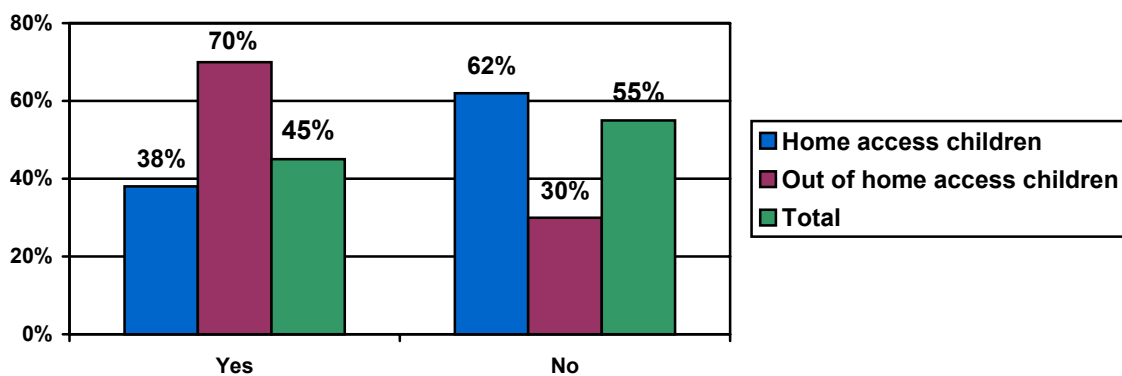
- Many parents would be concerned if their children used the Internet outside of home unsupervised by an adult. All those who provide Internet access to children in places such as public libraries and schools should try and ensure that an adult does monitor young people’s online activities and have safeguards in place to ensure that children are not able to access “adult” websites. In situations where there is adult supervision, this should be communicated to parents to ensure that they are not worrying unnecessarily.

## ACCESSING THE INTERNET AT SCHOOL

An estimated 60,000 10-14 year olds use the Internet at school. Amárach asked a number of questions concerning the level of supervision and rules in place when the Internet is accessed at school.

Use of the Internet at school is significantly higher among those who do not have home access. This suggests that there is a reliance on school Internet access among those who do not have home Internet access.

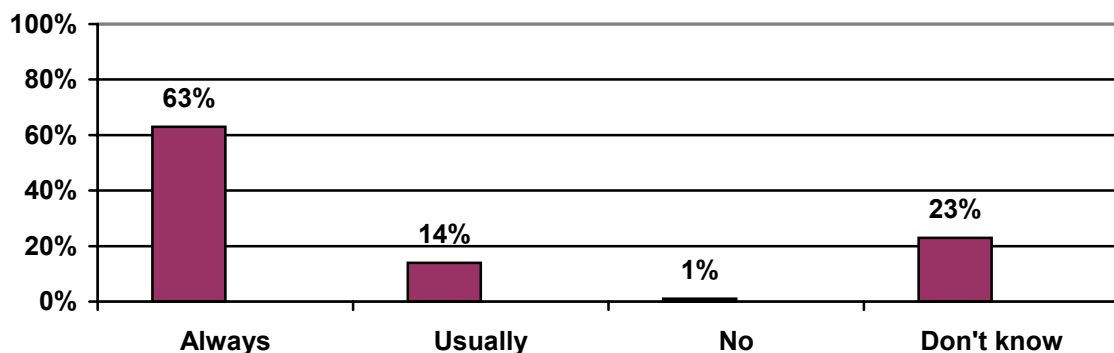
### Do you use the Internet at school?



### Supervision of Internet Use in Schools

Out of home access parents were asked if their child's use of the Internet in school is supervised. Over six in ten (63%) said that it was always supervised, 14% said usually and 23% did not know.

### Is your child's use of the Internet at school supervised by a teacher?

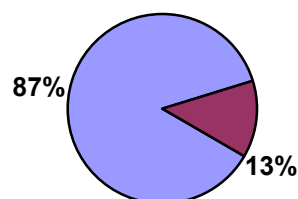


Fathers were less likely to be aware of the level of supervision than mothers. Among those who said don't know many of them had never thought about being concerned with their child accessing the Internet unsupervised. However, among those who said their child's use of the Internet was always or usually supervised, 46% of them simply assumed that it is supervised and were not sure.

Parents' perceptions of the level of supervision in schools is, in fact, less than what their children say. Eighty-seven percent of out of home access children said that there was always a teacher present when they used the Internet at school.

Only 11% say they are allowed to use the Internet when a teacher is not present.

### When you use the Internet at school, is there a teacher there?



■ Yes - all of the time ■ Yes - some of the time

### Rules Governing Internet Use in Schools

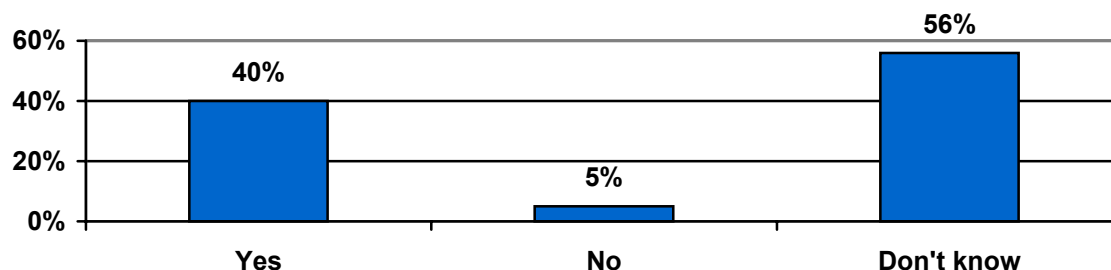
The survey findings suggest that there is a very high level of rules imposed on children when they use the Internet at school. Almost all are restricted in the amount of time they spend online. The vast majority (85%) are told which websites they can visit and almost seven in ten can only use the Internet for homework or school projects.

Rules governing children's use of the Internet at school	%
You can only use the Internet at particular times of the day or during particular days of the week	96%
You are only allowed to spend a limited amount of time on the Internet	93%
A teacher is always around when you use the Internet	91%
A teacher tells you exactly what websites you visit	85%
Can only go online for homework or school projects	71%
<i>Base: All out of home access children who use the Internet at school (n=68)</i>	

### Use of Protective Software in Schools

Four in ten children say that their school PCs have software to protect them from looking at something that might be considered unsuitable for them. Almost six in ten (56%) said they did not know.

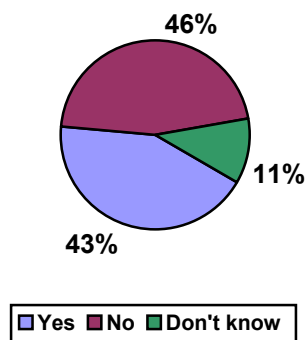
#### Is there software on your school PCs to protect you from looking at something that might be unsuitable for you?



### Schools Communicating with Parents

Out of home access parents whose children use the Internet at school were asked if they had received communication from their child's school in relation to their policy on children using the Internet in school. Forty-three percent said they had received communication, 46% said they had not and 11% were unsure.

School communicating with parents on their Internet access policy?



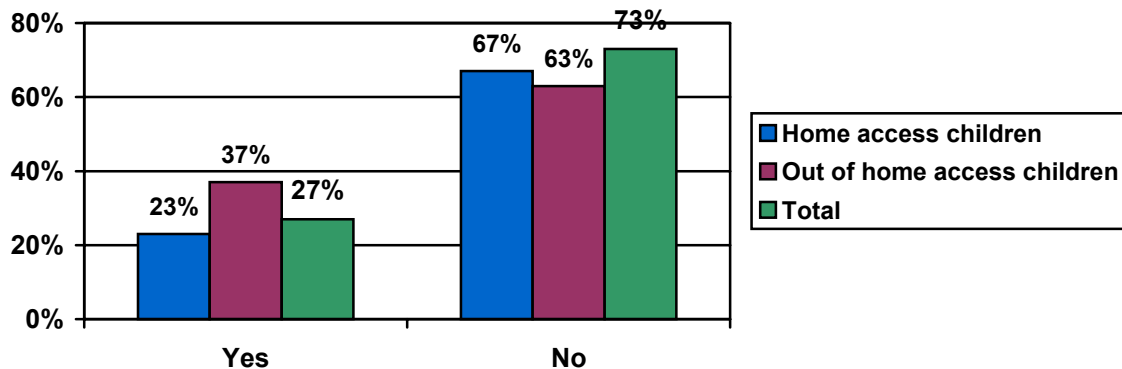
#### ***Implication:***

- Schools need little additional information on how to protect children when they access the Internet at school. However, schools should be encouraged to communicate with parents regarding what safeguards are in place when their child uses the Internet. This is likely to put parents at ease and prevent them being unnecessarily concerned.

## ACCESSING THE INTERNET AT A FRIEND'S HOME

An estimated 26,500 10-14 year old children access the Internet at a friend's home. Children who do not have Internet access at home are significantly more likely to be logging at a friend's house.

### Do you use the Internet at a friend's home?



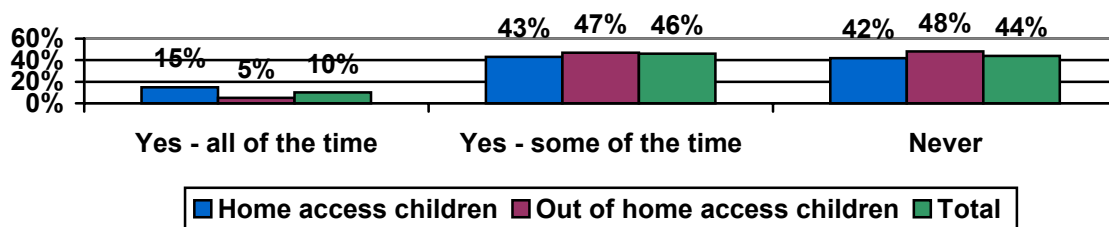
Those using the Internet at a friend's house are almost twice as likely to be visiting chat rooms. This suggests that when young people get together unsupervised, their interest in, and opportunity for exploring the online world increases.

*"You don't want them going home to their parents and saying they were looking up whatever on your computer. I'd feel responsible."*  
- Mother in Dublin

### Lack of Adult Supervision

When children use the Internet at a friend's home the level of adult supervision is low. Nearly half of the children surveyed say that they are never supervised when they access the Internet at a friend's house. This is particularly evident among children who have not been spoken to by their parents about the potential dangers of Internet use. Those not supervised at a friend's house are also more likely to be not supervised at home either.

### When you use the Internet at a friend's house does an adult supervise you?



*"You never really know what goes on when they're at friends' houses. You just hope really"*  
- Mother in Ennis

### Mothers Most Likely to be Supervising

All those who are supervised either some of the time or all of the time, were asked who it was that supervised them. A friend's mother was the person most frequently cited. This was followed by friend's brothers or sisters. Only a small minority were supervised by their friend's father.

Who supervises you when you use the Internet at a friends house?	Home access children	Out of home access children	Total
Friend's mother	81%	62%	75%
Friend's brothers/sisters	24%	34%	25%
Friend's father	19%	10%	20%
Other	-	9%	5%

*Base: Home access children who are supervised at a friends home (n=30)*  
*Base: Out of home access children who are supervised at a friends home (n=18)*  
*Note: Multiple responses allowed*

Given that a significant number of children are able to use the Internet at a friend's house totally unsupervised by an adult suggests that a number of them could be in potentially vulnerable positions. Children are more likely to be adventurous and thrill seeking when they are online with friends than when they are on their own. If anything, supervision when children are together should be even higher than when they go online alone. Parents should try and agree on shared rules and responsibilities when children and friends are using the Internet. An open discussion about it will be the best way of ensuring that parents are aware of the potential hazards.

*"You can't control it. You are relying on other parents having the same standards as you."*  
 - Mother in Dublin

#### **Implication:**

- Parents should be encouraged to discuss with other parents the rules they have in place governing their own children's Internet access. This should help clarify what their children are permitted to do if they access the Internet at a friend's home.

## CHAT ROOMS

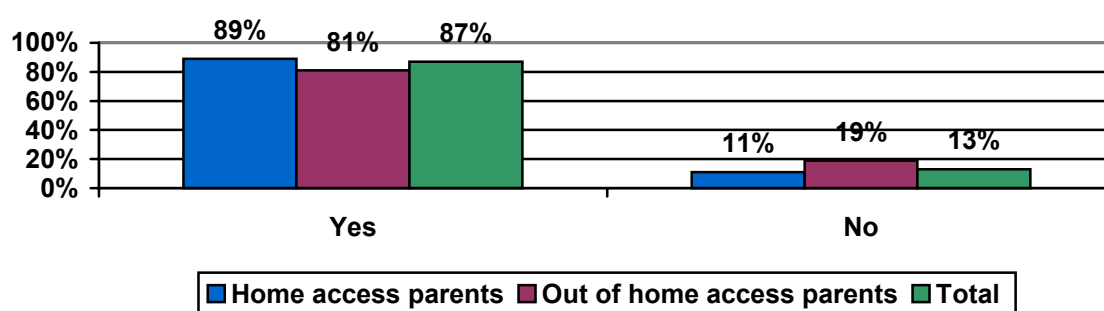
### High Level of Awareness of Chat Rooms

The vast majority of parents said they were aware of online chat rooms. Some of the survey was conducted while a chat room storyline was running in a popular soap opera, Coronation Street. It is likely that this had some impact on raising awareness levels.

*“Kids don’t know if they’re talking to a 12 year old or a 40 year old. It’s frightening.”*  
- Father in Cork

Those not aware of chat rooms were more likely not to have discussed the dangers of Internet use with their children when compared to those aware of chat rooms. They were also likely to be more trusting of their children’s online behaviour.

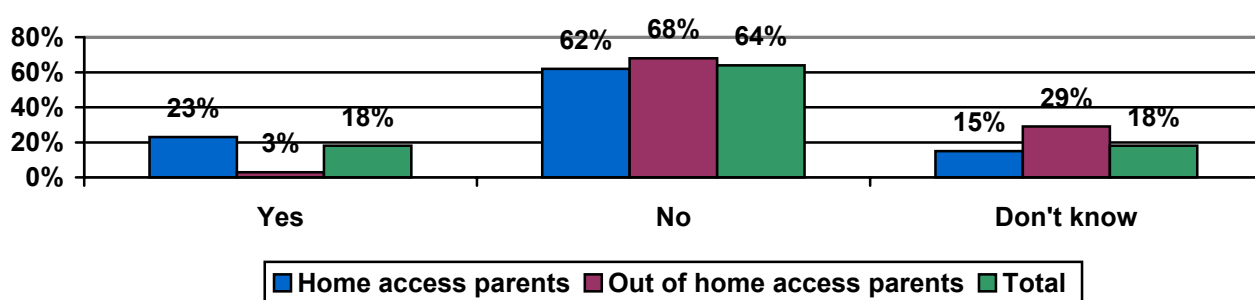
**Awareness of chat rooms**



### Chat Room Use

When asked whether their children ever visited chat rooms 23% of home access parents said yes, while 35% of their children said yes. The level of knowledge among out of home access parents was similarly low – 3% said that their children visited chat rooms, while 13% of the children said they did.

**Does your child visit chat rooms?**

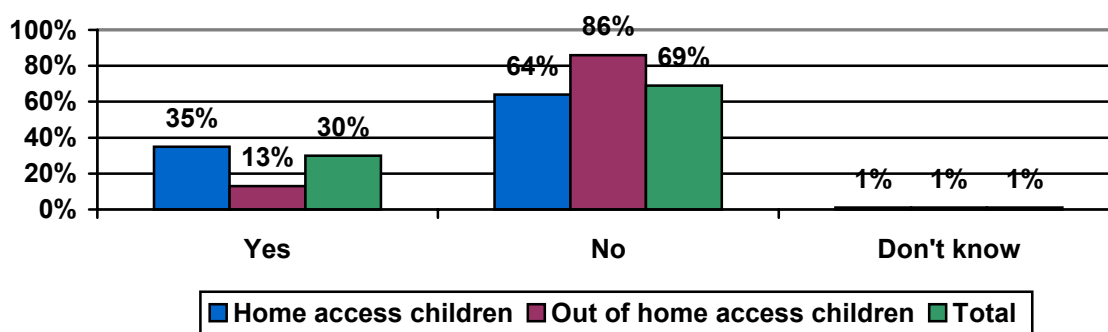


Those who said don’t know were more likely not to have any rules for their child’s use of the Internet, and to be least concerned about their children accessing the Internet unsupervised outside of the home. This suggests that parents who are not overly familiar with what their children do online are the least concerned about the potential dangers of Internet use and the least likely to impose usage rules.

*“My kids use chat rooms. They give false names and chat away. I haven’t really thought about it being dangerous”*  
- Father in Ennis

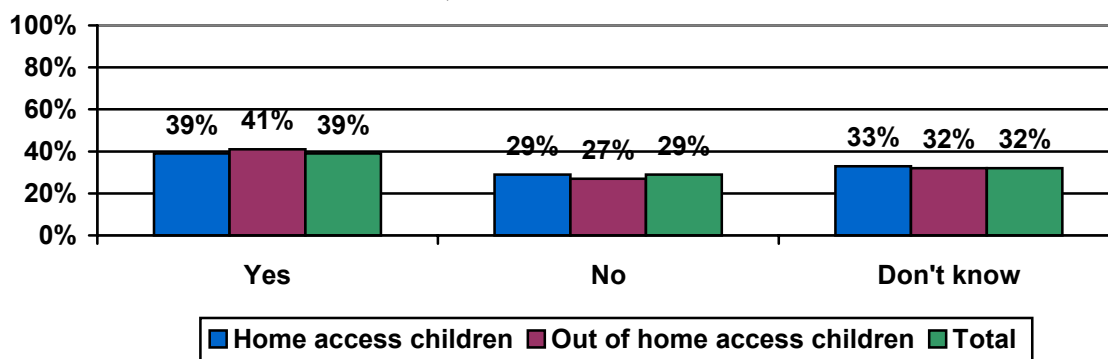
Over a third of home access children and 13% of out of home access children said they had visited a chat room. Those with home access do appear to have more freedom online than those who use the Internet elsewhere. Chat rooms appeared to be frequented by older children (13 and 14 year olds) more so than 10 to 12 year olds. Among home access children, those visiting chat rooms were more likely to be allowed use the Internet unsupervised. Acknowledgement of chat room use was quite a bit higher among children who were responding to the questionnaire without a parent present in the room. This suggests that the numbers visiting chat rooms could in fact be higher.

**Have you ever visited a chat room?**



Amárach also asked children whether any of their friends, or other people they know, for example, people in their class, visit chat rooms. Many did. This suggests that perhaps some of the children were not being entirely honest about whether they visited chat rooms. It is unlikely that so many would know others doing it without actually having tried it out themselves.

**Do any of your friends or other people you know in, for example your class, visit online chat rooms?**



### Frequency of Visiting Chat Rooms

Children who access chat rooms were asked how often they visit them. Those with home Internet access are visiting chat rooms a lot more than those without home access. Home access children use the Internet more frequently than their counterparts who only use the Internet outside of the home. This once again emphasises the higher level of freedom enjoyed by those accessing the Internet at home. The frequency of visiting chat rooms was significantly higher among those children who responded while their parents were not present. This suggests that a number of them may be visiting chat rooms more often than they are prepared to admit to in front of a parent.

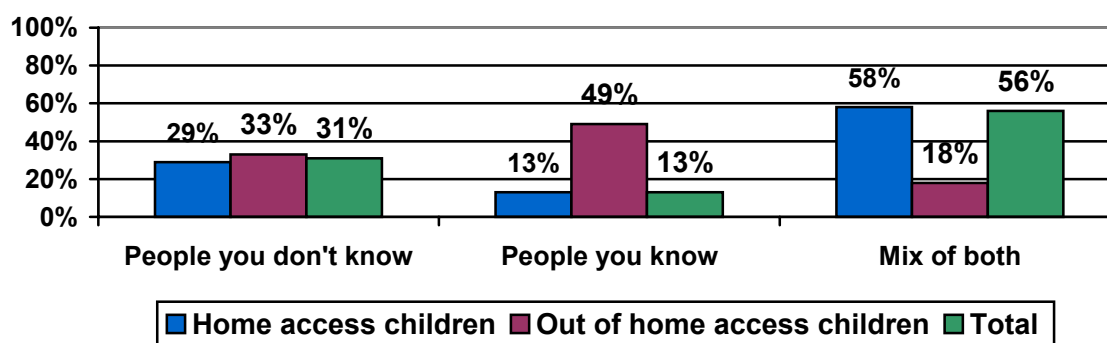
Frequency of visiting chat rooms	Home access children	Out of home access children
Daily	2%	-
More than once a week	20%	-
Once a week	23%	6%
2-3 times a month	17%	14%
Once a month	4%	23%
Once every 2-3 months	8%	39%
Less than once every 3 months	23%	18%
<b>Average number of times per week</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>0.3</b>
<i>Base: All home access children who visit chat rooms (n=71)</i>		
<i>Base: All out of home access children who visit chat rooms (n=13)</i>		

### Who do they Chat to?

In order to get a better understanding of what goes on in chat rooms, Amárach asked those who visit chat rooms a number of probing questions.

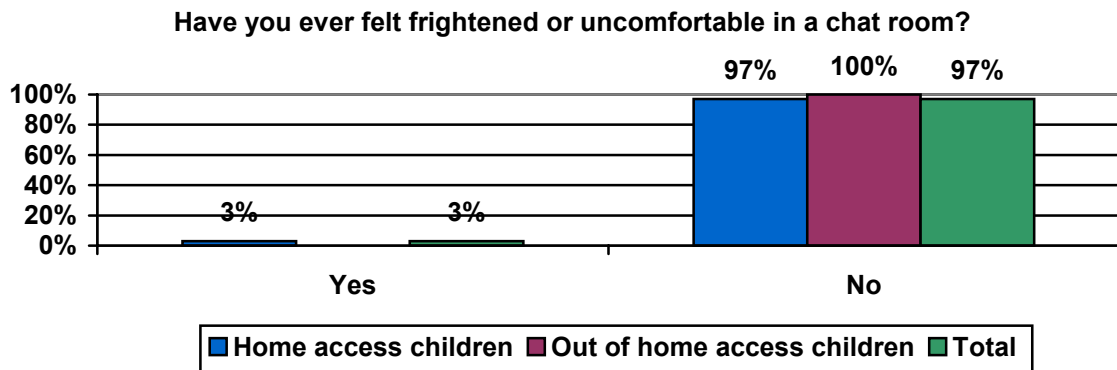
The children were asked who they chat to online. Most talk to a mix of people they know and people they don't know. About three in ten communicate exclusively with people they don't know.

#### Do you chat to people you already know or to people you don't know?



### Evidence of Children Feeling Vulnerable

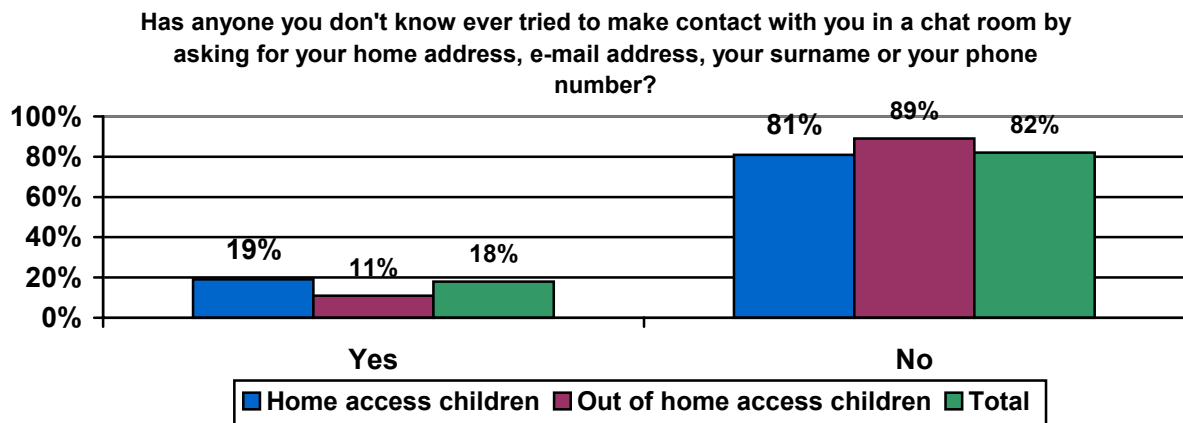
There is little evidence to suggest that a large number of children who use chat rooms have been in situations where they have felt frightened or uncomfortable. Only a very small percentage (3%) said they had ever felt frightened or uncomfortable in a chat room.



However, almost one in five said that someone they did not know had tried to make contact with them by asking for their home address, e-mail address, their surname or their phone number. Much of this could be entirely innocent, but it is nonetheless worth noting that many are familiar with this level of online contact.

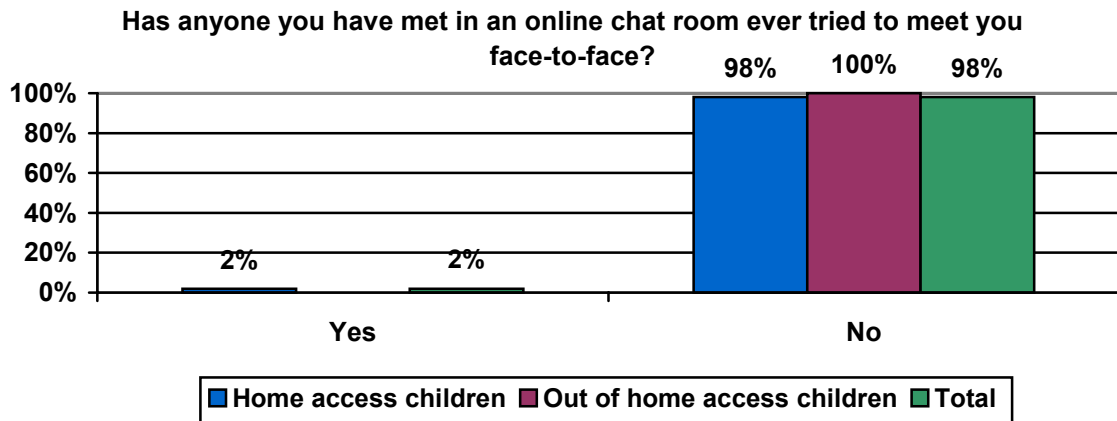
*"I suppose it's just fun, but it can go too far."*  
- Mother in Dublin

Although the numbers responding to this question is small, it is worth noting that teenage girls are the most likely to have said that someone has attempted this level of contact with them.



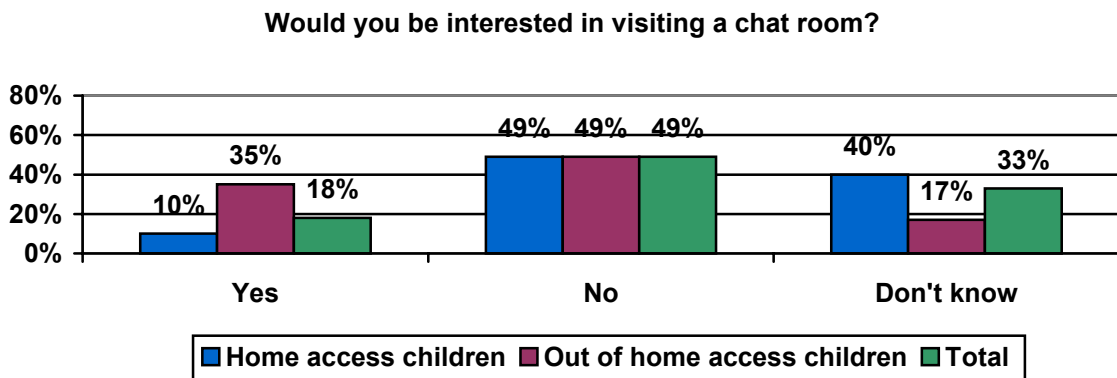
### Face-to-Face Contact

About 2% of children who have visited an online chat room said that someone has tried to meet them face-to-face. Once again this could be totally innocent and innocuous contact. But it does raise some questions about the vulnerability of children who are using chat rooms. Children ultimately do not know who is at the other end and have few means of verifying who they are talking to.



### Interest in Visiting Online Chat Rooms

All children who said they had never visited a chat room were asked if they would be interested in visiting one. A significant minority said they would - 10% of home access children and 35% of out of home access children. The fact that more home access children already visit chat rooms explains the lower level of interest expressed.



The high level of interest suggests that children’s use of chat rooms will increase in the near future. Children are naturally curious and many will want their curiosity sated.

*“I told my kids about a friends daughter who got caught up in a chat room and didn’t know how to handle it. It was good for my kids to be aware that happens”*  
 - Mother in Ennis

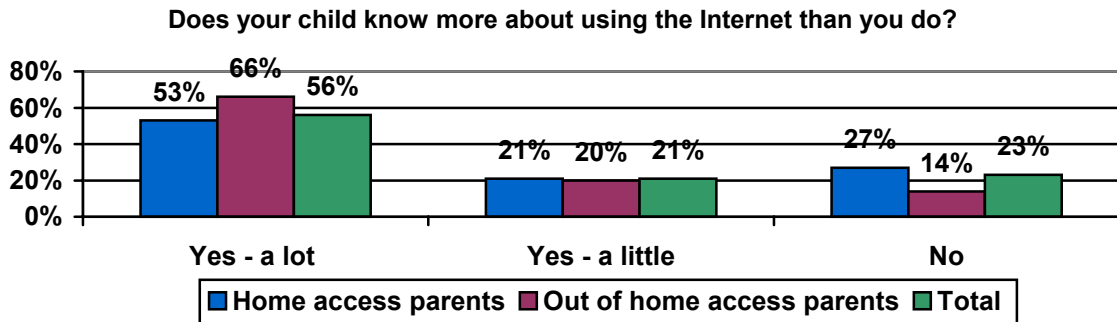
***Implications:***

- Given the relationship between awareness of chat rooms and the likelihood of discussing the dangers of Internet use with children, awareness of chat rooms should be raised to ensure that all parents are aware of the potential dangers and will therefore be more likely to discuss it with their children.
- Children should be given very clear guidelines regarding what chat rooms they should visit and the level of personal information that they should make available.
- Children should be strongly advised to speak to an adult if any one in a chat room attempts to meet them face-to-face.

## Barriers to Protecting Children Online

### Parents Knowledge of the Internet Vis a Vis Their Children's

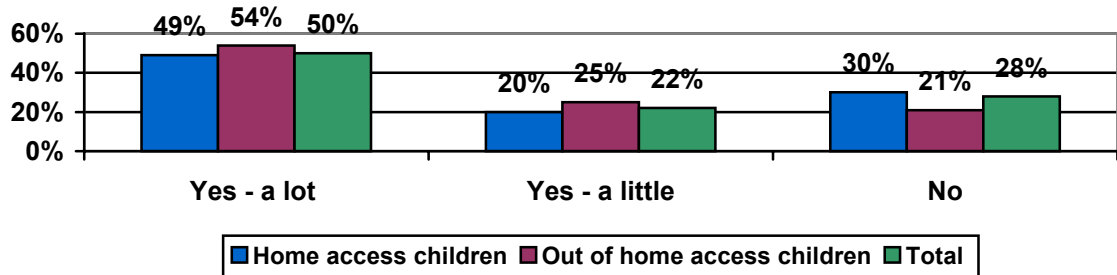
One of the most fundamental difficulties faced by parents in protecting their children online, is that many children know more about the Internet than their parents. Among those with home Internet access – only 23% of parents say they know more than their children do.



Children are also in agreement that they know more than their parents. Half say they know a lot more, and 22% say they know a little more.

*"They're not afraid the way we are. They were born into it. We were not."*  
- Father in Ennis

### Do you think you know more about using the Internet than your parents do?

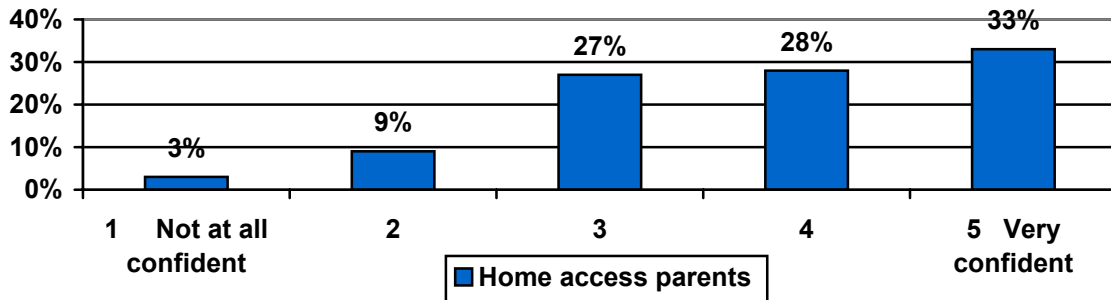


### Parent's Confidence in Controlling Internet Use

Home access parents were asked to rate their confidence in their own ability to control their child's online behaviour. Six in ten (61%) felt confident giving themselves a rating of at least 4 out of 5. Confidence was highest among Internet users, those who have discussed with their child the dangers of Internet use and those who set rules for their child's use of the Internet.

*"I'm very conscious of the fact that there are a lot of kids who know an awful lot more about it than I do and if my back is turned I don't know what they're on to"*  
- Mother in Cork

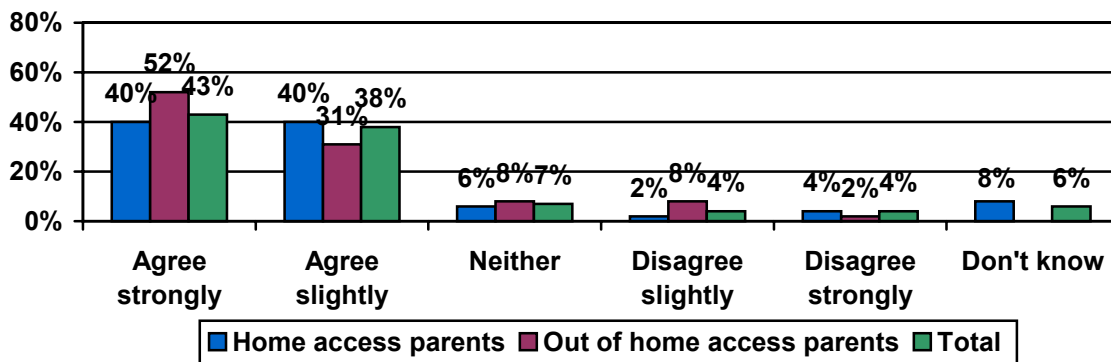
**Parents rating of their confidence in their ability to control what their child does online**



The level of confidence is high particularly given that over half feel their child knows more about the Internet than they do. It may suggest that some parents have difficulty admitting that they are in fact unable to totally control what their children do online. When the question is depersonalised and parents are asked to comment on parents in general eight in ten (81%) agree strongly or slightly.

*"The only thing you can do is give them some good advice. But you don't know if they really will listen to you"*  
- Mother in Dublin

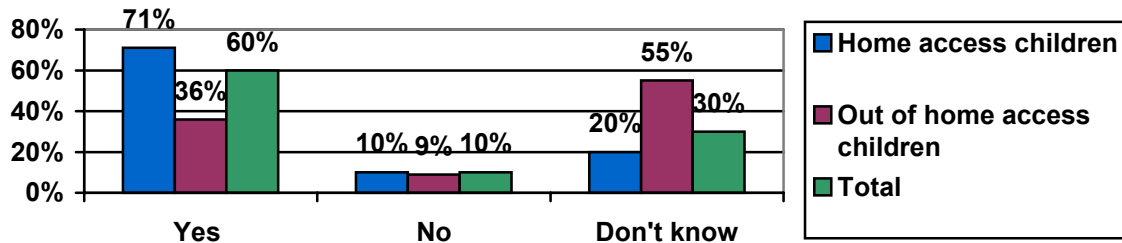
**Agreement with statement - "Many parents are unable to control and monitor Internet use of their children as they do not know enough about it"**



### Parents' Understanding of Online Activities

A majority of children do believe that their parents know and understand what they do online. This is interesting given that many of the parents are not even Internet users. It is difficult to understand the children's responses.

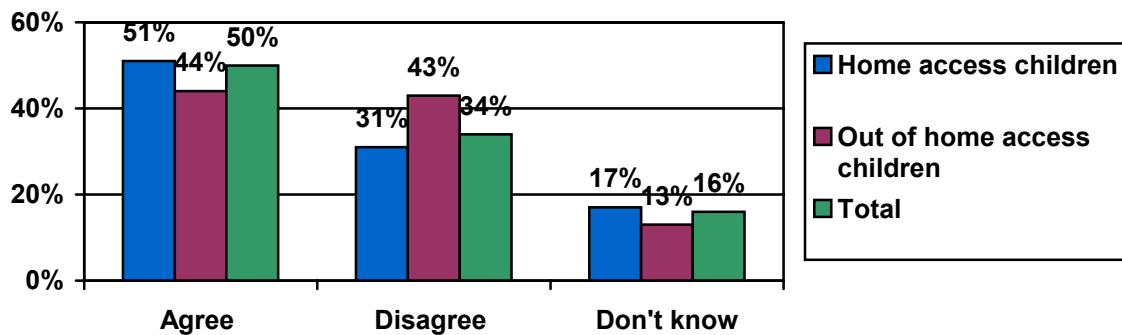
**Do you think your parents know and understand exactly what you do on the Internet?**



### Balancing Freedom with Protection

One of the big issues in protecting children online is to strike a balance between protecting children from potentially harmful situations while trusting them and affording them a degree of privacy and freedom. Half of the children surveyed said they would like more freedom to do what they want on the Internet.

**Agreement with statement - "I would like more freedom to do what I want on the Internet"**



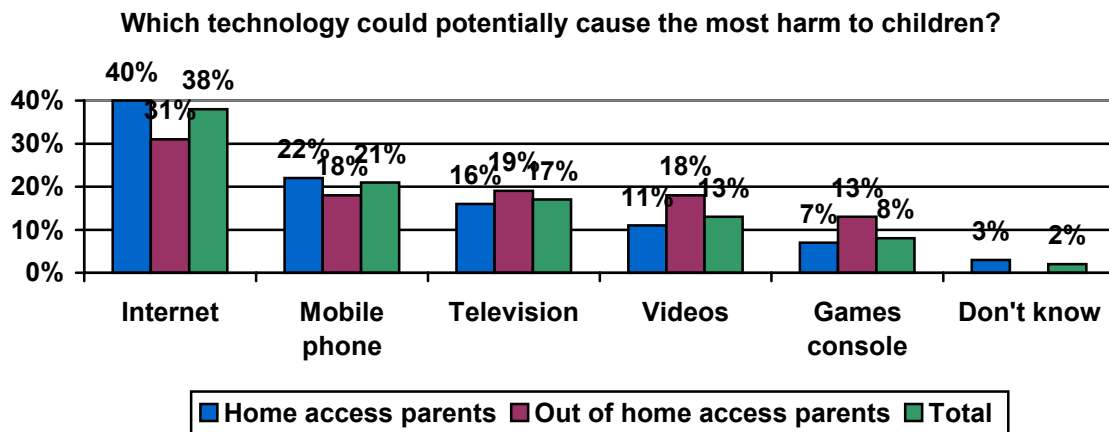
***Implications:***

- All parents should be encouraged to increase their level of Internet knowledge if they are to effectively protect their children online. Those that know the most tend to be the most able to monitor and supervise.
- Parents who have an open and honest discussion with their children about the dangers of Internet use and those who set rules for how their children access the Internet are more likely to feel confident in their own ability to protect their children online.
- Parents need to recognise that a balance should be struck between protecting their children and giving their children appropriate levels of freedom and privacy. Guidelines should be given to parents to help them determine where the balance lies.

## INTERNET DOWNSIDE ISSUES

### Most Harmful Technology

All parents were asked what technology did they think could potentially cause the most harm to their children. The Internet was the most frequently cited technology, followed by mobile phones and television. It should be noted that this question was asked towards the end of the survey, and that it is likely that if it was the first question asked a much smaller percentage of parents would have opted for the Internet.



### Sexually Explicit Content Dominates Negatives

All parents were asked what they considered to be the main negative impact of Internet use among children aged 14 or under. They were then asked what other negatives could they think of. Their responses are tabled below.

Negative Aspects of Internet Use	Main	All mentions
Access to pornography	44%	78%
Can be exposed to unsuitable people e.g. paedophiles	12%	50%
Access to unsuitable material/information	18%	49%
Access to violent/hate material	5%	36%
Spend too much time playing games	1%	32%
Could spend the time more usefully	6%	28%
Makes them lazy about doing homework/ school projects	3%	25%
Anti-social/insular activity	6%	24%
Too exposed to advertising	1%	16%
Do not read enough books	-	14%
Bullying/ Harassment	-	6%
Other	-	1%

*Base: All parents (n=312)*

Among the main negatives cited, access to pornography was the most frequently mentioned. This was followed by exposure to unsuitable material or information. Of all the negatives mentioned almost eight in ten parents said pornography, half said exposure to unsuitable people such as paedophiles. Over a third (36%) cited

*"I think for young children words mightn't affect them, but pictures do"*  
- Mother in Cork

access to violent or hate material. A similar number said that children spend too much time playing games.

### **Awareness of Online Material**

All parents were asked what type of unsuitable material or information did they think could be accessed on the Internet that could cause harm to children aged 14 or under. This measured their unprompted awareness. Their level of prompted awareness was then measured by asking them if they were aware of a range of unsuitable material that is available online.

<b>Unsuitable online information and material that could cause harm to children</b>	<b>Unprompted Awareness</b>	<b>Total Awareness</b>
Pornographic pictures/images	81%	98%
Information about sex	40%	94%
Information about drugs	26%	78%
Violent images/pictures	20%	73%
Unsuitable jokes	11%	63%
Racist/hate material	10%	56%
Information about cults	8%	54%
Information about racism	5%	53%
Information about suicide	5%	47%
Information about anorexia/losing weight	4%	49%
Information about making bombs/terrorism	4%	42%
Other	4%	-
Don't know	3%	-
<i>Base: All parents (n=312)</i>		
<i>Note: Multiple responses allowed</i>		

Unprompted, the vast majority of parents cited pornography. A reasonable number also mentioned information about sex and drugs. When asked about their awareness of the availability of specific types of material almost all were aware of the ability to access pornography and other sexually explicit information. Over seven in ten were aware that information about drugs, violent and hate material was available online. Less than half of the parents surveyed were aware that information on suicide, anorexia and how to make bombs was available online.

Lower levels of awareness were evident among non-Internet users, parents who rated their own knowledge of the Internet as weak, and among parents who do not impose rules on their child's use of the Internet. Once again, it is clear that a parent's understanding and awareness of the Internet seriously impacts on their likelihood of actively controlling and monitoring their child's Internet use.

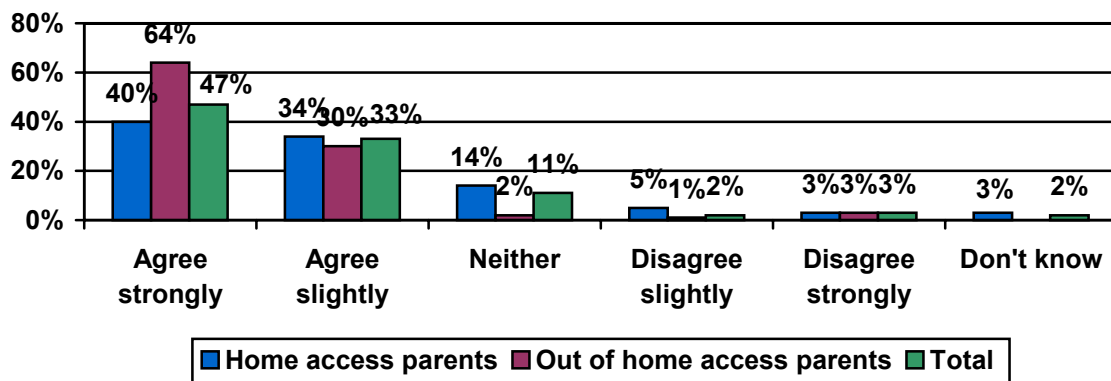
### Level of Parental Concern

The vast majority of parents (80%) are concerned that their children might access harmful material such as sexually explicit or violent material on the Internet.

*"When you see them on the Internet you think they are doing great working on school stuff and so on. But then they have access to all these dodgy sites"*  
 - Father in Dublin

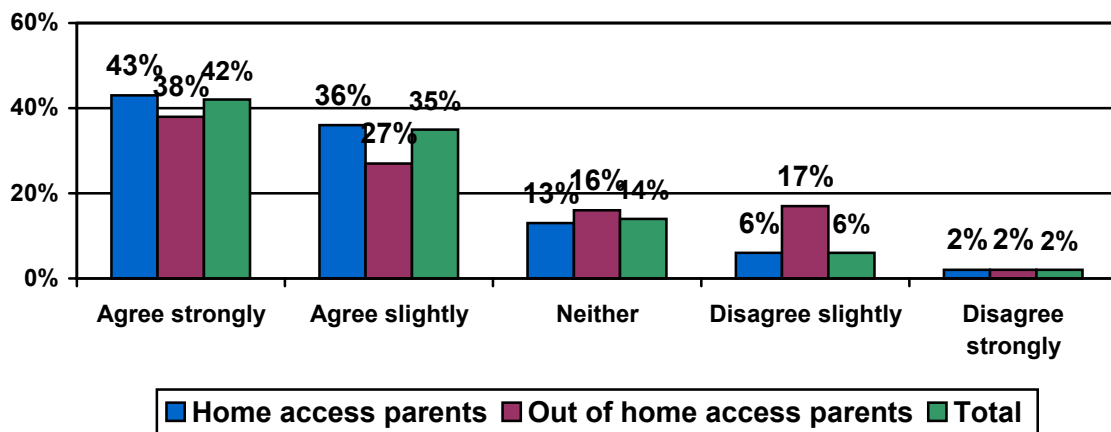
The high level of concern strongly suggests that parents need to have safeguards in place in an effort to ensure that their children do not access such material. The use of software is one tool that could be used to ensure that children can only access child-friendly sites.

**Agreement with statement - "I am concerned that my child/children might access harmful material such as sexually explicit or violent material on the Internet"**



In addition to the harmful aspect of children accessing sexually explicit or violent material online, a significant number of parents are also concerned that children may become isolated from their friends if they spend too much time on the Internet.

**Agreement with statement - "Children may become isolated from their friends if they spend too much time on the Internet"**



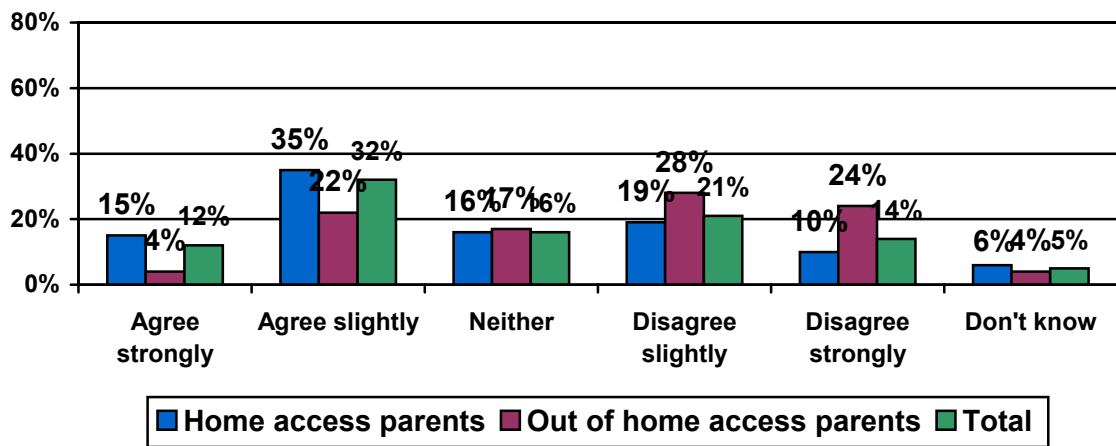
***Implications:***

- A significant number of parents need to be made more aware of the amount of unsuitable material that is available online. The purpose is not to scare them into increasing the level of monitoring they do but to strongly encourage them to pay closer attention.
- Given that the majority of parents are concerned that their child could access unsuitable material online, they need to be informed of ways in which this can be prevented, through for example use of restrictive software.

**SAFETY OF THE INTERNET**

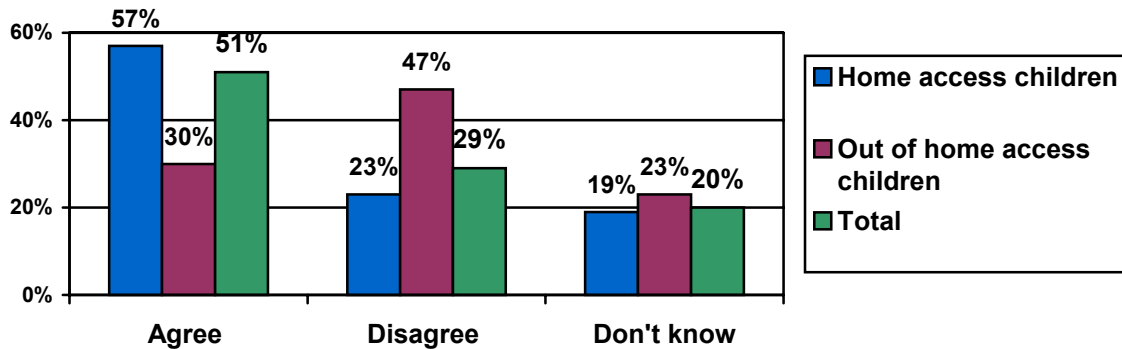
How safe to parents consider the Internet to be? All parents were asked to say whether they agreed or disagreed with the following statement – the Internet is a safe and secure environment for children to learn and communicate with people. About four in ten (42%) of parents agreed with the statement, 35% disagreed.

**Agreement with statement - "The Internet is a safe and secure environment for children to learn and communicate with people"**



Just over half of all children surveyed agreed with the statement that the Internet is a safe place for children to be. One in five said they did not know. Agreement was highest among children who do not visit chat rooms.

**Agreement with statement - "The Internet is a safe place for children to be"**



**Implications:**

- Communication regarding the safety of the Internet needs to be balanced. The positive aspects should be presented alongside the negatives.

**COMMUNICATION BETWEEN PARENTS AND CHILDREN**

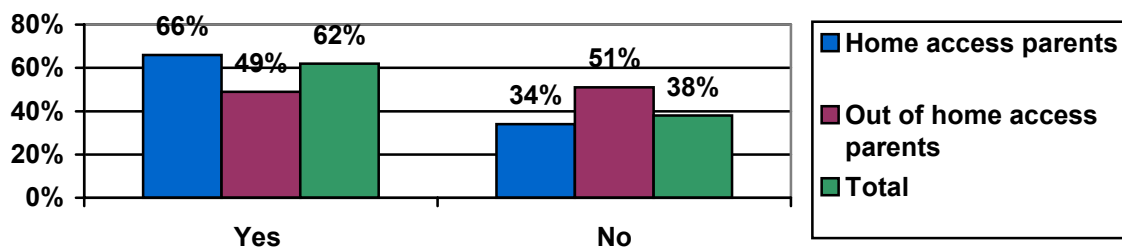
The level of communication between parents and their children is critical to parents understanding what their children are doing online and their ability to discuss with their children the potential dangers of using the Internet.

*"I think seeing stuff on the Internet is more damaging than on TV. At least on TV you can talk about it and everybody's watching it. With the Internet there's no discussion"*  
- Father in Cork

**Discussing the Potential Dangers of Internet Use**

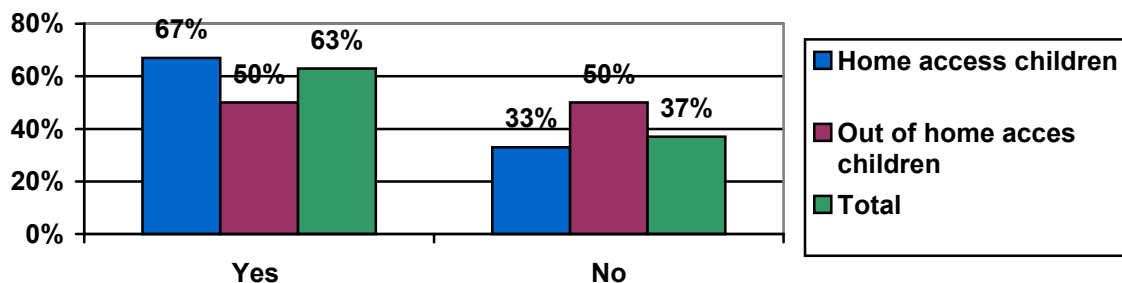
Amárach asked all parents whether they had ever discussed with their child the potential dangers of Internet use. A majority (62%) said they had. Home access parents were significantly more likely to have discussed it with their children when compared to out of home access parents. Parents who use the Internet and who consider themselves knowledgeable of the Internet are also more likely to have discussed the potential dangers of Internet use with their child.

**Have you ever discussed with your child the potential dangers of Internet use?**



The responses of the children were remarkably similar to the responses provided by the parents. Over six in ten say that their parents have talked to them about using the Internet safely. Those who have been talked to are more likely to have rules governing their use of the Internet and to be supervised when they use the Internet. This suggests that those most likely to come to harm online (i.e. can use the Internet unsupervised and do not have set rules for access) are the children who are not spoken to about Internet safety.

**Have your parents talked to you about using the Internet safely?**



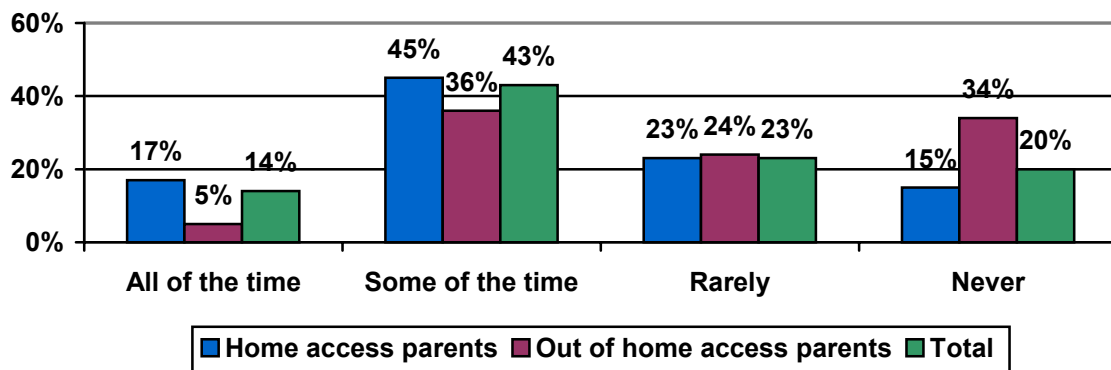
### Discussing Online Activities

Only a small minority of parents say their child discusses their online activities with them on an ongoing basis. Over four in ten say their child rarely or never discusses their online activities with them. Given that many parents say that they supervise and monitor their child online, the low level of discussion is surprising.

*"I am sure they must come across things, but my son wouldn't tell me. No way."*  
 – Mother in Dublin

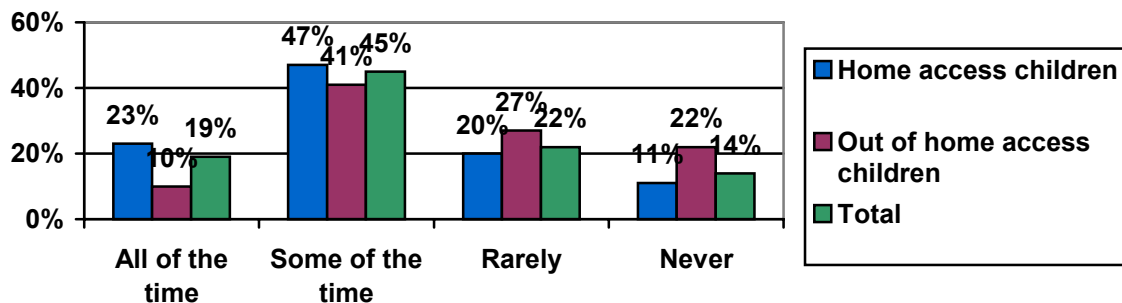
Levels of discussion are significantly higher among home access parents when compared to out of home access parents.

**How often does your child discuss their online activities with you ?**



Once again, the children's responses are very similar to those provided by the parents. Those most likely to discuss their online activities with their parents are those who have been spoken to about Internet safety, those who are supervised and those whose parents know more about the Internet than they do. There is a clear link between a parent's knowledge of the Internet and the likelihood of a child discussing their online activities with them.

**Do you talk to either of your parents about what you do online ?**



***Implications:***

- Children should be encouraged to involve their parents in their Internet activities by discussing with them what they are doing online.
- All parents should be strongly advised to talk to their children about how to use the Internet safely.
- Parents should also make greater efforts to discuss with their children their general online activities.

## Trust

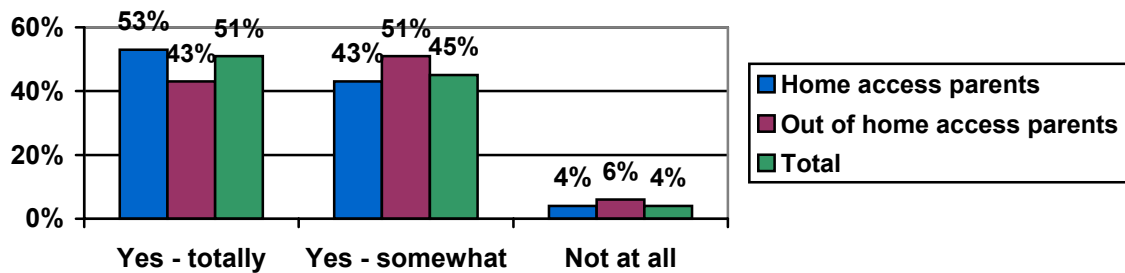
Despite the potential for harm when children are online and the need to monitor what children do online there does need to be a balance between supervision and trust.

### High Levels of Trust

Just over half of parents say they totally trust their child not to visit inappropriate websites on the Internet or to search for unsuitable material. Only 4% say they do not trust their child at all. Despite this high level of trust, the most trusting parents are in fact more likely to pay the closest attention to what their children do online and to set the highest level of rules. This suggests that much of the trust is achieved by having an active involvement in what their child does online.

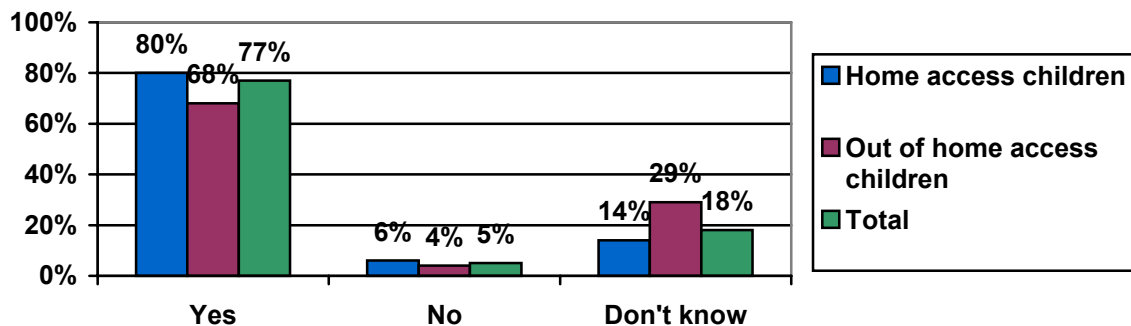
*"I would want to know what sites she's on but I wouldn't look over her shoulder every second. I have to trust her."*  
- Mother in Cork

### Do you trust your child not to visit inappropriate websites on the Internet or to search for unsuitable material?



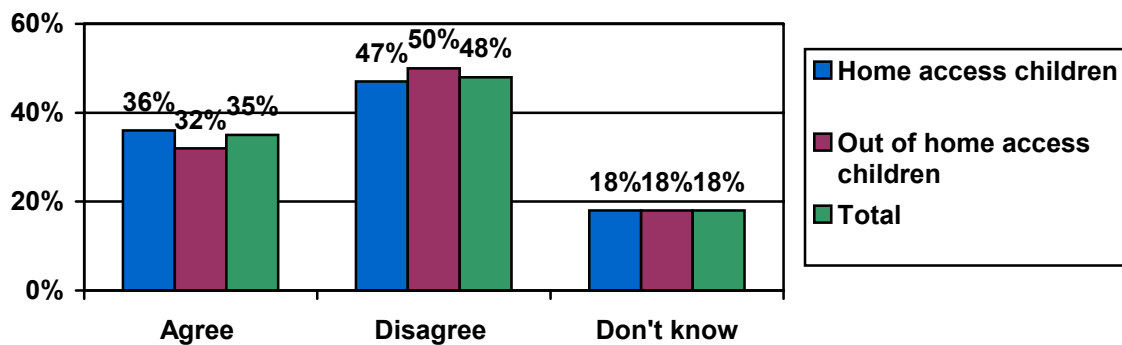
Almost eight in ten (77%) children feel their parents trust them when they use the Internet not to visit sites that they would not like them to see. Only 5% feel they are not trusted.

### Do your parents trust you when you use the Internet not to visit sites that they would not like you to see?



Children were asked whether they agreed or disagree with the following statement – my parents worry too much about what I do on the Internet. Just over a third agreed with the statement and about half disagreed. This suggests that a significant minority of children feel their parents are worrying unnecessarily and that perhaps the children are not being trusted enough.

**Agreement with statement - "My parents worry too much about what I do on the Internet"**



**Implications:**

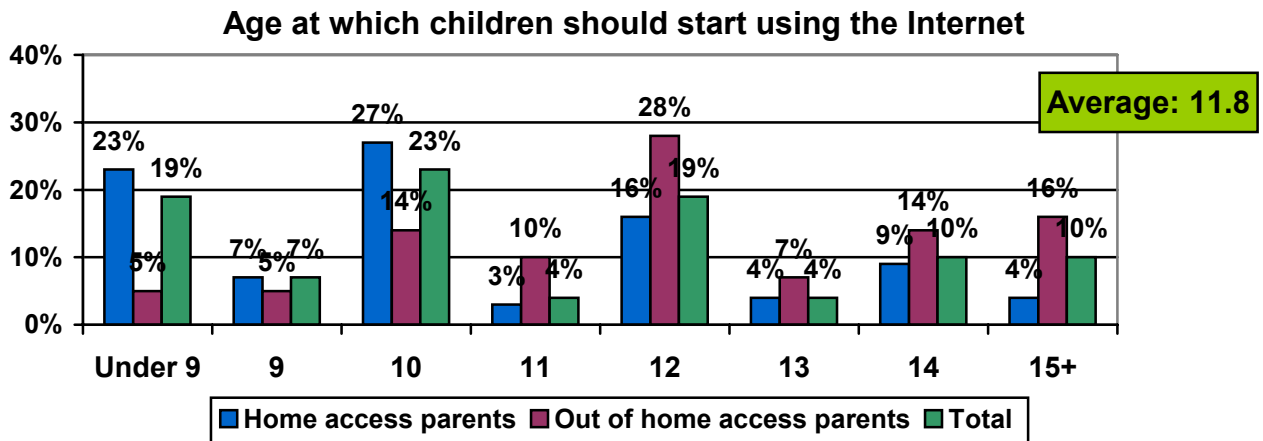
- It is up to parents to determine where the balance lies between trusting their children online and monitoring what they do online. Parents should be informed of ways to help them determine how best to approach this issue. For example, If access rules are continually being broken they need to increase the level of monitoring. Ultimately if they are clued into their child's online behaviour they should know where the balance lies.

## AGE ISSUES

All parents were asked a number of questions concerning the specific age at which children should start using the Internet, age at which they should be warned about the potential dangers of Internet use and age at which they should be left unsupervised.

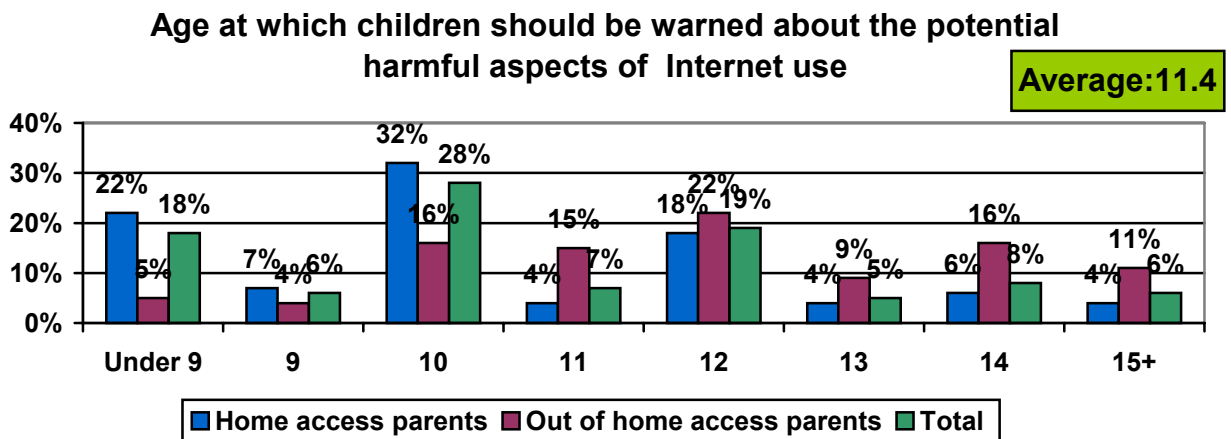
### When should Children Start using the Internet?

When asked what age children should start using the Internet the average among all parents was close to 12 years. Parents with home Internet access were more inclined to go cite a younger age than those without home access. It is likely that home access parents already have a number of children aged 10 or under who are using the Internet at home.



### When should children be warned about the potential harmful aspects of the Internet?

Regarding the age at which children should be warned about the potential harmful aspects of the Internet, the average age cited was just over 11. Once again many of the home access parents opted for a younger age. The likelihood that they already have children aged 10 or under using the Internet is much higher than out of home access parents.

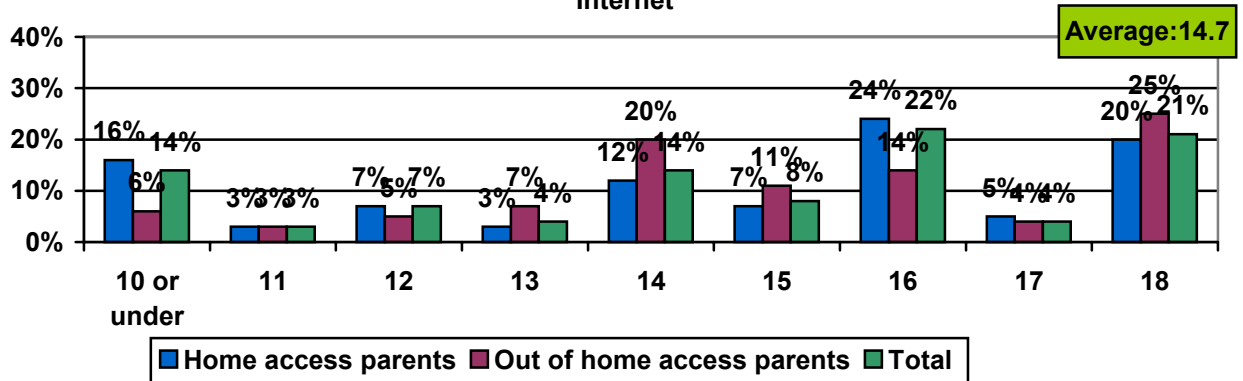


**When should children be left unsupervised using the Internet?**

Parents were asked at age would they be happy to leave a child unsupervised using the Internet. The average age cited was close to 15. The average was slightly lower among home access parents.

*“The young ones I wouldn’t be worried about. But the teenagers, I feel I really have to watch them”*  
 – Father in Dublin

**Age at which you would be happy to leave a child unsupervised using the Internet**



**Implications:**

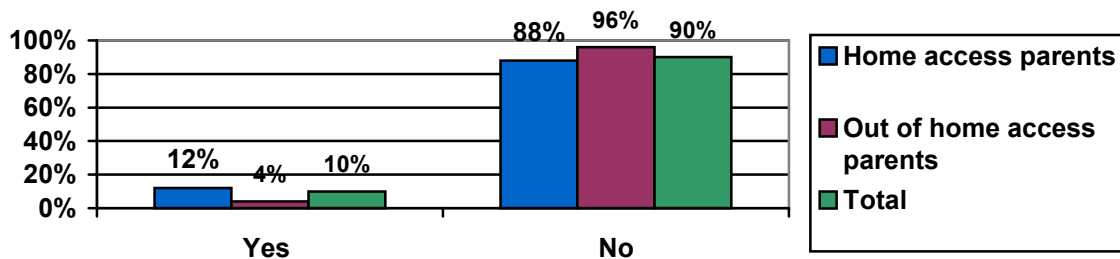
- Public communication regarding Internet safety issues targeted specifically at children should be targeted at children aged 11 upwards.
- It is ultimately the decision of the parents to determine when they should speak to their children about the potential harmful aspects of Internet use. However, they should be encouraged to do it sooner rather than later in order to minimize the potential for harm.

**CHILDREN'S EXPOSURE TO UNSUITABLE MATERIAL**

What evidence is there to suggest that young Irish Internet users are accessing harmful material online?

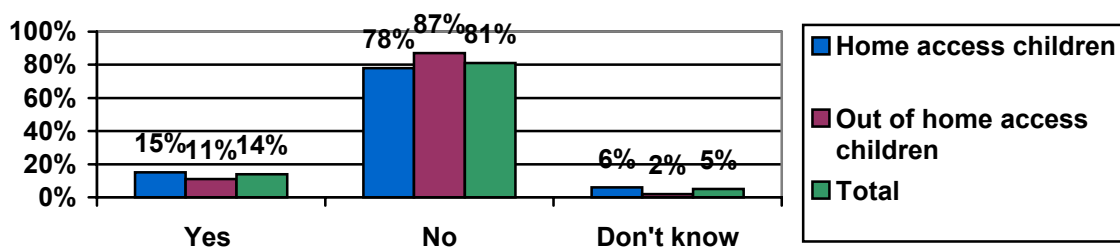
All parents were asked if their child had ever told them about something unsuitable that they saw on the Internet. One in ten parents said they had.

**Has your child ever told you about something unsuitable that they saw on the Internet?**



The number of children who say they have seen things on the Internet that they think their parents would not like them to see is relatively low at 14%. It is interesting to note that acknowledgement of seeing unsuitable material online was significantly higher among children who were responding without a parent present. This suggests that the frequency of children coming across inappropriate material could in fact be quite a bit higher.

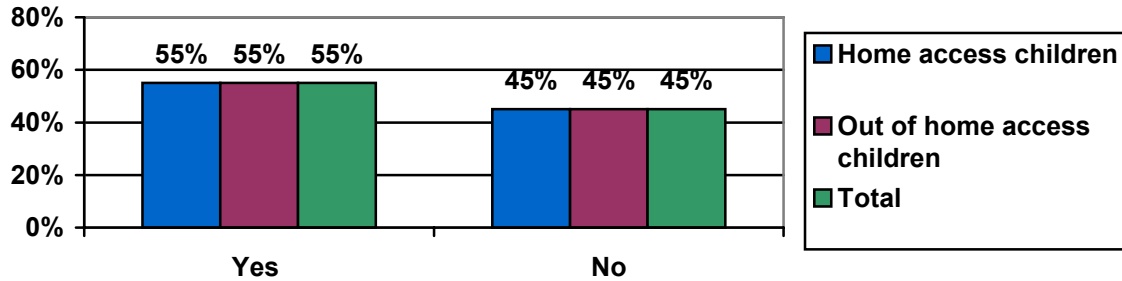
**Have you ever seen things on the Internet that you think your parents would not like you to see?**



### Talking about Seeing Inappropriate Material

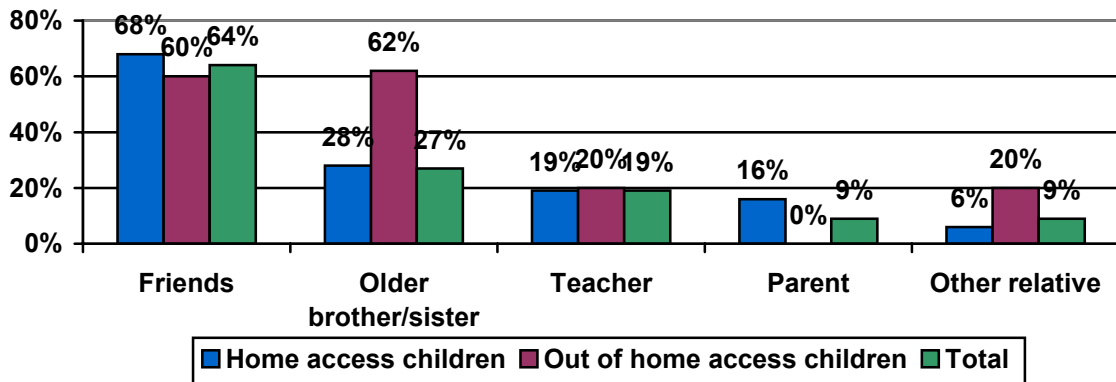
Of those that did see something on the Internet that their parents would not like them to see just over half spoke to someone about it.

Did you speak to anyone about this?



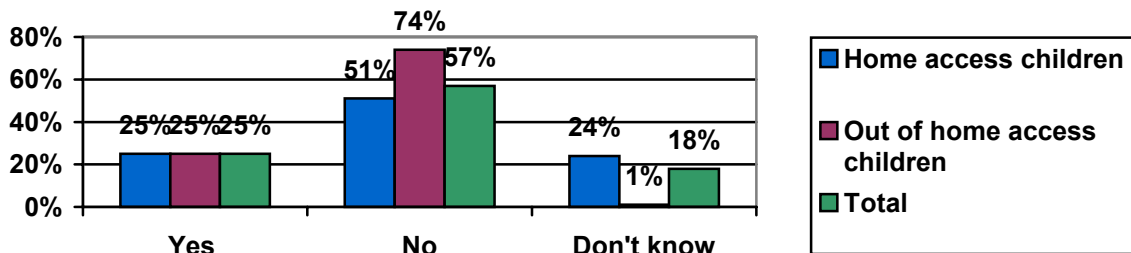
The majority of them spoke to friends, followed by older brothers or sisters. Only a small minority discussed it with their parents.

Who did you speak to?



One in four children say they know of friends or people in their class who have come across information or pictures on the Internet that their parents would not like them to see. Once again responses were significantly higher in interviews where no parent was present. It is likely that a much higher percentage of children are hearing about unsuitable online material from their friends and classmates.

Do you know of any friends or people in your class who have come across information or pictures on the Internet that your parents would not like you to see?



***Implications:***

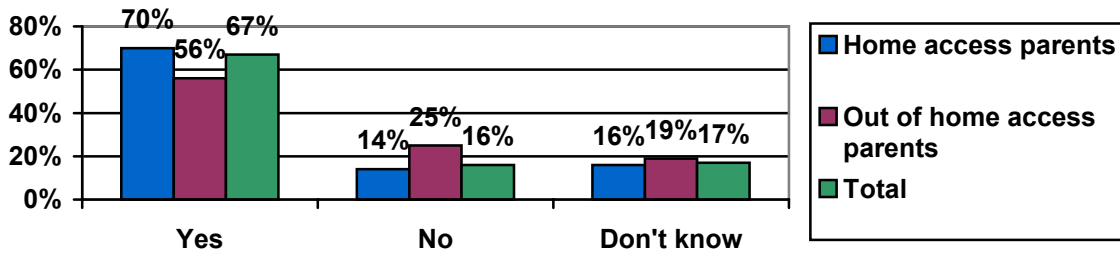
- Children should be encouraged to tell their parents if they come across inappropriate material on websites. It should be emphasised to them that they will not get in trouble for stumbling across such websites.
- Parents should also encourage their children to tell them about unsuitable material they come across on the Internet, as it will help parents to report inappropriate sites and foster a more open discussion between parents and their children.

**REPORTING OF ILLEGAL AND HARMFUL MATERIAL**

**Understanding the Difference Between Illegal and Harmful Material**

A majority of parents say they understand the difference between illegal and harmful material on the Internet. Those who do not understand are more likely to be in C2DE and farm households, not Internet users, and to consider themselves to have a low level of Internet knowledge.

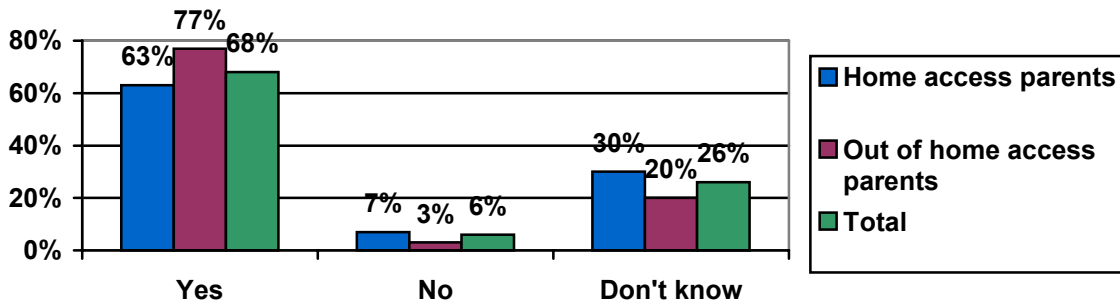
**Do you understand the difference between illegal and harmful material on the Internet?**



**Likelihood of Reporting Illegal or Harmful Material**

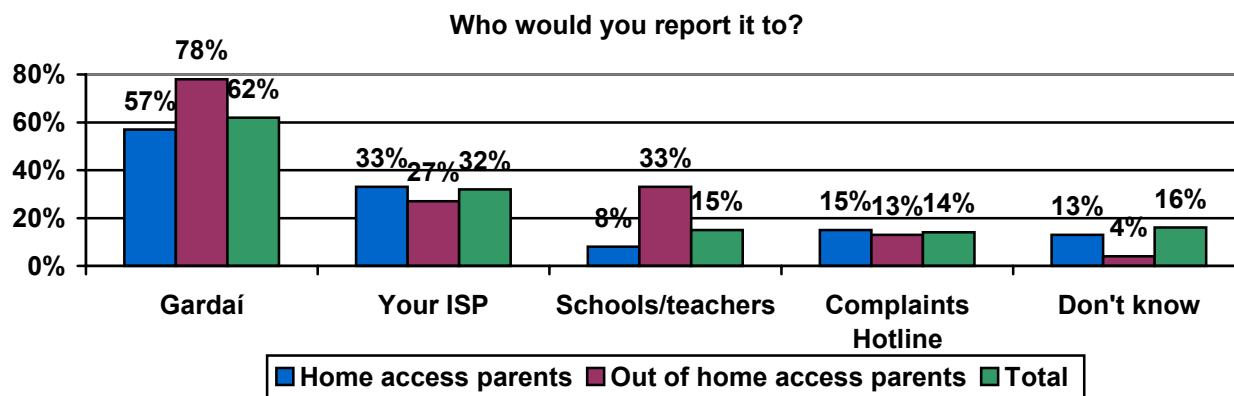
All parents were asked if they came across a website or online material that they considered to be illegal or harmful to their children if they would report it. Almost seven in ten (68%) said they would.

**If you came across a website or online material that you considered illegal or harmful to your children would you report it?**



## Who to Report to?

When asked to whom they would report illegal or harmful material to, the Gardaí were mentioned by a majority. This was followed by schools/teachers and their own Internet service provider. Few mentioned a complaints hotline. This strongly suggests that few parents are aware of the hotline. A significant number said don't know.



### Implications:

- Parents need to be made aware of who the most appropriate contact is for reporting illegal or harmful online material.
- If the hotline is deemed the most appropriate body to which websites should be reported to, awareness of its existence needs to substantially increase as most parents seem to be totally unaware of it.
- Parents also need to understand what will happen if a website is reported to ensure that they consider their reporting of it to be worthwhile.

**RESPONSIBILITY FOR PROTECTING CHILDREN ONLINE**

**Who is Responsible for Protecting Children Online?**

All parents were asked who they considered to have primary responsibility for protecting children when they are on the Internet. They were also asked who else has a responsibility. The vast majority (86%) felt that parents have the primary responsibility. Schools and teachers were also considered to have a major role to play.

*"We have to be responsible for what's coming into the house same way as television. You just have to know to switch it off."*  
- Mother in Cork

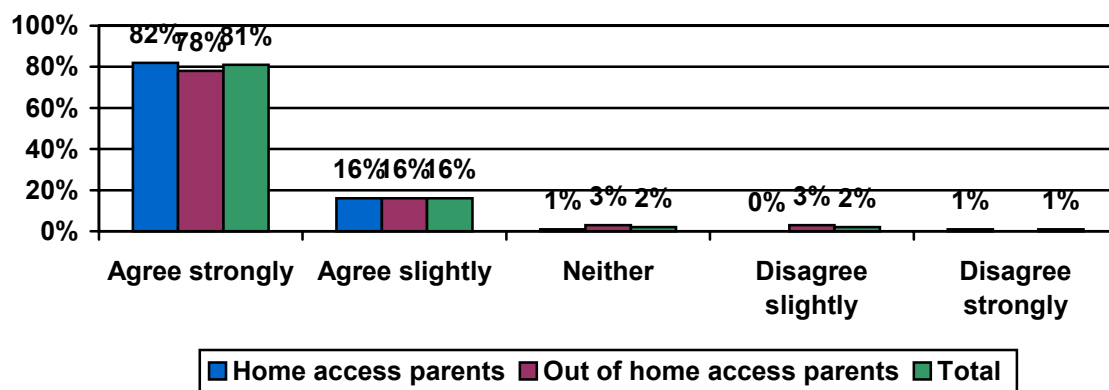
Nearly one in four said government and a similar number mentioned ISPs.

Who is responsible for protecting children online	Primary responsibility	Other persons responsible	Persons responsible – any mention
Parents	86%	11%	97%
Schools/teachers	5%	68%	73%
Older brothers/sisters	-	24%	24%
Government	2%	23%	24%
ISPs	4%	18%	22%
Website owners	2%	18%	20%
Neighbours/Friends parents	1%	19%	19%
Other	-	5%	5%
Don't know	-	5%	-

*Base: All parents (n=312)  
Note: Multiple responses allowed*

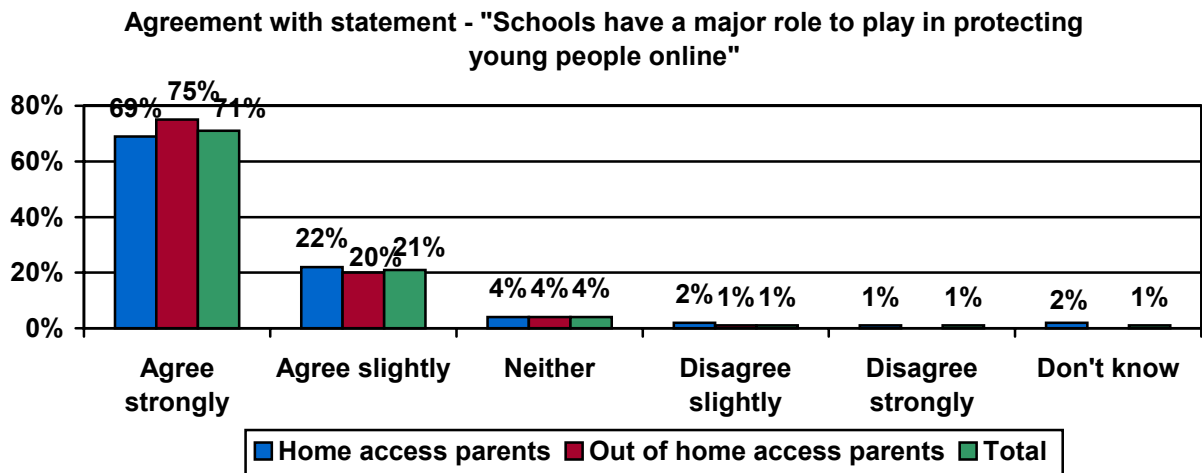
Parents were also challenged with the following statement – parents should be responsible for protecting their children's use of the Internet. Almost all agreed strongly or slightly. Even among parents who do not have Internet access in their home, they still felt very responsible for safeguarding their children.

**Agreement with statement - "Parents should be responsible for protecting their children's use of the Internet"**



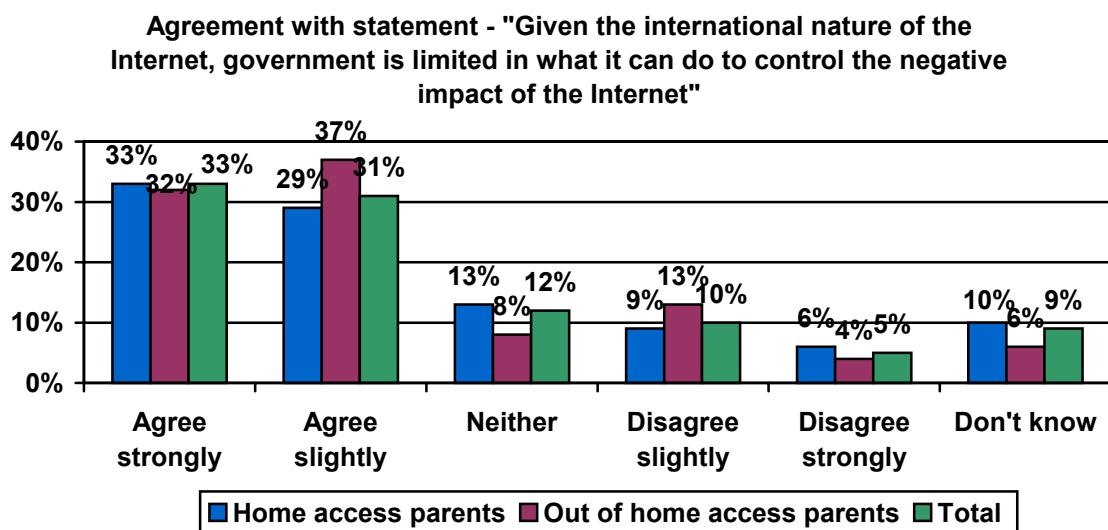
### Role of Schools

The vast majority (92%) of parents agree that schools have a major role to play in protecting young people online. Schools have a responsibility to adequately protect children when they access the Internet at school. However, parents also seem to think schools also have a role in informing children of Internet safety issues whether the children are using the Internet at school or not.



### Role of Government

Just over six in ten parents agree that given the international nature of the Internet, government is limited in what it can do to control the impact of the Internet. This suggests that most parents are able to acknowledge the difficulties faced by government in controlling online material.



***Implications:***

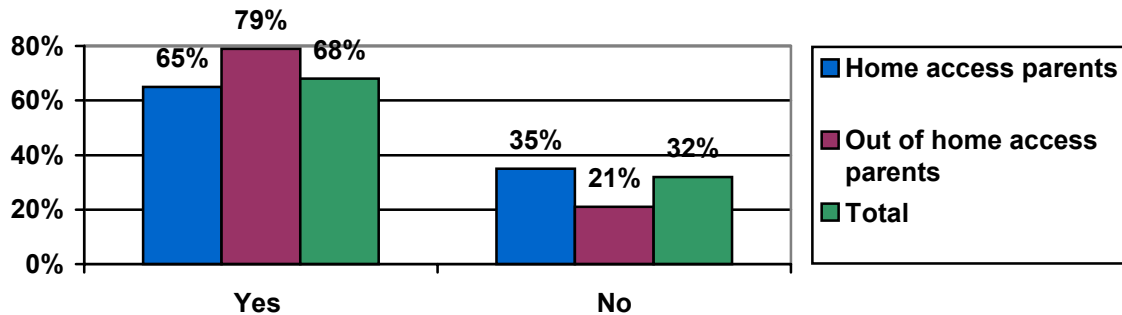
- Parents are in agreement that they are primarily responsible for protecting their children online. Therefore any Internet safety communication must be specifically targeted at parents.
- However, the role other parties are expected to play should also be acknowledged. In particular schools should be encouraged to teach children about appropriate Internet behaviour.
- ISPs should also be involved in the distribution of information targeted at both parents and children to help them use the Internet in a safe manner.

**Interest in More Information**

It is clear from the research conducted that many parents need more information about the ways in which they can protect their children when online. When asked directly if they would like more information about how to protect their children online – seven in ten said they would. Those most interested are those who are also most concerned that their child might access harmful material online.

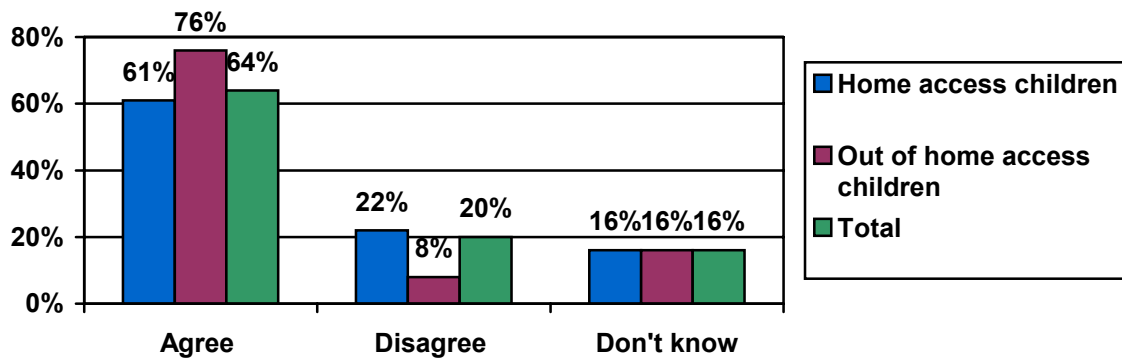
*"I think parents need constant advice. Everything moves so quickly"*  
 - Mother in Dublin

**Would you like more information about how to protect your children online?**



Interestingly a majority of children agree that they would like their parents to know more about using the Internet.

**Agreement with statement - "I would like my parents to know more about using the Internet"**



*"There should be more information on what is available in the Internet and how to deal with it. I feel lost a lot of the time."*  
 - Father in Cork

### Schools Regarded as Main Information Channel

All parents interested in learning more about how to protect their children online were asked how should the information be made available. Schools came out as the number one information channel. TV and newspapers were mentioned by about four in ten parents.

How should information be made available	%
Through schools	64%
On TV	44%
National newspapers	38%
PC retail outlets/shops	32%
On the radio	23%
Library	18%
Local newspapers	17%
Billboard advertising	13%
Community Centre	11%
Don't know	6%
<i>Base: All parents interested in learning more about protecting their children online (n=220)</i> <i>Note: Multiple responses allowed</i>	

Parents were also asked who they thought should provide information. Schools and government were the most frequently cited information providers.

Who should information	%
Schools	49%
Government	37%
ISPs	34%
PC retail outlets/shops	31%
Media	19%
Website owners	16%
Other	6%
Don't know	6%
<i>Base: All parents interested in learning more about protecting their children online (n=220)</i> <i>Note: Multiple responses allowed</i>	

***Implications:***

- Schools are the clear information channel of choice among parents. A campaign where information packs are sent to schools and then distributed to parents and children might be an effective method of getting messages across.
- Schools might also be a good environment where parents and their children are spoken to together about Internet safety issues. If parents and children are spoken to at the same time the likelihood that they will continue discussing Internet issues with each other is higher than if they are spoken to separately.
- A national “schools road-show” campaign might work well – whereby selected individuals visit all schools and present information on how to use the Internet safely.
- National media campaigns in newspapers and television are also likely to capture a high level of interest.

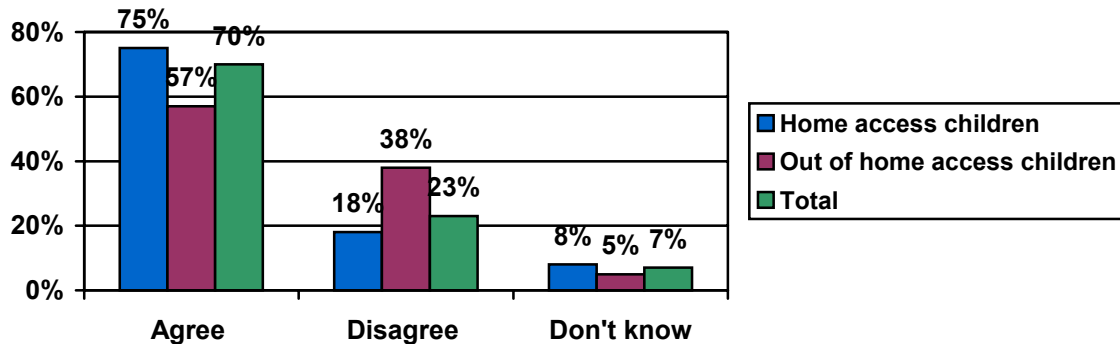
## INTERNET UPSIDES

The focus of this research study is Internet downside issues. However, there are a whole range of benefits of Internet use among young children. A small number of questions were asked to identify some of these.

### Importance of the Internet for Education

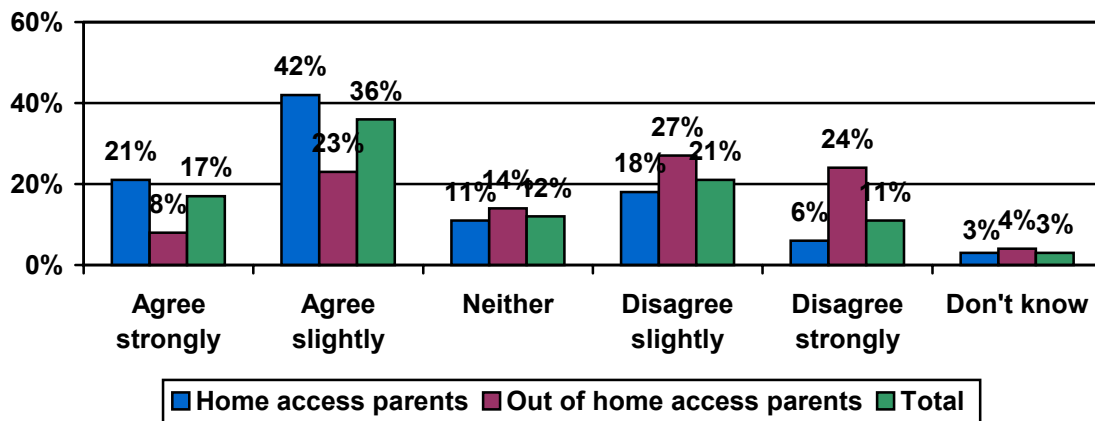
A majority (70%) of children agree that the Internet is very important for their school work. The ability for children to access vast amounts of information online is a tremendous help for them in learning to research and source information and in allowing them access to information that would not be readily accessible in the offline world.

**Agreement with statement - "The Internet is very important for my school work"**



In addition to the children's attitudes a small majority of parents agree with the following statement – children who do not have access to the Internet are at a disadvantage compared to their peers that do. Parents who have Internet access in their home were significantly more likely to agree with the statement.

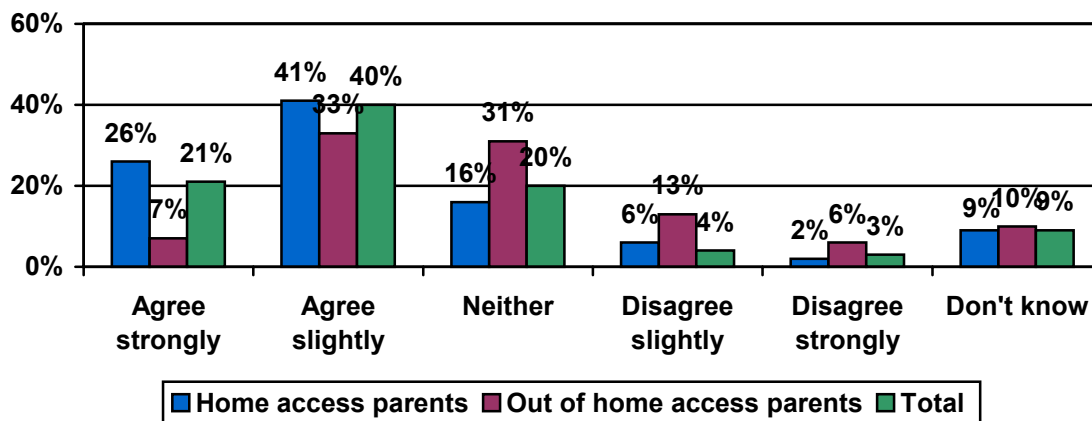
**Agreement with statement - "Children who do not have access to the Internet are at a disadvantage compared to their peers that do"**



### Positives Outweigh the Negatives

Despite the attention on the negatives of Internet use throughout the survey, by the end of the questionnaire a majority of parents were still able to agree that the positive aspects of Internet use among children outweigh the negatives. This was particularly true among parents who have home Internet access who are in a better position to recognise and see the positive benefits.

**Agreement with statement - "The positive aspects of Internet use among children outweigh the negatives"**



#### **Implications:**

- No communication with parents on Internet safety issues should be so worrying that it would stop parents allowing their children to use the Internet altogether.
- All communication, whether it is with parents, children or teachers should emphasise the benefits children gain from using the Internet.

## KEY IMPLICATIONS

Amárach has presented implications at the end of each section of the report. These have been summarised below.

### Parents:

- Parents need clear information on the following:
  - o Guidelines for rules they should have in place for when their children access the Internet at home and other rules for when they access the Internet outside of home.
  - o Software options – what it can do, where they can purchase it and ease of installation.
  - o How to password protect Internet access on home PCs
  - o The importance of keeping a home PC in a communal area should be emphasised.
  - o What they should do if they come across illegal or harmful material online – should they report it, if so, who to, and what will happen as a result of them reporting it.

More general findings for parents include the following:

- o All parents should be encouraged to learn more about the Internet. Without this knowledge, their ability to monitor online activities is seriously compromised.
- o Parents should be encouraged to regularly talk to their children about what they do online.
- o All parents should be encouraged to discuss the potential dangers of Internet use when their children reach an age at which their parents consider it to be appropriate.
- o Some parents may need guidance to determine where the balance lies between monitoring their child's online activities and their child's own privacy. This should be highlighted in any communications.
- o Parents should be encouraged to discuss with other parents the rules they have in place governing their own children's Internet access. This should help clarify what their children should be able to do if they access the Internet at a friend's home.

### Children:

- Children need clear information on the following:
  - o A set of rules and guidelines that have been set by their parents governing their Internet access from any location.
  - o Guidelines on how to communicate specifically in chat rooms e.g. level of personal information that should be given out.

More general findings for children include the following:

- o Children should be encouraged to have open discussions with their parents about their online activities.
- o Children should be informed that they will not be punished if they tell their parents or another adult such as a teacher about an inappropriate site or other online material they have come across.

### Information Provision:

- Schools are considered the most effective channel to use for communicating with parents and children about Internet Downside Issues.
- Schools should make a greater effort to communicate with parents regarding the school's own policy for children accessing the Internet in school.
- An online medium is not an appropriate channel for disseminating safety guidelines – the parents that need the highest level of information do not currently use the Internet.

- ISPs and PC sellers could play an important role in providing information on software purchase options.
- The role the complaints hotline is going to play needs to be clarified. Awareness of it needs to be raised if it is going to have a major role.
- No communication should be so severe that it discourages parents from allowing their children to use the Internet at all. The downsides must be balanced against the upsides.

# **QUESTIONNAIRES WITH RESULTS**

<b>PARENT CLASSIFICATION PAGE</b> <b>C1 Gender</b> Male..... 46% Female..... 54%		<b>C7 Highest Educational Qualification Attained</b> Primary level..... 6% 2 <sup>nd</sup> level..... 64% Still at 2 <sup>nd</sup> level..... 2% 3 <sup>rd</sup> level Under graduate ..... 12% 3 <sup>rd</sup> level Post graduate ..... 12% Still at 3 <sup>rd</sup> Level..... 0% No formal education..... 3%	
<b>C2 Age (State exact age and code)</b> <input type="text"/>		<b>C8 Occupation of Chief Income Earner</b> (Record job details) <hr/>	
25-29..... 0% 30-34..... 8% 35-39..... 22% 40-44..... 32% 45-49..... 25% 50-54..... 12% 55-59..... 0% 60-64..... 0% 65-74..... 0%		<b>C9 Social Class</b> AB..... 21% C1..... 35% C2..... 31% D..... 7% E..... 1% F50+..... 3% F50-..... 3%	
<b>C3 Marital Status</b> Married..... 87% Living as Married..... 6% Single..... 3% Widowed/Divorced/Separated..... 3%		<b>C10 Respondents Working Status</b> Working full time ..... 58% Working part-time ..... 13% Self-employed..... 6% Unemployed seeking a job..... 3% Looking after family/homemaker..... 20% Retired..... 0% Student..... 0% Other..... 1%	
<b>C4 Persons in Household</b> Including yourself, how many people live in your household..... <input type="text"/> Complete space opposite How many children under the age of 18 live in your household.. <input type="text"/> How many are aged 9 and under <input type="text"/> How many are between 10 and 14 years <input type="text"/> How many are between 15 and 18 years <input type="text"/>			

Interviewer's Declaration Interviewers Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
I certify that this is an eligible interview which has been carried out strictly in accordance with your specifications and has been conducted within the MRS code of conduct.

**ASSIGNMENT NUMBER.....**

**N.B. OF YOUR 10 QUESTIONNAIRES IN THE ASSIGNMENT SHEET  
5 MUST BE WITH MALE PARENTS/GUARDIANS  
5 MUST BE WITH FEMALE PARENTS/GUARDIANS**

Good morning/afternoon. I am ..... of Field Research Ireland, I am currently conducting a survey on home Internet use. I would greatly appreciate it if you could spare some time to complete the survey.

**SCREENING QUESTIONS**

Q.A Do you have the Internet at home

Yes	100%	<b>CONTINUE</b>
No	0%	<b>CLOSE &amp; Re-Recruit</b>

Q.B Do you have at least one child aged between 10 and 14 who uses the Internet at home at least twice a month?

Yes	100%	<b>CONTINUE</b>
No	0%	<b>CLOSE &amp; Re-Recruit</b>

Q. C How old is your child (children) aged between 10 and 14?

	Insert exact Age	<b>CHECK QUOTAS AND WHICH CHILD IS AVAILABLE FOR INTERVIEW</b>
Child 1		
Child 2		
Child 3		
Child 4		

**Agree on child to be interviewed and inform parent that all questions relating to Internet use of the child will only relate to the child who has been selected for interview**

***PARENT TO BE INTERVIEWED FIRST  
BEST EFFORTS SHOULD BE MADE TO ENSURE THAT THE CHILD IS NOT IN THE ROOM WHEN THE PARENT IS BEING INTERVIEWED. THE PARENT CAN BE IN THE ROOM WHEN THE CHILD IS BEING INTERVIEWED BUT SHOULD NOT PROMPT ANY OF THE CHILD'S ANSWERS***

**\*\*\*\*\* PARENTAL USE OF THE INTERNET \*\*\*\*\***

Q. 1 In what room in your home is the PC that is connected to the Internet located?

Sitting-room	29%	Family room	19%
Dining-room	9%	Children's bedroom	10%
Study	21%	Parent's bedroom	4%
Kitchen	4%	Other (please Specify _____)	5%

Q.2 What was the main reason for getting Internet access at home? **DO NOT PROMPT, SINGLE**

Pressure from children	17%
For educational purposes for myself	13%
For educational purposes for my children	26%
A lot of people I know are on the Internet and I want to keep in touch through email	4%
My employer is providing me with Internet access	2%
It is now so cheap to access the internet	4%
As a source of entertainment	2%

To shop on-line	2%
To seek information	17%
In order to work from home	8%
Other (Please specify _____)	4%
Don't know	1%

Q.3 Do you use the Internet at all?

Yes	66%	CONTINUE
No	34%	SKIP TO Q.8

Q.4 Where do you use it? **READ OUT, CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY**

Home	66%	Public Library	4%
Work	28%	On the move using portable equipment e.g, a WAP mobile phone, a palmpilot, a laptop	9%
School/college	3%	Elsewhere (write in _____)	-
Cyber Cafés	1%		
Friends house	3%		

Q.5 How often do you use the Internet from any location? **READ OUT SINGLE RESPONSE**

Daily	31%	Monthly	8%
Every 2 to 3 days	29%	Less often	10%
Weekly	20%	Don't know	-
Fortnightly	2%		

Q.6 How long have you been using the Internet from anywhere at all?  
(INTERVIEWER: INCLUDING USING EMAIL ONLY)

Years		Months	Average: 1.98 years	DON'T KNOW 0%
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Q.7 Thinking back to when you first got home Internet access, do you personally use the Internet more or less often now?

More often	51%
No Change	27%
Less often	22%

### ASK ALL

Q.8 On a scale of one to five where 1 equals not at all knowledgeable and 5 equals very knowledgeable how do you rate your knowledge of the Internet i.e. your overall ability to use the Internet?

<b>Not at all knowledgeable</b>				<b>Very Knowledgeable</b>
21%	24%	27%	14%	13%

\*\*\*\*\* CHILDS USE OF THE INTERNET \*\*\*\*\*

**INTERVIEWER - PLEASE INFORM PARENT THAT "CHILD" IN ALL QUESTIONS REFERS ONLY TO CHILD SELECTED TO BE SURVEY.**

Q.9 How often does your child use the Internet at home? **READ OUT SINGLE RESPONSE**

Daily	18%	Fortnightly	11%
Every 2 to 3 days	34%	Don't know	5%
Weekly	32%		

Q.10 What does your child use the Internet for? **NO PROMPTING, CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY**

School projects	52%	Playing games on my own	36%
Homework	33%	Playing games with others	23%
Exam revision	6%	Game cheats	8%
School websites	9%	Hobbies	15%
To send e-mail	37%	Making web pages	1%
To receive e-mail	32%	Read magazines online	3%
To chat with others in chat rooms	12%	Download music	13%
News about TV programmes	2%	Football/Sports sites	13%
Information about products or services	11%	Listen to the radio	4%
		Other (write in _____)	4%

Q.11 Are you aware of online chat rooms? **INTERVIEWER NOTE – IF THE RESPONDENT IS UNAWARE OF WHAT A CHAT ROOM IS READ OUT THE FOLLOWING -** A chat room is a place on the Internet where visitors can talk to each other live by typing in the words

Yes	89%	No	11%
-----	-----	----	-----

Q.12 Does your child ever visit chat rooms?

Yes	23%	Don't know	15%
No	62%		

Q.13 Do you feel your child knows more about using the Internet than you do e.g. is able to find web pages faster than you?

Yes - a lot	53%
Yes – a little	21%
No	27%

**\*\*\*\*\* SAFETY OF THE INTERNET \*\*\*\*\***

Q.14 Do you have any rules for your child when they access the Internet **from home**? **SINGLE RESPONSE**

Yes	78%	CONTINUE
No	16%	SKIP TO Q.16
Don't know	6%	

Q.15 Which of the following rules, if any, are set for your child when they access the Internet?

<b>READ OUT (Please circle appropriate code &amp; Rotate)</b> ▼	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
1. Can only go online for homework or school projects	45%	54
2. An adult is always present when they access the Internet	52%	48%
3. Can only visit specific websites authorised by a parent/adult	82%	18%
4. The amount of time spent online is limited	90%	10%
5. The time of day or night that the child uses the Internet is specified	86%	13%
6. Can only use the Internet at home	69%	31%
7. Cannot use the Internet with friends in the house when an adult is not around	59%	41%
8. Access to the PC or the Internet is password protected and your child does not know the password	50%	50%
9. Other (Specify _____)	1%	99%

**ASK ALL**

Q.16 Do you, or another adult (someone aged 18+) in your home, personally monitor what your child does online, for example, what websites they visit, checking the history files, checking phone bills, who they send e-mails to? **READ OUT, SINGLE RESPONSE**

Yes - all of the time	34%
Yes – some of the time	37%
Rarely	21%
Never	8%

Q.17 Do you trust your child not to visit inappropriate websites on the Internet or to search for unsuitable material?

Yes – totally	53%
Yes – somewhat	43%
Not at all	4%

Q.18 How confident are you in your own ability to control what your child does on the Internet at home on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 equals not at all confident and 5 equals very confident.

<b>Not at all Confident</b>				<b>Very confident</b>
3%	9%	27%	28%	33%

Q.19a Now thinking generally about young children, what do you consider to be the **main** negatives of Internet use among children aged 14 or under? **DO NOT PROMPT, Single RESPONSE**

Q.19 b What other negatives can you think of, that would apply to children aged 14 or under? **DO NOT PROMPT, PROBE FOR MULTIPLE RESPONSE**

QUESTION 19a	MAIN	QUESTION 19b	OTHER
Anti-social/insular activity	8%	Anti-social/insular activity	18%
Access to pornogrpghy	42%	Access to pornogrpghy	35%
Access to violent/hate material	5%	Access to violent/hate material	28%
Access to unsuitable material/information	18%	Access unsuitable material/information	30%
Could spend the time more usefully	6%	Could spend the time more usefully	22%
Makes them lazy about doing homework/ school projects	4%	Makes them lazy about doing homework/ school projects	24%
Do not read enough books	%	Do not read enough books	14%
Bullying/ Harassment	%	Bullying/Harassment	5%
Can be exposed to unsuitable people e.g. paedophiles	12%	Can be exposed to unsuitable people e.g. paedophiles	37%
Too exposed to advertising	0%	Too exposed to advertising	16%
Spend too much time playing games	1%	Spend too much time playing games	31%
Other (write in _____)	-	Other (write in _____)	2%
Nothing	2%	Nothing	4%

Q.20a What kind of unsuitable material/information do you think could cause harm to young children (Children aged 14 or under) if they accessed it on the Internet? **DO NOT PROMPT, CIRCLE ALL MENTIONS, PROBE FOR MORE THAN ONE MENTION**

Q.20b Are you aware that the following is widely available on the Internet? **READ OUT AND ROTATE, CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY**

	Q.20a UNPROMPTED	Q.20b	Q.20b
		PROMPTED Yes Aware	PROMPTED Not aware
Pornographic pictures/images	82%	97%	3%
Information about sex	37%	95%	5%
Information about drugs	24%	79%	21%
Racist/hate material	9%	57%	43%
Information about cults	5%	55%	45%
Violent images/pictures	19%	72%	28%
Information about making bombs/terrorism	5%	43%	57%
Information about suicide	5%	48%	52%
Information about anorexia/losing weight	3%	51%	49%
Information about racism	5%	55%	45%
Unsuitable jokes	-	63%	37%

Other (Please specify _____)	4%		
Don't know	3%		

Q.21 Have you ever discussed with your child the potential dangers of Internet use?

Yes	66%	No	34%
-----	-----	----	-----

Q.22 How often does your child discuss their online activities with you?

All of the time	17%	Rarely	23%
Some of the time	45%	Never	15%

Q.23 How important do you think parental guidance is such as, watching what they are doing, when you child uses the Internet? **READ OUT, SINGLE RESPONSE**

Very important	61%	Not at all important	3%
Quite important	31%	Don't know	6%

Q.24 Has you child ever told you about something unsuitable that they saw on the Internet that may have upset or frightened them?

Yes	12%
No	88%

Q.25 Do you understand the difference between illegal material and harmful material on the Internet?

Yes	70%
No	14%
Don't know	16%

Q.26 If you came across a website or online material that you considered illegal or harmful for young children would you report it?

Yes	63%	CONTINUE
No	7%	<b>SKIP TO Q.28</b>
Don't know	30%	

Q.27 Who would you report it to? **DO NOT PROMPT, MULTIPLE RESPONSE**

The Gardaí	57%
Your Internet Service Provider e.g. Eircom	33%
A complaints hotline	15%
School/teachers	8%
Don't know	13%

**ASK ALL**

Q.28 Do you think children need to have access to the Internet?

Yes	68%
No	20%
Don't know	12%

Q. 29 At what age do you think children should start using the Internet?

Write in exact Age stated	→	Av. Age 10.28
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Q.30 At what age do you think children should be warned about the potential harmful aspects of Internet use?

Write in exact Age stated	→	Av. Age 10.09
---------------------------	---	---------------

Q.31 At what age would you be happy to leave a child unsupervised when they are using the Internet?

Write in exact Age stated	→	Av. Age 14.22
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Q.32 Does your child also use the Internet anywhere outside the home? If so, where? READ OUT AND CIRCLE APPROPRIATE CODE

	Yes	No	Don't know
1. Nowhere else/only use at home	54%	45%	1%
2. Work	1%	99%	1%
3. School	41%	55%	4%
4. Cyber Cafés	2%	96%	2%
5. Friends house	20%	75%	5%
6. Public Library	4%	94%	2%
7. Childminder's House	1%	97%	1%
8. On the move using portable equipment e.g, a WAP mobile phone, a palmpilot, a laptop	5%	93%	2%
9. Elsewhere (write in ___)	2%	70%	28%
<b>ALL THOSE WHOSE CHILDREN ONLY ACCESS THE INTERNET AT HOME, SKIP TO Q.34 REST CONTINUE</b>			

Q.33 Is your child's use of the Internet outside of your home supervised?

Yes - all of the time	51%
Yes - some of the time	13%
No	9%
Not sure/don't know	27%

**ASK ALL**

Q.34 Would you be concerned about your child accessing the Internet unsupervised outside of your home for example, at school, a local library or a friends house? **READ OUT, SINGLE RESPONSE**

Yes - very concerned	42%
Yes - quite concerned	35%
Not at all concerned	12%
Have never thought about it	11%

Q.35a In your opinion, who has the primary responsibility for protecting children when they are on the Internet? **DO NOT PROMPT, SINGLE RESPONSE**

Q.35b Who else has a responsibility for protecting children when they are on the Internet? **DO NOT PROMPT, MULTIPLE RESPONSE**

	<b>Q.35a Primary responsibility</b>	<b>Q.35b Other</b>	<b>Any mention</b>
Parent(s)	89%	8%	97%
Schools/teachers	3%	71%	73%
Older Brothers/Sisters	-	26%	26%
ISPs (e.g. Eircom, Esat, Indigo)	4%	19%	23%
Neighbours/friends parent(s)	-	17%	17%
Government	1%	21%	22%
Website owners	1%	17%	19%
Other (please specify _____)	-	2%	2%
Don't know	-	4%	-

**\*\*\*\*\* SAFETY OPTIONS\*\*\*\*\***

Q.36 Are you aware of software, such as Net Nanny, that can be purchased and put on a PC that restricts access to certain “adult” sites?

Yes	54%	CONTINUE
No	46%	<b>SKIP TO Q.39</b>

Q.37 Do you use this software on your home PC?

Yes	46%	CONTINUE
No	54%	<b>SKIP TO Q.39</b>

Q.38 On a scale of one to 5 where 5 means very effective and 1 means not at all effective, how effective do you think this software is in protecting your children online?

<b>Not at all effective</b>	<b>02</b>	<b>03</b>	<b>04</b>	<b>Very Effective</b>
2%	3%	15%	24%	56%
<b>ALL ANSWERING THIS QUESTION ONLY SKIP TO Q.40, REST GO TO Q.39</b>				

Q.39 Would you be interested in using software that would block access to “adult” sites?

Yes	81%
No	19%

**ASK ALL**

Q.40 Would you like more information about how to protect your children when they are on the Internet?

Yes	65%	CONTINUE
No	35%	<b>SKIP TO Q.43</b>

Q.41 Who do you think should provide that information? **MULTIPLE RESPONSE, DO NOT PROMPT**

Schools	50%	Website owners (Content providers)	19%
ISPs (e.g. Eircom, Esat, Indigo)	40%	Other (please specify _____)	4%
Government	32%	Other (please specify _____)	-
PC sellers/retail outlets	33%	Don't know	6%
Media	20%		

Q.42 How should this information be made available? **DO NOT PROMPT, CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY**

Through Schools	66%	Billboard advertising	15%
On TV	49%	Library	16%
On the radio	25%	Community Centre	12%
National newspapers	38%	PC retail outlets/shops	34%
Local newspapers	17%		

**\*\*\*\*\* GENERAL ATTITUDES\*\*\*\*\***

**ASK ALL**

Q.43 Which of the following technologies do you think could potentially cause the most harm to your children? **READ OUT & ROTATE, SINGLE RESPONSE**

Television	16%	Games Console such as a Playstation	7%
Mobile Phone	22%	Videos	11%
Internet	40%	Don't Know	3%

**SHOWCARD 'A'**

Q.44 Finally, I am going to read out a number of statements about the Internet, and I would like you to say whether you agree or disagree with each statement...

<b>READ OUT (Please Tick &amp; Rotate)</b> ▼	<b>Agree Strongly</b>	<b>Agree Slightly</b>	<b>Neither</b>	<b>Disagree Slightly</b>	<b>Disagree Strongly</b>	<b>Don't Know</b>
1. Schools have a major role to play in protecting young people online	69%	22%	4%	2%	1%	2%
2. Parent(s) should be responsible for protecting their children's use of the Internet	82%	16%	1%	-	1%	-
3. The Internet is a safe and secure environment for children to learn and communicate with people	15%	35%	16%	19%	10%	6%
4. Many parent(s) are unable to control and monitor Internet use of their children as they do not know enough about it	40%	40%	6%	2%	4%	8%
5. Given the international nature of the Internet, government is limited in what it can do to control the negative impact of the Internet	33%	29%	13%	9%	6%	10%
6. Children may become isolated from their friends if they spend too much time on the Internet	43%	36%	13%	6%	2%	-
7. Children who do not have access to the Internet are at a disadvantage	21%	42%	11%	18%	6%	3%

compared to their peers that do						
8. I am concerned that my child/children might access harmful material such as sexually explicit or violent material on the Internet	40%	34%	14%	5%	3%	3%
9. The positive aspects of Internet use among children outweigh the negatives	26%	41%	16%	6%	2%	9%
10. People worry too much about what children could be exposed to on the Internet	14%	21%	14%	17%	24%	10%

**THANK PARENT, COLLECT CLASSIFICATION & BEGIN INTERVIEWING CHILD**

## CHILDREN'S QUESTIONNAIRE

**PLEASE NOTE THAT PARENT IS NOT TO PROMPT CHILDS ANSWERS**

Q.45 Where do you use the Internet? **READ OUT, CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY**

Home	100%	An Internet café	-
School	38%	Parent's work	1%
A friend's house	23%	Childminder's House	1%
A relative's house	6%	Other (write in _____)	-
<b>A library</b>	2%		

### \*\*\*\*\* HOME INTERNET USE\*\*\*\*\*

Q.46 How often do you use the Internet at home? **SINGLE RESPONSE**

Every day	23%	Weekly	26%
Every 2 to 3 days	36%	About every 2 weeks	14%

Q.47 How long have you been using the Internet from anywhere at all?

<b>Years</b>		<b>Months</b>	<b>Average: 1.61 years</b>	<b>DON'T KNOW</b> 5%
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Q.48 What do you use the Internet for? **READ OUT, CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY, PROBE FOR AT LEAST THREE MENTIONS**

School projects	55%	Playing games on my own	43%
<b>Homework</b>	33%	Playing games with others	30%
<b>Exam revision</b>	5%	Game cheats	12%
School websites	8%	Hobbies	19%
To send e-mail	43%	Making web pages	2%
To receive e-mail	38%	Read magazines online	8%
To chat with others in chat rooms	21%	Download music	19%
News about TV programmes	4%	Football/Sports sites	22%
Information about products or services	7%	Listen to the radio	8%
		Other (write in _____)	%

Q.49 Do you think you know more about using the Internet than your parent(s) do?

Yes - a lot	49%
Yes - a little	20%
No	30%

### \*\*\*\*\* CHAT ROOMS \*\*\*\*\*

Q.50 Have you ever visited an online chat room? (**INTERVIEWER NOTE:** If the child is unsure of what a chat room is read out the following – A chat room is a place on the Internet where you can talk live to other people by typing to them)

Yes	35%	CONTINUE
No	64%	<b>SKIP TO Q.56</b>
Don't know	1%	

Q.51 How often do you visit chat rooms? **PROBE, SINGLE RESPONSE**

Every day	More than once a week	Once a week	Two-three times a month	Once a month	Once every 2-3 months	Less than once every 3 months
2%	20%	23%	17%	4%	8%	23%

Q.52 Do you chat to people you already know or to people you don't know in chat rooms? **SINGLE RESPONSE**

Mix of both	58%
People you know	13%
People you don't know	29%

Q.53 Have you ever felt frightened or uncomfortable in a chat room?

Yes	3%	No	97%
-----	----	----	-----

Q.54 Has anyone you don't know ever tried to make contact with you in a chat room by asking for your home address, your e-mail address, your surname or your phone number?

Yes	19%	No	81%
-----	-----	----	-----

Q.55 Has anyone you have met in an online chat room tried to arrange to meet you face-to-face?

Yes	2%	<b>SKIP TO Q. 57</b>
No	98%	

Q.56 Would you be interested in visiting a chat room?

Yes	10%	Don't know	40%
No	49%		

Q. 57 Do any of your friends or other people you know in for example your class visit online chat rooms?

Yes	39%	Don't know	33%
No	29%		

**\*\*\*\*\* INTERNET SAFETY\*\*\*\*\***

Q.58a Are you allowed to use the Internet at home when you are on your own?

Yes	51%
No	48%

Q.58b Is there a password on your home PC to stop you using the Internet when you are on your own?

Yes	40%	CONTINUE
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No	41%	<b>SKIP TO Q.60</b>
Don't know	20%	

Q.59 Do you know this password?

Yes	31%
No	69%

Q.60 When you use the Internet at home is there usually someone else in the room with you who keeps an eye on what you are doing?

Yes	60%	CONTINUE
No	40%	<b>SKIP TO Q.62</b>

Q.61 Who is usually in the room? **DO NOT PROMPT, SINGLE RESPONSE**

Mum	61%
<b>DAD</b>	25%
<b>BROTHERS/SISTERS</b>	10%
Other relatives	2%
Childminder/Babysitter	-
Friends	1%
Other (write in _____)	-

Q.62 When you use the Internet at home does someone actually sit down and use the Internet with you?

Yes – all of the time	11%	CONTINUE
Yes – some of the time	53%	
Never	35%	<b>GO TO Q. 64</b>

Q. 63 Who is the person that usually uses the Internet with you? **SINGLE RESPONSE**

Mum	56%
Dad	24%
Brothers/sisters	16%
Other relatives	-
Friends	1%
Other (write in _____)	-

*ASK ALL*

Q.64 When you want to use the Internet at home are any of the following rules applied? **SINGLE RESPONSE PER LINE**

<b>READ OUT AND ROTATE</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
You can only use the Internet for homework and school projects	37%	62%
An adult is always around when you use the Internet	53%	47%
Your parent(s) tell you exactly what websites you can visit	49%	50%
You are only allowed spend a limited amount of time on the Internet	82%	17%
You are only allowed use the Internet at home	53%	46%

You are not allowed use the Internet when you have friends around in the house	47%	53%
You can only use the Internet at particular times of the day or during particular days of the week	78%	22%
Other (Specify _____)	2%	15%

**CONTINUE THOSE WHO USE THE INTERNET AT A FRIENDS HOUSE, I.E. CODE 3 AT QUESTION 45, REST SKIP TO Q.68**

Q.66 When you use the Internet at a friend's house does an adult supervise you?

Yes – all of the time	15%	<b>CONTINUE</b>
Yes - some of the time	43%	
No – never	42%	<b>SKIP TO Q.68</b>

Q.67 Who is it that supervises you? **DO NOT PROMPT, CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY**

Friends mother	81%
Friends father	19%
Friends Brothers/sisters	24%
Other (write in _____)	-

**ASK ALL**

Q.68 Do you talk to either of your parent(s) about what you do on the Internet?

**READ OUT**

Yes - all the time	23%	Rarely	20%
Yes – sometimes	47%	Never	11%

Q.69 Have your parent(s) talked to you about using the Internet safely?

Yes	67%	No	33%
-----	-----	----	-----

Q.70 Do you think your parent(s) know and understand exactly what you do on the Internet?

Yes	71%	Don't know	20%
No	10%		

Q.71 Do your parent(s) trust you when you use the Internet not to visit sites that they would not like you to see?

Yes	80%	Don't know	14%
No	6%		

Q.72 Have you ever seen things on the Internet that you think your parent(s) would not like you to see?

Yes	15%	<b>CONTINUE</b>
No	78%	<b>SKIP TO Q.75</b>
Don't know	6%	

Q.73 Did you speak to anyone about this?

Yes	55%	<b>CONTINUE</b>
No	45%	<b>SKIP TO</b>

		<b>Q.75</b>
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Q.74 Who did you speak to? **DO NOT PROMPT, CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY**

Parent(s)	16%
Friends	68%
Teacher	19%
Older brother or sister	28%
Other relative	6%
Other (Please specify _____ )	-

**ASK ALL**

Q.75 Do you know of any friends or people in your class who have come across information or pictures on the Internet that **your** parent(s) would not like **you** to see?

Yes	25%	Don't know	24%
No	51%		

Q.76 Software can be put on a computer to protect you from seeing something or reading something that might not be suitable for you. Have you ever heard of something like this?

Yes	59%
No	41%

Q.77 Does your home computer have anything like this to protect you from looking at something that might be unsuitable for you?

Yes	21%	Don't know	35%
No	44%		

**CONTINUE ALL THOSE WHO ALSO HAVE ACCESS AT SCHOOL E.G. CODE 02 AT QUESTION 45, REST SKIP TO Q.79**

Q.78 Do you know if your school computer has anything like this to protect you from looking at something that might be unsuitable for you?

Yes	26%	Don't know	57%
No	17%		

**ASK ALL**

Q.79. I am going to read out a number of statements about the Internet, and I would like you to say whether you agree or disagree with each statement? **SINGLE RESPONSE PER LINE**

<b>▼ READ OUT AND ROTATE</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Don't Know</b>
1. Children should be able to visit any websites they want to	35%	40%	25%
2. The Internet is a safe place for children to be	57%	23%	19%
3. My parent(s) worry too much about what I do on the Internet	36%	47%	18%
4. I would like more freedom to do what I want on the Internet	51%	31%	17%
5. The Internet is very important for my school work	75%	18%	8%

6. I would like my parent(s) to know more about using the Internet	61%	22%	17%
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Q.78 a Please record whether a parent or guardian was present for at least most of the interview?

Yes – parent present	67%
No parent present	33%

**CLOSE INTERVIEW AND COLLECT CLASSIFICATION**

C1 Childs Gender

Boy	59%	Girl	41%
-----	-----	------	-----

C2 Age of child

10 years	16%	13 years	26%
11 years	16%	14 years	23%
12 Years	12%		

C3 Education level – current year completed

4 <sup>th</sup> class	19%	1 <sup>st</sup> year post-primary	21%
5 <sup>th</sup> class	15%	2 <sup>nd</sup> year post-primary	23%
6 <sup>th</sup> class	20%		

Interviewer's Declaration Interviewers Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

I certify that this is an eligible interview which has been carried out strictly in accordance with your specifications and has been conducted within the MRS code

Parents/Guardians Signature _____
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## PARENT CLASSIFICATION PAGE

<b>C1 Gender</b>		<b>C7 Highest Educational Qualification Attained</b>	
Male.....	41%	Primary level.....	9%
Female.....	59%	2 <sup>nd</sup> level.....	80%
<b>C2 Age (State exact age and code)</b>	<input style="width: 40px; height: 20px;" type="text"/>	Still at 2 <sup>nd</sup> level.....	1%
25-29.....	2%	3 <sup>rd</sup> level Under graduate .....	6%
30-34.....	10%	3 <sup>rd</sup> level Post graduate .....	4%
35-39.....	29%	Still at 3 <sup>rd</sup> Level.....	-
40-44.....	34%	No formal education.....	-
45-49.....	13%	<b>C8 Occupation of Chief Income Earner</b>	
50-54.....	6%	(Record job details)	
55-59.....	4%	_____	
60-64.....	1%	<b>C9 Social Class</b>	
65-74.....	-	AB.....	5%
<b>C3 Marital Status</b>		C1.....	16%
Married.....	83%	C2.....	40%
Living as Married.....	3%	D.....	17%
Single.....	7%	E.....	3%
Widowed/Divorced/Separated.....	7%	F50+.....	17%
<b>C4 Persons in Household</b>		F50-.....	2%
Including yourself, how many people live in your household.....	<input style="width: 40px; height: 20px;" type="text"/>	<b>C10 Respondents Working Status</b>	
Complete space opposite		Working full time .....	53%
How many children under the age of 18 live in your household..	<input style="width: 40px; height: 20px;" type="text"/>	Working part-time .....	8%
How many are aged 9 and under	<input style="width: 40px; height: 20px;" type="text"/>	Self-employed.....	8%
How many are between 10 and 14 years	<input style="width: 40px; height: 20px;" type="text"/>	Unemployed seeking a job.....	1%
How many are between 15 and 18 years	<input style="width: 40px; height: 20px;" type="text"/>	Looking after family/homemaker.....	29%
		Retired.....	-
		Student.....	-
		Other.....	1%

Interviewer's Declaration Interviewers Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

I certify that this is an eligible interview which has been carried out strictly in accordance with your specifications and has been conducted within the MPO code of conduct.

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**ASSIGNMENT NUMBER.....**

**N.B. OF YOUR 10 QUESTIONNAIRES IN THE ASSIGNMENT SHEET  
5 MUST BE WITH MALE PARENTS/GUARDIANS  
5 MUST BE WITH FEMALE PARENTS/GUARDIANS**

Good morning/afternoon. I am ..... of Field Research Ireland, I am currently conducting a survey on Internet use. I would greatly appreciate it if you could spare some time to complete the survey.

**Agree on child to be interviewed and inform parent that all questions relating to Internet use of the child will only relate to the child who has been selected for interview**

**PARENT TO BE INTERVIEWED FIRST**  
**BEST EFFORTS SHOULD BE MADE TO ENSURE THAT THE CHILD IS NOT IN THE ROOM WHEN THE PARENT IS BEING INTERVIEWED. THE PARENT CAN BE IN THE ROOM WHEN THE CHILD IS BEING INTERVIEWED BUT SHOULD NOT PROMPT ANY OF THE CHILD'S ANSWERS**

**\*\*\*\*\* PARENTAL USE OF THE INTERNET \*\*\*\*\***

Q.1 Do you intend to get home Internet access within the next 12 months?

Yes - certain to	7%	<b>SKIP TO Q.3</b>
Yes – likely to	21%	
No	58%	<b>CONTINUE</b>
Don't know	14%	

Q.2 Why do you say you will not start get the Internet at home within the next 12 months? **DO NOT PROMPT, CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY**

It is too expensive / Cannot afford to	41%	Would need to upgrade computer – not fast enough or not enough memory	6%
Has no use for it / Sees it as irrelevant	47%	Can use the Internet in work/school/college instead	16%
Doesn't know anything about the Internet	14%	Other	5%
Concerned about children's safety on-line	22%	(write in _____)	
Has a computer but does not have a modem	9%	Not my decision	1%
<b>ALL ANSWERING QUESTION 2, SKIP TO Q.4</b>			

Q.3 What is the main reason for getting Internet access at home? **DO NOT PROMPT, SINGLE RESPONSE**

Pressure from children	16%
For educational purposes for myself	27%
For educational purposes for my children	20%
A lot of people I know are on the Internet and I want to keep in touch through email	2%
My employer is providing me with Internet access	-
It is now so cheap to access the internet	4%
As a source of entertainment	9%
To shop on-line	-
To seek information	18%
In order to work from home	5%
Other (Please specify _____)	-
Don't know	-

Q.4 Do you use the Internet at all?

Yes	23%	<b>CONTINUE</b>
No	77%	<b>SKIP TO Q.8</b>

Q.5 Where do you use it? **READ OUT, CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY**

Home	-	Public Library	2%
Work	69%	On the move using portable equipment e.g, a WAP mobile phone, a palmpilot, a laptop	-
School/college	3%	Elsewhere(write in_____)	4%
Cyber Cafés	9%		
Friends house	16%		

Q.6 How often do you use the Internet from any location? **READ OUT SINGLE RESPONSE**

Daily	14%	Monthly	16%
Every 2 to 3 days	9%	Less often	29%
Weekly	25%	Don't know	-
Fortnightly	6%		

Q.7 How long have you been using the Internet from anywhere at all?  
(INTERVIEWER: INCLUDING USING EMAIL ONLY)

<b>Years</b>		<b>Months</b>	<b>Average Years1.66</b>	<b>DON'T KNOW 999</b>
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**ASK ALL**

Q.8 On a scale of one to five where 1 equals not at all knowledgeable and 5 equals very knowledgeable how do you rate your knowledge of the Internet i.e. your overall ability to use the Internet?

<b>Not at all knowledgeable</b>				<b>Very Knowledgeable</b>
45%	27%	19%	7%	3%

**\*\*\*\*\* CHILDS USE OF THE INTERNET \*\*\*\*\***

**INTERVIEWER - PLEASE INFORM PARENT THAT "CHILD" IN ALL QUESTIONS REFERS ONLY TO CHILD SELECTED TO BE SURVEY.**

Q.9 Where does your child use the Internet? **READ OUT, CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY**

School	67%	A library	5%
A friend's house	28%	An Internet café	2%
A relative's house	19%	Parent's work	5%
Childminder's house	4%	Other (write in_____)	-

Q.10 How often does your child use the Internet from anywhere at all? **SINGLE RESPONSE**

Daily	5%	Monthly	9%
Every 2 to 3 days	14%	Less often than monthly	9%
Weekly	43%	Don't know	9%
Fortnightly	15%		

Q.11 What does your child use the Internet for? **NO PROMPTING, CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY**

School projects	63%	Playing games on my own	8%
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Homework	20%	Playing games with others	20%
Exam revision	1%	Game cheats	3%
School websites	8%	Hobbies	12%
To send e-mail	5%	Making web pages	3%
To receive e-mail	2%	Read magazines online	1%
To chat with others in chat rooms	1%	Download music	4%
News about TV programmes	2%	Football/Sports sites	13%
Information about products or services	18%	Listen to the radio	1%
		Other (write in _____)	6%

Q.12 Do you feel your child knows more about using the Internet than you do e.g. is able to find web pages faster than you? **READ OUT**

Yes - a lot	66%
Yes - a little	20%
No	14%

Q.13 Are you aware of online chat rooms? ? **INTERVIEWER NOTE – IF THE RESPONDENT IS UNAWARE OF WHAT A CHAT ROOM IS READ OUT THE FOLLOWING - A chat room is a place on the Internet where visitors can talk to each other live by typing in the words.**

Yes	81%	No	19%
-----	-----	----	-----

Q.14 Does your child ever visit chat rooms?

Yes	3%	Don't know	29%
No	68%		

**\*\*\*\*\* INTERNET USE IN SCHOOL \*\*\*\*\***

**CONTINUE ALL THOSE WHOSE CHILDREN USE THE INTERNET AT SCHOOL I.E. CODE 1 AT QUESTION 9, REST SKIP TO Q. 21**

Q.15 How often does your child access the Internet at school?

Daily	1%
Every 2 to 3 days	30%
Weekly	46%
Fortnightly	7%
Don't know	-

Q.16 When your child uses the Internet at school is it..**READ OUT, SINGLE RESPONSE**

Always supervised by a teacher	63%	CONTINUE
Usually supervised by a teacher	14%	
Not supervised by a teacher	1%	SKIP TO Q.18
Don't know/Not sure	23%	

Q.17 Are you sure their use is supervised or are you assuming it is supervised?

Assuming	54%	Sure	46%
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Q.18 Have you received communication from your child's school in relation to their policy on children using the Internet in school?

Yes	43%	Not sure/Don't know	11%
No	46%		

Q.19 Are you aware of software, such as Net Nanny, that can be purchased and put on a PC that restricts access to certain "adult" sites?

Yes	49%	CONTINUE
No	51%	SKIP TO Q. 21

Q.20 Is this software used in your child's school?

Yes	41%	Don't know	56%
No	3%		

\*\*\*\*\* SAFETY OF THE INTERNET \*\*\*\*\*

**ASK ALL**

Q.21 Do you have any rules for your child when they access the Internet at any location? **SINGLE RESPONSE**

Yes	38%	CONTINUE
No	52%	SKIP TO Q.23
Don't know	10%	

Q.22 Which of the following rules, if any, have you set for your child when they access the Internet?

<b>READ OUT (Please circle appropriate code &amp; Rotate)</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
10. Can only go online for homework or school projects	49%	51%
11. An adult/teacher is always present when they access the Internet	82%	18%
12. Can only visit specific websites authorised by a parent/adult/teacher	81%	19%
13. The amount of time spent online is limited	81%	19%
14. The time of day or night that the child uses the Internet is specified	65%	35%

Q.23a Now thinking generally about young children, what do you consider to be the main negatives of Internet use among children aged 14 or under? **DO NOT PROMPT, SINGLE RESPONSE**

Q.23b What other negatives can you think of, that would apply to children aged 14 or under? **DO NOT PROMPT, PROBE FOR MULTIPLE RESPONSE**

<b>QUESTION 23a</b>	<b>MAIN</b>	<b>QUESTION 23b</b>	<b>OTHER</b>
Anti-social/insular activity	1%	Anti-social/insular activity	18%
Access to pornogrpghy	50%	Access to pornogrpghy	31%
Access to violent/hate material	7%	Access to violent/hate material	40%
Access to unsuitable material/information	19%	Access unsuitable material/information	32%
Could spend the time more usefully	5%	Could spend the time more usefully	22%

Makes them lazy about doing homework/ school projects	1%	Makes them lazy about doing homework/ school projects	15%
Do not read enough books		Do not read enough books	15%
Bullying/ Harassment		Bullying/Harassment	8%
Can be exposed to unsuitable people e.g. paedophiles	12%	Can be exposed to unsuitable people e.g. paedophiles	39%
Too exposed to advertising	2%	Too exposed to advertising	12%
Spend too much time playing games	1%	Spend too much time playing games	28%
Other (write in _____)	1%	Other (write in _____)	
Nothing	1%	Nothing	3%

Q.24a What kind of unsuitable material/information do you think could cause harm to young children if they accessed it on the Internet (children aged 14 or under)?  
**DO NOT PROMPT, CIRCLE ALL MENTIONS, PROBE FOR MORE THAN ONE MENTION**

Q24b Are you aware that the following is widely available on the Internet? **READ OUT THOSE NOT MENTIONED AT Q.24a , CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY**

	Q.24a UNPROMPTED	Q.24b	Q.24b
		PROMPTED Yes Aware	PROMPTED Not aware
Pornographic pictures/images	77%	98%	2%
Information about sex	50%	89%	11%
Information about drugs	31%	74%	26%
Racist/hate material	13%	55%	45%
Information about cults	15%	52%	48%
Violent images/pictures	21%	76%	24%
Information about making bombs/terrorism	4%	39%	61%
Information about suicide	7%	43%	57%
Information about anorexia/losing weight	8%	43%	57%
Information about racism	6%	46%	54%
Unsuitable jokes	13%	63%	37%
Other (Please specify _____)	4%		
Don't know	4%		

Q.25 Have you ever discussed with your child the potential dangers of Internet use?

Yes	49%	No	51%
-----	-----	----	-----

Q.26 How often does your child discuss their online activities with you?

All of the time	5%	Rarely	24%
Some of the time	36%	Never	34%

Q.27 Has you child ever told you about something unsuitable that they saw on the Internet that may have upset or frightened them?

Yes	4%	No	96%
-----	----	----	-----

Q.28 Do you trust your child not to visit inappropriate websites on the Internet or to search for unsuitable material?

Yes – totally	43%	Not at all	6%
Yes – somewhat	51%		

Q.29 Do you understand the difference between illegal material and harmful material on the Internet?

Yes	56%	Don't know	19%
No	25%		

Q.30 If you came across a website or online material that you considered illegal or harmful for young children would you report it?

Yes	77%	CONTINUE
No	3%	<b>SKIP TO Q.32</b>
Don't know	20%	

Q.31 Who would you report it to? **DO NOT PROMPT, MULTIPLE RESPONSE**

The Gardaí	78%
Your Internet Service Provider e.g. Eircom	27%
A complaints hotline	13%
School/teachers	33%
Don't know	4%

**ASK ALL**

Q.32 Do you think children need to have access to the Internet?

Yes	41%	Don't know	23%
No	36%		

Q.34 At what age do you think children need to start using the Internet?

Write in exact Age stated	→	Av. Age: 12.41
---------------------------	---	----------------

Q.35 At what age do you think children should be warned about the potential harmful aspects of Internet use?

Write in exact Age stated	→	Av. Age: 11.95
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Q.36 At what age would you be happy to leave a child unsupervised when they are using the Internet?

Write in exact Age stated	→	Av. Age: 14.92
---------------------------	---	----------------

Q.37 Would you be concerned about your child accessing the Internet unsupervised outside of your home for example, at school, a local library or a friends house? **READ OUT , SINGLE RESPONSE**

Yes - very concerned	41%	Not at all concerned	7%
Yes – quite concerned	37%	Have never thought about it	15%

Q.38a In your opinion, who has the **primary** responsibility for protecting children when they are on the Internet? **DO NOT PROMPT, SINGLE RESPONSE**

Q.38b Who else has a responsibility for protecting children when they are on the Internet? **DO NOT PROMPT, MULTIPLE RESPONSE**

	<b>Q.38a Primary responsibility</b>	<b>Q.38b Other</b>	<b>Any mention</b>
Parent(s)	74%	22%	96
Schools/teachers	13%	59%	72
Older Brothers/Sisters	-	19%	19
ISPs (e.g. Eircom, Esat, Indigo)	3%	15%	18
Neighbours/friends parent(s)	2%	25%	26
Government	3%	27%	30
Website owners	4%	22%	26
Other (please specify _____)		13%	13%
Don't know	2%	6%	5%

**\*\*\*\*\* SAFETY OPTIONS\*\*\*\*\***

Q.39 Would you like more information about how to protect your children when they are on the Internet?

Yes	79%	CONTINUE
No	21%	SKIP TO Q.42

Q.40 Who do you think should provide that information? **MULTIPLE RESPONSE, NO PROMPT**

Schools	49%	Website owners (Content providers)	6%
ISPs (e.g. Eircom, Esat, Indigo)	20%	Other (please specify _____)	3%
Government	47%	Don't know	2%
PC sellers/retail outlets	24%		
Media	16%		

Q.41 How should this information be made available? **DO NOT PROMPT, CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY**

Through Schools	60%	Billboard advertising	9%
On TV	32%	Library	17%
On the radio	20%	Community Centre	8%
National newspapers	34%	PC retail outlets/shops	29%
Local newspapers	12%		

**\*\*\*\*\* GENERAL ATTITUDES\*\*\*\*\***

**ASK ALL**

Q.42 Which of the following technologies do you think could potentially cause the most harm to your children? **READ OUT & ROTATE, SINGLE RESPONSE**

Television	19%
Mobile Phone	18%
Internet	31%
Games Console such as a Playstation	13%
Videos	18%

**SHOWCARD 'A'**

Q.43 Finally, I am going to read out a number of statements about the Internet, and I would like you to say whether you agree or disagree with each statement...

<b>READ OUT (Please Tick &amp; Rotate)</b> ▼	<b>Agree Strongly</b>	<b>Agree Slightly</b>	<b>Neither</b>	<b>Disagree Slightly</b>	<b>Disagree Strongly</b>	<b>Don't Know</b>
11. Schools have a major role to play in protecting young people online	75%	20%	4%	1%	-	-
12. Parent(s) should be responsible for protecting their children's use of the Internet	78%	16%	3%	3%	-	-
13. The Internet is a safe and secure environment for children to learn and communicate with people	4%	22%	17%	28%	24%	4%
14. Many parent(s) are unable to control and monitor Internet use of their children as they do not know enough about it	52%	31%	8%	8%	2%	-
15. Given the international nature of the Internet, government is limited in what it can do to control the negative impact of the Internet	32%	37%	8%	13%	4%	6%
16. Children may become isolated from their friends if they spend too much time on the Internet	38%	27%	16%	17%	2%	-
17. Children who do not have access to the Internet are at a disadvantage compared to their peers that do	8%	23%	14%	27%	24%	4%
18. I am concerned that my child/children might access harmful material such as sexually explicit or violent material on the Internet	64%	30%	2%	1%	3%	-
19. The positive aspects of Internet use among children outweigh the negatives	7%	33%	31%	13%	6%	10%
20. People worry too much about what children could be exposed to on the Internet	4%	11%	7%	32%	43%	3%

**THANK PARENT, COLLECT CLASSIFICATION & BEGIN INTERVIEWING CHILD**

**CHILDREN'S QUESTIONNAIRE**

**PLEASE NOTE THAT PARENT IS NOT TO PROMPT CHILDS ANSWERS**

Q.44 Where do you use the Internet? **READ OUT, CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY**

School	70%	An Internet café	3%
A friend's house	37%	Parent's work	4%
A relative's house	19%	Childminder's house	3%
A library	9%	Other (write in _____)	

**\*\*\*\*\* INTERNET USE\*\*\*\*\***

Q.45 How often do you use the Internet from anywhere at all? **READ OUT, SINGLE RESPONSE**

Every day	2%
Every 2 to 3 days	17%
Weekly	50%
About every 2 weeks	31%

Q.46 How long have you been using the Internet from anywhere at all?

<b>Years</b>		<b>Months</b>	<b>Average: 1.06</b>	<b>DON'T KNOW</b> 1%
--------------	--	---------------	----------------------	-------------------------

Q.47 What do you use the Internet for? **CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY, PROBE FOR AT LEAST THREE MENTIONS**

School projects	58%	Playing games on my own	14%
Homework	20%	Playing games with others	28%
Exam revision	6%	Game cheats	8%
School websites	19%	Hobbies	22%
To send e-mail	6%	Making web pages	3%
To receive e-mail	4%	Read magazines online	4%
To chat with others in chat rooms	5%	Download music	8%
News about TV programmes	6%	Football/Sports sites	14%
Information about products or services	15%	Listen to the radio	1%

Q.48 Do you think you know more about using the Internet than your parent(s) do?

Yes - a lot	54%
Yes - a little	25%
No	21%

**\*\*\*\*\* CHAT ROOMS\*\*\*\*\***

Q.49 Have you ever visited an online chat room? ? (**INTERVIEWER NOTE:** If the child is unsure of what a chat room is read out the following – A chat room is a place on the Internet where you can talk live to other people by typing to them)

Yes	13%	CONTINUE
No	86%	

Don't know	1%	<b>SKIP TO Q. 55</b>
------------	----	----------------------

Q.50 How often do you visit chat rooms? **PROBE, SINGLE RESPONSE**

Every day	More than once a week	Once a week	Two-three times a month	Once a month	Once every 2-3 months	Less than once every 3 months
		6%	14%	23%	39%	18%

Q.51 Do you chat to people you already know or to people you don't know in chat rooms? **SINGLE RESPONSE**

Mix of both	18%
People you know	49%
People you don't know	33%

Q.52 Have you ever felt frightened or uncomfortable in a chat room?

Yes	-	No	100%
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Q.53 Has anyone you don't know ever tried to make contact with you in a chat room by asking for your home address, your e-mail address, your surname or your phone number?

Yes	11%	No	89%
-----	-----	----	-----

Q.54 Has anyone you have met in an online chat room tried to arrange to meet you face-to-face?

Yes	-	<b>SKIP TO Q.56</b>
No	100%	

Q.55 Would you be interested in visiting a chat room?

Yes	35%	Don't know	17%
No	49%		

Q.56 Do any of your friends or other people you know in for example your class visit online chat rooms?

Yes	41%	Don't know	32%
No	27%		

**\*\*\*\*\* SCHOOL INTERNET USE\*\*\*\*\***

**CONTINUE ALL THOSE WHO USE THE INTERNET AT SCHOOL I.E. CODE 1 AT QUESTION 44, REST SKIP TO Q. 62**

Q.57 When you use the Internet at school, is there a teacher there?

Yes - all of the time	87%	Never	-
Yes - some of the time	13%		

Q.58 When you want to use the Internet at school are any of the following rules applied? **SINGLE RESPONSE PER LINE**

<b>READ OUT AND ROTATE</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
----------------------------	------------	-----------

You can only use the Internet for homework and school projects	71%	29%
An teacher is always around when you use the Internet	91%	7%
Your teacher tell you exactly what websites you can visit	85%	15%
You are only allowed spend a limited amount of time on the Internet	93%	5%
You can only use the Internet at particular times of the day or during particular days of the week	96%	4%

Q.59 Are you ever allowed to use the Internet at school when a teacher is not there?

Yes	11%	No	89%
-----	-----	----	-----

Q.60 Software can be put on a computer to protect you from seeing something or reading something that might not be suitable for you. Have you ever heard of something like this?

Yes	53%	No	47%
-----	-----	----	-----

Q.61 Do you know if your school computer has anything like this to protect you from looking at something that might be unsuitable for you?

Yes	40%	Don't know	56%
No	5%		

**\*\*\*\*\* INTERNET USE AT FRIENDS HOUSE\*\*\*\*\***

**CONTINUE ALL THOSE WHO USE THE INTERNET AT A FRIENDS HOUSE I.E. CODE 2 AT QUESTION 44, REST SKIP TO Q. 64**

Q.62 When you use the Internet at a friend's house does an adult supervise you?

Yes – all of the time	5%	CONTINUE
Yes - some of the time	47%	
No - never	48%	<b>SKIP TO Q.64</b>

Q.63 Who is it that supervises you? **DO NOT PROMPT, CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY**

Friends mother	62%
Friends father	10%
Friends Brothers/sisters	34%
Other (write in _____)	9%

**\*\*\*\*\* INTERNET SAFETY\*\*\*\*\***

**ASK ALL**

Q.64 Do you think your parent(s) know and understand exactly what you do on the Internet?

Yes	36%	Don't know	55%
-----	-----	------------	-----

Q.65 Do you talk to either of your parent(s) about what you do on the Internet?

**READ OUT**

Yes - all the time	10%	Rarely	27%
Yes – sometimes	41%	Never	22%

Q.66 Have your parent(s) talked to you about using the Internet safely?

Yes	50%	No	50%
-----	-----	----	-----

Q.67 Do your parent(s) trust you when you use the Internet not to visit sites that they would not like you to see?

Yes	68%	Don't know	29%
No	4%		

Q.68 Have you ever seen things on the Internet that you think your parent(s) would not like you to see?

Yes	11%	CONTINUE
No	87%	SKIP TO Q.71
Don't know	2%	

Q.69 Did you speak to anyone about this?

Yes	55%	CONTINUE
No	45%	SKIP TO Q.71

Q.70 Who did you speak to? **DO NOT PROMPT, CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY**

Parent(s)	-	Older brother or sister	62%
Friends	60%	Other relative	20%
Teacher	20%	Other (Please specify _____)	-

**ASK ALL**

Q.71 Do you know of any friends or people in your class who have come across information or pictures on the Internet that **your** parent(s) would not like **you** to see?

Yes	25%	No	75%
-----	-----	----	-----

Q.72 I am going to read out a number of statements about the Internet, and I would like you to say whether you agree or disagree with each statement? **SINGLE RESPONSE**

<b>▼ READ OUT AND ROTATE</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Don't Know</b>
7. Children should be able to visit any websites they want to	21%	55%	23%
8. The Internet is a safe place for children to be	30%	47%	23%
9. My parent(s) worry too much about what I do on the Internet	32%	50%	18%
10. I would like more freedom to do what I want on the Internet	44%	43%	13%
11. The Internet is very important for my school work	57%	38%	5%
12. I would like my parent(s) to know more about using the Internet	76%	8%	16%

Q.73 Please record whether a parent or guardian was present for at least most of the interview?

Yes – parent present	78%	No parent present	22%
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**CLOSE INTERVIEW AND COLLECT CLASSIFICATION**

C1 Childs Gender

Boy	53%	Girl	47%
-----	-----	------	-----

C2 Age of child

10 years	19%	13 years	19%
----------	-----	----------	-----

11 years	19%	14 years	28%
12 Years	16%		

C3 Education level – current year completed

4 <sup>th</sup> class	15%	1 <sup>st</sup> year post-primary	22%
5 <sup>th</sup> class	16%	2 <sup>nd</sup> year post-primary	23%
6 <sup>th</sup> class	20%		

Interviewer's Declaration Interviewers Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

I certify that this is an eligible interview which has been carried out strictly in accordance with your specifications and has been conducted within the MRS code of conduct.

Parents/Guardians Signature _____
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## PARENT CLASSIFICATION PAGE

<p><b>C1 Gender</b>                      Male..... 45%                      Female..... 55%</p> <p><b>C2 Age (State exact age and code)</b> <input style="width: 40px; height: 20px;" type="text"/></p> <p>25-29..... 1%                      30-34..... 8%                      35-39..... 24%                      40-44..... 33%                      45-49..... 22%                      50-54..... 11%                      55-59..... 1%</p> <p><b>C3 Marital Status</b>                      Married..... 86%                      Living as Married..... 5%                      Single..... 4%                      Widowed/Divorced/Separated..... 4%</p> <p><b>C4 Persons in Household</b>                      Including yourself, how many people live in your household..... <input style="width: 40px; height: 20px;" type="text"/>                      Complete space opposite</p> <p>How many children under the age of 18 live in your household.. <input style="width: 40px; height: 20px;" type="text"/></p> <p>How many are aged 9 and under <input style="width: 40px; height: 20px;" type="text"/></p> <p>How many are between 10 and 14 years <input style="width: 40px; height: 20px;" type="text"/></p> <p>How many are between 15 and 18 years <input style="width: 40px; height: 20px;" type="text"/></p>	<p><b>C7 Highest Educational Qualification Attained</b>                      Primary level..... 7%                      2<sup>nd</sup> level..... 67%                      Still at 2<sup>nd</sup> level..... 2%                      3<sup>rd</sup> level Under graduate ..... 11%                      3<sup>rd</sup> level Post graduate ..... 10%                      Still at 3<sup>rd</sup> Level..... -                      No formal education..... 2%</p> <p><b>C8 Occupation of Chief Income Earner</b>                      (Record job details)                      _____</p> <p><b>C9 Social Class</b>                      A1..... 48%                      C2DE..... 44%                      F..... 5%</p> <p><b>C10 Respondents Working Status</b>                      Working full time ..... 57%                      Working part-time ..... 12%                      Self-employed..... 7%                      Unemployed seeking a job..... 2%                      Looking after family/homemaker..... 21%                      Retired..... -                      Student..... -                      Other..... 1%</p>	
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Interviewer's Declaration Interviewers Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

I certify that this is an eligible interview which has been carried out strictly in accordance with your specifications and has been conducted within the MRS code of conduct.

**ASSIGNMENT NUMBER.....**

**N.B. OF YOUR 10 QUESTIONNAIRES IN THE ASSIGNMENT SHEET  
 5 MUST BE WITH MALE PARENTS/GUARDIANS  
 5 MUST BE WITH FEMALE PARENTS/GUARDIANS**

Good morning/afternoon. I am ..... of Field Research Ireland, I am currently conducting a survey on home Internet use. I would greatly appreciate it if you could spare some time to complete the survey.

**Agree on child to be interviewed and inform parent that all questions relating to Internet use of the child will only relate to the child who has been selected for interview**

**PARENT TO BE INTERVIEWED FIRST  
BEST EFFORTS SHOULD BE MADE TO ENSURE THAT THE CHILD IS NOT IN THE ROOM WHEN THE PARENT IS BEING INTERVIEWED. THE PARENT CAN BE IN THE ROOM WHEN THE CHILD IS BEING INTERVIEWED BUT SHOULD NOT PROMPT ANY OF THE CHILD'S ANSWERS**

**\*\*\*\*\* PARENTAL USE OF THE INTERNET \*\*\*\*\***

Do you use the Internet at all?

Yes	55%
No	45%

Where do you use it? **READ OUT, CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY**

Home	90%	Public Library	3%
Work	33%	On the move using portable equipment e.g, a WAP mobile phone, a palmpilot, a laptop	8%
School/college	3%	Elsewhere	-
Cyber Cafés	3%	(write in _____)	-
Friends house	4%		

How often do you use the Internet from any location? **READ OUT SINGLE RESPONSE**

Daily	30%	Monthly	8%
Every 2 to 3 days	27%	Less often	11%
Weekly	20%	Don't know	-
Fortnightly	1%		

On a scale of one to five where 1 equals not at all knowledgeable and 5 equals very knowledgeable how do you rate your knowledge of the Internet i.e. your overall ability to use the Internet?

<b>Not at all knowledgeable</b>				<b>Very Knowledgeable</b>
27%	24%	25%	12%	11%

**\*\*\*\*\* CHILDS USE OF THE INTERNET \*\*\*\*\***

**INTERVIEWER - PLEASE INFORM PARENT THAT "CHILD" IN ALL QUESTIONS REFERS ONLY TO CHILD SELECTED TO BE SURVEY.**

What does your child use the Internet for? **NO PROMPTING, CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY**

School projects	55%	Playing games on my own	30%
Homework	30%	Playing games with others	22%
Exam revision	5%	Game cheats	7%
School websites	9%	Hobbies	14%
To send e-mail	30%	Making web pages	2%
To receive e-mail	25%	Read magazines online	2%
To chat with others in chat rooms	9%	Download music	11%
News about TV programmes	2%	Football/Sports sites	17%
Information about products or services	13%	Listen to the radio	3%
		Other (write in _____)	5%

Are you aware of online chat rooms? **INTERVIEWER NOTE – IF THE RESPONDENT IS UNAWARE OF WHAT A CHAT ROOM IS READ OUT THE FOLLOWING -** A chat room is a place on the Internet where visitors can talk to each other live by typing in the words

Yes	87%	No	13%
-----	-----	----	-----

Does your child ever visit chat rooms?

Yes	18%	Don't know	18%
No	64%		

Do you feel your child knows more about using the Internet than you do e.g. is able to find web pages faster than you?

Yes - a lot	56%
Yes – a little	21%
No	23%

**\*\*\*\*\* SAFETY OF THE INTERNET \*\*\*\*\***

Do you trust your child not to visit inappropriate websites on the Internet or to search for unsuitable material?

Yes – totally	51%
Yes – somewhat	45%
Not at all	4%

Now thinking generally about young children, what do you consider to be the **main** negatives of Internet use among children aged 14 or under? **DO NOT PROMPT, Single RESPONSE**

What other negatives can you think of, that would apply to children aged 14 or under? **DO NOT PROMPT, PROBE FOR MULTIPLE RESPONSE**

	MAIN		OTHER
Anti-social/insular activity	6%	Anti-social/insular activity	18%
Access to pornogrppghy	44%	Access to pornogrppghy	34%
Access to violent/hate material	5%	Access to violent/hate material	31%

Access to unsuitable material/information	18%	Access unsuitable material/information	30%
Could spend the time more usefully	6%	Could spend the time more usefully	22%
Makes them lazy about doing homework/ school projects	3%	Makes them lazy about doing homework/ school projects	22%
Do not read enough books	-	Do not read enough books	14%
Bullying/ Harassment	-	Bullying/Harassment	6%
Can be exposed to unsuitable people e.g. paedophiles	12%	Can be exposed to unsuitable people e.g. paedophiles	37%
Too exposed to advertising	1%	Too exposed to advertising	15%
Spend too much time playing games	1%	Spend too much time playing games	30%
Other (write in _____)		Other (write in _____)	3%
Nothing	2%	Nothing	4%

What kind of unsuitable material/information do you think could cause harm to young children (Children aged 14 or under) if they accessed it on the Internet? **DO NOT PROMPT, CIRCLE ALL MENTIONS, PROBE FOR MORE THAN ONE MENTION**

Are you aware that the following is widely available on the Internet? **READ OUT AND ROTATE, CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY**

	UNPROMPTED	PROMPTED Yes Aware	PROMPTED Not aware
Pornographic pictures/images	81%	98%	2%
Information about sex	40%	94%	6%
Information about drugs	26%	78%	22%
Racist/hate material	10%	56%	44%
Information about cults	8%	55%	46%
Violent images/pictures	20%	73%	27%
Information about making bombs/terrorism	5%	42%	58%
Information about suicide	5%	47%	53%
Information about anorexia/losing weight	4%	49%	51%
Information about racism	5%	53%	47%
Unsuitable jokes	11%	63%	37%
Other (Please specify _____)	4%		
Don't know	3%		

Have you ever discussed with your child the potential dangers of Internet use?

Yes	62%	No	38%
-----	-----	----	-----

How often does your child discuss their online activities with you?

All of the time	14%	Rarely	23%
Some of the time	43%	Never	20%

Has your child ever told you about something unsuitable that they saw on the Internet that may have upset or frightened them?

Yes	10%
No	90%

Do you understand the difference between illegal material and harmful material on the Internet?

Yes	67%
No	16%
Don't know	17%

If you came across a website or online material that you considered illegal or harmful for young children would you report it?

Yes	68%
No	6%
Don't know	26%

Who would you report it to? **DO NOT PROMPT, MULTIPLE RESPONSE**

The Gardaí	62%
Your Internet Service Provider e.g. Eircom	32%
A complaints hotline	14%
School/teachers	15%
Don't know	16%

Do you think children need to have access to the Internet?

Yes	61%
No	24%
Don't know	15%

At what age do you think children should start using the Internet?

Write in exact Age stated	Average Age_ 11.8_
---------------------------	-----------------------

At what age do you think children should be warned about the potential harmful aspects of Internet use?

Write in exact Age stated	Average Age_ 11.4_
---------------------------	-----------------------

At what age would you be happy to leave a child unsupervised when they are using the Internet?

Write in exact Age stated	Average Age_ 14.7_
---------------------------	-----------------------

Does your child also use the Internet anywhere outside the home? If so, where?  
READ OUT AND CIRCLE APPROPRIATE CODE

	<b>Yes</b>
10. Nowhere else/only use at home	41%
11. Work	1%

12. School	47%
13. Cyber Cafés	2%
14. Friends house	22%
15. Public Library	5%
16. Childminder's House	2%
17. On the move using portable equipment e.g, a WAP mobile phone, a palmpilot, a laptop	4%
18. Elsewhere (write In _____)	-

Would you be concerned about your child accessing the Internet unsupervised outside of your home for example, at school, a local library or a friends house?

**READ OUT, SINGLE RESPONSE**

Yes - very concerned	42%
Yes – quite concerned	36%
Not at all concerned	11%
Have never thought about it	12%

In your opinion, who has the **primary** responsibility for protecting children when they are on the Internet? **DO NOT PROMPT, SINGLE RESPONSE**

Who else has a responsibility for protecting children when they are on the Internet? **DO NOT PROMPT, MULTIPLE RESPONSE**

	Primary responsibility	Other	Any mention
Parent(s)	86%	11%	97%
Schools/teachers	5%	68%	73%
Older Brothers/Sisters	-	24%	24%
ISPs (e.g. Eircom, Esat, Indigo)	4%	18%	22%
Neighbours/friends parent(s)	1%	19%	19%
Government	2%	23%	24%
Website owners	2%	18%	21%
Other (please specify _____)	-	5%	5%
Don't know	10	5%	5%

**\*\*\*\*\* SAFETY OPTIONS\*\*\*\*\***

Are you aware of software, such as Net Nanny, that can be purchased and put on a PC that restricts access to certain “adult” sites?

Yes	53%
No	47%

Would you like more information about how to protect your children when they are on the Internet?

Yes	68%
No	32%

Who do you think should provide that information? **MULTIPLE RESPONSE, DO NOT PROMPT**

Schools	49%	Media	19%
ISPs (e.g. Eircom, Esat, Indigo)	34%	Website owners (Content providers)	16%
Government	37%	Other (please specify_____)	6%
PC sellers/retail outlets	31%	Don't know	6%

How should this information be made available? **DO NOT PROMPT, CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY**

Through Schools	64%	Billboard advertising	13%
On TV	44%	Library	17%
On the radio	23%	Community Centre	11%
National newspapers	38%	PC retail outlets/shops	32%
Local newspapers	16%		

**\*\*\*\*\* GENERAL ATTITUDES\*\*\*\*\***

Which of the following technologies do you think could potentially cause the most harm to your children? **READ OUT & ROTATE, SINGLE RESPONSE**

Television	17%	Games Console such as a Playstation	8%
Mobile Phone	21%	Videos	13%
Internet	38%	Don't Know	2%

**SHOWCARD 'A'**

Finally, I am going to read out a number of statements about the Internet, and I would like you to say whether you agree or disagree with each statement...

<b>READ OUT (Please Tick &amp; Rotate)</b> ▼	<b>Agree Strongly</b>	<b>Agree Slightly</b>	<b>Neither</b>	<b>Disagree Slightly</b>	<b>Disagree Strongly</b>	<b>Don't Know</b>
21. Schools have a major role to play in protecting young people online	71%	21%	4%	1%	1%	2%
22. Parent(s) should be responsible for protecting their children's use of the Internet	81%	16%	2%	2%	1%	-
23. The Internet is a safe and secure environment for children to learn and communicate with people	12%	32%	16%	21%	14%	5%
24. Many parent(s) are unable to control and monitor Internet use of their children as they do not know enough about it	43%	38%	7%	4%	4%	6%
25. Given the international nature of the Internet, government is limited in what it can do to control the negative impact of the Internet	33%	31%	12%	10%	5%	9%
26. Children may become isolated from their friends if they spend too much time on the Internet	42%	35%	14%	6%	2%	-
27. Children who do not have access to	17%	36%	12%	21%	11%	3%

the Internet are at a disadvantage compared to their peers that do						
28. I am concerned that my child/children might access harmful material such as sexually explicit or violent material on the Internet	47%	33%	11%	2%	3%	2%
29. The positive aspects of Internet use among children outweigh the negatives	21%	40%	20%	5%	3%	9%
30. People worry too much about what children could be exposed to on the Internet	11%	18%	12%	26%	29%	8%

**THANK PARENT, COLLECT CLASSIFICATION & BEGIN INTERVIEWING CHILD**

**CHILDREN'S QUESTIONNAIRE**

**PLEASE NOTE THAT PARENT IS NOT TO PROMPT CHILDS ANSWERS**

Where do you use the Internet? **READ OUT, CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY**

Home	76%	An Internet café	1%
School	46%	Parent's work	2%
A friend's house	27%	Childminder's House	2%
A relative's house	9%	Other (write in _____)	-
A library	4%		

**\*\*\*\*\* HOME INTERNET USE\*\*\*\*\***

How often do you use the Internet at home? **SINGLE RESPONSE**

Every day	18%	Weekly	32%
Every 2 to 3 days	32%	About every 2 weeks	18%

How long have you been using the Internet from anywhere at all?

<b>Years</b>		<b>Months</b>	<b>Average:</b>	<b>DON'T KNOW 999</b>
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What do you use the Internet for? **READ OUT, CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY, PROBE FOR AT LEAST THREE MENTIONS**

School projects	56%	Playing games on my own	36%
Homework	30%	Playing games with others	30%
Exam revision	5%	Game cheats	11%
School websites	11%	Hobbies	20%
To send e-mail	34%	Making web pages	2%
To receive e-mail	30%	Read magazines online	7%
To chat with others in chat rooms	17%	Download music	17%

News about TV programmes	5%	Football/Sports sites	20%
Information about products or services	9%	Listen to the radio	6%
		Other (write in _____)	5%

Do you think you know more about using the Internet than your parent(s) do?

Yes - a lot	62%
Yes - a little	10%
No	29%

**\*\*\*\*\* CHAT ROOMS \*\*\*\*\***

Have you ever visited an online chat room? (**INTERVIEWER NOTE:** If the child is unsure of what a chat room is read out the following – A chat room is a place on the Internet where you can talk live to other people by typing to them)

Yes	50%
No	22%
Don't know	28%

How often do you visit chat rooms? **PROBE, SINGLE RESPONSE**

Every day	More than once a week	Once a week	Two-three times a month	Once a month	Once every 2-3 months	Less than once every 3 months
3%	18%	21%	18%	5%	13%	23%

Do you chat to people you already know or to people you don't know in chat rooms? **SINGLE RESPONSE**

Mix of both	56%
People you know	31%
People you don't know	13%

Have you ever felt frightened or uncomfortable in a chat room?

Yes	3%	No	97%
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Has anyone you don't know ever tried to make contact with you in a chat room by asking for your home address, your e-mail address, your surname or your phone number?

Yes	18%	No	82%
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Has anyone you have met in an online chat room tried to arrange to meet you face-to-face?

Yes	2%
No	98%

Would you be interested in visiting a chat room?

Yes	18%	Don't know	33%
No	48%		

Do any of your friends or other people you know in for example your class visit online chat rooms?

Yes	18%	Don't know	33%
No	49%		

**\*\*\*\*\* INTERNET SAFETY\*\*\*\*\***

**CONTINUE THOSE WHO USE THE INTERNET AT A FRIENDS HOUSE**

When you use the Internet at a friend's house does an adult supervise you?

Yes – all of the time	10%
Yes - some of the time	46%
No – never	44%

Who is it that supervises you? **DO NOT PROMPT, CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY**

Friends mother	75%
Friends father	20%
Friends Brothers/sisters	25%
Other (write in _____ )	5%

**\*\*\*\*\* INTERNET SAFETY\*\*\*\*\***

Do you talk to either of your parent(s) about what you do on the Internet? **READ OUT**

Yes - all the time	19%	Rarely	22%
Yes – sometimes	45%	Never	14%

Have your parent(s) talked to you about using the Internet safely?

Yes	63%	No	37%
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Do you think your parent(s) know and understand exactly what you do on the Internet?

Yes	62%	Don't know	28%
No	10%		

Do your parent(s) trust you when you use the Internet not to visit sites that they would not like you to see?

Yes	77%	Don't know	18%
No	5%		

Have you ever seen things on the Internet that you think your parent(s) would not like you to see?

Yes	14%
No	81%
Don't know	5%

Did you speak to anyone about this?

Yes	55%
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No	45%
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Who did you speak to? **DO NOT PROMPT, CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY**

Parent(s)	9%
Friends	64%
Teacher	19%
Older brother or sister	27%
Other relative	9%
Other (Please specify _____)	-

Do you know of any friends or people in your class who have come across information or pictures on the Internet that **your** parent(s) would not like **you** to see?

Yes	25%	Don't know	18%
No	57%		

Software can be put on a computer to protect you from seeing something or reading something that might not be suitable for you. Have you ever heard of something like this?

Yes	58%
No	42%

**CONTINUE ALL THOSE WHO ALSO HAVE ACCESS AT SCHOOL E.G. CODE 02 AT QUESTION 45, REST SKIP TO Q.79**

Do you know if your school computer has anything like this to protect you from looking at something that might be unsuitable for you?

Yes	32%	Don't know	56%
No	12%		

I am going to read out a number of statements about the Internet, and I would like you to say whether you agree or disagree with each statement? **SINGLE RESPONSE PER LINE**

▼ READ OUT AND ROTATE	Agree	Disagree	Don't Know
13. Children should be able to visit any websites they want to	32%	44%	24%
14. The Internet is a safe place for children to be	51%	29%	20%
15. My parent(s) worry too much about what I do on the Internet	35%	48%	18%
16. I would like more freedom to do what I want on the Internet	50%	34%	16%
17. The Internet is very important for my school work	70%	23%	7%
18. I would like my parent(s) to know more about using the Internet	64%	20%	16%

Please record whether a parent or guardian was present for at least most of the interview?

Yes – parent present	70%
No parent present	30%

**CLOSE INTERVIEW AND COLLECT CLASSIFICATION**

Childs Gender

Boy	58%	Girl	42%
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Age of child

10 years	17%	13 years	24%
11 years	17%	14 years	24%
12 Years	18%		

Education level – current year completed

4 <sup>th</sup> class	18%	1 <sup>st</sup> year post-primary	21%
5 <sup>th</sup> class	15%	2 <sup>nd</sup> year post-primary	23%
6 <sup>th</sup> class	20%		

Interviewer's Declaration Interviewers Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

I certify that this is an eligible interview which has been carried out strictly in accordance with your specifications and has been conducted within the MRS code

Parents/Guardians Signature _____
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