

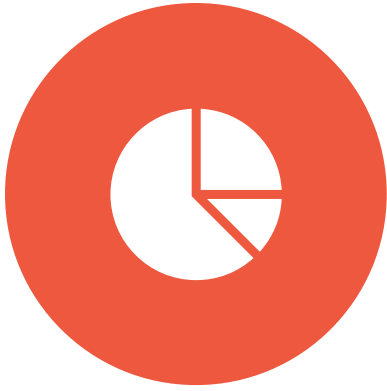
# Our children and social media

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MARCH 2025

# Our children and social media

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WHAT ARE THEY UP  
TO?



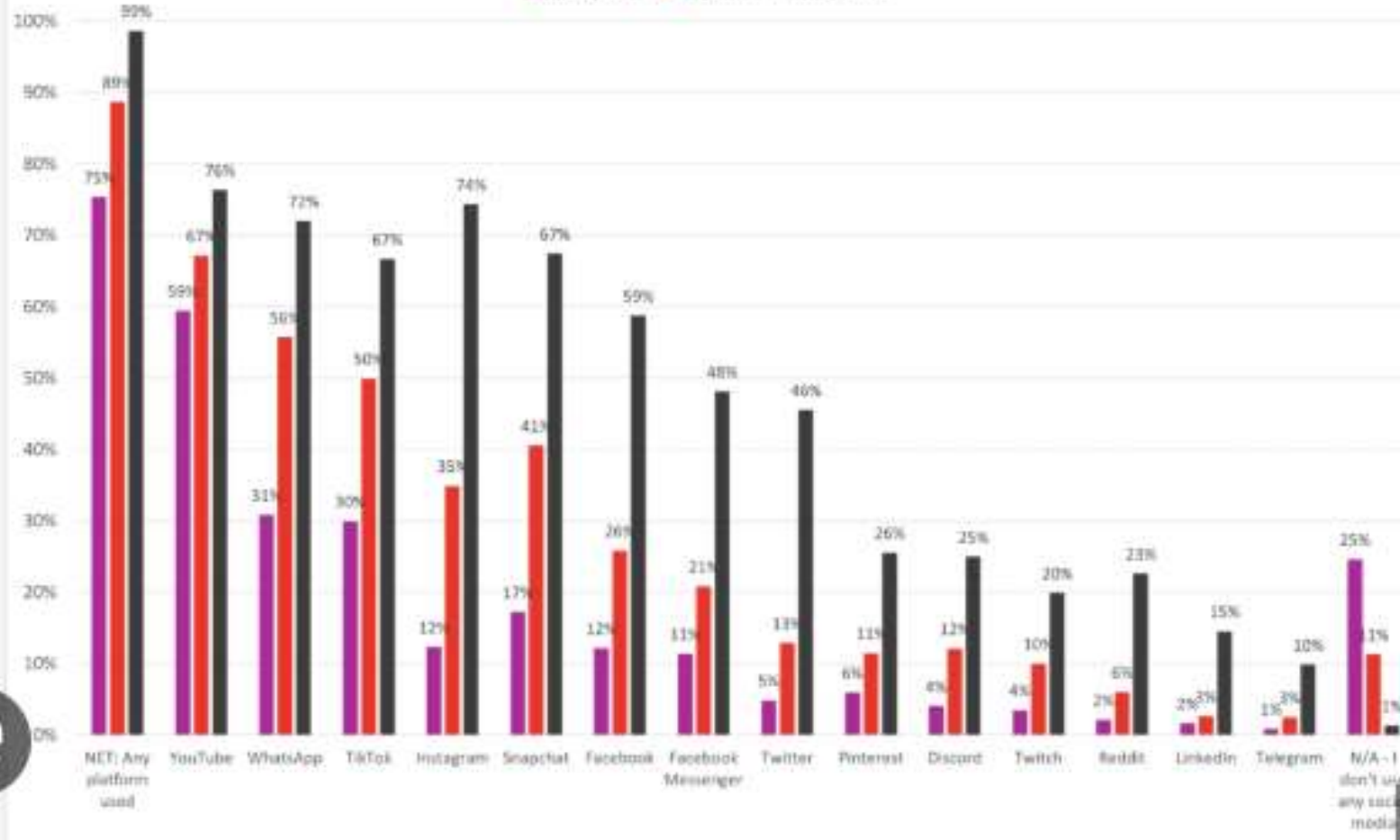
WHAT ARE THE  
CONCERNS?



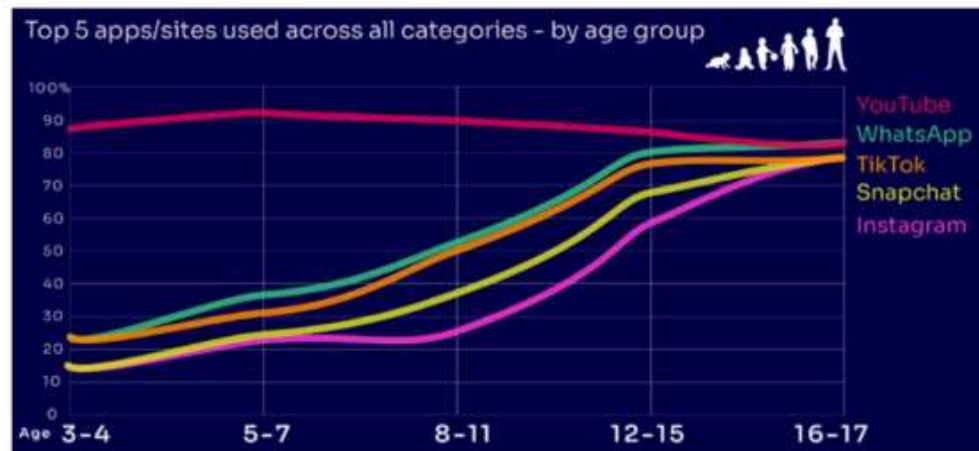
WHAT CAN WE DO?

## Social media use by age group

■ 8-10 years ■ Under 16 ■ 16 or over



## What age do children start going online independently?



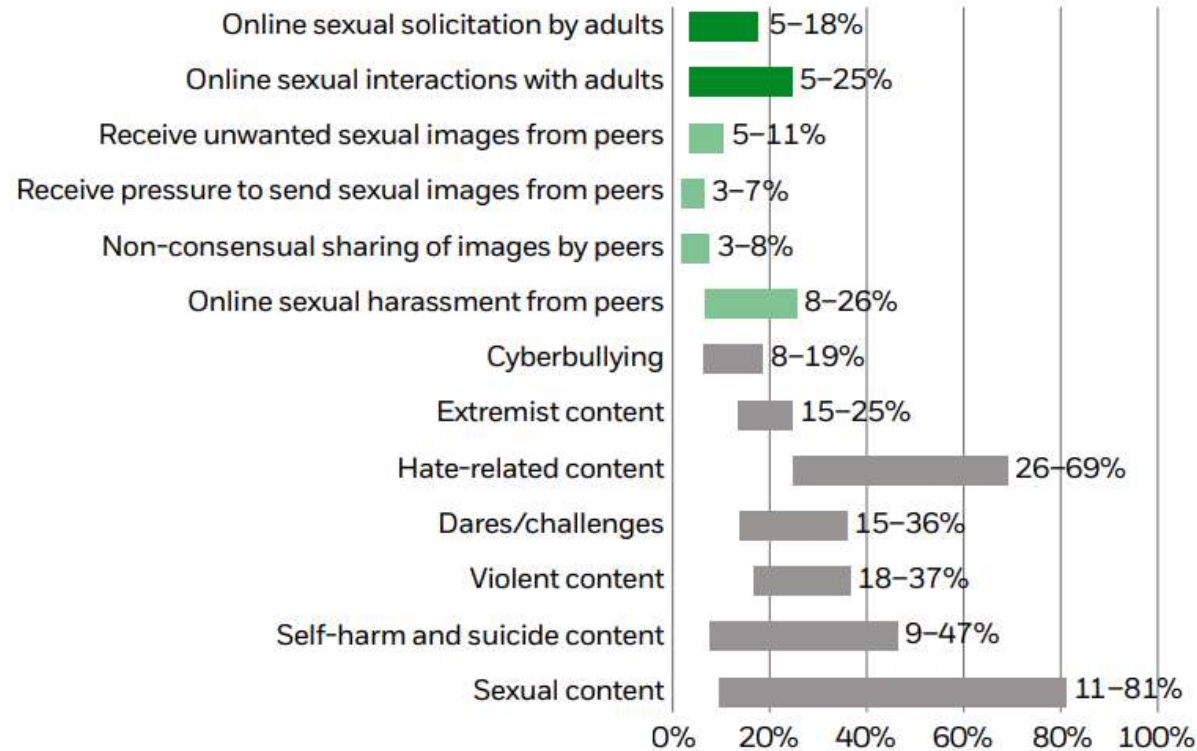
The age limit for these apps is:

Only 32% of parents knew what the age limit was  
27% of children have their own Smartphone by 4yrs

[Ofcom: Children's Media Literacy Report 2024](#)

# Impact of Social Media?

(2023) 92% of sexual abuse imagery removed by IWF was 'self-generated' sexual abuse material.



### **How does social media affect behavior negatively?**

Social media affects behavior negatively by depriving kids of important social cues they would usually learn through in-person communication. This can cause them to be more callous, anxious, and insecure.

### **How does social media affect social skills?**

Social media affects social skills by replacing some of kids' direct contact with their peers. This can cause callousness in communication and high anxiety during in-person conversation.

### **How does social media affect teenagers' mental health?**

Social media affects teenagers' mental health negatively by limiting direct contact with peers and encouraging constant comparison online, which can lead to low self-esteem, anxiety, and depression.

### **Is social media harmful?**

Social media can be harmful because it encourages constant comparison and limits in-person communication, often leading to increased feelings of depression, anxiety, poor body image, and loneliness.

# How much of this is connected to owning a smartphone?

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Smartphone slides

At this point in the session we shared information and research from

‘ Smartphone free childhood’ – where you as a parent can also sign a pact supporting delaying ownership of a smartphone until 14 and promoting smartphone free childhoods.

<https://smartphonefreechildhood.co.uk/about>

# Useful guidance for parents

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National College – Lots of resources supporting parents in having the confidence to challenge their child's online use. Gain the confidence and skills to have age-appropriate, informed discussions with children to keep them safe, healthy and resilient to life beyond the school gates. <https://nationalcollege.com/parents>

<https://smartphonefreechildhood.co.uk/about>

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/>

<https://saferinternet.org.uk/guide-and-resource/parents-and-carers>

<https://www.internetmatters.org/>