



SCCYP

**Scotland's Commissioner
for Children & Young People**

The online behaviour of children and young people

Preliminary review of literature

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Key findings

1. Internet take up

- **90%** of UK children and young people have access to the internet
- Internet use **increases** with age
- **99%** of 12-15 year olds use the internet
- Internet use is **more likely** among children of higher socio-economic status
- Children and young a of lower socio-economic status spend **more time** online than those of higher socio-economic status

3. Using the internet

- Breadth of use increases with age
- **Schoolwork** is the most popular weekly online activity
- **54%** of 11 year olds have an active social networking profile
- **72%** of 12-15 year olds visit social networking sites weekly
- **One in five** children use email weekly
- Online games are more popular with young children
- **One third** of 8-11 year olds visit avatar websites weekly

2. Accessing the internet

- Children and young people access the internet in an average of **4 locations**
- **Home** is the primary location for internet use
- Children and young people use an average of **3.5 devices** to access the internet
- **56%** 9-16 year olds use a mobile, smartphone or similar handheld device to access the internet

4. Popular websites

- **YouTube** is the most popular website visited by 2-17 year olds
- 8-15 year olds use a broad range of information websites
- **70%** of 12-15 year olds have a Facebook account

5. Trends

- **More children and young people** are using the internet regularly since 2009
- Popularity of **social networking** sites has increased
- More children and young people are using **mobile phones** to access the internet

6. Children and young people in Scotland are...

- **As likely** to have a social networking profile as other children and young people in the UK
- **Less likely** to go online via a PC or laptop as other children and young people in the UK
- **Less likely** to use the internet weekly for schoolwork as other children and young people in the UK

Introduction

Scotland's Commissioner for Children and Young People ('the Commissioner') works to promote and safeguard the rights of children and young people throughout Scotland. Specifically, the Commissioner's office aim to:

1. Maximise the impact of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) in Scotland
2. Influence and promote the effective and sustainable involvement and widespread participation of children and young people in Scotland's society
3. To keep under review and influence relevant policy, practice and legislation in relation to the rights of children and young people
4. To ensure that the Commissioner's office is efficient, effective and fit for purpose¹.

The Commissioner has a responsibility to engage children and young people in this work wherever possible. Indeed, the Commissioner's success in regard to aims 1, 2 and 4 above is heavily reliant on good quality communications with Scotland's children and young people.

Digital media is currently, and will continue to be, a key means of communication between the Commissioner and the children and young people he is working to support. This report is intended to inform the development and delivery of these existing and new digital communication channels to ensure the broadest reach in fully accessible and engaging formats.

About the review

This report presents findings from a small-scale review of key literature. It is not intended as an exhaustive review.

Scope

To be included in the review, documents had to meet the following criteria:

- Published between 2010 and 2012, ideally containing data collected during this time
- Relate to children and young people between 5 and 18 years of age
- Relate to children and young people in Scotland, the United Kingdom, Europe or internationally, in that order of preference
- Relate to at least one of the key questions listed below.

¹ Scotland's Commissioner for Children and Young People (2012) Strategic Plan 2012-2016. Edinburgh: SCCYP

Key questions

The review identified documents addressing the following topics and key questions:

1. Internet take up in the UK	How many children and young people are using the internet in the UK?
2. Accessing the internet	How do children and young people access the internet, and where?
3. Using the internet	Why do children and young people use the internet? What do they use it for?
4. Popular websites	What are the most popular entertainment, information and social media websites?
5. Trends	What are the emerging trends in internet take-up, access, and use?

Across each of these topics the review also sought to identify:

Demographic variation	Is there any variation in online behaviour by age, gender or socio-economic group?
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Reading this report

This report is intended as a reference document to guide the Commissioner's office in the design of direct digital communications with Scotland's children and young people.

Each of the five topics and associated key questions are addressed in turn. A sixth topic, *Online behaviour in Scotland*, highlights key findings specific to the Scottish context. Any findings of significant demographic variation in online behaviour are included within the relevant topic.

When interpreting the findings presented here it is important to remember that this is a snapshot in time. As the *Trends* section shows, there has been some rapid change in many of the behaviours discussed. This must be considered if referring to this document in future years.

It is also important to note that most of the statistics presented here were collected using self report studies, and therefore may be subject to some bias especially if respondents are concerned with providing socially desirable responses.

About the statistics

The data collected by this review have been represented graphically as figures or tables to provide the reader with a convenient picture of the statistics. The original source data has been extracted and redrawn for this purpose and, where appropriate, figures and tables represent a composite of two data sources. A reference to the original material is included with the Figure or Table title, and further detail can be found in the *List of Figures and Tables* in Appendix 1.

Readers should note the different age brackets used by different sources. These are made clear in the legend for each figure

1. Internet take-up

This first topic explores the key question ‘How many children and young people are using the internet?’ Before answering this it is useful to understand how many could be using the internet, so this topic begins by looking at access. ‘Access’ means the internet is readily available to a child or young person. It is not necessarily aligned with use: a child or young person with access to the internet may or may not use it. Topic one then looks at who is using the internet, and finally how often children and young people go online.

1.1 Access to the internet

Of the children and young people in the UK, who has access to the internet?

- A high percentage of children and young people in the UK have access to the internet. 91% of children and young people of all ages have access at home via a PC or laptop (see Figure 1). However, we know that children and young people can access the internet in an average of four different locations (home being just one of these) (Livingstone et al 2010, p.13) so the figures for access across all locations and modes of access may be different.
- The percentage of children and young people with access to the internet increases slightly with age. 95% of those aged 12 to 15 years have internet access at home, eight percentage points more than the youngest group (see Figure 1).
- There is some difference in access across socio economic categories. Nearly all children aged 5 to 15 in AB households have access. Access for children in DE households is lower than all other socio economic groups (80%) (see Figure 2)

Figure 1: Proportion of children and young people in the UK with access to the internet at home via a PC or laptop in 2011 (adapted from: Ofcom 2011a, p.15; 2012a, p.15

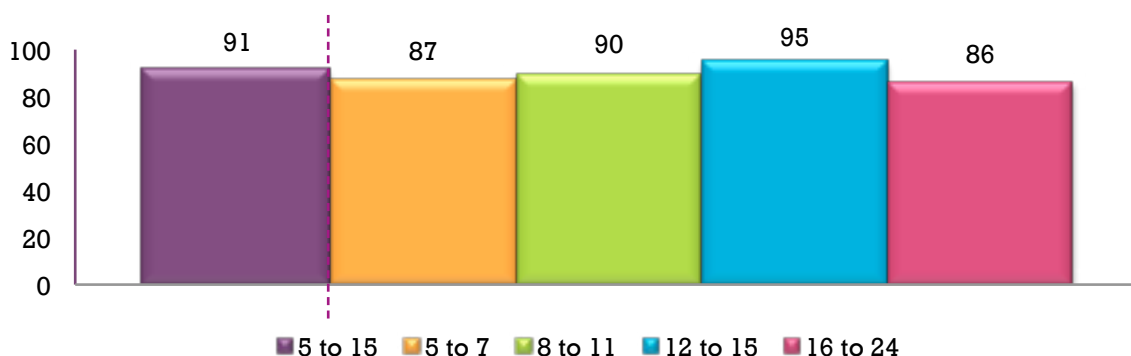
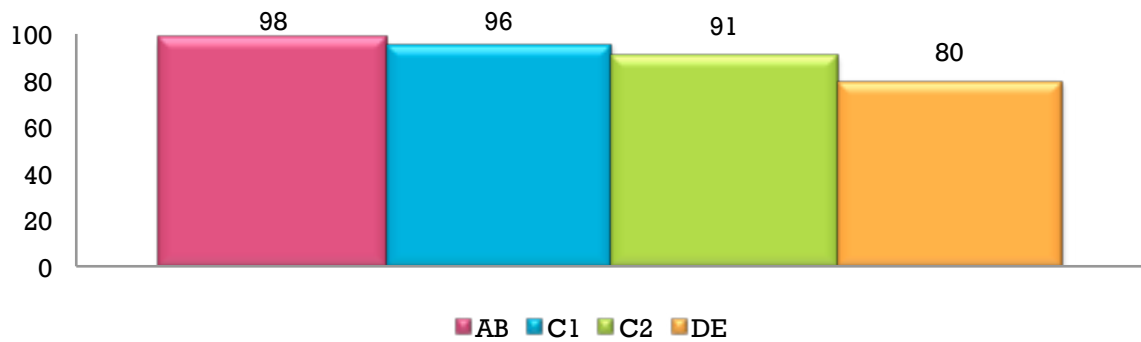


Figure 2: Proportion of children aged 5-15 years in the UK with access to the internet at home via a PC or laptop in 2011 by socio economic group (adapted from: Ofcom 2011a, p.15)

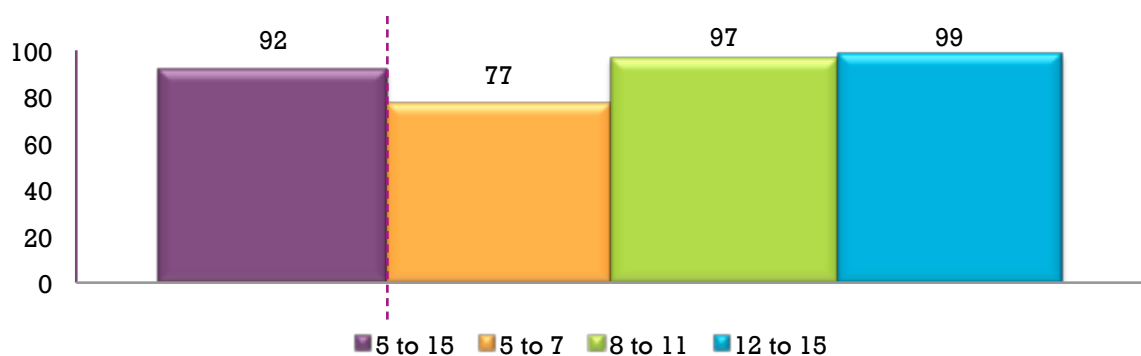


1.2 Internet use

Of the children and young people in the UK, who is using the internet?

- For over six years, more than half of all children aged over 6 in the UK have been using the internet (Livingstone et al 2011a, p.11). Today, internet use among children and young people is near ubiquitous. Livingstone et al (2011b, p.12) estimate that 96% of children in the UK use the internet at least rarely.
- On average, children in the UK first use the internet at age 8 years, one year earlier than the average age of first use among European children (9 years) (Livingstone et al 2011b, p.14).
- The proportion of children who use the internet increases with age. Three quarters (77%) of 5 to 7 year olds use the internet, but nearly all 8 to 15 year olds do so (see Figure 3).
- There is also variation in use across socio economic groups, with children aged 5 to 15 years old living in an AB household 'more likely to ever use' the internet than those living in a DE household (93% vs. 72%) (Ofcom 2011a, p.18).

Figure 3: Proportion of children in the UK who use the internet in any location and on any device in 2011 (adapted from: Ofcom 2011a, p.28)



1.3 Frequency of use

How often do children and young people in the UK use the internet?

- Teenagers use the internet far more regularly than younger children (see Figure 4).
- Livingstone et al (2011a, p.12) found that parental internet use has an influence on how frequently a child or young person uses the internet. They reported that the more a parent uses the internet, the more likely their child will be to use it often; where parents use the internet on a daily basis, their child will be more likely to do the same.
- The only notable gender difference is within the 8 to 11 age group, where boys are more likely than girls to say they regularly use the internet at home (70% vs. 60%) (Ofcom 2011a, p.22).
- The estimated number of hours spent online² each week increases with age, from 5.5 hours among 5 to 7 year olds, to nearly 20 hours a week among the over 16s (see Figure 5).
- Internet users aged 5 to 15 in DE households tend to spend more time online in a typical week than those in AB households (11.4 hours vs. 9.2 hours) (Ofcom 2011a, p.37).

Figure 4: Frequency of children and young people's internet use in the UK in 2010 (adapted from: Livingstone et al 2011b, p15)

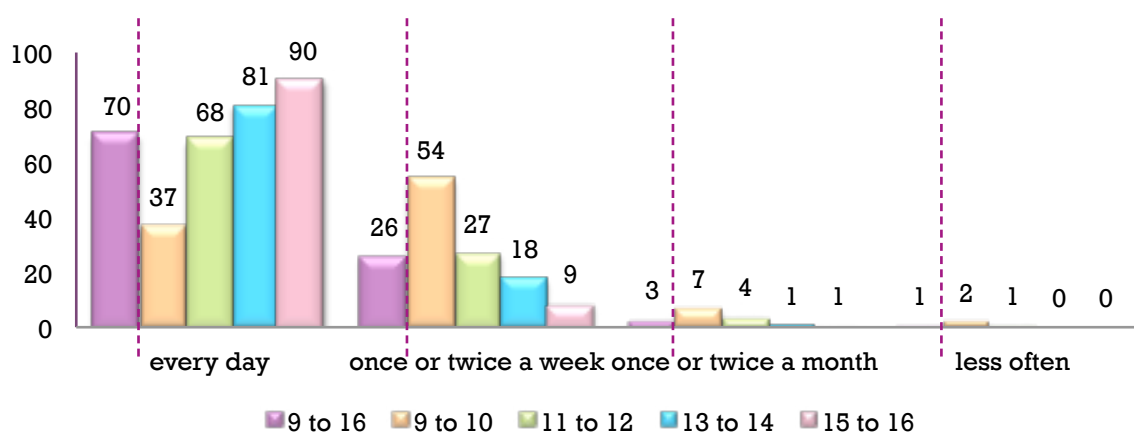
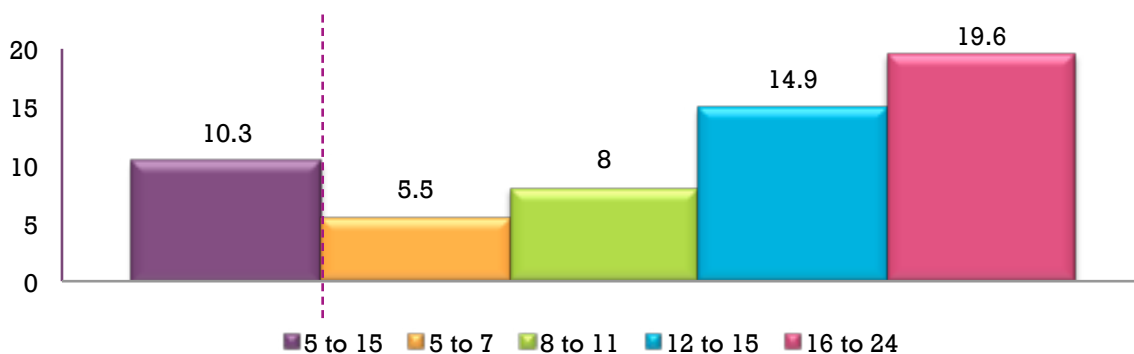


Figure 5: Estimated weekly hours of internet use in 2011, of those children and young people who use the internet at home (adapted from: Ofcom 2011a, p.37; 2012a, p.34)



² Measuring exact time spent online is difficult because children may be doing other activities while not turning off the internet

2. Accessing the internet

The internet is increasingly mobile, accessible in a range of public and private spaces, and via a variety of devices. Topic two identifies the different locations in which children and young people have access to and use the internet, and which internet enabled devices they are using to go online.

2.1 Location of internet use

Where do young internet users in the UK go online?

- While the majority of young internet users in the UK use the internet at home or at school, the introduction of internet enabled mobile phones and other handheld devices means that internet use is now possible anywhere. Nearly 60% of 9 to 16 year olds are using the internet in this portable way (see Figure 6).
- Home is very much the primary location for internet use; use of the internet in other locations tends to be in addition to use at home. For example 84% of 5 to 15 year olds use the internet at home, and 8% only use the internet in other locations (see Figure 7). Similarly, 91% of 16 to 24 year olds use the internet via a PC or laptop at home, while only 4% use the internet via these devices in other locations (Ofcom 2012a, p.32).
- The proportion of children and young people who use the internet at home increases with age, perhaps reflecting a shift from using the internet in more public places such as school, to more private and personalised use in teenage years (see Figure 8).

Figure 6: Where children aged 9-16 years in the UK use the internet, of those who use the internet (adapted from: Livingstone et al 2011b, pp.13-14)

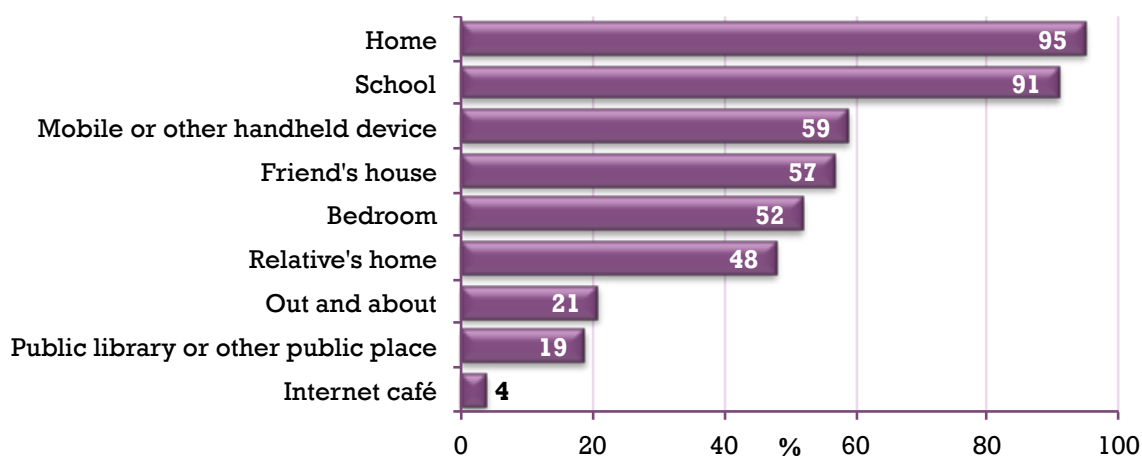


Figure 7: Location of internet use on any device by children in the UK in 2011 (adapted from: Ofcom 2011a, p.28)

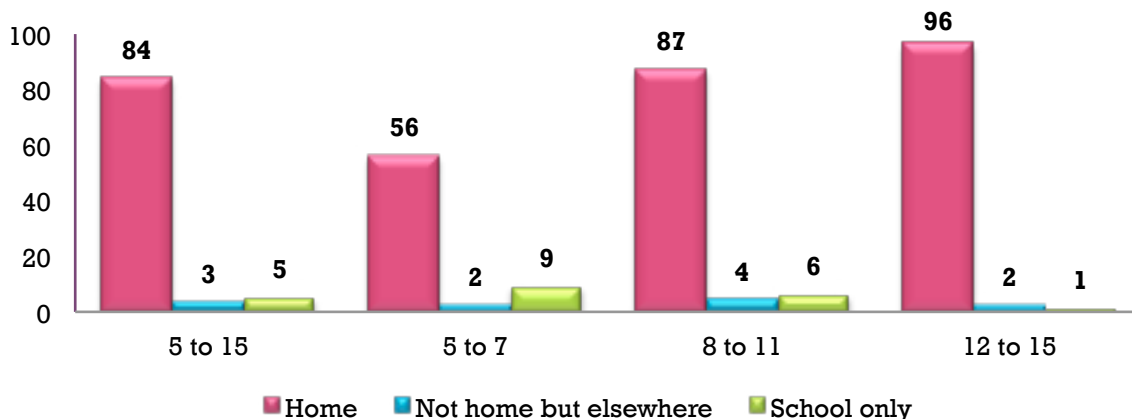
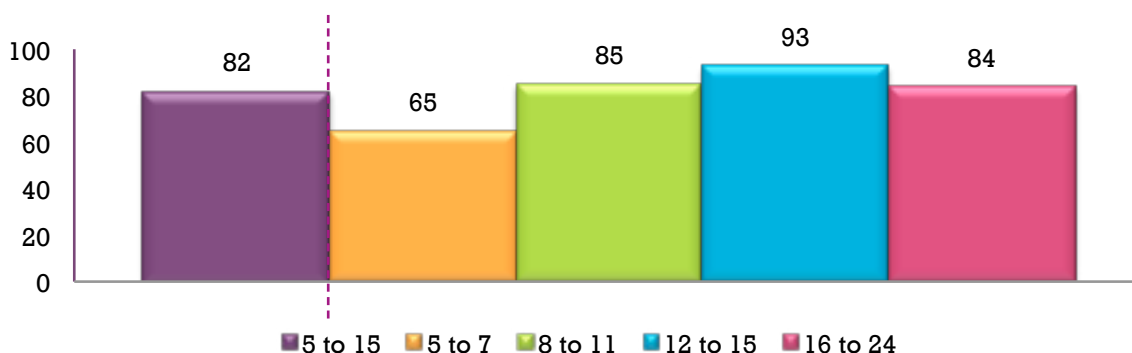


Figure 8: Proportion of children and young people in the UK in 2011 who ever use a PC or laptop to access the internet at home, of those who use the internet (adapted from: Ofcom 2011a, pp.24-25; 2012a, p.28)

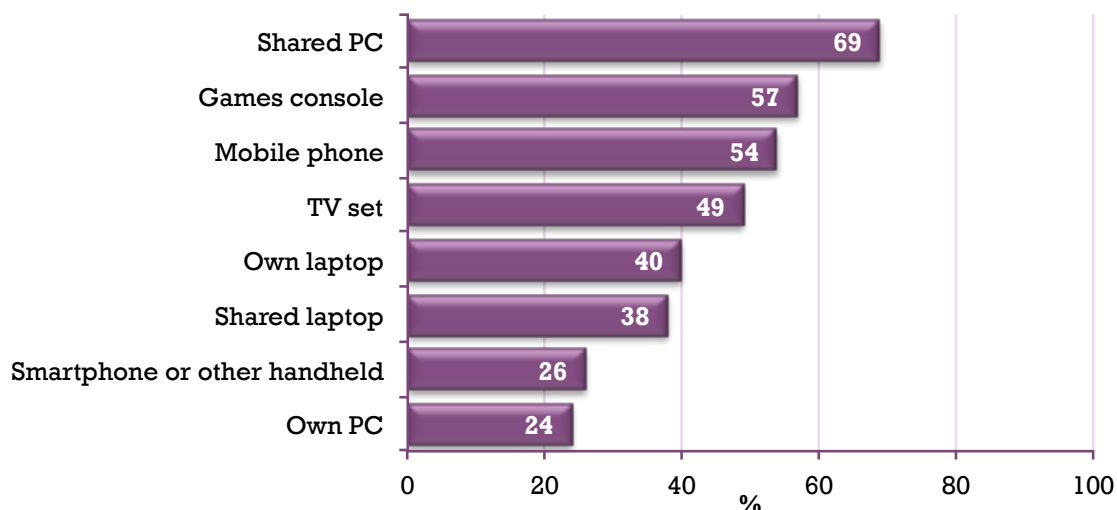


2.2 Mode of internet use

What devices do children and young people use to go online?

- In the UK, each household has on average three different internet enabled devices (Ofcom 2012b, p.13).
- On average, children and young people aged 9 to 16 years in the UK use 3.5 different devices to access the internet (Livingstone et al 2011b, p14). Three quarters (74%) of 16 to 24 year old internet users use devices other than a laptop to go online at home (Ofcom 2012a, p.29). Figure 9 lists some of these devices, the most popular of which are explored in more detail below.

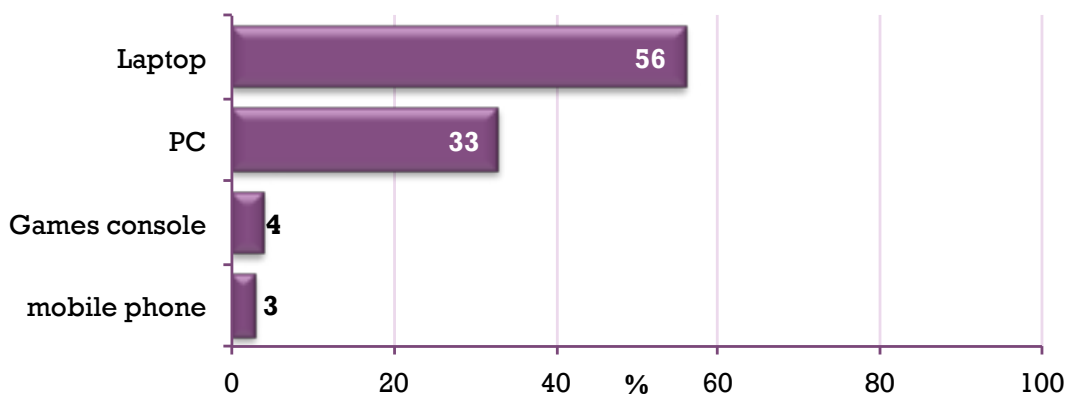
Figure 9: Device used to access the internet by children and young people aged 9-16 years in the UK in 2010, of those who use the internet (adapted from: Livingstone et al 2011b, p.14)



PC or laptop

- Laptops and PCs continue to be the primary devices for accessing the internet, with 89% identifying these devices as the ones they use most. Only a very low proportion of young internet users mostly access the internet via a device other than a PC or laptop (see Figure 10).

Figure 10: Device used most to access the internet at home by children aged 5-15 years in the UK in 2011, of those who use the internet (adapted from: Ofcom 2011a, p.26)



Mobile phones / smart phones

- Mobile phones and smart phones are not adult only technology. More than half of all 5 to 15 year olds in the UK own one of these devices (see Figure 11)
- The statistics on regular use of mobile phones at home remind us that children and young people do not need to own a mobile phone to have access to one, and may be using a mobile phone that belongs to someone else in the household. Across the age groups, regular mobile phone use is greater than mobile phone ownership: among 5 to 7 year olds ownership is 2% and regular use is 7%; among 8 to 11 year olds ownership is 12% while regular use is at 33%; and although only 41% of 12 to 15 year olds own a mobile phone, 78% say they regularly use one at home (Ofcom 2011a, pp.17, 22).

- 14% of internet users aged 5 to 15 use a mobile phone to access the internet at home, and the proportion who do so increases with age (see Figure 12).
- Livingstone et al (2010, p.13) asked 9 to 16 year olds about use of a mobile phone to access the internet from any location. 26% reported using a smartphone or similar handheld device to go online, and an additional 33% use a mobile phone.
- Young smart phone owners aged 16 to 24 are particularly likely to use their phone to access the internet: 51% of this group agree that 'my phone is more important to me for accessing the internet than any other device' (Ofcom 2012b, p.223).
- Of older children who own mobile phones, around one third use their phone to visit social networking sites, and a further third use their phone to visit websites (see Figure 13).

Figure 11: Mobile phone ownership in the UK in 2011, by age (adapted from: Ofcom 2011a, p.18; 2012b, p.223)

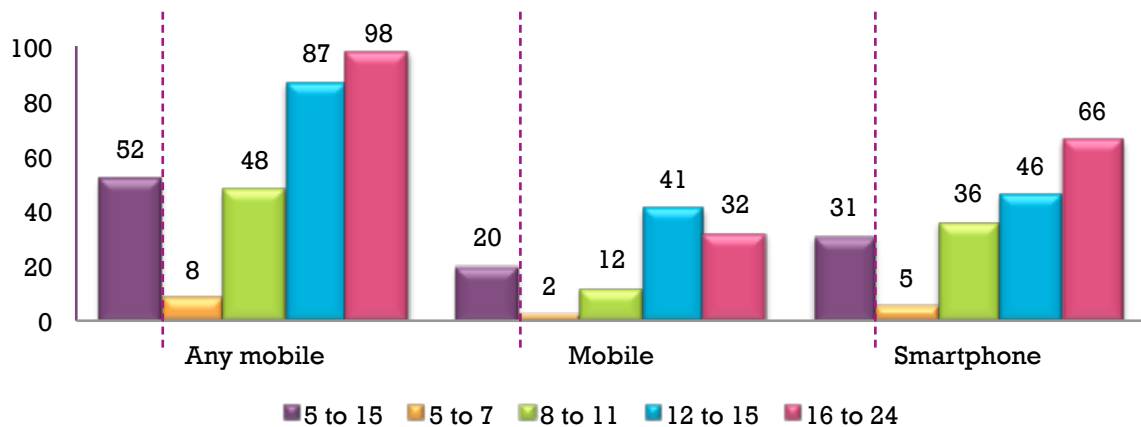


Figure 12: Proportion of children and young people in the UK in 2011 who ever use a mobile phone to access the internet at home, of those who use the internet (adapted from: Ofcom 2011a, p.25; 2012a, p.28)

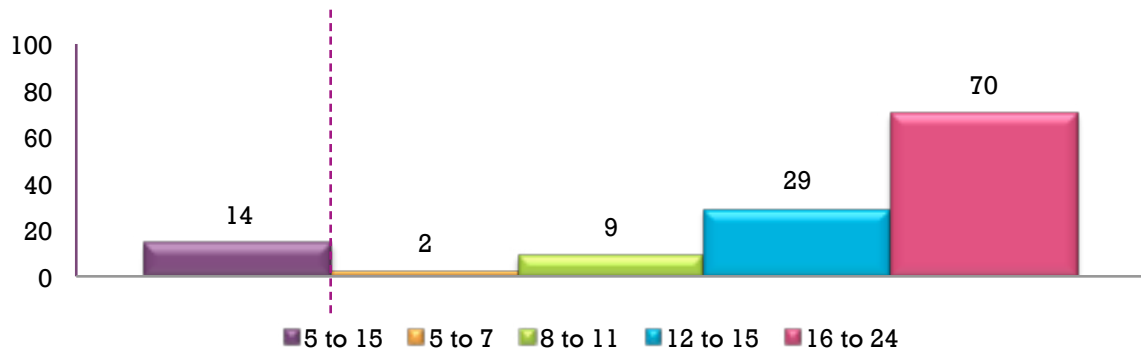
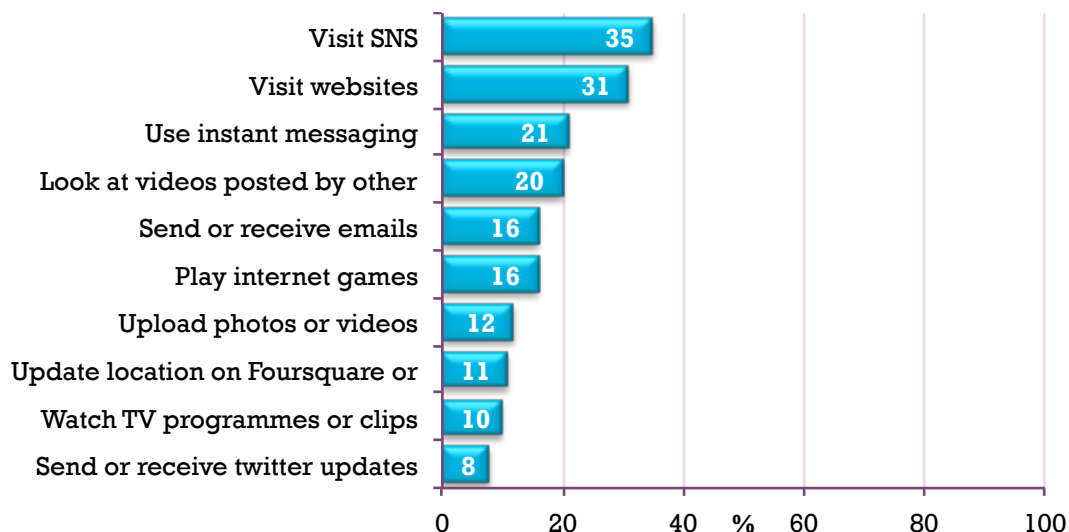


Figure 13: Mobile phone activities ever carried out by owners aged 12 to 15, in 2011 (adapted from: Ofcom 2011a, p.41)



Games consoles

- 91% of all 5 to 15 year olds in the UK have access to a fixed or portable games console at home (Ofcom 2011a, p.15), and 88% report ever using these devices at home (Ofcom 2011a, p.20).
- 17% of 5 to 15 year olds have ever used a games console to access the internet (see Figure 14), and 4% use these devices more than any other to go online (see Figure 10).
- Children over 8 years old are more likely than younger children to access the internet in this way (see Figure 14).
- There are some gender differences in the use of this device similar to the differences found in the incidence of online gaming. Boys are generally more likely than girls to use a games console at all, and more likely to use a games console to access the internet at home (see Figure 15).
- Most children and young people who access the internet via a games console are likely to use this device for playing games online. Among 12-15 year olds who ever use a games console to go online, 89% say this is to play games online (Ofcom 2011a, p.25).

Figure 14: Proportion of children and young people in the UK in 2011 who ever use a games console to access the internet at home, of those who use the internet (adapted from: Ofcom 2011a, pp.24-25; 2012a, p.28)

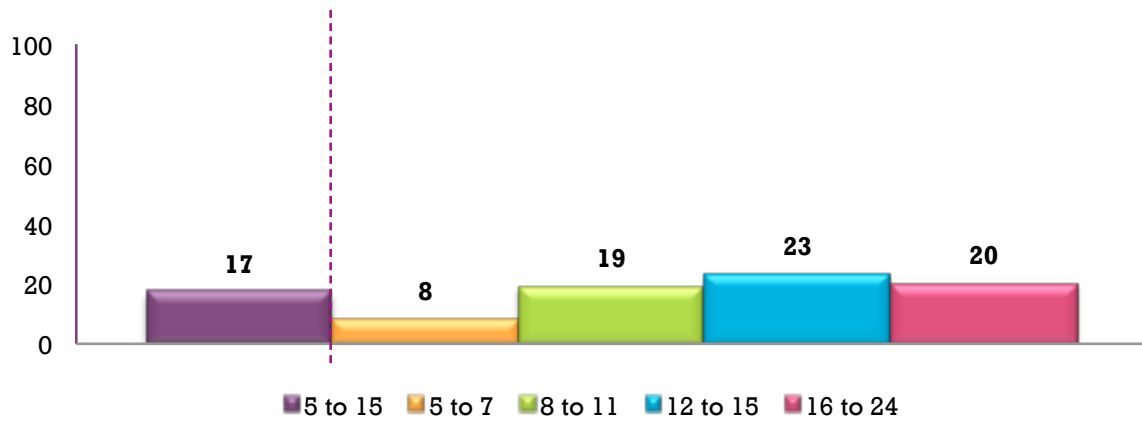
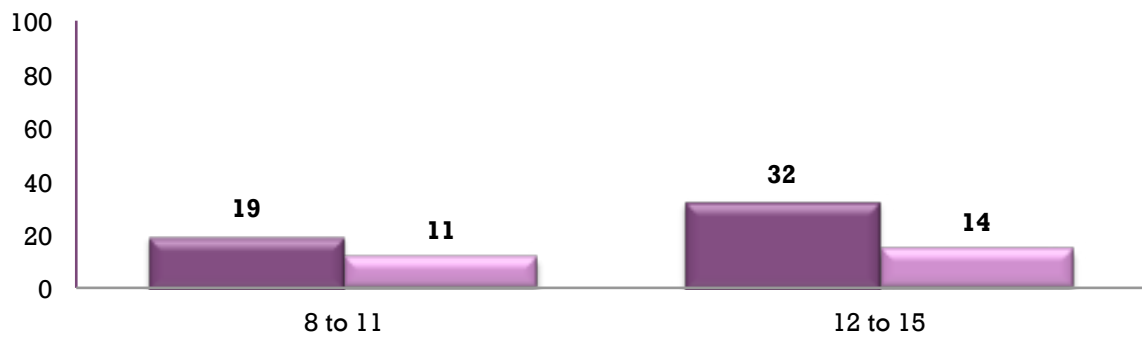


Figure 15: Proportion of young internet users in the UK in 2011 who ever access the internet via a fixed or portable games console, by gender (adapted from: Ofcom 2011b, p.17)



3. Using the internet

Topic three asked why children and young people use the internet? What do they do when they go online? Findings relating to the most popular online activities are detailed below.

3.1 Schoolwork

- When children begin to use the internet, schoolwork is one of the first things they use it for (Livingstone et al 2011a, p.14), and this activity comfortably holds first place in the list of online activities undertaken by 5 to 15 year old internet users (see Figure 16).
- The number of children and young people who use the internet for schoolwork or homework increases with the age of the child. This trend remains true across frequencies of use, whether looking at the proportion who have ever undertaken this activity (Ofcom 2011a, p.47), had done so within one month (Livingstone et al 2011b, p.19), or do so on a weekly basis (see Figure 17).
- Schoolwork is the most popular weekly activity for children aged 12 to 15 and 8 to 11 years. It is the second most popular weekly activity among the youngest group (see Table 1).
- There are no gender differences for this activity when considering all children (Livingstone et al 2011b, p.19). However, within the age group 8 to 11 years, girls are more likely than boys to use the internet at least once a week for schoolwork 71% vs. 61% (Ofcom 2011a, p.46).
- Children aged 8 to 15 years in DE households are less likely than all children of this age to use the internet at least weekly for homework or schoolwork (59% vs. 71%) (Ofcom 2011a, p.45)

Figure 16: Top ten internet activities ever undertaken by children in the UK aged 5-15 years, of those who use the internet (adapted from: Ofcom 2011a, p.46)

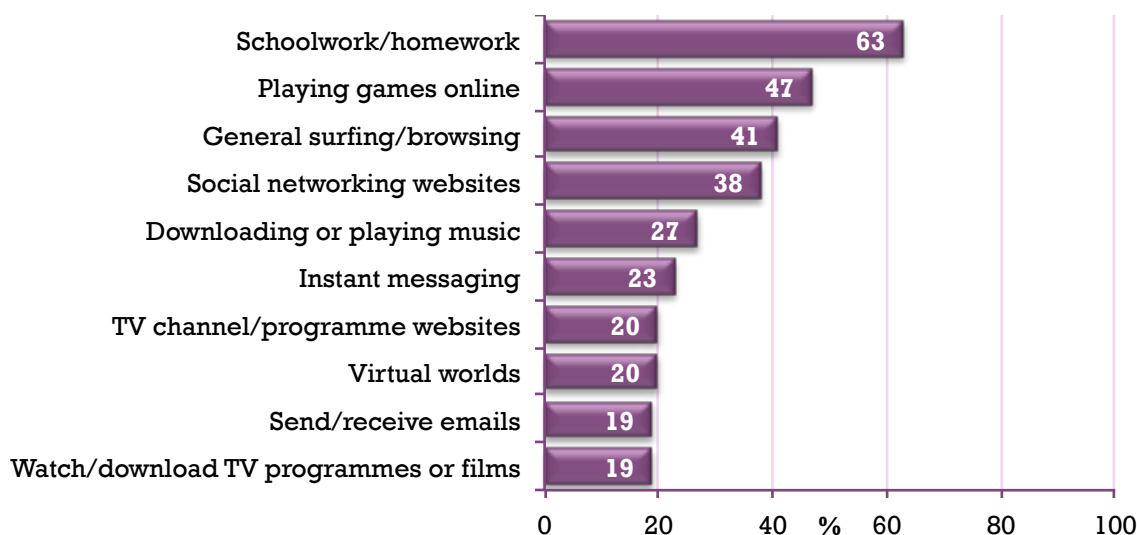


Figure 17: Proportion of children who use the internet at least weekly for schoolwork, by age, of those who use the internet at home (adapted from: Ofcom 2011a, p.45)

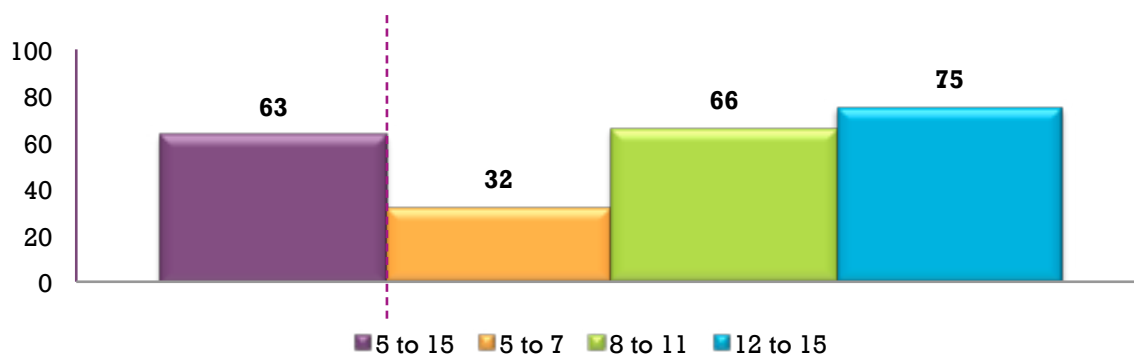


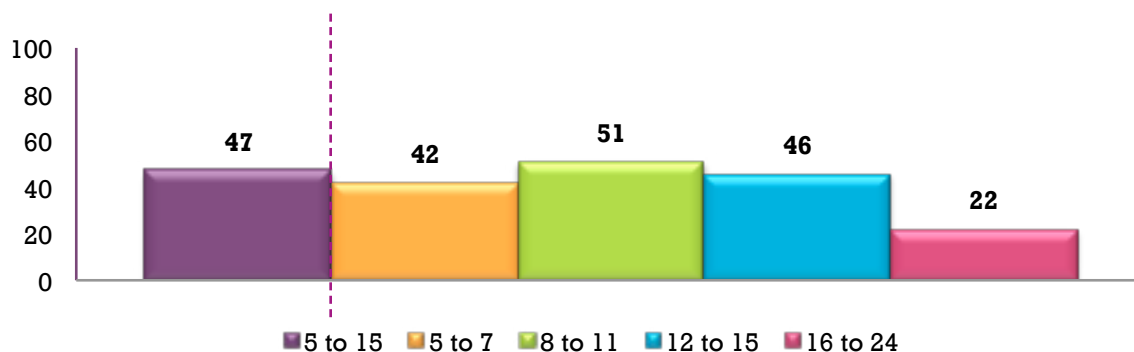
Table 1: Relative popularity of the top ten online activities in 2011 by age group (adapted from: Ofcom 2011a, p.467)

Top ten activities	Relative popularity (out of ten) by age bracket			
	5 to 15	5 to 7	8 to 11	12 to 15
Schoolwork/homework	1	2	1	1
Playing games online	2	1	2	4
General surfing/browsing	3	5	3	3
Social networking websites	4	8	5	2
Downloading or playing music	5	6	6	5
Instant messaging	6	-	9	5
Avatar websites	7	4	4	9
TV channel/programme websites	8	3	7	7
Send/receive emails	9	8	8	6
Watch/download TV programmes or films	9	7	10	8

3.2 Playing games

- This is second most popular online activity among 5 to 15 year old internet users. It may involve playing games alone or against the computer, or playing games with others on the internet.
- Although the proportion of children who play games online remains fairly steady across the age groups (see Figure 18) the popularity of this as a weekly activity over other online activities decreases with the age of the child. Playing games online is the most popular weekly activity among 5 to 7 year old children, the second most popular activity among 8 to 11 year olds, and the fourth most popular activity among 12 to 15 year olds (see Table 1).
- There is a clear gender difference for this activity within certain age groups. 12 to 15 year old boys are more likely than girls this age to regularly play online games (59% vs. 33%) (Ofcom 2011a, p.45). Livingstone et al (2011b, p.20) asked about online activities undertaken within a one month period and found that boys aged 9 to 12 years were more likely, and boys aged 13 to 16 years were twice as likely as girls of the same age to have taken part in this activity.

Figure 18: at least weekly playing games on websites or online (adapted from: Ofcom 2011a, p.45; 2012a, p.60)



3.3 Social networking

- Social networking is the fourth most popular online activity among 5 to 15 year old internet users (see Table 1).
- The relative popularity of social networking increases with age. While this is one of the least popular of the top ten weekly activities among 5 to 7 year olds, it is the second most popular weekly activity among 12 to 15 year olds, only slightly behind schoolwork (see Table 1).
- The proportion of children and young people who use social networking sites at least weekly also increases with age, from 2% of 5 to 7 year olds, to 82% of over 16s (see Figure 19).
- Many social networking sites have a minimum age of 13 years. Despite this, over a third of 8 to 12 year old internet users (34%) have a social networking profile on one of these sites. Nearly half (47%) of 10 to 12 year old internet users have such a profile (Ofcom 2011b, p.5).
- Research by Livingstone et al (2011a, p.18) suggests that if there were no age restrictions even more children may use social networking sites. They found that more younger children use social networking sites in European countries where the dominant social networking site has no age restrictions. Similarly, among parents who impose no restrictions on their child's use of social networking sites, most children, even the youngest, have a social networking profile (Livingstone et al 2011a, p.18).
- Between the ages of 10 and 11 the number of children in the UK with an active profile doubles from 27% to 54%, which may relate to the beginning of secondary school and peer expectations (Ofcom 2011a, p.51; Livingstone et al 2011b, p.21) (see Figure 20).
- Among 12 to 15 year olds, girls are more likely than boys to visit social networking sites at least weekly (78% vs. 67%) (Ofcom 2011a, p.45). In 2010 girls this age are more likely than boys to have an active social networking profile (84% vs. 75%) (Ofcom 2011b, p.43).
- There are fewer under age users (9 to 12 years old) in higher socio economic groups, suggesting parents of these children may place more restrictions on online activities (Livingstone et al 2011b, p.21).

Figure 19: Proportion of children and young people who visit social networking sites at least weekly in 2011, of those who use the internet (adapted from: Ofcom 2011a, p.46; 2012a, p.58)

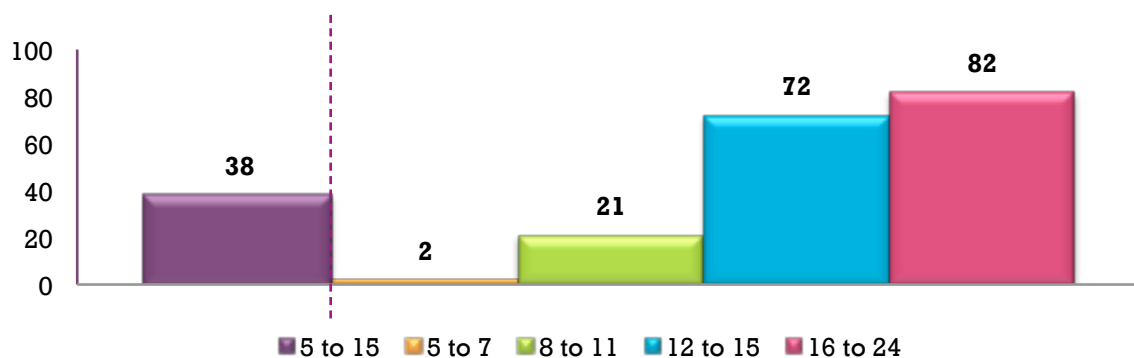
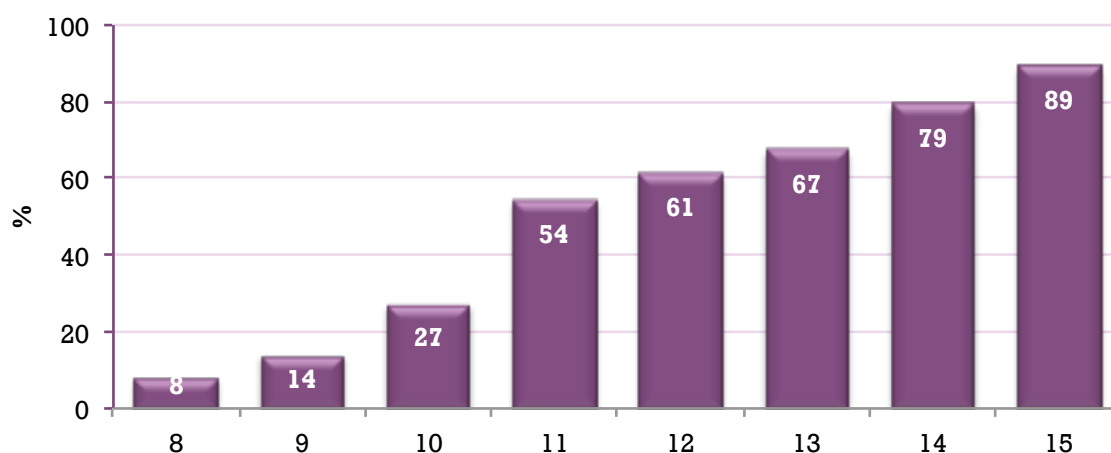


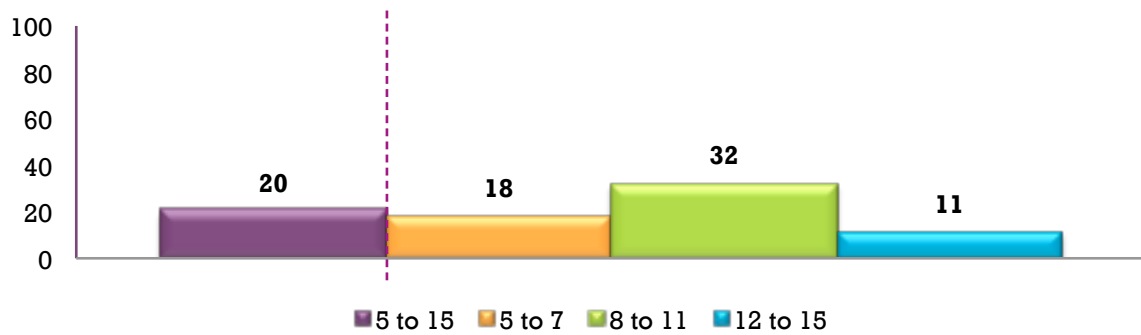
Figure 20: Proportion of children with an active social networking profile by age, of those who use the internet at home (adapted from: Ofcom 2011a, p.52)



3.4 Virtual worlds

- Avatar websites and virtual worlds allow children and young people to create a character, pet or avatar and, through this character, spend time in a virtual world where they may take part in games and activities, and interact with other children and young people. Examples include websites such as Club Penguin, Moshi Monsters, Stardoll and Gaia Online.
- This activity is more popular with younger children. Of the top ten online activities, avatar websites and virtual worlds ranks 4th among 5 to 11 year olds, but is the least popular online activity for 12 to 15 year olds (Figure 21).
- Nearly one third of 8 to 11 year olds visit virtual worlds and avatar websites on a weekly basis (see Figure 21).
- Younger girls aged 9 to 12 years are more likely to spend time in a virtual world than boys of the same age (25% vs. 15%) (Livingstone et al 2011b, p.19).

Figure 21: Proportion of children and young people who visit avatar websites or online worlds at least weekly by age, of those who use the internet (adapted from: Ofcom 2011a, p.46)

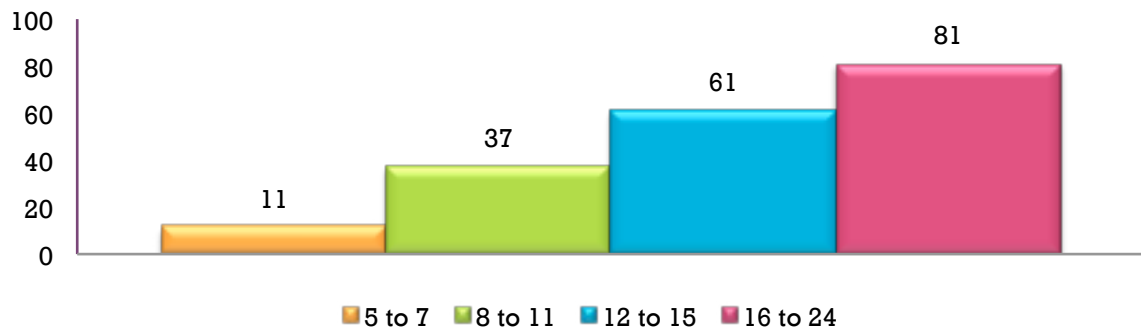


3.5 Information

General surfing and browsing

- Surfing the internet is the third most popular online activity among 5 to 15 year olds, and holds this ranking for the 8 to 15 age group (see Table 1).
- The proportion of children and young people who undertake this activity at least weekly increases with age (see Figure 22).
- Boys aged 8 to 11 are more likely than girls this age to use the internet weekly for information purposes (Ofcom 2011b, p.38).

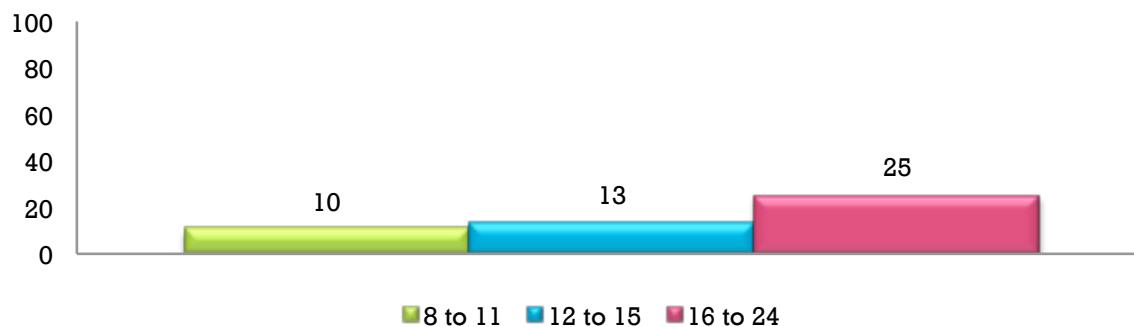
Figure 22: Proportion of children and young people who use the internet at least weekly for general surfing and browsing (adapted from: Ofcom 2011a, p46; 2012a, p.58)



News websites

- Visiting news websites is a more popular activity among older internet users. One quarter of 16 to 24 year olds visit news websites on a weekly basis, while only one in ten 8 to 11 year olds reported doing this (see Figure 23).

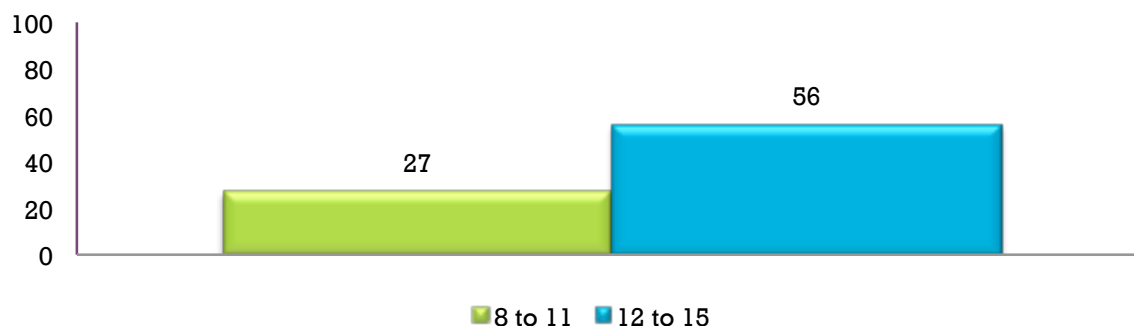
Figure 23: Proportion of children and young people who go to sites about news and what is going on in the world at least weekly (adapted from: Ofcom 2011a, p.45; 2012a, p.58)



3.6 Audio and visual content

- Livingstone et al (2011b, p.19) found that 75% of young internet users in the UK had watched video clips online within a one month period. Ofcom research reported that more than half of 12 to 15 year old internet users watched or downloaded some form of audio-visual material on a weekly basis (See Figure 24).

Figure 24: Proportion of children and young people who at least weekly watch or download clips, whole TV programmes, films, music videos or videos made by the general public such as on YouTube, of those who use the internet (adapted from: Ofcom 2011a, p.45)



3.7 Other communication

- Other online communications refers to email, instant messaging, and video communications such as Skype.
- The proportion of children and young people who use these communication tools on a weekly basis increases with age (see Figure 25).
- One fifth of 5 to 15 year olds use email on a weekly basis (see Figure 26).

Figure 25: Proportion of young internet users who engage in other online communications at least weekly (adapted from: Ofcom 2011a, p45)

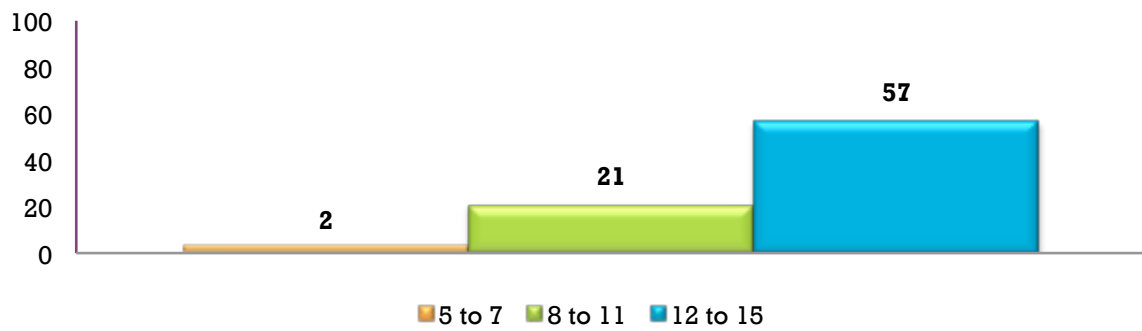
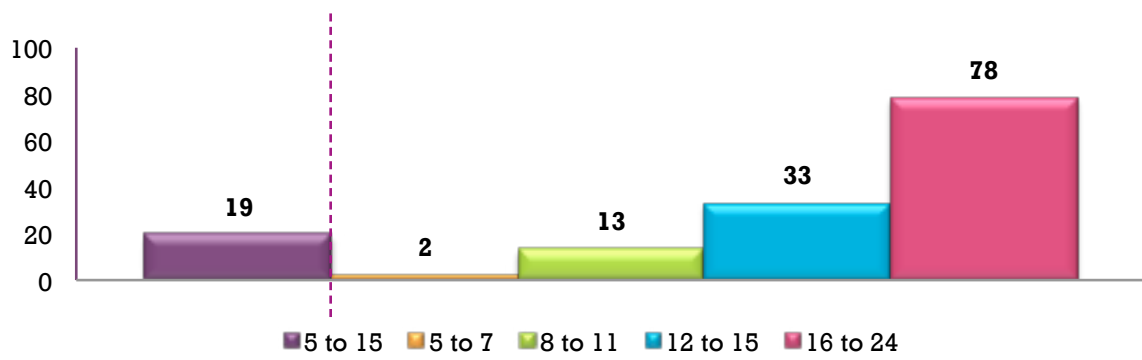


Figure 26: Proportion of young internet users who send or receive emails at least weekly, by age (adapted from: Ofcom 2011a, p.46; 2012a, p.60)



4. Popular websites

Understanding which websites are popular with children and young people provides further insight into what they like, and how they like to engage with online material. Topic four explores which entertainment, informational, and social networking websites are most popular with children and young people in the UK.

4.1 Top ten websites

- A review of unique audience numbers³ for websites visited by 2 to 17 year olds revealed YouTube to be the most popular website with this age group. Facebook is the only social networking site to feature in the top ten and ranks third most popular (see Table 2).

Table 2: Relative popularity of top ten websites among 2 to 17 year olds on desktop and laptop computers in March 2012 (adapted from: Ofcom 2012b, p.258)

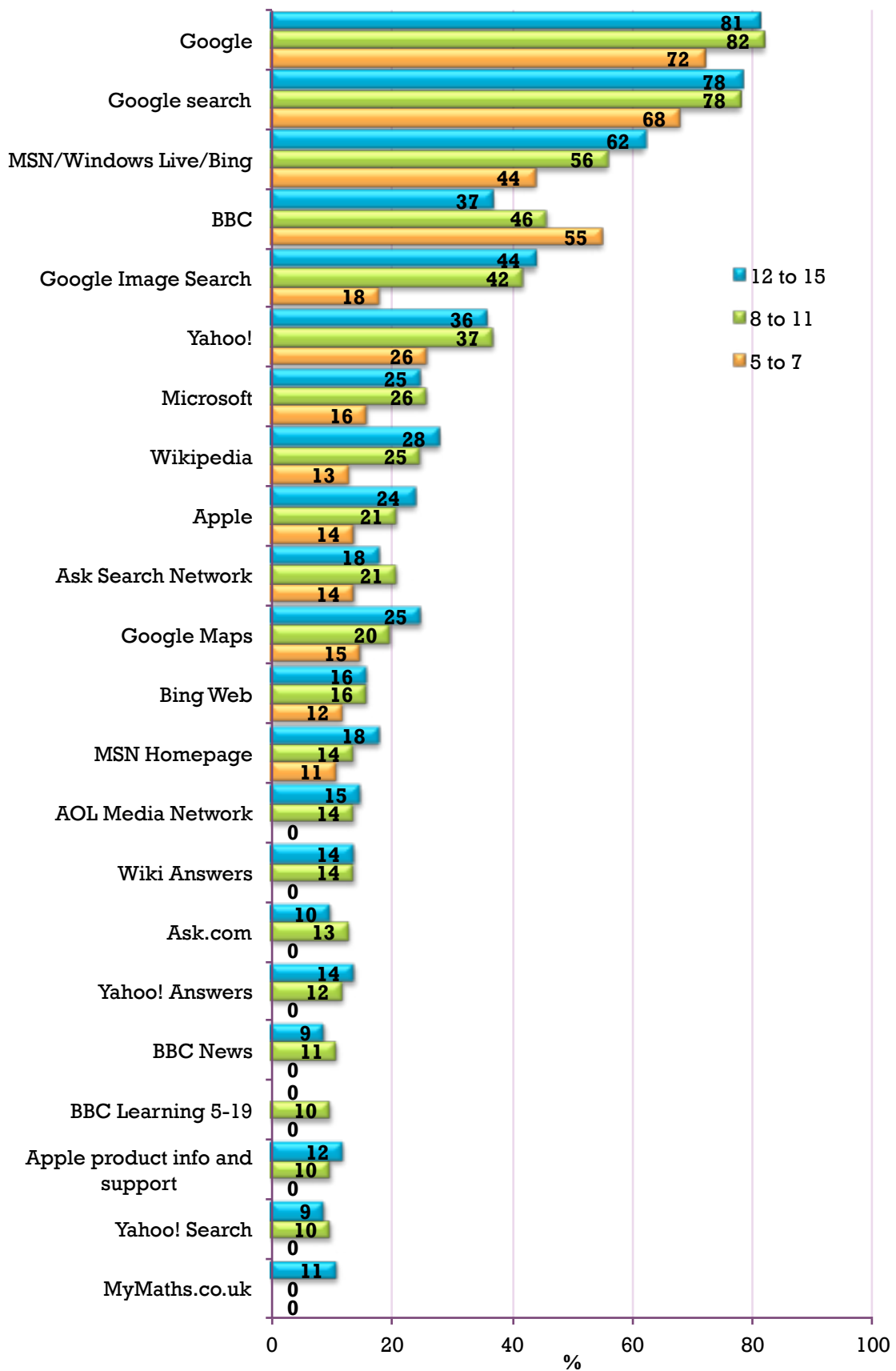
Rank	Site name	Category
1	YouTube	Entertainment
2	Google	Information
3	Facebook	Social networking
4	BBC	Information
5	MSN/Windows Live/Bing	Information
6	Wikipedia	Information
7	Yahoo!	Information
8	eBay	Transaction
9	Microsoft	Information
10	Amazon	Transaction

4.2 Information websites

- Information websites include those used for general surfing and browsing, news and educational websites, and sites where people can add or change information such as Wikipedia.
- 8 to 15 year olds in particular are accessing a broad range of information websites (see Figure 27).
- Google is used by the majority of children in all age groups (see Figure 27).

³ Unique audience is the total number of unique persons who have visited a website at least once in the specified period. Persons visiting the same website more than once in this period are only counted once.

Figure 27: Information websites accessed by proportion of unique visitors in each age group, March 2011
 (adapted from: Ofcom 2011a, pp.172-174)



4.3 Communication and social networking websites

- Communication websites here include social networking, emailing and instant messaging websites.
- The social networking site, Facebook, is the most popular communication website across all age groups. Despite requiring users to be 13 years or over, two fifths of internet users aged 5 to 7 years, and over half of 8 to 11 year old internet users visited Facebook at least once in the specified month (see Figure 28).
- Facebook is by far the most popular social networking site in the UK: 70% of all 12 to 15 year olds in the UK have a Facebook profile (see Figure 29). Research from America reports that most young people who use social networking sites use other sites as well as Facebook rather than instead of it. 89% of teenagers with one account use Facebook only; 99% of teenagers with multiple accounts use Facebook (Lenhart et al 2011, p.19).

Figure 28: Communication websites accessed by proportion of unique visitors per age group, March 2011 (adapted from: Ofcom 2011a, pp.172-174)

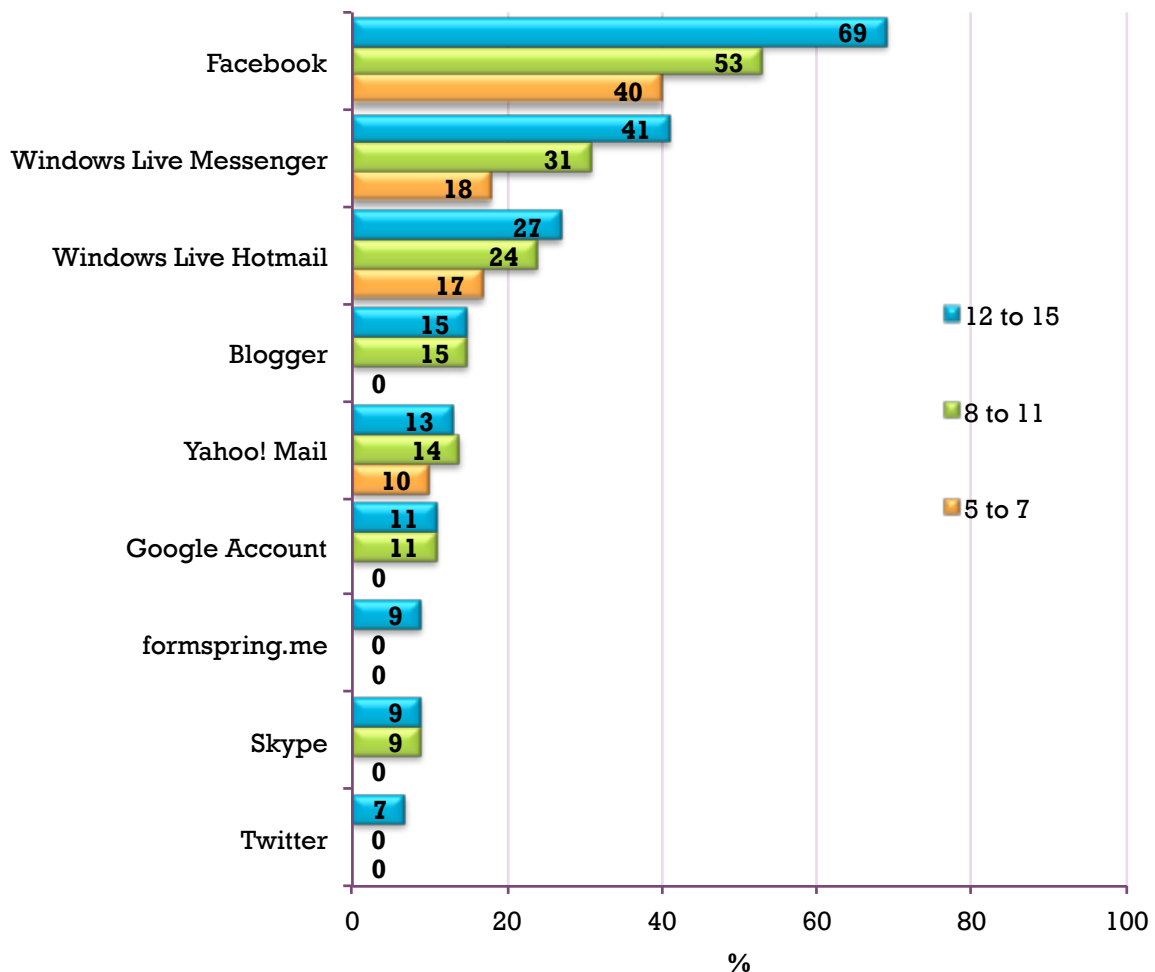
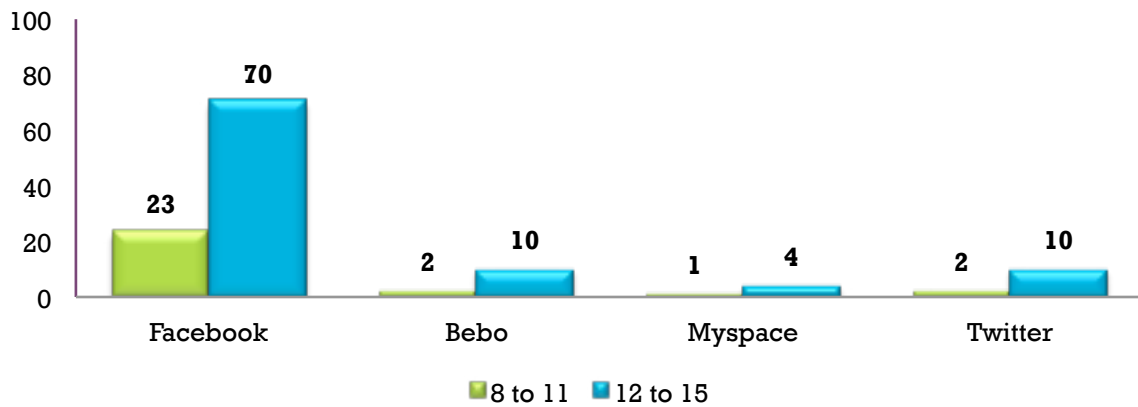


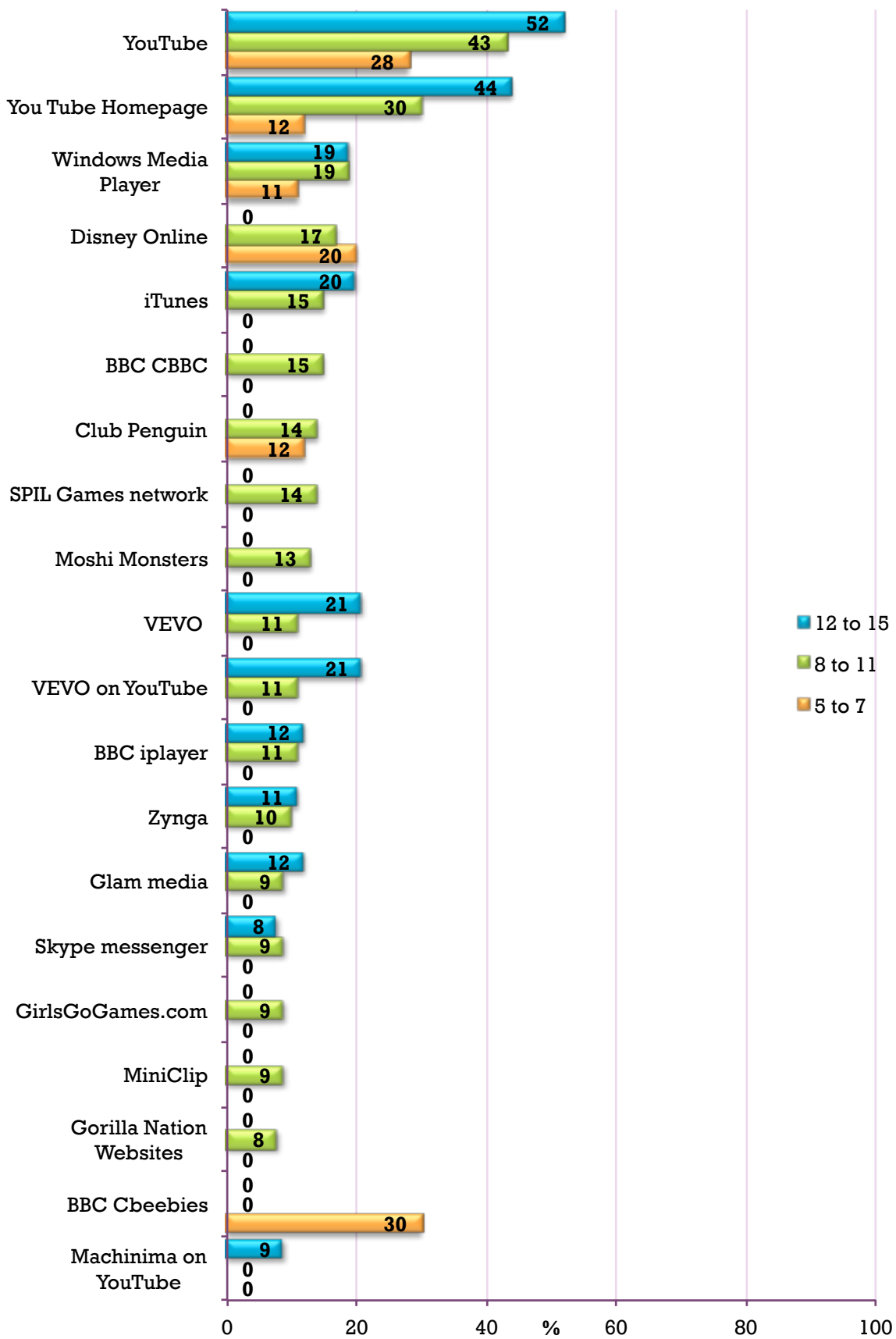
Figure 29: Proportion of children with social media account by site used, of all children in the UK (adapted from: Ofcom 2011a, p.53)



4.4 Entertainment websites

- Entertainment websites here include gaming and avatar websites, sites where users can watch audio-visual content, and sites where users can download or play music.
- 8 to 11 year old internet users visit a broad range of gaming websites including SPIL games, Disney online, Zynga, GirlsGogames.com, Mini Clip, and Gorilla Nation websites (see Figure 30).
- In this category of website, 5 to 7 year olds favour sites where they can watch or download clips or TV programmes including YouTube and BBC CBeebies (see Figure 30).
- Avatar websites including Club Penguin and Moshi Monsters are more popular with younger children, particularly those aged 8 to 11. No unique visitors to these sites aged 12 to 15 were recorded during the specified period (see Figure 30).
- Watching music videos, for example on the website VEVO, is more popular among 12 to 15 year olds than the younger age groups (See Figure 30).

Figure 30: Entertainment websites by proportion of unique visitors in each age group, March 2011 (adapted from: Ofcom 2011a, pp.172-174)



5. Trends

Looking at how behaviour has changed over recent years can provide some indication of what to expect in the future. Topic five explores recent trends within each of the previous four topics to highlight how the online behaviour of children and young people has changed.

5.1 Access to the internet

- Access to the internet at home via a PC or laptop has increased for all age groups (see Figure 31.)
- Among young people aged 16 to 24 access to the internet at home via any device increased by 5 percentage points between 2011 and 2012 (90% vs. 85%) (Ofcom 2012b, p.243).
- Since 2009 there has been an increase in children and young people’s access to the internet across all socio economic groups, with the increase most marked for children in DE households (see Figure 32).
- Between 2009 and 2011 the proportion of children and young people who ever use the internet at home has increased by more than ten percentage points for 8 to 11s and 12 to 15s (see Figure 33).
- Between 2010 and 2011 there was significant increase in proportion of children who ever use the internet for children in AB households (89% to 93%) and for children in DE households (69% to 72%) (Ofcom 2011a, p.19; Ofcom 2011b, p.10).

Figure 31: Proportion of children in the UK with access to the internet at home via a PC or laptop by age, 2009-2011 (adapted from: Ofcom 2011a, p.15)

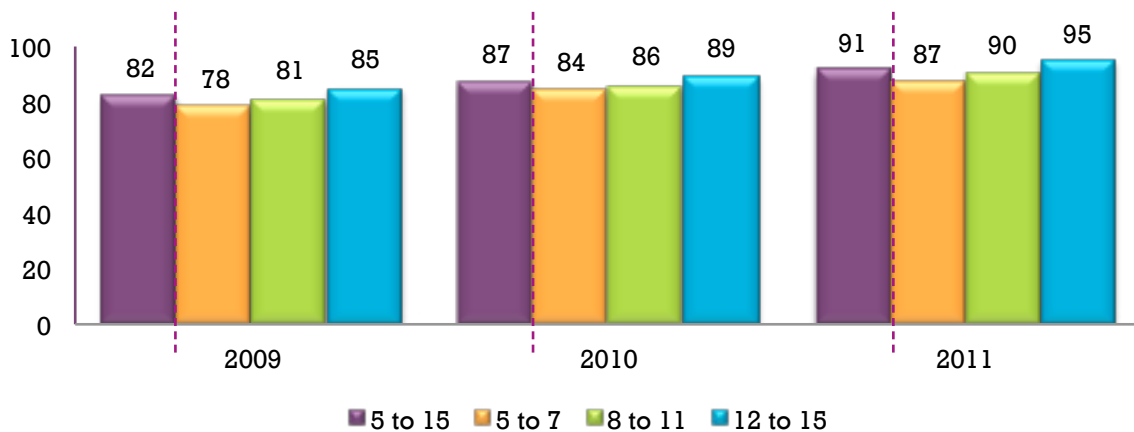


Figure 32: Proportion of children aged 5-15 years in the UK with access to the internet at home via a PC or laptop by socio-economic group, 2009-2011 (adapted from: Ofcom 2011a, p.15)

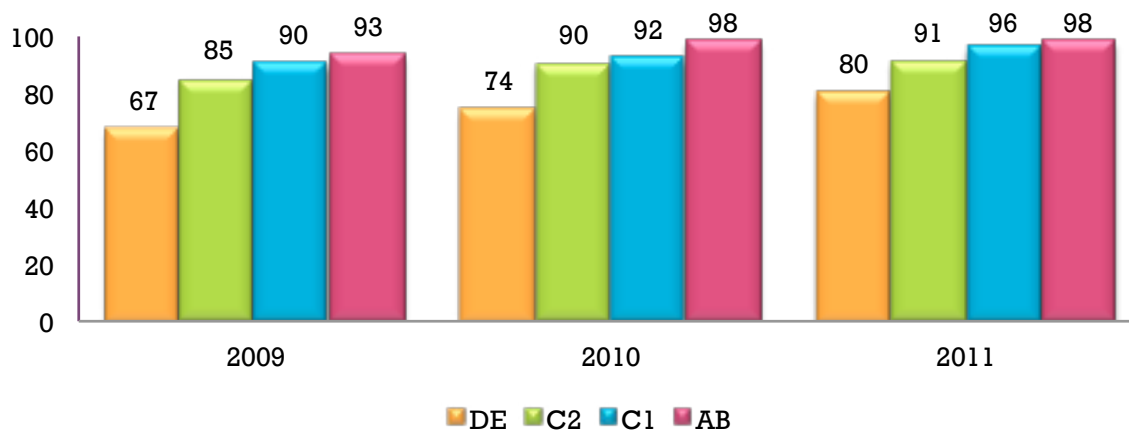
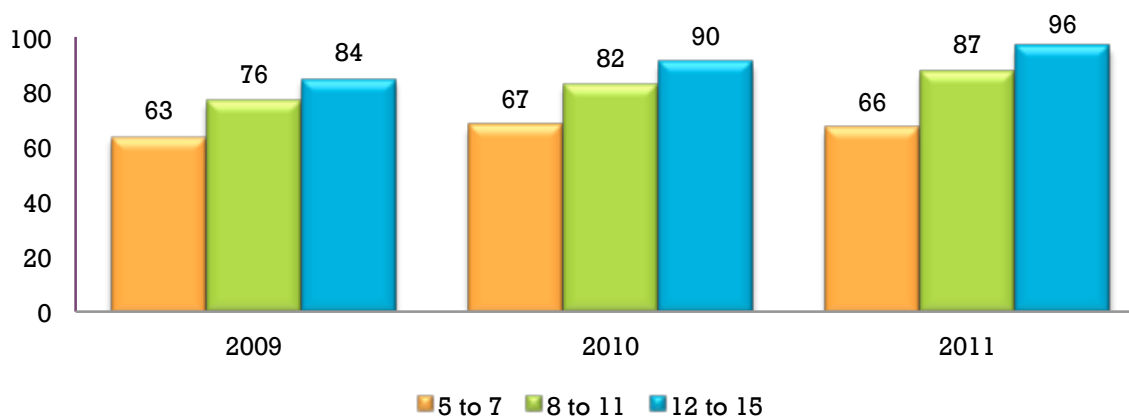


Figure 33: Proportion of children in the UK who have ever used any device to access the internet at home, 2009-2011 (Ofcom 2011a, p.25)



5.2 Amount of internet use

- The proportion of children and young people who use the internet regularly has increased across the age groups (see Figure 34).
- There was an increase the proportion of children from DE households who use the internet regularly, from 54% in 2010 to 60% in 2011 (Ofcom, 2011a, p.22; 2011b, p.28).
- The number of hours spent using the internet at home by 5 to 15 year olds has remained fairly stable since 2009. A slight decrease in time spent was recorded between 2010 and 2011, mainly attributable to the 12 to 15 year old age group (see Figure 35). This may reflect the increased uptake of mobile devices to access the internet, and therefore an increase in time spent on the internet in locations other than home.

Figure 34: Proportion of children in the UK who use the internet regularly (Ofcom 2011a, p.22)

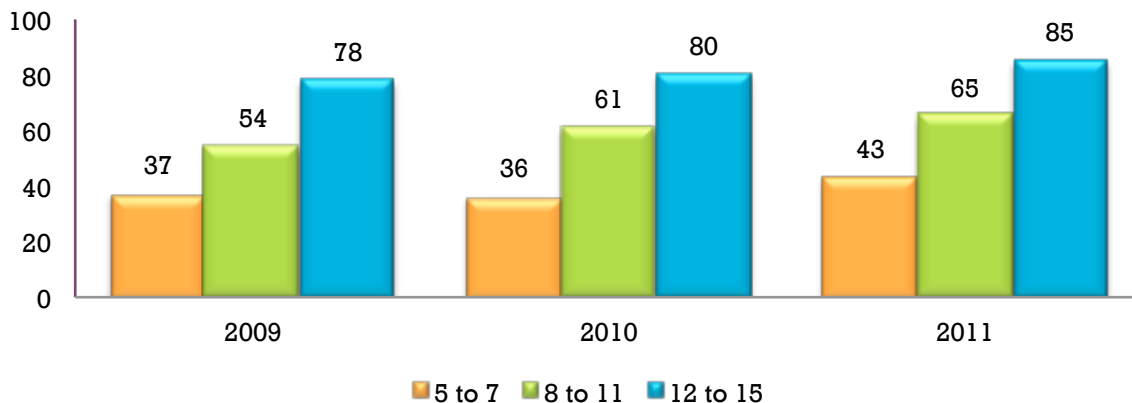
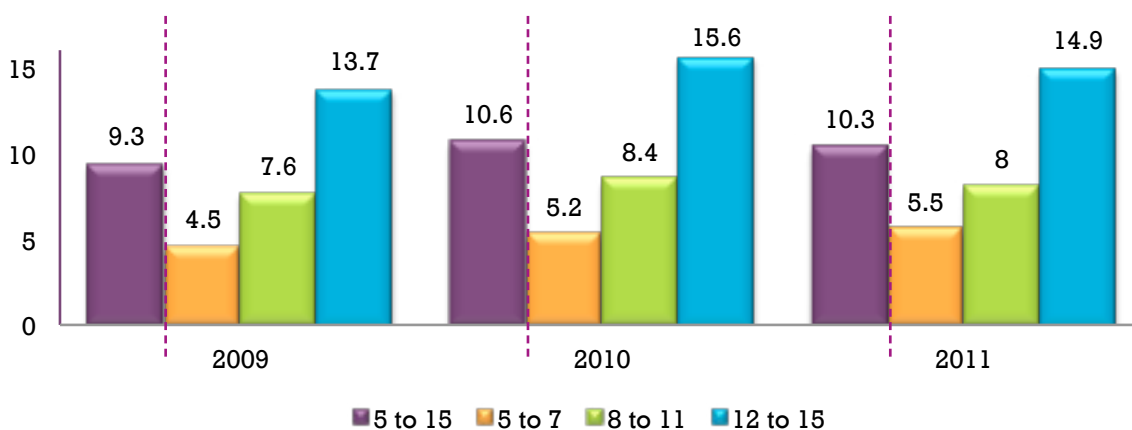


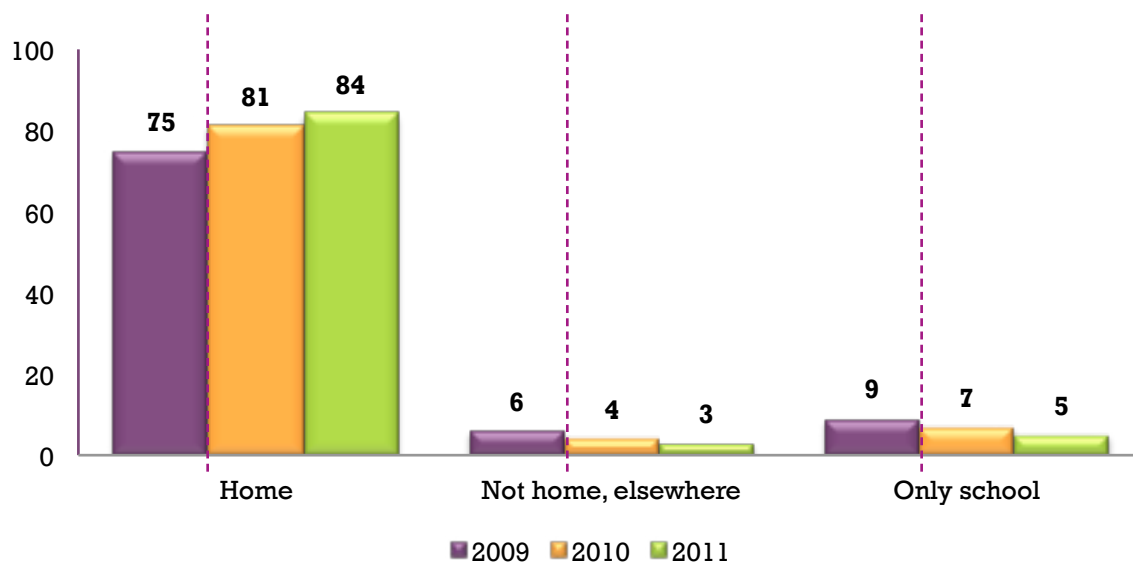
Figure 35: Estimated weekly hours of internet use at home by children in the UK, of those who use the internet at home, 2009-2011 (adapted from: Ofcom 2011a, p.37; 2011c, p.13; 2010, p.11)



5.3 Location of internet use

- A higher proportion of 8 to 11s and 12 to 15 year olds use the internet at home in 2011 compared to 2009 (87% vs. 76%) (96% vs. 84%) (Ofcom 2011a, p.25).

Figure 36: Proportion of 5 to 15 year olds who use the internet via any device, by location (adapted from: Ofcom 2011a p.28)



5.4 Mode of internet use

- There has been an increase in the use of alternative devices to access the internet. Use of games consoles rose from 18% of 12 to 15 year olds in 2009, to 23% of 12 to 15 year olds in 2010 (see Figure 37).
- Internet access is becoming more mobile. Since 2010, 5 to 15 year olds are more likely to 'mostly access' the internet using a laptop (56% vs. 44%) and less likely to 'mostly use' a desktop PC (33% vs. 48%) (Ofcom 2011a, p.25). The use of mobile phones to access the internet has increased, particularly among the older age group (see Figure 38).

Figure 37: Proportion of children and young people who ever use games consoles to access the internet, by age group (adapted from: Ofcom 2011a, p25)

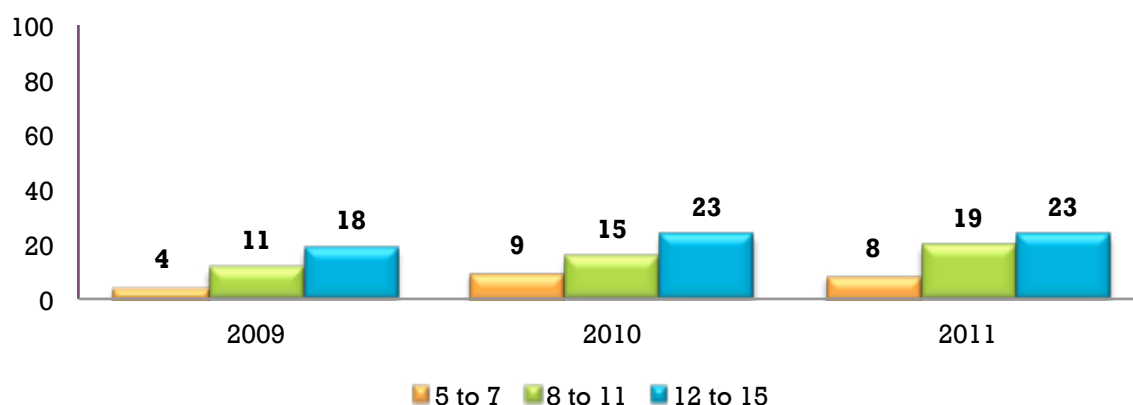
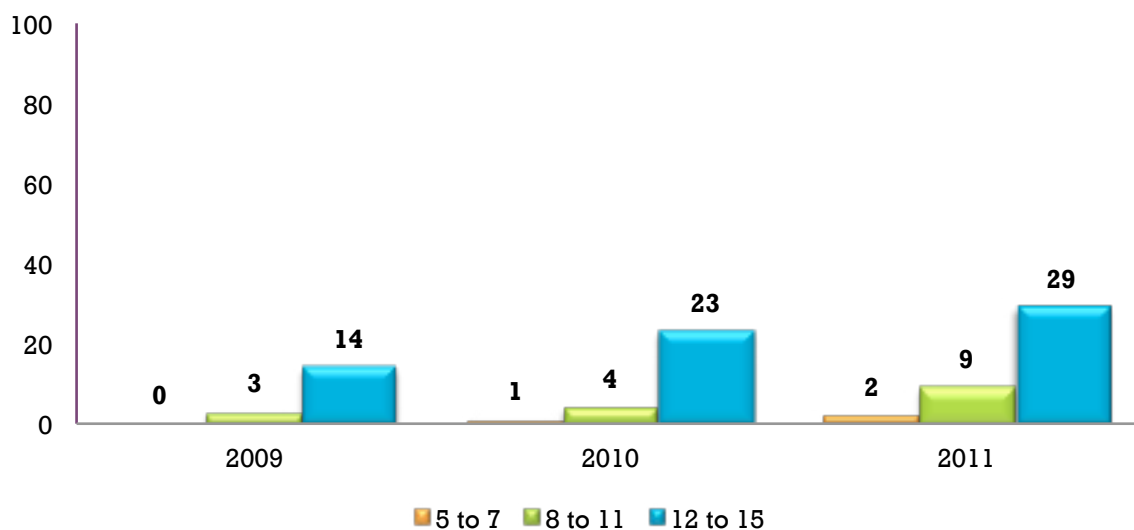


Figure 38: Proportion of children who have ever used a mobile phone to access the internet (adapted from: Ofcom 2011a, p25)

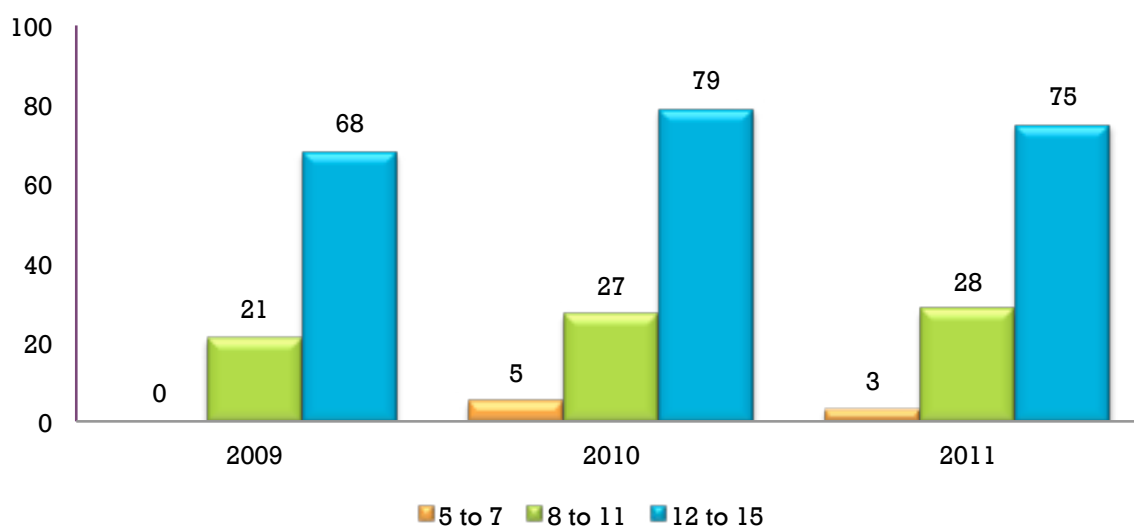


5.5 Using the internet

Social networking

- Social networking activities have steadily increased in popularity since 2009 (see Figure 39).
- In 2010, 34% of 8 to 12 year olds had an active profile on sites that require users to be 13 or older, up from 25% in 2009 (Ofcom 2011b, p.44).

Figure 39: Children and young people with an active social networking profile, of who use the internet at home (adapted from: Ofcom 2011a, p.52)



Social networking websites

- Lenhart et al (2011, p.16) reported that the use of Twitter among teenagers has doubled over two years (16% in 2011 vs. 8% in 2009).

6. Online behaviour in Scotland

Much of the available research relates to children and young people across the UK. Ofcom's reports on children's literacy in the nations provide some insight into the online behaviour of children and young people in Scotland. This section highlights notable Scottish trends and national differences in online behaviour.

6.1 Internet take-up

- The proportion of 5 to 15 year olds in Scotland with access to the internet at home through a PC or laptop was lower than the UK figures of the same year (79% vs. 87%) (Ofcom 2011c, p.1).
- 63% of children in Scotland have 'ever used' any device to access the internet at home, compared to 81% of children in the UK (Ofcom 2011c, p.10).
- Among 5 to 15 year old internet users in Scotland, weekly internet increased from 8.9 hours in 2009 to 11.4 hours in 2010 (Ofcom 2010, p.11; 2011c, p.2).

6.2 Internet access

- Children in Scotland are less likely than all UK children to use the internet at home via a PC or laptop (63% vs. 80%) (Ofcom 2011c, p.1). This is a decrease from the previous year (71%) (Ofcom 2010, p.8).
- Young internet users in Scotland are less likely than all young internet users in the UK to go online at home through a games console (10% vs. 16%) (Ofcom 2011c, p.1).
- However, similar proportions of 8 to 15 year old mobile phone owners in Scotland use their phone at least weekly to visit social networking sites (10% vs. UK 10%) and websites (8% vs. UK 10%) (Ofcom 2011c, p.13).

6.3 Internet use

- Scotland's 8 to 15 year old internet users are as likely as all UK young internet users to have a social networking profile (Ofcom 2010, p.3). Between 2009 and 2010 there was a significant increase in the number of children in Scotland who use the internet weekly for social networking (39% vs. 52%) (Ofcom 2011c, p.1).
- In 2010 children in Scotland were less likely than all UK young internet users to use the internet weekly for schoolwork (52% vs. 67%) (Ofcom 2011c, p.1).
- Between 2009 and 2010 there was a decrease in the proportion of children in Scotland who use the internet weekly for news (14% vs. 7%). This is lower than the percentage of young internet users across the UK who undertake this activity (15%) (Ofcom 2011c, p.1).

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Appendix 1: List of figures

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2	Proportion of children aged 5-15 years in the UK with access to the internet at home via a PC or laptop in 2011 by socio economic group	Ofcom 2011a, p15
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2	Relative popularity of top ten websites among 2 to 17 year olds on desktop and laptop computers in March 2012	Ofcom 2012b, p258

Appendix 2: Research matrix

Report [key data set]	Date data collected	Who participated	Age of CYP	Location	Research method
Livingstone et al (2011a) EU Kids Online Final Report	2010	25,142 child internet users and their parents (1000/country)	9-16	25 European countries	Face to face interviews Self complete questions
Livingstone et al (2011a) Risks and safety for children on the internet: the UK report	May/June 2010	1032 children and their parents	9-16	UK	Face to face interviews Self complete questions
Ofcom (2012a) Adults media use and attitudes report [media literacy tracker]	Sept – Oct 2011	1823 Adults 16 and over	16-24	UK	Quantitative interviews
Ofcom (2011a) Children and parents media use and attitudes report [Media Literacy Tracker]	March – April 2011	1,717 children and their parents	5 - 15	UK	Quantitative interviews
Ofcom (2011a) Children and parents media use and attitudes report [UKOM/Neilsen]	March 2011	45,239 individuals	2+	UK	Monitored use of PC and laptop computers at home
Ofcom (2011b) UK children's media literacy [Media literacy tracker]	April - May 2010, Sept-Oct 2010	2,071 Children and their parents	5 - 15	UK	Quantitative interviews
Ofcom (2011c) Children's media literacy in the nations: summary report	Spring and Autumn 2010	286 children and their parents	5-15	Scotland	Quantitative interviews
Ofcom (2010) Children's media literacy in the nations: Summary report	Spring and Autumn 2009	284 children and their parents	5-15	Scotland	Quantitative interviews



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