



Digital use and risk:

Online platform engagement among children
aged 10 to 15

July 2025



Acknowledgement of Country

eSafety acknowledges all First Nations people for their continuing care of everything Country encompasses – land, waters and community. We pay our respects to First Nations people and to Elders past and present.

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eSafety research program

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About this report

Online platforms are a central part of life for children in Australia, with widespread engagement across social media, communication apps and online gaming environments.

As children aged 10–15 increasingly navigate these digital spaces, it is essential to understand not only how they use these platforms but also the risks they may encounter.

This short report is part of a report series presenting findings from eSafety’s Keeping Kids Safe Online survey. It details top-line findings on the use of online platforms and experiences of harms among 10–15-year-olds, including age and gender differences where sample sizes allowed.

Methodology

Between December 2024 and February 2025, eSafety conducted the Keeping Kids Safe Online survey, which was a nationally representative survey of 3,454 children aged 10–17 years living in Australia (see methodology report [here](#)). A subset of this data, comprising responses from 2,629 children aged 10–15 years, was examined to explore their use of online platforms and experiences of online harms and to identify where these harms may be occurring.

Specifically, we assessed use¹ of online platforms by children aged 10–15, including the use of social media platforms² and platforms or apps used specifically to chat, message, call or video call (referred to here as ‘communication platforms’).³

We also investigated the lifetime and 12-month prevalence of cyberbullying, non-consensual tracking, monitoring and harassment, online grooming-type behaviour, online sexual harassment, exposure to content associated with harm, image-based abuse, and online hate within this age group.

Children who had experienced each harm type were asked further questions about their most recent or impactful experience of that harm type, including where it occurred. To minimise the burden on children who had experienced multiple harm-types, they were only asked follow-up questions about one type.

¹The Keeping Kids Safe Online survey did not examine the use of specific online platforms via individual user accounts. Instead, the survey focused on general patterns of use among children.

²In this research, the term social media platform is used to refer to services including: BeReal, Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, Reddit (like *r/gaming*), Snapchat, Steam, Threads, TikTok, Twitch, X (Twitter), YouTube, as well as ‘another social media platform or app’. These services were chosen for the survey based on their popularity, as identified in scoping research. Their usage in this research does not imply that any of these services necessarily meet the definitions of a ‘social media service’ (SMS) or an ‘age-restricted SMS’ under the Online Safety Act.

³In this research, the term ‘communication platform’ is used to refer to services including: Discord, email (like Gmail), FaceTime, Google Chat, IMO, KakaoTalk, Kik, Line, Messenger (also known as Facebook Messenger), Messenger Kids, Signal, Skype, Telegram, text messages (like iMessage, Google messages), Viber, voice or text chat in a video game or console, WeChat, WhatsApp, Wickr, as well as ‘another app or platform to message, call or chat to people online.’ This selection aimed to capture diverse modes of communication (i.e. text, voice, video) across platforms that are accessible and relevant to children. The use of the term ‘communication platform’ is descriptive and does not carry any meaning under the Online Safety Act or any subordinate legislation.

Online platform use

Nearly all children aged 10 to 15 have used social media
Almost all children in our survey (96%) had ever used a social media platform⁴

- While children aged 13–15 were more likely than those aged 10–12 to have ever used a social media platform (99% vs. 93%), a large majority of younger children had still engaged with social media.

As shown in Table 1, the most popular social media platforms that children had ever used were YouTube (76%), TikTok (56%), Instagram (47%), Snapchat (46%) and Facebook (42%). In addition, 44% of children had ever used YouTube Kids.

There are gendered differences in the types of social media platforms ever used by children

While a similar proportion of girls, boys and trans and gender-diverse children had ever used social media, there were gender differences in the social media platforms children had used (see Table 1).

- Girls were more likely than boys to have ever used TikTok, Instagram, Snapchat, Pinterest or BeReal.
- Boys were more likely than girls to have ever used Steam, Reddit or Twitch.
- Trans and gender-diverse children were more likely than boys and girls to have ever used Pinterest, Steam, Reddit or Twitch. In addition, they were more likely than boys to have ever used Snapchat.⁵

Older children use more social media platforms

As shown in Table 1, children aged 13–15 were more likely than those aged 10–12 to have ever used all social media platforms captured in the survey.

⁴The survey included YouTube Kids, to help children differentiate between YouTube and YouTube Kids. While it is included in Table 1 for reference, it isn’t considered a social media platform for the purpose of this report and is not included in any further analysis.

⁵The smaller sample size for trans and gender-diverse children should be considered when interpreting these findings.

Table 1: Lifetime use of social media platforms, by gender and age (%)

Platform	Child gender				Child age	
	Total	Boys	Girls	Trans and gender diverse	10-12	13-15
YouTube	76	77	74	86	73	78↑
TikTok	56	52	60↑	65	45	67↑
Instagram	47	42	51↑	55	30	64↑
Snapchat	46	42	51↑	57↑	33	60↑
Facebook	42	41	43	57	32	52↑
Pinterest	20	10	29↑	46↑	15	25↑
Steam	11	16↑	5	27↑	7	15↑
Reddit	11	12↑	8	35↑	7	14↑
Another social media platform or app	9	9	9	19↑	9	10
Twitch	9	12↑	5	22↑	5	12↑
X (Twitter)	8	9	7	13	5	11↑
BeReal	5	3	8↑	7	3	8↑
Threads	4	4	5	7	3	6↑
YouTube Kids	44	40↑	49↑	25	59↑	29
Base	2,629	1,335	1,241	53	1,332	1,297

Source Q: Which, if any, social media platforms or apps have you ever used?

Note: The survey included YouTube Kids, to help children differentiate between YouTube and YouTube Kids. YouTube Kids isn't considered a social media platform in this analysis. Arrows denote statistically significant differences between subgroups.

Current use of social media platforms

We examined use of social media platforms in the 4 weeks prior to the survey. Almost two-thirds of children surveyed (63%) had used YouTube, 44% had used TikTok, 36% had used Snapchat, 35% had used Instagram and 29% had used Facebook (Table 2).

We found a similar pattern of gender and age differences in the platforms children used in the 4 weeks prior to the survey as was observed for lifetime use (see Table 2).

Table 2: Current (past 4 weeks) use of social media platforms, by gender and age (%)

Platform	Child gender				Child age	
	Total	Boys	Girls	Trans and gender diverse	10-12	13-15
YouTube	63	67↑	58	75↑	63	63
TikTok	44	41	47↑	46	31	57↑
Snapchat	36	32	40↑	40	21	51↑
Instagram	35	31	39↑	41	19	51↑
Facebook	29	28	30	36	21	37↑
Pinterest	9	3	16↑	20↑	7	11↑
Another social media platform or app	6	6	6	10	7	6
Steam	6	9↑	2	13↑	4	8↑
Reddit (like r/gaming)	5	6↑	3	11↑	3	7↑
X (Twitter)	4	5↑	3	6	2	5↑
Twitch	4	5↑	2	12↑	3	5↑
Threads	1	2	1	2	1	2↑
BeReal	1	1	2↑	0	1	2↑
Base	2,629	1,335	1,241	53	1,332	1,297

Source Q: In the past 4 weeks, which social media platforms or apps have you used?

Note: Arrows denote statistically significant differences between subgroups.

Almost all children have used communication platforms

As with the popularity of social media platforms among children aged 10–15 surveyed, we found that communication platforms were also widely used. Almost all children (94%) had ever used an app or platform for chatting, messaging, calling or video calling someone.

- Children aged 13–15 were more likely than those aged 10–12 to have ever used a communication platform (96% vs. 93%).
- Girls were more likely than boys to have ever used a communication platform (95% vs. 93%).

As shown in Table 3, the most common communication platforms ever used were FaceTime (44%), Messenger Kids (40%), text messages (32%), WhatsApp (29%), email (26%), Discord (22%) and Messenger (21%).

There are gendered differences in the lifetime use of communication platforms

As shown in Table 3, girls, boys and trans and gender-diverse children tended to favour different communication platforms.

- Girls were more likely than boys to have ever used FaceTime, Messenger Kids or text messages.
- Boys were more likely than girls to have ever used Discord or voice or text chat in a video game or console.
- Trans and gender-diverse children were more likely than girls and boys to have ever used Discord or Google Chat. They were also more likely than girls to have used voice or text chat in a video game or console.⁶

Older children are more likely to have used communication platforms

As shown in Table 3, children aged 13–15 were more likely than those aged 10–12 to have ever used a range of communication platforms, including FaceTime, text messages, WhatsApp, email and Messenger. However, children aged 10–12 were more likely to have used Messenger Kids.

Table 3: Lifetime use of communication platforms, by gender and age (%)

Platform	Child gender				Child age	
	Total	Boys	Girls	Trans and gender diverse	10-12	13-15
FaceTime	44	41	47↑	44	40	49↑
Messenger Kids	40	36	45↑	33	52↑	28
Text messages (like iMessage, Google messages)	32	29	35↑	29	24	39↑
WhatsApp	29	29	29	22	22	35↑
Email (like Gmail)	26	25	27	38	19	34↑
Discord	22	28↑	14	46↑	12	31↑
Messenger (also known as Facebook Messenger)	21	20	22	28	16	27↑
Voice or text chat in a video game or console	13	17↑	8	21↑	10	16↑
Skype	6	6	6	4	5	6↑
Google Chat	5	5	5	13↑	5	6
I have used another app or platform to message, call or chat to people online	5	4	5	11↑	3	6↑
WeChat	2	2	2	2	2	3
Telegram	2	2	2	1	1	3↑
Viber	2	2	2	0	1	2
Kik	1	1	1	2	1	2
Signal	1	1	1	0	1	2↑
KakaoTalk	1	1	1	1	1	1
Line	1	1	1	2	1	1
IMO	1	1	1	3	1	1
Wickr	0	0	0	0	0	0
Base	2,629	1,335	1,241	53	1,332	1,297

Source Q: Which, if any, of these apps or platforms have you ever used to chat with, message, call or video call anyone online?

Note: Arrows denote statistically significant differences between subgroups.

⁶The smaller sample size for trans and gender-diverse children should be considered when interpreting these findings.

Current use of communication platforms

As shown in Table 4, in the 4 weeks prior to the survey, children aged 10–15 had most commonly used Messenger Kids (27%), FaceTime (25%), text messages (25%) or WhatsApp (23%) to chat, message, call or video call others.

We found a similar pattern of gender and age differences in the use of communication platforms in the past 4 weeks as was observed for lifetime use (see Table 4).

Table 4: Current use of communication platforms, by gender and age (%)

Platform	Child gender				Child age	
	Total	Boys	Girls	Trans and gender diverse	10–12	13–15
Messenger Kids	27	23↑	31↑	12	42↑	12
FaceTime	25	22	30↑	13	23	28↑
Text messages (like iMessage, Google messages)	25	21	29↑	24	19	31↑
WhatsApp	23	23	23	18	18	27↑
Messenger (also known as Facebook Messenger)	14	13	15	22	11	18↑
Discord	13	18↑	7	32↑	8	19↑
Email (like Gmail)	12	11	13	13	8	15↑
Voice or text chat in a video game or console	9	14↑	5	12↑	7	11↑
I have used another app or platform to message, call or chat to people online	3	3	3	6	2	5↑
Skype	2	2	2	0	2	2
Google Chat	2	1	2	5	2	2
WeChat	2	1	2	2	1	2
Telegram	1	1	1	1	1	1
Viber	1	1	1	0	1	1
Line	1	0	1	2	0	1
Signal	0	0	1	0	0	1
Kik	0	0	0	0	0	0
KakaoTalk	0	0	0	0	0	0
IMO	0	0	0	2↑	0	0
Wickr ⁷	0	0	0	0	0	0
Base	2,629	1,335	1,241	53	1,332	1,297

Source Q: In the past 4 weeks, which of these apps or platforms have you used to chat to, message, call or video call people online?

Note: Arrows denote statistically significant differences between subgroups.

⁷Although Wickr was shut down in December 2023, it was retained in the survey to examine lifetime use.

Most children have played online video games

Video gaming was also popular among children aged 10–15 in our survey, with 86% having ever played video games online. It was particularly popular among boys. We found that 92% of boys, compared with 80% of girls, had ever played video games online. Among trans and gender-diverse children, 85% had played video games online.

In addition, 88% of children aged 13–15 had ever played video games online, compared with 85% of children aged 10–12.

Experiences of online harms

Cyberbullying experiences are common among children

We found that more than 1 in 2 children aged 10–15 (52%) had ever been cyberbullied, with 38% having experienced cyberbullying in the past 12 months.

Girls are more likely than boys to be cyberbullied

Just over half of girls (53%) had ever been cyberbullied, compared with (49%) of boys. Girls (40%) were also more likely than boys (35%) to have been cyberbullied in the past 12 months.

Trans and gender-diverse children are more likely to be cyberbullied

More than 8 in 10 trans and gender-diverse children (81%) had ever experienced cyberbullying, and 71% had experienced it in the past 12 months.⁸

Cyberbullying experiences increase with age

Among children aged 13–15, 57% had ever been cyberbullied, compared with 46% of children aged 10–12. Children aged 13–15 were also more likely to have been cyberbullied in the previous 12 months, compared with children aged 10–12 (42% vs. 34%).

Children are bullied in diverse ways online

As shown in Table 5, over 1 in 3 children had ever had someone say hurtful things to them online (36%) or been purposely left out of an online activity (34%). Around 1 in 4 had humiliating or hurtful things said about them online (23%), while 1 in 6 had humiliating or hurtful lies spread about them online (17%).

⁸The smaller sample size for trans and gender-diverse children should be considered when interpreting these findings.

Table 5: Lifetime and 12-month prevalence of cyberbullying (%)

Cyberbullying experience	Ever	Past 12 months
Had someone say hurtful things to them online	36	23
Were purposely left out of an online activity	34	24
Had humiliating or hurtful things said about them online	23	14
Had humiliating or hurtful lies spread about them online	17	9
Were sent or tagged in offensive or upsetting photos or videos	14	8
Had their private messages, information or secrets shared with other people	15	9
Were told online to hurt or kill themselves, or that they should die	12	7
Had someone say that they were going to hurt or kill them or told other people to hurt or kill them	10	5
Had humiliating or hurtful photos or videos of them shared online	9	5
Had their phone number, email or home address shared online	7	4
Had humiliating or hurtful fake photos or videos made of them and shared online	6	3
Had a fake online identity or profile made of them	6	3
Base	2,629	2,629

Source Q: Has anyone online ever done any of the following things to you on purpose because they really wanted to humiliate you or make you feel bad, or make others not like you?

Children’s experience of bullying across different platform types

A subset of children who had experienced cyberbullying (n=569) were asked further questions about their most recent or impactful experience of cyberbullying, including where the bullying occurred.

More than 1 in 3 children (36%) reported that their most recent or impactful experience of cyberbullying occurred on a social media platform (Table 6).⁹ We also found:

- Girls were more likely than boys to report that their most recent or impactful experience of cyberbullying occurred on social media.
- Children aged 13–15 were more likely than children aged 10–12 to report that their most recent or impactful experience of cyberbullying occurred on social media.

Similarly, more than 1 in 3 children (36%) reported that their most recent or impactful experience of cyberbullying occurred on a communication platform.¹⁰

- Children aged 10–12 were more likely than children aged 13–15 to report that their most recent or impactful experience of cyberbullying occurred on a communication platform.

⁹In this research, the term social media platform is used to refer to services including: BeReal, Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, Reddit (like r/gaming), Snapchat, Steam, Threads, TikTok, Twitch, X (Twitter), YouTube, as well as ‘another social media platform or app’
¹⁰In this research, the term ‘communication platform’ is used to refer to services including: Discord, email (like Gmail), FaceTime, Google Chat, IMO, KakaoTalk, Kik, Line, Messenger (also known as Facebook Messenger), Messenger Kids, Signal, Skype, Telegram, text messages (like iMessage, Google messages), Viber, voice or text chat in a video game or console, WeChat, WhatsApp, Wickr, as well as ‘another app or platform to message, call or chat to people online.’

Around 1 in 4 children (26%) reported that their most recent or impactful experience of cyberbullying occurred in an online gaming platform (i.e. in an online video game or voice or text chat in a video game or console).

- Boys were more likely than girls to report that their most recent or impactful experience of cyberbullying occurred in an online gaming platform.
- Children aged 10–12 were more likely than children aged 13–15 to report that their most recent or impactful experience of cyberbullying occurred in an online gaming platform.

Table 6: Category of platforms where children most recently experienced cyberbullying, by gender and age (%)

Platform category	Total	Child gender		Child age	
		Boys	Girls	10–12	13–15
Social media	36	29	42↑	25	49↑
Communication	36	31	41	44↑	27
Online gaming	26	37↑	14	32↑	18
Base	569	273	285	313	256

Source Q: Which platform or platforms did this happen to you on? You can choose more than one answer.
Note: Sample sizes were too small to explore the platforms on which trans and gender-diverse children experienced cyberbullying (n=11). Arrows denote statistically significant differences between subgroups.

Children’s experience of cyberbullying across specific platforms

As shown in Table 7, children were most likely to report that their most recent or impactful experience of cyberbullying occurred on an online video game (22%) or on Snapchat (20%). Around 1 in 6 said that it occurred on Messenger Kids (16%), while 6% were cyberbullied most recently on Instagram or on Facebook. In addition, we found:

- Boys were more likely than girls to report that their most recent or impactful experience of cyberbullying occurred on an online video game, voice or text chat in a video game or console, or YouTube.
- Girls were more likely than boys to report that their most recent or impactful experience of cyberbullying occurred on Snapchat, Messenger Kids or text messages.
- Children aged 10–12 were more likely than children aged 13–15 to report that their most recent or impactful experience of cyberbullying occurred on an online video game or Messenger Kids.
- Children aged 13–15 were more likely than children aged 10–12 to report that their most recent or impactful experience of cyberbullying occurred on Snapchat, Facebook or Discord.

Table 7: Platforms on which children most recently experienced cyberbullying, by gender and age (%)

Platform	Child gender			Child age	
	Total	Boys	Girls	10-12	13-15
Online video game	22	32↑	13	29↑	15
Snapchat	20	14	26↑	11	30↑
Messenger Kids	16	9	23↑	26↑	5
Instagram	6	4	7	5	7
Facebook	6	5	7	4	8↑
Discord	5	7	4	3	8↑
Text messages	5	2	7↑	6	4
TikTok	4	3	5	4	3
Voice or text chat in a video game or console	4	7↑	1	4	4
Messenger	3	3	4	3	4
WhatsApp	3	4	2	3	4
YouTube	3	5↑	1	4	2
Email	1	2	1	1	1
FaceTime	1	2	1	1	1
Steam	1	1	1	1	1
X (Twitter)	0	1	0	0	0
Reddit (like r/gaming)	0	0	0	0	0
Google Chat	0	1	0	1	0
WeChat	0	0	0	0	0
Viber	0	0	0	0	0
Skype	0	0	0	0	0
KakaoTalk	0	0	0	0	0
Threads	0	0	0	0	0
IMO	0	0	0	0	0
Kik	0	0	0	0	0
Another online platform	4	4	4	5	3
Another social media platform or app	1	1	0	1	1
Another app or platform I use to message, call or chat to people online	1	1	0	1	1
Base	569	273	285	313	256

Source Q: Which platform or platforms did this happen to you on? You can choose more than one answer.
Note: Sample sizes were too small to explore the platforms on which trans and gender-diverse children experienced cyberbullying (n=11). The following platforms were included in the survey but weren't selected by any children: BeReal, Line, Pinterest, Signal, Telegram, Twitch, Wickr. Arrows denote statistically significant differences between subgroups.

Prevalence of non-consensual tracking, monitoring and harassment

Almost 1 in 4 children (23%) had ever experienced non-consensual tracking, monitoring¹¹ or harassment. In the past 12 months, 16% of children had experienced this.

More specifically:

- Seven per cent of children had someone use an app or a device to track their exact real-time location without their permission; 4% in the past 12 months.
- Nearly 1 in 5 children (17%) had someone look through their phone (or another device) or their social media or read their messages without their permission; 12% in the past 12 months.
- One in 10 children (10%) had felt worried or scared because someone kept sending them messages, calling them or posting on their social media page, and they wouldn't stop even when asked to; 5% in the past 12 months.

A similar proportion of girls and boys have experienced non-consensual tracking, monitoring or harassment

Nearly 1 in 4 girls (24%) and more than 1 in 5 boys (22%) had ever experienced non-consensual tracking, monitoring or harassment. Further, 17% of girls and 15% of boys had experienced it in the past 12 months.

Trans and gender-diverse children are more likely to have ever experienced non-consensual tracking, monitoring or harassment

Almost 2 in 5 trans and gender-diverse children (38%) had ever experienced non-consensual tracking, monitoring or harassment, and 1 in 5 (20%) had experienced it in the past 12 months.¹²

Experiences of non-consensual tracking, monitoring or harassment increase with age

More than 1 in 4 children aged 13–15 (26%) had ever experienced non-consensual tracking, monitoring or harassment, compared with 1 in 5 children aged 10–12 (19%). In addition, 19% of children aged 13–15 had experienced it in the past 12 months, compared with 14% of children aged 10–12.

¹¹While the survey included text clarifying that children should respond 'no' if tracking or monitoring was carried out by 'someone like a parent or caregiver doing this to keep you safe, and you were comfortable with this,' it is possible that some children still reported such experiences as non-consensual.
¹²The smaller sample size for trans and gender-diverse children should be considered when interpreting these findings (n=53).
voice or text chat in a video game or console , WeChat, WhatsApp, Wickr, as well as 'another app or platform to message, call or chat to people online.'

Children’s experiences of non-consensual tracking, monitoring and harassment across different platform types

A subset of children who had experienced non-consensual tracking, monitoring and harassment (n=328) were asked further questions about their most recent or impactful experience, including where it happened.

More than 1 in 2 children (55%) reported that their most recent or impactful experience of non-consensual tracking, monitoring and harassment occurred on a social media platform (Table 8).¹³

- Children aged 13–15 were more likely than those aged 10–12 to indicate that their most recent or impactful experience occurred on a social media platform.

Almost 1 in 2 children (47%) reported that their most recent or impactful experience of non-consensual tracking, monitoring and harassment occurred on a communication platform.¹⁴

- Children aged 10–12 were more likely than those aged 13–15 to indicate that their most recent or impactful experience occurred on a communication platform.

In contrast, a very small proportion of children (3%) reported that their most recent or impactful experience of non-consensual tracking, monitoring and harassment occurred in an online gaming platform.

Table 8: Category of platforms where children most recently experienced non-consensual tracking, monitoring and harassment, by gender and age (%)

Platform category	Child gender			Child age	
	Total	Boys	Girls	10-12	13-15
Social media	55	54	55	47	64↑
Communication	47	48	47	59↑	35
Online gaming	3	3	4	4	3
Base	328	164	157	174	154

Source Q: Which platform or platforms did this happen to you on? You can choose more than one answer.
Note: Sample sizes were too small to explore the platforms on which trans and gender-diverse children experienced non-consensual tracking, monitoring or surveillance (n=7). Arrows denote statistically significant differences between subgroups

¹³In this research, the term social media platform is used to refer to services including: BeReal, Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, Reddit (like r/gaming), Snapchat, Steam, Threads, TikTok, Twitch, X (Twitter), YouTube, as well as 'another social media platform or app'
¹⁴In this research, the term 'communication platform' is used to refer to services including: Discord, email (like Gmail), FaceTime, Google Chat, IMO, KakaoTalk, Kik, Line, Messenger (also known as Facebook Messenger), Messenger Kids, Signal, Skype, Telegram, text messages (like iMessage, Google messages), Viber, voice or text chat in a video game or console, WeChat, WhatsApp, Wickr, as well as 'another app or platform to message, call or chat to people online'

Children’s experiences of non-consensual tracking, monitoring and harassment across specific platforms

As shown in Table 9, just over 1 in 5 children (22%) reported that their most recent or impactful experience of non-consensual tracking, monitoring or harassment occurred on Snapchat. Around 1 in 5 children (17%) reported that it had occurred on Messenger Kids, 16% said that it had happened on Instagram, and 15% said it occurred on Facebook. In addition, 1 in 8 said that it occurred on TikTok (12%) or via text messages (12%).

- Children aged 13–15 were more likely than those aged 10–12 to report that their most recent experience occurred on Snapchat or Instagram.
- Children aged 10–12 were more likely than those aged 13–15 to report that their most recent experience happened on Messenger Kids.

Table 9: Platforms where children experienced most recently non-consensual tracking, monitoring and harassment, by gender and age (%)

Platform	Child gender			Child age	
	Total	Boys	Girls	10-12	13-15
Snapchat	22	20	25	14	32↑
Messenger Kids	17	18	17	29↑	4
Instagram	16	18	14	11	21↑
Facebook	15	17	13	12	18
Text messages (like iMessage, Google messages)	12	11	14	15	10
TikTok	12	14	10	10	13
YouTube	7	10	4	9	5
WhatsApp	7	9	6	6	8
Messenger (also known as Facebook Messenger)	5	7	4	5	6
Another online platform	5	6	3	5	4
Discord	4	4	3	5	3
Email (like Gmail)	3	2	4	4	2
FaceTime	3	4	2	2	4
Online video game	2	1	3	3	2
Voice or text chat in a video game or console	1	2	1	1	1
WeChat	1	1	1	1	1
X (Twitter)	1	2	0	1	1
Google Chat	1	1	1	1	1
Pinterest	1	0	1	1	0
BeReal	1	0	1	1	0
Another app or platform I use to message, call or chat to people online	1	1	0	1	1
KakaoTalk	1	0	1	0	1
Telegram	1	0	1	0	1
Line	1	0	1	0	1
Another social media platform or app	0	1	0	0	1
Steam	0	0	0	0	1
Reddit (like r/gaming)	0	1	0	0	1
Kik	0	0	0	0	0
Twitch	0	0	0	0	0
IMO	0	0	0	0	0
Threads	0	0	0	0	0
Signal	0	0	0	0	0
Skype	0	0	0	0	0
Base	328	164	157	174	154

Source Q: Which platform or platforms did this happen to you on? You can choose more than one answer.

Note: Sample sizes were too small to explore the platforms on which trans and gender-diverse children experienced non-consensual tracking, monitoring or surveillance (n=7). The following platforms were included in the survey but weren't selected by any children: Viber, Wickr. Arrows denote statistically significant differences between subgroups.

Prevalence of online grooming-type behaviour

Of the children surveyed, 14% had ever experienced online grooming-type behaviour.^{15,16} Almost 1 in 10 (9%) had experienced online grooming-type behaviour in the past 12 months.

A similar proportion of girls and boys have experienced online grooming-type behaviour

Around 1 in 7 girls (14%) and boys (13%) had ever experienced online grooming-type behaviour.¹⁷ In the past 12 months, 10% of girls and 8% of boys had experienced online grooming-type behaviour.

Older children are more likely to have ever experienced online grooming-type behaviour

Among children aged 13–15, 17% had ever experienced online grooming-type behaviour, compared with 11% of children aged 10–12. A similar percentage of children aged 13–15 (10%) and 10–12 (8%) experienced online grooming-type behaviour in the past 12 months.

Prevalence of online grooming-type behaviours

As shown in Table 10:

- 1 in 10 children (10%) had ever had an adult or someone at least 4–5 years older than them do or say something creepy or inappropriate to them
- 6% of children had ever had an adult or someone at least 4–5 years older than them ask them about private parts of their body, ask them to send a nude image of themselves, or sent them a nude image of themselves.

¹⁵Grooming-type behaviour' is used because grooming involves intent and a pattern of behaviour over time, which cannot be fully determined from the survey data. The survey captures behaviours commonly associated with online grooming. However, these indicators alone do not confirm that grooming has taken place.

¹⁶Children were given the option of skipping certain sensitive questions in the survey, including those on potential online grooming. Among the 2,629 children aged 10–15 surveyed, 707 declined to see the questions on potential online grooming. The prevalence of potential online grooming reported here is therefore based on a subset of the overall sample (n=1,922).

¹⁷Sample sizes were too small to report the prevalence of potential online grooming among trans and gender-diverse children aged 10–15 (n=40).

Table 10: Lifetime and 12-month prevalence of online grooming-type behaviours (%)

Experiences of grooming-type behaviours online	Ever	Past 12 months
Had an adult or someone at least 4 or 5 years older do or say something creepy or inappropriate to them	10	6
Had an adult or someone at least 4 or 5 years older ask them about private parts of their body	6	3
Had an adult or someone at least 4 or 5 years older ask them to send them a nude image of themselves	6	3
Had an adult or someone at least 4 or 5 years older send them a nude image of themselves	6	3
Had an adult or someone at least 4 or 5 years older send them a nude image of other people	5	3
Had an adult or someone at least 4 or 5 years older offer them money or gifts in exchange for a nude image of themselves	4	2
Base	1,922	1,922

Source Q: Has an adult or someone at least 4 or 5 years older than you ever ...?

Children’s experiences of online grooming-type behaviour across different platform types

A subset of children who had experienced online grooming-type behaviour (n=215) were asked further questions about their most recent or impactful experience of this, including where it occurred (see Table 11).

- Most children (61%) reported that their most recent or impactful experience of online grooming-type behaviour occurred on a social media platform.¹⁸
- One-quarter of children (25%) reported that their most recent or impactful experience of online grooming-type behaviour occurred on a communication platform.¹⁹
- Almost 1 in 5 children (18%) reported that their most recent or impactful experience was in online gaming.

¹⁸In this research, the term social media platform is used to refer to services including: BeReal, Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, Reddit (like r/gaming), Snapchat, Steam, Threads, TikTok, Twitch, X (Twitter), YouTube, as well as ‘another social media platform or app’.

¹⁹In this research, the term ‘communication platform’ is used to refer to services including: Discord, email (like Gmail), FaceTime, Google Chat, IMO, KakaoTalk, Kik, Line, Messenger (also known as Facebook Messenger), Messenger Kids, Signal, Skype, Telegram, text messages (like iMessage, Google messages), Viber, voice or text chat in a video game or console, WeChat, WhatsApp, Wickr, as well as ‘another app or platform to message, call or chat to people online’.

Table 11: Category of platforms where children most recently experienced online grooming-type behaviour, by gender and age (%)

Platform category	Child gender			Child age	
	Total	Boys	Girls	10-12	13-15
Social media	61	55	67	58	63
Communication	25	25	25	27	24
Online gaming	18	20	13	21	15
Base	215	102	102	79	136

Source Q: Which platform did this happen to you on?

Note: Sample sizes were too small to explore the platforms on which trans and gender-diverse children experienced online grooming-type behaviour (n=11).

Children’s experience of online grooming-type behaviour across specific platforms

Almost 1 in 4 children (23%) reported that their most recent or impactful experience of online grooming-type behaviour was on Snapchat, and almost 1 in 5 (17%) reported that it was on Instagram. In addition, around 1 in 7 (15%) said that their most recent experience was in an online video game, and around 1 in 10 reported that it was on Facebook (11%), TikTok (11%) and Discord (9%).

The data shown in Tables 11 and 12 suggest potential demographic differences in platforms where experiences of online grooming-type behaviours occur, but small sample sizes limit our ability to draw conclusions.

Table 12: Platforms where children most recently experienced online grooming-type behaviour, by gender and age (%)

Platform	Child gender			Child gender	
	Total	Boys	Girls	10-12	13-15
Snapchat	23	19	30	19	25
Instagram	17	17	16	13	19
Online video game	15	17	12	17	14
Facebook	11	11	12	12	11
TikTok	11	7	13	8	12
Discord	9	11	7	11	8
YouTube	3	4	3	4	3
Another online platform	3	2	3	4	3
Messenger (also known as Facebook Messenger)	3	1	5	3	3
Voice or text chat in a video game or console	3	3	2	4	2
Messenger Kids	3	4	3	4	2
Text messages (like iMessage, Google messages)	3	4	2	2	3
Email (like Gmail)	2	2	2	4	1
WhatsApp	2	1	4	0	3
X (Twitter)	2	1	2	2	2
Steam	1	1	1	2	1
Reddit (like r/gaming)	1	1	2	1	1
Google Chat	1	0	3	1	1
Telegram	1	1	2	1	1
Another social media platform or app	1	2	1	2	1
Pinterest	1	0	0	1	1
FaceTime	1	2	0	1	1
BeReal	1	1	0	3	0
Skype	1	0	1	0	1
Another app or platform I use to message, call or chat to people online	1	1	1	1	0
KakaoTalk	1	0	1	2	0
Line	0	1	0	1	0
Threads	0	0	1	0	1
Kik	0	0	1	0	1
WeChat	0	0	1	0	1
Viber	0	1	0	0	0
Base	215	102	102	79	136

Source Q: Which platform or platforms did this happen to you on? You can choose more than one answer.
Note: Sample sizes were too small to explore the platforms on which trans and gender-diverse children experienced online grooming-type behaviour (n=11). The following platforms were included in the survey but weren't selected by any children: IMO, Signal, Twitch, Wickr.

A significant minority of children experience online sexual harassment

Almost 1 in 4 children (24%) had ever experienced online sexual harassment.²⁰ Nearly 1 in 5 (18%) had experienced online sexual harassment in the past 12 months.

A similar proportion of girls and boys reported experiencing any online sexual harassment

One-quarter of girls (24%) and a similar proportion of boys (23%) had ever experienced online sexual harassment.²¹ In the past 12 months, 18% of girls and 16% of boys experienced this form of harassment.

Online sexual harassment increases with age

One-third of children aged 13–15 (33%) had ever experienced online sexual harassment, compared with 14% of children aged 10–12. Children aged 13–15 (24%) were also more likely than children aged 10–12 (10%) to have experienced online sexual harassment in the past 12 months.

Children experience online sexual harassment in a variety of ways

As shown in Table 13, 14% of children were ever sent sexual messages or had sexual comments made about them that they didn't want, while 10% were asked sexual questions or had someone try to get them to talk about sex online when they didn't want to. In addition, 21% of children aged 13–15 were ever called an offensive sexual name online.

²⁰Children were given the option of skipping certain sensitive questions in the survey, including those on online sexual harassment. Among the 2,629 children aged 10–15 surveyed, 649 declined to see the questions on online sexual harassment, while 164 indicated they didn't really understand what sexual comments and messages are and consequently weren't shown these questions. The prevalence of online sexual harassment reported here is therefore based on a subset of the overall sample (n=1,816).
²¹Sample sizes were too small to report the prevalence of online sexual harassment among trans and gender-diverse children aged 10–15 (n=45).

Table 13: Lifetime and 12-month prevalence of online sexual harassment (%)

Online sexual harassment experience	Ever	Past 12 months
Were called an offensive sexual name online ²²	21	16
Were sent sexual messages or had sexual comments made about them online that they didn't want	14	10
Were asked sexual questions or had someone try to get them to talk about sex online when they didn't want to	10	7
Had sexual rumours or lies spread about them online ²³	9	6
Were sent a nude image of someone that they didn't want	8	5
Had someone try to pressure them online into sending a nude image of themselves when they didn't want to	8	4
Had their private sexual information shared online ²⁴	6	3
Base	1,816	1,816

Source Q: Has anyone ever ...?

Children's experience of online sexual harassment across different platform types

A subset of children who had experienced online sexual harassment (n=250) were asked further questions about their most recent or impactful experience of online sexual harassment, including where it occurred.

Over 6 in 10 children (62%) reported that they most recently experienced sexual harassment on a social media platform (Table 14).²⁵

- Children aged 13–15 were more likely than children aged 10–12 to report that their most recent or impactful experience of online sexual harassment occurred on social media.

Fewer children indicated that they most recently experienced sexual harassment on a communication platform²⁶ (26%) or on an online gaming platform (11%).

- Boys were more likely than girls to report that their most recent or impactful experience of online sexual harassment occurred in an online gaming platform.

²²Only asked of children aged 13 and over (n=974).

²³As above.

²⁴As above.

²⁵In this research, the term social media platform is used to refer to services including: BeReal, Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, Reddit (like r/gaming), Snapchat, Steam, Threads, TikTok, Twitch, X (Twitter), YouTube, as well as 'another social media platform or app'.

²⁶In this research, the term 'communication platform' is used to refer to services including: Discord, email (like Gmail), FaceTime, Google Chat, IMO, KakaoTalk, Kik, Line, Messenger (also known as Facebook Messenger), Messenger Kids, Signal, Skype, Telegram, text messages (like iMessage, Google messages), Viber, voice or text chat in a video game or console, WeChat, WhatsApp, Wickr, as well as 'another app or platform to message, call or chat to people online'

Table 14: Category of platforms where children most recently experienced online sexual harassment, by gender and age (%)

Platform	Child gender			Child age	
	Total	Boys	Girls	10–12	13–15
Social media	62	59	68	49	66↑
Communication	26	25	27	31	24
Online gaming	11	16↑	4	12	11
Base	250	124	115	58	192

Source Q: Which platform did this happen to you on?

Note: Sample sizes were too small to explore the platforms on which trans and gender-diverse children experienced online sexual harassment (n=11). Arrows denote statistically significant differences between subgroups.

Children experience sexual harassment on a range of online platforms

The most common platforms on which children reported most recently experiencing sexual harassment were Snapchat (35%) and Instagram (14%). Other platforms on which children experienced sexual harassment most recently include Discord (10%) and TikTok (9%). As shown in Table 15:

- Girls were more likely than boys to report that their most recent or impactful experience of online sexual harassment was on Messenger Kids.
- Boys were more likely than girls to experience online sexual harassment most recently on an online video game.
- Children aged 10–12 were more likely than children aged 13–15 to experience sexual harassment most recently on Messenger Kids or Signal.²⁷
- Children aged 13–15 were more likely than children aged 10–12 to experience sexual harassment most recently on Snapchat or TikTok.

²⁷The smaller sample size for children aged 10–12 should be considered when interpreting these findings.

Table 15: Platforms on which children most recently experienced sexual harassment, by gender and age (%)

Platform	Child gender			Child gender	
	Total	Boys	Girls	10-12	13-15
Snapchat	35	32	39	19	40↑
Instagram	14	10	18	16	14
Discord	10	11	8	4	12
TikTok	9	8	11	3	11↑
Facebook	8	7	9	8	8
Online video game	8	10↑	3	11	7
Voice or text chat in a video game or console	5	7	1	2	6
Messenger (also known as Facebook Messenger)	4	5	3	5	3
WhatsApp	4	2	5	2	4
YouTube	3	3	4	5	3
Messenger Kids	3	1	6↑	11↑	1
FaceTime	2	2	2	3	2
Text messages (like iMessage, Google messages)	2	2	2	2	2
Steam	2	4	0	5	1
Email (like Gmail)	2	1	3	2	2
Reddit (like r/gaming)	1	1	1	0	1
Signal	1	0	1	3↑	0
Google Chat	1	0	1	1	0
BeReal	1	0	1	0	1
X (Twitter)	0	1	0	0	1
Pinterest	0	1	0	0	1
KakaoTalk	0	1	0	0	0
Twitch	0	1	0	2	0
IMO	0	1	0	2	0
Skype	0	0	0	1	0
Another online platform	3	3	3	2	3
Another social media platform or app	1	2	0	0	1
Base	250	124	115	58	192

Source Q: Which platform did this happen to you on?
Note: Sample sizes were too small to explore the platforms on which trans and gender-diverse children experienced online sexual harassment (n=11). The following platforms were included in the survey but weren't selected by any children: Kik, Line, Telegram, Threads, Viber, WeChat, Wickr, another app or platform to message, call or chat to people online. Arrows denote statistically significant differences between subgroups.

Most children are exposed to content associated with harm online

Over 7 in 10 children (71%) had ever seen or heard content associated with harm online.²⁸ This includes exposure to such things as sexist, misogynistic or hateful content, content depicting dangerous online challenges or fight videos, or content that encourages unhealthy eating or exercise habits. Six in 10 children (60%) had seen or heard content associated with harm in the past 12 months.

A similar proportion of girls and boys are exposed to content associated with harm online

Seven in 10 boys (71%) and girls (70%) had ever seen or heard content associated with harm online. Among both boys and girls, 60% had seen or heard content associated with harm in the past 12 months.

Trans and gender-diverse children are more likely to have ever been exposed to content associated with harm online

Nine in 10 trans and gender-diverse children (90%) had ever seen or heard content associated with harm online, while 72% had seen or heard content associated with harm in the past 12 months.

Exposure to content associated with harm increases with age

Almost 8 in 10 children aged 13–15 (77%) had ever seen or heard content associated with harm online, compared with over 6 in 10 children aged 10–12 (64%). Similarly, children aged 13–15 were more likely to have been exposed to content associated with harm in the past 12 months (67%), compared with children aged 10–12 (53%).

Children are exposed to diverse forms of content associated with harm online

As shown in Table 16, over 4 in 10 children (43%) had ever seen or heard online offensive, sexist or hurtful things about girls or women, fight videos or dangerous online challenges; 40% had seen things online that encourage unhealthy eating or exercise habits; and 38% had seen offensive or threatening things about other people online because others are hateful of their identity.

²⁸Not including content seen in TV shows or movies.

Table 16: Lifetime and 12-month prevalence of exposure to content associated with harm online (%)

Content associated with harm seen or heard online	Ever	Past 12 months
Offensive, sexist or hurtful things about girls or women	43	35
Fight videos	43	32
Dangerous online challenges	43	32
Things that encourage unhealthy eating or exercise habits	40	32
Offensive or threatening things about other people online because others are hateful of their identity	38	31
Sexual images or videos	26	19
Things that show or encourage illegal drug taking	22	17
Extreme real-life violence	18	13
Things that suggest how a person can hurt or kill themselves on purpose	17	11
Violent sexual images or videos	9	6
Something else upsetting	24	17
Base	2,629	2,629

Source Q: Have you ever seen or heard any of the following things online?

Children’s exposure to content associated with harm across different platform types

A subset of children who had seen or heard content associated with harm online (n=559) were asked further questions about their most recent or impactful experience of seeing or hearing content associated with harm online, including where they were exposed to the content (Table 17).

Three in 4 children (75%) reported that they most recently encountered content associated with harm on a social media platform (Table 17).²⁹

Conversely, only 6% indicated that they most recently encountered content associated with harm on a communication platform,³⁰ while 5% encountered it most recently on an online gaming platform.

- Children aged 13–15 were more likely than children aged 10–12 to report that their most recent or impactful experience of encountering content associated with harm occurred on a communication platform.
- Children aged 10–12 were more likely than children aged 13–15 to report that their most recent or impactful experience of encountering content associated with harm occurred in an online gaming platform.

Table 17: Category of platforms where children were most recently exposed to content associated with harm, by gender and age (%)

Platform	Child gender			Child age	
	Total	Boys	Girls	10-12	13-15
Social media	75	74	77	74	77
Communication	6	6	7	4	8↑
Online gaming	5	6	4	7↑	3
Base	559	293	258	289	270

Source Q: Which platform did you see it on?

Note: Sample sizes were too small to explore the platforms on which trans and gender-diverse children were exposed to potentially harmful content (n=8). Arrows denote statistically significant differences between subgroups.

²⁹In this research, the term social media platform is used to refer to services including: BeReal, Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, Reddit (like r/gaming), Snapchat, Steam, Threads, TikTok, Twitch, X (Twitter), YouTube, as well as ‘another social media platform or app’.

³⁰In this research, the term ‘communication platform’ is used to refer to services including: Discord, email (like Gmail), FaceTime, Google Chat, IMO, KakaoTalk, Kik, Line, Messenger (also known as Facebook Messenger), Messenger Kids, Signal, Skype, Telegram, text messages (like iMessage, Google messages), Viber, voice or text chat in a video game or console, WeChat, WhatsApp, Wickr, as well as ‘another app or platform to message, call or chat to people online’

Children are exposed to content associated with harm on a range of online platforms

The most common platforms on which children reported that their most recent or impactful exposure to content associated with harm had occurred were YouTube (37%) and TikTok (23%). Other platforms on which children were exposed to content associated with harm most recently included Facebook (11%) and Instagram (8%).

- Girls were more likely than boys to encounter content associated with harm most recently on Messenger Kids.
- Children aged 10–12 were more likely than children aged 13–15 to encounter content associated with harm most recently on YouTube, an online video game or ‘another online platform’.
- Children aged 13–15 were more likely than children aged 10–12 to encounter content associated with harm most recently on TikTok, Instagram or Snapchat. They were also more likely to encounter content associated with harm most recently via text message.

Table 18: Platforms on which children were most recently exposed to content associated with harm, by gender and age (%)

Platform	Child gender			Child age	
	Total	Boys	Girls	10-12	13-15
YouTube	37	39	35	46↑	27
TikTok	23	22	24	17	29↑
Facebook	11	10	14	9	14
Instagram	8	8	9	5	12↑
Snapchat	5	6	5	3	8↑
Online video game	4	6	3	7↑	2
WhatsApp	2	1	3	1	3
Discord	1	2	0	1	1
Text messages (like iMessage, Google messages)	1	1	0	0	2↑
Messenger Kids	1	0	2↑	1	0
X (Twitter)	1	0	0	0	1
Email (like Gmail)	1	1	0	0	1
Voice or text chat in a video game or console	1	1	0	0	1
Reddit (like r/gaming)	0	0	0	0	0
Messenger (also known as Facebook Messenger)	0	0	0	0	1
Steam	0	1	0	1	0
Pinterest	0	1	0	1	0
Telegram	0	0	0	0	0
Google Chat	0	0	0	0	0
WeChat	0	0	0	0	0
Twitch	0	0	0	0	0
Skype	0	0	0	0	0
Another online platform	7	9	5	10↑	5
Another social media platform or app	0	0	1	1	0
Base	559	293	258	289	270

Source Q: Which platform did you see it on?
Sample sizes were too small to explore the platforms on which trans and gender-diverse children were exposed to potentially harmful content (n=8). The following platforms were included in the survey but weren't selected by any children: BeReal, FaceTime, IMO, KakaoTalk, Kik, Line, Signal, Threads, Viber, Wickr, another app or platform to message, call or chat to people online. Arrows denote statistically significant differences between subgroups.

Prevalence of image-based abuse

Almost 1 in 10 children (8%) had ever experienced image-based abuse (IBA), with 3% having experienced IBA in the past 12 months.³¹

More specifically:

- 5% of children had someone threaten to share a nude image of them online; 2% in the past 12 months
- 4% of children had someone take or create a nude image of them without their permission; 1% in the past 12 months
- 3% of children had someone threaten to share a nude image of them if they didn’t do something they wanted; 1% in the past 12 months
- 3% of children had someone share a nude image of them online without their permission; 1% in the past 12 months
- 3% of children had someone create a fake nude image of them without their permission; 1% in the past 12 months.

A similar proportion of girls and boys have experienced image-based abuse

Eight per cent of girls and 7% of boys had ever experienced IBA, with 3% of both boys and girls experiencing IBA in the past 12 months.³²

Older children are more likely to have ever experienced image-based abuse

Just over 1 in 10 children aged 13–15 (11%) had ever experienced IBA, compared with 4% of children aged 10–12. However, a similar percentage of older (4%) and younger (3%) children had experienced IBA in the past 12 months.

Children’s experiences of image-based abuse across different platform types

A subset of children who had ever had someone threaten to share a nude image of them online or who had shared a nude image of them online (n=79) were asked further questions about their most recent impactful experience of this, including where it occurred.³³ Due to the small sample sizes, we are unable to compare the platforms on which girls and boys and younger and older children most recently experienced IBA.

³¹Prevalence of IBA assessed in recontact survey. Children were given the option of skipping certain sensitive questions in the survey, including those on IBA. Among the 1,775 children aged 10–15 who completed the recontact survey, 292 declined to see the questions on IBA. The prevalence of IBA reported here is therefore based on a subset of the overall sample (n=1,483).

³²Sample sizes were too small to report the prevalence of IBA among trans and gender-diverse children aged 10–15 (n=30).

³³The smaller sample size should be considered when interpreting these findings.

Three-quarters of children surveyed (76%) reported that their most recent or impactful experience of IBA occurred on a social media platform,³⁴ while 1 in 4 (26%) reported that it occurred on a communication platform.³⁵ A minority (4%) reported that their most recent or impactful experience was in online gaming.

Children’s experiences of image-based abuse across specific platforms

Four in 10 children (40%) indicated that their most recent or impactful experience of IBA occurred on Snapchat, while almost 1 in 4 most recently experienced IBA on Facebook (24%) or Instagram (24%). Fewer children reported that their most recent experience of IBA occurred on TikTok (13%) or other online platforms (Table 19).

Table 19: Platforms on which children most recently experienced image-based abuse (%)

Platform	Total
Snapchat	40
Facebook	24
Instagram	24
TikTok	13
Pinterest	9
YouTube	8
X (Twitter)	8
FaceTime	7
Discord	6
It happened in real life/they were shared in real life	6
Messenger Kids	5
Online video game	4
BeReal	4
Steam	4
Email (like Gmail)	4
WhatsApp	3
Text messages (like iMessage, Google messages)	3
Messenger (also known as Facebook Messenger)	3
Twitch	3
Threads	2
Reddit (like r/gaming)	1
Telegram	1
Base	79

Source Q: Which platform or platforms did they threaten you on? Q: Where were the images shared?

Note: The following platforms were included in the survey but weren’t selected by any children: Google Chat, IMO, KakaoTalk, Kik, Line, Signal, Skype, Viber, WeChat, Wickr, voice or text chat in a video game or console, another online platform, another social media platform or app, another app or platform to message, call or chat to people online.

³⁴In this research, the term social media platform is used to refer to services including: BeReal, Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, Reddit (like r/gaming), Snapchat, Steam, Threads, TikTok, Twitch, X (Twitter), YouTube, as well as ‘another social media platform or app’.

³⁵In this research, the term ‘communication platform’ is used to refer to services including: Discord, email (like Gmail), FaceTime, Google Chat, IMO, KakaoTalk, Kik, Line, Messenger (also known as Facebook Messenger), Messenger Kids, Signal, Skype, Telegram, text messages (like iMessage, Google messages), Viber, voice or text chat in a video game or console , WeChat, WhatsApp, Wickr, as well as ‘another app or platform to message, call or chat to people online.’

One-quarter of children have personally experienced online hate

One in 4 children (25%) had ever personally experienced online hate; that is, they had someone say or post offensive or threatening things to or about them online because they were hateful of one or more of their identity characteristics. In the past 12 months, 15% of children had experienced this.³⁶

More specifically:³⁷

- Two in 5 sexually diverse children aged 13–15 (41%) had ever had someone say or post offensive or threatening things to or about them online because they were hateful of their sexuality; 25% in the past 12 months.³⁸
- Nearly 3 in 10 Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children (27%) had ever had someone say or post offensive or threatening things to or about them online because they were hateful of them being Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander; 13% in the past 12 months.
- Around 1 in 5 children with disability (19%) had ever had someone say or post offensive or threatening things to or about them online because they were hateful of their disability or diagnosis; 12% in the past 12 months.
- Among girls, 14% had ever had someone say or post offensive or threatening things to or about them online because they were hateful of them being a girl; 8% in the past 12 months.
- One in 10 children (10%) had ever had someone say or post offensive or threatening things to or about them online because they were hateful of their skin colour, race or culture; 5% in the past 12 months.
- One in 10 children (10%) had ever had someone say or post offensive or threatening things to or about them online because they were hateful of the country they are from; 5% in the past 12 months.
- Eight per cent of children had ever had someone say or post offensive or threatening things to or about them online because they were hateful of their religion; 4% in the past 12 months.
- Among boys, 7% had ever had someone say or post offensive or threatening things to or about them online because they were hateful of them being a boy; 3% in the past 12 months.

³⁶Prevalence of personal experiences of online hate assessed in recontact survey. Children were given the option of skipping certain questions in the survey, including those on their identity characteristics. Among the 1,775 children who completed the recontact survey, 246 declined to answer one or more questions about their identity characteristics and consequently weren't asked whether they had experienced certain types of online hate. Of these 246 participants, 65 had experienced at least one other type of online hate, while 181 hadn't experienced any other type of online hate or they didn't know or didn't want to say. These 181 participants have therefore been excluded from the overall prevalence of online hate, and the overall prevalence is based on a subset of the overall sample (n=1,594).

³⁷Sample sizes were too small to report the prevalence of trans and gender-diverse children who had someone say or post offensive or threatening things to or about them online because they were hateful of them being transgender, non-binary or gender diverse (n=28).

³⁸The smaller sample size for sexually diverse children should be considered when interpreting these findings (n=54).

A similar proportion of girls and boys had personally experienced online hate

Around a quarter of both girls and boys (26% and 23%, respectively) had ever personally experienced online hate, while 14% of both girls and boys had personally experienced online hate in the past 12 months.³⁹

Online hate experiences increase with age

Three in 10 children aged 13–15 (30%) had ever personally experienced online hate, compared with just over 2 in 10 children aged 10–12 (21%). Children aged 13–15 (19%) were also more likely than children aged 10–12 (11%) to personally experience online hate in the past 12 months.

Children’s experiences of online hate across different platform types

A subset of children who had ever personally experienced online hate (n=332) were asked further questions about their most recent or impactful experience, including where it happened.

More than 6 in 10 children (63%) reported that their most recent or impactful experience of online hate occurred on a social media platform (Table 20).⁴⁰ Fewer children reported that their most recent or impactful experience occurred on a communication platform⁴¹ (22%) or an online gaming platform (16%).

- Children aged 10–12 were more likely than those aged 13–15 to indicate that their most recent or impactful experience of online hate occurred on an online gaming platform (21% vs. 12%).

Table 20: Category of platforms where children most recently experienced online hate, by gender and age (%)

Platform category	Child gender			Child age	
	Total	Boys	Girls	10-12	13-15
Social media	63	58	67	57	67
Communication	22	26	18	21	22
Online gaming	16	19	13	21↑	12
Base	332	159	157	151	181

Source Q: Which platform or platforms did this happen to you on? You can choose more than one answer.

Note: Sample sizes were too small to explore the platforms on which trans and gender-diverse children experienced online hate (n=16). Arrows denote statistically significant differences between subgroups.

³⁹Sample sizes were too small to report the prevalence of online hate among trans and gender-diverse children aged 10–15 (n=32).

⁴⁰In this research, the term social media platform is used to refer to services including: BeReal, Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, Reddit (like r/gaming), Snapchat, Steam, Threads, TikTok, Twitch, X (Twitter), YouTube, as well as ‘another social media platform or app’.

⁴¹In this research, the term ‘communication platform’ is used to refer to services including: Discord, email (like Gmail), FaceTime, Google Chat, IMO, KakaoTalk, Kik, Line, Messenger (also known as Facebook Messenger), Messenger Kids, Signal, Skype, Telegram, text messages (like iMessage, Google messages), Viber, voice or text chat in a video game or console, WeChat, WhatsApp, Wickr, as well as ‘another app or platform to message, call or chat to people online’.

Children’s experiences of online hate across specific platforms

As shown in Table 21, just over 1 in 5 children (21%) reported that their most recent or impactful experience of online hate occurred on Snapchat, while around 1 in 6 reported that it occurred on TikTok (17%), Facebook (16%) or an online video game (15%).

- Children aged 13–15 were more likely than those aged 10–12 to report that their most recent experience of online hate occurred on Snapchat.
- Conversely, children aged 10–12 were more likely than those aged 13–15 to report that they most recently experienced online hate on an online video game or Messenger Kids.
- Boys were more likely than girls to report that their most recent experience of online hate occurred on Discord.

Table 21: Platforms where children most recently experienced online hate by gender and age (%)

Platform	Child gender			Child age	
	Total	Boys	Girls	10-12	13-15
Snapchat	21	17	24	13	28↑
TikTok	17	18	18	18	17
Facebook	16	13	19	15	17
Online video game	15	17	13	20↑	10
Instagram	13	12	16	11	15
YouTube	7	9	5	10	4
Discord	7	10↑	3	5	8
Another online platform	6	5	6	7	5
Messenger Kids	5	4	6	9↑	3
Text messages (like iMessage, Google messages)	3	5	2	3	2
X (Twitter)	3	4	2	2	3
Reddit (like r/gaming)	2	2	2	2	2
WhatsApp	1	1	2	1	2
Messenger (also known as Facebook Messenger)	1	2	1	1	2
Email (like Gmail)	1	0	2	1	1
FaceTime	1	1	2	2	1
Voice or text chat in a video game or console	1	3	0	1	2
Google Chat	1	0	1	0	1
Pinterest	1	0	1	1	1
KakaoTalk	0	0	0	0	1
Telegram	0	1	0	0	1
Line	1	1	0	0	1
Another social media platform or app	1	3	0	2	1
Steam	1	1	0	0	1
Kik	0	1	0	0	0
Twitch	0	0	0	1	0
Threads	1	2	0	1	1
Skype	0	1	0	1	0
Base	332	159	157	151	181

Source Q: Which platform or platforms did this happen to you on? You can choose more than one answer.
Note: Sample sizes were too small to explore the platforms on which trans and gender-diverse children experienced online hate (n=16). The following platforms were included in the survey but weren't selected by any children: BeReal, IMO, Signal, Viber, WeChat, Wickr, another app or platform to message, call or chat to people online. Arrows denote statistically significant differences between subgroups.

Over half of children have ever seen online hate

Almost 6 in 10 (57%) children had ever seen online hate, with just under 1 in 2 (45%) having seen online hate in the past 12 months.⁴²

A similar proportion of girls and boys have seen online hate

Over half of girls (58%) and of boys (55%) had ever seen online hate; 45% of girls and 44% of boys had seen this in the past 12 months.⁴³

Exposure to online hate increases with age

Over 6 in 10 children aged 13–15 (62%) had ever seen online hate, compared with 51% of children aged 10–12. Older children (51%) were also more likely than younger children (39%) to have seen online hate in the past 12 months.

Children see diverse forms of online hate

As shown in Table 22, the most prevalent type of online hate seen by children was hate against people with a specific skin colour, race or culture (36%). Over 1 in 3 children had also ever seen online hate against people who are sexually diverse (35%), people from a specific country (34%), people who are transgender, non-binary or gender diverse (34%), or people with specific religious beliefs (34%). One-third (33%) had seen online hate against women or girls.

Table 22: Lifetime and 12-month prevalence of exposure to online hate (%)

Seen online hate against	Ever	Past 12 months
People with a specific skin colour, race or culture	36	26
People who are gay, lesbian, bisexual, or any other sexuality that isn't straight or heterosexual	35	26
People from a specific country	34	24
People who are transgender, non-binary or gender diverse	34	25
People with specific religious beliefs	34	24
Women or girls	33	22
People with a disability or diagnosis	28	19
Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people	23	15
Men or boys	22	15
Base	1,775	1,775

Source Q: Have you ever seen anyone say or post offensive or threatening things online, to or about people, because they were hateful of ...?

⁴²Not including content seen in TV shows or movies. Prevalence of exposure to online hate assessed in recontact survey (n=1,775).

⁴³Sample sizes were too small to report the prevalence of exposure to online hate among trans and gender-diverse children aged 10–15 (n=36).

Children’s exposure to online hate across different platform types

A subset of children who had ever seen online hate (n=578) were asked further questions about their most recent or impactful experience of seeing online hate, including where they saw it (Table 23).

Over 7 in 10 children (72%) reported that their most recent or impactful experience of seeing online hate occurred on a social media platform (Table 23).⁴⁴ Fewer children indicated that they most recently saw online hate on an online gaming platform (11%) or on a communication platform (8%).⁴⁵

- Children aged 13–15 were more likely than children aged 10–12 to report that they most recently saw online hate on a social media platform.
- Conversely, children aged 10–12 were more likely than children aged 13–15 to report that they most recently saw online hate on an online gaming platform.
- Boys were also more likely than girls to most recently see online hate on an online gaming platform.

Table 23: Category of platforms where children most recently experienced online hate, by gender and age (%)

Platform category	Child gender			Child age	
	Total	Boys	Girls	10-12	13-15
Social media	72	71	72	65	78↑
Communication	8	9	7	7	9
Online gaming	11	15↑	8	15↑	7
Base	578	290	281	283	295

Source Q: Which platform did you see it on?

Note: Sample sizes were too small to explore the platforms on which trans and gender-diverse children saw online hate (n=7). Arrows denote statistically significant differences between subgroups.

⁴⁴In this research, the term social media platform is used to refer to services including: BeReal, Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, Reddit (like r/gaming), Snapchat, Steam, Threads, TikTok, Twitch, X (Twitter), YouTube, as well as ‘another social media platform or app’.

⁴⁵In this research, the term ‘communication platform’ is used to refer to services including: Discord, email (like Gmail), FaceTime, Google Chat, IMO, KakaoTalk, Kik, Line, Messenger (also known as Facebook Messenger), Messenger Kids, Signal, Skype, Telegram, text messages (like iMessage, Google messages), Viber, voice or text chat in a video game or console, WeChat, WhatsApp, Wickr, as well as ‘another app or platform to message, call or chat to people online’.

Children see online hate on various online platforms

As shown in Table 24, the most common platforms on which children reported that their most recent or impactful exposure to online hate occurred were TikTok (27%) and YouTube (21%). Other platforms on which children most recently saw online hate included Facebook (15%) and Instagram (14%).

- Children aged 13–15 were more likely than children aged 10–12 to indicate that their most recent or impactful experience of seeing online hate occurred on TikTok, Instagram, Snapchat or Discord.
- Conversely, children aged 10–12 were more likely than children aged 13–15 to most recently see online hate on an online video game, Messenger Kids or ‘another online platform’.

Table 24: Platforms on which children most recently saw online hate, by gender and age (%)

Platform	Child gender			Child age	
	Total	Boys	Girls	10-12	13-15
TikTok	27	26	27	21	32↑
YouTube	21	23	18	25	18
Facebook	15	13	17	14	16
Instagram	14	14	14	9	19↑
Online video game	10	13	7	14↑	6
Snapchat	7	5	8	4	9↑
WhatsApp	2	1	2	2	1
Discord	2	3	1	0	4↑
X (Twitter)	2	2	1	1	3
Reddit (like r/gaming)	2	2	2	2	2
Text messages (like iMessage, Google messages)	1	1	1	1	1
Messenger Kids	1	1	2	3↑	0
Email (like Gmail)	1	1	0	1	1
Voice or text chat in a video game or console	1	2	0	2	1
FaceTime	1	0	1	0	1
Steam	0	0	0	0	0
Pinterest	0	0	1	1	0
WeChat	0	0	0	0	0
Twitch	0	0	0	0	1
Skype	0	0	0	0	0
Threads	0	0	0	0	0
BeReal	0	0	0	0	0
Another online platform	10	8	13	15↑	5
Another social media platform or app	1	1	1	1	1
Another app or platform to message, call or chat to people online	0	0	0	1	0
Base	578	290	281	283	295

Source Q: Which platform did you see it on?
Note: Sample sizes were too small to explore the platforms on which trans and gender-diverse children saw online hate (n=7). The following platforms were included in the survey but weren't selected by any children: Google Chat, IMO, Kakao Talk, Kik, Line, Messenger, Signal, Telegram, Viber, Wickr. Arrows denote statistically significant differences between subgroups.

