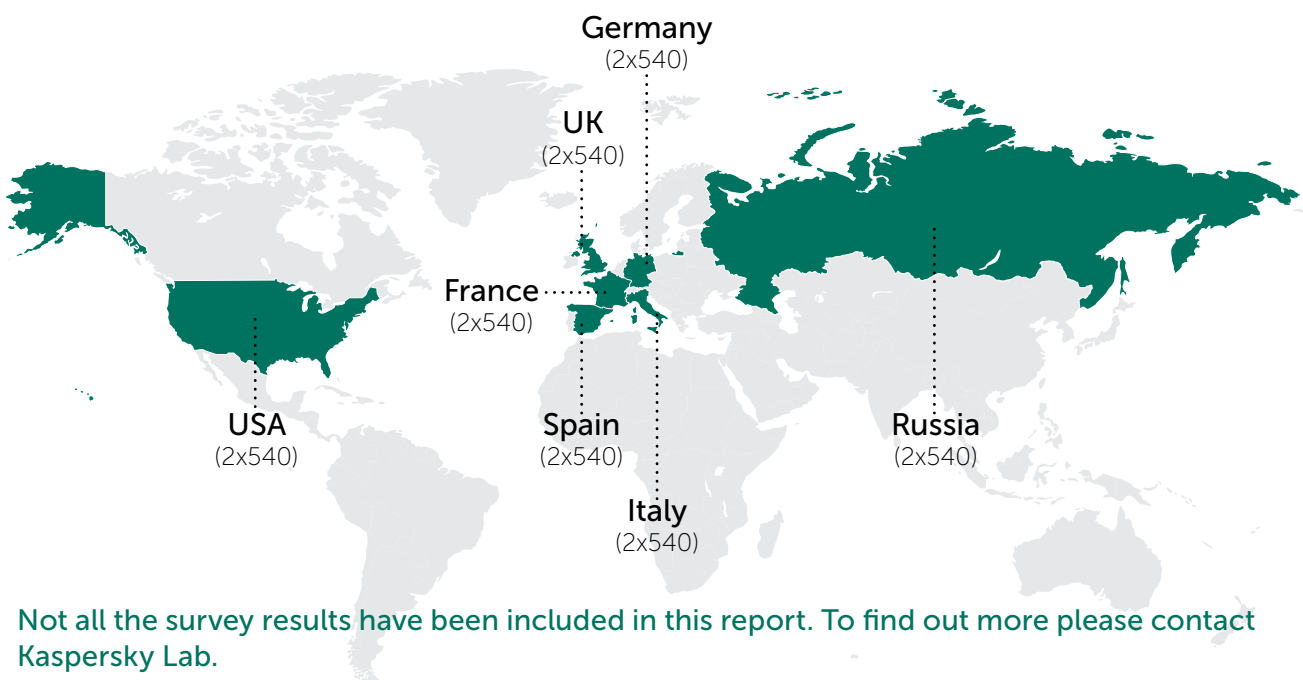Growing Up Online

What Kids Conceal

KASPERSKY⁸

ICON KIDS & YOUTH

2016

Main Findings

- **44%** of 8 to 16 year olds have concealed from their parents something related to their online or device activity (This rises to **51%** of 14 to 16 year olds)

- Up to **70%** of parents whose children have successfully hidden online activity are unaware that their kids conceal potentially dangerous online activities from them, such as inappropriate content, interacting with inappropriate people, or cyberbullying

- To keep their activities hidden, **14%** of kids have locked a device with a password their parents didn't know. **13%** try to time online sessions for when their parents are out and **10%** delete their browsing history after every session

- 22% have used anonymizer tools and **14%** have downloaded applications that enable them to conceal which apps they use

- At the same time, **75%** of kids would feel safer if they could talk more with their parents about the dangers online

Methodology

The research, undertaken for Kaspersky Lab by iconkids & youth, surveyed online 3,780 families with children aged 8 – 16 (one parent and one child per family) in seven countries:

Germany
(2x540)

UK
(2x540)

France
(2x540)

USA
(2x540)

Spain
(2x540)

Russia
(2x540)

Italy
(2x540)

Not all the survey results have been included in this report. To find out more please contact Kaspersky Lab.

KASPERSKY lab

To be awake is to be online

The world at their fingertips...

Connected devices and the Internet have become an embedded part of life for young people. Four in ten (44%) admit to being online constantly, rising to 61% of those aged between 14 and 16 and falling to a still surprising 25% of those aged eight to ten.

	GLOBAL	Gender		Age		
		Boys	Girls	8-10 years	11-13 years	14-16 years
Almost constanly	44%	43%	45%	25%	44%	61%
Once or twice a day	31%	32%	30%	32%	34%	27%
Several times a week	19%	19%	19%	29%	18%	11%
Once a week	4%	4%	4%	8%	3%	1%
Several times a month	2%	2%	3%	5%	1%	1%
Once a month	1%	1%	1%	2%	0%	0%
Rarely/never use it	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

How often do you personally use the Internet as a whole?
Respondents: Children

The Internet connects them to family, friends, entertainment and information and they couldn't live without it. From the age of 14, when teenagers are officially allowed to join many leading social media networks and instant messaging apps, chatting with friends becomes the number one online activity. 49% says they couldn't manage without social networks.

Even among the youngest children surveyed, who are focused mainly on online gaming, videos and movies – just under half says they would under no circumstances give them up.

KASPERSKY lab

	GLOBAL	Gender		Age		
		Boys	Girls	8-10 years	11-13 years	14-16 years
Play online games	43%	54%	33%	49%	43%	39%
Watch movies/ videos	42%	43%	41%	43%	41%	41%
Social networks such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram	35%	32%	38%	19%	36%	49%
Instant messengers, such as WhatsApp, Viber	33%	29%	37%	19%	36%	44%
Use for school/ training/ vocational	28%	26%	30%	25%	29%	31%
Listen to online radio/ stream music, download music	25%	22%	28%	19%	25%	31%
Search for information, e.g. latest news, sports, hobbies, events, local issues	21%	22%	20%	15%	22%	24%
Calls over the Internet/ Skype	19%	19%	20%	14%	21%	23%
Download/ upload photos, videos, texts in social networks or other forums	19%	17%	20%	12%	19%	24%
Write e-mails	18%	17%	20%	13%	17%	24%
Tutorials, learning programs, forums for hobbies, leisure, etc.	15%	14%	15%	12%	15%	17%
Online learning courses, e.g. for school/ training/ vocational	12%	12%	13%	11%	11%	15%
Newsgroups, blogs or Internet forums: personally read or write	10%	9%	11%	6%	10%	14%
Online shopping, e.g. Ebay or Amazon	9%	9%	10%	6%	9%	12%
Online banking	5%	5%	5%	4%	4%	6%
I can do without all of them	9%	9%	9%	11%	9%	7%

With which Internet activities would you under no circumstances want
to do without? What should be available on the Internet?
Respondents: Children

Many (58%) use the Internet as their main route to news and also more general information (74%),
often encouraged to do so by their schools. These sources can include the online editions of
respected news media as well as unverified websites, so it is not surprising that 70% of respondents
say they don't believe everything they read. However, for 62% of 14 to 16 year olds such scepticism
is not enough for them to turn to their parents for answers.

KASPERSKY lab

...and now in their pocket

Smartphones have become the main device for going online, with 62% accessing the Internet on their smartphone, compared to just half (53%) doing so on a computer or laptop.

It is almost impossible to separate a young person from their smartphone. 73% of those aged 14 to 16, and even one in three (33%) of those aged eight to ten say they couldn't do without them.

The reasons for this growing use include the fact that smartphones are now cheaper, with larger screens and memories and greater functionality – so they can do more. But, most of all they are small and portable and allow users of any age to carry their indispensable online life with them wherever they go. The widespread, 21st century condition: FOMO ('fear of missing out'), combined with teenage angst and a natural desire to be close to one's friends at all times, make connected phones irresistible companions.

So while computers and laptops remain the top devices for school work, movies etc. it's the smartphones that are now mainly used for communications and connection. This introduces a whole new landscape of risk.

What's hiding in their hands

A new world to worry about for parents

Many parents have become used to quietly monitoring their kids' online activity; following advice to keep computers in family spaces, taking a quick look as they walk past and monitoring a child's behaviour for signs of unease or even distress. None of this is possible when the activity that could be putting your child at risk is taking place on a device you can't see.

Sometimes this is intentional on the part of the teenager. The adolescent years are a journey of growing independence; of wanting to be different while at the same time wanting to belong. Not sharing everything with your parents and a high susceptibility to the influence of peer pressure are part of being young, but in the online world such behaviour can make a young person vulnerable to threat and inappropriate content.

The dangers of too much privacy

Just under half (44%) of young people, rising to 51% of those aged 14 to 16 have concealed from their parents something related to their online or device activity.

KASPERSKY🅱

While in most cases this concerns the relatively harmless fact that they have exceeded their permitted Internet session (22%), some admit to hiding the sites they visited (14%), or watching films or playing games that are not appropriate for their age (12%).

More worrying is the small but significant number who admit to concealing from their parents the fact that they were in online contact with people their parents are unhappy about (7%), had signed up for or opened accounts on unsuitable sites, or had downloaded illegal or prohibited stuff (5%).

	GLOBAL	USA	Russia	EU	France	Germany	Italy	Spain	UK
How long I was on the Internet	22%	23%	36%	19%	17%	29%	16%	19%	15%
Which sites I had visited on the Internet	14%	18%	21%	12%	9%	18%	11%	13%	10%
That I had watched games/ films that are not approved for my age	12%	16%	17%	11%	7%	19%	7%	11%	10%
The fact that I had used a device that I was actually not permitted to use	8%	15%	10%	6%	4%	7%	5%	8%	7%
That I maintain contact with people over social media, who my parents do not like or find	7%	14%	10%	5%	5%	8%	3%	4%	6%
That I had illicitly downloaded apps	6%	12%	7%	5%	3%	7%	10%	2%	4%
That I had signed up/ opened accounts on unsuitable sites	5%	11%	4%	4%	3%	5%	4%	4%	4%
That I had downloaded prohibited/ illegal stuff	5%	13%	8%	3%	2%	4%	2%	2%	4%
That I had sent pictures/ videos that were not appropriate/ intended for this purpose	5%	12%	4%	3%	3%	3%	3%	2%	5%
That I had been mobbed	4%	12%	2%	2%	2%	2%	0%	2%	5%
That I had mobbed another child	3%	13%	1%	2%	3%	1%	1%	0%	3%
Other	3%	3%	5%	3%	3%	2%	2%	3%	2%
No, never	57%	43%	42%	62%	66%	54%	65%	63%	64%

What did you conceal from your parents?
Respondents: Children

These activities could have far-reaching negative impact. They could expose the child's device to technology-based threats such as hacking or infection and data loss – perhaps leading to pictures being made public and embarrassing others or causing distress. In extreme cases they could also make the young person more vulnerable to approaches from dangerous strangers, intent on drawing them into cyber-crime or even radicalisation.

KASPERSKYlab

One in three of those surveyed had acted to stop their parents from finding out what they did online. 14% had locked a device with a password their parents didn't know, while 13% say they tried to confine their Internet sessions to when their parents were not around. 10% deletes their browsing history after every session.

A significant number have opted for more sophisticated measures: 22% used anonymizer tools and 14% had downloaded applications that enabled them to conceal which apps they used.

	GLOBAL	Gender		Age		
		Boys	Girls	8-10 years	11-13 years	14-16 years
I use tools to anonymise my identity on the Internet	22%	24%	20%	17%	23%	27%
I use special apps that conceal which apps I use	14%	15%	12%	13%	13%	15%

Respondents: Children

At the same time, over half of parents (57%) believe that their children will tell them if something worrying or inappropriate happens online and 31% are convinced that their kids don't hide anything from them. Only one in three (38%) parents have spotted their children hiding something from them online. In most cases, this was related to the amount of time spent online, the nature of the websites visited and accessing content that was not age appropriate.

However, the activity that many parents didn't spot tended to include the most dangerous or distressing.

In up to 70% of cases where young people had successfully concealed activity such as visiting unsuitable websites, illicitly downloading apps or illegal materials, or sending/watching inappropriate videos or images – their parents had absolutely no idea. The same proportion didn't realize their children were hiding the experience of being cyber-bullied or even that they were themselves cyber-bullies. More than half of young people had successfully concealed from their parents that the fact that they were in contact with inappropriate people via social media.

Conclusion: Empowering parents

Parents want to protect their children, and children look to their parents for such protection.

The majority of young people say they would welcome more conversation with their parents about the dangers they might encounter online (75%), and would feel safer if their parents provided guidance on the apps and websites that were OK to use (63%) and restricted access to those that weren't (61%).

KASPERSKY🅱

It is worth noting that many 14-16 year olds were also in favor of some of these measures to protect themselves better online. 70% would welcome better dialog with their parents about online threats and half would even accept the fact that some sites, applications and activities were forbidden.

	GLOBAL	Gender		Age		
		Boys	Girls	8-10 years	11-13 years	14-16 years
If my parents talk to me about the dangers on the Internet	75%	73%	76%	77%	77%	70%
If my parents install general antivirus software	74%	73%	76%	71%	76%	74%
If my parents tell me which websites/ apps I may use	63%	63%	64%	73%	66%	51%
If it is only my parents that can buy or download programs/ apps (and I am not permitted to do so)	62%	60%	63%	69%	63%	52%
If my parents prohibit certain activities on the Internet (e.g. online shopping, video websites, social networks)	61%	60%	62%	69%	64%	51%
If my parents password protect specific websites, and I can as such not access these websites (e.g. online stores)	56%	55%	57%	62%	60%	47%
If my parents set me a time limit	54%	56%	53%	64%	57%	43%
If my parents often try as far as possible to be present when I am on the Internet	53%	52%	54%	66%	54%	39%
If my parents check the history/ chronicle when I stop, so they can see where I was all over the Internet	50%	51%	49%	55%	53%	42%
If my parents lock away the device	43%	44%	42%	51%	46%	33%

Insofar as your parents want to make your Internet usage safer with the help of these different options, which in your opinion would work, so that you are even more safer when surfing on the Internet?

Respondents: Children

Three quarters (74%) of all respondents, regardless of age said they would feel safer if their parents installed general antivirus software on the devices they used. In a world where children increasingly go online using a smartphone or take proactive steps to keep their activities on the Internet hidden from others, having a strong, comprehensive security solution working quietly in the background to keep them safe wherever they are, and whatever they're doing, is more important than ever.

KASPERSKY⁵