

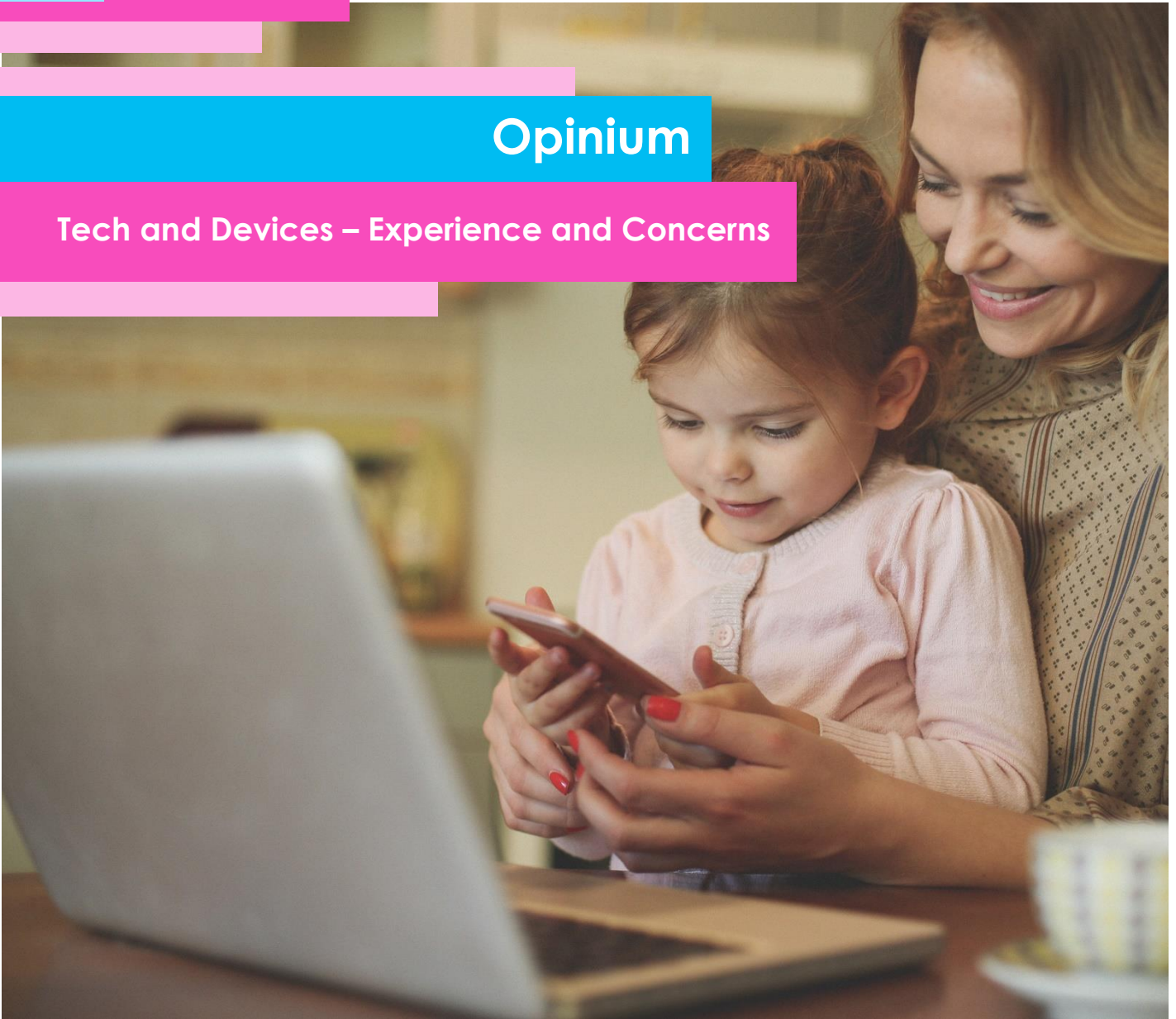


What people think,
feel and do



Opinium

Tech and Devices – Experience and Concerns



Key findings

5 March 2025



Project details

PROJECT NAME	TECH AND DEVICES – EXPERIENCE AND CONCERNS
CLIENT COMPANY NAME	Opinium
PROJECT MANAGER NAME	Matthew Howlett
PROJECT MANAGER EMAIL	matthewhowlett@opinium.com
SAMPLE	2,000 UK Adults
FIELDWORK DATES	22 nd – 25 th October 2025

Online Safety

Over three in four Brits think parents bear a large amount of responsibility for keeping children safe online

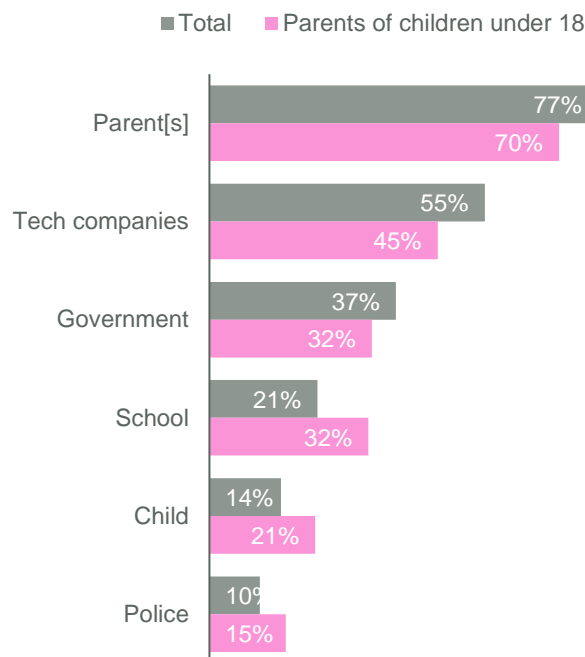
Over three quarters of UK adults (77%) think that parents bear a large amount of responsibility for keeping children safe online, this is followed by more than half (55%) who cited tech companies, and nearly two in five (37%) who mentioned the Government.

Parents with children under 18 are more likely to place responsibility on either school (32%) or the child themselves (21%), though a majority (70%) still think much of the burden is on them too.

Firstly, looking at potential restrictions, support for tech limits is in the majority, with over three in five (62%) backing schools not requiring online access for homework, lessons, timetables, etc. Similarly, three fifths (60%) support banning devices with internet access in schools.

Thinking about tech companies, there is a sense that more needs to be done. Over three in five UK adults think they are not doing enough to stop children from seeing or receiving inappropriate content (both 62%). Well over four in five (86%) also agree with the idea that tech companies should create better controls for parents to enable on children’s devices.

Responsibility for keeping children safe online.



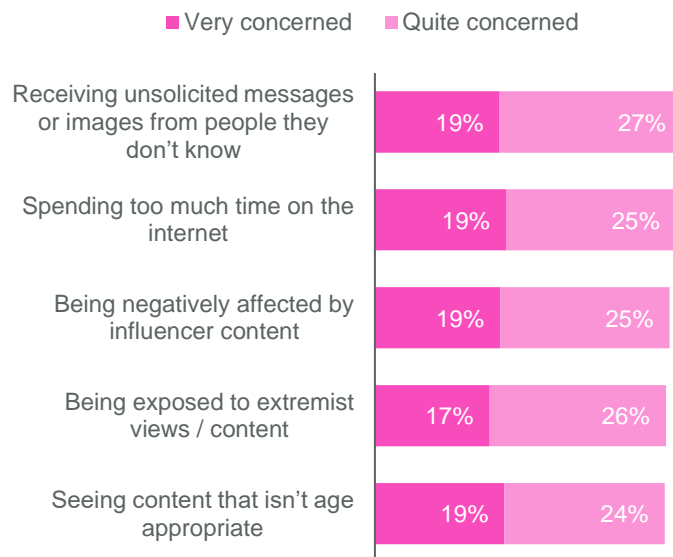
Device Access

A quarter of parents with children under 18 have a child with an unrestricted device

Just over one in four (26%) UK parents with children under 18 say their child/children has a device with no parental restrictions or time limits. Additionally, around three in ten (31%) have a child with a device which has time limits, and a third (34%) say a child has a device with parental restrictions.

Among all parents, concern for a variety of online experiences for their children is mixed. Receiving unsolicited images/messages from strangers is the top concern (46%), followed by spending too much time on the internet (45%), and being negatively affected by influencer content (44%). Despite this, net concern was negative for all experiences asked about.

Concern for child/children experiencing the following (Among parents)



Much of this may be down to a lack of experience or knowledge of incidents. Less than a quarter (23%) of UK parents whose child or children have a smart device say they received messages from people they don't know, with less than a tenth (9%) saying this has happened multiple times.

The most commonly experienced moment is the 41% who say their child/children spends too much time on the internet, followed by the 30% who say they have spent money on online games, purchases, etc.

Nearly three quarters have done something to limit their child/children's online activity.

Almost three in four parents with a child who has a smart device (73%), say that they have done something to limit what their child can see online. The top actions for this include having conversations about online use (38%), limiting screen time (31%) and putting parental controls in place (30%).

Despite this, parents are not giving their children devices out of necessity. When asked why they allow their child/children to have a smart device, the most common reason is because of fun/entertainment (33%) with 23% also seeing it as a way to improve their learning and digital literacy.

Communication is also a key reason, such as to keep in contact with family and friends (24%), being able to contact them at any time (23%), and for their child to be able to get in touch (22%).

In terms of essential reasons, while 22% mentioned it was a requirement for their school, only one in eight (12%) did so because their friends had it and they didn't want them to be different, the lowest of the prompted options.

Parent Device Experiences

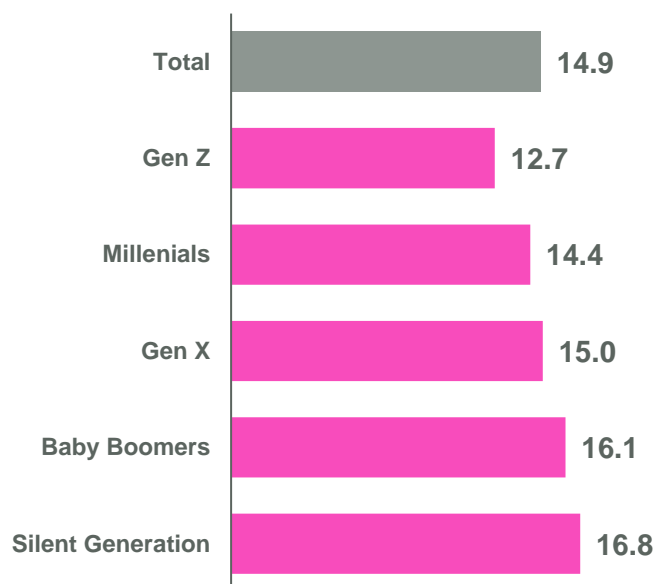
Gen Z on average owned a smart device at 13 years old, with most thinking this is about right

Nearly nine in ten UK adults (89%) now own a smartphone, with only 2% not owning any listed smart device. Among those who own something, as a large number of UK adults were already in adulthood by the time smart devices became mainstream, a third (34%) were over 40 years old when they first owned one. Among Gen Z, the generation which grew up with smart devices to some degree, the average age for picking up a smart device of their own was just over 13 years old (13.2), including nearly one in ten (9%) who were eight years or younger.

Over two thirds of Gen Z adults however think the age they received one was about right, with marginally more thinking they were too young (15%) than too old (13%).

Gen Z also on average think children should receive a smartphone at just under 13 years of age (12.7), only marginally lower than the average age they owned a smart device themselves. Among all UK adults, the average is slightly higher at nearly 15 years old (14.9).

Average age someone should first own a smart device (by generation)



Three quarters have done something with their smartphone that they regret

Over half of UK adults (53%) mentioned something that they had done on their smartphone that they regret; the top issues being sending messages to people they don't know (38%), sending images/videos to people they don't know (29%), posting personal images/videos in public places, and starting a relationship with someone they met online (both 18%). Among Gen Z, those who have regretted an action rises to three in four (75%).

Among those who have done something they regret over one quarter (27%) are still experiencing repercussions, rising to nearly half (48%) for Gen Z. Embarrassment, anxiety and regret (all 11%) are the most common among all UK adults.

Those with a smart device generally do put thought into what they do online however, two thirds (67%) put some thought into sharing personal views online, with only 6% not thinking about this at all. Similar thought is put into engaging with other people's personal content (62%), posting photos or videos of themselves (57%), and posting photos/videos of others (53%).

A majority also have protection on their smart devices, including strong identification controls (61%), anti-malware software, and strong privacy settings on social media (both 46%).