

Children's Wellbeing in a Digital World

Year Four
Index Report 2025

internet
matters.org

Developed with:

 **BMG**
an RSK company



Foreword

For the past year, children's online lives have been the subject of extensive public debate. Calls to ban or restrict children's access to smartphones and social media have dominated headlines, reflecting parents' concerns and anxieties about the impact of digital technology on their children's wellbeing. This has led to children's digital lives being debated in Parliament, including the introduction of the Protection of Children (Digital Safety and Data Protection) Bill. Meanwhile, Australia has become the first country to announce plans to ban under-16s from social media.

This year's Children's Wellbeing in a Digital World report highlights an "internet of extremes" and sheds light on what is driving this public discourse. It's positive to see that children are making greater use of the internet to be creative, to stay active and to find community. Yet, the negative indexes are also growing faster than in previous years, with notable increases in the physical downsides and emotional costs of being online.

It's also disappointing to see that vulnerable children continue to be disproportionately affected by the worst aspects of the online world. Whilst children with vulnerabilities typically experience more of the positive impacts of being online, they also experience more of the negative. On top of this, many of the online benefits experienced by children without vulnerabilities are bypassing vulnerable children altogether. With the SEND system in crisis, more attention must be paid to those who are most at risk in the online world – and who also stand to benefit the most from digital technology.

This year, we are expecting to see significant progress made for children's online safety, as Ofcom begins to enforce the Online Safety Act. The Online Safety Act is designed to make the UK "the safest place in the world to be online": if this is to be realised, then Ofcom must prioritise children's safety over industry demands.

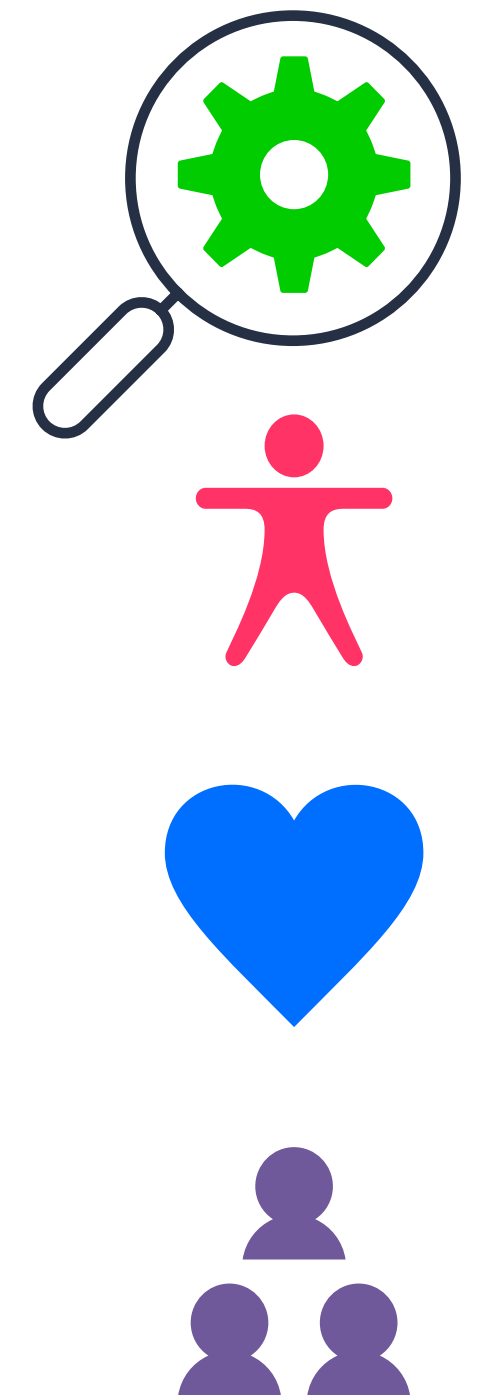
While policy and regulation are an increasingly necessary lever for keeping children safe in a digital world, parents will continue to play a vital role as they are children's first port of call when something goes wrong online. Internet Matters is dedicated to helping parents gain the knowledge and confidence they

need to support their children in the online world and we're glad to see in this research that parents are becoming more tech-savvy and children are having more open conversations with them. Having meaningful conversations goes hand-in-hand with the use of parental controls in keeping children safe online and soothing parents' anxieties about the digital world.

The fourth wave of our Digital Wellbeing Index has revealed valuable insights, showing that parents and children continue to need help and support to navigate the online world. It will continue to inform our work at Internet Matters, both in influencing policy and also in creating resources for families. The Index received the 2024 MRS Award for Media Research and both Internet Matters and our collaborators BMG Research were delighted to receive this recognition. However, the Index would not exist without the children, parents and carers involved, so we thank them for their contributions.

We look forward to continuing to work across the sector to keep children safe online.

Carolyn Bunting MBE,
Joint CEO of Internet Matters



Contents

Welcome to our report	4
Key findings	5
Methodology and approach	8
Section 1: An internet of extremes: Increasing benefits and risks for children online	9
Section 2: Polarised impacts: Children with vulnerabilities experience the positives and negatives of being online more intensely	16
Section 3: A growing sense of unease: Online harm is causing children greater distress	23
Section 4: Digital Parenting: Parents are becoming more confident and enforcing stricter boundaries	27
Conclusions	32





Welcome to our report

This report is the fourth in an annual series that evaluates and tracks the impact of digital technology on children's digital wellbeing and family life.¹ This year's research, conducted with children and parents from over 1,000 families, gives an up-to-date illustration of the effects of digital technology on children's wellbeing.

As with previous surveys, we break digital wellbeing down into four dimensions, developed by the University of Leicester,² and look at the impact of technology in each of these areas:

- Physical wellbeing
- Social wellbeing
- Emotional wellbeing
- Developmental wellbeing

Similar to last year, we use index scores for each of these areas of wellbeing to set the scene, before outlining some key changes and stories that sit behind the shifts, helping to bring to life the experiences of children and parents.

The index was designed to measure both the positives and negatives of wellbeing. This year's findings strongly justify that approach, as both the opportunities and risks of being online have become more pronounced and intensified.

The report is split into four sections.

Section 1: An internet of extremes explores the nuanced experience of being online and its impact on children's digital wellbeing. The findings reveal that both the positive and negative dimensions of the Index have intensified in the past year, creating increasingly divided experiences.

Section 2: Polarised impacts delves into the experiences of children with vulnerabilities.³ These children are most affected by the internet's extremes and the situation for vulnerable children has worsened in the last year. They are experiencing a faster rise in negative impacts and are not benefiting from some of the improvements seen by other children.

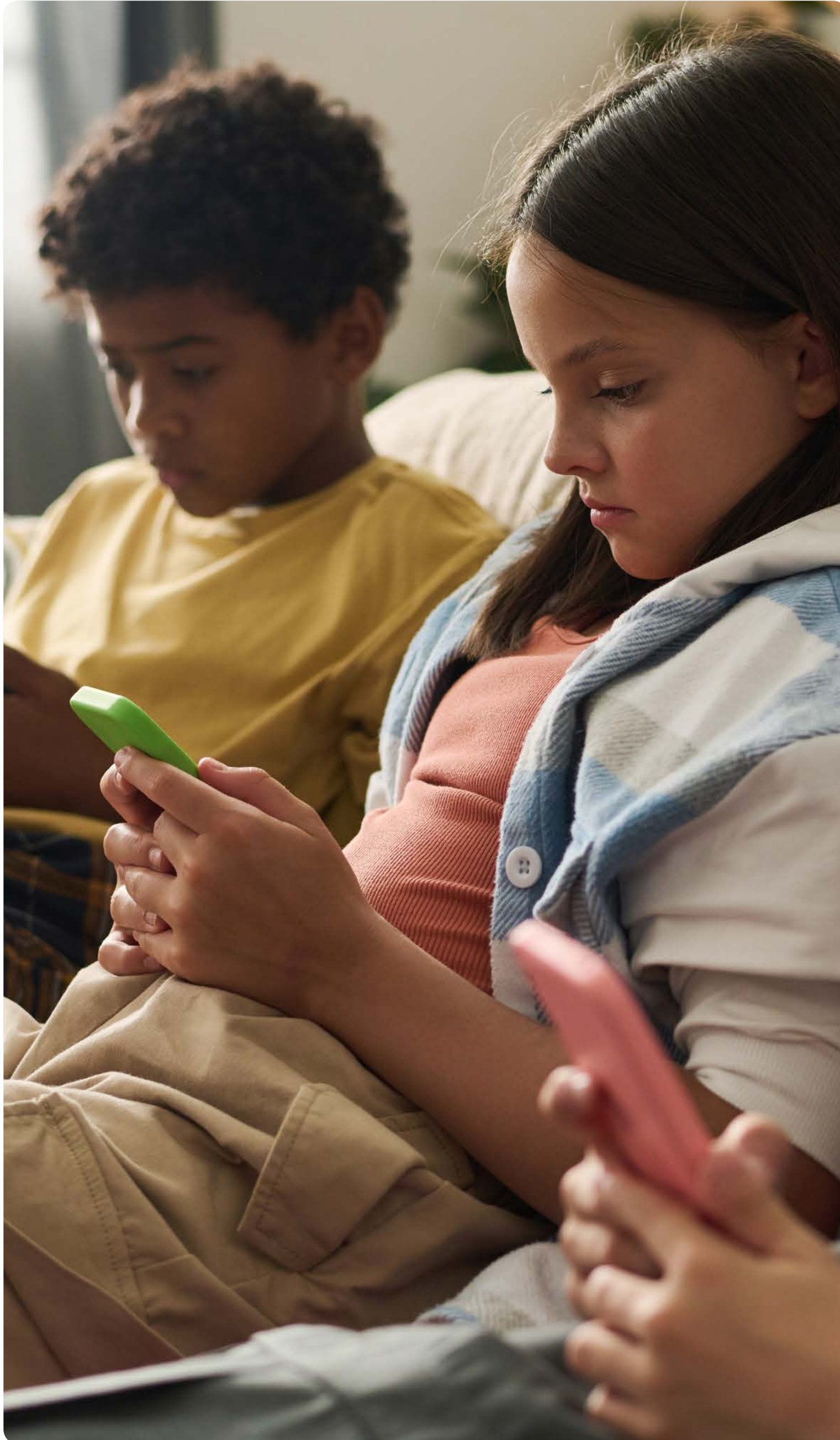
Section 3: A growing sense of unease examines the distress caused by online harms and their impact on children's senses of safety and wellbeing. The section also reveals that parents are noticing a rise in harms affecting their children and believe they are having a greater negative impact.

Section 4: Digital parenting highlights that parents are becoming more concerned about their children's online experiences. Alongside this rise in concern, this wave of data shows that parents are becoming more engaged and aware of their children's online activities.

1. *Internet Matters*, [Children's Wellbeing in a Digital World](#).

2. See the section "Methodology and approach" for more details.

3. Throughout the report we refer to children who have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), who receive special educational needs (SEN) support, or who have a physical/mental health condition which requires professional help, as 'vulnerable' or as 'children with vulnerabilities'. We recognise that there are multiple understandings of the term vulnerable, and this definition is for the purpose of this report and year on year comparisons.



Key findings

Section 1: An internet of extremes

- **A new trend is emerging, with both the positive and negative indexes growing simultaneously.** This is a trend we have not seen previously, as the negative index scores remained stable across waves 2 and 3. As a result, we are seeing an increasingly polarised online landscape – where the internet is becoming both more essential and, at the same time, more distressing for children. This creates a complex challenge for both parents and children, who must navigate a world where digital spaces offer incredible opportunities for connection and discovery yet also pose increasing risks to children's wellbeing.
- **But the positive impacts of being online continue to outweigh the negatives.** Across all four dimensions of wellbeing (social, emotional, developmental and physical), the positive scores continue to outweigh the negatives for children and parents. We have also seen significant increases in all four positive dimensions for children's wellbeing.
- **A range of online activities are driving these changes across the Indexes:**
 - **Social connection:** Children feel that the internet is far more important for various aspects of their social lives than last year, with more children seeing the internet and technology as important for finding supportive communities (50% this year cf. 44% in 2023), meeting good friends (56% cf. 50%) and participating in events (69% cf. 63%).

- **Emotional cost:** A growing number of children report feeling upset when they witness mean or unpleasant behaviour online – rising from 13% last year to 20% this year. This rise is accompanied by more children choosing to avoid certain platforms because of negative interactions (26% cf. 21% in 2023). This suggests they may be feeling less resilient to the challenges of online spaces.
- **Physically active or physically drained?** More children are turning to online resources to learn new sports skills (36% cf. 26% last year), discover different sports (27% cf. 21%), and use apps to support their health (24% cf. 19%). Yet, despite these efforts, parents remain concerned about the impact of screentime on their children's physical wellbeing. Nearly two-fifths (38%) now believe the internet negatively affects their child's health, a concern that has grown for the second year in a row.



The internet is becoming both more essential and more distressing for children.

Section 2: Polarised Impacts

- **Vulnerable children⁴ have a polarised online experience:** Vulnerable children continue to show higher positive and negative wellbeing scores than their peers. However, the negative indexes for this group have now risen to the highest level in the three years that the Index has been tracking them. If this trend continues unchecked, we may find that the very spaces that offer community, connection and escape become more of a burden than a benefit.
- **Vulnerable children face growing social and emotional strain online:** For vulnerable children, the internet is becoming an increasingly difficult space to navigate. The number of vulnerable children who had an upsetting experience online grew significantly this year, with 24% saying upsetting experiences happened 'quite a lot' or more, compared to 10% stating this last year. Many are also struggling with comparisons, with an increase in the number of children feeling sad when they come across people who are not like them on social media.
- **Benefits are not felt equally:** Some of the increasing digital benefits seen by non-vulnerable children are bypassing vulnerable children. An example is the increase in children without a vulnerability who say that they are someone who understands what information they should and shouldn't share online. Over the last three years, this figure has increased from 76% to 82% for non-vulnerable children. Yet for vulnerable children there has been little movement in this figure, going from 70% to 71%.

24% of vulnerable children say upsetting experiences happened 'quite a lot' or more, compared to 10% last year.

Section 3: A growing sense of unease

- **Fewer children feel safe online:** A majority of children (77%) still feel safe online, but this has dropped when compared to last year (81%). This is particularly the case for vulnerable children. Children with vulnerabilities are less likely to feel safe compared to their non-vulnerable peers (70% cf. 79%).
- **Online harms are more upsetting:** Two-thirds (67%) of children have experienced harm online. Whilst this remains in line with children's experiences in previous waves, children report finding many of these experiences more upsetting or frightening this year.
- **Parents too feel the impacts of harm are getting worse:** For example, they think encountering graphic violent content has a more negative impact this wave compared to last wave (31% cf. 18%). Similarly, they feel that content promoting unhealthy body image or eating habits is more distressing to their children (27% cf. 13%).
- **Taken together, these three trends suggest a troubling shift:** As experiences of harm remain stubbornly high, children's emotional resilience seems to be weakening, making it harder for them to navigate and recover from the challenges of the digital world.

67% of children experience harm online.



4. Throughout the report we refer to children who have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), who receive special educational needs (SEN) support, or who have a physical/mental health condition which requires professional help, as 'vulnerable' or as 'children with vulnerabilities'. We recognise that there are multiple understandings of the term vulnerable, and this definition is for the purpose of this report and year on year comparisons.



Section 4: Digital Parenting

This wave uncovers three positive trends in the way parents and children navigate the digital world together:

- 1. Children are more open:** Almost all children (93%) report being at least somewhat open with their parents about their online activities. Encouragingly, more children also believe their parents are fully aware of their digital habits, with this figure rising to 28% from 24%.
- 2. Parents are stepping up their digital game:** Over the last three years, parents have become more aware of their children's online activities, including what they do online (82% cf. 78%), the games they play (87% cf. 84%), the websites and apps they visit (82% cf. 77%), and who they are interacting with (77% cf. 73%).
- 3. Greater use of tools and controls to set boundaries:** A growing number of parents now consider themselves stricter about their children's technology use and online time and are using tools and controls to manage time spent online. For example, more parents are setting limits on their children's online time (43%, cf. 38%). We also find that some groups of parents are more likely to manage their child's behaviour than others. For example, parents in the highest socio-economic group are far more likely to manage their children's online behaviour (23%) compared to those in the lowest socio-economic group (11%)⁵, reflecting a consistent pattern observed in each year of the study.

Beyond these trends, our research also highlights the evolving role of smartphones in children's digital wellbeing. While media narratives often focus on the negative effects of smartphones on children's wellbeing, both parents and children recognise the safety benefits they provide. A vast majority of parents (87%) believe their child is safer when they can be contacted via smartphone, and 78% of children agree that having a smartphone makes them feel more secure in their daily lives. Many parents are also using smartphone features like location tracking to keep their children safe.

Parents are more aware of their children's online activities.



5. In the UK, the Office for National Statistics classifies people into socio-economic groups like 'SEG AB' and 'SEG DE'. SEG AB covers higher and intermediate managerial, administrative, and professional roles, like doctors and senior managers. SEG DE includes semi-skilled and unskilled manual jobs, state pensioners, and the unemployed receiving state benefits. In this report we used the terms 'affluent' and 'higher socio-economic' to refer to those households in 'SEG AB' and 'less affluent' and 'lower socio-economic' to refer to those households in 'SEG DE'.

Methodology and approach

Who did we survey?

Results are based on an online survey of 1,054 UK children aged between 9 and 16 and their parents, with comparisons made to a similar sample of 1,001 in Wave 3 last year. Fieldwork for this wave was conducted between 28th August and 5th September 2024.

Wave	Sample definition	n.
2021	Children aged 9-15 and their parents	1,001
2022	Children aged 9-16 and their parents ⁶	1,138
2023	Children aged 9-16 and their parents	1,001
2024	Children aged 9-16 and their parents	1,054

The survey was completed online with parents who had at least one child between 9-16 years old.⁷ Parents were first asked to answer a set of questions on the use of digital technology in relation to one of their children.⁸ The survey was then handed over to this child to answer a similar set of questions. Questions asked to parents and children were very similar to those asked in 2022 and 2023.⁹

Quotas in line with ONS population estimates were put in place to ensure the sample was stratified by each age group, with equal representation of boys and girls at each age. This is in line with the approach taken in each previous wave, with the targets of boys and girls at each age in line with UK population estimates.

Weighting

The samples for waves 2, 3 and 4 were weighted consistently to ensure representativeness with the broader population of UK children and that any sample change effects were reduced from the previous year. Targets were gender, age, region and the Index of Multiple Deprivation, as well as parent gender, to ensure a consistent distribution of male and female parents between waves.¹⁰

How the Index works

Internet Matters produced the first [Digital Wellbeing Index in 2021](#). The Index is derived from a framework, developed in collaboration with Internet Matters, by Dr Diane Levine and her team at the University of Leicester. This framework identifies four dimensions where digital technology can have the most impact (both positive and negative) on children's wellbeing:

- **Developmental wellbeing** – realisation of cognitive capabilities and achievement of educational potential; managing financial responsibilities that come with maturation; personal growth.
- **Emotional wellbeing** – healthy emotional development; ability to cope with stress and setbacks; spiritual development; development of thoughtful values and a positive outlook; space and opportunities to flourish; life purpose; autonomy; feeling successful.

- **Physical wellbeing** – achievement and maintenance of healthy thriving; development of physical capabilities; using technology in physical safety; access to supportive or accessibility technologies.
- **Social wellbeing** – participation in wider communities including schools, clubs or societies; being an active citizen; ability to work with others; healthy interaction with online communities; maintenance of positive and sustainable online personae; managing the risks of grooming and exploitation; development and maintenance of good relations with significant people both online and offline; communication with people you know.

The accompanying report presents trends in the Index to set the scene on children's digital wellbeing and explores the key changes and stories that lie behind these shifts.

Corrections and amendments to index calculations

Since the previous wave, we have adjusted a number of measures used in calculating the Index, to align them more closely with the original methodology from the second report.

While this may result in decimal-point variations in some figures compared to the last wave's report, these changes have not impacted the overall results,

including the improvement in digital wellbeing and the differences in digital wellbeing between subgroups.

Limitations around tracking back to the 2021 wave

We now have three comparable waves of data to analyse (2022–2024), but our ability to track results from 2021 is still limited due to the following reasons:

- The 2021 survey was conducted on 9–15-year-olds and their parents. Later waves have included respondents aged 16.
- The questionnaire changed between Wave 1 and Wave 2, including many new questions, order changes, and questions that have been framed differently.
- Differences in the index calculations since Wave 2 onwards, based on changes to the questionnaire.
- Weighting has been applied to the Wave 2, 3 and 4 results (see above) but was unable to be retrospectively applied to Wave 1.

Please note that all the changes highlighted in this report, comparing data across the waves (covering waves 2-4) or between subgroups, are statistically significant at the 95% confidence level. This means that the observed differences in the findings between periods are highly unlikely to be due to chance and instead reflect genuine changes or trends.

6. 138 16-year-olds were added to this survey but not included in most of the Wave 2 reporting to improve comparability.

7. For brevity, we've referred to 'parents' throughout this report, but this could include legal guardians of children aged 9-16.

8. Where parents had more than one child in the 9-16 age range, one child was selected using a 'least fill method'.

9. The 2021 questionnaire contains some of the same metrics but much of the questionnaire was updated in 2022.

10. This means figures reported for Wave 2 given in this report may be slightly different to previous Internet Matters publications.

Section 1: An internet of extremes: Increasing benefits and risks for children online

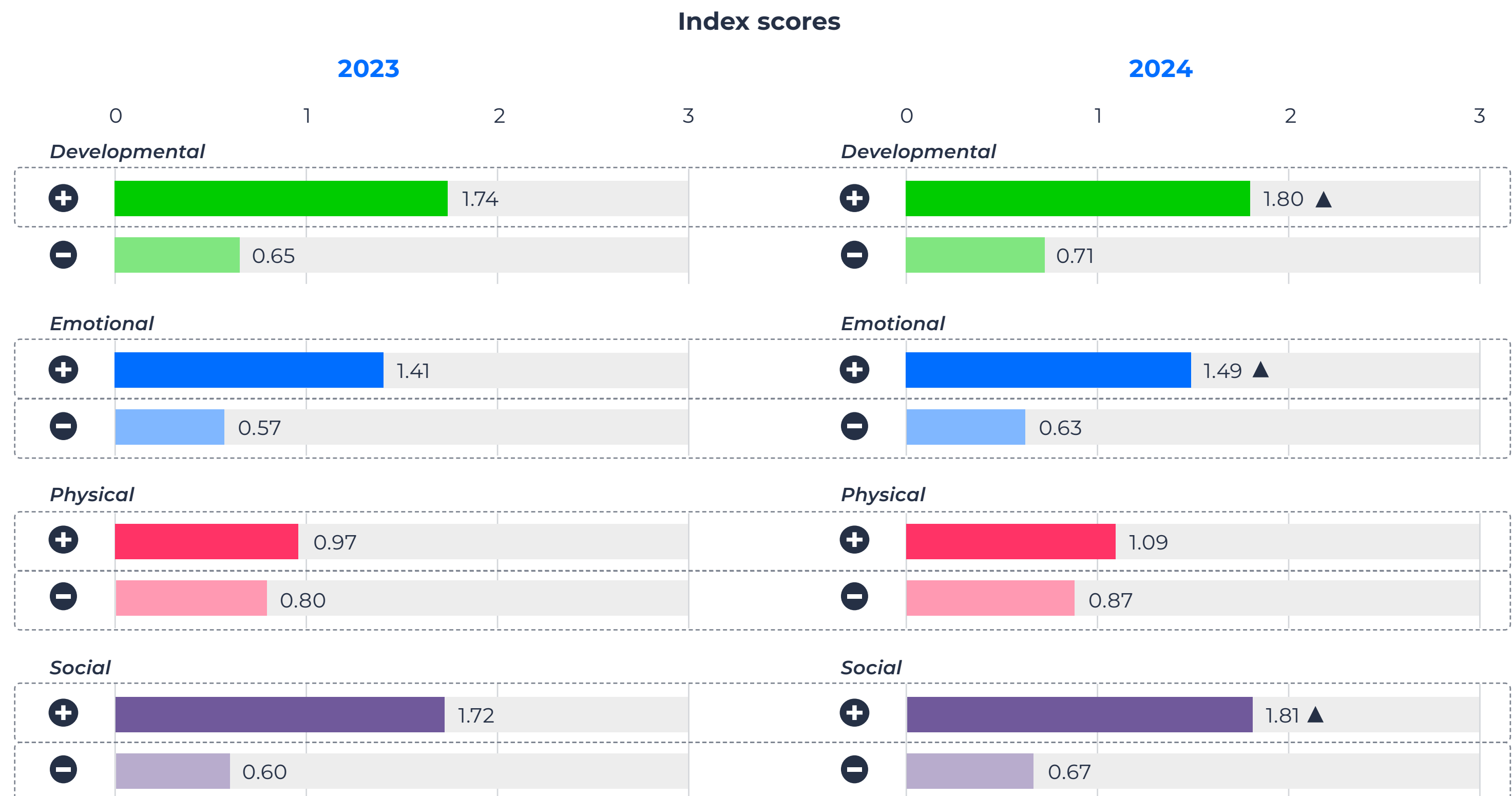
The impact of the internet on wellbeing has become more extreme. Both the positive and negative impacts of time online have increased.

Over the past year, nearly all of the positive and negative index scores for children's wellbeing have seen notable increases, rising to the highest levels we have recorded. These changes point towards an online experience that is increasingly extreme for children. While it is reassuring to see substantial benefits from online activity, the parallel rise in negatives highlights an increasingly polarised and complex digital landscape.

Figure 1 highlights the extent of these changes. For children's physical, social and emotional wellbeing, both positive and negative scores have seen statistically significant increases. Developmental wellbeing is the exception for children, where only the positive score has increased significantly since last year (1.80 cf. 1.74 last year).¹¹

11. While the developmental negative index score for children has increased from 0.65 to 0.71 over the last year, this change is not statistically significant.

Figure 1. An internet of extremes: Children's perspectives on their digital wellbeing



Base: Children (2023: 1,001, 2024: 1,054)

----- Significant difference versus previous year

▲ Trend increase since Wave 2 (2022)

The index scores for parents reinforce the range of children’s experiences online. Although parents have noticed an improvement in their children’s online physical and social wellbeing, all the negative index scores from parents have increased significantly since last year.

Remember the upsides: The positives of the digital world continue to outweigh the negatives

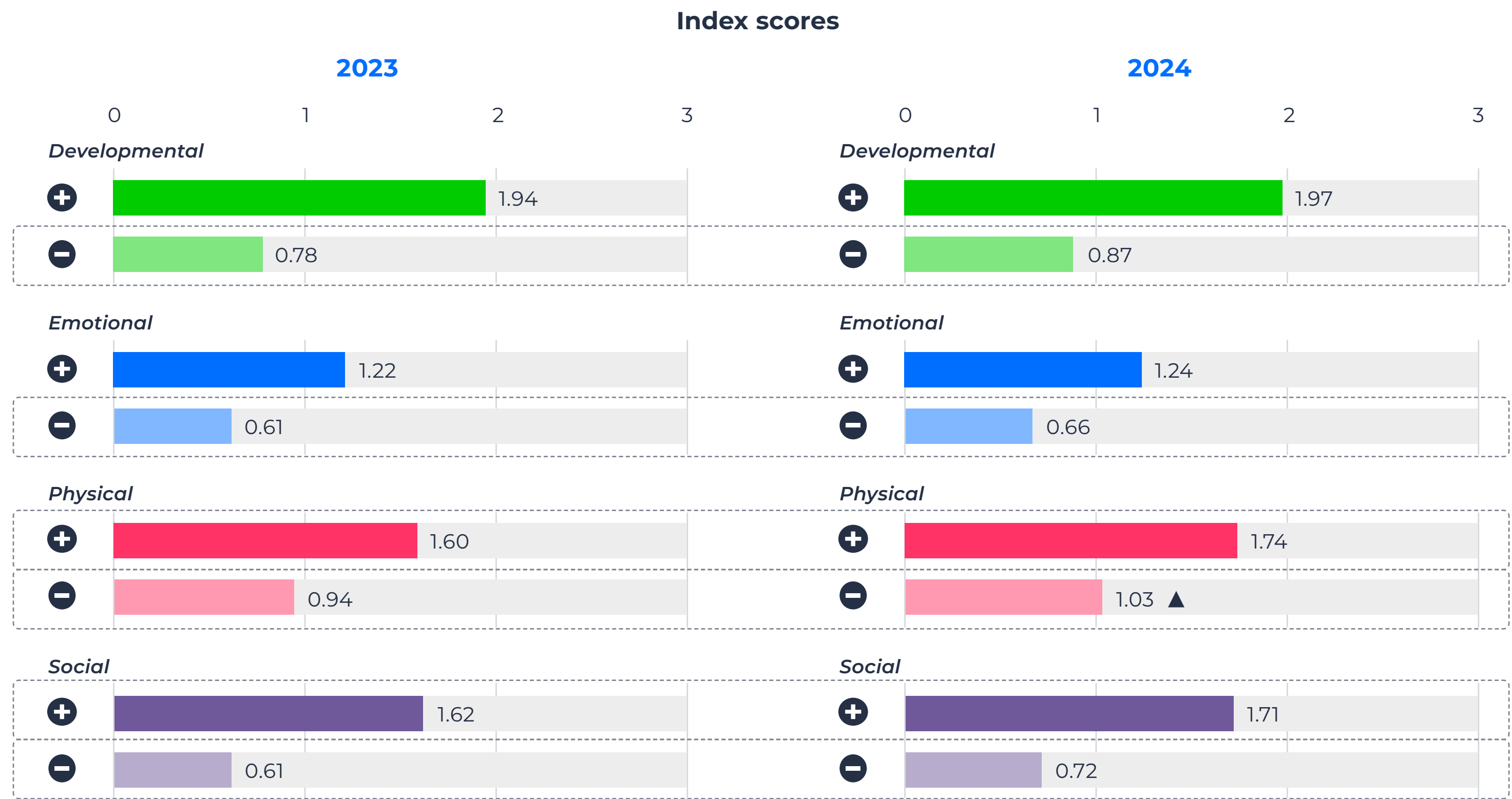
Despite the increase in both positive and negative wellbeing scores, the benefits of being online for children’s wellbeing continue to outweigh the negatives—contrary to the often negative narrative around the impact of digital technology on young people told in the media.

The children’s index scores show that the positive impacts of being online on physical, emotional, developmental and social wellbeing remain greater than the negatives. We see this particularly in social wellbeing, which has the greatest difference between positive and negatives scores this year: a positive score of 1.81 and a negative score of 0.67.

For social, emotional and developmental wellbeing we have seen a positive trend since 2022. In contrast, the significant increases in children’s negative scores seen over the last year have come after stable results between 2022 to 2023.

Parents’ index scores tell a similar story; they are more likely to notice the positive impacts of their children’s online behaviour than the negative. The area where this is seen the most is when it comes to children’s developmental wellbeing, where we see the biggest difference in parent scores (1.97 positive score cf. 0.87 negative).

Figure 2. An internet of extremes: Parents’ perspectives on children’s digital wellbeing



Base: Parents (2023: 1,001, 2024: 1,054)

----- Significant difference versus previous year

▲ Trend increase since Wave 2 (2022)

These shifts in index scores may initially seem complex and abstract, but they are grounded in concrete, measurable changes. We now turn to the specific measures which have driven the Index changes.

Building bonds in an online world: Children are increasingly using online spaces to connect with friends, establish supportive networks, and find inspiration for the future

A space to be themselves

The biggest change affecting children’s emotional wellbeing since last year is those who feel they can be themselves online or on social media. This year, 57% of children feel that that they are able to be themselves online, up from 51% last year.

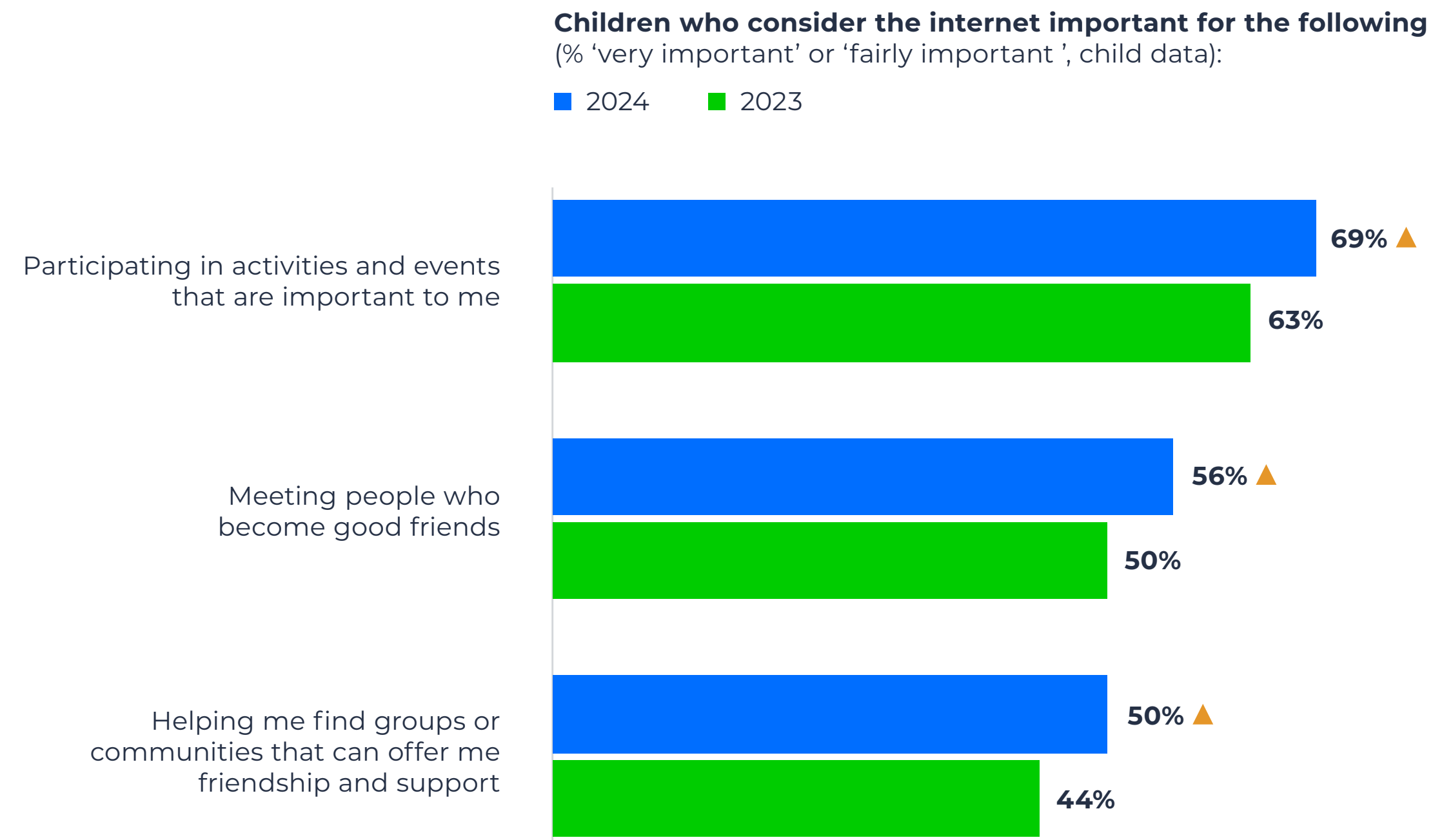
Making connections

Technology and being online has also become much more important for children to form social connections with one another over the last year. This includes an increase in those saying that being online and using technology is fairly or very important for:

- **Meeting people who have become good friends:** up from 50% to 56% over the last year.
- **Finding groups and communities who can offer friendship and support:** up from 44% to 50%.
- **Participating in important activities and events:** up from 63% to 69%.

Among girls aged 13 and over, the proportion who consider being online important for participating in events has risen significantly, from 64% to 76% in the past year. While girls often face unique challenges in the online world, such as receiving unwanted comments and contact from strangers, last year’s research showed that many girls saw these harms as the price they paid to be in spaces where they wanted to be.¹²

Figure 3. Building bonds in a virtual world: Children are increasingly using online spaces to connect with friends, establish supportive networks, and engage in events



Q55. How important do you think technology and being online has been for you for these things? Base: Children (2023: 1,001, 2024: 1,054)

▲ ▼ Significant difference versus previous year

12. Internet Matters, [“So standard it’s not noteworthy”: Teenage girls experiences of harm online](#), March 2024,

Online inspiration

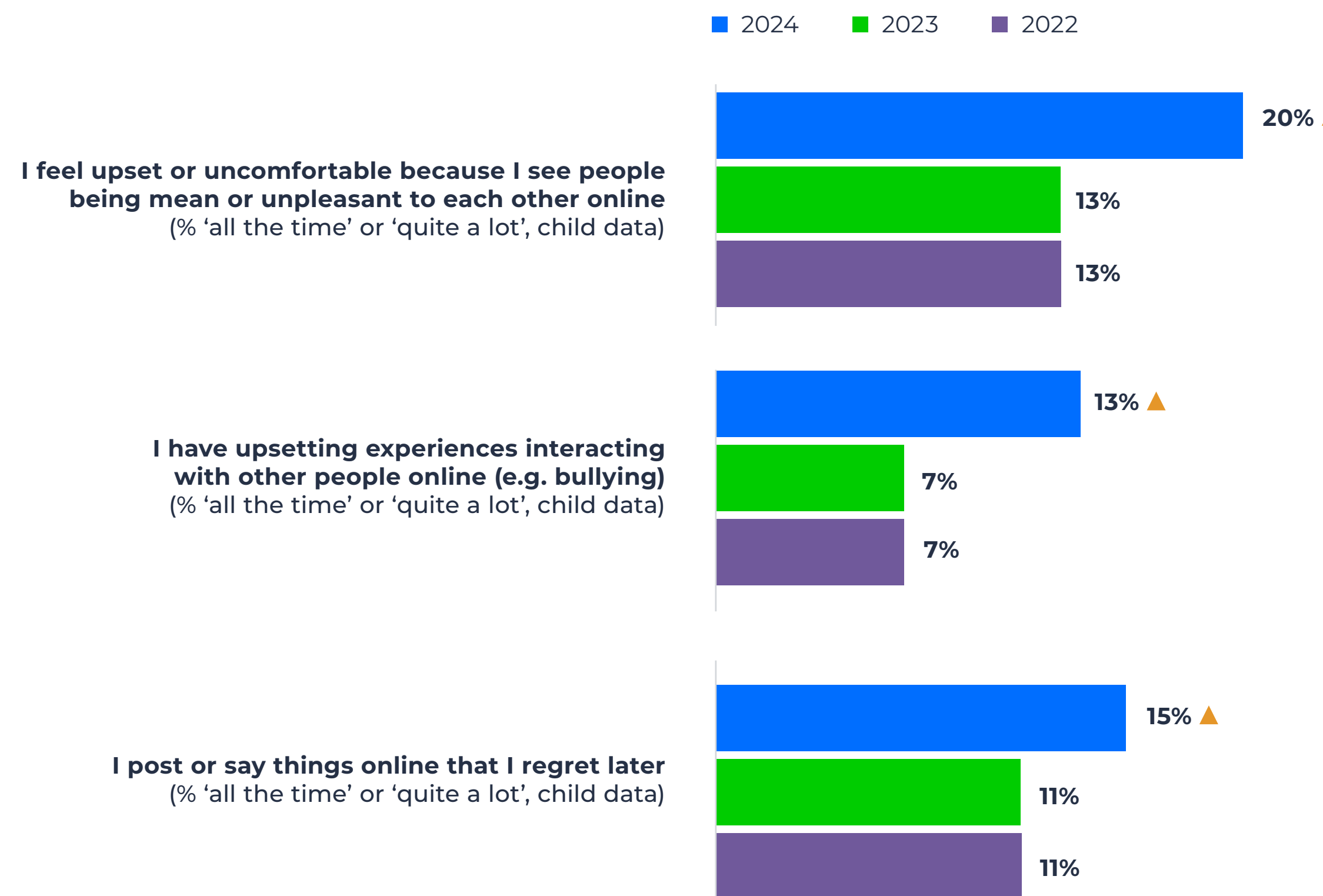
Using the internet as a source of inspiration is another important positive impact of being online for children. We have seen an increase in the proportion of children who feel the internet and using technology are very important for personal inspiration when:

- **Getting ideas of what they would like to do in the future:** up from 24% to 30% since last year.
- **Finding new hobbies or things they are interested in:** up from 21% to 28%.
- **Learning about things they wouldn’t be taught in school:** up from 23% to 27%.

Yet there is an emotional cost to being online which is growing

Worryingly, evidence suggests that online interactions are increasingly leaving children feeling uncomfortable and upset. A fifth (20%) of children now report feeling upset or uneasy when witnessing people being mean or unpleasant online—up from 13% last year. Similarly, the proportion of children experiencing regular upsetting interactions with others online has nearly doubled, rising to 13% from 7%.

Figure 4. The emotional cost of online interactions is growing



Q57. How often do these things happen? Base: Children (2022: 1,138, 2023: 1,001, 2024: 1,054)

▲ ▼ Significant difference versus previous year

While these changes are particularly noticeable this year, between 2022 and 2023 there was little movement in the proportion of children who felt upset from witnessing children being mean online (13% in both 2022 and 2023) or having upsetting interactions (7% in both 2022 and 2023).

In response to this behaviour, some children are choosing to avoid certain online spaces, with 26% saying they steer clear of particular apps, websites, or games because of how people act or speak. This marks a notable rise from 21% last year.

Negative experiences are not limited to reactions to other people’s behaviour. A greater proportion of children now have regrets about what they are posting online (15% cf. 11%).

Parents have noticed these impacts on social and emotional wellbeing. Those who agree that their child gets upset because of others being unpleasant online has increased from 17% to 21% since last year. A fifth of parents (21%) also believe their children compare themselves to people they see online in an unhealthy way, up from 18% last year.

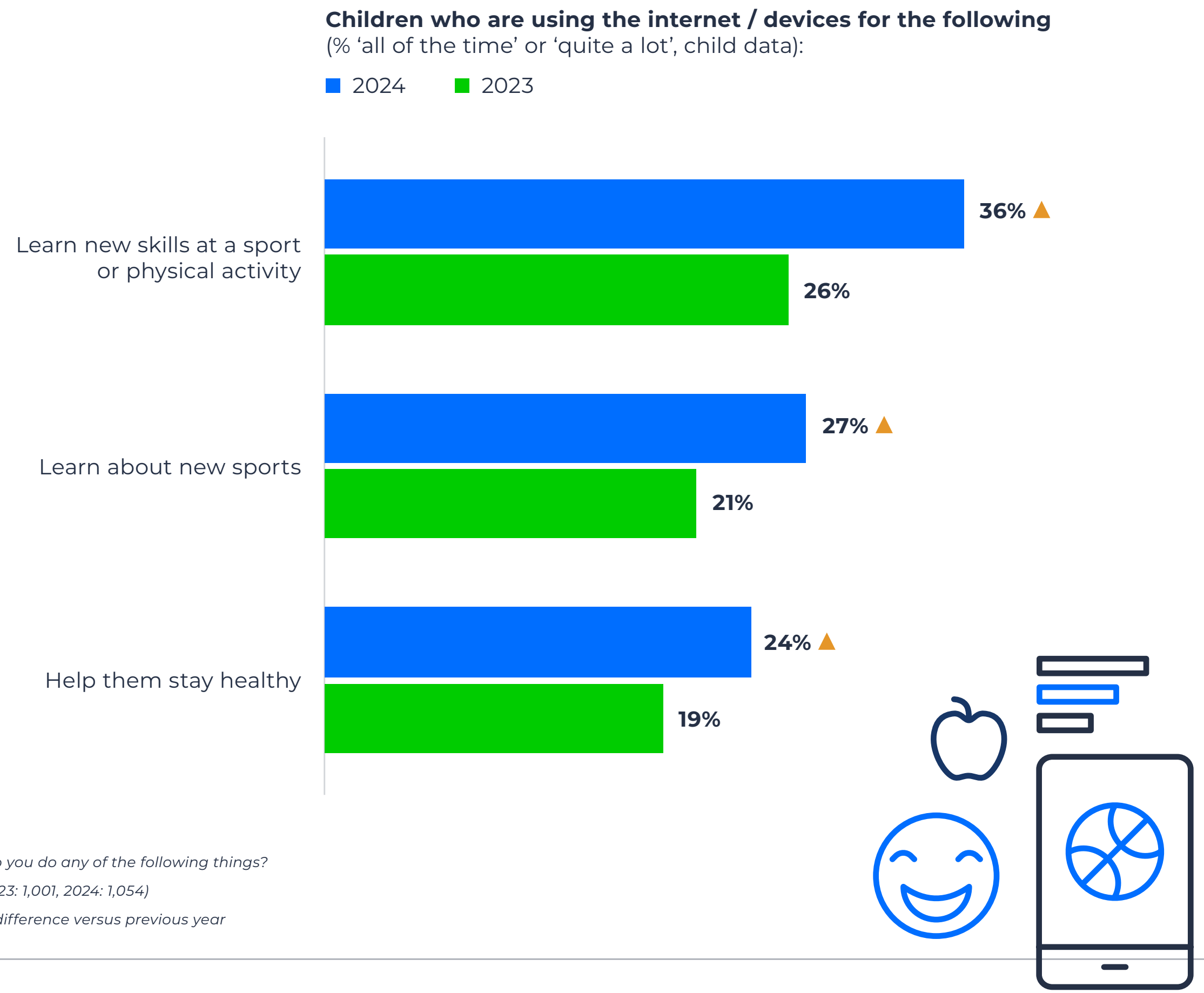
Online Olympians: Children are making greater use of the internet and apps to enhance their learning and maintain their health, but not all children are benefiting

The internet often gets a bad press for children spending too much time online at the expense of their health and fitness. Yet our results this year show that the impact of being online on physical wellbeing is not limited to the negative impacts of too much screentime and can in fact support children's physical health.

There are many ways in which being online has been a source of inspiration for children's physical activity, with increases in the proportion of children doing the following since last year:

- **Learning new skills in a sport:** Over a third (36%) are now using the internet 'quite a lot' or 'all the time' to learn skills in the sports that they play, compared to just 26% last year.
- **Learning about new sports:** There has also been an increase in those who are using the internet to learn about entirely new sports (27% cf. 21% last year).

Figure 5. Online Olympians: Children are making greater use of the internet and apps to enhance their learning and maintain their health



- **Using technology to stay healthy:**

A quarter (24%) are now using apps and devices to track their health, up from 19% last year.

Given the broader context of the Olympics and the UEFA European Football Championship (Euros) last year, it's perhaps unsurprising that all these changes have resulted in the physical wellbeing index having the biggest annual increase among all the index scores.

Parents are also noticing how the internet has improved their children's physical wellbeing. For example:

- **Being able to learn skills in a sport they do:** 72% of parents say the internet / technology is fairly or very important for their children's ability to pick up skills or tips in a sport they do, an increase from 67% since last year.
- **Finding out about new sports:** 63% of parents feel the internet and technology is important for their children finding out about entirely new sports that they would like to try out, increasing from 57% last year.
- **Engaging with health-focused apps:** 58% of parents see importance in children using apps and the internet to stay healthy, up from 53% since last year.



Girls and children from lower-socio economic backgrounds have not had the same gains

While these improvements in physical wellbeing are encouraging, they appear to benefit children who were already using the internet to enhance their physical wellbeing.

For example, boys aged 15 and 16 have consistently reported higher physical wellbeing scores than girls of the same age. Since last year, the physical wellbeing score for these boys has increased significantly (1.37 cf. 1.10 last year), driven largely by their use of the internet to learn new skills in a sport (51% cf. 32%).

In contrast, the physical wellbeing score for girls of the same age has remained relatively unchanged (0.93 cf. 0.94). It would seem that the internet is not inspiring groups who typically lose interest in sport over time to catch up with their peers. Instead, these findings mirror trends in sport we already see in society.¹³

Similarly, children from a higher socio-economic background are also more likely to have experienced the positive impact of being online on physical wellbeing (1.25 compared to

1.10). Meanwhile, there has been no change for children from less well-off families (0.83 compared to 0.82).

Overall, while the improvements in physical wellbeing are a positive development, they should not overshadow the fact that online inspiration is not felt by all children equally.

The physical downside: Parents are increasingly worried about the impact of online time on their children's physical health.

As we have outlined at the start of this section, since last year the impact of the internet on children's wellbeing has become more extreme. Children are experiencing more of both the positive and negative aspects from being online.

The changes over the last year in physical wellbeing reflect this internet of extremes dynamic particularly well. Despite the wide range of improvements that being online had on physical wellbeing since last year (with more children than ever using the internet for positive physical health benefits), there have also been notable increases in the physical downsides of being online.

These include:

- **Staying online, instead of playing sport:** While children are using the internet and online apps for staying healthy or learning about sport more than they were last year, there has also been an increase in the proportion of children who said they stopped playing sport to remain online (12% to 17%).
- **A greater impact on physical health:** A quarter of children (26%) have said that spending a lot of time online affects their physical health; this has seen a significant rise over the past three years (2022: 18%).

Parents have also noticed negative changes in their children's physical wellbeing. Since last year, parents are more likely to agree that being online is affecting their children's:

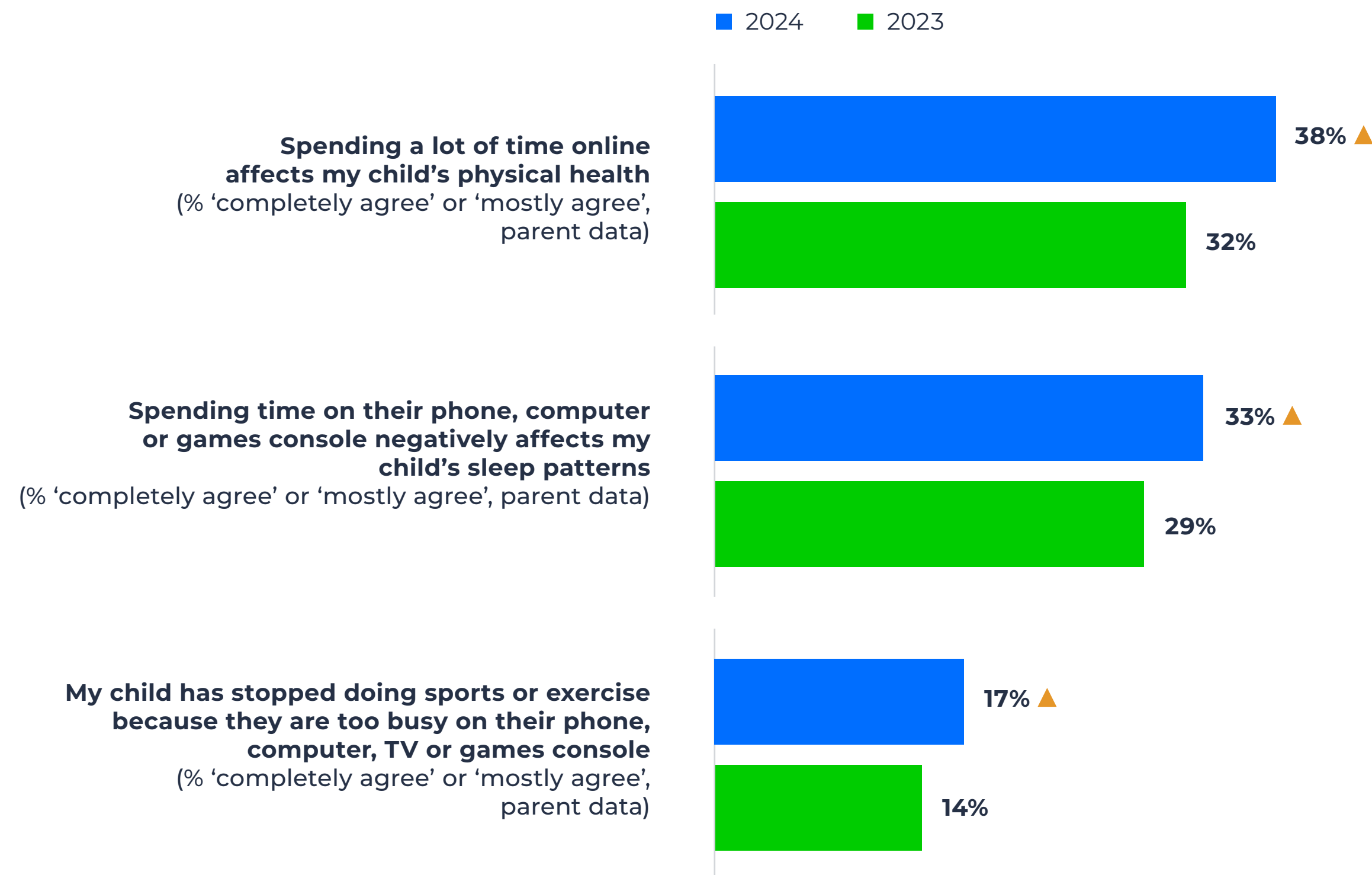
- **Physical health:** 38% of parents now agree that excessive time online harms their children's physical health, up from 32% last year and 27% two years ago, marking a concerning second consecutive year increase.
- **Desire to play sports:** One in six (17%) agree that their child has stopped doing sports or exercise because they are too busy on their phone, computer or games console – up from 14% last year.

13. Women in Sport, ["More than 1 million teenage girls fall 'out of love' with sport"](#), March 2022.

- **Sleeping patterns:** More parents agree that spending time online affects their child's sleeping patterns (33% cf. 29%).

The increases in the positive aspects of being online are encouraging, but it is concerning to see the rise in many negative aspects of online activity. While the positive and negative aspects of being online are both increasing overall it is important to note that, as explored above, this is not the case for all demographics. Some children, such as girls and those from lower socio-economic backgrounds, are experiencing the negative trends in wellbeing without some of the corresponding positive trends. As we navigate this increasingly complex digital landscape, it is crucial to ensure that online spaces are not only enriching but also safe and inclusive for all children. By addressing disparities and mitigating risks, we can work towards a digital environment where every child can thrive.

Figure 6. The physical downside: Parents are increasingly worried about the impact of their children's online time on their physical health



Q28. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements? Base: Parents (2023: 1,001, 2024: 1,054)

▲ ▼ Significant difference versus previous year





Section 2:

Polarised impacts:

Children with vulnerabilities experience the positives and negatives of being online more intensely



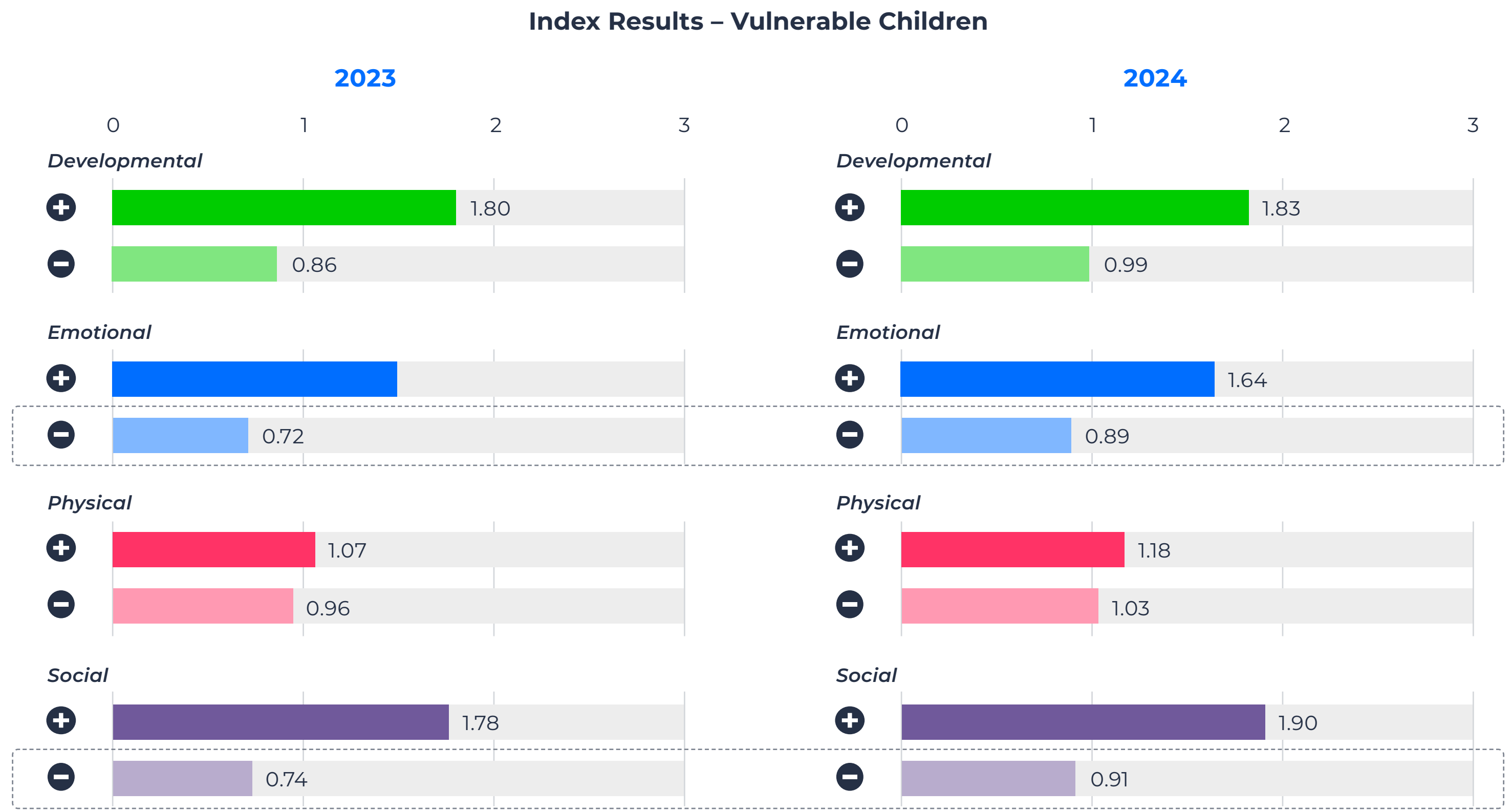
Vulnerable children continue to experience the best and worst of online life

Our Index has always shown that vulnerable children typically experience more of the positive and negative impacts of being online. This year is no exception. For vulnerable children, the positive and negative index scores are higher when compared to children who are not in this group.

Vulnerable children derive greater benefit from some aspects of being online compared to non-vulnerable children:

- **Connected communities:** Children with vulnerabilities have consistently felt that being online is more important for them to build friendships and join communities. This year, nearly three-fifths (59%) of vulnerable children feel that the internet was important for finding groups that offer friendship and support, compared to 47% of those not in this group.
- **Creating things to be proud of:** Over the last three years, children with vulnerabilities have also been more likely to report that they create things they are proud of when online or using technology. This year, 46% of vulnerable children said they were creating things that they were proud of online 'quite a lot' or more, compared to 32% of non-vulnerable children.
- **Comfortable being themselves:** Being online has consistently helped vulnerable children be comfortable with being themselves. This year, half (52%) of children with vulnerabilities said that the internet helped them feel comfortable with being themselves and this is significantly more than children without vulnerabilities (42%).

Figure 7. Polarised impacts: Children with vulnerabilities experience the positives and negatives of being online more intensely



Base: Children with a vulnerability e.g. SEN support / EHCP / physical and/or mental health condition (2023: 205, 2024: 239)

----- Significant difference versus previous year ▲ Trend increase since Wave 2 (2022)

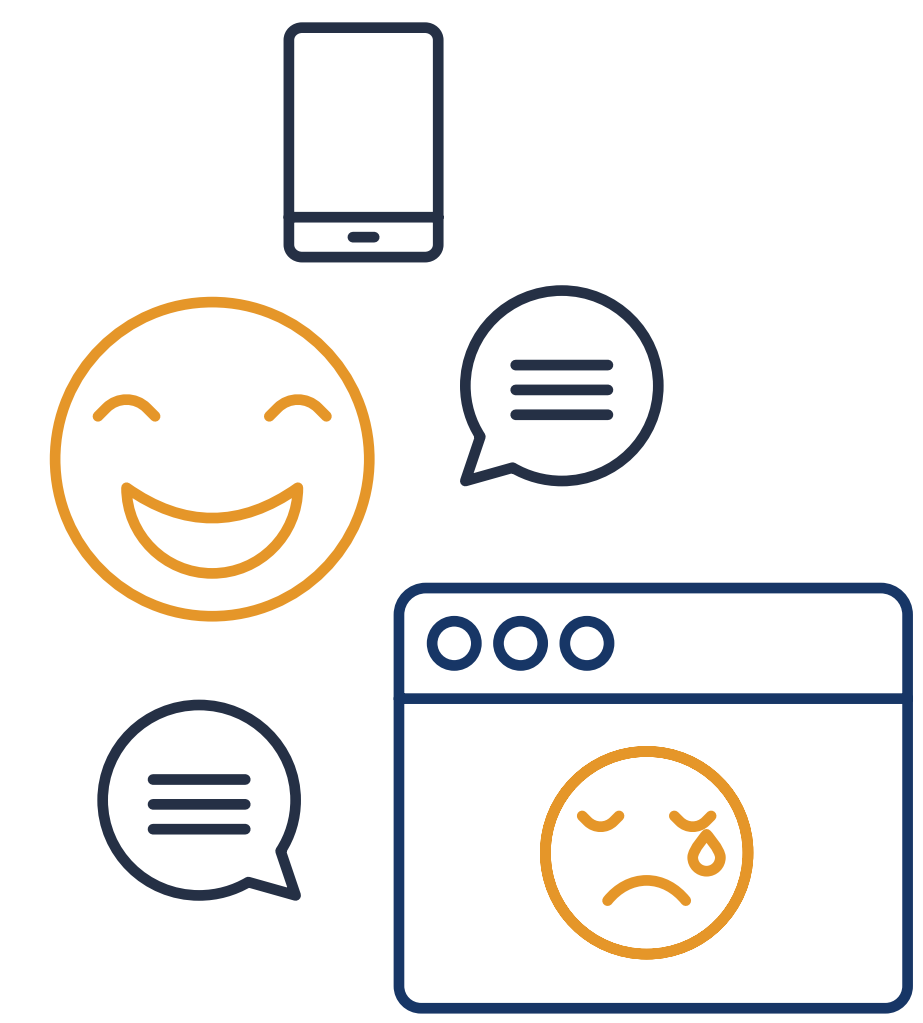
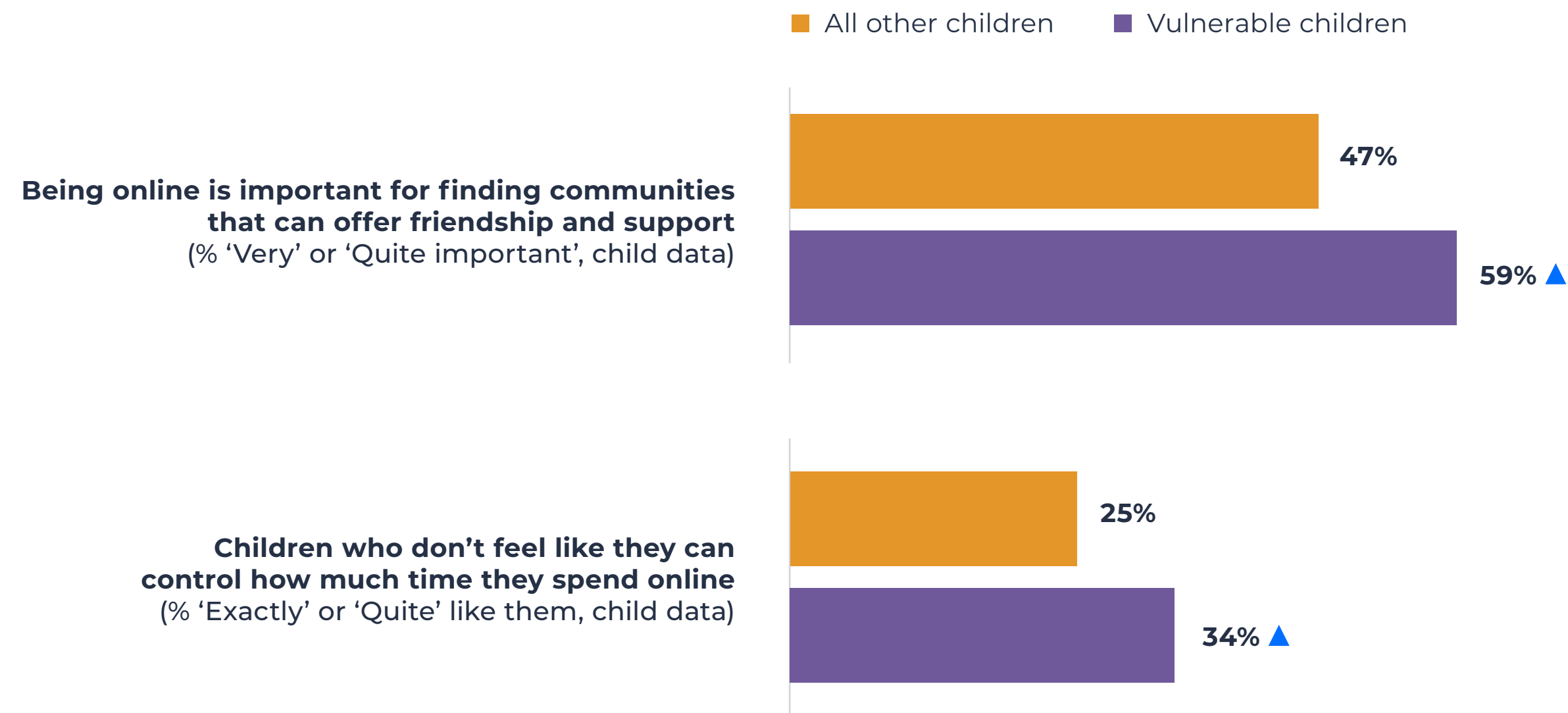


Figure 8. Polarised impact: Online spaces provide vulnerable children opportunities to find communities, but they are disproportionately exposed to negative experiences



Q55.4 How important do you think technology and being online has been for you for these things?
 Q61.4 How much do each of these things sound like you?
 Base: Children (2023: 1,001, 2024: 1,054)
 Base: Children with a vulnerability e.g. SEN support / EHCP / physical and/or mental health condition (2023: 205, 2024: 239)

▲ ▼ Significant difference among vulnerable and non-vulnerable children

Yet vulnerable children continue to experience more of the negative sides of online life than their non-vulnerable peers. For example, they are more likely to:

- **Lose track of time online:** Vulnerable children face greater challenges in managing their time online, often feeling unable to control how much time they spend on digital activities. 34% of vulnerable children feel they cannot control how much time they spend online, compared to 25% of children not in this group.
- **Post things they later regret:** Vulnerable children have also been consistently more likely to post things they later regret. This year, a fifth (22%) of vulnerable children are likely to do this compared to 12% of children outside of this vulnerable group. Negative impacts are escalating at a faster pace

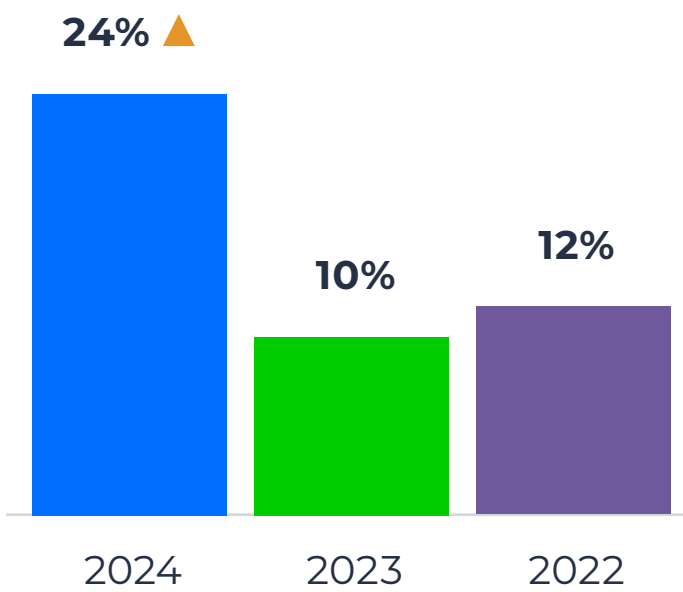
Looking across other measures in the index, we can see that the picture for vulnerable children has sadly worsened compared to last year. Negative impacts are escalating at a faster pace, while some of the positive improvements are bypassing this group.

The drop in social and emotional wellbeing for vulnerable children is striking, as this downward trend hasn't been seen in children outside this group. Negative social wellbeing scores have increased significantly over the last year for vulnerable children (0.74 to 0.91). Meanwhile, for children not in this group, the negative social wellbeing score has changed very little (0.57 to 0.60).

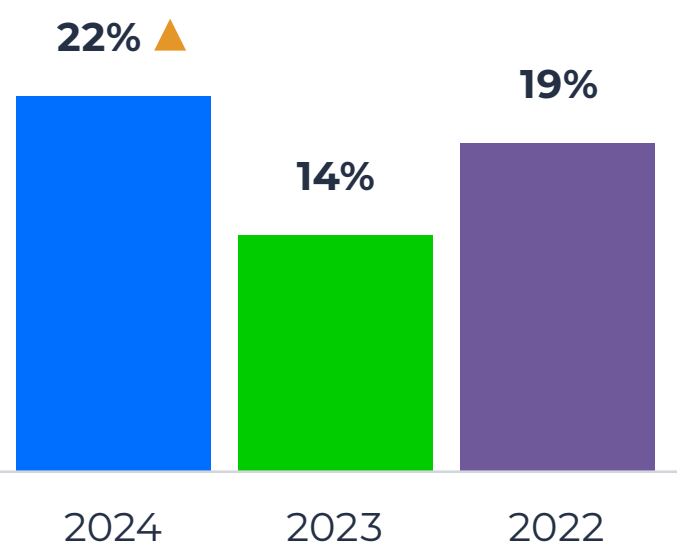
A third of vulnerable children say they feel like they cannot control how much time they spend online.

Figure 9. Negative aspects getting worse: Social and emotional wellbeing are getting worse for children with vulnerabilities

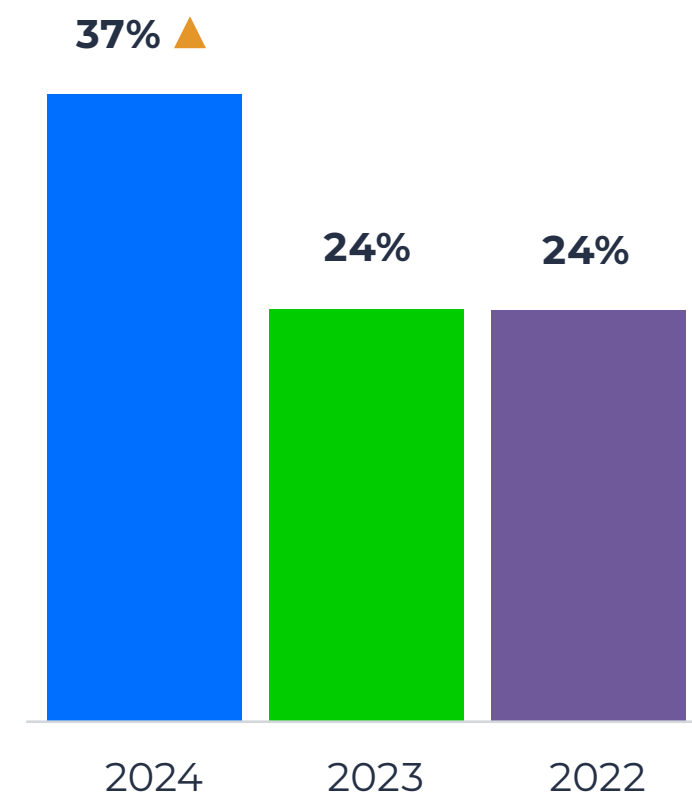
Having upsetting experiences interacting with others online (e.g. bullying)
(% 'all the time' or 'quite a lot', child data)



Turning down opportunities to meet friends so they can stay online
(% 'all the time' or 'quite a lot', child data)



Avoid apps, website or games because of how people act to on them
(% 'all the time' or 'quite a lot', child data)



The key reasons for this widening gap are vulnerable children who say they are having the following experiences 'quite a lot' or more:

- **Upsetting experiences online:** 24% are having upsetting experiences interacting with other people online (e.g. bullying), compared to 10% last year. This is the highest proportion of vulnerable children we have recorded having upsetting experience online. In comparison, between 2022 and 2023 the proportions remained fairly stable (12% and 10% respectively).
- **Turning down opportunities to meet friends:** 22% are turning down opportunities to meet so they can stay online, compared to 14% last year.
- **Avoiding apps, website or games:** Over a third (37%) are avoiding certain apps, websites or games because of how people talk or act toward one another; only 24% were doing the same last year.

For each of these measures, there has been little change in the experiences of children without vulnerabilities. As a result, this is leading to a widening gap between these two groups. For example, while there was little difference between vulnerable children and non-vulnerable children having upsetting experiences online last year (10% cf. 7% respectively), the difference between these two groups is now much greater (24% cf. 9% this year).

22% of vulnerable children are turning down offline opportunities to meet friends to stay online.

Q57. How often do these things happen?
Base: Children with a vulnerability e.g. SEN support / EHCP / physical and/or mental health condition (2023: 205, 2024: 239)

▲ ▼ Significant difference versus previous year

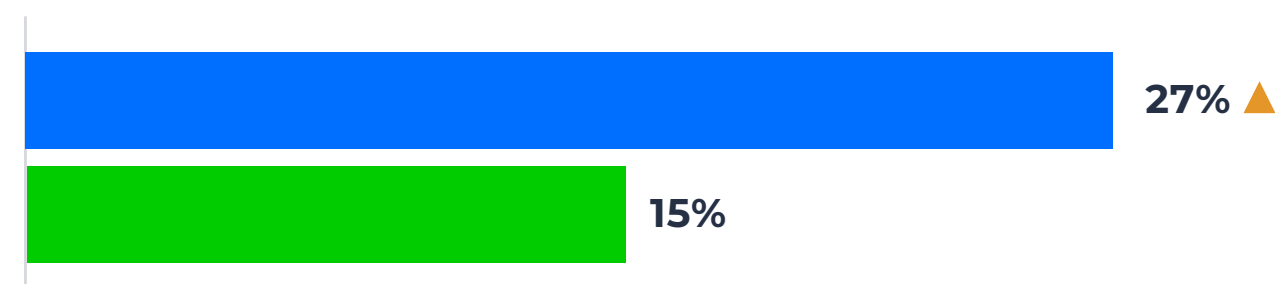
Figure 10. The emotional impact for vulnerable children

■ 2024 ■ 2023

I see people online/on social media who make me feel sad because I'm not like them
(% 'exactly like me' or 'quite like me', child data)



I get upset if something you post online does not get many likes or positive comments
(% 'all the time' or 'quite a lot', child data)



Q58.2. How much do each of these things sound like you?
Q59.1 How often do these things happen?
Base: Children with a vulnerability e.g, SEN support / EHCP / physical and/or mental health condition (2023: 205, 2024: 239)

▲ ▼ Significant difference versus previous year

An emotional toll

Children with vulnerabilities are also experiencing a greater negative impact on their emotional wellbeing. Similar to changes in social wellbeing, the negative score for emotional wellbeing has increased for vulnerable children (0.72 to 0.89), while remaining consistent for those not in this group (0.53 to 0.54).

One factor driving this change is that some vulnerable children find it difficult to relate to the people they see online. This year has seen an increase in vulnerable children feeling sad after seeing someone online who is not like them, rising from 18% last year to 26% now. Children with vulnerabilities are also now more likely to get upset if they post something online and it does not get many likes or positive comments (27% cf. 15% last year). Once again, children without these vulnerabilities have not experienced changes in these behaviours.



Benefits are not felt equally: Some of the increasing digital benefits are bypassing vulnerable children

The increase in negative experiences is just one aspect of how the online lives of vulnerable children have differed over the last year. Unfortunately, in addition we see that many of the online benefits experienced by other children are bypassing children with a vulnerability.

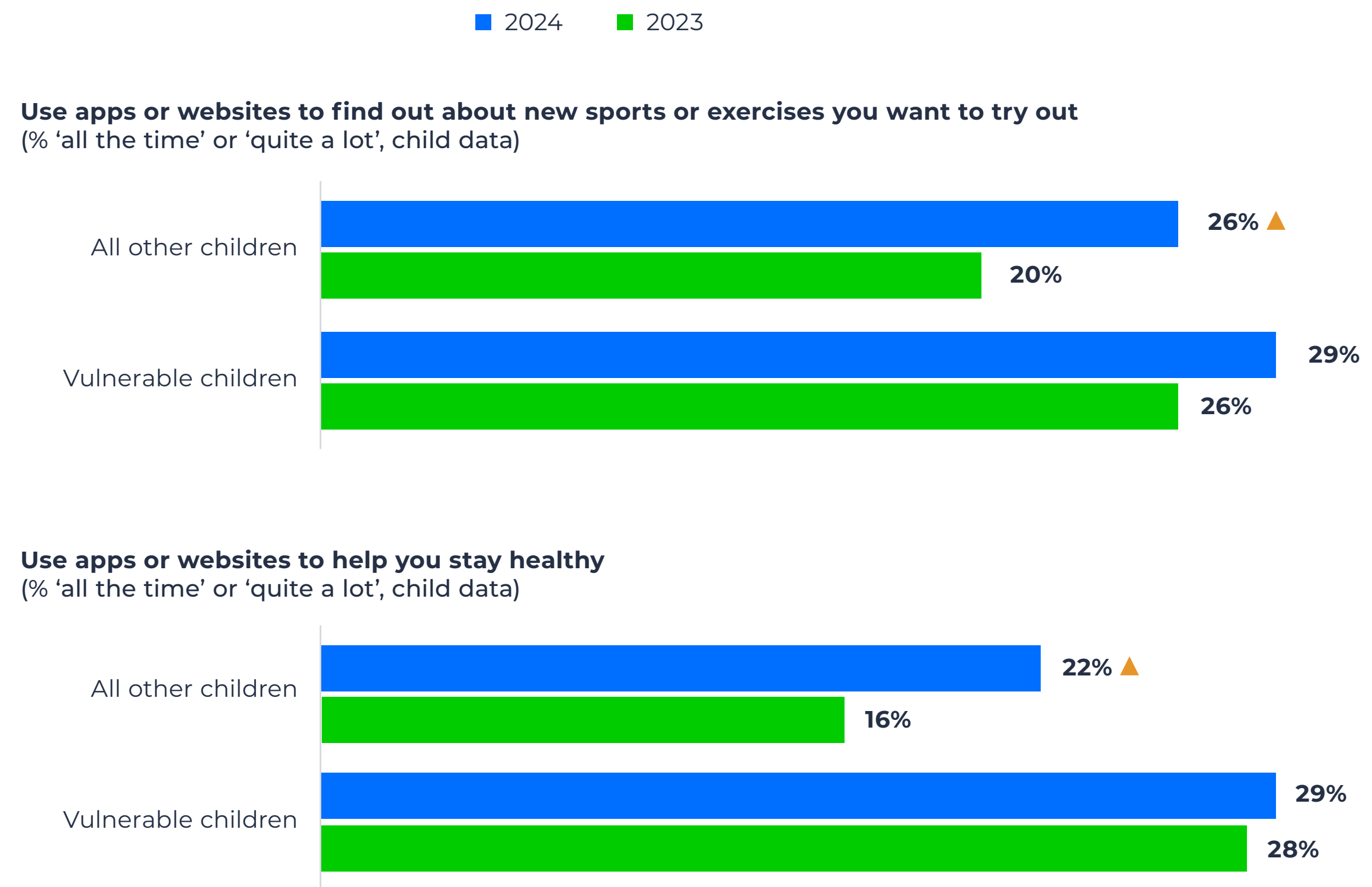
Closing the gap in physical wellbeing

Previously, vulnerable children have been more active than non-vulnerable children in using the internet to support their physical wellbeing; children without vulnerabilities are now catching up. In comparison, there has been little change in physical dimension scores for vulnerable children this year.

- **New sports:** Children without vulnerabilities are increasingly using the internet to learn about new sports (26% cf. 20% last year), while for vulnerable children there has been no significant change (29% cf. 26%).
- **Staying healthy:** Children without vulnerabilities are also more likely to be using the internet to stay healthy compared to last year (22% cf. 16%), yet for vulnerable children this remains largely unchanged compared to last year (29% cf. 28%).



Figure 11. Benefits not felt equally: Some of the increasing digital benefits are bypassing vulnerable children



Q54. How often do you do any of the following things?
 Base: Children (2023: 1,001, 2024: 1,054)
 Base: Children with a vulnerability e.g. SEN support / EHCP / physical and/or mental health condition (2023: 205, 2024: 239) after the existing
 ▲ ▼ Significant difference versus previous year

Developmental benefits bypassing vulnerable children

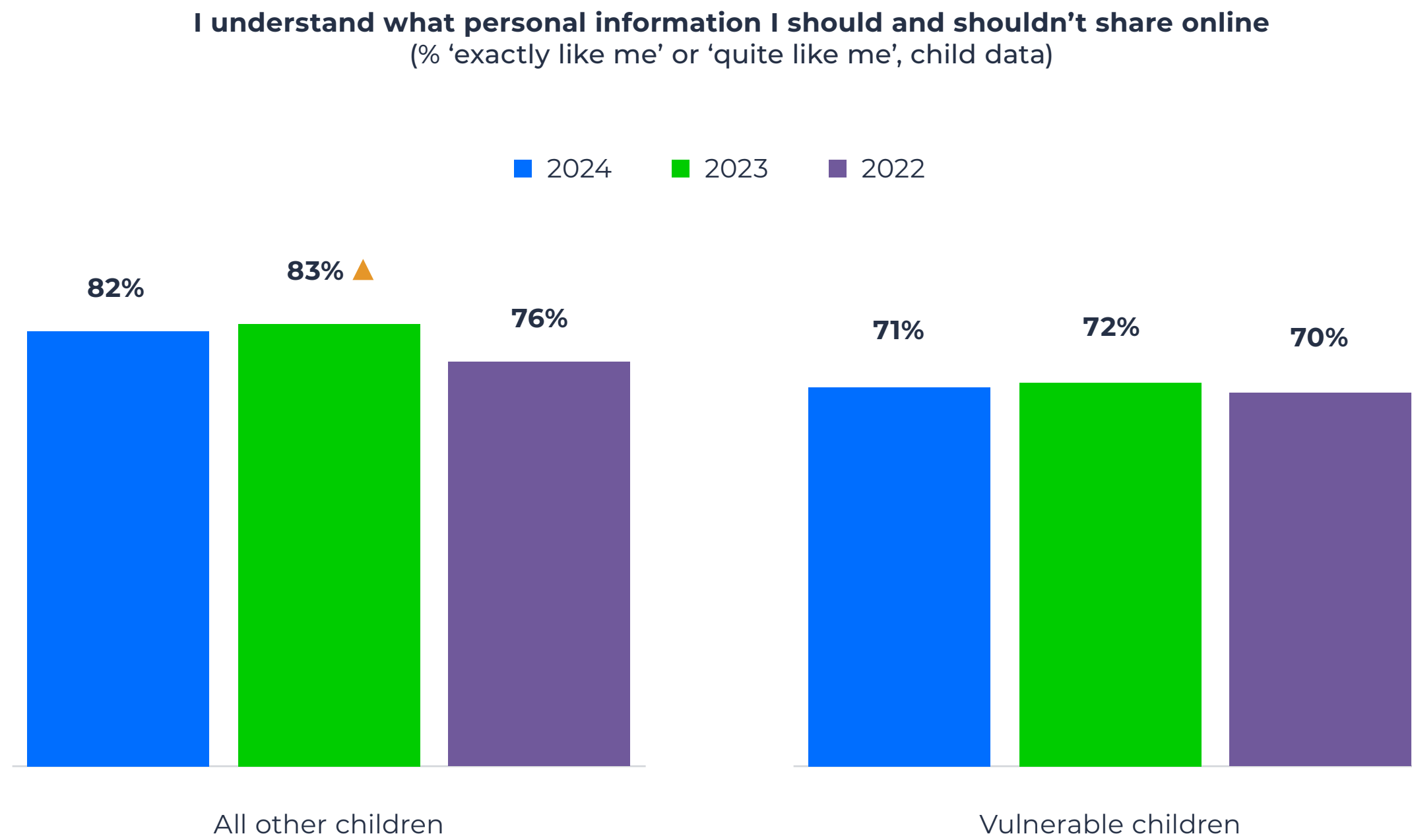
For developmental wellbeing there are also clear benefits which are passing over children with vulnerabilities. An example is the increase in non-vulnerable children who say that they are someone who understands what information they should and shouldn’t share online. Over the last three years, this figure has increased from 76% to 82% for non-vulnerable children. Yet for vulnerable children there has been little movement in this figure over the last three years, going from 70% to 71%.

To add to this potential concern, there has consistently been a smaller proportion of vulnerable children who have experienced the benefits of being online for their progress at school. They have consistently felt the internet is less important for helping them revise or learn things for school than their counterparts (71% cf. 78%).

It is worrying to see this widening gap of experience emerge between vulnerable children and their peers. We know the SEND system in the UK is overstretched and under resourced, leading to significantly worse outcomes for vulnerable children across a range of areas.¹⁴ Without addressing these challenges within the broader SEND system, we are likely to see an ongoing trend where vulnerable children continue to progress more slowly and experience more negative outcomes online than their non-vulnerable peers.

The SEND system in the UK is overstretched and under resourced.

Figure 12. Developmental benefits bypassing vulnerable children



Q61.3. How much do each of these things sound like you?
 Base: Children (2022: 1,138, 2023: 1,001, 2024: 1,054)
 Base: Children with a vulnerability e.g. SEN support / EHCP / physical and/or mental health condition (2023: 205, 2024: 239)
 ▲ ▼ Significant difference versus previous year



14. National Audit Office, [Support for children and young people with special educational needs](#), October 2024



Section 3: A growing sense of unease: *Online harm is causing children greater distress*

Most children still feel safe online: However, this feeling has declined since last year

Positively, most children report feeling a sense of safety online. This year, 77% of children say they feel safe online at least most of or all of the time. While this marks a decline from last year's 81%, it remains in line with the 2022 figure of 76%.

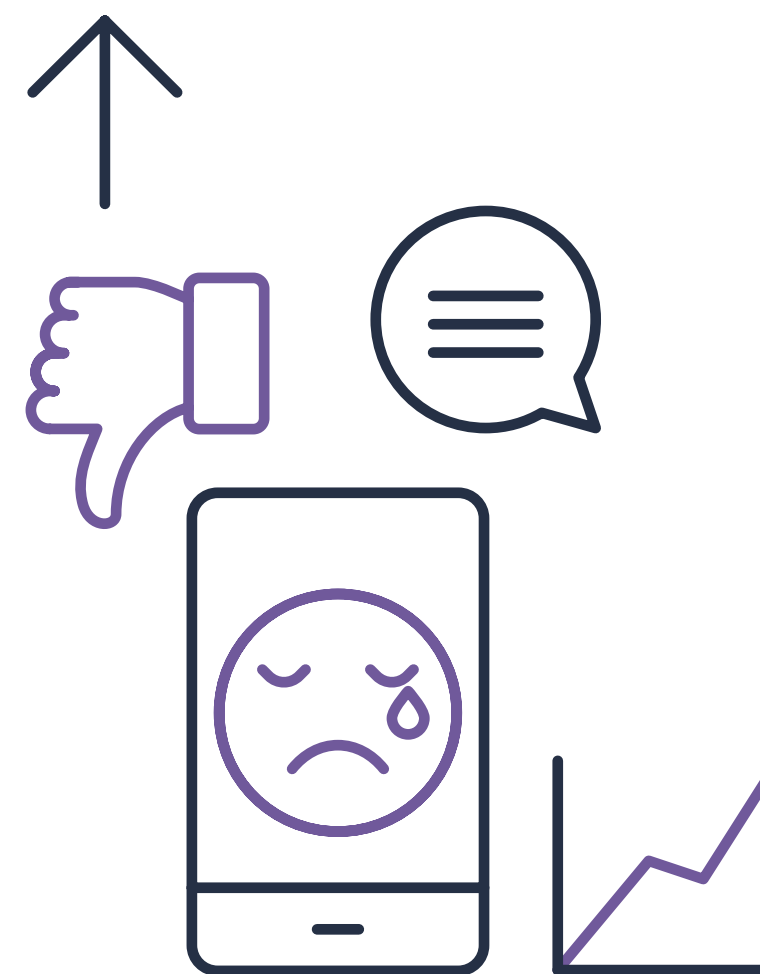
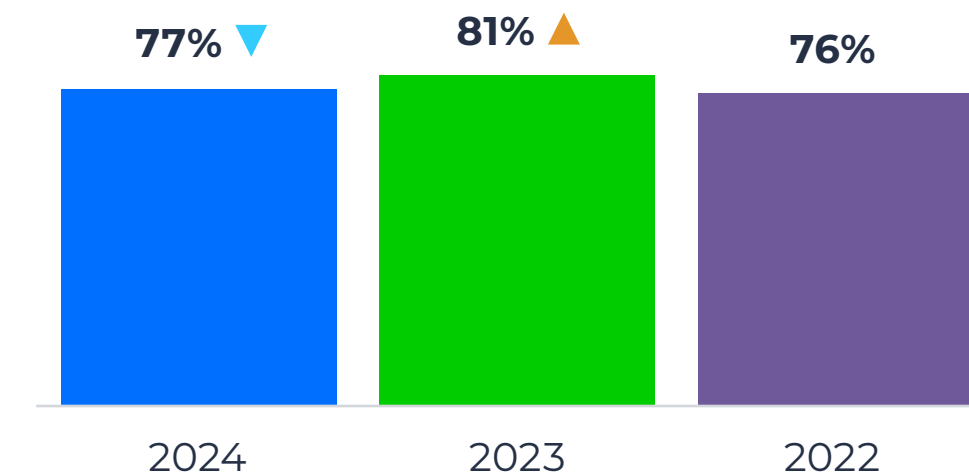


Figure 13. Safety online: Most children feel safe but this feeling is declining

I feel safe when I'm online
(% selected 'most of the time' or 'all of the time', child data)



Q41. Here are some statements or descriptions about how you might have been feeling over the past couple of weeks. Please tell us how often you feel this way, using the options provided.

Base: Children (2022: 1,138, 2023: 1,001; 2024: 1,054)

▲ ▼ Significant difference versus previous year

A closer analysis of the data reveals that this decline is due to a shift from children feeling safe most of the time (52% cf. 57% last year) to feeling safe only some of the time (20% cf. 16%). This suggests a subtle but notable shift in children’s own perceptions of safety; fewer children feel consistently safe and more report only feeling safe occasionally. We find that the number of children who always feel safe (25%) remains unchanged from last year.

As in the previous two years, children with vulnerabilities continue to feel less safe online than their peers. This year, 70% of vulnerable children report feeling safe online, compared to 79% of children outside this group.

Children continue to face the same harmful experiences online

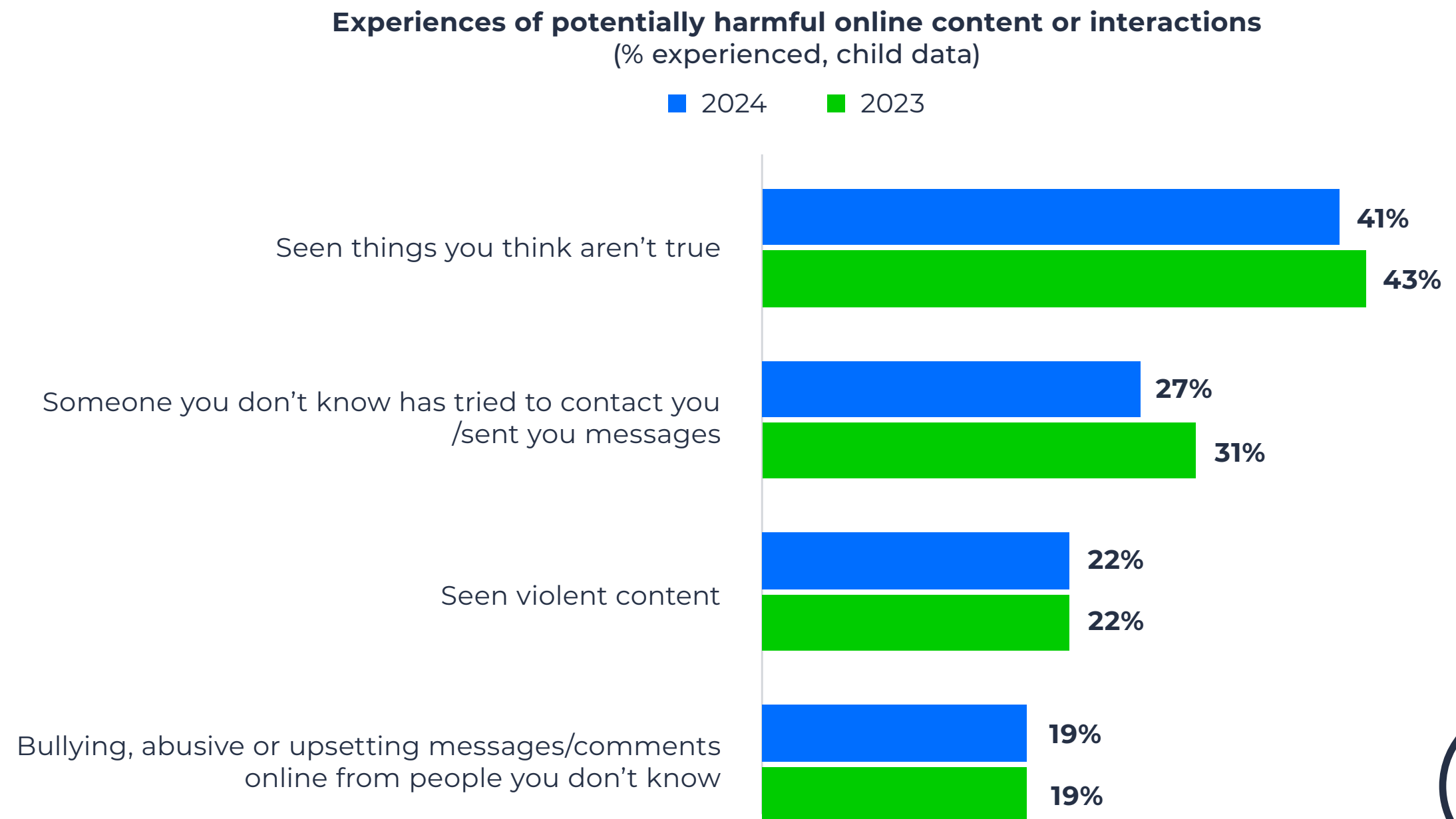
While most children report feeling safe online, a paradox remains: around two-thirds (67%) continue to encounter harmful or potentially harmful experiences. The proportion of children experiencing harm has stayed consistent over the past two years. Worryingly, none of the

individual harms we report on have declined over this period.

The most prevalent issue this year is exposure to false information, encountered by 41% of children. Additionally, over a quarter (27%) have been contacted by strangers, around one in five have encountered violent content (22%) and a similar number have experienced receiving bullying, abusive, or upsetting messages and comments from people they don’t know (19%).

Across the list of harms we ask about, there have been two increases. There has been a rise in the number of children reporting spending significant amounts of money in apps or games, increasing from 4% to 6%. This echoes other research indicating that monthly in-game spending has risen from under £20 to £38 over the past few years.¹⁵ This wave, we also observe a concerning rise in children sending or receiving nude images, increasing from 3% in the past two years to 5%.¹⁶ Where children have had these experiences, half of them found them really upsetting (51%) compared to a third last year (34%).

Figure 14. Children continue to face the same harmful experiences online



Q51. Have you had any of the following experiences online?

Base: Children (2023: 1,001, 2024: 1,054)

▲ ▼ Significant difference versus previous year



15. Internet Matters, [“How to manage in-game spending”](#)
 16. We compared this wave’s figure to the 2022–2023 average to ensure a sufficiently large sample size for testing significant differences.

These findings align with a growing concern around the use of artificial intelligence (AI) to create realistic but fake nude images of real people, especially women and girls. A report from Internet Matters revealed that 13% of teenagers have encountered nude deepfake images and that the majority of teens think having a fake nude image shared of them would be worse than a real nude image – highlighting the distress they can cause.¹⁷ We will continue to examine this emerging issue in future research.

We also continue to find that the harms children experience online are influenced by their gender and age. For example, we find that girls continue to experience more contact from strangers than boys (31% for girls versus 23%).

Furthermore, we find that certain types of harm increase with age. For example, 15-16 year olds are twice as likely to reporting seeing violent content compared to 9-10 year olds (32% cf. 15%). We also see requests for personal information, exposure to sexual content and receiving abusive messages increasing with age¹⁸. This highlights the importance of tailoring support and education around online safety to address the experiences of different groups of children.

The negative impact of harm has increased

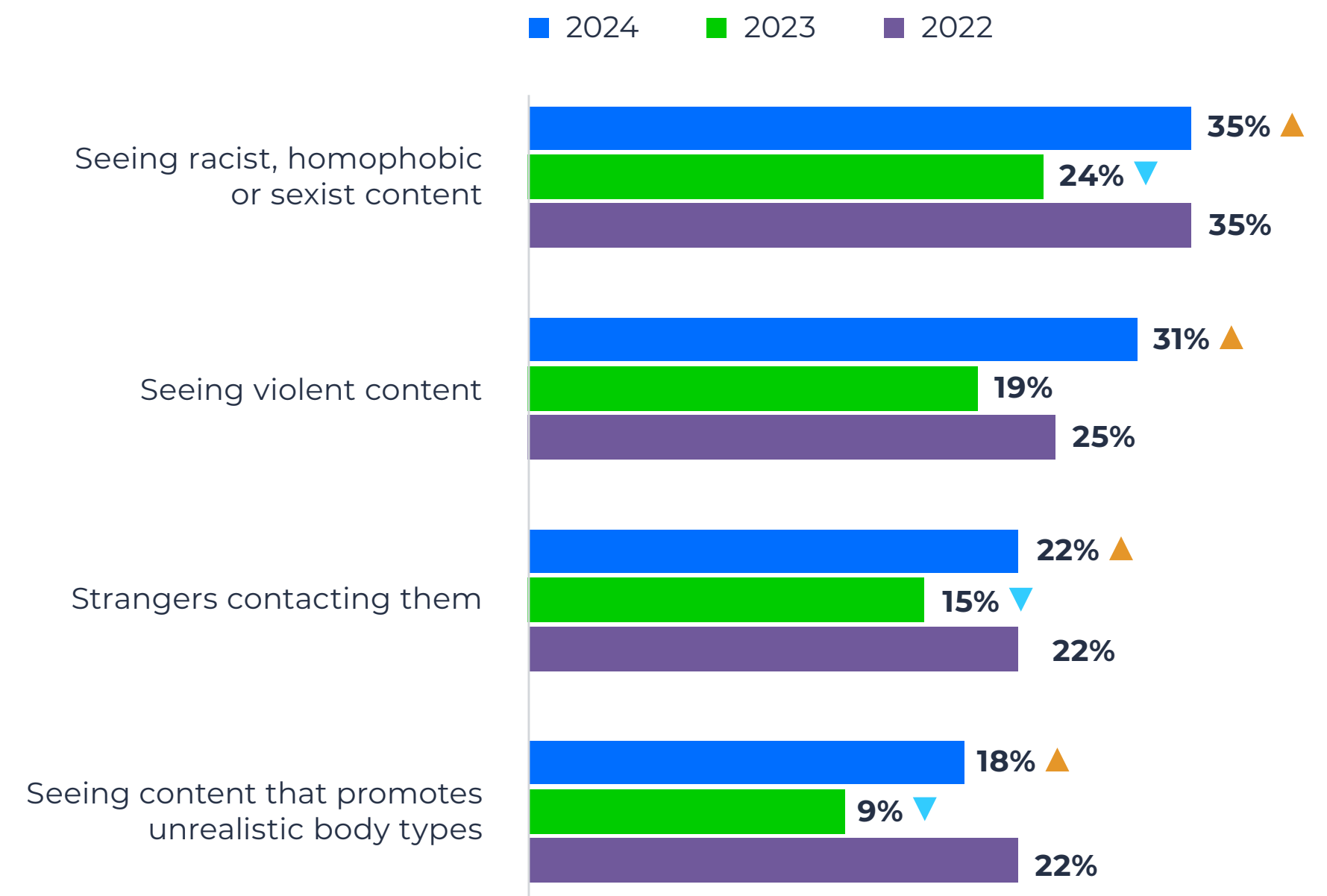
Last year we saw a shift in how children responded to online harms, with fewer reporting feelings of being upset or scared when encountering them. While this might have initially seemed like a positive development, it also raised concerns about the possibility of children normalising these harms, seeing them as an unavoidable part of their online experience.

This year, however, marks a reversal. More children are feeling the emotional impact of online harms, with figures generally returning to the higher levels recorded in 2022.¹⁹ This suggests that while resilience may play a role, the prevalence and intensity of these harms continues to take a toll on children’s wellbeing. For example:

- 35% of children found racist, homophobic, or sexist content upsetting or frightening, up from 24% in 2023 but consistent with the 2022 figure (35%).
- 31% of children were upset or scared by violent content this year, a significant rise from 19% in 2023 and surpassing the 25% reported in 2022.
- 22% of children found contact from strangers upsetting, up from 15% in 2023 and matching the 2022 level (22%).
- 18% reported being upset by content promoting unrealistic body standards, compared to just 9% in 2023, aligning with 2022 levels (22%).

Figure 15. These experiences are more upsetting for children

Children who said they found the following experiences upsetting or scary
(% selected 6/7 on a 1-7 scale, with 7 being ‘I found it really upsetting or scary’, child data)



Q52. When these things happened to you how did the make you feel?

Base: Children who experienced the following online: Seeing racist, homophobic or sexist context (2022: 168, 2023: 146, 2024: 155), Seeing violent content (2022: 278, 2023: 220, 2024: 235), Strangers contacting them (2022: 296, 2023:312, 2024: 289), Seeing content that promotes unrealistic body types (2022: 139, 2023: 146, 2024: 148)

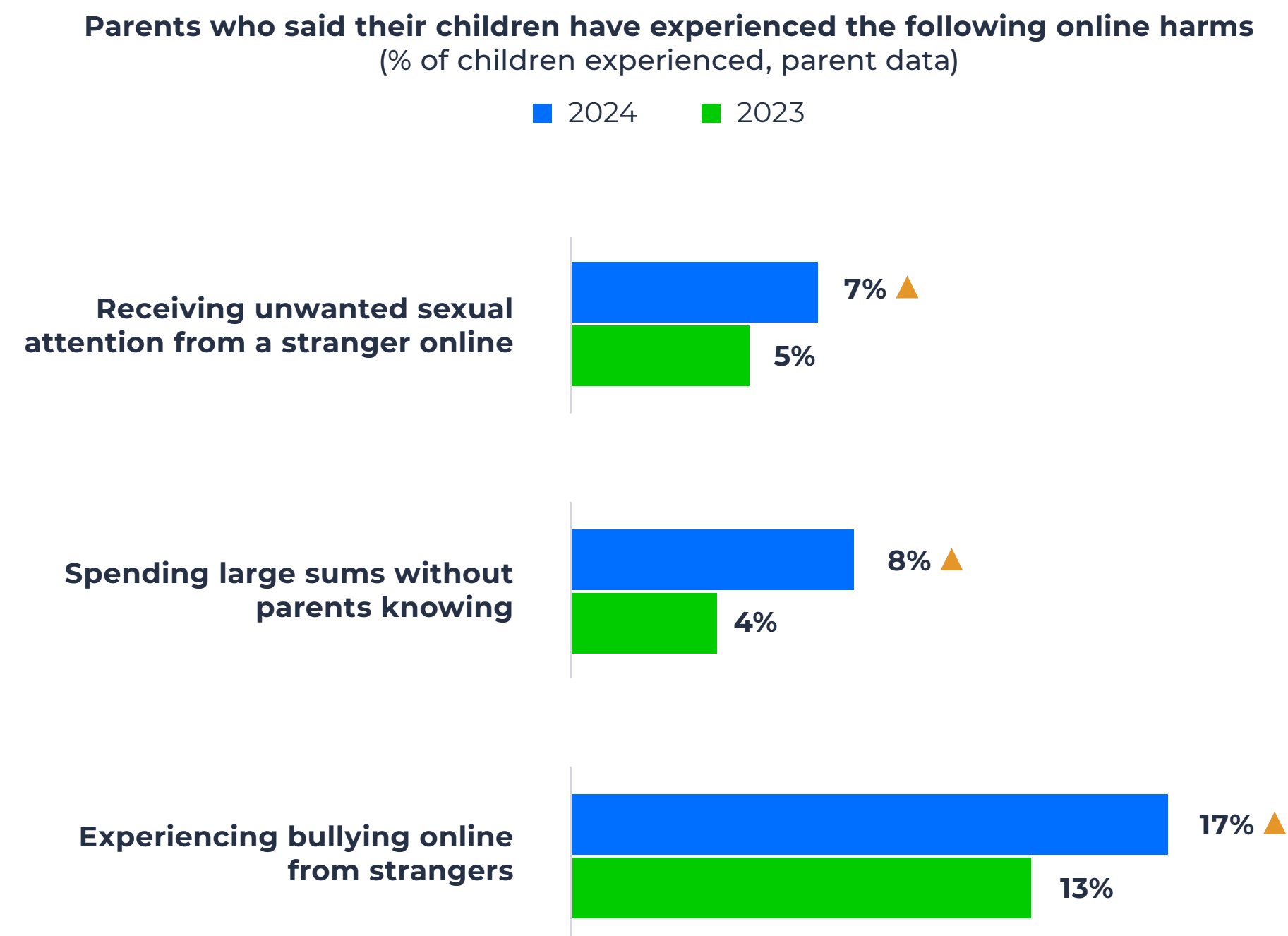
▲ ▼ Significant difference versus previous year

17. Internet Matters, [The new face of digital abuse: Children’s experiences of nude deepfakes](#), September 2024.

18. Experience of seeing sexual content online only asked to children aged 13 and above.

19. Lower base sizes mean figures are potentially more volatile. Changes are statistically significant but should still be treated with additional caution.

Figure 16. Parents notice an increase in online harms: They believe these experiences are becoming more distressing for children



Q23 As far as you know, have any of these ever happened to child online?
Base: Parents (2023: 1,001, 2024: 1,054)

▲ Significant difference versus previous year

Parents notice an increase in online harms: They believe these experiences are becoming more distressing for children

While children have not reported a significant rise in experiences of harm, parents have observed an increase in their children's harmful experiences. This wave, 61% of parents report their children experiencing harm, a figure consistent with the previous wave (58%) but higher than two years ago (53%).

This difference between parents and children could stem from varying perspectives. Children's recollections may arguably be more immediate and reliable as they are reporting their own experiences. However, on the other hand, parents bring a more removed perspective and may interpret or describe certain experiences as harmful that children themselves may not recognise in the same way.

Key findings include:

- **Online bullying:** More parents reported their children experiencing bullying from strangers, increasing from 13% to 17%.
- **In-game and in-app spending:** A higher proportion of parents report their children spending large sums of money in apps and games, (8% cf. 4%). This increase is seen for both boys and girls, but a higher proportion of parents of boys report it (10% vs 6%). Notably, there was an increase in children reporting this harm.
- **Unwanted sexual attention:** Parents observed a rise in children receiving unwanted sexual attention, up from 5%

to 7%. This has primarily been driven by parents of boys reporting they are experiencing this, with the proportion rising from 4% to 8%.

- **Extremist contact:** For the first time, this wave included a question about children being in contact with extremist groups. 2% of parents reported that their child had been contacted by or was in contact with groups promoting extreme views. Although this percentage is low, the implications are troubling, especially when considered on a larger scale. Concern among parents is significant, with 35% expressing worry about their children encountering such groups in the future.

Not only are there changes in experiences but there is also growing concern from parents about the impact of these harmful experiences on their children. This year, more parents believe that their child viewing graphic violent content has led to serious distress, upset, or harm (31% cf. 18%). Likewise, a higher proportion of parents think that content promoting unhealthy body image or eating habits has caused distress to their children (27% cf. 13%).²⁰

While the overall prevalence of online harms has remained broadly steady, children's ability to cope with these experiences appears to be weakening. More children are feeling the emotional toll of harmful content, reversing last year's trend of apparent resilience and returning to distress levels seen in 2022. It is perhaps unsurprising then that we are seeing a rise in the negative aspects of life online, explored in section 1, and that parents are taking more action to support their children to be safe online which we will now explore.

20. Lower base sizes mean figures are potentially more volatile. Changes are statistically significant but should still be treated with additional caution.



Section 4:

Digital Parenting:

Parents are becoming more confident and enforcing stricter boundaries

This year's research reveals two promising developments in the relationship between parents and their children's online behaviour: Children are becoming more open about their activities online, and parents are growing more confident and aware of their children's digital lives. Given our work in these areas, these developments are particularly encouraging for Internet Matters.

When considering the drivers of these changes, it is important to note that in the past year there has been significant public discourse about the 'addictive' nature of smartphones and harmful impact of social media on children and young people. This includes conversation regarding banning smartphones and social media for certain age groups. This has resulted in significant media and political attention on this issue, raising awareness in wider society, including amongst parents.



Nearly always ‘open’: Children are increasingly open with their parents about what they do online

Nearly all children (93%) report feeling that they are open with their parents about what they do online. Notably, there has been a significant increase in the proportion of children who feel they are very open – rising from 51% to 56%. This increase is particularly evident among girls aged 11-12, where it rose from 52% to 64%.

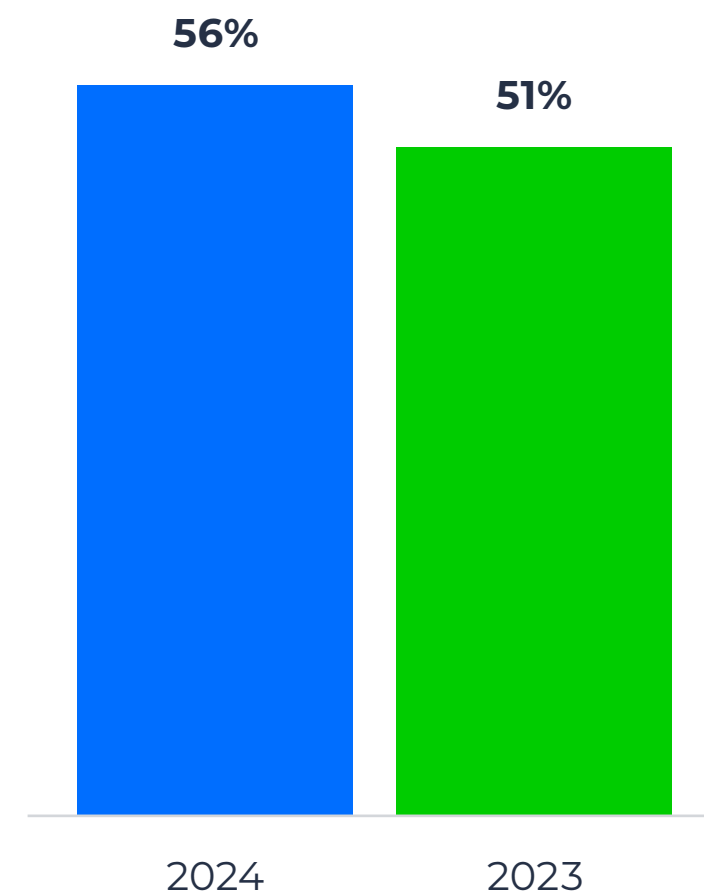
Parents’ perceptions align closely with these findings. A vast majority (94%) believe their children are open with them about their online activities, with a growing number stating that their children are very open (55% cf. 49%).

In line with this increasing openness, more children feel their parents know everything about their online activities (28% cf. 24%). This trend is particularly notable among boys, where the proportion has increased from 22% to 29%.



Figure 17. Nearly always ‘open’: Children are increasingly open with their parents about what they do online

Being very open with their parents about what they’re doing online
(% ‘very open’, child data)



Q53A. How open, if at all, are you with your parents / guardian about what you do online?
Base: Children (2023: 1,001, 2024: 1,054)

Parents are more social media savvy and aware of their children’s online activities

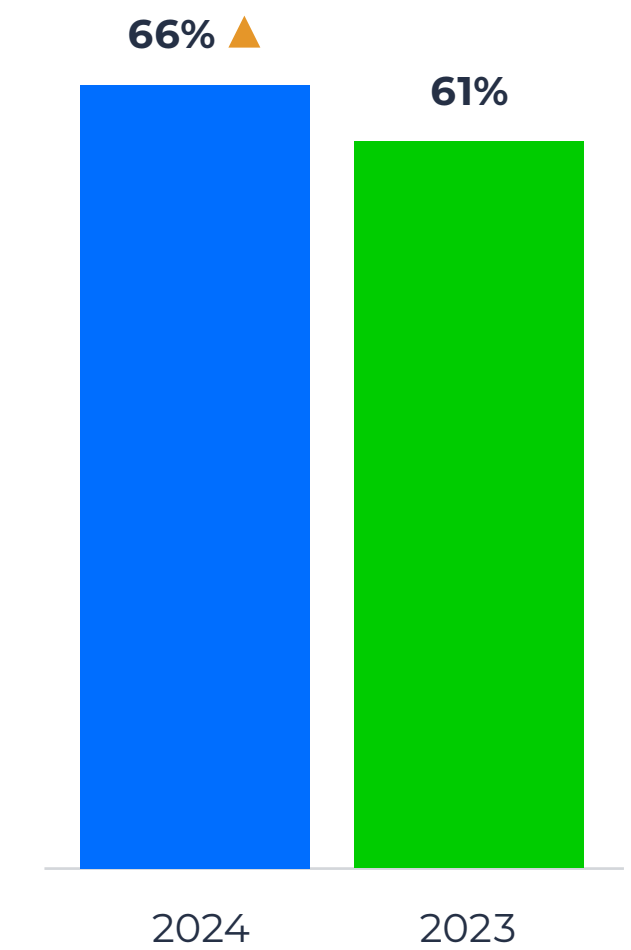
Another positive development is the growing confidence among parents in understanding and managing their children’s social media activities. Two-thirds of parents (67%) now feel confident helping their children post on platforms like TikTok and YouTube. This marks a steady increase over the past two years, up from 62% in 2023 and 57% in 2022.

This growing confidence is reflected in parents’ awareness of what their children post online. More parents report feeling they know what their children post quite well or very well, with this figure increasing from 61% to 66% compared to last year.

Beyond social media, parents have also improved their understanding of various aspects of their children’s online behaviour in the last two years. Since 2022, there have been increases in parents’ awareness of what their children do online (82% cf. 78%), what games they play (87% cf. 84%), which websites and apps they visit (82% cf. 77%), and who their children are talking with (77% cf. 73%).

Figure 18. Parents are more social media savvy

Knowing what their child posts on social media
(% ‘very well’ or ‘quite well’, parent data)



Q22. How much do you know about what your child is doing online?
Base: Parents (2023: 1,001, 2024: 1,054)
▲ ▼ Significant difference versus previous year

‘Strictly’ speaking: Parents are becoming stricter with children’s online lives

The rise in openness between children and parents, increased parental awareness of online harms (see Section 3), and growing public debate about children’s online lives may have contributed to parents adopting the stricter approaches to managing their children’s online behaviour and usage which we have observed in this wave. For instance, parents were asked on a scale of 1-7 how strict they are with their children regarding technology use and time spent online (with 1 being lenient and 7 being strict); while still a relatively small share, 14% said either 6 or 7, compared to 11% in the previous wave.

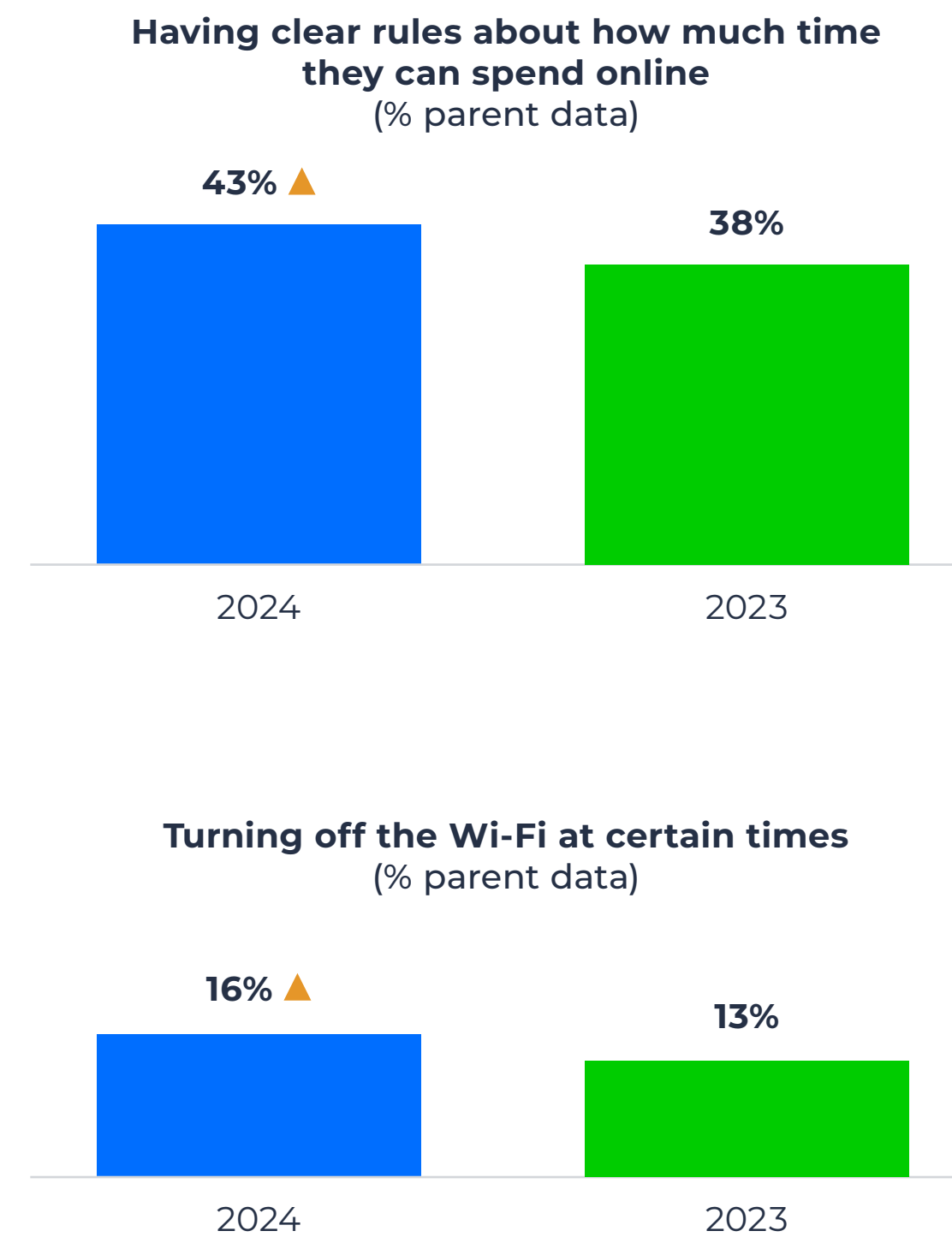
In line with this, the proportion of parents who manage their children’s online behaviour ‘a lot’ has remained steady compared to last year (around 20%) but has increased since 2022 (16%). There has also been a corresponding decline in parents reporting that they take ‘no action’ to manage their children’s digital behaviour (6% cf. 9%).

The same age and socio-economic patterns as last year persist, with older children being less likely to have their behaviour closely managed by parents (9% of 15–16-year-olds, compared to 26% of 9–10-year-olds). Additionally, parents in higher socio-economic groups are more likely to manage their children’s behaviour (23%) than those in lower groups (11%). While the exact reasons for this are unknown, additional research to understand how socio-economics impacts digital parenting would be valuable.

More parents enforce rules and seek support

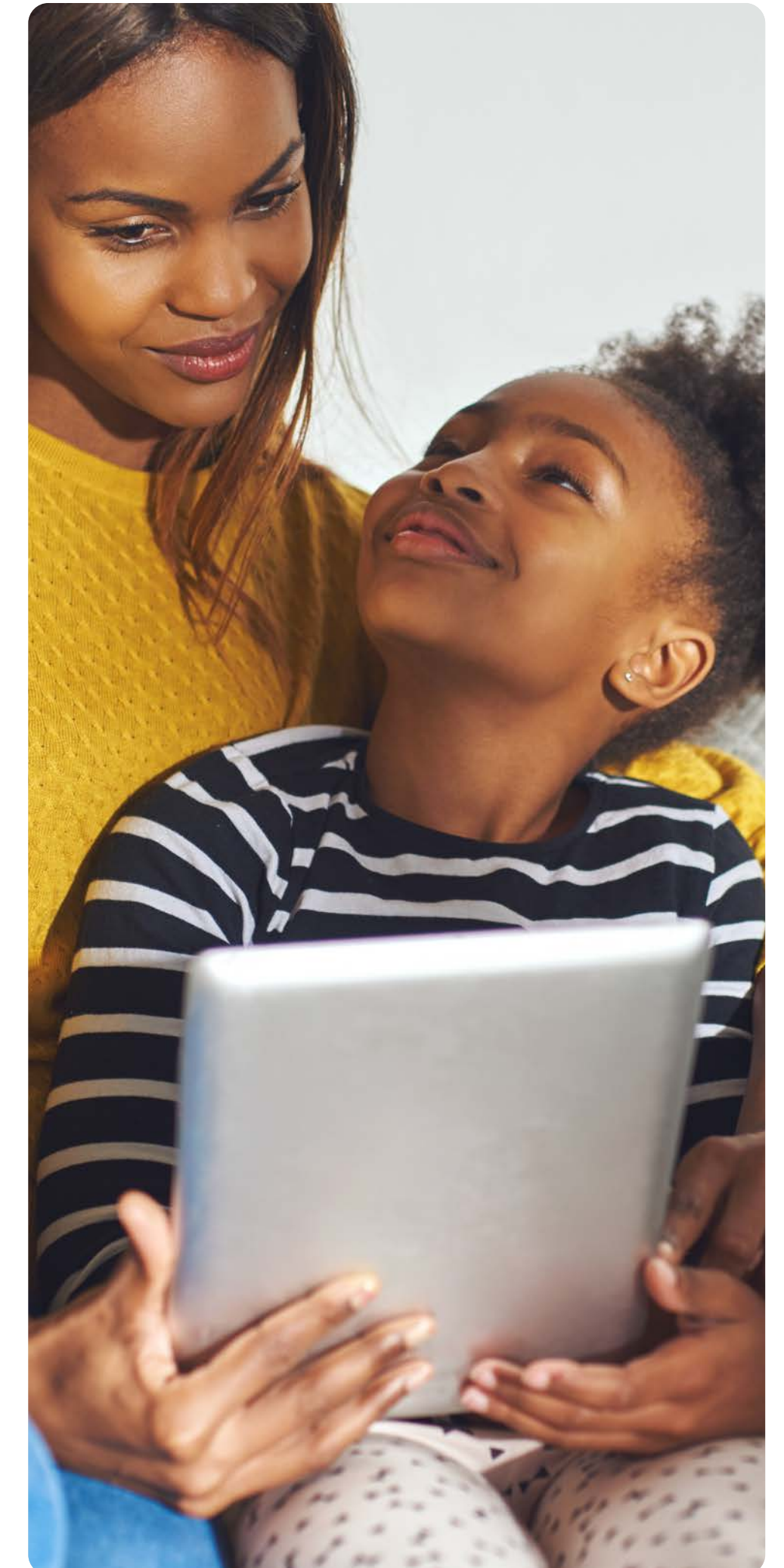
While conversations, discussed below, are important for children’s online safety, parental controls and rules have been shown to give parents peace of mind and lower anxieties around their children’s digital use.²¹ In this year’s research, more parents now enforce clear rules on how much time their children can spend online (43%) compared to the last two years (both 38%). Additionally, more parents report turning off the Wi-Fi at certain times (16% cf. 13% last year).

Figure 19. More parents enforce rules and set Wi-Fi limits



Q20. Do you do any of the following things to manage what your child does on their devices/online?
 Base: Parents (2023: 1,001, 2024: 1,054)

▲ Significant difference versus previous year



21. Smirnova, Svetlana, Sonia Livingstone, and Mariya Stoilova, *Understanding of User Needs and Problems: A Rapid Evidence Review of Age Assurance and Parental Controls*, September 2021.

While these are tactics for preventing harm, when harm does occur we see that parents are more likely to reach out to specialist organisations, compared to the last wave (15% cf. 11%). This increase is particularly driven by parents of boys (19% cf. 13%). Parents of boys in our survey are also increasingly seeking help from someone else, such as a teacher or counsellor (16% cf. 10%).

While the above represents a positive shift in engagement, this wave we also observe fewer parents taking away devices at specific times (32% cf. 38%). This decline is particularly noticeable among parents of boys aged 9–10, where the proportion has dropped from 63% to 39%.²² Concerningly, among this group there has also been a drop in parents having certain devices or accounts for ‘family’ use (25% cf. 38%) and parents using parental controls (48% cf. 61%). These findings could possibly suggest that boys of this age are less closely monitored than girls and parents are more likely to be reactive than proactive when parenting boys. This is further suggested by the fact that we still find 63% of parents of girls aged 9-10 use parental controls.

Most parents still talk to their children

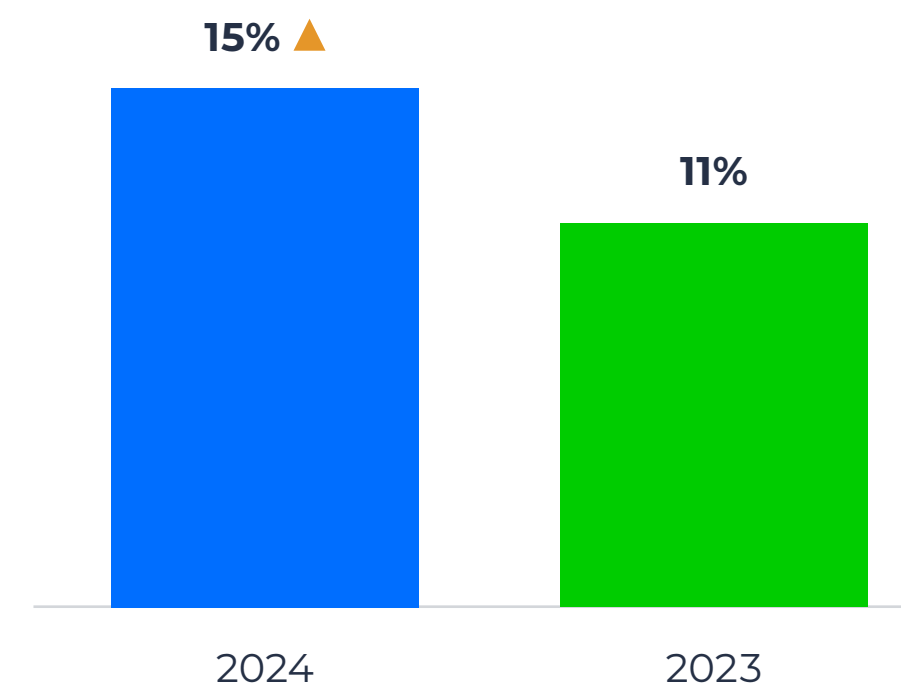
Parents are children’s number one source of information when it comes to online safety and are the first people they turn to when something goes wrong online.²³ We know this relationship can be central to children’s online safety and preventing harm from occurring.²⁴ While most parents still discuss with their children how to stay safe online and how to prevent harm in the future, there has been a decline since last wave with parents turning to other tools alongside conversations, as discussed above.

The proportion of parents who have conversations about online safety with their child has dropped since last year (66% cf. 73%). This drop is particularly noticeable among parents of girls (67% cf. 76%). This is concerning, given our research last year showed that girls aged 13-16 disproportionately report more harmful experiences, such as hateful content and receiving inappropriate messages, than all children, to the point where these experiences are becoming normalised by both girls and parents.²⁵

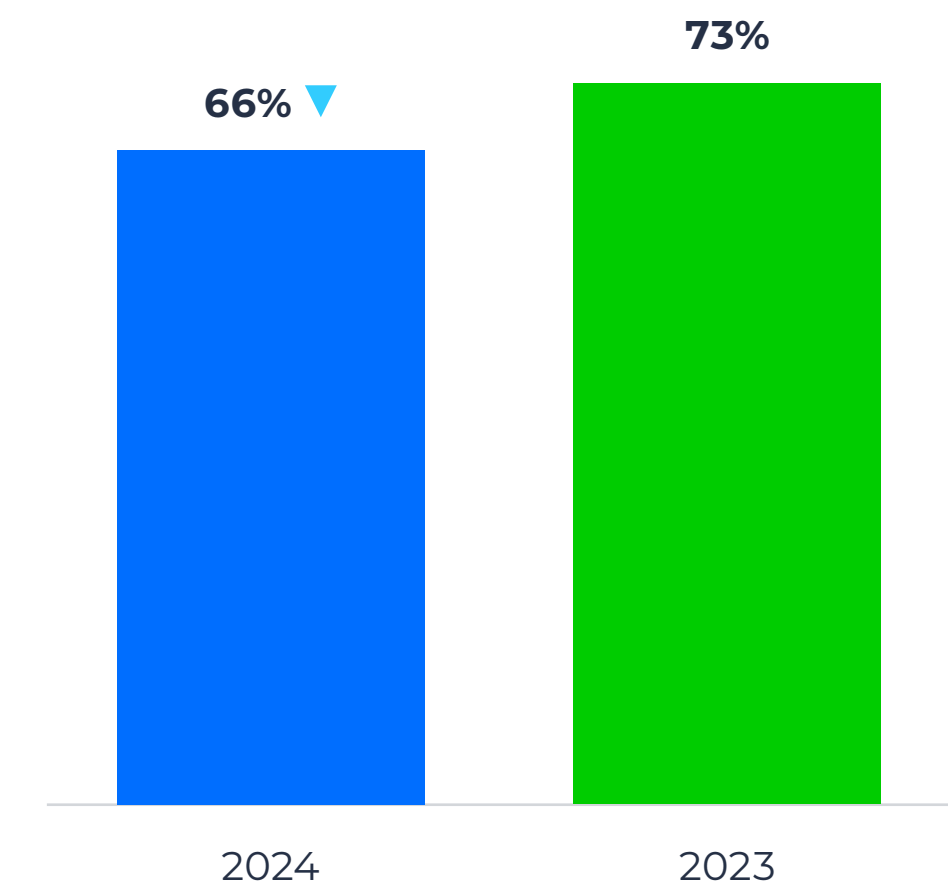


Figure 20. Most parents still talk to their children about online safety and more reach out to organisations

Reached out to a specialist organisation who deal with these kinds of experiences
(% parent data)



Discussed with your child how to stay safe/prevent similar things happening in future
(% parent data)



Q25. And did you do any of the following as a direct result of your child's experience(s)?
Base: Parents (2023: 1,001, 2024: 1,054)

▲ ▼ Significant difference versus previous year

22. Lower base sizes mean figures are potentially more volatile. Changes are statically significant but should still be treated with additional caution.

23. Internet Matters, [Digital Tracker](#), November 2024.

24. Internet Matters, [Children's Wellbeing in a Digital World Index Report](#), 2022.

25. Internet Matters, ["So standard it's not noteworthy": Teenage girls' experience of harm online](#), March 2024.

‘Smartphone safety net’: Parents feel their children are safer when they can contact them and track them through their devices

The debate surrounding children’s smartphone usage continues to grow and we find that parents have nuanced perspectives on this.²⁶ While parents have concerns about their children’s screentime and exposure to harmful content on social media, parents also feel smartphones enhance safety by allowing direct communication and location tracking.

In this year’s research, for the first time, we explored the impact of smartphones on perceptions of safety among parents and children, building on insights from focus groups we ran in 2024. While media coverage, such as Channel 4’s ‘Swiped’, often highlights the downsides of smartphone use – including effects on sleep, mental health, schoolwork, and attention span²⁷ – parents and children also recognise safety benefits. Notably, 87% of parents believe their child is safer when they can contact them via smartphone, and 78% of children agree that having a smartphone makes them feel safer in everyday life.

Parents actively track their children’s locations, with 65% saying they do so and a quarter

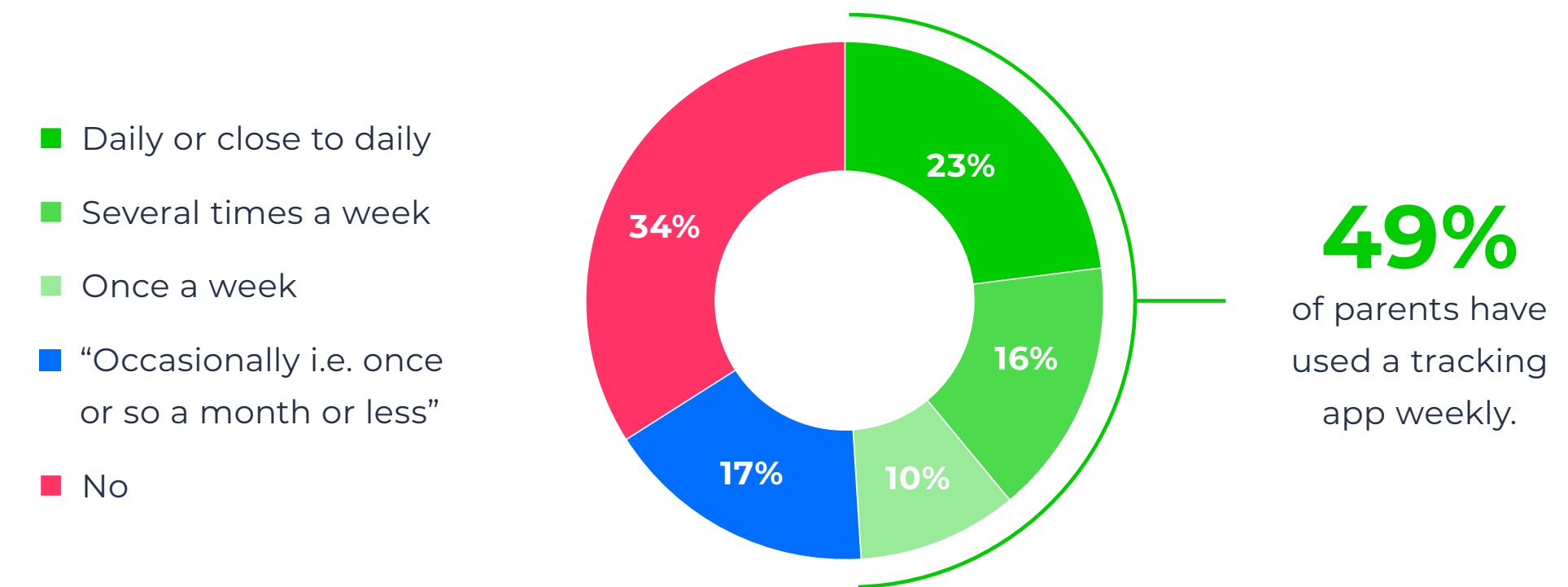
(23%) saying they do so daily or nearly daily. This behaviour is especially common among parents of 11-12 year-olds, with 76% tracking their children’s locations and 32% doing so daily. Tracking apps also offer reassurance, with 90% of parents who have tracked their children in the past six months saying they feel their child is safer as a result of knowing the location of them.

The higher prevalence of the use of tracking apps amongst parents of 11-12 year olds coincides with children starting secondary school, travelling independently for the first time, and often receiving their first smartphones. Reflecting this, smartphone ownership in our sample jumps from 60% among 9-10 year-olds to 90% among 11-12 year-olds.

Given the ubiquitous nature of smartphones and the role they play in peace of mind for both parents and children, it would be difficult to see how their ownership can be regulated going forward. However, as this section highlights, it is possible for parents to take positive steps to ensure devices are set up in a way where access and use can be better controlled. However, children’s online safety cannot fall solely to parents. More should also be done by industry and government to support children to engage healthily and limit harm when using connected devices like smartphones.

Figure 21. ‘Smartphone safety net’: Parents feel their children are safer when they can contact them and track them through their devices

Parents that have used an app to track their child’s smartphone location in the last 6 months
(% parent data)



Parents’ feelings about their child’s safety
(% selected ‘quite a bit safer’ or ‘a great deal safer’, parent data)



SP1. Have you ever used an app to track your son/daughter’s location in the last 6 months? Base: Parents whose child has a smartphone (907)
 SP2. How much safer, if at all, do you feel your child is because of the following? Base: Parents whose child has a smartphone (907), and have used a tracking app to locate their child in the last six months (592)

26. Internet Matters, [Digital Dilemmas](#), August 2024.

27. Channel 4, [Swiped: the school that banned smartphones](#), December 2024.



Conclusions

In a year where children's online safety has dominated headlines, understanding children's online experiences is more relevant than ever. Now in its fourth year, our Digital Wellbeing Index continues to shed light on the complexities of life online for children. While our report shows that the positive dimensions of digital wellbeing continue to outweigh the negative, the negative sides of online life are on the rise – particularly for vulnerable children – creating an 'internet of extremes'. We also see that experiences of online harm remain stubbornly high, with two-thirds of children experiencing harms such as bullying, contact from strangers and coming across mis and disinformation.

For some, the proposed solution is banning smartphones for under-14s and social media for under-16s and at first glance this would seem to be an effective approach, but this comes with challenges, including practicality and risks. It would also be a disservice to young people to simply exclude them from the internet. As highlighted through this report, online life has many benefits for children, from helping them to stay healthy to building belonging and community, as well as preparing them for a future where technology will continue to play a significant role.

The best solution is to enable children to reap the rewards of digital life without facing harm, and for this to become a reality we must work collectively to make the online world safer. This cannot be achieved through one policy or conversation: it requires a sustained, collaborative effort from government, industry and the regulator, and must involve the education of parents and children too.

Regulation and policy on the horizon

Online Safety Act (OSA)

The role of Government and Ofcom, the UK's online safety regulator, in ensuring children are safe online cannot be understated. While the OSA (which was enacted in late 2023) is being heralded as a step change in children's online safety, its impact remains to be seen as we wait for secondary legislation to come into force, particularly the protections within the Children's Safety Codes, set to take effect from mid-2025.

While we wait, children's exposure to online harm remains persistently high and many across the sector are concerned that the legislation will not go far enough to keep children safe. Ofcom must fully exercise its powers under the law and prioritise children's safety above the interests of industry, and Ofcom must be held accountable by Government and the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT).

The Government must also remain vigilant to new technologies, particularly generative AI, and the risks and harms these create that may not be covered by current legislation. Just in the past year, our own research showed how the rise of generative AI tools has significantly increased the ease of producing realistic sexual deepfakes, or nude deepfakes.²⁸ 13% of teens already have an experience with a nude deepfake, yet the tools used to make these are easily accessible as legislation lags behind.²⁹

28. Internet Matters, [The new face of digital Abuse: Children's experiences of nude deepfakes](#), October 2024.

29. Ibid.

Media literacy

Regulation is important, but so too is media literacy. Media literacy refers to: being able to evaluate information and distinguish between what is true and false online; being able to create and share digital content responsibly and safely; and having the awareness and ability to protect yourself from the risks of being online. In a world of new and emerging risks, where policy and regulation can lag behind, being digitally savvy can be the first line of defence against harm.

Following the long passage of the OSA into law, we have seen less focus and support for media literacy interventions in the UK. Our Vision for Media Literacy, published in mid-2024, outlined five big ideas to transform children's media literacy through schools, as at present online safety and digital skills education is a postcode lottery.³⁰ Our ideas included: embedding media literacy in the curriculum and ensuring there is oversight of its teaching; supporting teachers to teach media literacy through training and improved resources; and building a cross-sector coalition to support schools, drawing on the expertise of the third sector, industry and a range of government departments.

In England, the Government has commissioned an independent review of the curriculum to ensure it is "fit for purpose" and "meeting the needs of children and young people".³¹ Given the importance of media literacy for happy, healthy and engaged citizens, as well as digital skills for the future workforce, there is a clear need for media literacy to be included in any recommendations that come from this review, and we will continue to strive to influence government action.

Industry must do more

The OSA will require industry, including social media providers, to make their apps and platforms safer for children to use. While the focus of the OSA is on removing illegal content and ensuring children cannot access content that is legal but harmful (such as self-harm content), industry must do more than simply comply.

Industry should also consider how apps and platforms are designed and incorporate the principles of safety-by-design from the outset, especially where their users are children. This should include children having access to age-appropriate experiences, enabling different features as children grow and mature – rather than having one design for all children. Children, and parents too, should also be empowered through features like easy reporting tools and parental controls, so where harm does occur this can be swiftly addressed.

Parents want to be involved

Children tell us that their parents are their main source of information about online safety and are the first people they turn to when something goes wrong online.³² Our research also shows that parents see themselves as ultimately responsible for their children's online safety.³³ Encouragingly, this year's report highlights that more parents are taking proactive steps – whether through open dialogue or the use of parental controls – to help keep their children safe online.

However, despite their crucial role, parents are often overlooked by policymakers and regulators. As the OSA comes into force, it is essential

that parents are kept informed – whether this is explaining new age verification methods or user empowerment tools such as how to report harm and make a complaint.

At Internet Matters, we have created hundreds of step-by-step guides, resources and articles to help parents navigate this space. On our website internetmatters.org, parents can access all the information they need to support their child to be safe online with information tailored to children's age, interests and needs.

Vulnerable children deserve a safer digital world

All children should have access to the benefits of the digital world and it is upsetting to see that not only are the negative impacts of life online growing for vulnerable children but that they are not experiencing the gains in positive wellbeing that their non-vulnerable peers have seen this year. Sadly, this is a trend we see across our research, with vulnerable children consistently experiencing more harm online.³⁴ If we do nothing, this trend will only continue.

Therefore, all levers to improve children's online safety must focus on the needs of vulnerable children and their families too. This can take many forms, whether it be targeted media literacy interventions for vulnerable users, tailored resources for parents of vulnerable children or additional safety features built into apps and platforms with vulnerable users in mind. At Internet Matters, we have developed bespoke resources for the families and professionals who support vulnerable children, which can be found on our [Inclusive Digital Safety site](https://internetmatters.org), with further resources on our main site internetmatters.org.

30. Internet Matters, [A Vision for Media Literacy: Charting the path for media literacy in schools](#), June 2024.

31. ["Curriculum and Assessment Review"](#), gov.uk.

32. Internet Matters, [Digital Tracker](#), November 2024.

33. Internet Matters, [Digital Dilemmas](#), August 2024.

34. Katz, Adrienne and Dr Aiman El Asam, [Vulnerable children in a digital world](#), Internet Matters, 2019.

Appendix 1. How index scores were calculated

The participants were asked to rate the importance or truth of statements about their technology use, their feelings about their technology use, and some questions about their household and family dynamics. Each statement has been assigned to one of the four dimensions of wellbeing and designated as relating to either the positive or negative effects of digital technology on children. The overall Index and the scores for each dimension are based on these answers.

How scores were developed for each positive and negative dimension

Each of the eight groupings (four dimensions with a positive and negative group) is represented by between three and eight survey items (please see Appendix 2 for details on all items used)

- Each item was scored out of three based on the strength of an individual response. For example, someone reporting that they do something 'all the time' scored higher than someone who reported that they did something 'occasionally'.

- For each dimension, the scores for related items were averaged (taking the arithmetic mean), providing a maximum score of three and a minimum of zero.
- The arithmetic mean of every respondent's dimension score provides our total scores, which in turn provide our baseline scores for the whole Index.
- Children's items created the children's Index and matched parents' items created the parents' Index.

The positive and negative aspects of all the dimensions were separated in the following way:

Developmental wellbeing:

- Positive items focus on whether children have been able to use digital tools to their advantage, enabling them to discover, learn and develop.
- Negative items focus on the extent to which children appear to be experiencing a lack of control over how they use digital technology, where it generates behaviour that has no obvious benefit or pay-off for the child.

Emotional wellbeing:

- Positive items focus on the positive influence digital technology can have on how children feel about themselves and the positive emotions it elicits.
- Negative items focus on the negative emotional reactions or experiences that the use of digital technology can produce in children.

Physical wellbeing:

- Positive items focus on the use of digital technology to facilitate physical activity by enabling children to learn and develop their knowledge and skills.
- Negative items focus on the opportunity costs and negative consequences that the overuse of digital technology can have on physical health and activity, such as preventing children from engaging in sports/exercise or impacting their sleep.

Social wellbeing:

- Positive items focus on the role that digital technology can play in enabling children to remain connected to others or form new, valuable connections, particularly in circumstances where this might otherwise not be possible or feasible.
- Negative items focus on the negative consequences that can arise from social interaction online.

Considerations in reviewing Index scores

While this framework is useful to categorise the ways in which children's wellbeing has developed since last year, there are, of course, many overlaps between these dimensions. In reality, children's wellbeing cannot be isolated to only one specific dimension. For example, a child might become more active and see an increase in their physical wellbeing, and this, in turn, may also bring about an improvement in their mental health and an increase in their emotional wellbeing.

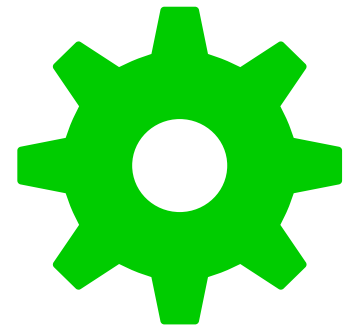
Similarly, it is also impossible to measure causality between the shifts in dimension scores: greater physical activity could be both the cause or result of better mental health, and as such, an increase in physical wellbeing could be both the cause and result of an increase in emotional wellbeing. The Index aims, therefore, to quantify children's digital wellbeing, whilst also acknowledging the nuances that occur across these different dimensions.

Appendix 2. Index Dimensions and items

The Index is based on four key dimensions identified in the Children and families' wellbeing in a digital world report by Dr Diane Levine and team at the University of Leicester.³⁴ The items that are included under each dimension were developed, refined, and selected for inclusion based on:

- The original definition of each dimension from the University of Leicester report.
- The qualitative research findings in earlier waves explored how these issues manifest and appear in the real lives of children across the UK.
- The testing of different survey question items during this previous qualitative research to establish which were better at tapping into these real-world experiences

35. Levine, D., et al. [Children and families wellbeing in a digital world: a four dimensional model](#), 2021.



How digital technology impacts developmental wellbeing

Developmental wellbeing: realisation of cognitive capabilities and achievement of educational potential; managing financial responsibilities that come with maturation; personal growth.

To develop well in a digital world, you can benefit from: opportunities for learning new skills and developing a sense of wonder; opportunities to develop thinking, collaboration, organisation and problem-solving skills; opportunities to bring together content to offer to others; access to new information and online learning including gaining qualifications; exposure to alternative opinions, world-views and examples of mature rational discussion; secure understanding of how data are used; and the digital skills, confidence and competence for everyday tasks and roles in daily life (including work, homework, household administration and financial management). For some, technology can even provide an income stream, for example through the safe monetisation of digital platforms.

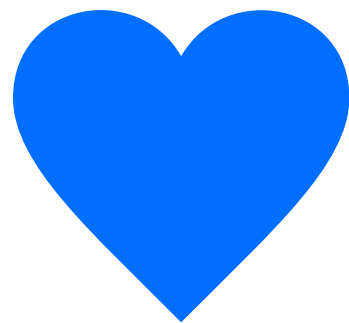
You will need to manage the risks from: exposure to disinformation; fake news; fallacies and conspiracy theories; living in an echo-chamber; wasting or missing opportunities to learn; seeing examples of unhelpful and irrational thinking; cybersecurity challenges such as managing personal data online; and challenges to financial wellbeing - such as exposure to the varied and subtle ways that online games take money from players, sometimes in tiny but repeated payments.

From *Children and families' wellbeing in a digital world*, University of Leicester

Items included in the Index for developmental wellbeing

+ or -	Children	Parents
Positive	Technology and being online has been important for me being more independent and being able to do things by myself	Technology and being online has been important for my child having more independence (e.g., because they can be contacted and are able to use their phone to get to places etc.)
	Technology and being online has been important for getting ideas for what I would like to do in the future (e.g., as a job)	Technology and being online has been important for my child thinking and planning for the future (e.g., what they would like to do after they leave school)
	Technology and being online has been important for me learning about things that no-one would teach me about in real life [13+ in year 1]	Technology and being online has been important for my child being able to learn about things no one would teach them in real life [added last year]
	Technology and being online has been important for helping me revise / learn things for school	Technology and being online has been important for my child being able to engage with schoolwork and other educational opportunities
	Technology and being online has been important for being able to find new hobbies or things I am interested in	My child benefits a lot from being able to look things up online that they are interested in
	I'm able to use the internet to earn money from some of the things I do online (e.g., website design, playing video games, sponsorship or payments from brands to promote things online/on social media) [15+ in year 1]	Technology and being online has been important for my child making money by using specific digital skills (e.g., website design, playing video games, sponsorship or payments from brands to promote things online/on social media) [15+ in year 1]
	I understand what personal information I should and shouldn't share online [added last year]	My child fully understands what personal information they should and shouldn't share online
	Technology and being online has been important for my child being able to learn new skills	

+ or -	Children	Parents
Negative	I keep playing the same games or watching the same TV shows/films even when I'm not enjoying it	My child spends a lot of time re-watching the same TV shows or re-playing the same games that they've seen or played before over and over again
	I run out of things to see on social media so scroll through the same things again [13+ in year 1]	My child spends a lot of time scrolling through the same things on social media [added last year]
	I quite easily spend money online without realising e.g., buying apps and spending money in games	My child spends money in apps or on games without realising
	I don't feel like I can control how much time I spend online	My child is not able to control how much time they spend online [added last year]
	I see something I don't like online or on social media, but don't know what to do about it	My child struggles to work out whether the information they are exposed to online / on social media is true



How digital technology impacts emotional wellbeing

Emotional wellbeing: healthy emotional development; ability to cope with stress and setbacks; spiritual development; development of thoughtful values and a positive outlook; space and opportunities to flourish; life purpose; autonomy; feeling successful.

To be well in a digital world, you can benefit from: opportunities for creativity and self-expression, for example online curation of links to hobbies; opportunities to be authentic, for self-validation and building self-worth; information about methods of self-regulation such as timed meditation practice apps; channels that let us articulate our emotions and validate our experiences, for example special interest groups on social media; exposure to positive role models; harmless strategies for distraction and management of emotional pain; opportunities to engage in joyful and enjoyable activities such as developing or operating in gameworlds.

You will need to manage the risks from: addiction; low self-worth; increased emotional distress; destructive behaviours or beliefs such as self-harm or radicalisation; shaming and isolation; 'doom-scrolling' (continual scrolling through negative news); unrealistic comparisons against impossible standards; exposure to harmful content such as extreme pornography; exposure to 'persuasive design' and a desire for constant, instant self-gratification.

From *Children and families' wellbeing in a digital world*, University of Leicester

Items included in the Index for emotional wellbeing

+ or -	Children	Parents
Positive	Spending time online makes me feel happy [13+ in year 1]	Being online makes my child happy [added last year]
	Being online has let me find people I admire and look up to [13+ in year 1]	Being online has enabled my child to find positive role models
	Being online has helped me to feel more comfortable with being 'me' [13+ in year 1]	Being online has helped my child to feel more comfortable with themselves [added last year]
	I create things I'm proud of online or using technology (e.g., games or computer programmes)	My child creates things they are proud of online or using technology (e.g., in games or with computer programmes) [added last year]
	I see things or people online that inspire me to try new things	Technology and being online has allowed my child to see things or people that inspire them to try new things [added last year]
	Being online has helped me learn more about people with different experiences to mine, which I wouldn't have come across otherwise [added last year]	Online platforms/resources have allowed my child to learn about and empathise with people who have different experiences to them, which they wouldn't have otherwise had exposure to
	I'm able to be myself online or on social media [13+ in year 1]	Digital devices/ being online has allowed my child to discover and pursue interests/hobbies that make them happy

+ or -	Children	Parents
Negative	I worry a lot about what other people think of me online (e.g., on social media)	My child worries a lot about how others perceive them online (especially social media)
	I see people online/on social media who make me feel sad because I'm not like them	My child compares themselves to people they see online/on social media in a way that I think is unhealthy
	I get more easily upset/angry when online or playing video games than when doing other things	My child gets more easily upset/angry when online or playing video games than when doing other things
	I post or say things online that I regret later	My child posts or says things online that they later regret [added last year]
	I get upset if something I post online/on social media does not get many likes or nice/positive comments	My child gets upset because something online or social media does not get the response they wanted it to (e.g., not enough 'likes', or interpreted the wrong way)
	I see things online that worry or upset me	My child sees things online that worry or upset them
	I worry about saying something wrong online/on social media	My child's online activity exposes them to content that encourages or supports unhealthy body image (e.g., extreme weight loss or muscle gain)



How digital technology impacts physical wellbeing

Physical wellbeing: achievement and maintenance of healthy thriving; development of physical capabilities; using technology in physical safety; access/lack of access to supportive or accessibility technologies.

To be well in a digital world, you can benefit from: opportunity to maintain a healthy balance between sedentary and active behaviours; to develop new physical skills; opportunities to participate in mobile digital activities; access to supportive or assistive technologies for those with chronic disabilities, for example reading pens or visual search engines, or 'adaptive switches' designed to help people independently activate switch enabled devices such as smartphones; information about healthy lifestyle choices; shared or learned activities for wellbeing (sports, exercise, relaxation).

You will need to manage the risks from: losing opportunities of doing healthy and joyful activity in favour of sedentary or shut-in lifestyles, sometimes called 'displacement'; sleep disruption; exposure to problematic temptations impacting physical health and wellbeing; exposure to potentially damaging content promoting unhealthy behaviours towards food or exercise or negative impact on nutrition; impact on self-ideation and body confidence.

From *Children and families' wellbeing in a digital world*, University of Leicester

Items included in the Index for physical wellbeing

+ or -	Children	Parents
Positive	I use the internet to learn new skills at a sport or physical activity	Technology and being online has been important for my child being able to learn skills or pick up tips for improving a sport or exercise activity they do (e.g., by watching videos on YouTube or reading about sports online)
	I use my phone to arrange to meet up to play sports or do activities outside	Technology and being online has been important for my child arranging to meet up and play sports or do outdoor activities [added last year]
	I use apps, websites and devices to help me stay healthy	My child uses apps, websites, or devices to help them stay healthy [added last year]
	I use apps or websites to find out about new sports or exercises I want to try out (e.g., seeing people doing a sport on social media) [added last year]	Technology and being online has been important for my child finding out about new sports or exercises they want to try out (e.g., seeing people doing a sport on social media)

+ or -	Children	Parents
Negative	I stopped playing a sport or doing exercise because I want to play video games, watch TV or be on social media	My child has stopped doing sports or exercise because they are too busy on their phone, computer, TV or games console
	I stay up late on my phone, playing games or watching TV (e.g. into the early hours of the morning once everyone else has gone to bed)	My child spends time on their phone, computer or games console which negatively affects their sleep patterns
	I spend a lot of time online which affects my physical health (e.g. makes me tired or unable to concentrate, affects my eyesight or posture) [added last year]	Spending a lot of time online affects my child's physical health (e.g., strains their eyes, makes them tired or unable to concentrate, affects their posture) [added last year]



How digital technology impacts social wellbeing

Social wellbeing: participation in wider communities including schools, clubs or societies; being an active citizen; ability to work with others; healthy interaction with online communities; maintenance of positive and sustainable online personae; managing the risks of grooming and exploitation; development and maintenance of good relations with significant people both online and offline; communication with people we know.

To be well in a digital world, you can benefit from: relationships with significant others who bring care and support, opportunities to both keep apart, and integrate online and offline relationships and the knowledge of when to do this; opportunities for shared experiences and building of new positive relationships; maintaining existing relationships; healthy and open communications; opportunities to help and support others; mentoring and being a mentor; access to community of 'people like me' (for example through digital activism or peer support groups); ability to move between communities; healthy interaction with unknown people or in public forums; positive reinforcement from community participation; maintenance of a non-destructive and age appropriate online presence; opportunities to be an active citizen.

You will need to manage the risks of: experiencing and exhibiting bullying behaviour, grooming and other forms of exploitation; forming and/or being unable to escape from destructive relationships; becoming cut off from family and friends; withdrawal and alienation; lack of communication or loneliness; unhealthy comparison with others; fear of missing out; participation in communities that are intrinsically harmful, abusive or antisocial participation styles; a digital footprint with negative consequences for the future; isolation from social interaction in digitally-mediated and physical life; exposure to racism and other forms of discrimination; development of antisocial behaviours and alienation from broader society (such as radicalisation).

From *Children and families' wellbeing in a digital world*, University of Leicester

Items included in the Index for social wellbeing

+ or -	Children	Parents
Positive	Technology and being online helps me to stay in close contact with my friends	Technology and being online helps my child stay in contact and maintain meaningful relationships with people who are important to them
	Technology and being online helps me to stay in contact with friends or family I wouldn't be able to otherwise (e.g., friends who live far away)	The internet and digital devices (e.g., smartphone) has helped my child to stay in contact with people they otherwise wouldn't have been able to do (e.g., relatives or friends who live far away)
	Technology and being online helps me meet people who become good friends	Technology and being online helps my child meet people who have become important friends
	Digital devices/being online lets me feel like part of a group [15+ in year 1]	Digital devices/being online has enabled my child to feel part of a group that they otherwise wouldn't have
	Technology and being online helps me find groups or communities that can offer me friendship and support [added last year]	Technology and being online helps my child find groups or communities that can offer friendship and support
	Technology and being online helps me participate in activities and events that are important to me [added last year]	Technology and being online helps my child to participate in activities and moments/events that are important to them

+ or -	Children	Parents
Negative	I have upsetting experiences interacting with other people online (e.g., bullying)	My child has had negative experiences interacting with other people online (e.g., bullying)
	Spending time online makes me feel lonely [added last year]	Spending time online makes my child feel lonely [added last year]
	I turn down opportunities to meet with friends so I can stay in on my phone, computer, or games console [added last year]	My child turns down opportunities to meet with friends so they can stay in on their phone, computer or games console
	I feel upset or uncomfortable because I see people being mean or unpleasant to each other online [added last year]	My child gets upset or uncomfortable because s/he sees people being mean or unpleasant to each other online [added last year]
	I avoid using certain apps, websites or games because of the way people act or talk to each other on them [added last year]	My child avoids using certain apps, websites or games because of the way people act or talk to each other on them [added last year]
	[Impact of] Someone you don't know has tried to contact you/sent you messages [added last year]	[Impact of] being contacted by a stranger online [added last year]
	If I miss out on things that are happening on social media among my friends, I get upset	We often find it difficult to get our child(ren) out of the house because they want to stay in and play video games, stream and watch TV programmes or be on their phone

About Internet Matters

Internet Matters is a not-for-profit, industry-funded members body that helps families stay safe online, providing resources for parents, carers and professionals working with children.

The organisation was established in 2014 by BT, Sky, TalkTalk and Virgin Media O2. The consistent support and funding which Internet Matters received from its founding members, combined with additional funding from other industry partners, has allowed Internet Matters to consistently conduct research to capture the views and experiences of families. Our flagship insight programme, the Digital Wellbeing Index, is now in its fourth year, and gathers crucial insights from parents, carers and children. The Index informs the resources we create to support families and educators, and contributes to our influencing work with policymakers.



About BMG

BMG Research specialise in delivering impactful insights to inform decision-making, shape policies and guide investments. Primarily based in the UK, they work closely with their clients to help them navigate complex challenges, set strategic priorities and assess the effectiveness of change. They leverage extensive subject knowledge and methodological expertise, combining these with cutting-edge analytics to create tailored solutions for each of their clients.





Faraday Buildings,
Ground Floor,
1 Knightrider Street,
London, EC4V 5BT

info@internetmatters.org

 [InternetMatters](https://www.facebook.com/InternetMatters)

 [@im_org](https://twitter.com/im_org)

 [@InternetMatters](https://www.youtube.com/InternetMatters)

 [Internet Matters Ltd](https://www.linkedin.com/company/InternetMattersLtd)

 [@internetmattersorg](https://www.instagram.com/internetmattersorg)