



National Survey for Wales 2014-15 Online safety for children

28 March 2017
SB 19/2017

A set of questions on child internet access and online safety was included in the National Survey. Parents were asked which devices their child used to access the internet, what online activities their child engaged in, and about parental knowledge and involvement regarding online safety for their child.

Key findings

- 95% of children aged 7 to 15 used the internet at home.
- The device most commonly used by these children was a tablet or other handheld device (71%).
- 64% of children aged 7 to 15, who used the internet outside school, accessed a school learning platform and 67% used the internet to find other information related to schoolwork.
- 87% of parents felt that their child knew how to stay safe when using the internet.
- 56% of households with children aged 7-15 used parental control filters.
- Further analysis showed that the parents were more likely to use a parental control filter when more than two children live in the household; when the parent also uses the internet themselves; when the child was aged 12 or under; and when the parent has at least GCSEs at A to C.

56%
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parental control filters



The National Survey for Wales covers a wide variety of topics affecting people and their local area. The headlines results from 2014-15, based on over 14,000 face-to-face interviews, were first published in June 2015. An expanded version of the National Survey began in 2016 covering similar topics as well as a selection of topics from four other surveys that it has replaced. The first results from the new survey will be published in June 2017.

About this bulletin

This bulletin provides more detailed analysis of the results for the questions on **internet access and online safety for children** which were included for the first time in the National Survey for Wales in 2014-15.

The full questionnaire is available on the [National Survey web pages](#).

Additional tables can be accessed via [StatsWales](#).

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Introduction

The Welsh Government is committed to ensuring that children are able to use technology safely, and in a way that supports their learning experience both inside and outside of school.

To support this commitment, the Welsh Government launched Hwb+, the all-Wales virtual learning platform, in 2012, and [Hwb](#), the National Digital Content Repository, in 2014. Additionally, the Welsh Government continues to support internet safety education and awareness-raising through initiatives such as [360 degree safe Cymru](#) – the online safety self-assessment tool for schools in Wales, and the [Online Safety Resource](#).

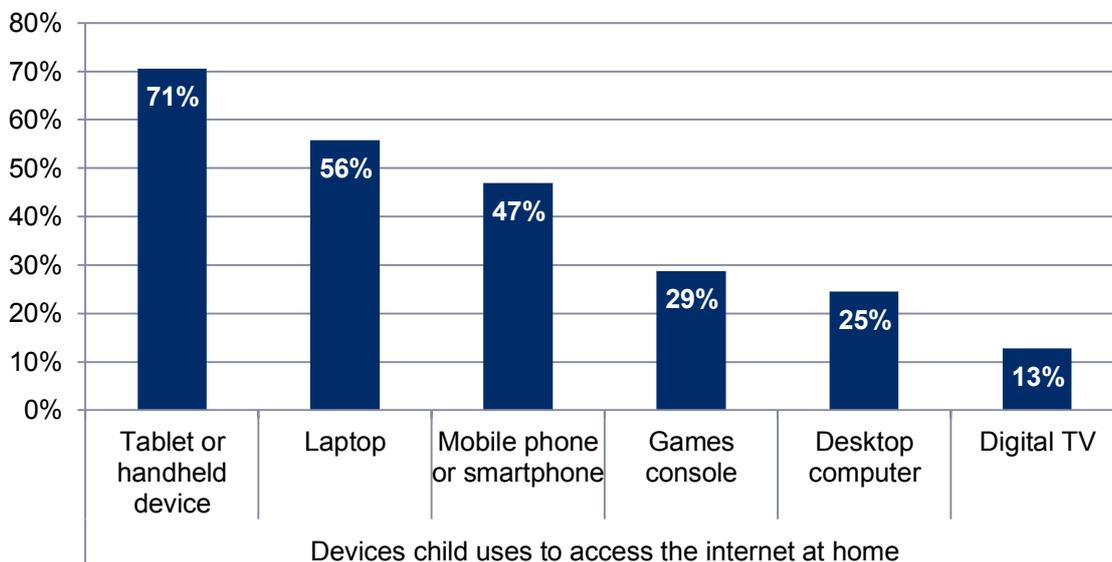
The National Survey questions on online safety were asked of parents, in order to provide Wales-specific information about the devices used and activities carried out on the internet by children aged 7 to 15. Parents with a child in this age range were also asked about their engagement with their child on the issue of internet safety. This bulletin sets out the results.

If there was more than one child in the household in this age group then one child was selected at random and the parent was asked to think about this child when answering the questions. The full [questionnaire](#) with questions on online safety, as well as on a range of other National Survey topics, can be found on the [National Survey for Wales web pages](#). Additional tables can be accessed via [StatsWales](#). More information about the survey methodology, and definitions of terms used in the bulletin, can be found in the [Key Quality Information](#) section at the end of this bulletin.

Internet use

95% of children aged 7-15 used the internet at home. As shown in Chart 1, the device most commonly used for accessing the internet by this group of children was a tablet or handheld device (used by 71%).

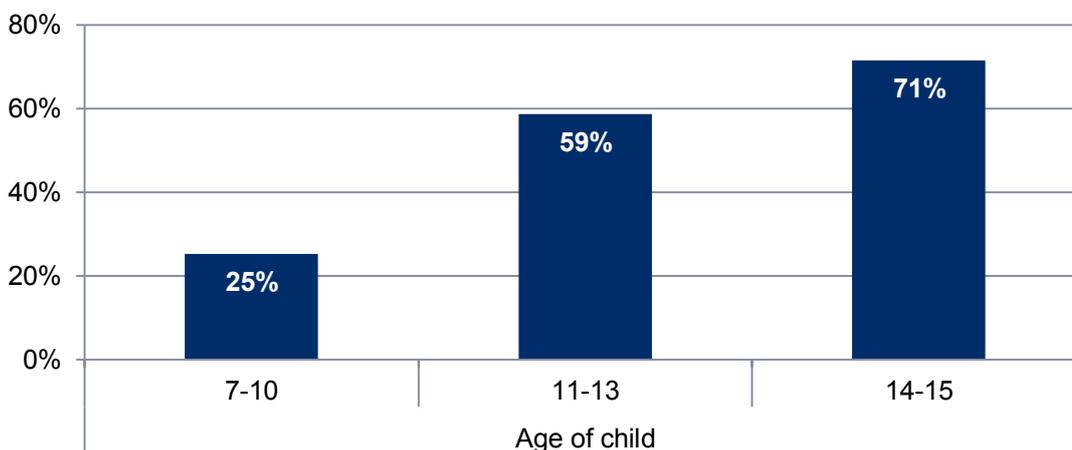
Chart 1: Devices children used to access the internet at home



Children are given increasingly more homework that requires them to access the internet, and for which using a laptop or desktop computer may be best. Parents of the 34% of children who did not use a laptop or desktop computer at home were therefore asked whether their child used the internet anywhere else outside of school. 42% of these children used the internet at another person's home, and 10% used the internet in a public building, such as a library or community centre.

Chart 2 shows that the percentage of children who used a mobile phone or a smartphone to access the internet at home increased sharply with age. 25% of children aged 7-10 who accessed the internet at home used a mobile phone or smartphone, compared with 71% of children aged 14-15.

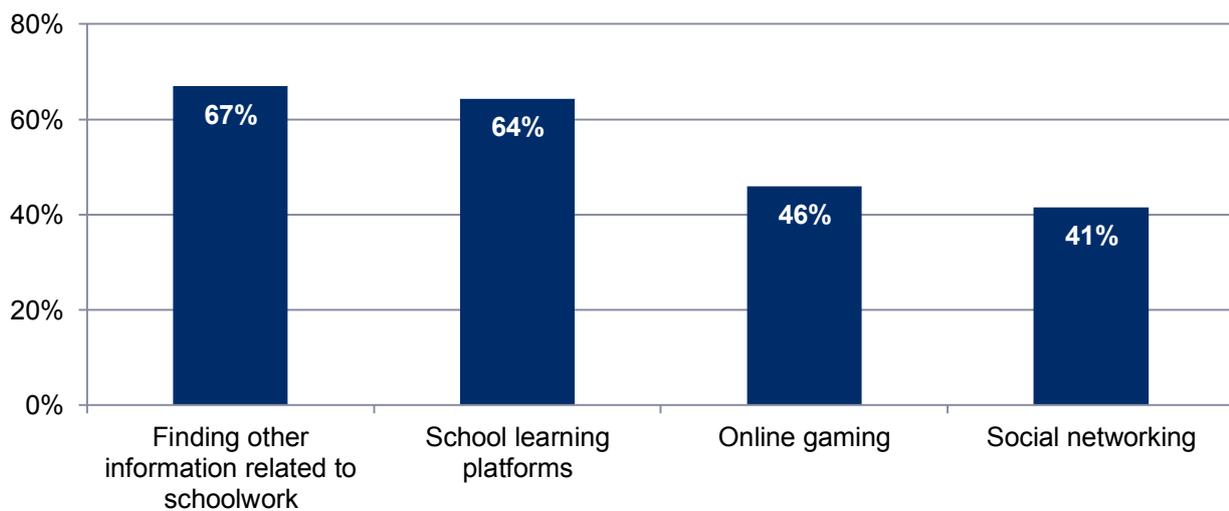
Chart 2: Mobile phone or smartphone used to access the internet, by age of child



Parents of children who used the internet outside school were asked about which activities their child used the internet for. Chart 3 shows that, according to parents, 64% of children used the internet to access school learning platforms and 67% of children used the internet to find other information related to schoolwork. The percentage of children using the internet for school-related activities increased with the age of the child. At age 7-10, 23% of children used the Hwb school learning platform, and 62% used the internet for finding other information related to schoolwork. For children aged 14-15, this increased to 33% accessing Hwb, and 73% using the internet to find other information related to schoolwork.

Other common internet activities included online gaming (46%) and social networking (41%).

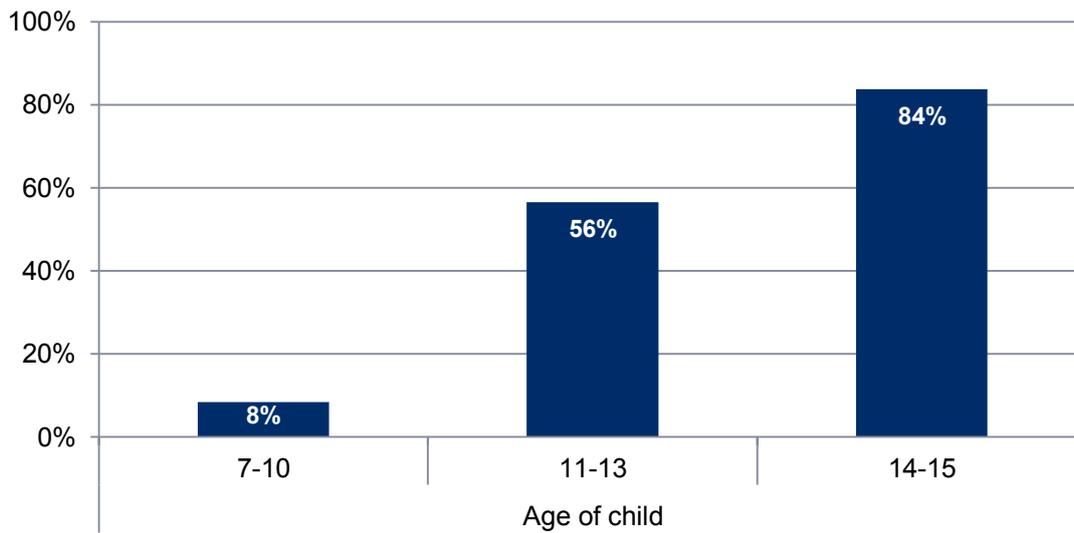
Chart 3: Internet activities carried out by child



41% of all children aged 7-15 used the internet for social networking, however this varied greatly by age. Chart 4 shows that while 8% of children aged 7-10 used the internet for social networking, this percentage increased to 84% for children aged 14-15, making social networking the most popular internet activity for this age group. The majority of social networking services state a minimum age of 13 in their terms and conditions, but the results show that children are using the internet for social networking before they are 13. Parents indicated that 32% of children aged 11 used the internet for social networking, increasing to 58% of children aged 12, and 77% of children aged 13.

Details of the specific websites or services used were not collected. Generally boys and girls carried out the same online activities and to a similar extent. However, 60% of boys used the internet for online gaming, compared with 32% of girls.

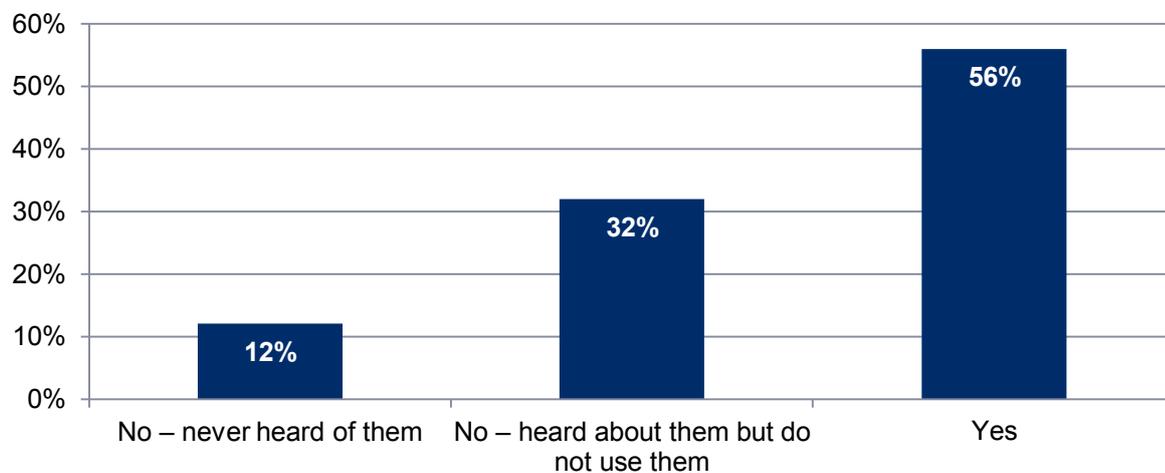
Chart 4: Use of internet for social networking by age of child



Internet safety

Parents were asked whether their household used parental control filters, such as 'Net Nanny' or other filters provided by their internet service provider (ISP). As shown in Chart 5, 56% of households with children used parental control filters, 32% did not use filters, and 12% had never heard of internet filters.

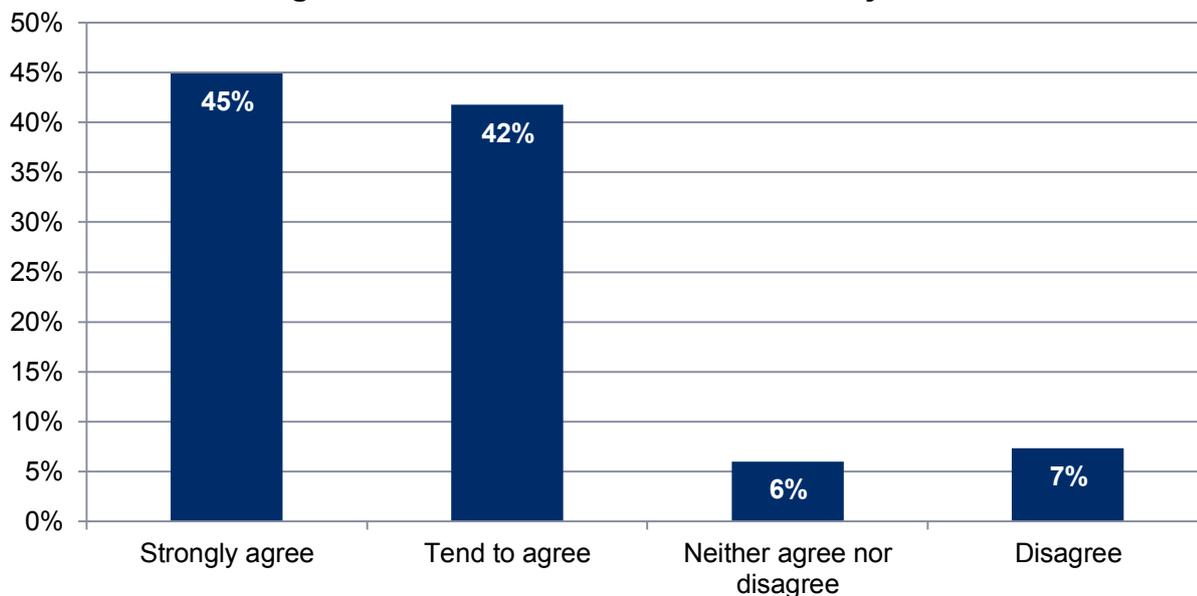
Chart 5: Use of parental control filters



Households with more children were more likely to use a parental control filter. While 52% of households with one child used a filter, this increased to 62% for households with 3 or more children. Parents who used the internet themselves were more likely to have a parental control filter installed in their household (57%) compared with parents who did not personally use the internet (41%).

Parents were asked whether their child knew how to stay safe when using the internet. As shown in Chart 6, 87% of parents agreed (strongly agree or tend to agree) that their child knew how to stay safe.

Chart 6: Parental agreement that child knows how to stay safe on internet



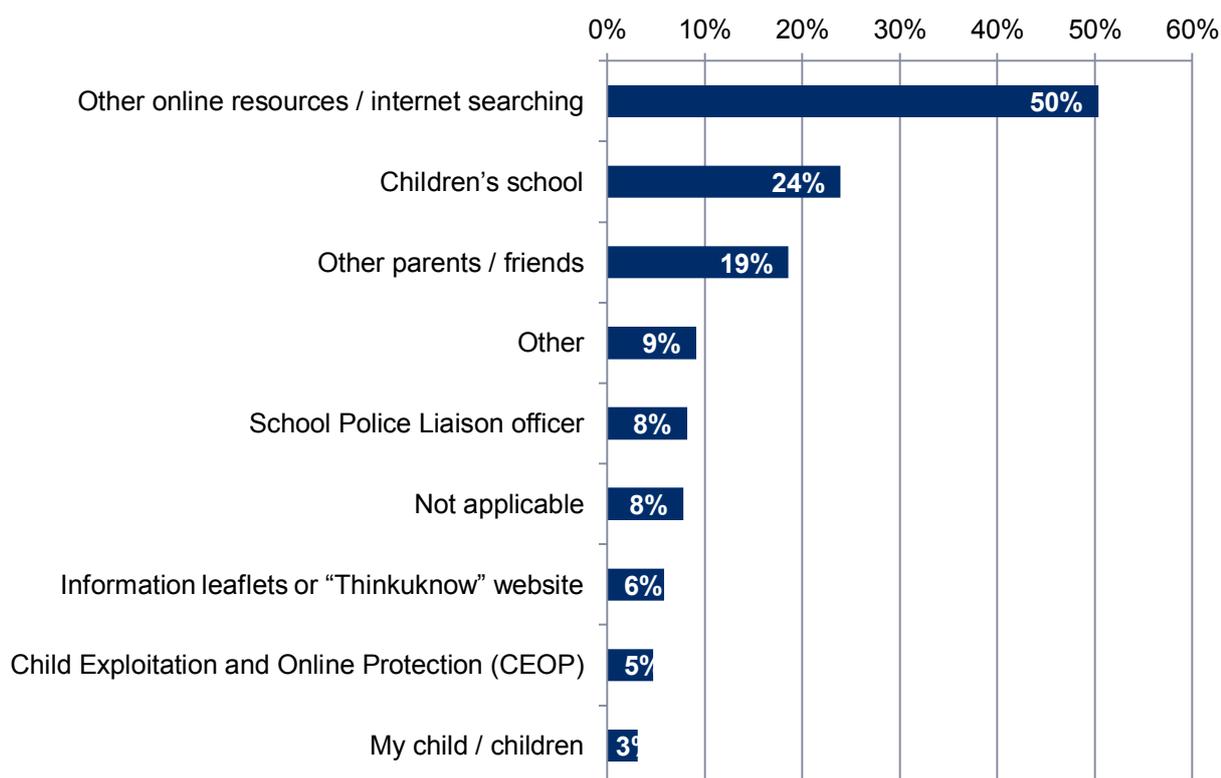
The percentage of parents who strongly agreed that their child knew how to stay safe when using the internet was higher if their child was older. 36% of parents with a child aged 7-10 strongly agreed that their child knew how to stay safe on the internet, increasing to 58% of parents with a child aged 14 -15.

42% of parents said their child’s teachers regularly talked to the child about internet safety, 47% sometimes talked to their child about internet safety, and 11% rarely or never talked to their child about internet safety.

Parents were also asked whether they had told their children how to stay safe online. 75% had told their child not to visit some websites; 84% not to meet someone they had only met online; 89% not to talk to strangers online; and 91% not to give out personal information. The percentage of parents who had told their children how to stay safe online increased with the age of the child. 90% of parents with a child aged 7-10 had spoken to their child about at least one of the above areas of internet safety, compared with 98% of parents with a child aged 14-15.

Chart 7 shows the places parents go to get advice or information about internet safety for their child. 50% of the parents asked said they would find advice online whilst 24% said they would ask their child’s school for advice or information. Other parents and friends was another commonly stated source (19%). 8% of parents used information leaflets or the [‘Thinkuknow’](#) website for information.

Chart 7: Parental source of advice or information about internet safety for child



Further analysis

More in-depth analysis was carried out to explore the factors that may be involved in influencing:

- whether a child uses a school learning platform; and
- whether a household uses a parental control filter.

The method used in each case allowed us to look at the effect of one factor while keeping other factors constant (sometimes called “controlling for other factors”).¹

For the use of school learning platforms, we looked at factors including tenure, age of child, gender of child, the highest qualification of the parent², economic status, and household material deprivation.³ After controlling for these factors, the results showed that the children most likely to use a school learning platform are older; and have parents with qualifications at GCSE grades A – C (or equivalent) and above.

As discussed earlier, cross tabulation showed that both the number of children in the household and whether the parent personally used the internet were related to the use of control filters. Further analysis looked at these factors in addition to tenure, age of child, household material deprivation³, gender of child, and parent’s qualifications². After controlling for these factors, the results confirmed that the parents most likely to use these filters had more than two children; use the internet themselves; have younger children; and have a qualification at GCSE grades A – C (or equivalent) and above.

¹ This method is known as logistic regression. More information about the method can be found in [this technical report](#)

² For a definition of the qualifications included in each category see [Terms and Definitions](#)

³ See [Terms and Definitions](#)

Terms and definitions

Household

A household is defined as one person living alone or a group of people (not necessarily related) living at the same address with common housekeeping – that is, sharing a living room or sitting room or at least one meal a day.

Parent

Within this bulletin, ‘parent’ refers to parent or legal guardian of a child living in the same household.

Material deprivation

Material deprivation is a measure which is designed to capture the consequences of long-term poverty on households, rather than short-term financial strain. Respondents were asked questions on whether their household was able to afford a series of things like: keep the house warm enough, make regular savings, or have a holiday once a year.

The material deprivation score is calculated so that a person who can afford everything, has a score of 0 and a person who wants but doesn't have any of the items asked about has a score of 100. A higher score is given to households lacking those items that most households already have. Those with a score of 25 or more are classed as ‘materially deprived’. The full list of questions asked can be found on page 80 of the [2014-15 questionnaire](#).

Qualifications

Respondents' highest qualifications have been grouped according to the National Qualification Framework (NQF) levels, where level 1 is the lowest level of qualifications and level 8 is doctoral degree or equivalent. For the National Survey, respondents have been grouped into 5 groups, those with no qualifications are in the lowest category and respondents with qualifications at levels 4 to 8 have been grouped together in the highest qualification category. [More information about the NQF levels](#).

To provide more meaningful descriptions of the qualifications, these short descriptions have been used in this bulletin.

National Qualification Framework levels	Short descriptions used in charts
NQF levels 4-8	Higher education (Level 4+)
NQF level 3	A' level and equivalent (Level 3)
NQF level 2	GCSE grades A to C and equivalent (Level 2)
Below NQF level 2	GCSE below grade C (below Level 2)
No qualifications	No qualifications

Key quality information

Background

The National Survey for Wales 2012-15 was carried out by TNS-BMRB and Beaufort Research on behalf of the Welsh Government. The results reported in this bulletin are based on interviews completed in 2014-15 (1 April 2014 – 12 April 2015 (fieldwork was extended slightly beyond the one year mark, in order to increase the achieved sample size).

Each year approximately 25,000 addresses were chosen randomly from the Royal Mail's Small User Postcode Address File. Interviewers visited each address, randomly selected one adult (aged 16+) in the household, and carried out a 25-minute face-to-face interview with them, which asked for their opinions on a wide range of issues affecting them and their local area. A total of 14,285 interviews were achieved in 2014-15. Analysis included in this bulletin was based on the 2,200 respondents with a child aged 7-15.

Interpreting the results

Percentages quoted in this bulletin are based on only those respondents who provided an answer to the relevant question. Missing answers occur for several reasons, including refusal or an inability to answer a particular question and cases where the question is not applicable to the respondent.

Where a relationship has been found between two factors, this does not mean it is a causal relationship. More detailed analysis is required to identify whether one factor causes change in another. Regression analysis provides a way of investigating which factors are likely to be important – see [below](#).

Checks are in place to ensure the quoted figures are the most up-to-date figures available at the time of publication.

The results of the National Survey are weighted to compensate for unequal selection probabilities and differential non-response (i.e. to ensure that the age and sex distribution of the final dataset matches that of the Welsh population).

Quality of the data

National Statistics status

The [United Kingdom Statistics Authority](#) has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the [Code of Practice for Official Statistics](#).

National Statistics status means that official statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value.

All official statistics should comply with all aspects of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. They are awarded National Statistics status following an assessment by the UK Statistics Authority's regulatory arm. The Authority considers whether the statistics meet the highest standards of Code compliance, including the value they add to public decisions and debate.

It is Welsh Government's responsibility to maintain compliance with the standards expected of National Statistics. If we become concerned about whether these statistics are still meeting the appropriate standards, we will discuss any concerns with the Authority promptly. National Statistics status can be removed at any point when the highest standards are not maintained, and reinstated when standards are restored.

Quality report

A summary [quality report](#) is available, containing more detailed information on the quality of the survey as well as a summary of the methods used to compile the results.

Sampling variability

Estimates from the National Survey are subject to a margin of uncertainty. Part of the uncertainty comes from the fact that any randomly-selected sample of the population will give slightly different results from the results that would be obtained if the whole population was surveyed. This is known as sampling error.⁴ Confidence intervals can be used as a guide to the size of the sampling error. These intervals are calculated around a survey estimate and give a range within which the true value is likely to fall. In 95% of survey samples, the 95% confidence interval will contain the 'true' figure for the whole population (that is, the figure we would get if the survey covered the entire population). In general, the smaller the sample size the wider the confidence interval. Confidence intervals are included in the tables of survey results published on [StatsWales](#).

As with any survey, the National Survey is also subject to a range of other sources of error: for example, due to non-response; because respondents may not interpret the questions as intended or may not answer accurately; and because errors may be introduced as the survey data is processed. These kinds of error are known as non-sampling error, and are discussed further in the [quality report](#) for the survey.

Significant differences

Where the text of this release notes a difference between two National Survey results (in the same year), we have checked to ensure that the confidence intervals for the two results do not overlap. This suggests that the difference is statistically significant (but as noted above, is not as rigorous as carrying out a formal statistical test), i.e. that there is less than a 5% (1 in 20) chance of obtaining these results if there is no difference between the same two groups in the wider population.

Checking to see whether two confidence intervals overlap is less likely than a formal statistical test to lead to conclusions that there are real differences between groups. That is, it is more likely to lead to "false negatives": incorrect conclusions that there is no real difference when in fact there is a difference. It is also less likely to lead to "false positives": incorrect conclusions that there **is** a difference when there is in fact none. Carrying out many comparisons increases the chance of finding false positives. Therefore, when many comparisons are made the conservative nature of the test is an advantage because it reduces (but does not eliminate) this chance.

⁴ Sampling error is discussed in more detail in the [Quality Report](#) for the National Survey.

Where National Survey results are compared with results from other sources, we have not checked that confidence intervals do not overlap.

Regression analysis

More details on how we did the regression analysis in this report, and on the regression model that was produced, are available in this [Technical Report](#).

Technical report

More detailed information on the survey methodology is set out in the [technical report](#) for the survey.

Well-being of Future Generations Act (WFG)

The Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 is about improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. The Act puts in place seven well-being goals for Wales. These are for a more equal, prosperous, resilient, healthier and globally responsible Wales, with cohesive communities and a vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language. Under section (10)(1) of the Act, the Welsh Ministers must (a) publish indicators (“national indicators”) that must be applied for the purpose of measuring progress towards the achievement of the Well-being goals, and (b) lay a copy of the national indicators before the National Assembly. The 46 national indicators were laid in March 2016.

Information on indicators and associated technical information - [How do you measure a nation's progress? - National Indicators](#)

Further information is available - [Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#).

Although the statistics included in this release do not contribute directly to any of the indicators they could provide supporting narrative to the national indicators and be used by public services boards in relation to their local well-being assessments and local well-being plans.

Revisions

[More information on our revisions policy](#).

Release policy

Information about the process for releasing new results is available from the [Welsh Government's statistics web pages](#).

Availability of datasets

The data behind the charts and tables in this release are published in spreadsheets on [StatsWales](#). An anonymised version of the annual datasets (from which some information is removed to ensure confidentiality is preserved), together with supporting documentation, has been deposited with the [UK Data Archive](#). For more information, please contact us (see below).

Further uses of the results

The results will be used extensively by Welsh Government policy teams, but they are also relevant to a wide range of other external organisations and individuals.

Next update

Not a regular output.

Further details

The document is available at:

<http://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/national-survey/?tab=current&lang=en>

We want your feedback

We welcome any feedback on any aspect of these statistics which can be provided by email to surveys@wales.gsi.gov.uk

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