ONLINE LEARNING

AND PARENTAL CONTROLS

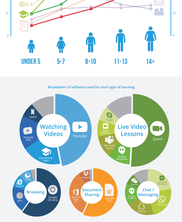
With the recent explosive online learning as a result of the coronavirus pandemic (an estimated 1.5 billion children have been impacted), we looked at the ways in which parents are controlling their kids and how effective they feel parental controls are in tackling these concerns.

We surveyed a representative group of 1,173 parents - 707 in the US and 466 in the UK - to find out what they are most concerned about when their children are of contents and their effectiveness as well as parental concerns about online learning vary significantly across different age groups.

We hope this graphic will provide both parents and policymakers with a better understanding of the challenges that children face when using supervised activity - tools like and what we can do to make it safer for children.

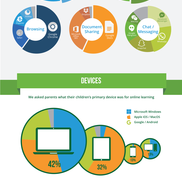
More information is available in an accompanying report at iffer.org.

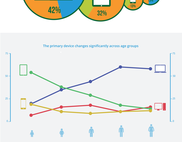
WHAT? are the most common types of online learning



DEVICES

We asked parents what their children's primary device was for online learning

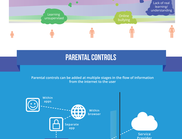


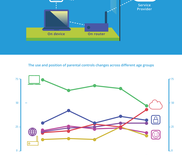


PARENTAL CONCERNS

We asked parents what their primary concern is with online learning

PARENTAL CONTROLS





YOUTUBE COMPARISON

Most service providers offer a range of parental controls. A good example is YouTube and YouTube Kids. Here's a comparison:

Unfortunately, there is no universal industry approach or even terminology so every developer/publisher tends to adopt their own approach.

	YouTube	YouTube Kids
Content Restrictions	✓	✓
Adult content	✓	✓
Age-appropriate content	✓	✓
Choose specific channels	✓	✓
Search control	✓	✓
Restricted search	✓	✓
Turn on/off	✓	✓
Time limit control	✓	✓
Volume control	✓	✓
Timer	✓	✓
Requires setup	✓	✓
Stops ads	✓	✓
Stops comments	✓	✓

AGE GROUPS

While primary issues, activities and devices are often the same for all children, secondary concerns, controls and actions a very different age group.

As such we broke up our data by age group and identified a distinctive concern and tips for each group. We have compared that with parent concerns and parental controls for this specific per-age, along with comments or controls overall.

Watching videos | School work | Games | Live video lessons | Browsing the internet | Parent controls | Document sharing | Chat / messaging | Close read

UNDER 5

CONCERN

Seeing inappropriate content

USE CASE

DEVICE | BROWSER/STATION | SOFTWARE | ACTIVITY

CONTROLS

Effectiveness: ★★★☆☆

Ease of use: 60% (Average)

> I don't need parental controls if I'm paying attention to them.

> I'll need more controls when starts older.

MOST COMMON

Setting inappropriate content

AGES 5-7

CONCERN

Learning Unsupervised

USE CASE

DEVICE | BROWSER/STATION | SOFTWARE | ACTIVITY

CONTROLS

Effectiveness: ★★★☆☆

Ease of use: 62% (Average)

> We use parental controls for this issue on their tablets. It's nice to have the tablet be the "bad guy" instead of us.

> I'm too often notified about timewasted or unappropriate things which means we have to spend or interfere the more useful/fun/etc.

MOST COMMON

Setting inappropriate content

AGES 8-10

CONCERN

Talking to strangers

USE CASE

DEVICE | BROWSER/STATION | SOFTWARE | ACTIVITY

CONTROLS

Effectiveness: ★★★☆☆

Ease of use: 80% (Average)

> Parental controls works great if you are ready (oversteed) and work towards it.

> I don't really understand (parental controls) and worry that if my mistake is fixed, I'm worried that the same mistake/exposure will be limited because of the controls.

MOST COMMON

Setting inappropriate content

AGES 11-13

CONCERN

Online bullying

USE CASE

DEVICE | BROWSER/STATION | SOFTWARE | ACTIVITY

CONTROLS

Effectiveness: ★★★☆☆

Ease of use: 33% (Average)

> It is very hard to get a good balance between reasonable parenting control and privacy/trusting.

> The age groups are too clad (based on estimator's opinion. Kids constantly time to or to use something that is restricted but ready accessible.

MOST COMMON

Setting inappropriate content

AGES 14+

CONCERN

Lack of real learning/understanding

USE CASE

DEVICE | BROWSER/STATION | SOFTWARE | ACTIVITY

CONTROLS

Effectiveness: ★★★☆☆

Ease of use: 47% (Average)

> Older tense (but ways across) parental controls

> I feel I too brush up child to talk to not above (mean. [Children] are pretty unnecessary, prior child will look trash to you.

MOST COMMON

Setting inappropriate content

OTHER FINDINGS

- The absence of standards in both software and terminology, combined with a huge array of devices, apps and services, has created a level of complexity that is overwhelming for most parents and children.
- Parental controls are not static and change constantly as technology companies update their software. This has the knock-on impact of causing guides to parental controls to rapidly fall out of date.
- Parents want to be able to set and monitor parental controls for their larger concerns, but they are also quick to identify problems and possible improvements.
- Parental controls are only a partial solution: it is critical for parents and teachers to educate children on how to learn safely online

If you wish to know more about this research, how it was conducted, or would like to see the full set of data and more information on our findings, please read the accompanying report on **iffer.org**.