

# Children and the internet



KEEP YOUR KIDS  
**SAFE** Online



## Children and the internet

1) The children, internet users, who were interviewed in this study, appear, for most of them, to be **extremely** familiar with this tool. Learning to use the internet was, for them, almost “self evident”.

2) Vast majorities of them have access to the internet at home, mostly through broadband connection. They use the internet regularly and frequently; however this frequency is **correlated** with age. 9-10 year old children **typically** say that they connect several times per week, minimum connection time being half an hour to one hour. 12-14 year old children generally use the internet daily, often for one to three hours. All the children are more or less subject to explicit or implicit (self-discipline) rules and limits in the use of the internet, both as regards length and time of connection, nature of websites visited and on-line behaviour. They generally accept that these rules are **legitimate** and recognize that they are **aware of** risks, although some of them admit that they may occasionally disobey. Younger children, (9-10 years), are more closely supervised by their parents than 12-14 year old youngsters. A remarkable convergence in internet uses can be observed from one European country to another.

3) The most frequent uses are concentrated in two functions of a recreational, entertainment nature: online games. (often the most frequent use quoted by the youngest children) .It continues to be an important activity among older boys, while this seems to be less a priority among girls as they get older), and looking for information on subjects that are of interest or **browsing** for fun. Looking for information for schoolwork is a very frequent use (although naturally less attractive.) The communication functions (instant messaging, having chats with friends, emailing) are clearly used more by older children – girls appear to be particularly **eager** to use them. Downloading (of music, films, videos, games, etc.) is also more **widespread** among the older groups – and more among boys than among girls for that matter.

The Source: A Qualitative study by Eurobarometer.

## Comprehension Questions

1) These statements are false. Correct them with information from the text.

a) Most children are reluctant to use the internet.

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b) 9-10 year old children use the internet more frequently than older children do.

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c) Children do not respect any rules while surfing the net.

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d) Children in Europe use the internet for different purposes.

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2) Answer the following questions

a) What do young children mostly use the internet for?

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b) Do young boys and girls use the internet for the same purposes? Justify your answer.

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c) Do children’s uses of the internet change as they get older?

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