



**M.O.P. Vaishnav College for Women (Autonomous)**  
**Chennai - 600 034**

(College affiliated to University of Madras & Re-accredited at 'A++' grade by NAAC)

**VISUAL SOCIOLOGY**  
**III B.SC. VISUAL COMMUNICATION**

# Child Safety - Online and Offline

**Research Project**

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**VISUAL SOCIOLOGY PROJECT**

Submitted to

**DEPARTMENT OF VISUAL COMMUNICATION**

In the partial fulfilment of

B.Sc Degree (Visual Communication)

**M.O.P VAISHNAV COLLEGE FOR WOMEN**

(Autonomous)

Chennai – 600034



**Under the supervision of**

**Dr S. JAISHREE**

**(Head, Department of Visual Communication)**

**2020 -2021**

## **DECLARATION**

We hereby declare that this Visual Sociology project titled, CHILD SAFETY- ONLINE AND OFFLINE submitted to the Department of Visual Communication in partial fulfilment of our B.Sc Degree program is our original work. A lot of inspiration has been drawn from the works of other people and experts but it has been made sure that the credits they deserve have been given.

We thereby declare that this paper is a collaboration of all the team members and that the content is original.

Place – Chennai

Date – 28-04-2021

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## **CERTIFICATE**

This is to certify that the Visual Sociology project on CHILD SAFETY- ONLINE AND OFFLINE has been taken up, completed and presented in the form of a report by the following students, Deepica S, Farzana Mubarak, Medha Kartha, Poorna Pramode, Subhikshaa S. The project was completed under my guidance and I certify that this is the original work done by the students.

Place – Chennai

Date – 28-04-2021

Signature of Guide

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## **ABSTRACT**

Child safety is a universal concern. Crimes against children have been on the rise and people have become more aware of the issues related to child safety. Parents may still be uncomfortable with talking about certain issues with their children. It is important to open up a discussion about precautions to ensure safety of children in all places. With change brought in due to the Pandemic, online crimes have increased. The current pandemic has made it challenging to have physical gatherings. Everyone's online screen time has increased drastically. Online schools and colleges have become the norm. Very young children have been introduced to the internet, for an online school. They use the internet for education, reference and for entertainment. Their exposure to the internet has increased considerably, working parents do not have enough time to monitor their children constantly, this could lead the child to accidentally or intentionally/unknowingly do something on the internet, that they clearly should not be doing. There are also parents who are unaware of the dangers of the internet and need to be educated in order to protect their children. The study aims to discover and understand if parents take enough measures to educate their child about public safety and online safety. The study also aims to discover the measure parents have put in place for the safety of their children in public spaces, and what kind of precautions children take to protect themselves when out in public. An instagram campaign and a booklet will be created to spread awareness on child safety both online and offline.

# Chapter 1

## INTRODUCTION



## 1- INTRODUCTION

Child safety refers to keeping the child away from hazardous situations and reducing the risk of the child getting harmed.

In India, parents are very protective of their children, and they make it mandatory to teach their children about “STRANGER DANGER.” **Some common phrases that they are taught are:**

“

- Do not trust strangers
- Do not talk to strangers
- Do not go anywhere with strangers
- Do not accept anything from strangers. This includes gifts, food, drinks, candy, and sweets.
- If a stranger approaches you online or through text messages on a mobile phone, do not communicate with them and tell a trusted adult. There are other things you can do like blocking them and consulting an adult.
- Do not get into a car with strangers or enter a stranger's home
- If a stranger approaches you near your school, return to your school immediately and tell a staff member.
- Your body is your private property. No one else has the right to touch it. (When you were really young, maybe members of your family, like your mom, dad, grandma, grandpa, aunt, or uncle needed to touch your body when they helped you in the bathtub or changed your diaper as you were too young to do it by yourself. Also, doctors need to touch your body to keep you healthy, because they are in the body business.)”

- Source: *Wikipedia.*

## 1.1 Child Safety

At a young age, children are taught not to trust strangers who approach them when there isn't a trusted guardian or supervisor around them. This is to try to reduce the risk of child abduction, or abuse.

"Stranger danger" is the idea or warning that all strangers can potentially be dangerous. It is an example of a moral panic that people experience regarding anyone that they are unfamiliar with within society. The phrase is intended to help children associate unknown persons with danger.

The phrase has found widespread usage and many children will hear it during their childhood lives. Many books, films and public service announcements have been devoted to helping children remember this advice. However, the concept has been criticized for ignoring that most child abductions and harm result not from strangers, but rather from someone the child knows.

Although there are other dangers such as kidnapping for ransom, the main threat with which stranger danger campaigns are concerned is child sexual abuse. Despite many campaigns to bring awareness to the issue, some children remain unaware of the correct ways to handle an unknown situation with a stranger.

It is important to educate children on the dangers that can come from strangers and known trusted adults and recognise the signs of danger. It is also important to educate them on recognising situations where another person could be grooming them to be more accepting towards predatory behaviour.

## **1.2 Safety Online**

During the Pandemic, children have been using the internet more than they usually would. Whether it is for studying or simply for entertainment, it is evident that their screen-time has increased considerably. Not all the “Stranger Danger” tips may apply when the child is on the internet.

On the Internet, one can find information about, and images of, almost anything. However, when it comes to children’s online activities, one needs to make sure they’re protected against contact with undesirable people, inappropriate or harmful content, and malicious software or attacks.

It is important for parents to know what to do in such situations and make sure their child does not accidentally put themselves in harm’s way.

The main aim of this project is to educate and inform parents about the “new internet” age and public safety for kids when they are not with an adult. They need to know how to keep their children safe from harmful content and people that they could accidentally come into contact with while on the internet or in public.

## **1.3 Importance of this study**

There are many dangers that a child can face when he/she is in public without adult supervision. It is important for children to know what to do in such situations. This study will help understand what type of precautions are already being taken and what needs to be taken.

Due to the current situation - Pandemic, very young children have been introduced to the internet, for an online school. They use the internet for education, reference and for entertainment.

Their exposure to the internet has increased considerably, working parents do not have enough time to monitor their children constantly, this could lead the child to accidentally or intentionally/unknowingly do something on the internet, that they clearly should not be doing. There are also parents who are unaware of the dangers of the internet and need to be educated in order to protect their children.

## **Examples of the dangers faced online**

- Cyberbullying
- Cyber predators
- Phishing
- Accidentally downloading malware
- Traumatic content - Inappropriate content
- Chat Room “friends”
- Online scams

### Cyberbullying

Children in India reported the third-highest online bullying rate, after China and Singapore, among the 25 countries surveyed under a recently commissioned project by Microsoft Corporation to understand the global pervasiveness of online bullying.

In India, the survey indicated that 22% of children reported mean or unfriendly treatment, 29% were made fun of or teased and 25% were called mean names. The survey also found that 70% of children said that they know a lot or something about online bullying, while 79% were very or somewhat worried about the phenomenon. 77% reported being bullied online and/or offline. “India is one of the few countries where the rates of online and offline bullying were equal,” the survey said.

### Cyber Predators

The internet is filled with predators. They stalk children and take advantage of their innocence, lack adult supervision and abuse them. The children end up being lured into dangerous personal encounters in real life (IRL). The predators usually exploit social media and gaming platforms, i.e. virtual platforms where anonymity covers who they actually are.

## Phishing

The use of emails to try and trick people into clicking on malicious links or attachments is called phishing. It is often difficult for kids to distinguish between phishing emails and legitimate emails. The emails often look like a friend or a family member has sent it, often beginning with, “Hey! Thought you might like this” followed by a link. This can also be done with messaging apps or text messages - it is called ‘smishing’.

Cybercriminals devise these emails by gathering information like email addresses, friend’s names etc to tailor their attacks.

Phishing is one-way malware that can be accidentally downloaded. Malware is computer software that is installed without the knowledge or permission of the victim and performs harmful actions on the computer. Personal information from your computer can be stolen or the computer can be hijacked for use in a "botnet," which causes sluggish performance.

## Traumatic content - Inappropriate content

The Internet is full of “inappropriate content.” Children may try searching for such content, or they may stumble upon it accidentally. Regardless, it’s very easy to find if the websites containing the content are not blocked. Placing your computer in a room the whole family uses regularly is a good idea to help prevent the child from doing things they shouldn't.

Anything posted online will likely stay online forever. The dangers of social media are daunting. Children don't understand the need to be careful while posting online. Online posts can be misused for various reasons and can end up traumatising a child or teenager.

## Chat Room “friends”

Some predators enter chat rooms or use social media to find young children. They befriend them by pretending to be their age and usually try to meet up at some



point. Setting up fake profiles is quite simple, making it important for parents to emphasize this danger to their children.

### Online scams

A scam is a deceptive scheme or trick used to cheat someone out of something, especially money.

Internet scams are different methodologies of Fraud, facilitated by cybercriminals on the Internet. Scams can happen in a myriad of ways via:

- Phishing emails,
- Social media and
- SMS messages

on your mobile phone, fake tech support phone calls, scareware and more. The main purpose of these types of scams can range from

- credit card theft,
- capturing user login and
- password credentials and even identity theft.

### **1.4 Most common types of online scams**

- Phishing
- Fake AV (These start with a pop-up warning saying that you have a virus. Then the popup leads the user to believe that if they click on the link, the infection will get cleaned up. Cybercriminals use the promise of “Free Anti-Virus” to instead implant malware on a victim’s device.)
- Social Media Scams
- Mobile Scams
- Social Engineering Scams (a way that cybercriminals use human-to-human interaction in order to get the user to divulge sensitive information. ways that attackers can try to trick you- online and offline.)

Education and awareness are key in preventing online scam issues.

## **Objectives**

- To understand and learn various dangers a child could be exposed to when he/she is on the internet or in public
- To learn if parents in India teach their children about internet safety.
- To understand what parents do to keep their children safe when they are in public places.
- To analyze and come up with necessary rules for children to follow when they are on the internet and in public places.
- To find ways to educate parents who are themselves unaware of the dangers of the internet.

## **Scope**

- Research on dangers a child can be exposed to on the internet. As well as the mistakes a child does while using the internet.
- Research on child safety measures in public places.
- Survey to analyze the precautions parents take/don't take to protect their children from the dangers of the internet.
- Identifying solutions/ precautions that parents learn to educate their children to protect themselves from predators.
- To run a campaign to spread awareness about the dangers a child can face while on the internet, and what measures a parent must take to protect their children.

## **Limitations**

- There may be some sensitive issues that are difficult to approach.
- The effectiveness/results of the campaign are difficult to predict.

# Chapter 2

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE



## 2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The areas of study for reviewing literature focuses on the following: Child safety in public places, Educating kids about the potential threats in public, Stranger danger online, Parents' guide to the internet, Educators and Cybersafety.

### 2.1 Child safety in public spaces

In an article called "*Child protection: a universal concern and a permanent challenge in the field of child and adolescent mental health*" by Joerg M. Fegert and Manuela Stötzel,

Movements related to Child safety and child abuse are fairly recent. Attention to child safety increased around the late 19th century. It mentions the following study :

In 2015 the U.N. released a report titled "The Road to Dignity by 2030: Ending Poverty, Transforming All Lives and Protecting the Planet", which laid out an agenda for formulating sustainable development goals through the promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies. One of the important goals in this agenda is "to end abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence and torture against children". This report was followed by one put out by UNICEF titled "A Post-2015 World Fit for Children"

*UNICEF India* released a report on child safety in India.

The first agenda item in the UNICEF report reads as follows:

" End violence against children: In a world where almost one billion children under 15 suffer regular physical punishment, and nearly a quarter of all girls between the ages of 15 and 19 report experiencing physical violence, violence against children affects every country and every community. While violence against children is often invisible, its impact on individual children and their societies is profound and far-reaching, undermining developmental gains made in other areas. Because violence against children is a universal problem, investing in protecting children from violence, exploitation and abuse must be a global priority. More must be done to raise awareness of violence and encourage people to speak out when they see or suspect violence against children and to strengthen social welfare systems and

services that protect children from harm and provide support to those who are already victims of violence.”

Crimes against children in India have increased by more than 500 per cent between 2006 to 2016, as per an analysis done by Child Rights and You (CRY). More than 50 percent of crimes against children were recorded in just five states which are Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Delhi and West Bengal, during the same period.

India has a wide range of laws to protect children and child protection is now accepted as a major part of social development. Due to inadequate human resources and services many children in India are prone to exploitation and abuse.

According to UNICEF India in their article about child protection, Violence takes place in all settings: whether it is at home, school, child care institutions, work and in the community. In many cases, the abuser is someone known to the child, so it is very important to be equipped to deal with this in an appropriate way.

Progress has been made in generating social awareness, enhancing legislation and nurturing action towards ending violence, abuse and exploitation of children, but more needs to be done to ensure survivors and their families benefit from sensitive, timely and efficient protection and services.

Gated communities in cities can be considered to be safe but there are still important measures to be taken. Many children like to play outside and need to be informed about the dangers they can face.

The article “*What parents must do to keep children safe in gated communities*” by Sandhya Menon, *The Economic Times*, opines that in urban areas the number of families with two working parents has risen. Gated communities give a sense of safety for families in such arrangements. Families have become accustomed to depend on strangers who seem familiar just because they live in the same community.

Parents should educate their children about sexual abuse. Parents should also talk to their children about their daily activities. Sometimes kids do not tell their parents if they are having problems and building trust with them is a must. Structures and Systems where children can express their feelings and emotions freely without any inhibitions should be made. Background checks of people who work in communities and neighbourhoods are important.

Safety tips for children include ;

- Not opening the door for strangers,
- Being wary of strangers,
- noting down the home address and contacts of parents.

In the article “*How to sensitise children on home safety from an early age*” by *Shyam Motwani, The Indian Express*, The first step towards ensuring safety is sensitizing children from a young age. Using technology in infrastructure and age appropriate learning is a good way to ensure the safety of children at home.

*Citizen Matters, Chennai* in it’s article about child safety in schools opines that ; that measures for prevention of child sexual abuse be taken up not just by the government but also by other stakeholders at the ground level, which includes schools, communities and society at large. School-based education programmes can be extremely effective in the fight against child sexual abuse. The Child Abuse Study 2007 by the Government of India shows that 1 in 2 children in India experience some form of sexual abuse.

Their interview with the Co-Founder & Director of Ramana Vidyalaya, the measures to be taken to ensure safety in schools are:

- ❖ Child safety in schools can be ensured through code of conduct with the staff, training programmes, and orientation programmes for parents
- ❖ Have a strong induction programme for all the new recruits to ensure that they are aligned with the ethos around child safety. Recruitment of teachers should be based on fulfilling criteria related to child safety. It is useful to check with an online registry, where known offenders and abusers are

blacklisted. India also has a sex offenders' registry maintained by the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), which contains information such as the name, residential address, Aadhaar number, fingerprints and even DNA samples of the offenders.

- ❖ Counselling and checkups for children should be made mandatory to check wellness and safety of students.
- ❖ Many schools have started putting cameras at appropriate places to monitor people.
- ❖ Sensitization towards child abuse with parents and kids through workshops, orientations and providing guides
- ❖ Appropriate sex education in school will help students get proper information about sex and sexuality.

In the article "*Child Abuse in India – An Analysis*" by Amisha U. Pathak, it is stated that

Lack of sexual literacy and the inability of the governmental system to incorporate sexual education in schools is one of the basic reasons behind the increasing rates of child sex abuse in India.

**Conclusion:**

Vigilant parents can teach their children about self-protective practices such as the difference between a good touch and a bad touch, emergency practices in cases of abuse.

Children must be educated about Child Protection schemes and Childline Services at a young age so that they could benefit from these policies and become more informed about their rights

## 2.2 Educating kids about the potential threats

In an article titled '*What to teach kids about strangers*' published by the National Crime Protection Council, they explain that kids come across strangers every day once they start to step out of their homes and tell the parents to explain to the children that they can't judge whether a stranger is nice or not and that they have to be alert at all times when they are amidst strangers, and at the same time, they should also not create a picture in the kid's mind that all strangers are bad people, and that there are some trustable (safe) strangers (i.e, police) who they can ask help from.

But sometimes even when the kids are out with their parents, due to the carelessness of the parents or due to something that catches the attention of the kids, kids might get lost. It's a traumatic experience for the kid when he/she gets lost or is separated from his/her mother. In the article titled '*Getting Lost*' on *Indian Parenting Website*, the author says that it is not advisable for a parent to give their kid a name tag, since experts say that children are likely to trust a stranger who knows his name. It is also mentioned in the article that it is good to point out a spot to your kid and ask him/her to go there, if he/she is lost. One of the best meeting spots as mentioned in the article is the cash register because it is where the staff will always be situated and it is a spot that is there in almost every shop. One of the best pieces of advice given to the parents is to keep their visit as brief as possible when they have a really young child (below the age of 8).

A lost kid or a kid who is alone in the public is an advantage for kidnappers. In the article '*Stop! Leave! Help! - Teaching kids how to stop a potential abduction*' by *Juan Carlos Guerrero & Ama Daetz* published for *abc7 news* on Wednesday, May 15, 2019, they gave an example of a young girl who hid behind a truck when she noticed that she was being followed by a stranger in a car on a quiet street in Vallejo and once he backed up, she ran to get away. It is stated in the article that according to the "National Center for Missing and Exploited Children", less than one per cent of the 25,000 children that went missing in the year 2018, were from stranger abduction. In most cases, these potential abductors try to grab their victims on the street or lure them into their vehicles.



Van Der Zande, the founder of Kidpower Teenpower Fullpower (a group that teaches kids and adults how to prevent kidnappings, abuse, bullying and sexual assault), has explained some of the simple and useful skills which can be used by the kids in such situations. The first skill set that has been discussed by Van Der Zande is to be aware when in public, to notice trouble whether it is a car or a person and to move away from trouble. She also tells children to look for a woman with children if they ever get lost since a woman is most likely to help. The next skill that is discussed is to create a barrier with hands. By creating a barrier, the kids themselves take charge of their safety and by yelling ‘Stop! Leave! Help!’ the kids get the attention of other people and create uncertainty in the mind of the attacker about what is going to happen. Other skills include identifying safe routes along their walking area, asking for help, and some basic self defence skills. Van Der Zande has beautifully said "Making kids scared does not make them safer. Practicing what to do is what prepares them to be safe” and also recommends parents to practice self-defense skills with their children so they know exactly what to do if they face an emergency.

Another problem which kids tend to face when they are all by themselves in the public is inappropriate touch and for that, it is important for the parents to teach kids the difference between good and bad touch. In the article *by Beata Mostafavi titled ‘7 Ways to Talk to Your Child About Good and Bad Touch’ in Michigan Health* , it was said that despite expert recommendations, many parents delay talking to their kids about inappropriate touching. Mott paediatrician Alison Dickson, M.D says that about one in four girls and one in 13 boys experience child sexual abuse at some point in childhood, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. This makes it critical that parents have the conversation. This being a quite serious topic, many parents aren’t sure how to navigate the conversation or may feel uncomfortable themselves but there are approaches that don’t have to be scary or too intense. Some of the approaches discussed in this article are:

1. Teach children “you’re the boss of your body”
2. Don’t force any kind of touch
3. Use the proper words for body parts
4. Keep the right tone
5. Talk about good touch versus bad touch

6. Use simple rules and scripts
7. Keep having the conversation

But in the article *'It's Not Just 'Bad Touch' by Vidya Raja for The Better India*, they tell that it's high time to talk about other things and not just about good and bad touch. In the article, they had talked about a 7-year-old who developed a fear of going into the study in his house. His parents had been goading him to get over his fear, but they were unable to understand the basis of it. This continued for a few more weeks until one day in school he broke down. Upon having a conversation with him, he told his teacher about a cousin who has been showing him lewd pictures and obscene videos when they spend time playing and watching television in the study.

A kid at the tender age of 7 understood that something was wrong with this, but he was unable to find the words to tell his parents why he was fearful and uncomfortable. Such moments go beyond simple 'good touch-bad touch', and they need urgent addressing.

In the same article, they had interviewed Ashwini N V, a psychologist and the founder of the Muktha Foundation based in Bengaluru where she said that very often in cases of abuse, there is no physical contact at all. So by only teaching the children to differentiate by touch, we are giving them half-baked information. Ashwini also urges us to watch for changes in behaviour patterns in children as they may be warning signs of abuse. Some of the warning signs mentioned in the article by Ashwini are:

- Inappropriate engagement with toys or objects
- Becoming unusually secretive
- Nightmares and sleeping problems
- Writes or draws images with a sexual connotation
- Becoming extremely withdrawn or clingy
- Thinks of self or body as repulsive or dirty
- Reacting in a surprised manner when asked if somebody is misbehaving with them
- Change in eating habits, difficulties in swallowing.

Later in the same article, they've also mentioned the '6 Cautions' laid by Ashwini that children must be taught as a thumb rule to help prevent sexual abuse.

**1. 'Look' caution**

Acts of voyeurism, exhibitionism, making children watch pornography, 'sexting', and other behaviours where the sexual abuse involves 'seeing' must be reported.

**2. 'Hear' caution**

Acts of speaking in a vulgar manner directly or over the phone, telling a child 'I am going to touch you' (Not necessarily doing it), pressurising a child to touch him/her verbally (irrespective of the outcome) must also be reported.

**3. 'Touch' caution**

Over-emphasising what is considered 'private parts', has in many cases led to cases going unreported as children fail to recognize and therefore report it.

**4. 'Hold' caution**

Any act of hugging, making the child sit on the lap, or penetrative sexual activity that makes the child uncomfortable must be reported.

**5. 'Alone' caution**

While this does not directly constitute sexual abuse, it could very well act as a precursor to sexual abuse or some other form of abuse. This refers to encouraging a child to be in circumstances where the child is alone or seeking information regarding when the child is alone.

**6. 'Space' caution**

Getting very close to children despite a lot of space around. This can act as a precursor to possible abuse.

She also says that it is equally important to educate adults about these various behaviour patterns and look beyond the basic good touch-bad touch method of dealing with child sexual abuse.

Another main problem faced by children when in public is bullying. In the article on the *UNICEF website titled 'How to talk to your children about bullying,'* they have clearly defined bullying as a pattern of behaviour, rather than an isolated incident. Children who bully usually come from a perceived higher social status or position of power, such as children who are bigger, stronger or perceived to be popular.

In this article, they not only talk about how parents can help prevent bullying in their child's school and how they should respond when their child is bullied, they have also explained how parents can respond if their child is bullying others. They have clearly explained that children who bully often just want to fit in, need attention or are simply figuring out how to deal with complicated emotions and in some cases, bullies are themselves, victims or witnesses, to violence at home or in their community. They have discussed steps like communicating and understanding why the kid is behaving so, working through healthy ways of coping up with, examining one's self (since children who bully are often modelling what they see at home) and giving consequences and opportunities to make amends.

## **Conclusion**

Be it indoors or outdoors, threats for children manifests in different forms and a child has to stay alert always. This doesn't mean that the world is filled with bad people, there are good people who kids can reach out for help. And if your child is troubling or bullying another child, it's clearly high time for a parent to reflect upon themselves.

## 2.3 Stranger Danger Online

*An Article - "Almost 50% of Indian children admit to meeting a stranger they first met online- reveals Intel Security study". Intel Security released the findings of the 2015 edition of its Teens, Tweens and Technology Survey which examined the online behaviors and social networking habits of tweens and teens aged 8 to 16 years old in India.*

The findings of the study indicate that though parents have had "the talk" with their children about rules to follow while on social media, interacting with strangers is not one of the primary topics.

"Due to the proliferation of connected devices like smartphones, tablets and laptops, an unprecedented level of personal data is now available online, expanding the risk canvas exponentially. We believe that increased education and usage of technologies like parental controls, content filtering and creation of activity logs will play a huge role in empowering parents to ensure a safe digital footprint for their children." *said Venkat Krishnapur, Head of Operations for Intel Security Group's India Development Centre.*

This indicates that there are still certain things that parents need to be aware of (i.e. telling their children not to talk to or accept friend requests from strangers) while giving their child online safety instructions.

*Another study - Protecting Children From Online Sexual Predators: Technological, Psychoeducational, and Legal Considerations by Stefan C. Dombrowski, John W. LeMasney, and C. Emmanuel AhiaRider University Shannon A. Dickson - California State University, Sacramento. February 2004 states that:*

The Internet poses challenges to those who foster the well-being of youth. It provides access to countless children and represents an efficient way for predators to "groom" and then solicit youth for future sexual abuse

(Note: Predators view the process of finding and tracking down a child as a hunt and a game. They spend a lot of time, over many months, breaking down barriers to get the child to feel comfortable enough to divulge personal information. This process is referred to as "grooming.")

Some people who establish online relationships share deeply personal information without ever meeting. Others who communicate online sometimes meet in person and may eventually form more permanent relationships. The early stigma associated with meeting someone on the Internet and then establishing an in-person relationship has faded. Although this way of meeting can have advantages, there are also significant dangers. An individual can masquerade as a youth with similar background, age, and interests. This, in fact, is a common modus operandi of sexual predators whose goal is to gain access to youth for the purpose of sexual abuse.

*According to an article, Reports of Online Predators on the Rise. How to Keep Your Kids Safe, written by Toni Birdsong, a Family Safety Evangelist for McAfee-published on the official McAfee website. on Jun 13, 2020*

The past few months of staying at home, “have created what some experts call the perfect storm for online predators. Schools are closed, kids are on devices more, and social distancing is creating new levels of isolation and boredom.”

The **National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC)**, reports that their CyberTipline spiked 106% during the first months of the pandemic. A recent CNN story claims the dark web has seen a similar increase in activity within predator communities that has spilled over to the mainstream web since the pandemic began.

She goes on to say in the article; Predators reach out to minors through social networks, gaming platforms, or apps. They often pose as a peer, use fake photos, and create fake profiles to lure minors to chat. Predators build trust with children through devious tactics such as grooming, mirroring, and fishing.

( Note: **Mirroring** is the behavior in which one person unconsciously imitates the gesture, speech pattern, or attitude of another. Mirroring often occurs in social situations, particularly in the company of close friends or family.

Predators will start mirroring to make the child believe that they are the same age as them)

Predators have been known to target socially awkward or shy kids and convince them to keep their online relationships secret. The predator may ask for a risqué or explicit photo that they may later use to bully or manipulate the child or share within predator circles on the dark web. If the child refuses to send more photos when asked, a predator may threaten to share photos they already have with the child's family and friends. Often the predator may ask the child to meet in person. These relationships can be brief or go on. Regardless of duration, each encounter can have a harmful psychological impact on a child. Of course, the worst-case predator situations can result in trafficking or death.

*According to "Collection Of Data Through Cookies and smart devices - A Case Study" by Garima Kaushik and Rishabh Prakash, 2018.*

Data is everywhere. Ubiquitously, companies and governments are collecting data. One simple visit to the World Wide Web leaves a wide digital footprint. One Google search about the best mutual funds in the market and you will be bombarded with mutual fund advisories anywhere you visit. The lines between the online world and the offline world are blurring, as the number of metadata increases.

A cookie is a small text file that is stored by a website you visit, on your local computer. Several times there are tick boxes saying "Remember me on this device" right on the login screen. What does it do? Well, clicking the box simply places a cookie on your computer stating that till the cookie expires, the computer must automatically log you into that particular service.

Cookies in no way give access to user data on the hard disk, and by and large, they cannot be used to execute any malicious code on the host machine. It is just an identifier for that machine set by the server.

The major problem with cookies is a system called cookie profiling. Large advertisers get cookie information from several high-volume websites. These cookies can then be placed together and the advertiser can collect a significant amount of data regarding the user's behavior, his choices, demographics, and

sometimes even his finances. At the very least this data can be put to use to provide targeted cross-platform ads to the customer. At times, these ads are not just cross-platform, they are also cross-system and cross-services.

But a major risk arises when a hacker gets their hands on the cookies. If the hackers can gain access to the cookies on the device, they will gain access to a lot of personal information as well.

The amount of data being generated every day is enormous. Further, this has huge privacy implications. Hence, users must be very careful about the data they give out. And should take utmost care and good measures to ensure that there is no unwanted data leak. A good first step would be to begin reading the privacy policies and the data retention laws of your favorite online services. To be aware is to *beware!*

Parents must make sure to inform their children about the things they should not leak onto the internet.

According to an article titled *We need to start teaching young children about cybersecurity*, written by *Paul Mee, Partner, Digital and Financial Services, Oliver Wyman*, which appeared on *The World economic Forum*. 02 March 2020

- Hackers and fraudsters are increasingly targeting children, who are now using tech at an earlier age.
- Elementary school curricula should incorporate cybersecurity.
- Existing voluntary programmes aimed at younger children can show the way.
- There are basic lessons children need to learn early in life to ensure their safety. Look both ways before crossing the street. Wear seatbelts. Avoid talking to strangers.

It's time to add another to the list: **Beware hackers and cyber creeps.**



In this era of rapid technological advancement, children need to immerse themselves in technology at a young age in order to start learning the skills they will use throughout their lives.

Elementary school teachers should include these cybersecurity basics in their everyday curricula. At a minimum, every young child should know how to keep their information private, to refrain from responding to strangers and to report anything unusual to an adult.

Cyberattacks are nothing new, of course. But what is less understood is the extent to which children increasingly are being targeted. About one in four youths in the US will experience identity theft or fraud before they reach the age of 18, according to a 2019 estimate by the consumer credit reporting company Experian. Fraudsters are targeting their clean credit histories and, increasingly, their virtual wallets.

Parents need to make sure that kids are informed of these dangers.

According to an article, *8 Common Scams Targeted at Teens*, by Janet Flower - A Freelance financial writer whose work has appeared on such sites as Investopedia, MSN, The Globe and Mail, Forbes, ABC News, Yahoo, Canoe, and Fox News. November 30, 2020.

There are eight scams that target teenagers. Given that kids virtually live and interact online, it's no surprise that the internet is the optimal environment for many of them.

1. Social Media Scams
2. Inexpensive Luxury Goods
3. Identity Theft
4. Contests
5. Financial Scams
6. Scholarships and Grants
7. Online Auctions
8. Cell Phone "Freebies"

- Scams that target teenagers abound, especially in their favorite habitat—the internet.
- Fraudsters use social media to trick teens into providing personal information, which can be used for identity theft.
- Many scams take the form of ads and auctions, promising luxury goods for amazingly cheap prices—goods that never arrive.
- Other scams involve contests, scholarships, or employment offers that require the teen to pay some sort of fee or deposit.
- Yet another trick is to lure teens with "free" services for cell phones that actually incur a monthly charge.

It's an old but eternally important life lesson: If anything looks too good to be true, it probably is. Parents need to take the time to discuss with their teen(s) the types of information that scammers are looking for and emphasize the need for security, privacy, and caution in sharing data. And make their children aware of any common frauds out there—especially on the internet.

### **Conclusion**

The Internet can be wonderful for kids. They can use it to research school reports, communicate with teachers and other kids, and play interactive games. But online access also comes with risks, like inappropriate content, cyberbullying, and online predators. Parents need to make sure that their kids know and follow rules while on the internet as it is essential for their safety.

## **2.4 Parents' and the Internet**

Children nowadays live their lives connected to the internet; it has become an integral part of communication and entertainment that plays a huge role in their life. As important as it is, it can also be the source of great harm if not used safely and responsibly. So as a result, it is vital for parents and guardians to recognise their role in setting a safe environment for their children to safely use the internet.

The Internet, and other new technology can be very daunting for some folks to understand. This can cause some anxiety and frustration over managing what is okay and not okay for their children to do online. Parents find themselves having to adapt new parenting techniques and household rules in order to ensure their child is getting the right kind of exposure to the world - online or offline.

According to a study conducted by the Pew Research Center, parents, which includes those who have at least one child under the age of 18 but who may also have adult children, are far more likely to say that parenting is harder today than it was two decades ago than believe the opposite is true.

A major factor in this, is the widespread impact technology. Parents find themselves unable or unaware of how to deal with new issues like cyber bullying, online predators and exposure to bad influences such as drug use, violence and or nsfw content. They also have trouble managing just how much screen time is acceptable for a child in a day, and dealing with how these technologies may be changing the behaviors and experiences of children.

While the internet can be wonderful, it also makes inappropriate material far too accessible for children and also makes them vulnerable to predators. Parents must stay engaged with technology to monitor use in efforts to protect children more than previous generations.

Parents can keep an eye on their child's online endeavours to make sure they don't fall victim to online predators. According to an article written by Elana Pearl Ben-Joseph, MD, some good guidelines to follow are:

- Spend time online together to teach your kids appropriate online behavior.
- Keep the computer in a common area where you can watch and monitor its use, not in individual bedrooms. Monitor any time spent on smartphones or tablets.
- Bookmark kids' favorite sites for easy access.
- Check your credit card and phone bills for unfamiliar account charges.
- Find out what, if any, online protection is offered by your child's school, after-school center, friends' homes, or any place where kids could use a computer without your supervision.
- Take your child seriously if he or she reports an uncomfortable online exchange.

Watch out for signs that your child might be targeted by a predator such as:

- Spending long hours online, especially at night
- Phone calls from people you don't know
- Unsolicited gifts arriving in the mail
- Your child suddenly turning off the computer when you walk into the room
- Withdrawal from family life and reluctance to discuss online activities

It is much easier to monitor your child's online activities on shared family devices, but sometimes the need arises that growing children need their own devices. Whether it be for work or personal use, it is important to correctly transition the responsibility of keeping themselves safe on the internet. A good understanding of what websites are okay to use is vital.

Parents are especially concerned about the negative impact that smartphones may have on children, including how these devices could hinder their ability to develop interpersonal skills. Parents are worried that mobile devices could hurt younger children's ability to interact with others or forge meaningful relationships.

According to a research done by the Pew Research Center, roughly seven-in-ten parents think that children under the age of 12 using smartphones will hurt their ability to learn effective social skills (71%) or develop healthy friendships (68%).

And just over half of parents – 54% – say younger kids’ engagement with these devices will hurt their ability to do well in school.

So how can one know when children are ready for their own electronic device? Psychologist Catherine Steiner-Adair, author of *The Big Disconnect*, says the real question is not about the "right" age or about the phone itself, but about whether your child is developmentally ready to have “full access to the adult world,” and whether you’ve laid the groundwork to prepare them for healthy and responsible device use.

Introducing responsible device use is another parenting duty today — like handing children a book or telling them how to eat healthy. Rather than run away from technology use, consider it an opportunity to educate your child, demonstrate proper etiquette, and test out rules. You will know when your child is ready for their own device when you about responsible use and modeled the behavior on your own device.

Parents need to educate their children on good internet habits such as what information is private, what websites are off limits and what behaviours to look out for when dealing with a sketchy online presence. Some good tips, as presented in an article by a NortonLifeLock employee, are:

- Never leave your device unattended

Your electronic devices most often carry valuable personal information, such as addresses, contacts, photos, bank details and other details. Losing your device could potentially put these details in the hands of a predator looking to take advantage of your data.

- Click with caution

Phishing is the fraudulent attempt to obtain sensitive information or data, such as usernames, passwords and credit card details or other sensitive details, by impersonating oneself as a trustworthy entity in a digital communication.

Needless to say, phishing is a serious threat that is all too easy to encounter through a careless click. Always make sure that the link leads to a reputable website, and learn how to identify odd or sketchy emails or other notifications. Some of the things to look out for include spelling mistakes, odd messages, and threatening notifications urging prompt action. When in doubt, avoid clicking on the link, and instead go straight to the company website and contact the person concerned or the customer service department to ensure such a mail was sent to you.

- Never share passwords

It is vital to keep sensitive information such as passwords to yourself, as it can be pretty dangerous in the hands of the wrong person. Your password could grant someone trying to take advantage of your access to important reserves of data they can steal or manipulate. Never share your password, and use a combination of at least 10 letters and numbers to make it harder to guess.

- Be wary of using social media

Most social media websites require their users to be at least 13 years of age when signing up for an account, however, some platforms allow a child to sign up with parental supervision. In this case, children need to be educated on what is okay to post and what is not okay to share.

They also need to understand what kind of people they should avoid engaging in conversation with, and what sort of messages are not okay to receive, especially from an adult. They should never feel pressured to share details about themselves, personal information about their whereabouts, or share photos of themselves to another person.

Some social media apps broadcast their location, either when posting or at all times. This function is not a good idea for a young child to have, and may let predators know your current location. This can lead to stalking and/or abduction.

Cyberbullying is also a rampant problem on many social media platforms. It can affect children's lives both online and offline. It is important to understand what behaviour breaches the platform's community guidelines, and how to effectively deal with the offending content.

Most social media platforms have their own tools to help deal with harmful content that gets posted. By utilising these tools, you can report content that was made to target you, and have it taken down. In some cases, it may be necessary to contact the local police to inform them of a more serious crime, such as posting of defamatory posts of you.

- Share content with caution

Children tend to be very trusting of others, and can often make poor judgment calls on what kind of content is okay to share online. The internet is a vast place, where posts get circulated easily and can travel far distances. It is also very difficult to erase content you regret putting online, since many copies and reuploads can be in circulation.

Chris Hoff, vice president, strategic planning, security, Juniper Networks says "Anything that is put online should assumed to be permanent".

So, it is important to educate your kids on thinking before posting, and make sure they are okay with what they are sharing. They also need to keep in mind that even if the content they share isn't problematic in any sense, it may sometimes be taken out of context by another, and cause misunderstandings that could be very harmful.

- Be a good online citizen

It is often easy to get lost in the moment and forget that you are talking to a real human being and not just an online persona. It is important to maintain civility and have respect for varying opinions, ethnicities, racial groups, cultures and other things you may come across or may be topics of discussion. They should be coached on how to behave towards others when gaming, chatting, e-mailing or messaging.

Despite all the training you give our child in proper internet etiquette, they're bound to encounter some nasty situations, either on accident or on purpose. It is natural for children to be curious about things that are off limits to them. It is not always possible to control what they may come across when on the internet.

So, being open in discussion about online safety, and what practices can lead to harmful outcomes, is key to creating a safe "virtual" environment for exploring. Talking about the harmful things they see gives you a chance to treat it as a learning opportunity to teach them right from wrong and what behaviours are and are not acceptable. Most importantly, it is vital to build trust with your child, and encourage them to approach you if they encounter any communication or conversation that was scary or harmful.

## **Conclusion**

Parents have a lot of work ahead of them in order to prepare their child to face the world, both in an online and offline presence. Parenting and its challenges have changed drastically over the past decades, so parents often feel lost, confused and overwhelmed with what is expected of them, and whether they are making the right choices for their child. Proper research on internet threats and what is acceptable for their child to do online on their own is important in order to guide them through acceptable online behaviours. With the right sort of groundwork laid out, your children can experience a safe and healthy internet exploration.



## **2.5 Educators and Cyber Safety**

An article published by the Department of Education and Training, the executive administrative authority of the Australian state of Victoria in 2019, emphasises that Principals and teachers have a duty of care to take reasonable steps to protect students from any harm that should have reasonably been foreseen, including those that may be encountered within the online learning environment. And also how Principals and teachers must understand their duty of care, responsibilities and other school-based policies that work to support them such as the bully prevention policy, student engagement policy and acceptable use agreements.

*Why is it important to teach Cyber Safety in school*

*Ryan Ayers*, in the Article *The Importance of Teaching Students About Cyber Security* published in the year 2017, gives a brief on why educating students everything about cyber safety is important since the Internet has become a daily essential in everyone's lives today, including children's. And when mature, intelligent, sometimes even tech-savvy adults can fall for scams online, we can be almost certain that a child full of curiosity, but limited in maturity and awareness, can fall victim to the dangers of the internet. It's important for parents to be open with their kids about online safety, but it's also helpful if teachers get involved in the conversation.

He emphasises how most kids have been born right into this digital age and have never known a world without the Internet. They see the Internet as this great big thing with tons of information and answers to everything. So they must be made aware that the Internet has flaws; that people with bad intentions can seep through the cracks and get to them and their personal information if they are not careful.

He also states how cybercrime has become more of a threat than traditional types of crime. Crimes like burglary, larceny-theft, and even violent crime have declined in the last few years because criminals have found a new way to break into our homes through our screens, giving them access to more than what's physically in our houses or our pockets.

Ryan has also mentioned how Teens like to share what they are doing, who they are with, what they're wearing and a lot more about their daily life on social media, impulsively. Even if their accounts are private, there are ways for strangers to hack right into their accounts and see those posts they thought were private. Deleting a post is also neither a preventive measure nor a solution because, once something goes up on the Internet, there are ways to regain it, even if it's been deleted.

*Anindita Mishra* is McAfee's Cybermum in India. Her article about *the importance of cybersecurity lessons in school*, published in mcafee.com in November 2017 talks about why it is important, from another perspective. The excerpts are as follows :

- Children accept teachers as information providers and give credence to their words
- Cybersafety training can be tailored according to age and grade
- Group learning helps in building virtual social bonds, and confidence
- Campaigns, contests and bulletin boards can be used to promote better virtual behaviour
- New lectures similar to value education can be taken up to teach online etiquette. Schools that organize such cybersafety sessions, needs to make it a regular feature.

*How to Keep Students Safe Online Dr Sean Coffron's Article on the 6c's of cyber safety* in edtechmagazine.com published in November 2020 is a 4-stage guide for teachers on how to implant this concept in 1 to young minds

### 1. Calm the Storm and Work Methodically

There are four stages in realizing that students are at a high level of risk in the era of remote learning. The first stage is awareness, which is followed by panic. This

panic can take on different levels of severity, but it almost always leads to some level of paralysis and inactivity.

Allow yourself to feel this, and then work to the third level: acceptance. Accept that this is a new reality for students. Then, quickly and calmly protect students in the fourth stage, which is action. It's crucial in this stage to make a plan but also stay flexible and patient as you travel through uncharted waters.

## 2. Create a Safe and Secure Digital Space

Start with a plan and have a clear idea of your goals. For example, determine whether you want students to have unrestricted access to social media or if you prefer a more structured approach. Also, decide to what extent you'll monitor online activity and what digital resources students will be allowed to use. In the classroom, for instance, teachers can limit students to only those digital tools or resources that are relevant to the lesson at hand.

## 3. Communicate and Collaborate with Your Students

Once you have developed a clear vision for their digital lives, it's important to communicate this to students directly. As a teacher, there is a sense of scaffolding already in place, but the current situation still calls for finesse. Be honest with your concerns and educate students about the challenges of safely navigating the digital world. Also, make sure to listen to their ideas and goals so that you can work together to revise your plan as needed.

## 4. Collect Information About the Digital Risks

It's also important to take the time to learn more about the different threats students face online.

## 5. Connect with Organizations That Can Assist

There are plenty of organizations that are treasure troves of ideas and resources. One of the best ways to stay connected is to collaborate with local organizations and state agencies that conduct research and organize events to share and develop new ways to protect students online and spread awareness about digital safety and

citizenship. Consider reaching out to other schools or professional learning communities to find more resources to use.

## 6. Congratulate Yourself and Your Students for Success

One of the most powerful and potent strategies for protecting students from the dangers of cyberspace has nothing to do with computers at all. Most young people who are victims of cyberbullying have reported that they did not think anyone would listen to their concerns and that no one was on their side. So, reach out to your students. Be on their side. Congratulate them, and yourself, for taking this first important step to securing their emotional and social well-being.

### *Main topics to be addressed to students*

In the article: *The importance of cybersecurity lessons in school*, published in November 2017 at mcafee.com, author *Anindita Mishra* shares the important topics to be sensitised in a cyber safety session :

- Social Media: etiquette; safety; mutual respect; diplomacy; language; content
- The norms of sharing: How much to share; what not to share and with whom; Too much sharing and future effects
- The importance of privacy: How to secure devices; accounts; profile; passwords
- Scams, Spams, hacking: Attachments and links in emails and posts; keywords to look out for
- Block and report accounts: When to consider this option-How to keep records; whom to inform; how to block and report
- Identify fake: How to identify fake profiles and messages; how to authenticate data before sharing; how to block and report cyberbullies and predators
- Dares, challenges and other risky games: How to identify peer pressure and avoid them; understand that such risky challenges are the new

faces of cyberbullying and how to counteract them; how to tackle online bullying; creating a support group for victims

- Footprints in the digital sands of time: How posts have future implications and may impact college admissions and/or career. How to remove posts and photos shared and sanitize social media accounts
- Smartphone Safety: Using security apps, GPS, geotagging, selfie risks
- Financial risks: e-transactions

The learning outcome for students emphasised by the author are:

- Stay informed about cybersafety and cyber civics
- Know how to identify dangers and tackle them
- Make informed decisions online
- Learn how to surf in a secure environment
- Use the internet to learn and build a network

An Article by the *Victoria State Government, Department of Education and Training* in 2019, has provided an evidence-based eSafety Toolkit to help schools in Australia prevent and respond to cyber safety issues in their communities. The four key stages of cyber safety for students include:

1. Prepare: Resources to help schools assess their readiness to address online safety issues and provide suggestions for improving their systems.
2. Engage: Resources to help schools engage their communities, including staff, students and families, to create more positive online environments.
3. Educate: Resources to build the capacity of school communities to deal with online safety issues, including guidelines around staff training, implementing cyber safety programs and engaging external online safety education providers.
4. Respond: Resources to help schools assess and respond to cyber safety incidents and protect the mental health and wellbeing of their students.

*Cybersafety Pasifika, an AFP- Australian Federal Police led program*, published an article on *Tips for Teachers* on how to make students become aware of cyber safety in [cybersafety.pasifika.org](http://cybersafety.pasifika.org). Their suggestions are as follows:

- Make a difference by starting a positive change in your school community.
- Be a role model for young people by setting an example of positive online behaviour.
- Encourage young people to have respectful relationships; including self-respect, respect for family and friends.
- Help young people build a strong community that says no to bullying others.
- Question everything you see on the internet and encourage students to do the same. Because not everything on the internet is true.
- Talk about difficulties to support young people as they grow up with technology.
- If you are aware of a young person in trouble online, help them find support.

## **Conclusion**

The technological advancements that have created opportunities for students to engage in the classroom in new and exciting ways also involve significant challenges. It is essential for principals to work with their staff and school community to develop holistic policies that reflect the teaching and learning practices, strategies and technologies that are being used by teachers and students. Ensure to create clear processes and practices to manage classroom and online behaviour and respond to any incidents that may arise. Encourage teachers to prepare curriculum plans that explicitly teach safe, responsible and ethical online behaviours.

# Chapter 3

## METHODOLOGY



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### 3 METHODOLOGY

Child safety refers to keeping the child away from hazardous situations and reducing the risk of the child getting harmed.

In India, parents are very protective of their children, and they make it mandatory to teach their children about “STRANGER DANGER.”

At a young age, children are taught not to trust strangers who approach them when there isn't a trusted guardian or supervisor around them. This is to try to reduce the risk of child abduction, or abuse.

"Stranger danger" is the idea or warning that all strangers can potentially be dangerous. It is an example of a moral panic that people experience regarding anyone that they are unfamiliar within society. The phrase is intended to help children associate unknown persons with danger.

The phrase has found widespread usage and many children will hear it during their childhood lives. Many books, films, and public service announcements have been devoted to helping children remember this advice. However, the concept has been criticized for ignoring that most child abductions and harm result not from strangers, but rather from someone the child knows.

Although there are other dangers such as kidnapping for ransom, the main threat with which stranger danger campaigns are concerned is child sexual abuse. Despite many campaigns to bring awareness to the issue, some children remain unaware of the correct ways to handle an unknown situation with a stranger.

It is important to educate children on the dangers that can come from strangers and known trusted adults and to recognize the signs of danger. It is also important to educate them on recognizing situations where another person could be grooming them to be more accepting towards predatory behavior.



On the Internet, one can find information about, and images of, almost anything. However, when it comes to children's online activities, one needs to make sure they're protected against contact with undesirable people, inappropriate or harmful content, and malicious software or attacks.

It is important for parents to know what to do in such situations and make sure their child does not accidentally put themselves in harm's way.

### **3.1 Rationale Of This Study**

There are many dangers that a child can face when he/she is in public without adult supervision. It is important for children to know what to do in such situations. This study will help understand what type of precautions are already being taken and what need to be taken.

Due to the current situation - Pandemic, very young children have been introduced to the internet, for an online school. They use the internet for education, reference, and for entertainment.

Their exposure to the internet has increased considerably, working parents do not have enough time to monitor their children constantly, this could lead the child to accidentally or intentionally/unknowingly do something on the internet, that they clearly should not be doing. There are also parents who are unaware of the dangers of the internet and need to be educated in order to protect their children.

#### **The following are the types of dangers faced online**

- Cyberbullying
- Cyber predators
- Phishing
- Accidentally downloading malware
- Traumatic content - Inappropriate content
- Chat Room "friends"
- Online scams

The main aim of this project is to educate and inform parents about the dangers a child may face in public and educate them on the “new internet” age. They need to know how to keep their children safe from harmful content and people that they could accidentally come into contact with while on the internet or in public.

### **3.2 Objectives of the study**

- To understand and learn various dangers a child could be exposed to when he/she is on the internet or in public
- To learn if parents in India teach their children about internet safety.
- To understand what parents do to keep their children safe when they are in public places.
- To analyze and come up with necessary rules for children to follow when they are on the internet and in public places.
- To find ways to educate parents who are themselves unaware of the dangers of the internet.

### **3.3 Research Setting**

This study is set in Chennai. It is conducted amongst parents of children aged from 3-16 years.

This research also includes a focus group study of a group of children who use electronic devices.

### **3.4 Sampling And Size**

Sampling is the process of selecting a representative group from the population under study. The people who are a part of the sample are referred to as participants or respondents.

The sample for this project includes parents of, and children, aged between 3-16 years.

Sample size – 100 parents and children.

### **3.5 Sources of Data Required**

#### **3.5.1 Primary Research**

Primary data is information that is collected specifically for the purpose of a research project. An advantage of primary data is that it is specifically tailored to the research needs. A disadvantage is that it is expensive and difficult to obtain.

Primary data required for this research to proceed will be data and information collected from questionnaires. The questionnaires will be circulated among parents of the above-mentioned age groups. The collected information and data will then be analyzed and used for further research.

#### **3.5.2 Secondary Research**

Secondary data refers to data that is collected by someone other than the researcher. Common sources of secondary data include censuses, information collected by government departments, organizational records and data that was originally collected for other research purposes.

The secondary data for this research includes information obtained from various sources such as books, articles, case studies, magazines, journals and publications, newspapers, and websites.

### **3.6 Time Period**

The time schedule of the study is approximately 3 months spanning from the month of January (2021) to April (2021).

### **3.7 The Technique of Data Collection**

Data collection is the process of gathering and measuring information on variables of interest, in an established systematic fashion that enables one to answer stated research questions, test hypotheses, and evaluate outcomes.

Data collection is a component of research in all fields of study including physical and social sciences, humanities and business. While methods may vary by discipline, the emphasis on ensuring accurate and honest collection remains the same.

The techniques involved in collecting data for this study include interviews, questionnaires, focus group studies and case studies. The main technique that is going to be used is that of a survey by sending out questionnaires. This will take place both online and through phone calls.

### **3.8 Data Analysis**

Data analysis is a process of inspecting, cleansing, transforming, and modelling data with the goal of discovering useful information, informing conclusions, and supporting decision-making. It has multiple approaches encompassing diverse techniques.

The inputs that are received through the online surveys are directly processed by Google Forms. The data is tabulated as well as presented in the form of infographics such as pie charts and bar graphs enabling a better and easy understanding of the same.

The inputs received from children ( over phone conversations) directly will be converted to pie charts, tables, and bar graphs with the help of Microsoft Excel. These graphical and tabular representations of data will be analyzed to reach conclusions and inferences that advance the understanding of the topic.

### **3.9 Presentation Style**

The layout of the dissertation is as follows

1. Title
2. Contents
3. Tables and figures
4. Introduction
5. Review of Literature
6. Research Methodology
7. Analysis of data
8. Summary and Conclusion
9. Sample Questionnaire
10. Bibliography

### **3.10 Visual Plan**

The visual plan of this study is divided into two parts.

The first visual representation will be a booklet, which will visually explain the dangers of the internet and about public safety, and sensitise parents and children to react in the appropriate manner.

The second plan is to run a social media campaign on Instagram titled #dontletthenetbugsbite (Don't Let The NET Bugs Bite) that will contain posts targeting the issue and intending to increase the awareness among parents.

This plan will also include the posting of Instagram stories directed towards children of the mentioned age group.

# Chapter 4

## DATA ANALYSIS



## 4 Data Analysis

Two surveys were conducted via google forms. A questionnaire for parents and a questionnaire for children were distributed through Whatsapp, Instagram DM's, and email.

The purpose of this study was to analyse and understand how parents keep their children safe online and offline. It also helped understand how children followed the instructions given by their parents.

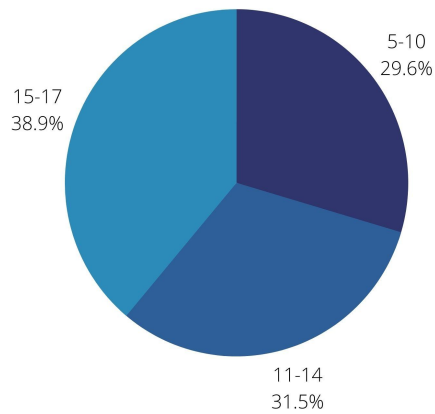
Key points :

- ❖ Two surveys were conducted:
  - Child Safety- Online and Offline - (for parents of kids aged 12 to 17)
  - Child Safety - Online and Offline - (for kids aged 12 to 17)
  
- ❖ Total number of responses = 131

## 4.1 Child Safety Online and Offline- Survey conducted for parents

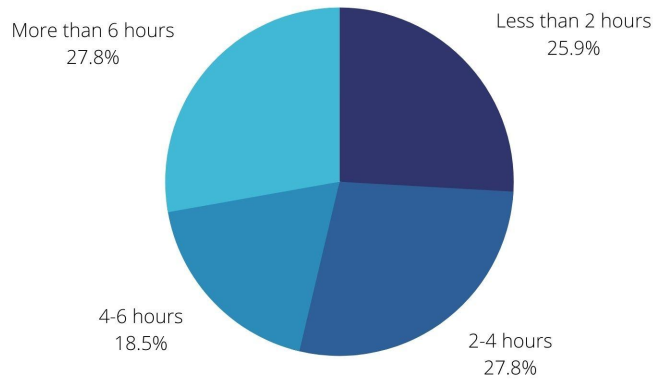
The following data analysis contains pictorial representations and explanations of the information collected from the responses to the survey.

### 1. Distribution of age group of respondent's children



*Figure 4.1.1*

### 2. Distribution of respondent's time spent with children.

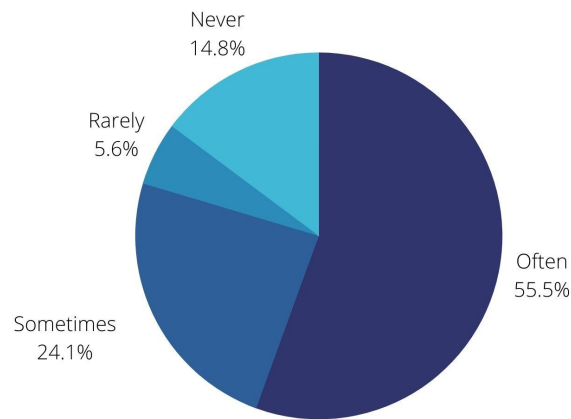


*Figure 4.1.2*



From *Figure 4.1.2*, 27.8% of respondents spend time with their children for 2- 4 hours and another 27.8% for more than 6 hours. This shows that parents who spend time with their kids for more than 6 hours are stay-at-home parents or parents who work part-time. Parents who spend time with their children for less than 2 hours are working parents.

### 3. Frequency of interaction between parents and children



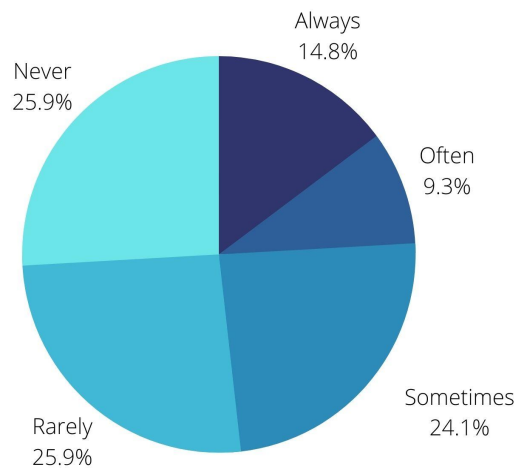
*Figure 4.1.3*

From *Figure 4.1.3*, one can see that most of the respondent's children do not shy away from sharing their daily activities with them. The time parents spend with children is valuable time. It helps the parents find out what kind of activities their children do during their free time, especially on the internet. It also helps parents monitor their kids' activities.

Parents can use time with their children to cultivate a closer bond and encourage their kids to share any troubles they may encounter. Having open discussions and being approachable to such matters helps children feel safe in confiding to their parents about the harassment they may face, instead of trying to handle it on their own, or seek unorthodox and harmful alternative methods.

Parents should also talk to their children about their daily activities. Sometimes kids do not tell their parents if they are having problems and building trust with them is a must. Structures and Systems where children can express their feelings and emotions freely without any inhibitions should be made. Background checks of people who work in communities and neighbourhoods is important.

#### 4. Number of times parents allow children to go out without adult supervision

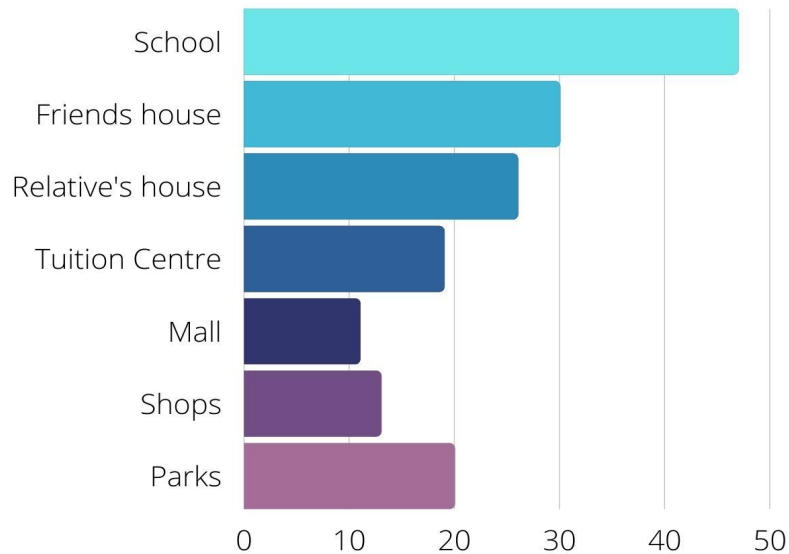


*Figure 4.1.4*

From *Figure 4.1.4*, most respondents rarely or never let their children go outside without adult supervision.

The crime rate in India against children is high so parents are wary about letting their children go out alone.

## 5. Places where children are allowed to go alone by their parents.



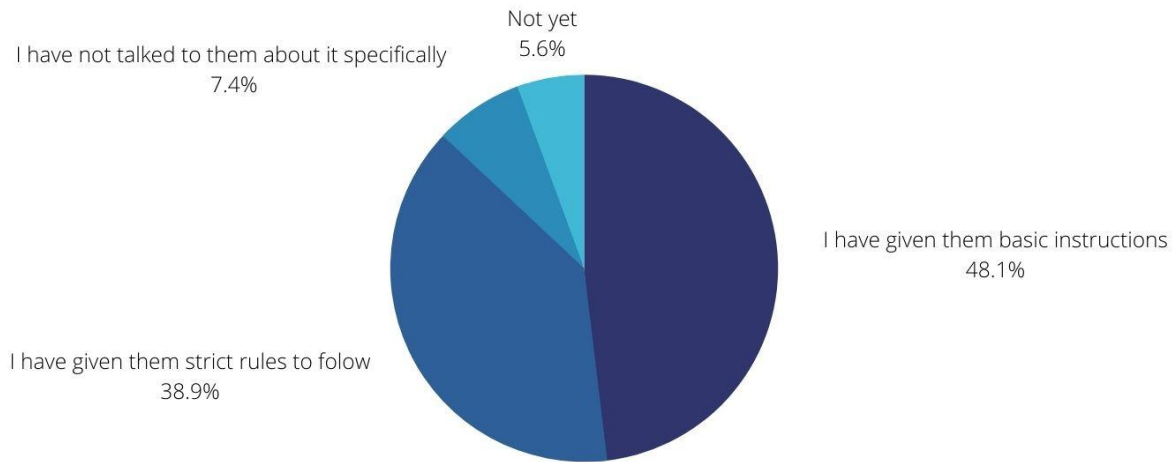
*Figure 4.1.5*

From *Figure 4.1.5*, most respondents allow their children to go to school without adult supervision. This shows that parents trust school authorities in keeping their kids safe in their absence. Schools usually take ample measures to secure the safety of children and educate them about safety.

One can also see that parents do not feel comfortable with allowing their children to go to malls, parks and shops on their own. This could indicate that parents are wary of their kid's safety in large crowded public spaces.

According to UNICEF India in their article about child protection, “Violence takes place in all settings: whether it is at home, school, child care institutions, work and in the community. In many cases, the abuser is someone known to the child, so it is very important to be equipped to deal with this in an appropriate way.”

## 6. Percentage of parents who have talked to their children about safety in public spaces



*Figure 4.1.6*

From *Figure 4.1.6*, the majority of respondents have given basic instructions about safety in public spaces to their children.

Most parents are aware of the dangers children could face in public spaces, and have also warned their children about it accordingly.

7. The following are responses that parents had typed into the survey regarding instructions they give their children when they are in public spaces.

The responses are as follows:

1. Don't interact with strangers and obey the traffic rules.
2. Don't speak to strange people & don't eat anything from strangers.
3. Do not speak with strangers.
4. Ride the cycle safely. Be aware of your surroundings. Do not talk to strangers. Do not accept anything from strangers.

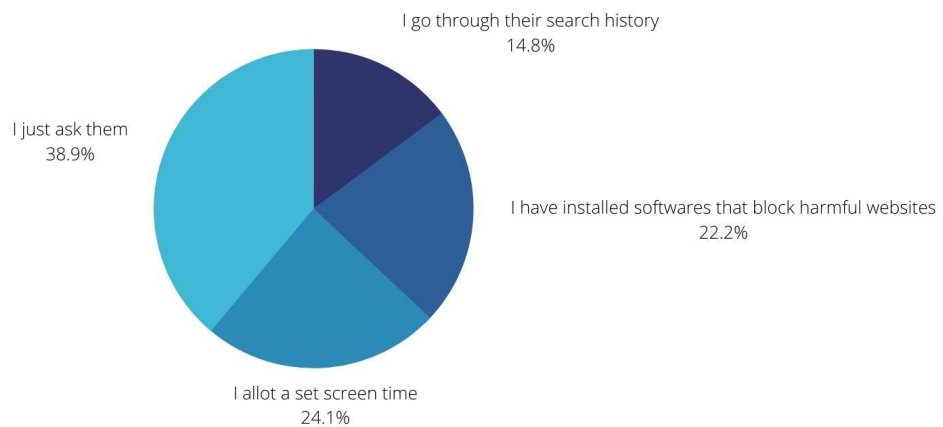
5. Do not mingle with strangers.
6. Beware of unknown people and about traffic.
7. Don't speak to the strange people.
8. Don't take anything from strangers.
9. Be aware of any strangers.
10. All safety-related measures.
11. Do not go with anyone who calls or speaks in public.
12. Be careful with Strangers.
13. Not instructions, suggestions, pandemic safety, travelling safety, playtime safety, stranger safety, using tools, road safety etc.
14. Be careful with strangers. Don't show off.
15. Good touch, bad touch. Road safety.
16. Have a watch of your surroundings.
17. She is smart and knows what to do....but I have also given her all the important things she needs to know...like not to hang out in dangerous localities etc.
18. Don't talk to strangers, do not get distracted on the road, don't get misled into believing anything a stranger tells you, be alert and walk in a group, never alone on the road.
19. Avoid talking to strangers, do not accept anything from outsiders, do not give any information such as address or phone number to strangers.
20. Behave sensibly, give respect to others.
21. Dealing with strangers, asking for help, contacting us in need, watching out for adverse situations, modus operandi of criminals, Good/bad touch, etc.
22. Not to talk to strangers.
23. Road Traffic, maintaining distance, don't ask anything which is not needed.
24. Be careful while riding, maintain distance and safety in crossing road
25. Don't go with anyone who says I'm a friend of your parents.
26. Never to go anywhere without me.

A summary of all the responses shows that maximum respondents have instructed their children to be wary of strangers.

Parents tend to focus their instructions for children’s safety around avoiding the situation altogether, rather than teaching them how to handle it.

While understanding the ways one can avoid dangerous situations is important, it is also vital for the kids to know what to do if they find themselves in unfortunate circumstances. It is not always guaranteed that kids will not fall into danger, even if they practice caution and keep away from strangers. Understanding how to effectively navigate through a bad situation could make all the difference in the outcome of the child’s survival.

### 8. Steps taken by parents to ensure online safety of children



*Figure 4.1.7*

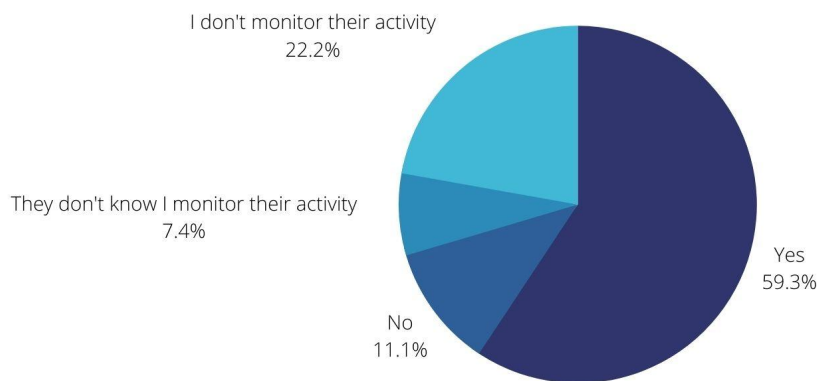
From *Figure 4.1.7*, 38.9% of respondents simply talk to their children about their online activity. This indicates that they trust their children in being honest with them, but this does not mean that the child will be completely honest or share everything with their parents. Parent-child relationships can improve when children are trusted and their boundaries are respected. Child safety can be ensured when children have positive relationships with their parents.

The 24.1 % of parents who allow screen time give their kids a specified amount of time to use the internet, but this does not mean that the child will not come in contact with inappropriate or harmful content.

The 22.2% of parents who have installed child protection software help their kids avoid dangerous situations altogether.

The 14.8% of parents who go through their child's search history, are in a way, invading their privacy. It also means that they only deal with the situation after it has occurred. This method does not guarantee the child's safety.

### 9. Monitoring activities:



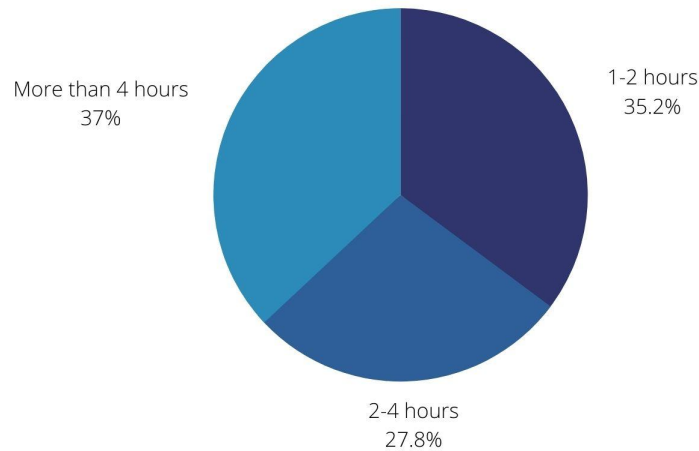
*Figure 4.1.8*

From *Figure 4.1.8*, 59.3% of respondent's children have no issues with letting their parents monitor their online activity. This shows that parents have cultivated a good sense of trust and approachability with their kids.

However, it could also be worth noting that children may be comfortable with being monitored because they have found effective ways to mask their more risky online activities, through incognito mode, or deleting the search history.

Monitoring children's activities online is a good tool to keep track of any harmful activities they may be involved in, but it does not guarantee total transparency in their actions. The most effective way to keep them away from harm is to teach them acceptable online behaviour and the dangers of certain websites.

**10.** Screen time is the amount of time spent in front of phones/monitors regarding online activities. The following pie chart shows how much time the respondent's children spend on the internet.



*Figure 4.1.9*

From *Figure 4.1.9*, it is observed that most respondents give screentime of more than 4 hours to their children.

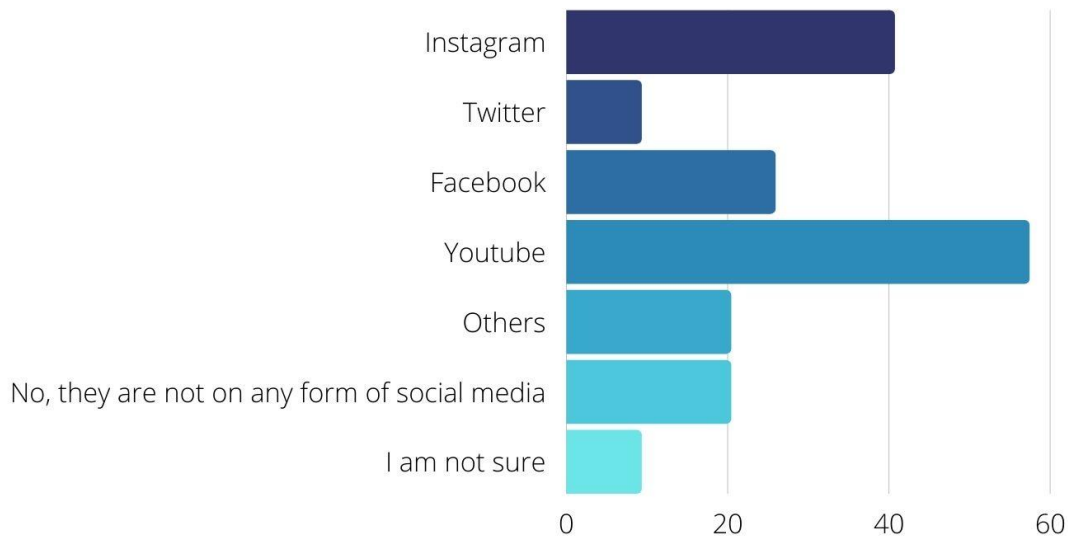
The past few months of staying at home have created what some experts call the perfect storm for online predators. Schools are closed, kids are on devices more, and social distancing is creating new levels of isolation and boredom.

Children use electronic devices to alleviate their boredom and to entertain themselves. During this time, it is very likely for them to come across dangerous content, especially if they have not been coached about proper internet etiquette. Parents hold a great responsibility in finding activities that are safe for their child to take part in.

Children need plenty of opportunities for creative play and creative thinking. Parents can start by providing activities that are based on the children's interests and ideas. This means learning how to listen intently to what children are saying.



### 11. Distribution of social media use by children of respondents:



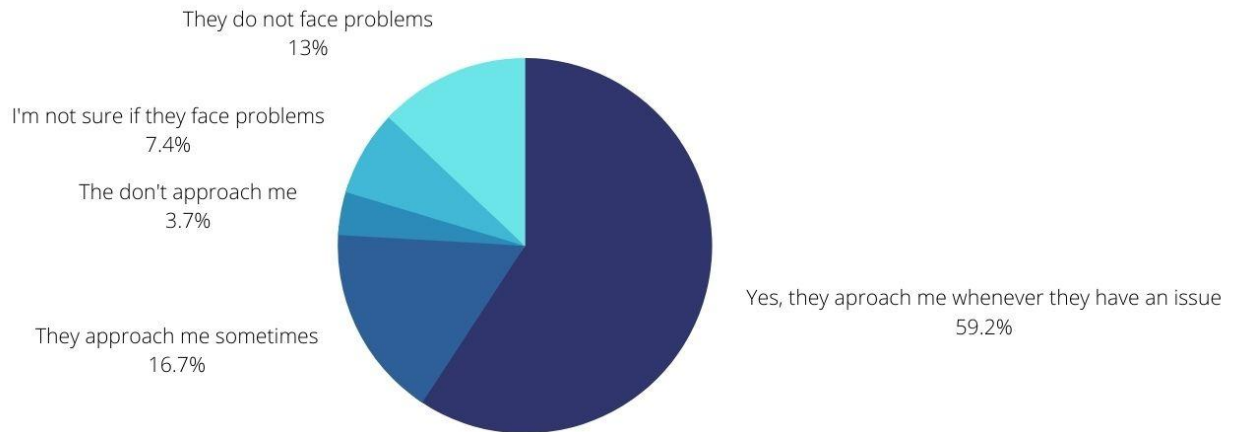
*Figure 4.1.10*

From *Figure 4.1.10*, most respondents let their children use YouTube. The reason for this could be that YouTube has good child safety features and some videos are even age-restricted. It also allows parents to monitor search history.

With Instagram being under use for 22.2%, they are more likely to be Teens who like to share details about their daily life, impulsively. So it is important for parents to spend time online together, to teach their kids appropriate online behaviour. The best way to do this is for parents to be on the same platform as their kids. Knowing that their parents can see what they are posting will force kids to act appropriately while on social media.

Teenagers may create multiple accounts (spam accounts) to avoid monitoring from their parents. Therefore parents should be well versed in using these social media sites in order to make sure their kids are safe and are behaving appropriately.

## 12. Interaction between children and parents regarding problems faced online

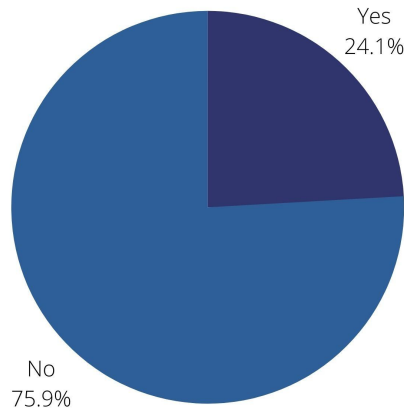


*Figure 4.1.11*

From *Figure 4.1.11*, it is observed that most of the respondent's children approach them whenever they are facing problems on the internet. This shows that there is increased transparency between parent and child.

13% of the respondents say that their children don't face problems online. This may be due to them monitoring their child's online activity.

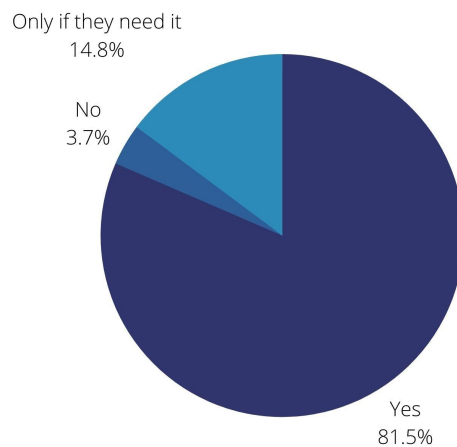
**13.** Representation of whether or not the respondent's children face problems online:



*Figure 4.1.12*

The results of *Figure 4.1.12*, could be indicative of the children having a good sense of awareness to avoid such problems, or could also mean that most children do not come forward about any problems they face online. Most respondents do not know if their children have talked to a stranger online as they have not been informed about it.

**14.** Parents opinions on whether efforts should be taken to teach online safety to children:



*Figure 4.1.13*

From *Figure 4.1.13*, it is observed that most respondents think that efforts should be taken to educate their kids about online safety.

During the pandemic, online usage among children has soared, especially due to the advent of online classes and learning. Previously, parents may not have felt the need to educate their kids on online safety. However, now that many children are using the internet, parents need to reassess their thoughts on the efforts they should take to teach their kids about proper internet safety protocols.

**15.** The following are responses that parents had typed into the survey on what kind of efforts were taken by them to educate their children on Online Safety.

(This was a non-compulsory question. 26 responses were recorded)

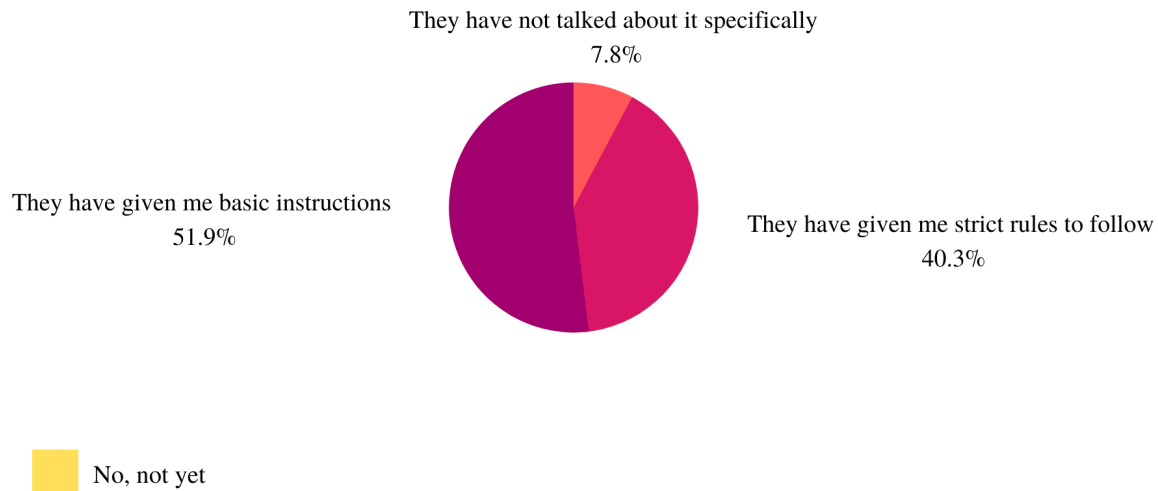
1. Avoid installing unwanted apps without parents permission.
2. Not to play online games where personal information is asked.
3. Educate them to play games, puzzles & useful sites. Sometimes I'll be watching along with them.
4. Have talked about online protocols. How information shared online is public information. How to browse safely.
5. Use safe sites. Restricted use of youtube and other social media. Discussed the crimes happening online.
6. Don't install unnecessary apps.
7. Have told them about all the possibilities on an online platform. Also told them how to deal with it.
8. Do not trust anything online without verifying it first.
9. Phishing.
10. Not to bother about persons who often come online.
11. Told them about dangers and quoted live examples.
12. Avoid stranger contacts, avoid providing personal information including pics, gaming that need to avoid, etc.
13. Not yet.
14. No DPS, no sharing of photographs. No sharing of personal details, ids, etc.
15. Be vigilant.

- 16.Nothing
- 17.I showed them a video about online safety and also told them everything I know.
- 18.Do not click on unknown sites, never disclose your name, address or upload pics on social media.
- 19.Stated all problems that might occur and how to avoid those.
- 20.Orally informed to avoid bad things.
- 21.Interactions with strangers, types of messages, information sharing, rules for installing applications, cyberbullying, etc.
- 22.They have taken a safety course about online safety.
- 23.Ya, I am communicating to them daily about online safety. Guide them about eye problems, concentration power, etc...
- 24.Eyesight issues, concentration in studies will miss out, payment gateway.
- 25.I have installed a child protection software.
- 26.I have shown them informative learning videos.

The summary of the responses shows that the respondents have taken active measures to ensure that their children are safe when they are online by incorporating various methods. The responses indicate that there are parents who know how to teach their kids about online safety.

## 4.2 Child Safety Online and Offline - Survey for Children

1. Distribution of respondents who have received information on public safety from parents:

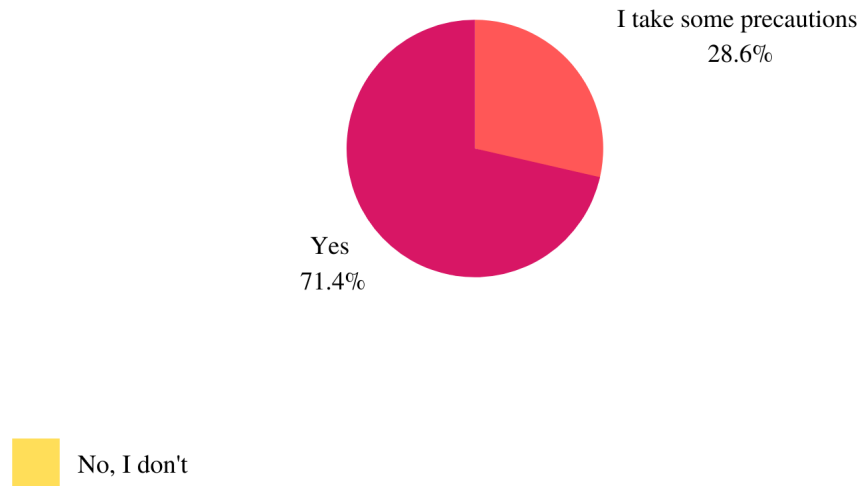


*Figure 4.2.1*

From *Figure 4.2.1*, it is observed that most of the respondents have received basic instructions from their parents to ensure public safety and 40.3% of the respondents' parents have given their children strict rules to follow. This shows that parents are aware of the various dangers outside and have sensitized their children about it. The instructions received by the respondents vary based on their age.

7.8% of the respondents have not received any rules/instructions on public safety. This can show that some parents may not have time to talk to their children about it or feel uncomfortable about certain topics. It can also show that some parents trust their kids to follow safety guidelines in public spaces.

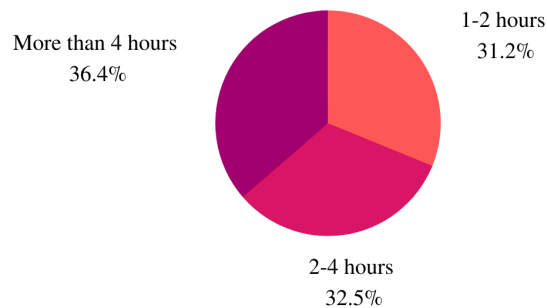
## 2. Representation of whether children take precautions in public:



*Figure 4.2.2*

From *Figure 4.2.2* it is observed that 71.4% of respondents take precautions when they are outside without adult supervision. This shows that children are aware of the dangers present outside and are sensitised about them by their parents.

## 3. Time spent online besides online classes by respondents:

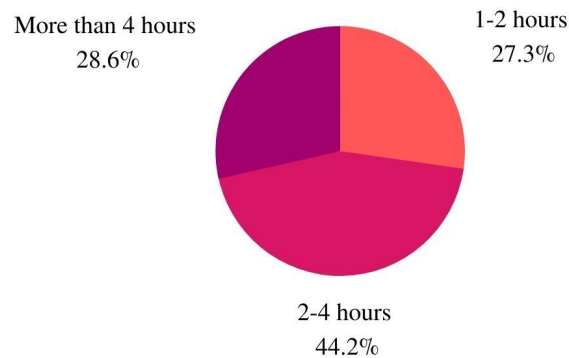


*Figure 4.2.3*

*Figure 4.2.3* it is observed that 36.4% of respondents spend time online for more than 4 hours apart from online classes.

This shows that there is a dependency on online media for entertainment, social connection etc. More dependency on online media can increase the risks of encountering dangers online.

#### 4. Time spent online for educational purposes by respondents:

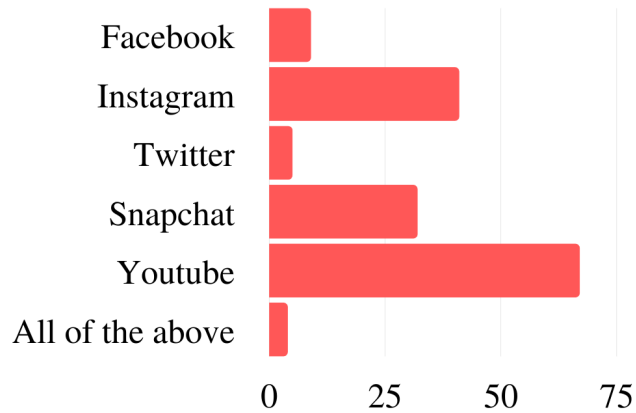


*Figure 4.2.4*

From *Figure 4.2.4* it is observed that 44.2% of respondents spend 2- 4 hours online for classes. This indicates that most users spend a considerable portion of their day on the internet for educational purposes. This could include taking classes, assignments, or researching topics for studies.



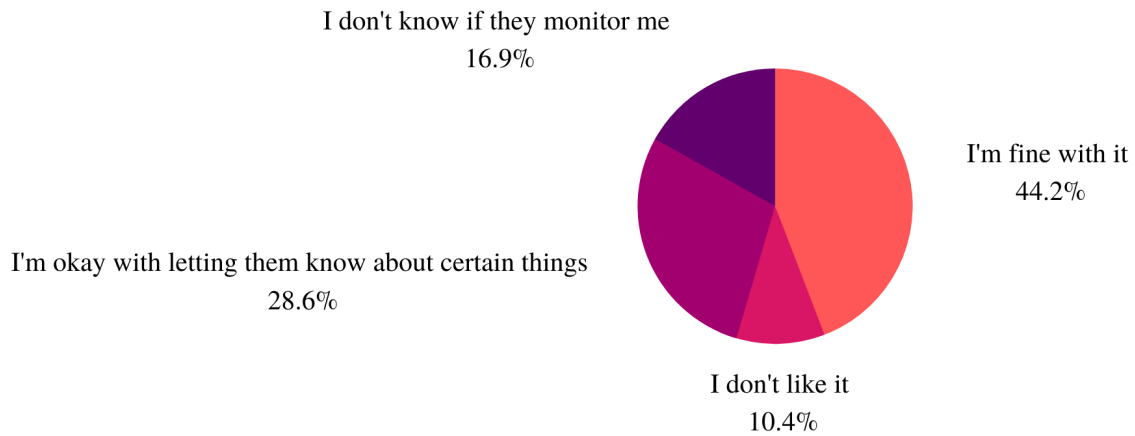
## 5. Distribution of users on social media platforms:



*Figure 4.2.5*

*Figure 4.2.5* shows that a majority of the respondents use YouTube and Instagram. This data shows that these platforms are more suitable for their needs and have better safety and privacy options for a young age group.

## 6. Respondents feelings about being monitored by parents:



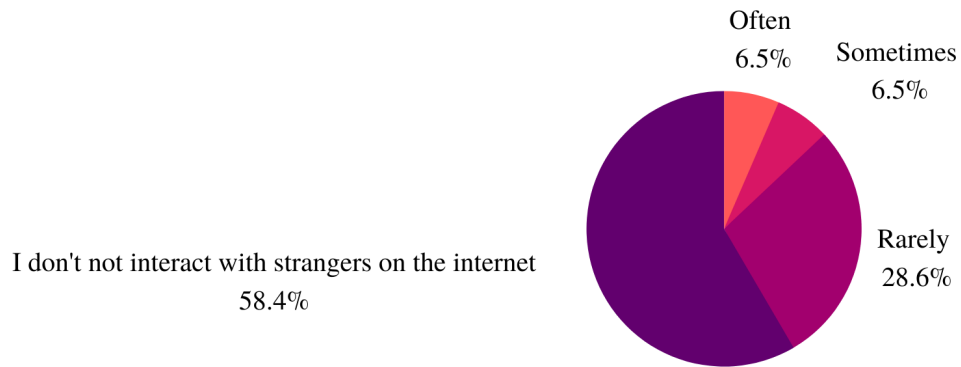
*Figure 4.2.6*

*Figure 4.2.6* shows that most of the respondents are fine with their parents monitoring their online activity.

28.6% of the respondents are okay with their parents knowing only certain things they do online and 10.4% don't like their parents going through their online activities.

Thus, it is vital for parents and guardians to recognise their role in setting a safe environment for their children. It is necessary for the kids to feel safe while they open up about all that they encounter. Parents should mindfully listen to them and then react to let their children safely use the internet.

## 7. Frequency of interaction with strangers on the internet:



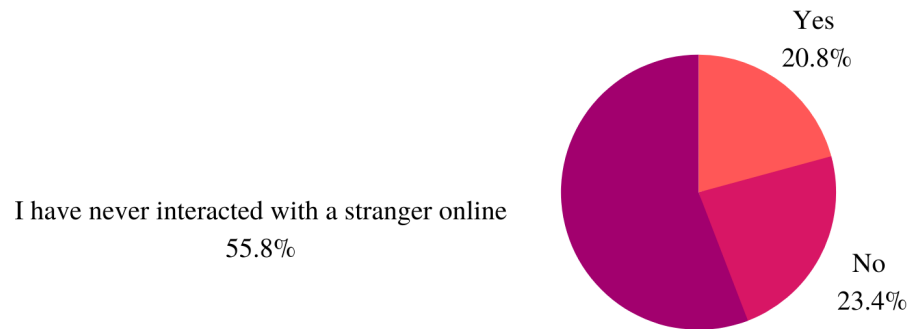
*Figure 4.2.7*

From *Figure 4.2.7* it is seen that 58.4% of the respondents avoid interaction with strangers online. This shows that the respondents are aware of the risks associated with interacting with strangers online.

28.6% of the respondents rarely interact with strangers online.

6.5% of the respondents talk to strangers online often. This indicates that there are still certain things that parents need to be aware of (i.e. instructing children not to talk to or accept friend requests from strangers) while giving their child online safety instructions.

**8. Percentage of respondents who have disclosed to their parents about an interaction with a stranger online:**



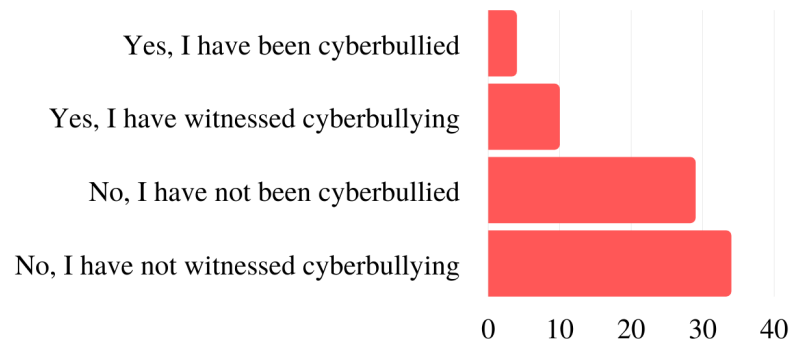
*Figure 4.2.8*

*Figure 4.2.8* indicates that 55.8% of the respondents have not interacted with strangers online.

The majority of them do not tell their parents if they have interacted with a stranger because of all strict measures that would be taken by their parents to avoid such problems.

Since most parents find themselves unable or unaware of how to deal with new issues like cyber bullying, online predators and exposure to bad influences, they consider seizing their child's/childrens' device when they disclose such incidents, as a measure to avoid such future inconveniences. Children opening up about the harmful things they see gives the parent a chance to treat it as a learning opportunity and to teach them right and wrong. Therefore it is vital to build trust with children, and encourage them to approach parents or guardians when they encounter any harmful or unnerving interaction.

## 9. Number of respondents who have witnessed or experienced cyberbullying:



*Figure 4.2.9*

*Figure 4.2.9* shows that 44.2% of the respondents have not experienced or witnessed cyberbullying.

Different studies measure cyberbullying differently. The definition of what cyberbullying includes can vary as well. One thing that's certain is that all kids who are online are at risk of cyberbullying.

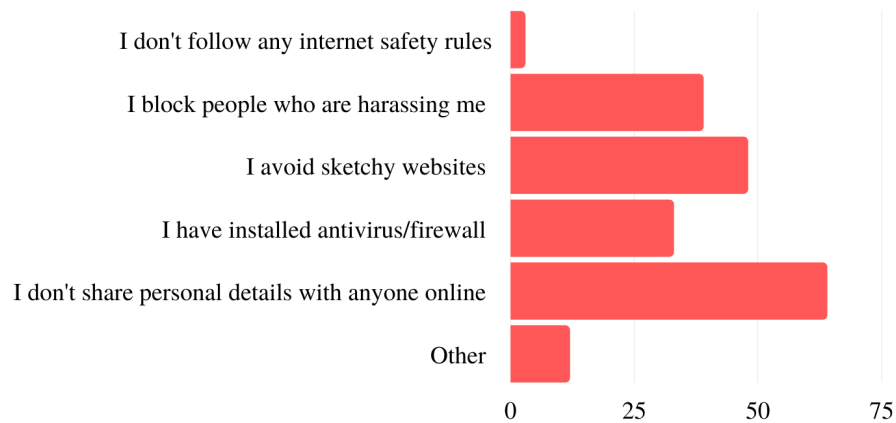
Sam Cook, a Data Journalist and Privacy Advocate, analyzed the results of an Ipsos international survey of adults in 28 countries which revealed an increasing number of parents whose children have experienced some form of cyberbullying.

Indian parents remained among the highest to express confidence that their children were cyberbullied at least sometimes, a number that only grew from 2011 to 2018.

Some kids are more vulnerable to cyberbullying than others. It happens more often to girls than boys. And kids who are disabled, LGBTQ, or obese are more likely to be cyberbullied than other kids.

Therefore even though the majority of respondents have not experienced cyberbullying, they are not immune to it, and hence need to be prepared nonetheless.

**10. Internet safety rules followed by respondents:**

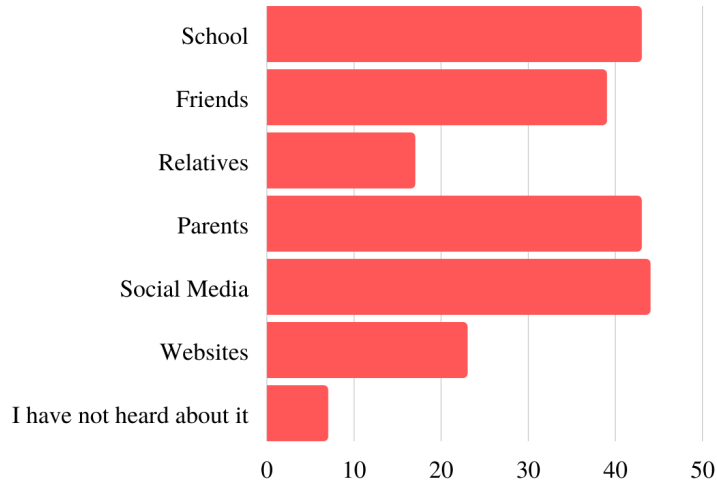


*Figure 4.2.10*

According to *Figure 4.2.10*, the most common internet safety rule that the respondents follow is “not sharing personal details with anyone online”.

Despite all the training parents give their child, in proper internet etiquette, they’re bound to encounter some dangerous situation, either on accident or on purpose. It is natural for children to be curious about things that are off limits to them as they consider the internet, a magic box with answers and information to and about everything. So, being open and discussing online safety, and what practices can lead to harmful outcomes, is key to creating a safe "virtual" environment for exploring.

**11. Graphical representation of whether or not the respondents have heard of online safety and the sources:**



*Figure 4.2.11*

*Figure 4.2.11* shows that 57.1% of the respondents receive information about online safety from school or social media.

Studies state that Principals and teachers have a duty of care to take reasonable steps to protect students from any harm that should have reasonably been foreseen, including those that may be encountered within the online learning environment, as children accept teachers as *information providers* and give credence to their words. Also, when students learn concepts in groups with their peers, they build a healthy social bond virtually.

### **4.3 New themes and scope of findings**

From the collected data, it is observed that parents take more precautions for their child's public safety than their online safety. It shows that parents do take measures to keep their child's online activity appropriate, but don't do much to make sure if they're actually safe or not while online.

Parents should take proper measures to research the community guidelines each online platform has, before allowing their child to sign up and have their own account. Some platforms have options such as parental controls, child mode etc. that parents can enable when their child is using.

Antivirus software, child protection software etc. that block harmful or inappropriate websites altogether, should be installed. These can help keep track of the child's online footprint even when the parents aren't around to supervise.

In an ideal world, the web would be a safe space for kids. Unfortunately, that is far from reality, and as a busy adult, it's not always possible for parents to spend the time to be there while their children are online. This is where free parental control software can help - by allowing them to either block access to particular sites that may have concerning contents, or only permit access to sites they deem suitable, this tool can help protect their kids.

## **4.4 Recommendations**

Safety in numbers is the hypothesis that, by being part of a large physical group or mass, an individual is less likely to be the victim of a mishap, accident, attack, or another bad event. Parents of children who travel to school or tuition alone can consider arranging for them to carpool with other classmates who live in the same area.

Parents can also teach their children about places they can find help, and trusted adults who they can reach out to when they are not around. Personal mobile phones can be a handy tool for a child to use if they ever need to call for help. The phones can also be used to track the child's whereabouts via GPS tracker apps, to make sure the child is where they should be.

Regarding online safety, here are some tips from the upcoming updated version of ITU's Guidelines for Parents, Carers, Guardians, and Educators for Child Online Protection:



(ITU - The International Telecommunication Union is a specialized agency of the United Nations responsible for all matters related to information and communication technologies. Established in 1865 as the International Telegraph Union, it is one of the oldest international organizations in operation.)

1. Set up parental controls.

All leading browsers (Google, Safari, Firefox, Bing, DuckDuckGo) include a parental control mode; make sure you turn it on, and also check the individual privacy settings on apps and games. Some internet service providers and mobile operators provide additional parental control tools, which block or restrict access to certain types of content, as well as limit the amount of time spent on devices.

2. Talk with your children about online safety.

Parents should be aware of the online and mobile services their children are using. Help them understand the importance of managing personal information in the correct way. It is recommended that parents and guardians

ask children to show them what they enjoy doing online, in order to better understand their habits and the potential dangers they might face.

1. Help your children be tech-ready.

Common Sense Media, a non-profit organisation, provides advice for age-appropriate apps, games and other platforms. Help children set up a strict privacy setting with the e-Safety Guide and check if they know how to report inappropriate content.

2. Stay aware of the online and mobile services used by your children.

Spend time with your children online. It is recommended that parents check on their children's technology regularly and find out about what they are doing online, what new tools and apps they might be using. They recommend selecting online tools and content together and discussing why certain tools and apps might not be appropriate.

3. Know how to report problems and seek help.

When playing online games or using apps children can be exposed to serious risks like cyberbullying and grooming. The NSPCC recommends that parents show children the blocking and reporting functions in each game and app so that they can prevent bullies or strangers from contacting them.

4. Create a culture of support so that children and young people feel comfortable seeking help.

Open dialogue and discussion are crucial. The way adults react has a critical influence on children's readiness to disclose if they are upset, worried or concerned by something they have seen or that has happened to them online. Research has shown that many young people are reluctant to speak to an adult about a negative online experience for fear of the consequences. Be alert of any sign of distress.

5. Manage children's screen time.

It is important to set boundaries and limits for online activities wherever possible. Build safe online habits and find a balance between online time and other activities.

# Chapter 5

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION



There are many dangers that a child can face when he/she is in public in the absence of adult's supervision. Children need to know what to do in such situations. This study is to help understand what type of precautions are already being taken and what precautions need to be taken.

Due to the current situation - Pandemic, very young children have been introduced to the internet, for an online school. They use the internet for education, reference and entertainment.

Their exposure to the internet has increased considerably. Working parents do not have enough time to monitor their children constantly and this could lead the child to accidentally or intentionally/unknowingly do something on the internet, that they clearly should not be doing. Some parents are unaware of the dangers of the internet and need to be educated to protect their children.

## **5 Summary**

The objectives of this study are:

- To understand and learn various dangers a child could be exposed to when he/she is on the internet or in public
- To learn if parents in India teach their children about internet safety.
- To understand what parents do to keep their children safe when they are in public places.
- To analyze and come up with necessary rules for children to follow when they are on the internet and in public places.
- To find ways to educate parents who are themselves unaware of the dangers of the internet.

Through an extensive and thorough research, the study brought to light many of the issues parents may face when raising a child in the digital age. The research helped to understand possible solutions parents can take to effectively help their child navigate the dangers they may face in public and online.

The children of today are born in a digital age, surrounded by technology. Parents may feel overwhelmed due to many changing factors in the environment

surrounding their child. More children are entering online spaces and are at risk of encountering dangers such as online predators, or falling victim to scams.

During March of 2020, most countries around the world issued a nationwide quarantine, which made it difficult for most workers and children to go to workplaces or schools. Many educational institutions moved classes to online video conference rooms. This, coupled with the surplus of free time children find staying at home, has encouraged children to move to online spaces for entertainment enmass, therefore increasing the risk of coming in contact with inappropriate content or a dangerous person.

The study aimed to discover and understand if parents take enough measures to educate their child about public safety and online safety. The study also aimed to discover the measure parents have put in place for the safety of their children in public spaces, and what kind of precautions children take to protect themselves when out in public.

Two surveys were conducted, one for parents to answer and one for children. The data recovered from the survey indicated that parents take good measures to protect their children from the dangers in public. It also shows that parents do take measures to keep their child's online activity appropriate, but don't do much to make sure if they're actually safe or not while online.

In order to inform parents on what they must do to keep their children safe online, a visual plan was created. The visual plan consists of two parts, a booklet and an instagram campaign.

The booklet consists of in-depth information on what parents can do to keep their children safe online and offline. The instagram campaign under the handle @netbug\_spray, consists of colorful posts, videos and reels, informing both children and parents on the platform about facts and important information regarding online and offline safety.

## 5.1 Major Findings

From the data of the two surveys aimed at Parents and teenagers, it is observed that:

- From *Figure 4.1.3*, 55.5% of parents say that their children talk about their daily activities often. This shows that many children often talk to their parents about their daily activities, but this may not mean that they disclose everything.
- 94% of parents allow their kids to only go to school alone, but the complete safety of the child is not guaranteed unless the school or parents take the necessary precautions.
- When asked about any specific instructions parents gave their children to follow, the responses submitted by the parents show that much of the instructions parents give their children are centred around helping them avoid dangerous situations altogether, rather than guiding them to navigate efficiently.
- From *Figure 4.1.6*, 48.1% of respondents have given basic instructions about safety in public spaces to their children, and 38.1% of parents have given their children strict instructions to follow.
- From the data collected, it is observed that parents and children have enough levels of transparency when it comes to their online behaviours. From *Figure 4.1.8*, 59.3% of respondent's children have no issues with letting their parents monitor their online activity.
- The above point also indicates that even though parents believe that their kids tell them everything, the children could be limiting the things they share.
- From *Figure 4.1.4*, more than 50% of respondents rarely or never let their children go outside without adult supervision. Parents do not allow their kids to go to crowded places without adult supervision. This should also be applied to social media and other online platforms.
- From *Figure 4.1.10*, more than 50% of respondents let their children use the social media YouTube due to its child safety features. This shows that platforms that prioritize child safety are preferred.
- From *Figure 4.1.7*, 38.9% of respondents simply talk to their children about their online activity. Although this shows increased transparency between

parents and children, it may not be an effective way of monitoring online activity.

- From *Figure 4.1.13*, it is observed that 81.5% of respondents think that efforts should be taken to educate their kids about online safety.
- It is recommended that parents should also join all the social media platforms as their kids to protect them from dangerous situations. Thus serving as a good safety measure while monitoring their kids and still allowing them to have a reasonable level of privacy.

The research has helped to learn various dangers a child could face when they are in public or on the internet and understand how parents in India teach their children about child safety.

## **5.2 Conclusion**

This study helped discover the dangers a child could face when online, and how parents have taken precautions to protect them. The study also helped identify the education parents gave their children on public and online safety. Through the research, a new understanding of what dangers parents prioritised keeping their children safe from, was found.

A survey was conducted and it helped in the analysis of what type of precautions parents and kids take for online and public safety. Solutions and precautions that parents need to learn to protect their kids from predators were discovered.

The research proved helpful in bringing to light some of the major issues parents face when parenting their children in a digital age. The research shows that parents are well equipped to tackle issues regarding the public safety of their children. However, they are still unaware of the issues their child may face online. In order to help parents and children understand the dangers of the internet, a visual plan was created.

The visual plan is as follows:

A booklet to help educate parents about online and public safety was created. An online campaign was/is being conducted on Instagram, under the handle '@netbug\_spray' with the hashtag #dontletthenetbugsbite. This campaign helps both parents and kids alike to gather information and tips about online and public safety.

To conclude, parents need to be more aware of how the internet works and the features of online media platforms. Online media can also affect the physical safety of children. If they are not careful with their personal data, they could be targeted by online predators or be exposed to harmful content inadvertently. Parents are required to make proper efforts to introduce their kids to safe online practices and to keep themselves safe.

### **5.3 Recommended research**

From the data collected it is clear that parents take necessary precautions with regards to public safety, but need to focus more on internet safety. It is important to give privacy to growing children but supervision and protection are still necessary.

A recommended area of further research can focus on how parents can protect their kids from strangers online as there is more probability of meeting such strangers online than in the public area.

Parents should understand that different age groups of children require different levels of supervision in their online usage. Younger children tend to have less supervision when it comes to online browsing. Parents should observe and research the type of content their child is exposed to, and try to regulate their screen time. Providing other activities and hobbies for the child to partake in is a good way to broaden their interests. Marking 'safe' websites for their child to use is also a good way to ensure that their child does not end up on dangerous websites through careless browsing.



The effectiveness of different monitoring activities used by parents should be studied further, and a way to monitor children while still giving them enough privacy should be discovered.

# Appendix 1

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# Appendix 2

## QUESTIONNAIRE





## **Questionnaire**

We the students of 3rd B.Sc Visual Communication, M.O.P. Vaishnav College for Women, are working on our research project - **“Child Safety Online and Offline”**.

Please answer the following questions to help us collect enough information to complete our research.

### **Questionnaire 1**

*Parents, kindly answer the following questions:*

**1. What age group does your child/children come under? (you can choose multiple)**

- 5 - 10
- 11 - 14
- 15 - 17

**2. How much time do you spend with your child generally ?**

- Less than 2 hours
- 2 - 4 hours
- 4 - 6 hours
- More than 6 hours

**3. How often does your child talk to you about their daily activities?**

- Often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

**4. How often do you allow your child to leave the house without adult supervision?**

- Always
- Sometimes
- Rarely

Never

**5. Where do you allow your child/children on their own?**

- School
- Friend's house
- Relatives house
- Tuition Centres
- Malls
- Shops
- Parks

**6. Have you talked to your children about safety in public spaces?**

- I have given them basic instructions
- I have given them strict rules to follow
- I have not talked to them about it specifically
- Not yet

**7. What kind of specific instructions have you given your child to follow in public for their safety?**

---

**8. What steps do you take to monitor your children's online activity?**

- I go through their search history
- I have installed software that blocks harmful websites
- I allot a screentime
- I just ask them

**9. Is your child comfortable with you monitoring their online activities?**

- Yes
- No
- They don't know I monitor their activity
- I don't monitor their activity

**10. How much screen time do you give your children for online activities - education/entertainment ?**

- 1-2 hours
- 2-4 hours
- More than 4 hours

**11. Does your child use social media? If yes, which of the following do they use? (you can choose multiple)**

- Instagram
- Twitter
- Facebook
- Youtube
- Others
- I am not sure

**12. Does your child approach you when they face problems on the internet?**

- Yes, they approach me whenever they have an issue
- They approach me few times
- They don't approach me
- I'm not sure if they face problems

**13. Has your child ever told you about talking to a stranger online?**

- Yes
- No

**14. Do you think you should take efforts to teach online safety to your children?check**

- Yes
- Only if they need it
- No

**15. What kind of efforts have you taken to teach your children about Online Safety?**

---

## **Questionnaire 2**

*Please ask your children to answer the following questions:*

- 1. Have your parents told you about public safety?**
  - They have given me strict rules to follow
  - They have given me basic instructions
  - They have not talked about it specifically
  - No/ Not yet
- 2. Do you take enough precautions when you are in public without adult supervision?**
  - Yes
  - I take some precautions
  - No, I don't
- 3. How much time do you spend online, apart from online classes?**
  - 1 - 2 Hours
  - 2- 4 hours
  - More than 4 hours
- 4. How many hours do you spend online for educational purposes?**
  - 1 - 2 Hours
  - 2- 4 hours
  - More than 4 hours
- 5. Which of the following social media platforms do you use?**
  - Facebook
  - Instagram
  - Twitter
  - Snapchat
  - Youtube
  - All of the above
- 6. Do your parents monitor your activity online? If yes, how do you feel about it?**
  - I'm fine with it
  - I don't like it
  - I'm okay with letting them know about certain things.

**7. How often do you interact with strangers on the internet?**

- Often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- I do not interact with strangers on the internet

**8. Have you ever disclosed to your parents about an interaction with a stranger online?**

- Yes
- No
- I have never interacted with a stranger online

**9. Have you experienced cyberbullying or witnessed it?**

- Yes, I have been cyberbullied
- Yes, I have witnessed cyberbullying
- No, I have not been cyberbullied
- No, I have not witnessed cyberbullying

**10. What internet safety rules do you follow? (You can choose multiple)**

- I don't follow any internet safety rules
- I block people who are harassing me
- I avoid sketchy websites
- I have installed antivirus/firewall
- I don't share personal details with anyone online
- Other

**11. Have you heard about internet safety? What are the sources?**

- School
- Friends
- Relatives
- Parents
- Social media
- Websites
- I have not heard about it

# Appendix 3

## RADIO SCRIPT



## **Radio script**

**RJ 1 : Subhikshaa S ,**

**RJ 2: Medha Kartha**

**(Subhikshaa and Medha will hereafter be referred to as "RJ 1" and "RJ 2")**

### **LIFE SKILLS FOR YOUNG ADULTS**

#### **SEGMENT 1:**

##### **Introduction:**

**RJ 1 : Vannakkam! Ungalukae teriyum neenga enna channella irukeenganu; analum paravala, na tirumba solluven**

**RJ 2 : You are listening to M.O.P. CRS.107.8, namadhu samudhayam, namadhu perumai.**

**RJ 2 : This is RJ Medha today i'm hosting with**

**RJ 1 : RJ Subhikshaa.... Inniki namma show la yaaru ah honour panna porom na - adhu vera yaarum illa, namma young adults dhaanga**

**RJ 2 : That's right we're talking about the 18 year olds!**

**RJ 1 : 18 turn aagardhae oru thani kicku le !!**

**RJ 2 : Yes Subhi! Turning 18 is such a big deal. Do you want to know what I did when I first turned 18?**

**RJ 1 : sollu sollu**

**RJ 2** : I started learning how to drive and got my driver's licence.

**RJ 1** : Aama... aana adhukku neraiya procedures irukkae.

**Farzana** : Hey you two, what are you discussing?

**RJ 2** : We're talking about drivers licence.

**Farzana** : Oh the song ?

**RJ 1** : Namma paatu pathi pesalla. Driver's license ku epdi apply pannano nu discuss pannikitu irukom.

**Farzana** : Oh what a coincidence! I am going to apply, but I have no idea what to do.

**RJ 2** : Well then I guess you're in the right place because today in the studio we have with us Mr. Valliappan.

**RJ 1** : Avar "Valli driving school" oda owner. Chennai makkal ku 25 varshathuku mela driving kathukuduthutu irukaranga.

(5 minutes)

---

(Music plays)

## **SEGMENT 2 : Drivers Licence**

### **INTERVIEW:**

**Farzana** : Oh that is great. Sir? Do you mind if I ask you a few questions?

**Farzana** : Thank you so much Sir. My first question is, How do i apply for an LLR.



(wait for response)

**Farzana** : Thank you Sir, so what do i do after getting an LLR?

(wait for response)

**Farzana** : When do you think someone is ready to go give the driving test?

(wait for response)

**Farzana** : Sir, what are some things I should keep in mind after I get my License?

(wait for response)

**"TAXI TAXI LICENSE IRUNDHA VENDAM TAXI"**

(10 minutes)

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(Music plays)

**SEGMENT 3 : Voter I.D. card**

**RJ 2** : Subhi! Do you know what an essential part of turning 18 means?

**RJ 1** : namma innimey chinna pasanga illa ippo namma laam adults. Vera enna irukku

**RJ 2** : That's right Subhi, we're adults. It means you have to Vote!

**RJ 1** : Namma vote edhukku podunnu? Oru vote podela na edhavadhu aagama?

**RJ 2** : But we need to vote! It's important!

**RJ 1** : Seri, nammalla yaru kitta voter ID irukku? Deepica un kitta irukkula, nee vera ippo recently ah dhaane apply panna. Konjam eppidi pannanum nu sollen Apdiyae Yaen Voting romba mukkiyam sollen.

## **Deepica :**

Politicsla irukuravanga elarapathiyum kora solradhu romba easy. Koraigala maathuradhu kashtama irundalum, adha maatanumgra yennam elarukum iruku. Adhukudaanga nambaloda ovoru votem romba mukkiyam.

Koraigala kuraikuradhu namba podra voteladaan iruku. Societyla maatram yerpadhuthuvadhu kashtamdaan anaa andha maatraturukku namba vote daan romba mukkiyam.

Oruvela ungaluku endha candidatekum vote poda virupam illanaalum, voting bothuku vandhu, "NOTA" adhavadhu 'None of the above' optionah choose panalam.

Vara MAY maasam voting nadaka poguthu and ippavae elarum romba excited ah irukeenga adhuvum mukiyama first time vote panna pora students

Andha Kalyan Jewelers ADla "En thangam en urimai" nu soluvaangalla, adhae mari "en votu en urimai" adhayum manasula vachukonga !!

Pandemic munadi, namba nerla poi apply panradhudaan procedureah irundhuthu but ippa ellamae online ayiduchu.

Nenga seiyya vendiyadhu ellam,

[https://www.elections.tn.gov.in/Electoral\\_Services.aspx](https://www.elections.tn.gov.in/Electoral_Services.aspx)

Indha official website ulla poi, details fill pananam.

ID proofku mattum sila documents scan and upload panna solluvanga.

Adhuku apram unga phone numberku oru OTP varum. Adha vachu nenga ungaloda voter IDah digital versionla download pannikalam.

Andha digital copy vachu Vote kandipa panalam.

Avlodaanga!! vela mudinjudhu. Easy Peasy Lemon squeezy.

So immediate poi unga voter ID ready panunga,

Nalla mudiva edhuthu, nermaiya muraila vote pannanum nu ungala vaalthuraen.

Nyabagam vachukonga " en thangam en urimai; nam votu nam urimai"  
"5ruva LAYS-u Voter ID daan maasu"

**RJ 1** : Engaluku voting pathi ivlo info kuduthaduku romba thanks Deepica!!. Na kandipa time vote pannuven !

(7 minutes)

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(Music plays)

#### **SEGMENT 4 : Internships**

**RJ 1** : Seri ippo namma License vaangiya chu, voter id yum eduthachu, college-um join panniyachu. College la namma professors laam theoretical knowledge kathukudukaraanga, aana namma idhuva practical-ah apply panrathuku namma internships pannanom. Idhu patthi nee enna nenaikara Medha? Internships veruma certificate kaaga pannanom- ah illati experience gain pannarthukkaga pannanoma?

**RJ 2** : It's a great way to learn on the job. You will get experience and improve your skills. Best of all, it'll look great on your resume.

**RJ 1** : Exactly, correct ah sonna. Munna internships-ku apply pannanomna namma proper ah a letter annupanom companies kita, aana ippo neraiya websites irukku and indha websites la neenga ungalukku porundhara maadhiri internships ku neenga apply pannalaam. Adhu mattum illainga, sila companies la internships-ku pay kooda pannunvaanga.

**RJ 2** : You can put your resume on the internship website. You can select what type of job you want, and the website will automatically show you job offers. Then, you can go and apply for the internship.

( 5 minutes )

---

(Music plays)

**SEGMENT 5 : CV and PORTFOLIO**

**RJ 1** : Seri aana, resume la enna irukkanum.  
Medha, Farzana neenga enna solringa???

**Farzana** : Many Companies today want to see what the applicants are capable of in the field. They are looking for practical knowledge. So the most important thing is your skills and interests.

**RJ 2** : So how do you write the CV?

**Farzana** : The CV should have personal details, educational qualifications, work experience if you are not a fresh graduate, internships, skills and what you can offer to the company.

**RJ 2** : What is a portfolio?

**Farzana** : A Portfolio shows all the work you have done in college or at previous jobs. It visually represents what you are capable of doing and creating.

**RJ 2** : That's great! Some job interviewers don't have time to read resumes. So a portfolio is a fast way to show them what you're capable of.

( 7 minutes )

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(Music plays)

**SEGMENT 6 : Bank Account**

**RJ 1** : Aana Medha, nammalukku vara salary ah enga save pannardhu, kaila cash ah irundhu, namma shopping panniye mottha salariyayum 2 naal la gaali panniduvom. So, what to do??

**RJ 2** : Well, they will need a bank account. Employers are not going to pay them in cash. So it's essential to have a bank account. Plus having one gives you a lot of benefits. Poorna what are some advantages of having a bank account according to you?

**Poorna:**

-Aama Medha, bank account thorakiradhula nammaku neraiya benefits irukku.

-Adhu nammaku paadhukaapu kodukum.

- Ungaloda pannatha neenga bank account la podardhu cheap aana process, adhe samayathula unga pannamum safe ah irukkum.

-Bank la Ungalukku oru debit card tharuvanga.

- Unga bank account ah neenga payment apps oda connect panni neenga easy ah cashless transactions pannalam.

( 3 minutes )

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(Music plays)

**SEGMENT 7 : CONCLUSION**

**RJ 1** : Idhoda nammaloda show mudiyardhu. Inniki namma discuss pannadhulaam ungalukku helpful ah irukkum nu nenaikaren.

**RJ 2** : Yes Subhi it's been a great run! So thank you listeners for tuning in to M.O.P. C.R.S. 107.8. This is RJ Medha and

**RJ 1** : RJ Subhikshaa

**RJ 1 and RJ 2 ( together )** : Signing off.

( 2 minutes

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# Appendix 4

## VISUAL PLAN



## Visual Plan

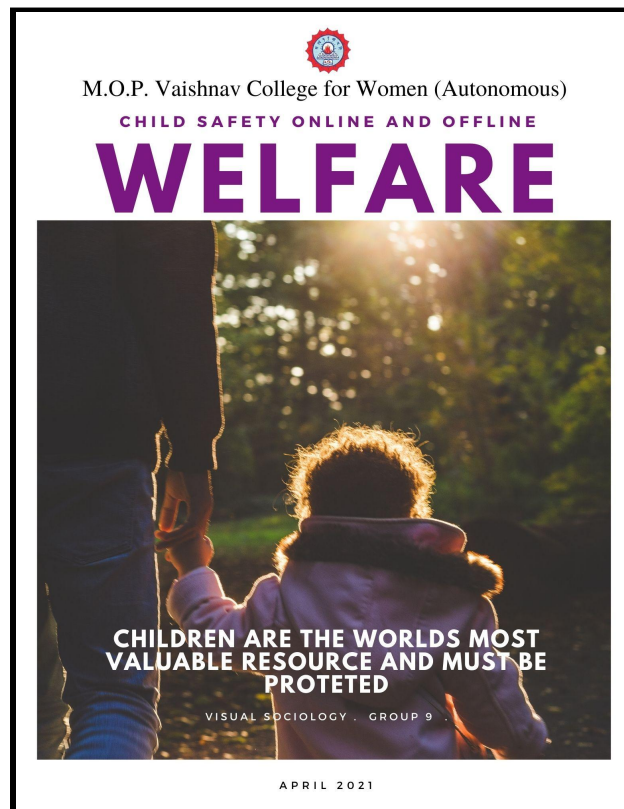
The visual plan of this study is divided into two parts.

The first visual representation will be a booklet, which will visually explain the dangers of the internet and about public safety, and sensitise parents and children to react in the appropriate manner.

The second plan is to run a social media campaign on Instagram titled #dontletthenetbugsbite (Don't Let The NET Bugs Bite) that will contain 5-6 posts targeting the issue and intending to increase the awareness among parents.

This plan will also include the posting of Instagram stories directed towards children of the mentioned age group.

Booklet: Here is an overview of what it will look like.



**Instagram:** For the instagram campaign, a page was created on the 15th of April, 2021, containing informative posts to help educate our target audience on the matter.

**Points to be noted:**

- The page gathered 48 followers (and counting) organically, without any promotions.
- A total of 13 posts and 2 reels were posted.
- The reels got over a 100 views.
- Impressions made: 890
- Profile Visits: 102
- Content interactions: 431
- Accounts reached in the last 30 days : 300

Here are some screenshots of the page - “**@netbug\_spray**”  
The hashtag “**#dontletthenetbugsbite**” was used in all of the posts.



