

Understanding the impacts of smartphones on Cheltenham's children

FREE EVENT open to all interested parents/carers and educators
Tuesday 23rd September, 7.00pm, Cheltenham Bournside School



SMARTPHONE FREE AT KS1, 2 & 3 CHELTENHAM

We are working with local schools and parents to encourage the delayed use of smartphones. Together, we have created Smartphone Free at KS1, 2 and 3 to help us achieve our goal.

Understanding the impacts of smartphones on Cheltenham's children

FREE EVENT open to all interested parents/carers and educators
Tuesday 23rd September, 7.00pm, Cheltenham Bournside School

- Welcome and creating change in Cheltenham - Steve Jefferies
- The link between smartphones and mental health - Dr Susie Davies
- Smartphone Free Childhood - Joe Ryrie
- Member of Parliament for Cheltenham - Max Wilkinson MP
- Research into young people's smartphone use - Dr Paul Redford & Dr Ben Knight
- Q&A session



Steve Jefferies is headteacher at Cheltenham Bournside School. With 15 years of experience in Senior Leadership, Bournside is his second headship. As a parent and educator, he is passionate about ensuring childhood is full of enriching, character building real world experiences.



Dr Susie Davies is a Bristol-based GP with a special interest in adolescent mental health. She is the founder and CEO of PAPAYA and is passionate about improving mental health outcomes for today's adolescents. She is the author of *The Healthy Selfie*, a book for teenagers to help them thrive in the digital age.



Joe Ryrie is Co-founder of Smartphone Free Childhood. Joe leads the team, driving their strategy, campaigning and organising.



Max Wilkinson MP is campaigning for a safer internet and has recently created a survey *'Banning Kids in the Digital Age: Have Your Say'*. The Liberal Democrats want to hear from you—what challenges do you face, and what changes would you support?



Dr Paul Redford is an Associate Professor, Chartered Psychologist (BPS), and Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy (SHEA). He specialises in the enablers of positive learning, with a focus on engagement, creativity, confidence, and well-being.



Dr Ben Knight is a researcher and educator at UWE. A Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy, Dr Knight also consults on complexity in education, leadership mindsets, and teacher professional judgement.

CHELTENHAM BOURNSIDE SCHOOL

Book your free ticket:

Cheltenham Bournside School, Warden Hill Road, GL51 3EF



Understanding the impacts of smartphones on Cheltenham's children

Steve Jefferies

Headteacher

Cheltenham Bournside School







 **SMARTPHONE
FREE AT KS1, 2 & 3**
CHELTENHAM



 **SMARTPHONE
FREE AT KS1, 2 & 3**
CHELTENHAM



 **SMARTPHONE
FREE AT KS1, 2 & 3**
CHELTENHAM

NOT ANTI-TECHNOLOGY BUT PRO-CHILDHOOD

Understanding the impacts of smartphones on Cheltenham's children

Dr Susie Davies

Bristol-based GP and Founder and CEO

PAPAYA (Parents Against Phone Addiction in Young Adolescents)





PAPAYA

Let's talk about our kids and their tech

DR SUSIE DAVIES
FOUNDER AND CEO PAPAYA

Choosing a different path for your family

Created by Dr Susie Davies, Papaya Talks—all rights reserved

Screen time

The average amount
of time a teenager
spends
online in the UK

4.54 hrs

*Ofcom 2025

=

34.3 hrs

a

week

=

75 day
s

a

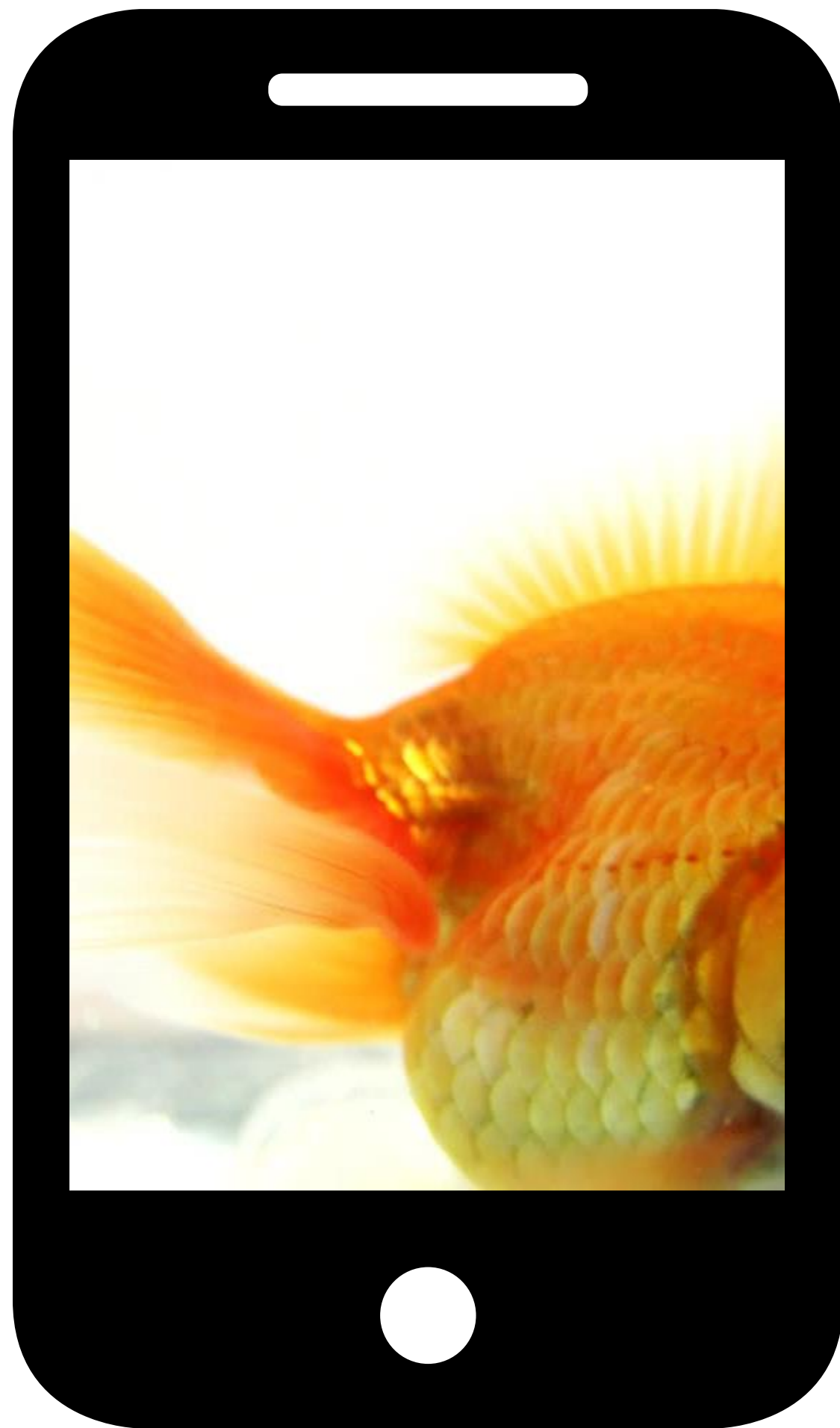
year

=

14. years

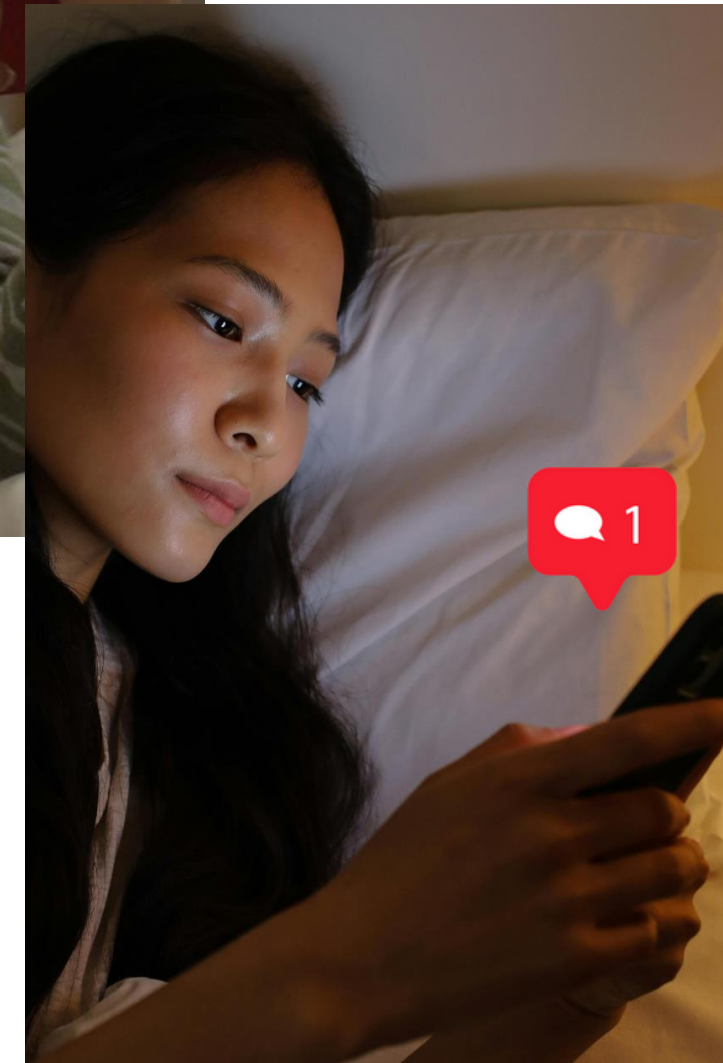
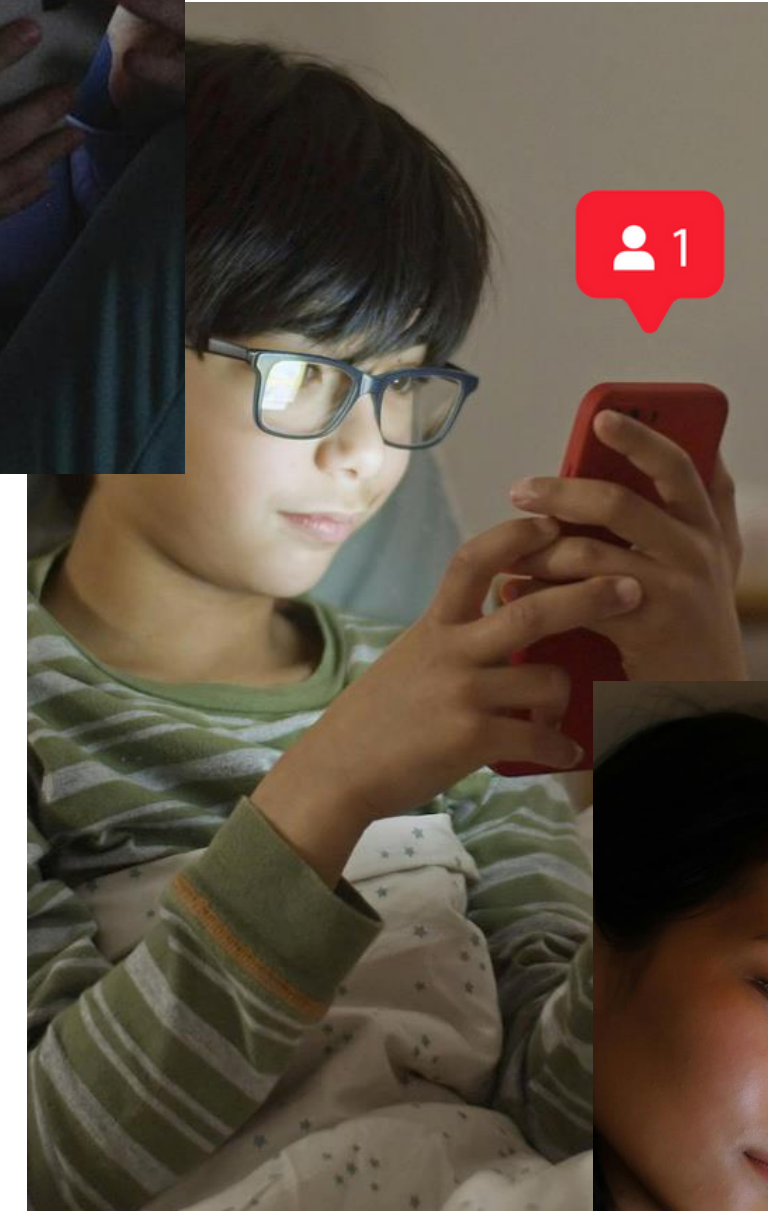
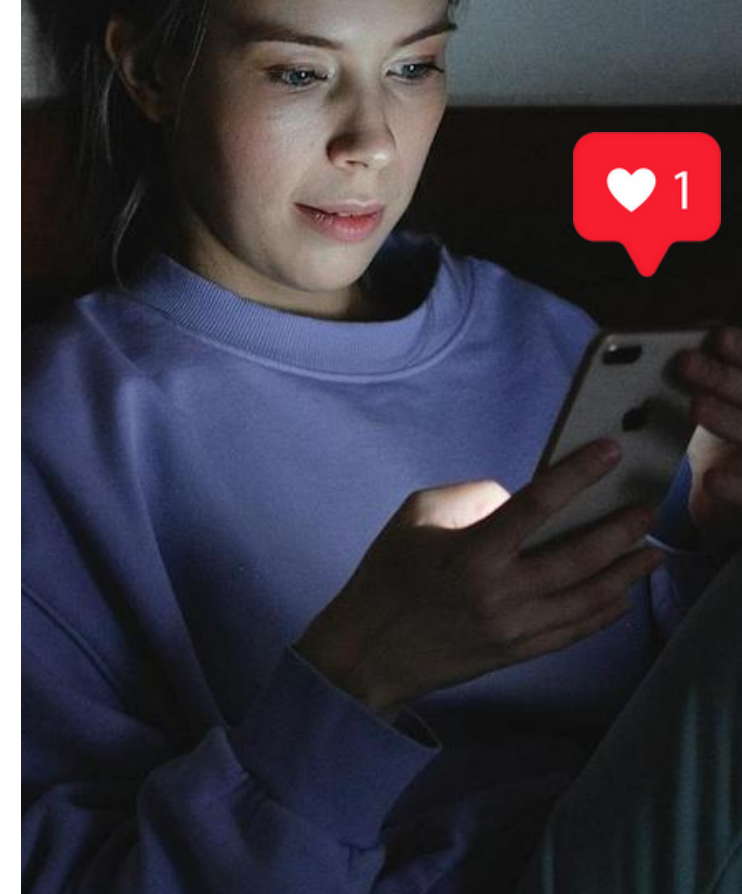
3
a lifetime

According to Jonathan Haidt, The Anxious Generation, the average teen spends between 6 to 8 hours a day engaged in screen-based activities, with approximately 4.8 hours dedicated specifically to social media.

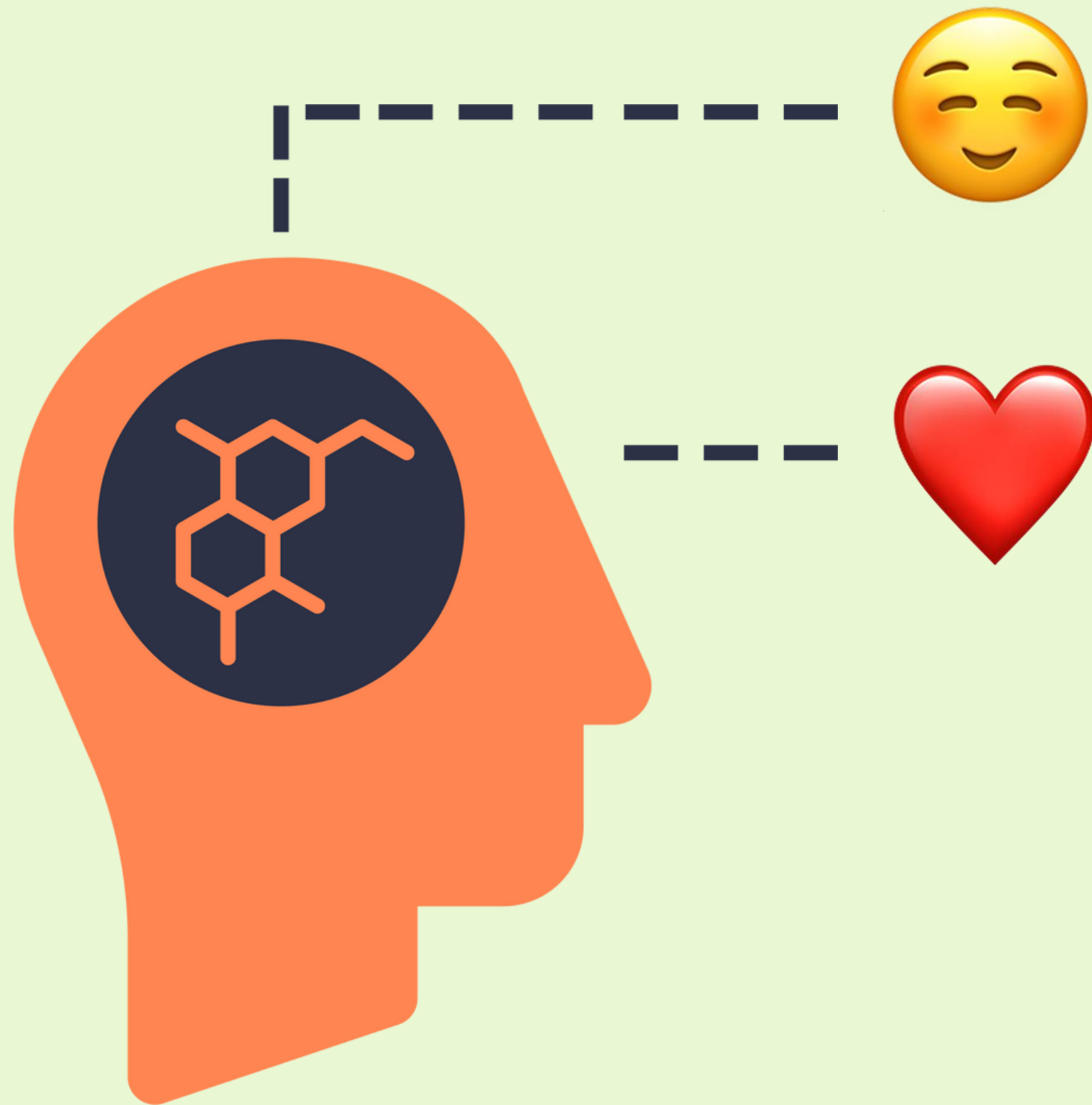


Smart technology taps into our dopamine reward pathway making us all vulnerable to overconsumption.

So powerful is persuasive tech that it has been described as akin to involuntary hypnotism.



Persuasive design



01.

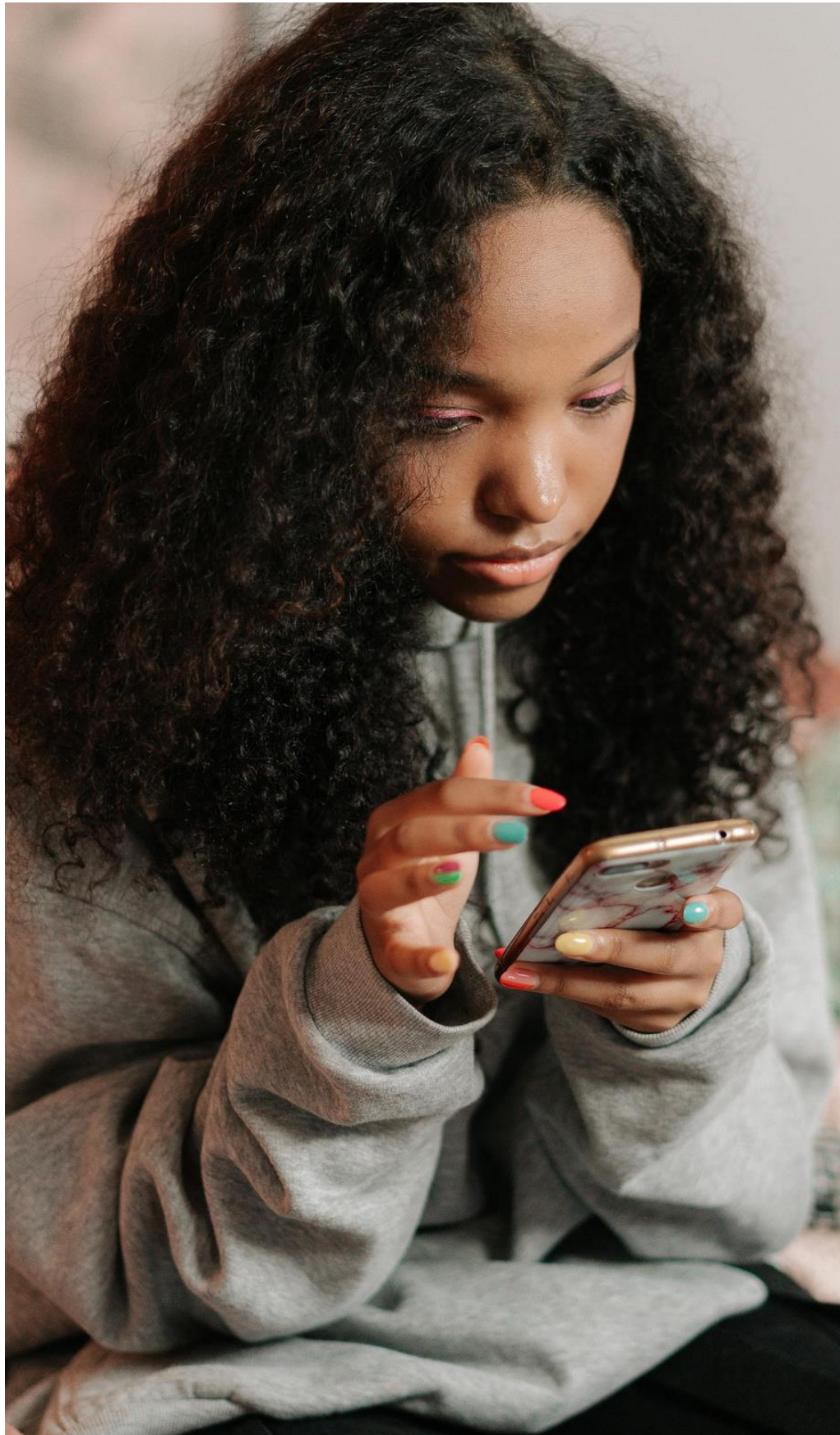
Dopamine is released during a reward which provides a learning signal to the brain.

02.

The greater the 'unexpected' reward the greater the learning signal.

03.

The motivational aspect of dopamine means that it can motivate us to do things that are good for us as well as those that are not.

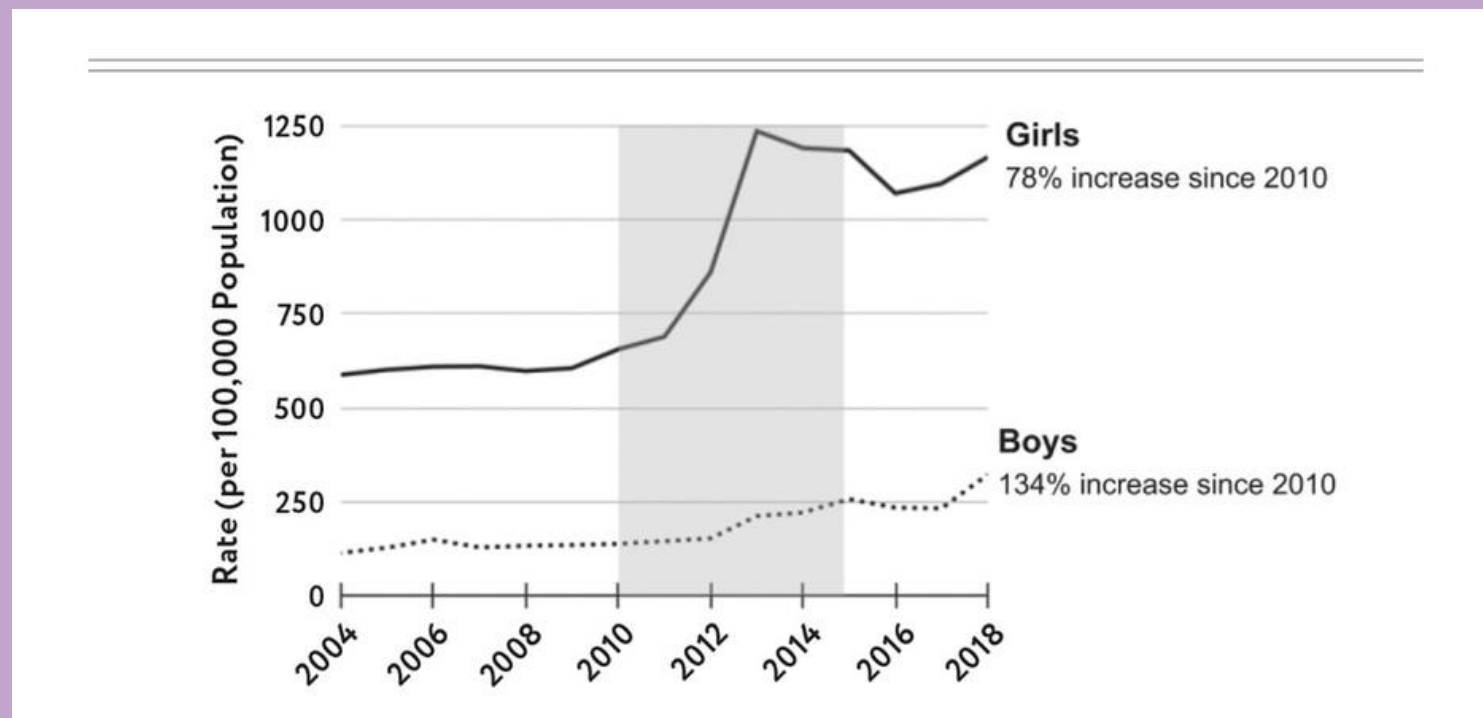


Children with Problematic Smartphone Usage (PSU) are twice as likely to experience anxiety and three times as likely to experience depression compared to children without PSU.

*King's College London, 2024

Mental health

Self Harm in UK teens



CYBULSKI ET AL, 2021

Figure from The Anxious Generation, Jonathan Haidt

According to NHS data in the past decade childhood outdoor accidents have reduced:

↓ 70%

but self-harm has increased:

↑ 93%

We have overprotected our children in the real world while underprotecting them online

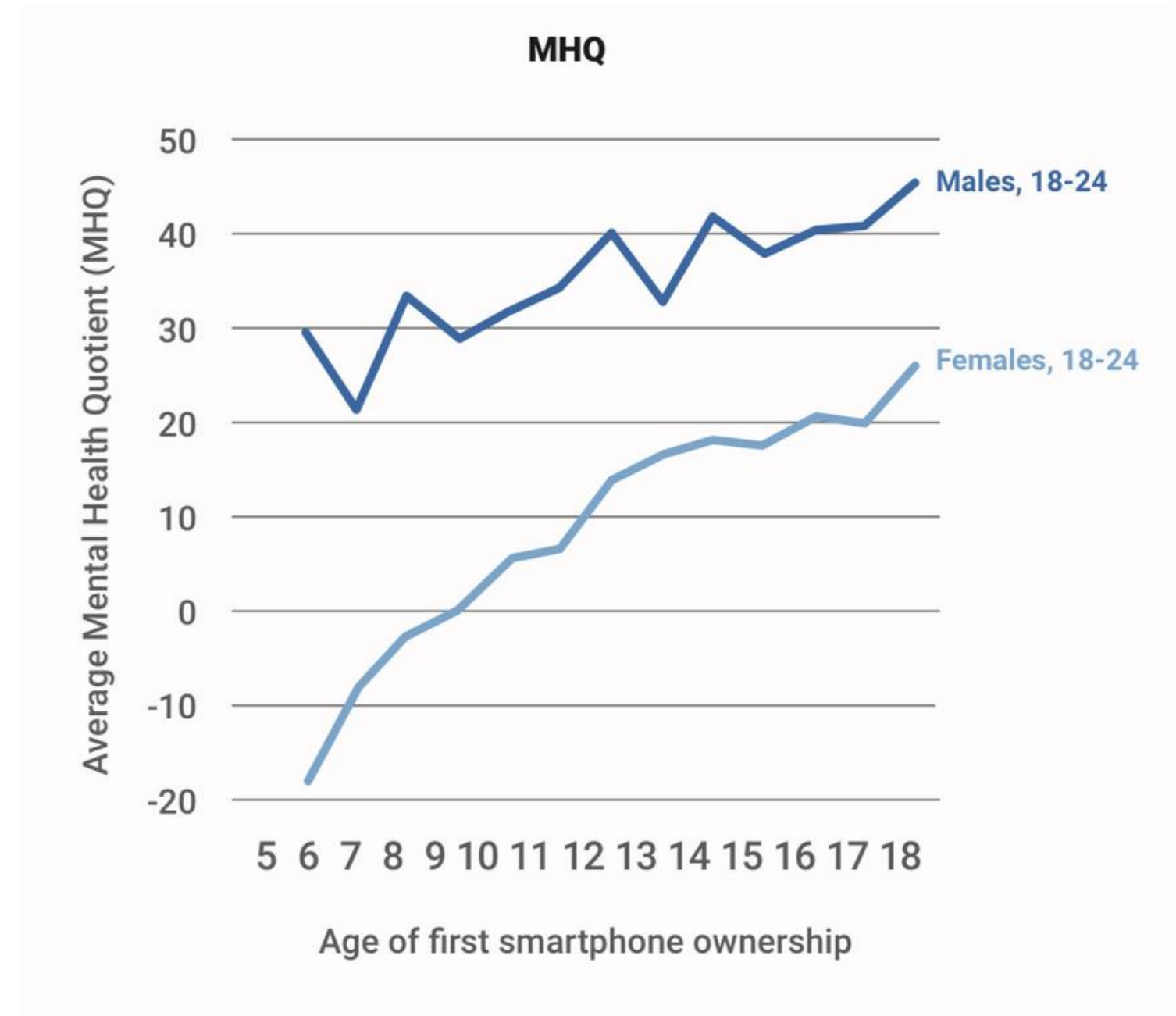
JONATHAN HAIDT



Mental health

Mental wellbeing improved with the older age of smartphone ownership.

The younger the age of first smartphone ownership the lower the mental health outcomes.



AGE OF FIRST SMARTPHONE/TABLET AND MENTAL WELLBEING OUTCOMES.
Sapien Labs, May 15, 2023

Why?



Social isolation and loneliness



Cyberbullying, grooming,
inappropriate content



Opportunity costs, loss of other
interests and sleep



Self-esteem



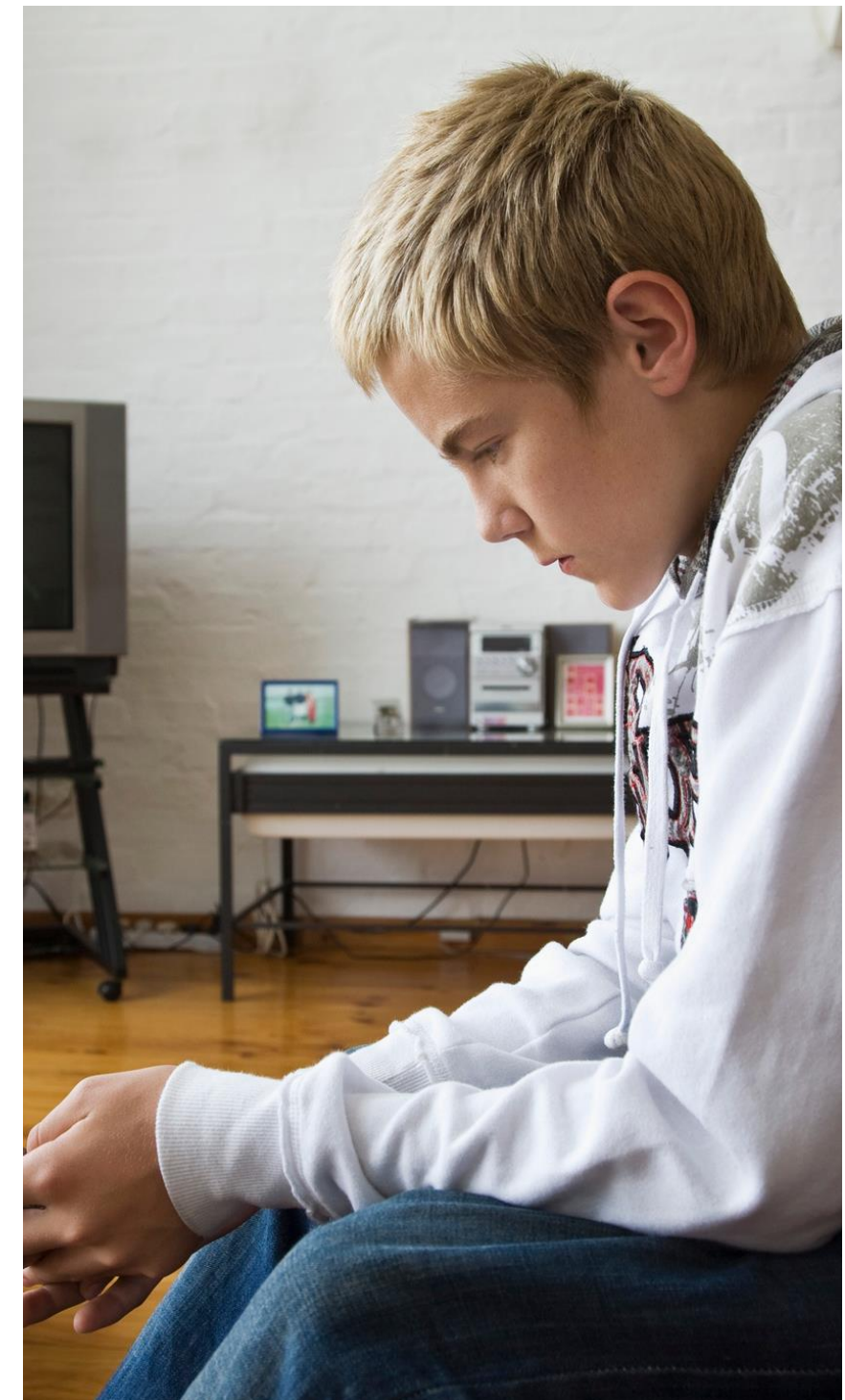
Comparison



Pornography



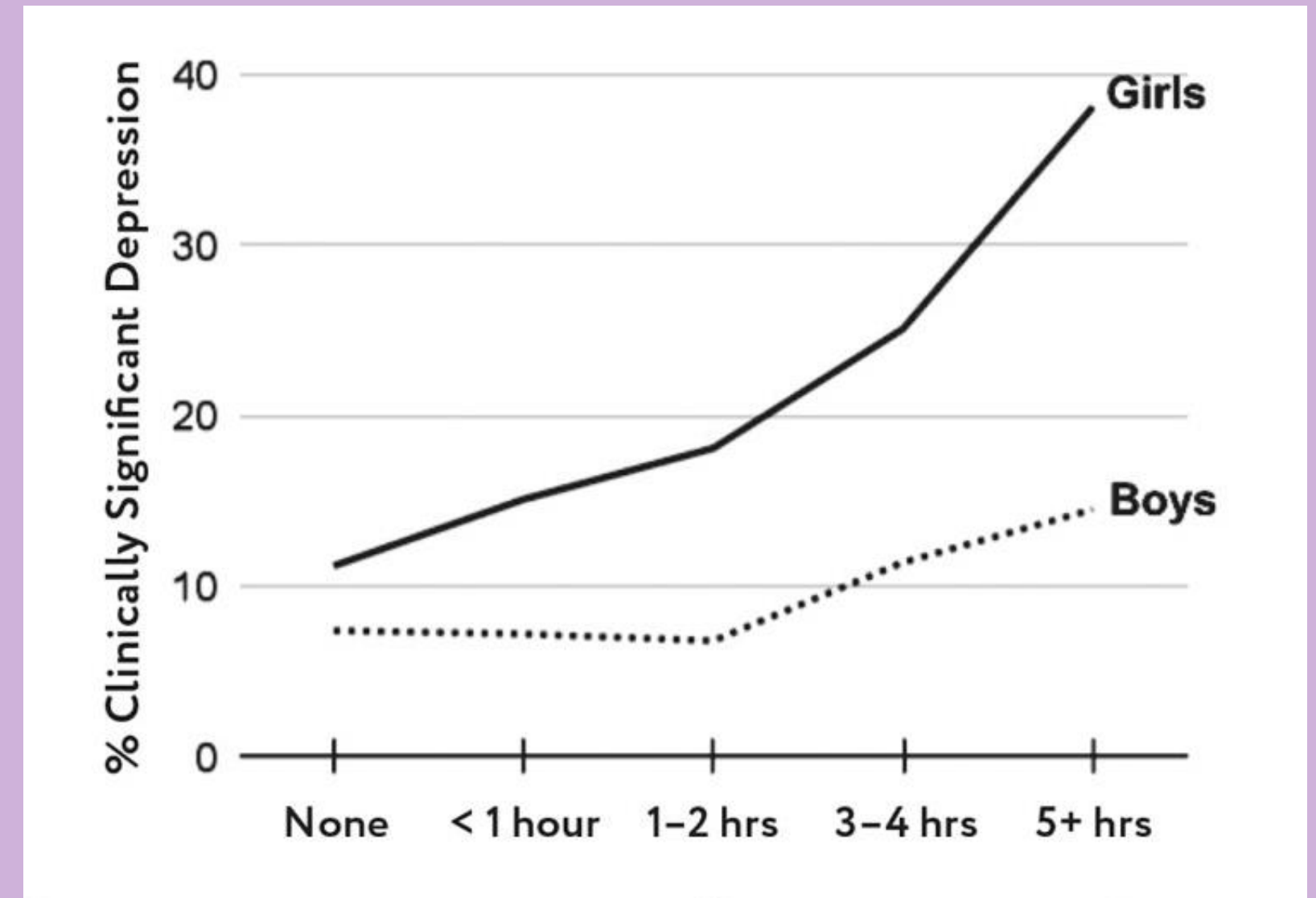
Gaming



Mental health



Depression and social media use, UK



MILLENNIUM COHORT STUDY

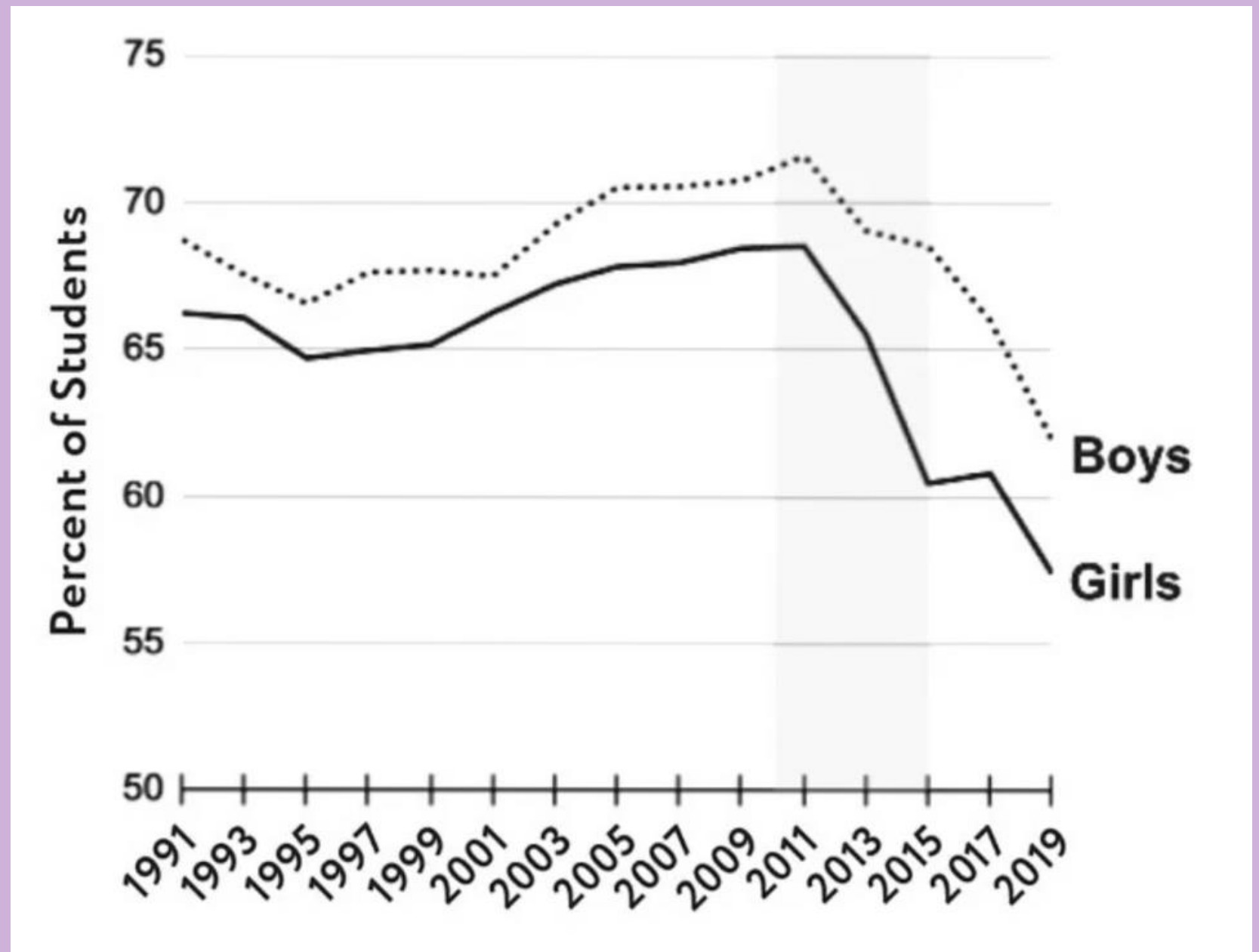
Figure from The Anxious Generation, Jonathan Haidt

Comparison

“

Young people are comparing their real selves with other peoples' curated images and highlight reels.

Satisfied with Oneself



MONITORING THE FUTURE

Figure from The Anxious Generation, Jonathan Haidt

Loneliness



13-17 year olds
are the loneliest group
in society.

1 in 5 teens
report feeling lonely, with
significant negative impacts
on health, education and
well-being.

*W.H.O., From loneliness to social connection:
charting a path to healthier societies 2025

What are they seeeing?

The average first exposure to porn is 12 whilst doing their homework.

Rothman, E. F. (2021). Pornography and public health. Oxford University Press

94% of children are exposed to porn by 14.

Middlesex University report for NSPCC and the children's Commissioner

1 in 5 children are bullied online

*Online bullying in England and Wales - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk), 2023.

*Ditch the label, The Wireless report , 2017

Of those bullied:

75%

were adversely affected

24%

Self harm as a result

Sleep

Pre-teens lose the equivalent
of a nights sleep per week to
social media

73%

of teenagers take their phone to
bed with them

The opportunity costs

*Oxford Home Schooling and Tuition, 2022

*The Raising the Nation Play Commission ,2025

x2

Children spend
twice as long
looking at screens
as playing outside

↓ 50%

Children's outdoor
playtime has
halved in a
generation

Physical health

*BMJ, 2023

*British Journal of Ophthalmology 2024

1/3

Almost a third of children who live in the most deprived areas of England have obesity by the time they leave primary school

30%

Childhood myopia has increased from 24% in 1990 to 36% in 2023.
30% higher risk of developing myopia from excessive screen time on smart devices



LET'S TALK ABOUT OUR KIDS AND THEIR TECH

SOLUTIONS

What can we do?

Top tips



If you can, consider delaying the smartphone for as long as possible

If your child does have a phone, focus on healthy boundaries and staying safe online



**SMARTPHONE
FREE CHILDHOOD**

**Smartphones: the new
frontier in parenting**

What can you do?



01. Talk to your child and other parents.

02. Join your local Smartphone Free Childhood WhatsApp group.

smartphonefreechildhood.org/find-your-community

03. Sign the Parent Pact



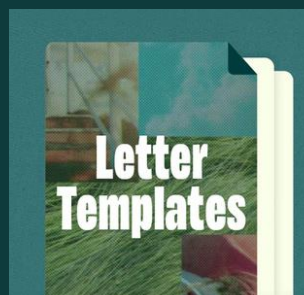
<<<<<<<<<<

<<<

Scan to sign



resources



01. Letter template to Primary School Headteachers



02. Smartphone alternatives; brick phones, flip phones & sims

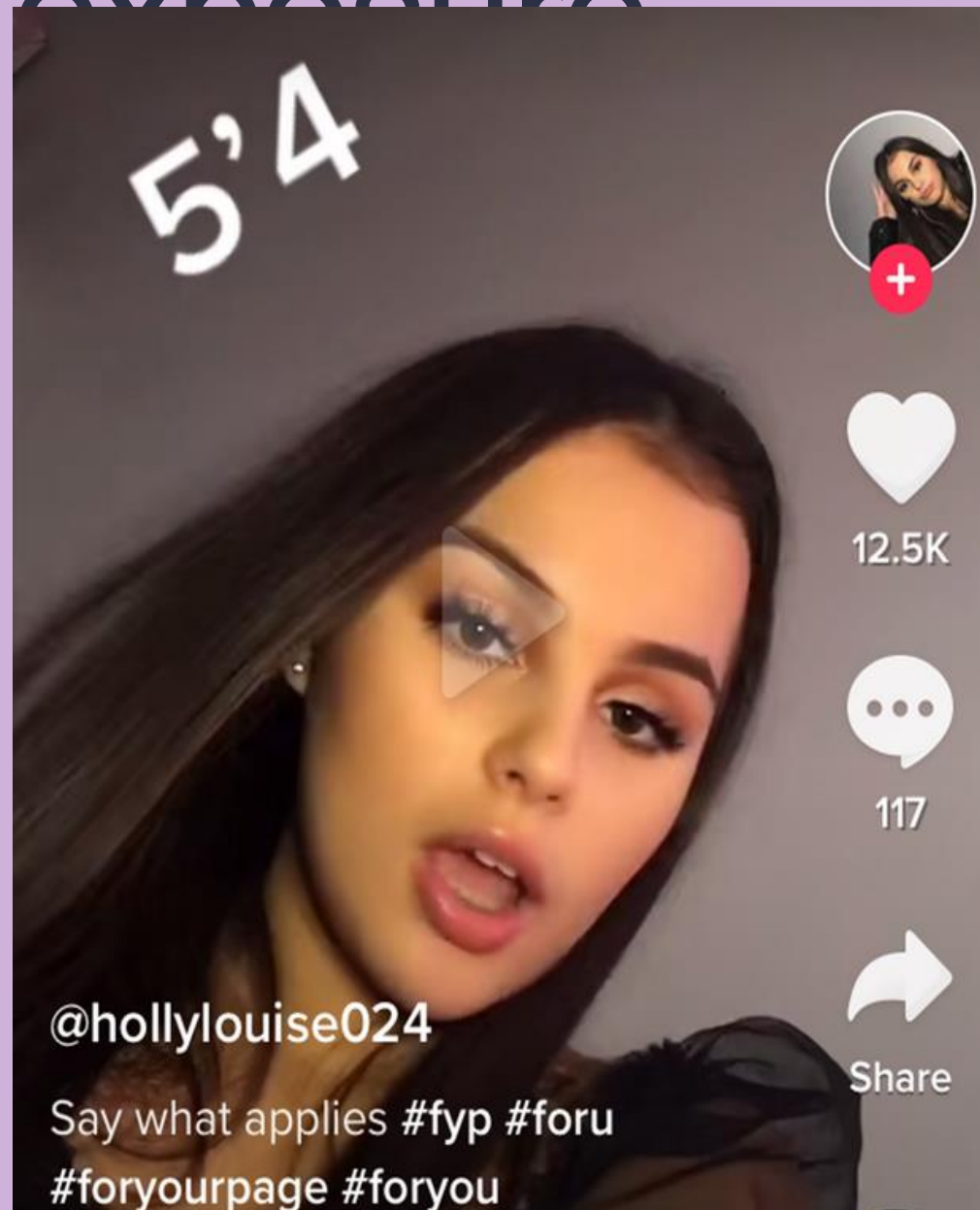


03. How to engage your whole school community about smartphones



04. Read 'How do I talk to my primary school age child about delaying smartphones?'

Top tips: Reduce exposure



Delay apps & screentime limits

Delay social media use. Set app limits and schedule downtime. Encourage the use of Do Not Disturb modes. Try the Forest app.

Reduce distraction

Reduce push notifications. Try using a flip cover, delete or hide distracting apps and turn it off.

Create screen-free spaces

Keep all internet-connected devices out of bedrooms. Avoid devices during meals and discourage multi-screening.

Top tips: Preventative Action



Control downloads & apps

Control software and app downloads with a password. Use [InternetMatters.org](https://www.InternetMatters.org) to review and set up apps. Increase privacy settings.

Block adult content

Turn off explicit material (in apps, broadband, and data plans). Watch out for VPNs, relays, and private browsers.

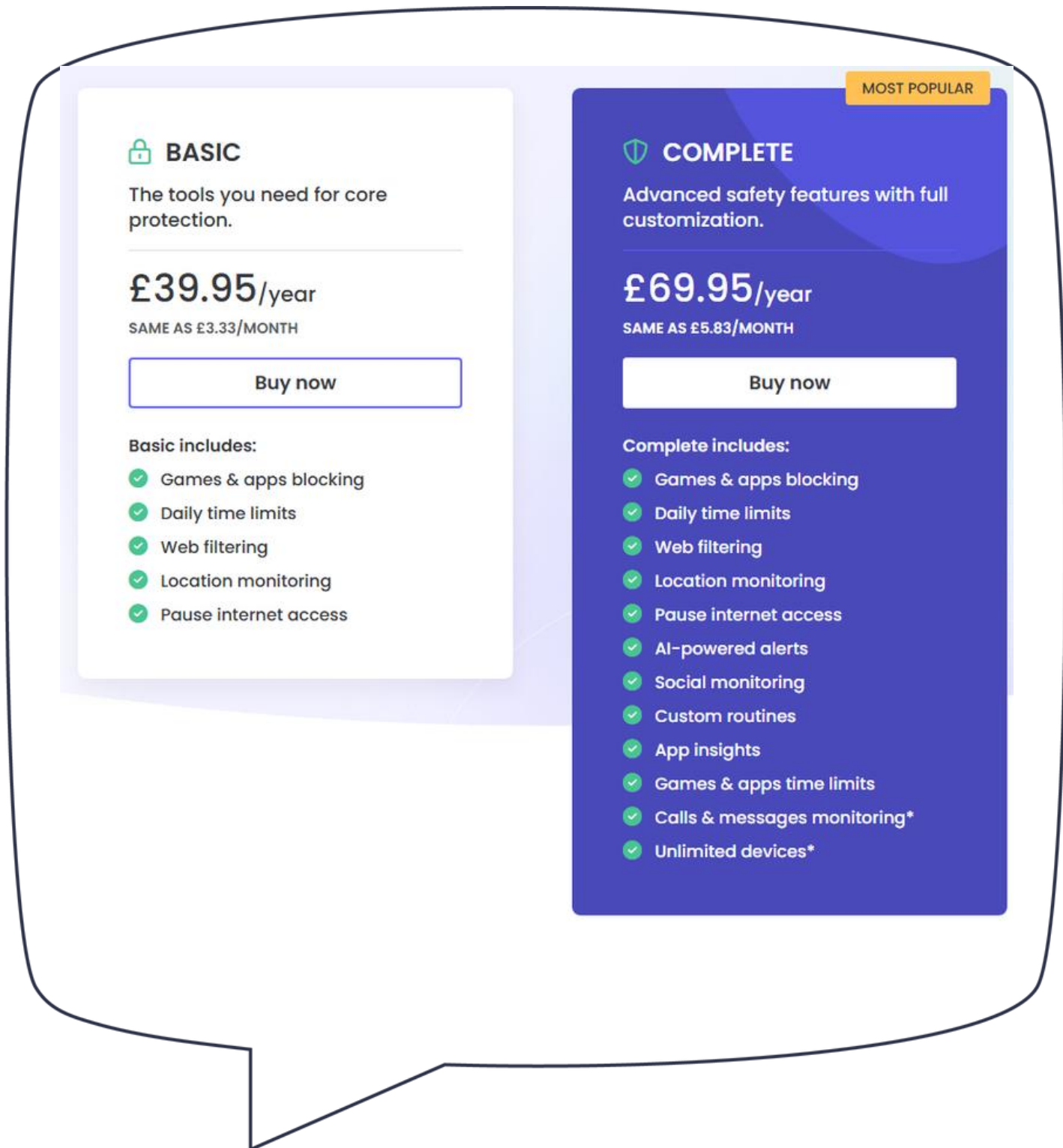
Parental controls & monitoring

Use parental control software (e.g., Google Family Link, Norton Family, or Qustodio).



LET'S TALK ABOUT OUR KIDS AND THEIR TECH

Parental Control Software



Free

Apple ScreenTime
& Google Family Link

Mid

e.g. Norton Family

Expensive

e.g. Qustodio

Qustodio is the premium product using a VPN for extensive controls.

Step wise progression



01. Delay the first phone.
Consider a basic phone first.

02. 14+ Consider a smartphone
phone with strict controls.

03. 16+ A cautious trial of selected
social media with private settings
and time limits.

04. Greater responsibility
and freedom online.

01.

Talk to your child and other parents

02.

Keep devices out of bedrooms at night

03.

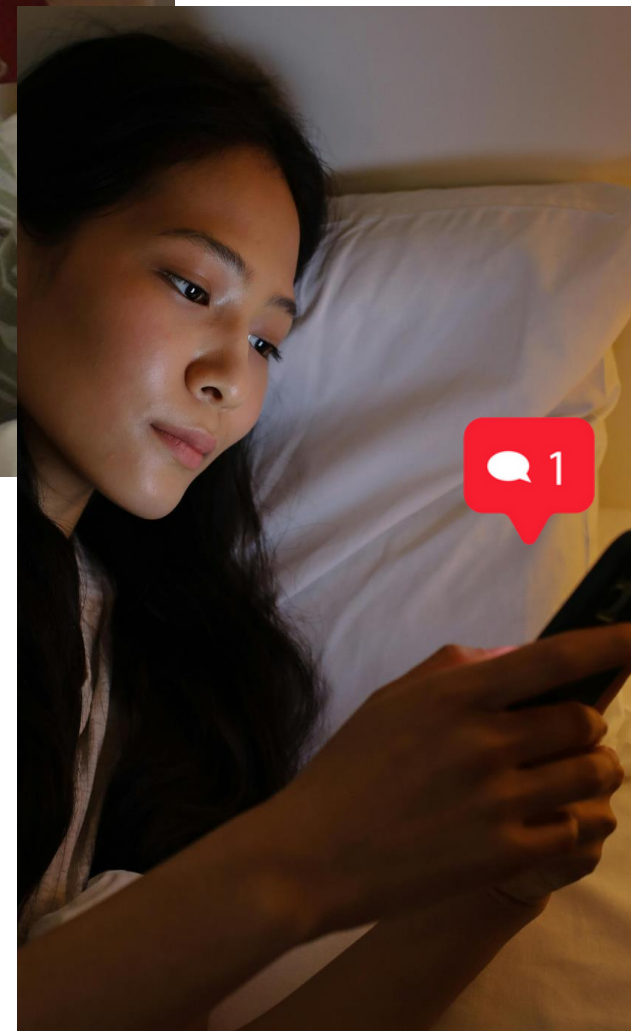
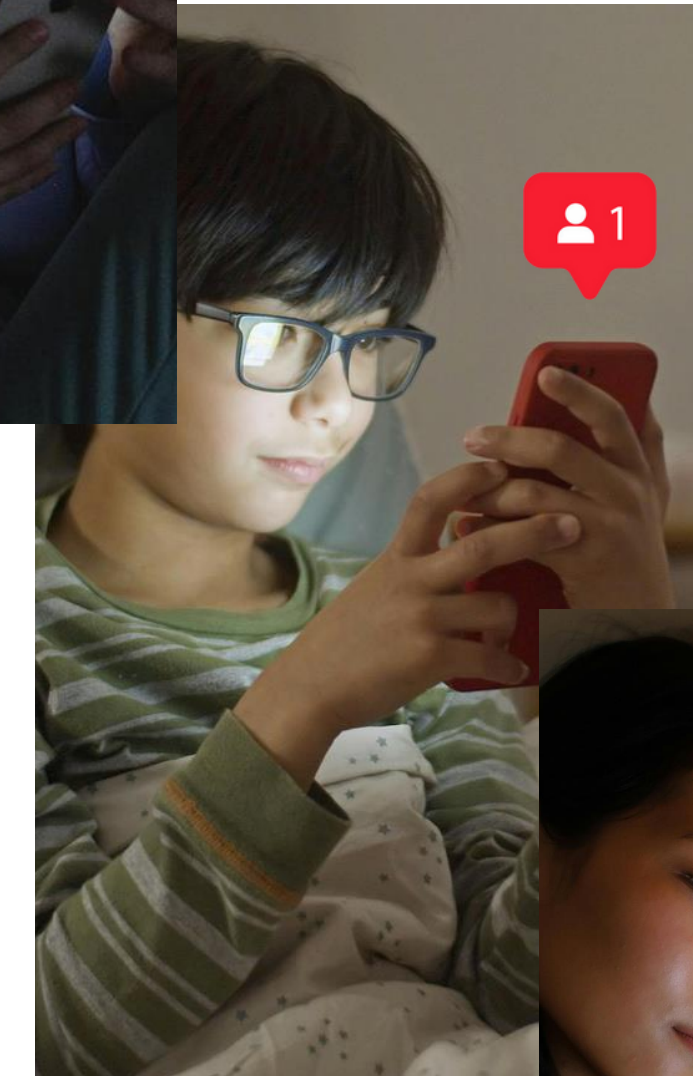
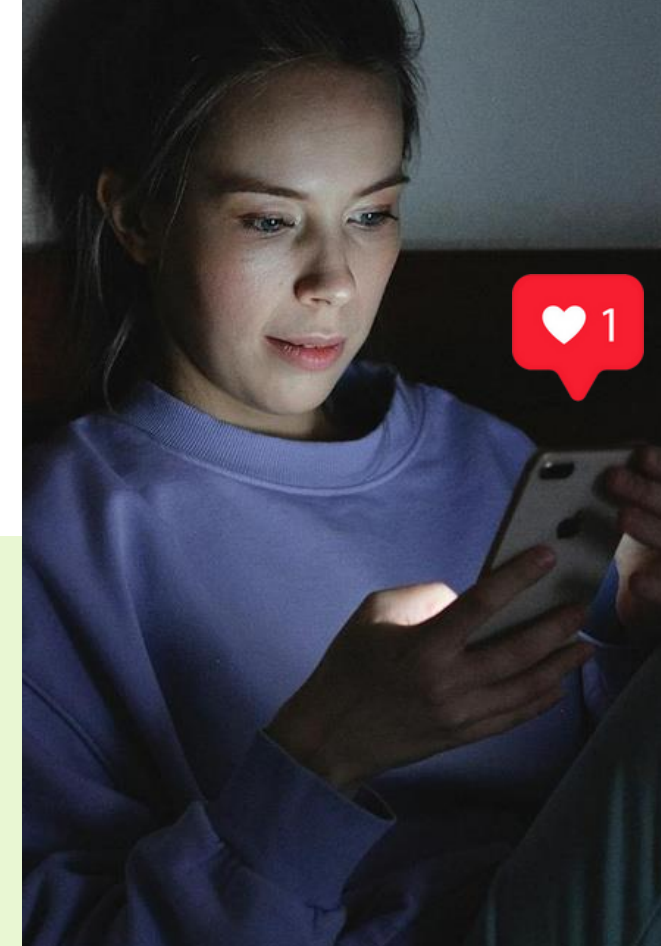
Use filters and parental control apps

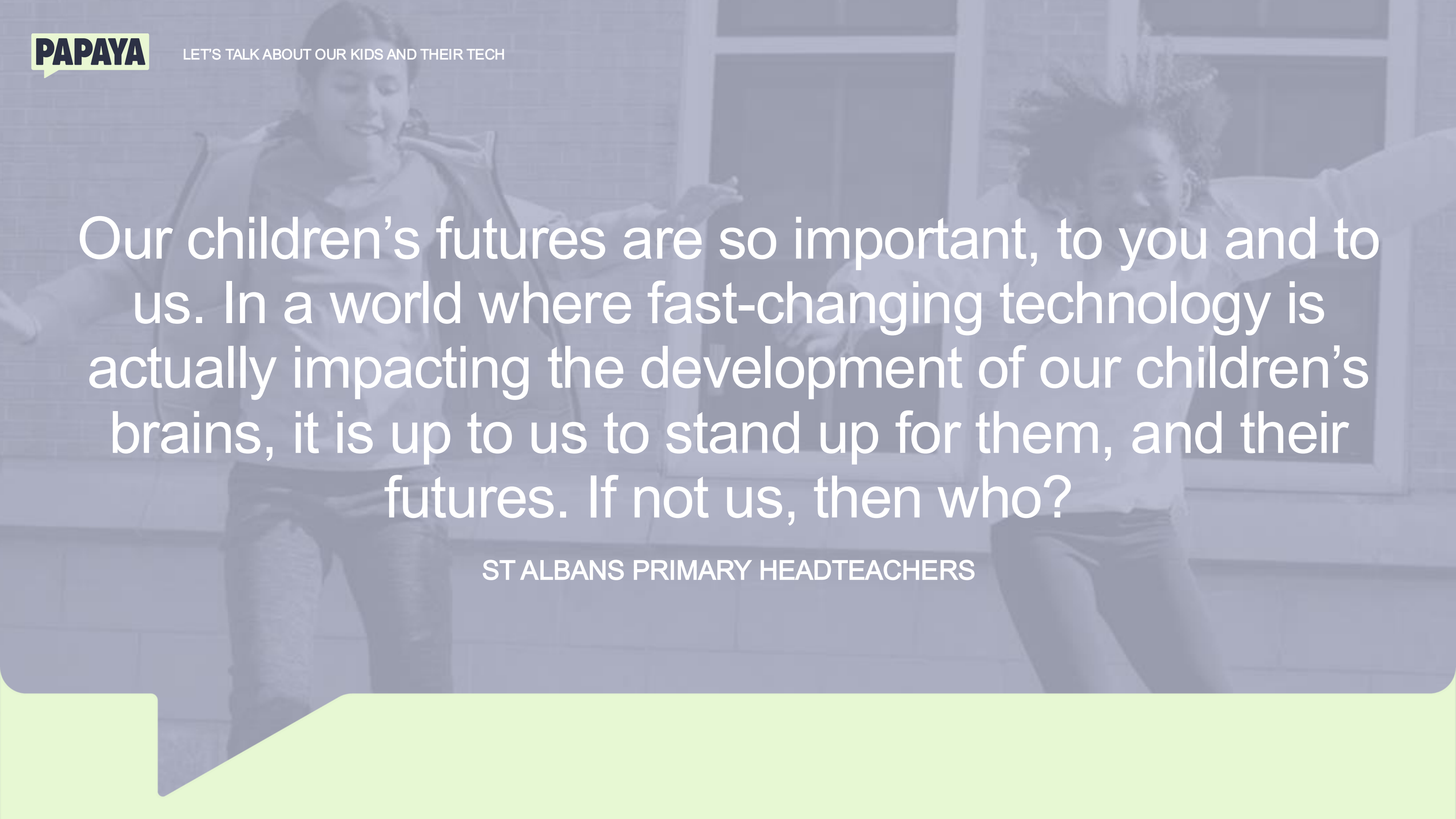
04.

Encourage more things that help your child/teen forget about their phone

05.

Consider changing your mind....



A background image of two children, a girl and a boy, jumping joyfully in front of a brick wall. The image is faded and serves as a backdrop for the text.

Our children's futures are so important, to you and to us. In a world where fast-changing technology is actually impacting the development of our children's brains, it is up to us to stand up for them, and their futures. If not us, then who?

ST ALBANS PRIMARY HEADTEACHERS

Safeguarding

- 51% of UK 11-13 year olds have seen hard core pornography.
- 75% of UK 15-year-olds have seen a beheading video.
- 90% of girls and 50% of boys have said they are sent unwanted explicit material.
- 20% of children are bullied online.

British Board of Film Classification Report, March, 2019

Digital Childhoods, Children's Commissioner report, 2022

Ofsted review of sexual abuse in schools, 2021

Online bullying in England and Wales - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk), 2020

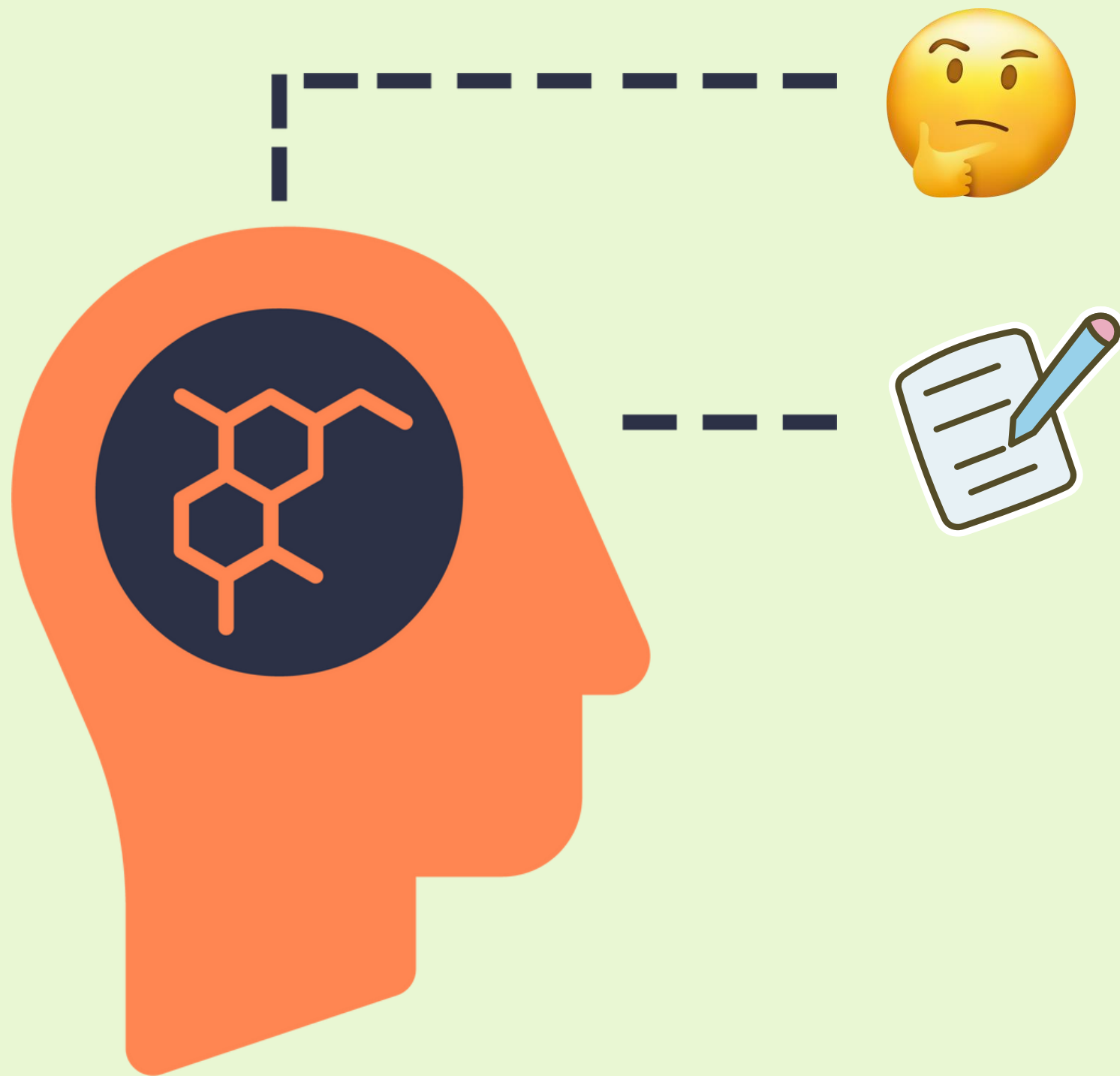
Learning

The effects of smartphone addiction on learning: A meta-analysis

Author links open overlay panel Oluwafemi J. Sunday a b, Olusola O. Adesope a, Patricia L. Maarhuis b

- Smartphone addiction has negative impacts on student learning and overall academic performance.
- The greater the use of a phone while studying, the greater the negative impact on learning.
- The skills and cognitive abilities students needed for academic success are negatively affected by excessive phone use.

What Teachers Think

**83%**

of teachers favour banning devices through out the entire school day.

75%

of teachers say the majority of lessons are interrupted by mobile phones.

87%

of teachers agree for teens the negatives of smartphones outweigh the benefits.

Next Steps



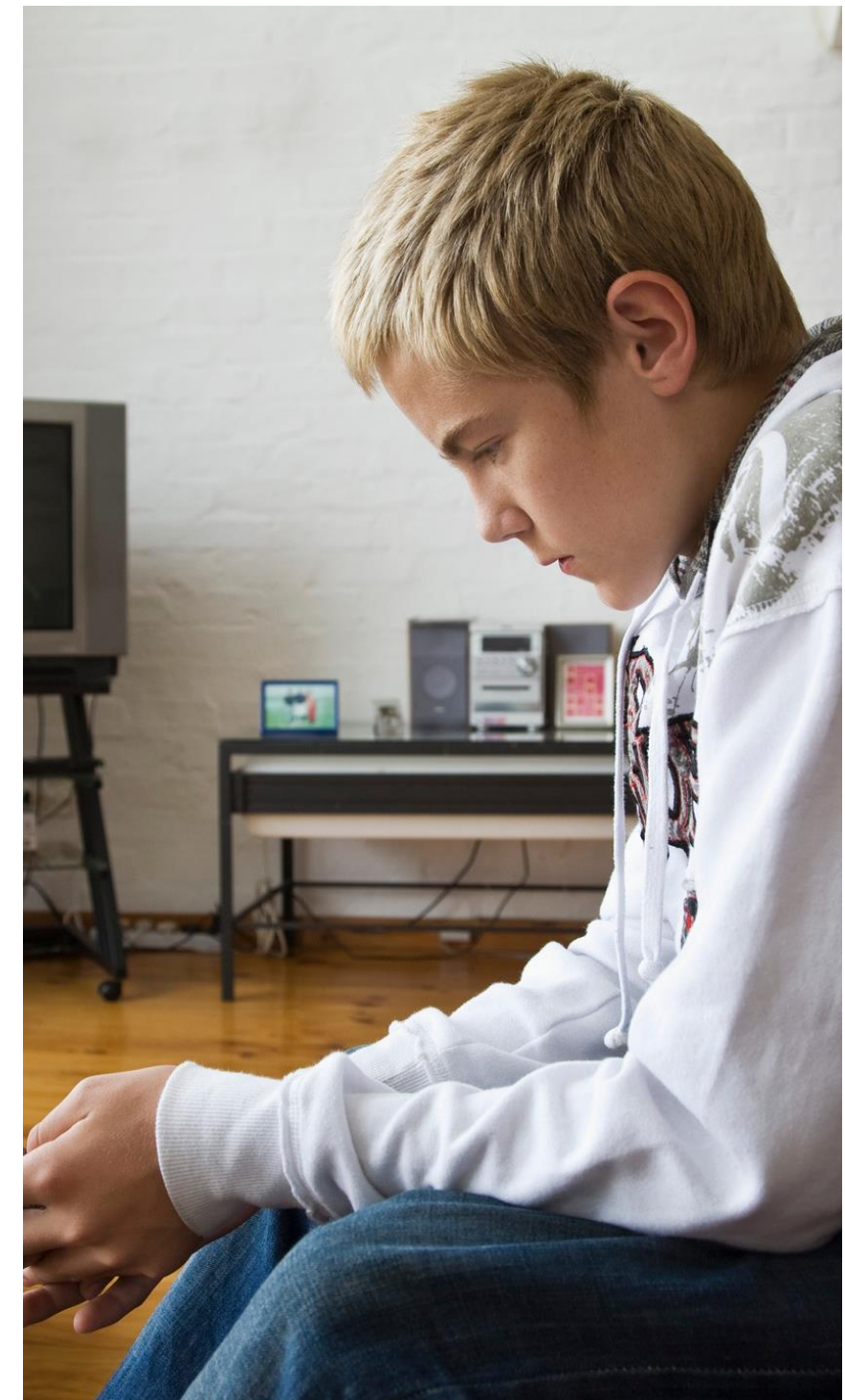
Phone Free Primary Schools
and Collective Action to Delay.



Parents Delaying the First
Smartphone.



Smartphone Free Secondaries:
• no smartphones onsite
• lockable pouches



What is the impact?

JOHN WALLIS ACADEMY

“We’ve seen a 42 per cent decrease in low-level disruption sanctions, a 40 per cent decrease in after-school detentions and a 25 per cent decrease in truancy.

“These statistics don’t begin to do justice to the cultural change that the school has seen in such a short space of time. The pupils are better behaved and less distracted. They are noisier, yet more respectful.”

What is the impact?

ORCHARD ACADEMY, BRISTOL

94% Orchard staff reported that learning had been less disrupted due to mobile phone use.

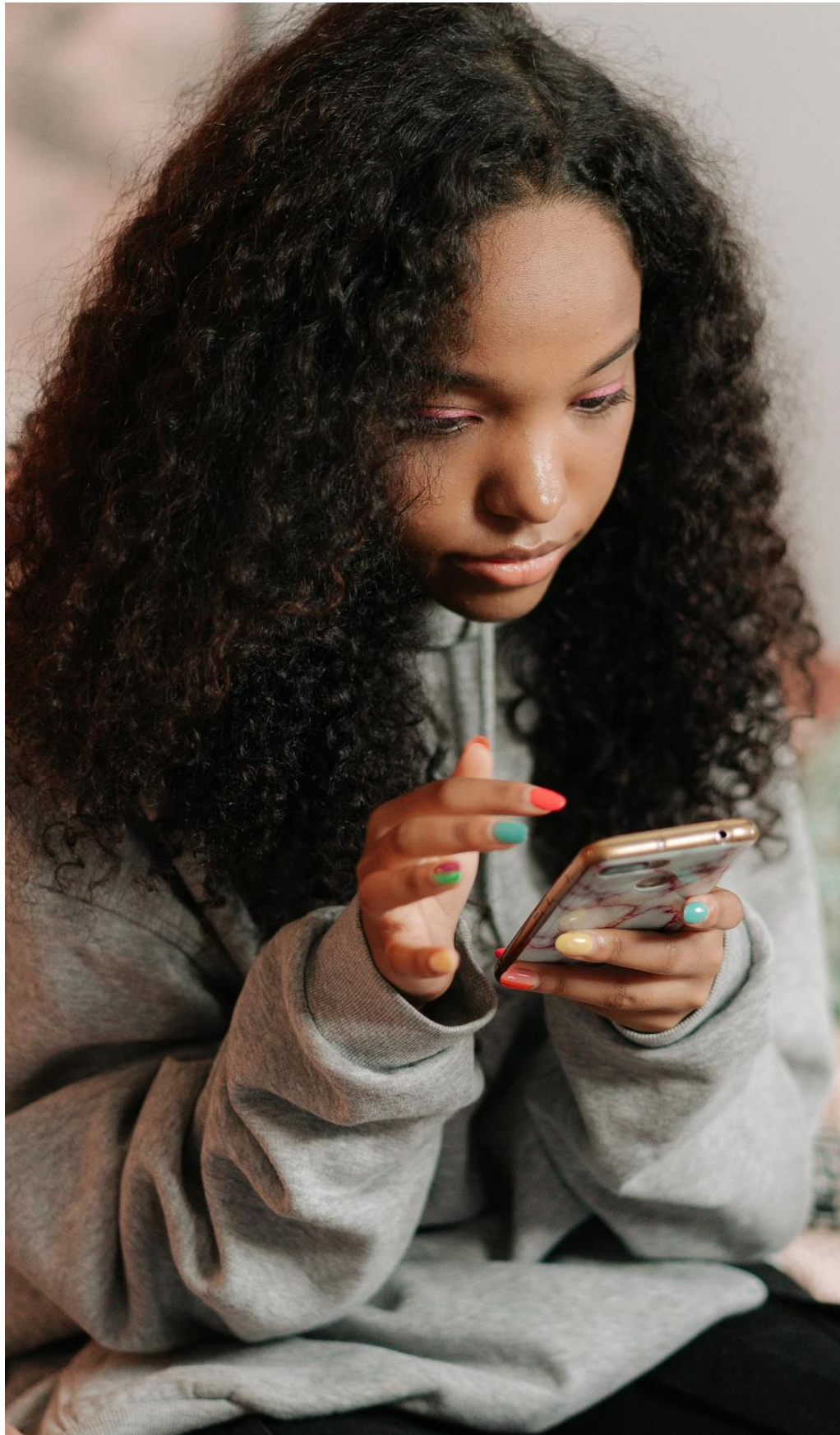
83% Orchard staff reported seeing an increase in students talking to one another during social times.

“They have led to quieter classrooms for me to study in.”

“We do more work without distractions in lessons.”

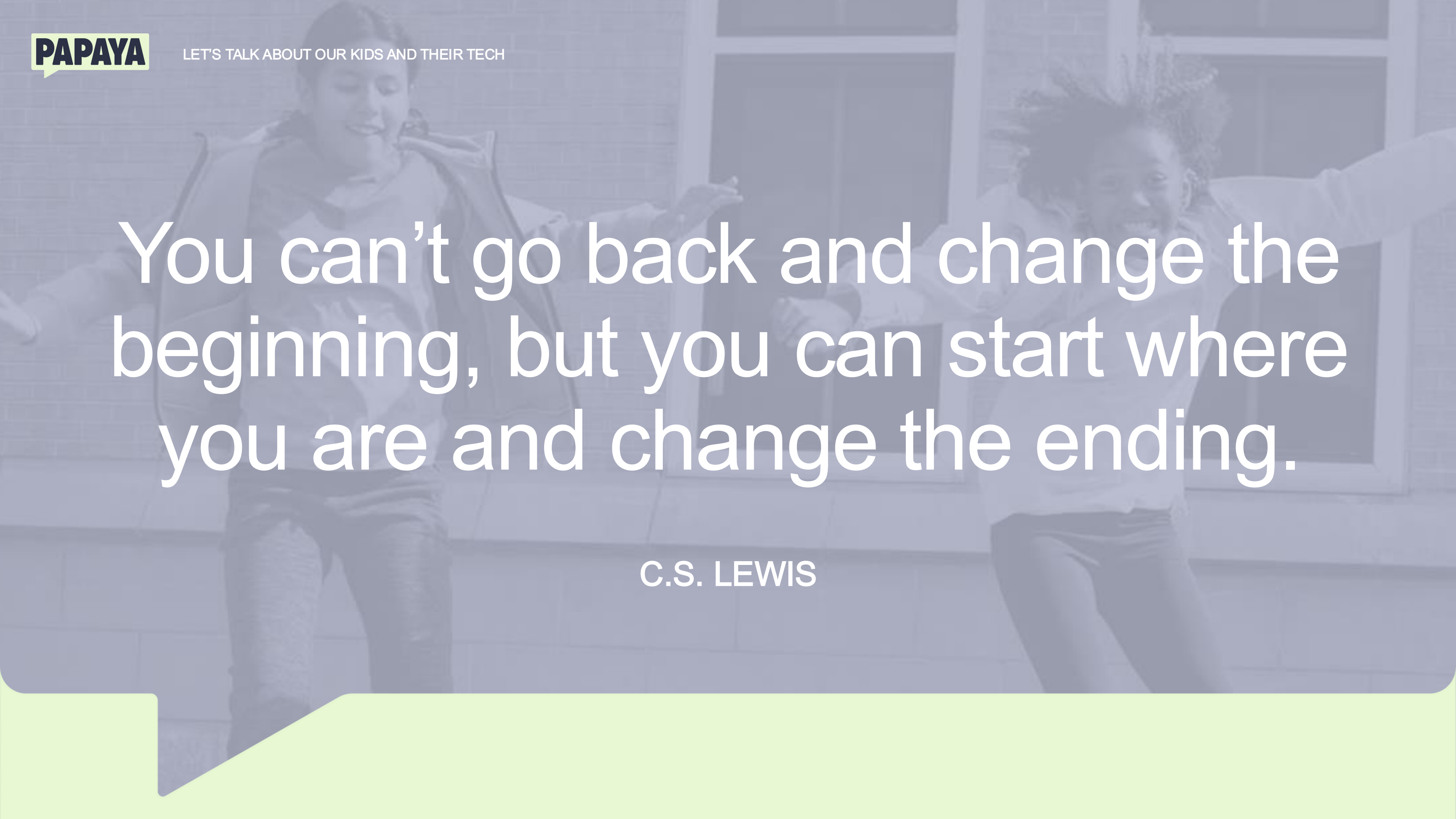
Learning

- The Centre for Economic Performance found that removing smartphones from schools led to significant improvements in student learning, particularly among the lowest-achieving students.
- This suggest restricting phone use can be a low-cost policy to reduce educational inequalities.



London borough is making moves to ban smartphones from its schools, from September 2025:

- 103 primary schools in Barnet will not allow smartphones to be brought into school.
- 23 secondary schools will commit to working towards removing smartphones entirely from the school day.

A background image of two children running joyfully on a sidewalk in front of a brick house. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue filter. The child on the left is a girl with dark hair, wearing a grey hoodie and dark pants. The child on the right is a girl with curly hair, wearing a light-colored shirt and dark pants. Both are smiling and have their arms outstretched.

You can't go back and change the beginning, but you can start where you are and change the ending.

C.S. LEWIS

Understanding the impacts of smartphones on Cheltenham's children

Dr Paul Redford and Dr Ben Knight
Associate Professor and Researcher and Educator
UWE Bristol



BRISTOL SMARTPHONE EXPERIENCE & SCHOOL POLICY PROJECT

Students, Parents & Staff Perspectives



Dr Ben Knight
Dr Paul Redford



Who are we?

Dr Ben Knight

Former primary
teacher & school
leader

Education academic

Author

Researcher

Consultant

Dr Paul Redford

Psychologist

Associate
Professor

Programme
Leader MA
Education
Leadership

Researcher

>Bristol Context

Secondary School Policies (which are available)

Secondary school	Academy/trust	Current policy	Planned changes
Ashton Park School	Excalibur	In bags, confiscated if seen	
Bedminster Down School	Futura	In bags, confiscated if seen	
Blaise High School	Greenshaw Learning	In bags, confiscated if seen	
Bridge Learning Campus		Yondr pouches	
Bristol Brunel Academy	Cabot Learning	In bags, confiscated if seen	
Bristol Cathedral Choir School	Cathedral schools	In bags	
Bristol Free School	Russell Education	In bags, confiscated if seen	Yondr pouches
Bristol Metropolitan Academy	Cabot Learning	In bags, confiscated if seen	
City Academy Bristol	Cabot Learning	In bags, confiscated if seen	
Cotham School		In bags, confiscated if seen	Yondr pouches
Fairfield High School	Excalibur	In bags, confiscated if seen	
Merchants' Academy	E-ACT	In bags, confiscated if seen	
Montpelier High School	E-ACT	In lockers, confiscated if seen	
Oasis Academy Brightstowe	Oasis	Phones handed in at the beginning of the day	
Oasis Academy Brislington	Oasis	In bags, confiscated if seen	
Oasis Academy Daventry Road	Oasis	Phones handed in at the beginning of the day	
Oasis Academy John Williams	Oasis	Phone locked in designated phone lockers	
Oasis Academy Temple Quarter	Oasis	Phones handed in at the beginning of the day	
Orchard School Bristol	Trust in Learning	Yondr pouches	
			Announced phone free during the day from Sept. Details to come
Redland Green School	Excalibur	In bags, confiscated if seen	
St Bede's Catholic College		In bags, confiscated if seen	
St Bernadette Catholic Secondary School		In bags, confiscated if seen	
St Mary Radcliffe and Temple School		In bags, confiscated if seen	
Trinity Academy Bristol	Cathedral schools	In bags	
Badminton School		Self regulation	
Bristol Grammar School		In bags, confiscated if seen	Yondr pouches
Clifton College		Phones handed in at the beginning of the day	
Clifton High School		In bags, confiscated if seen	
Collegiate School		In bags, confiscated if seen	
Queen Elizabeth Hospital		In lockers, confiscated if seen	
Redmaids' High School		Yondr pouches	

Parents Collectivising

ABOUT US ▾THE ISSUE ▾RESOURCES ▾

SMARTPHONE
FREE CHILDHOOD

GET INVOLVEDSIGN THE PACTDONATE 🔍

Live leaderboards

← back to National

Bristol

2,461

Children signed up

97

Schools covered

Sign the Pact 🍌

Share the Pact 🔗

“In bags, confiscated if seen” still most common

Approx 25% of schools have moved towards smartphone free policies (pouches or hand-in)

This will rise to approx 38% in September

A photograph of a classroom with rows of wooden desks and chairs. The focus is on the back of a wooden chair in the foreground, which has a white metal frame. The text "SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDY" is overlaid in large, white, bold, sans-serif capital letters across the center of the image. The background shows other rows of desks and chairs, slightly out of focus, and a dark green chalkboard at the front of the room.

SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDY

➤ Secondary School Sample



Schools (6)



Students (3721)



Parents (1595)



Staff (352)

Objectives

- Better understand trends in stakeholder views and experiences in Bristol
- Support school and trust-level decision-making and policy development
- Enable evidence-informed practice
- Cross-fertilise understanding of different stakeholder points of view
- Support conversations between young people, schools and parents
- Baseline for comparison with future data

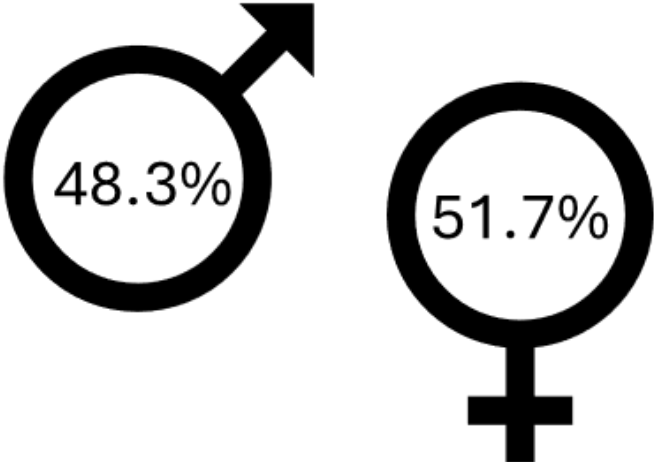
> Sample

 Schools (6)

 **Students (3721)**

 Parents (1595)

 Staff (352)



YEAR GROUP	% of SAMPLE
7	20.7
8	22.8
9	21.0
10	17.8
11	10.9
12	3.8
13	3.0

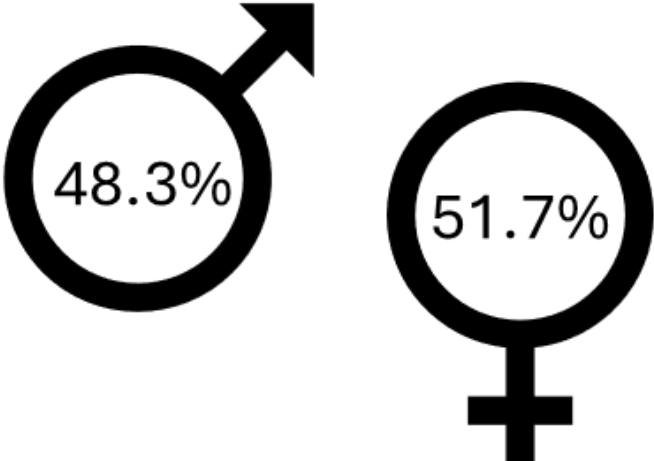
> Sample

 Schools (6)

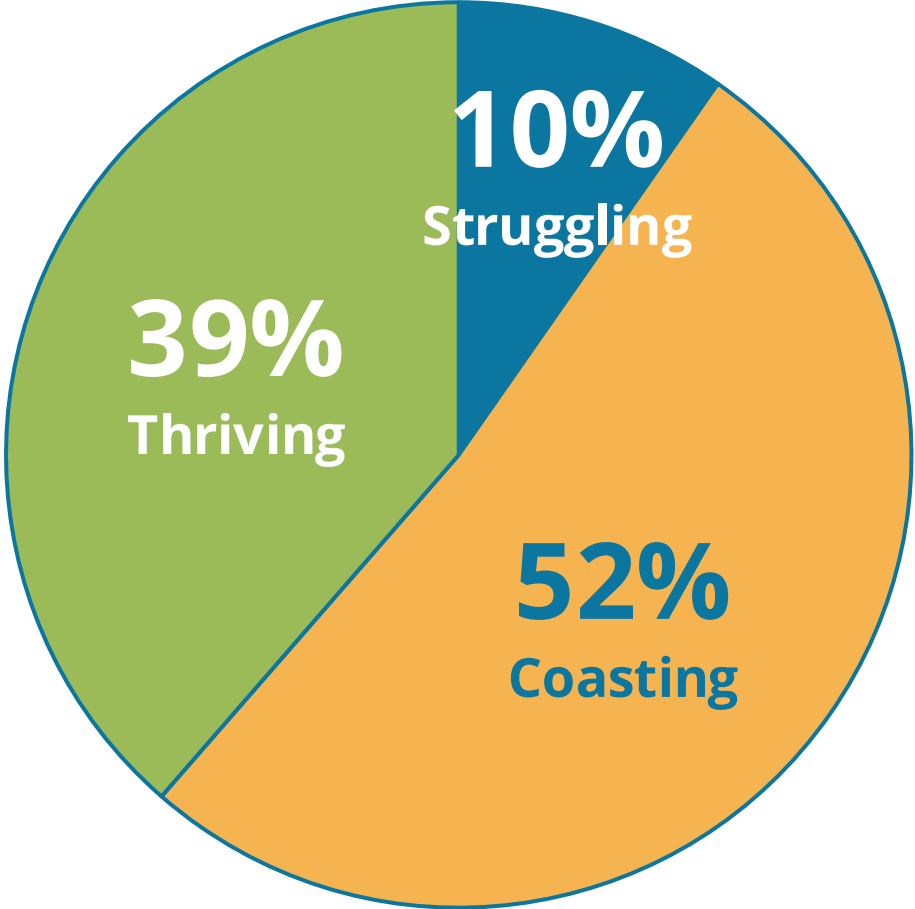
 **Students (3721)**

 Parents (1595)

 Staff (352)



YEAR GROUP	% of SAMPLE
7	20.7
8	22.8
9	21.0
10	17.8
11	10.9
12	3.8
13	3.0



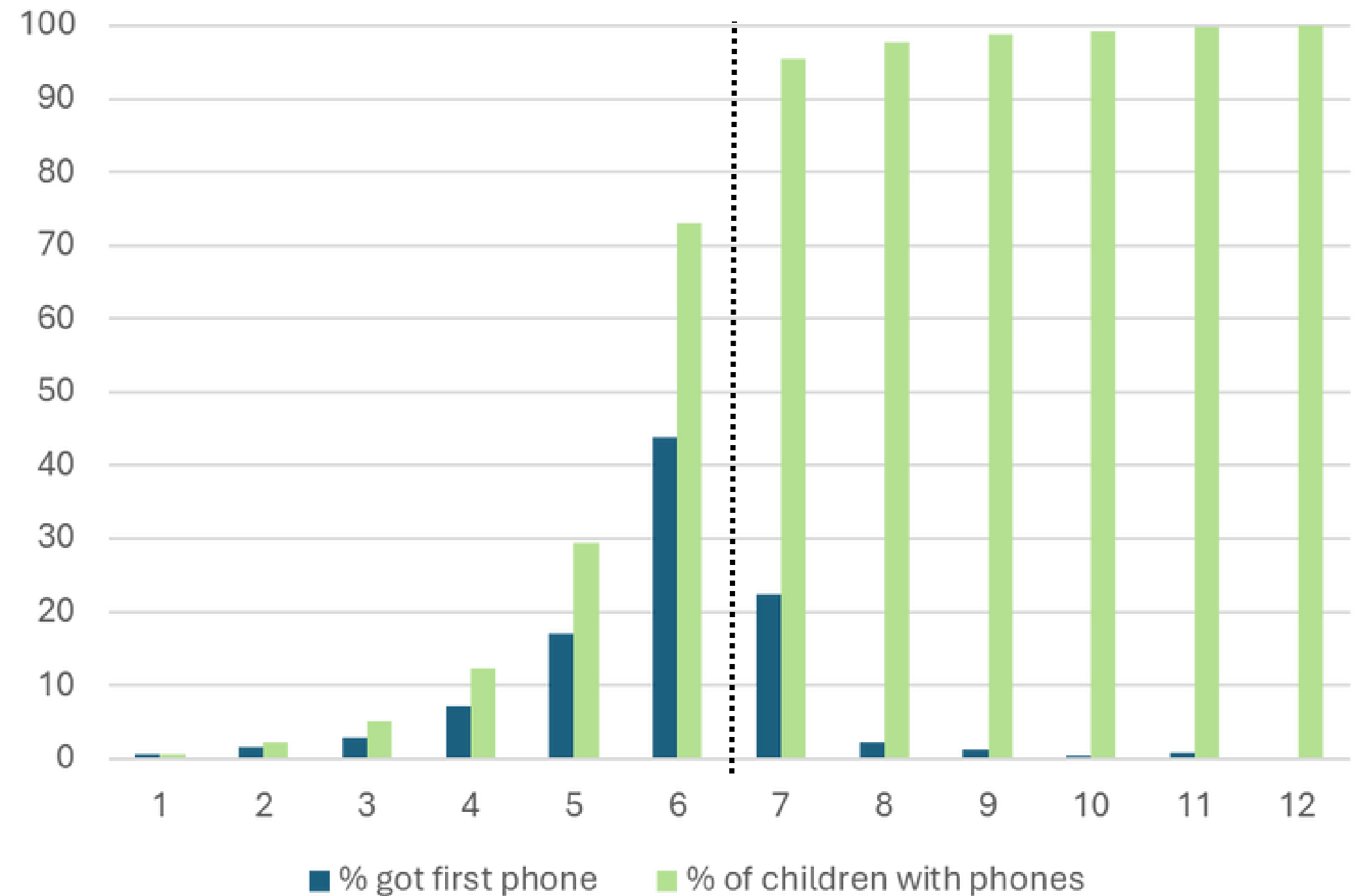
> Sample

 Schools (6)

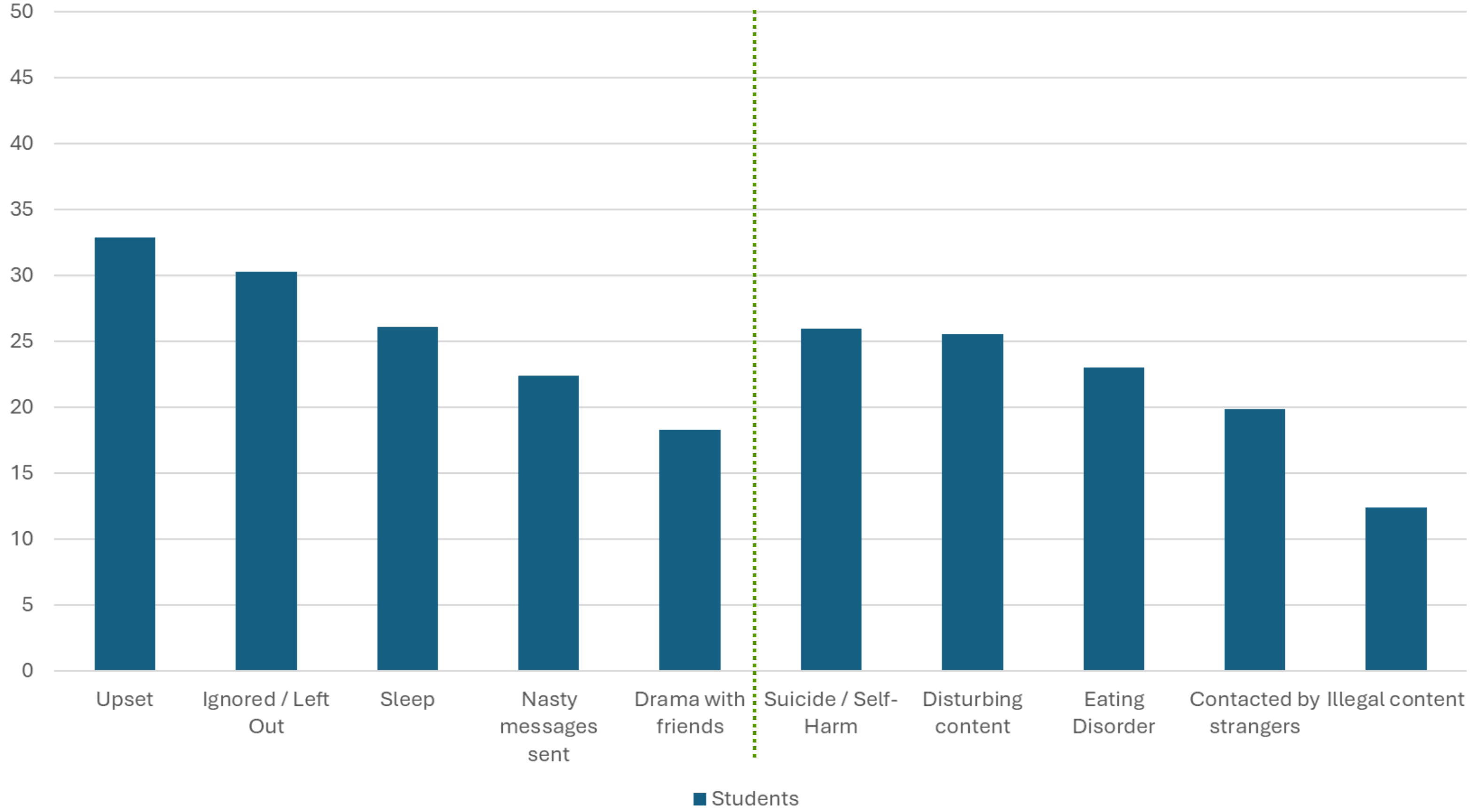
 **Students (3721)**

 Parents (1595)

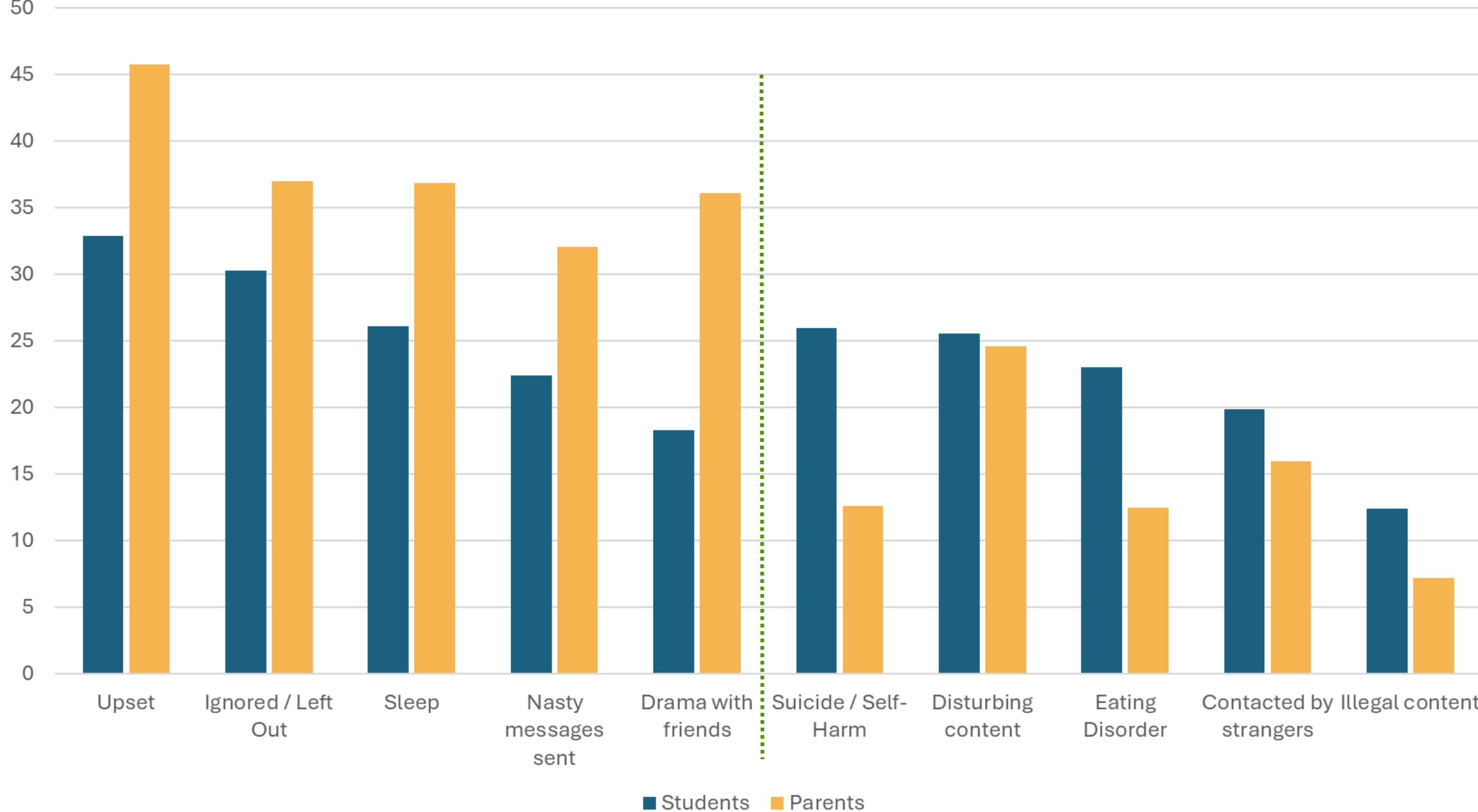
 Staff (352)



Negative Experiences on Phones

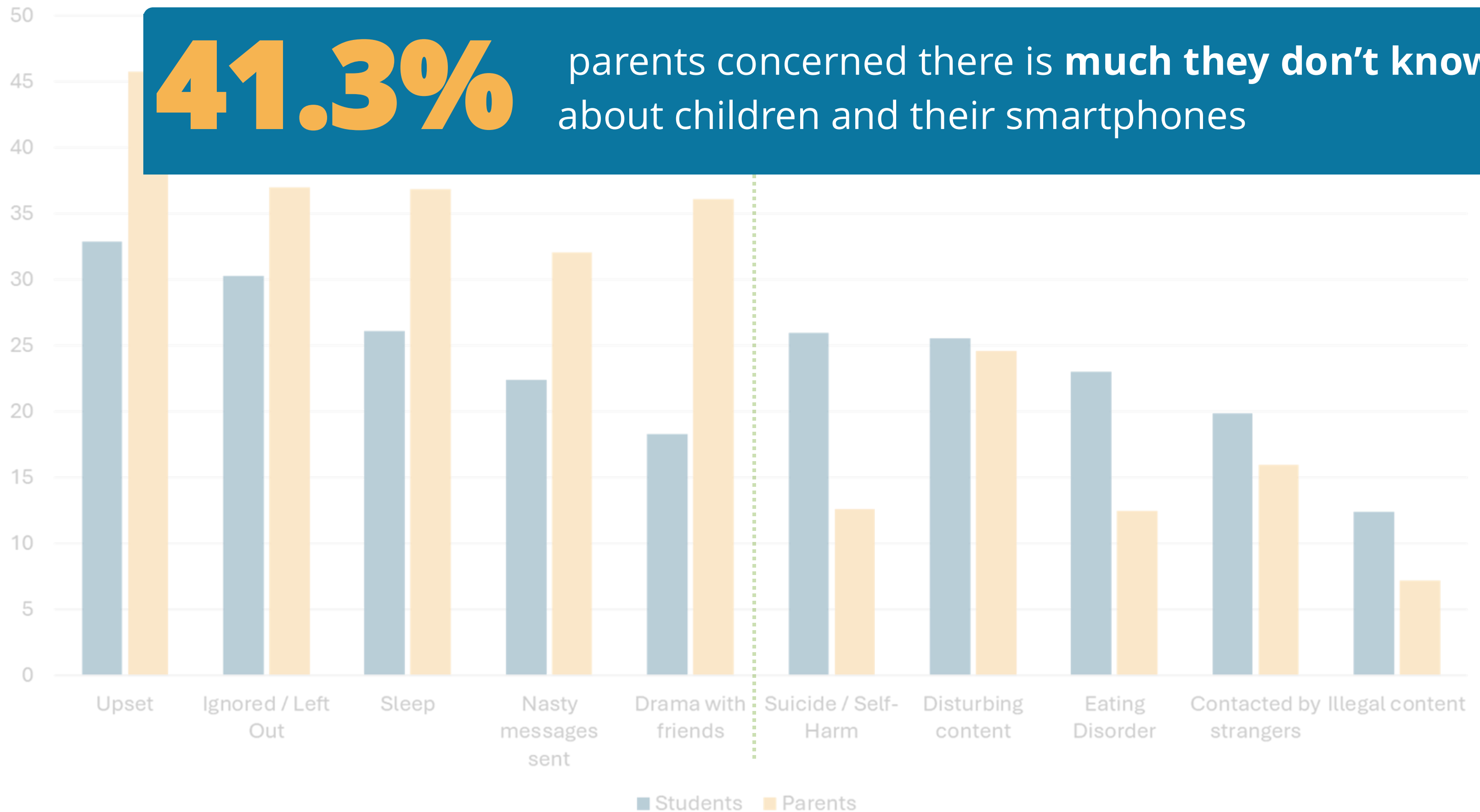


Negative Experiences on Phones



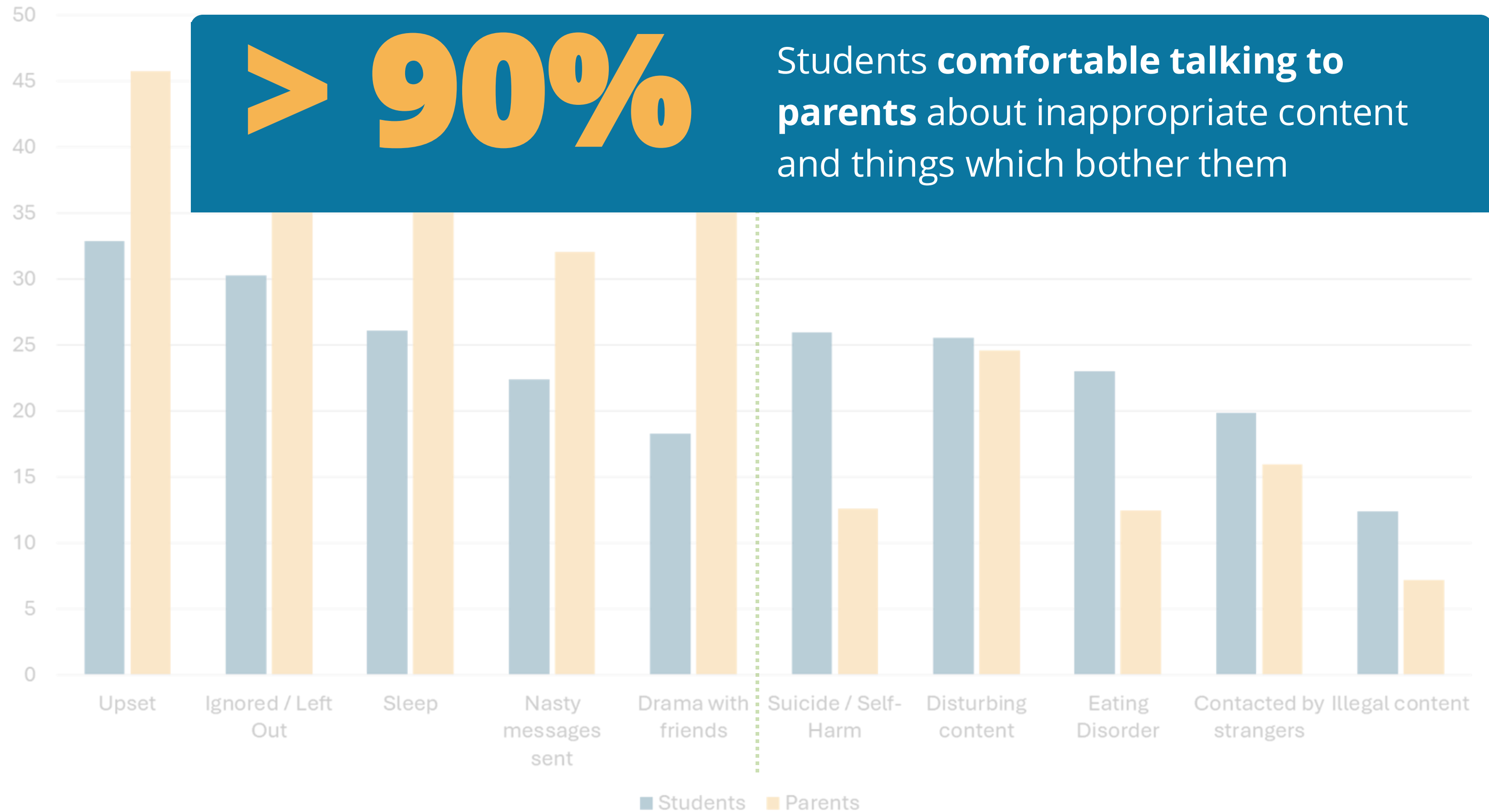
41.3%

parents concerned there is **much they don't know** about children and their smartphones

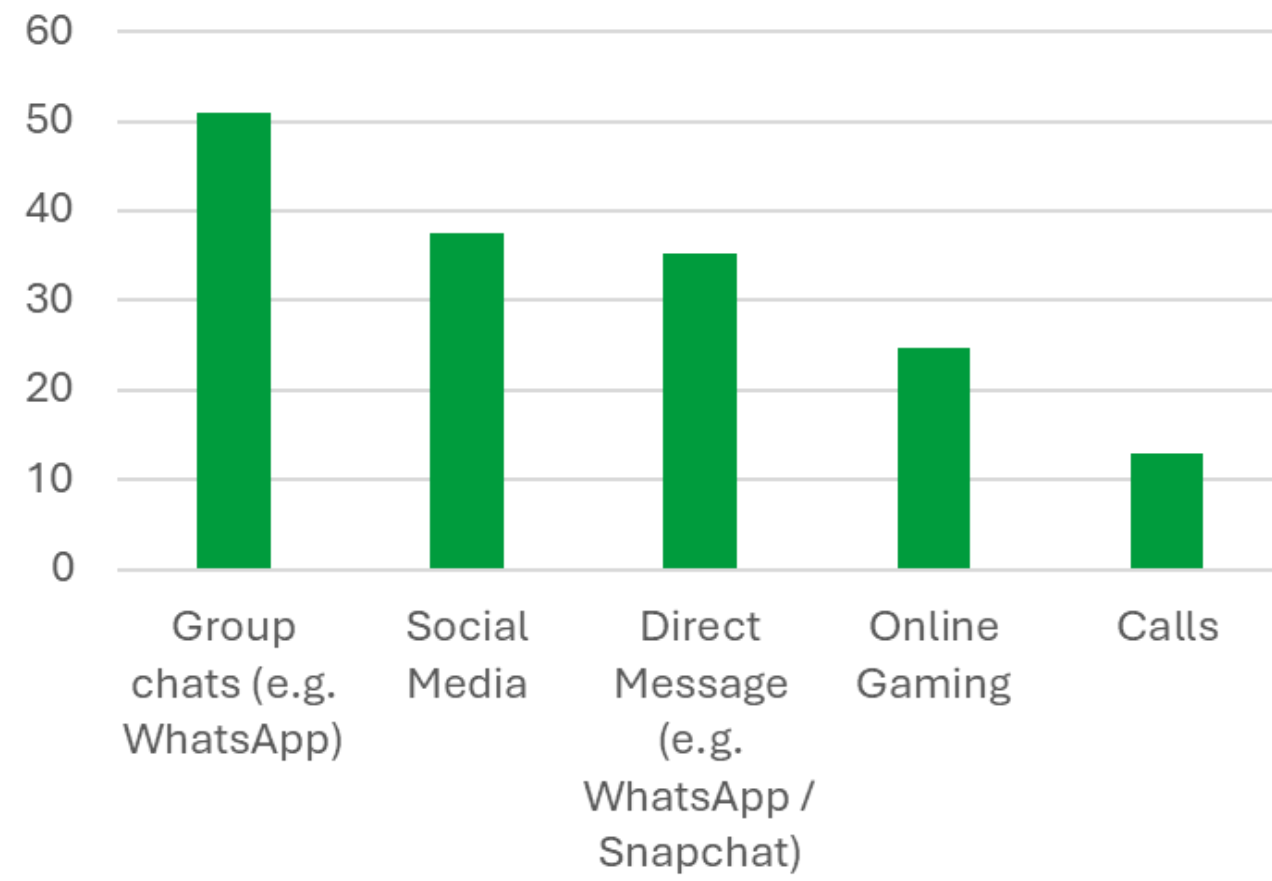


> 90%

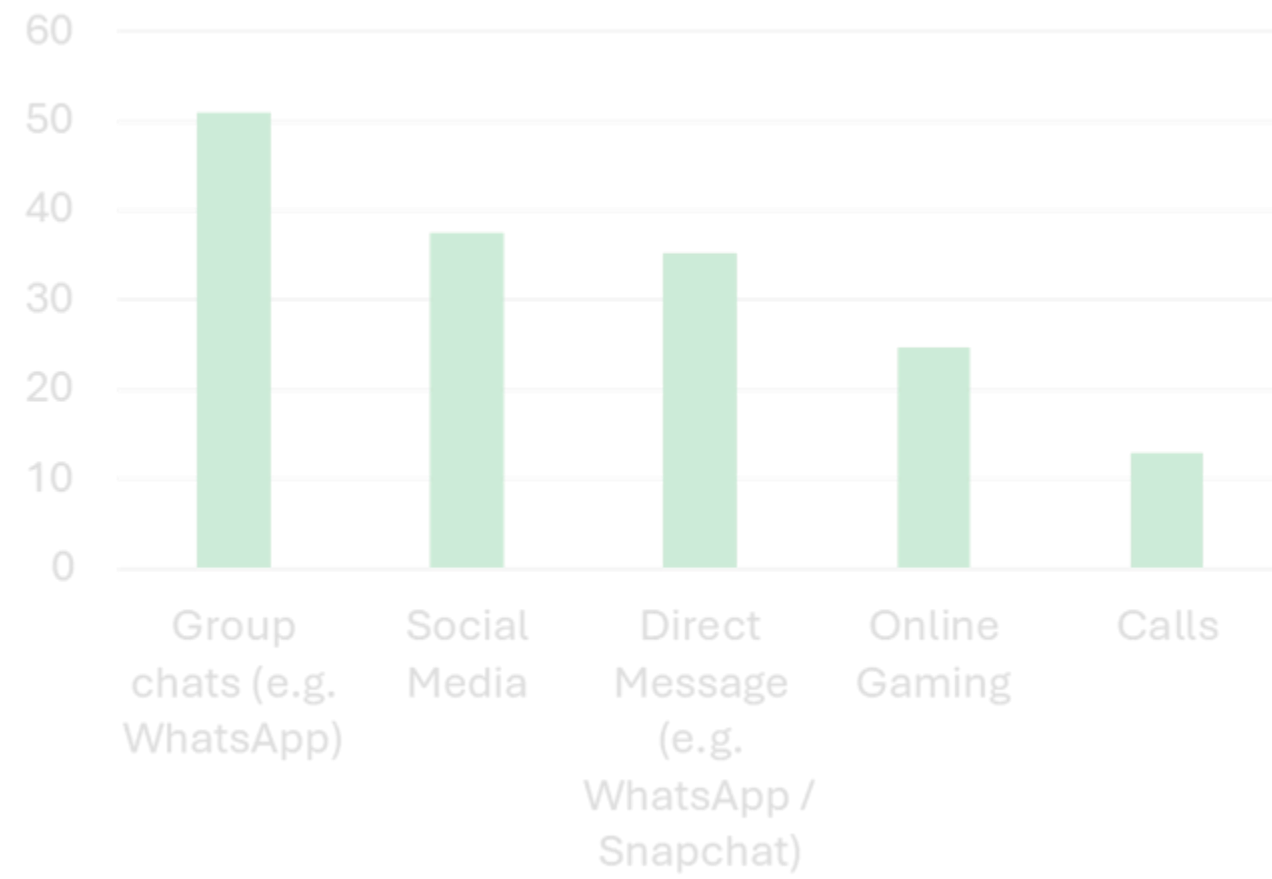
Students **comfortable talking to parents** about inappropriate content and things which bother them



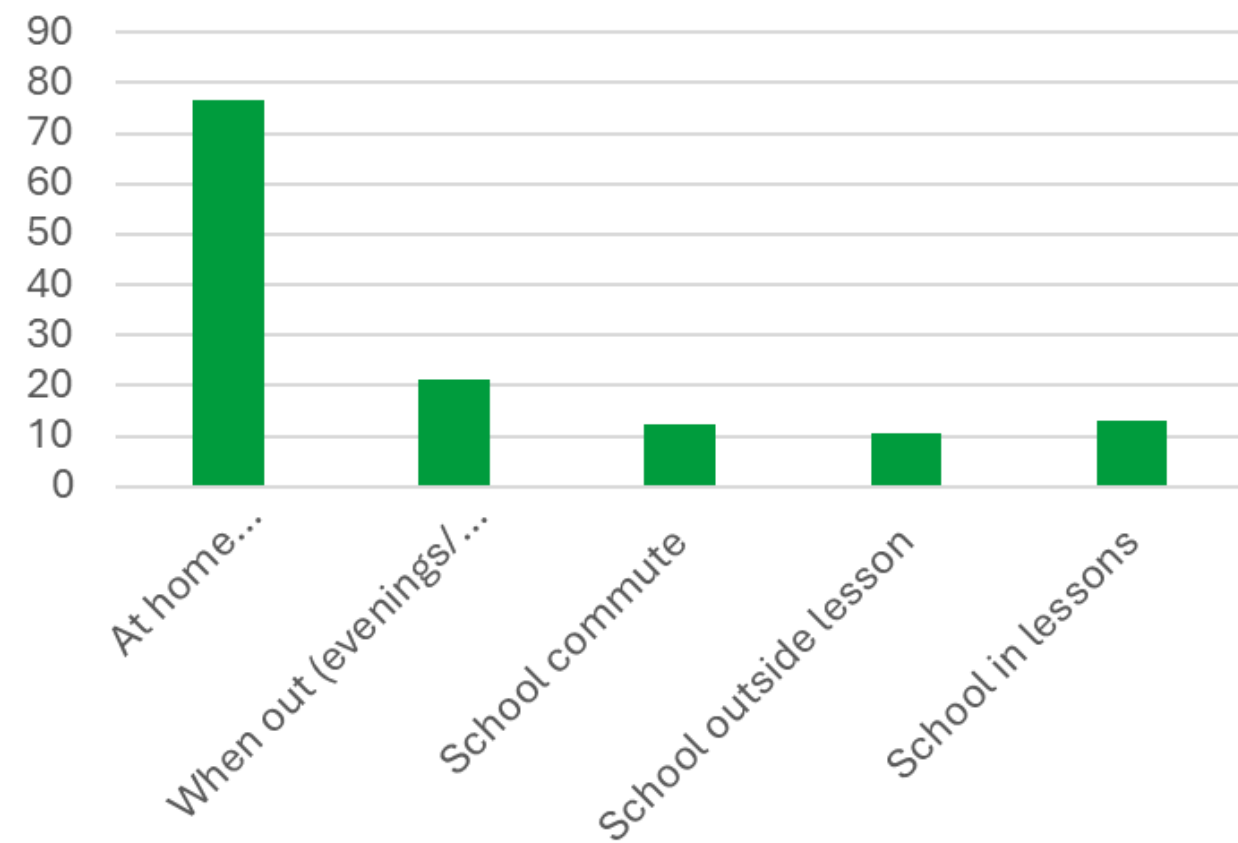
> How?



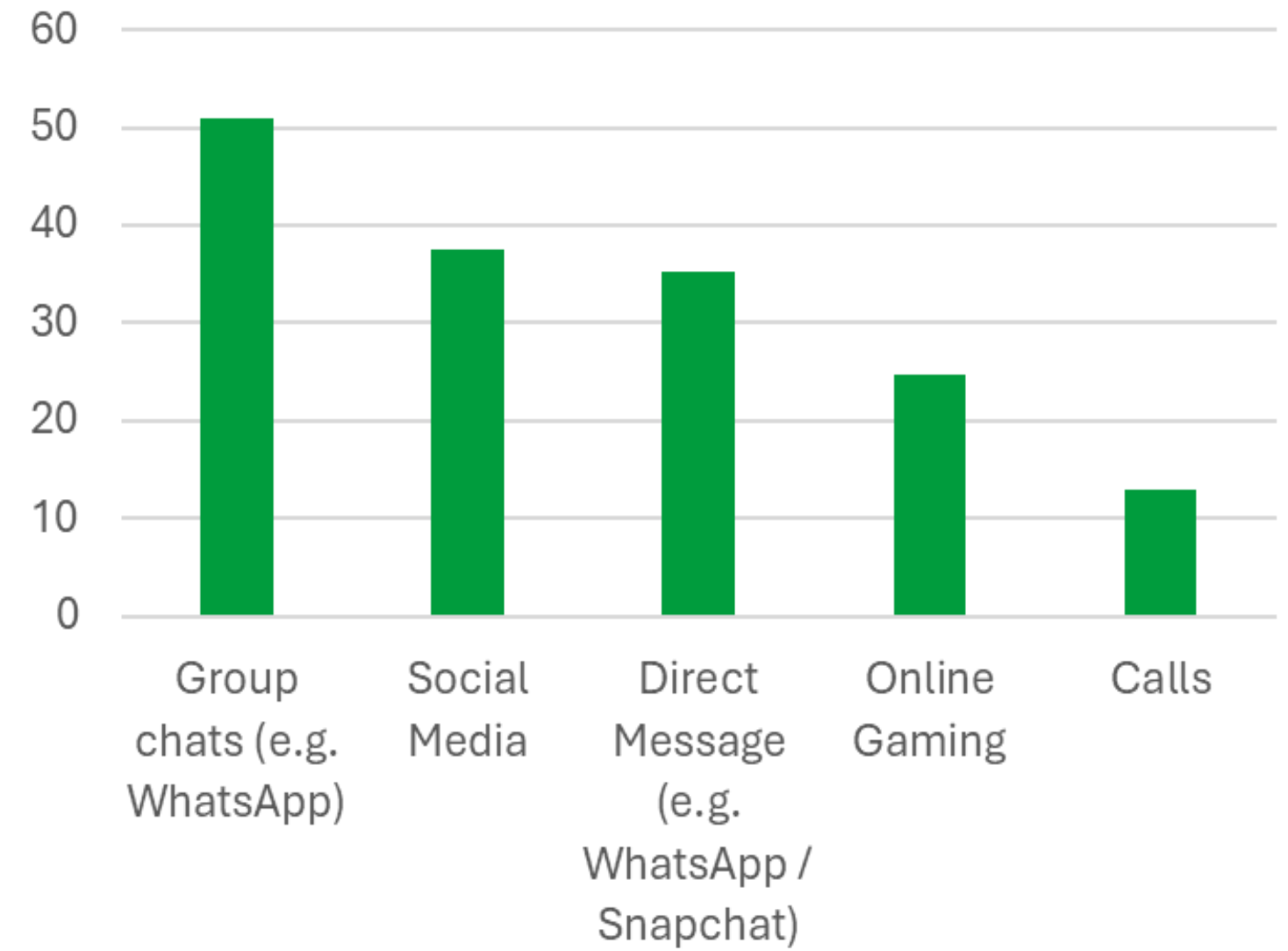
How?



Where?

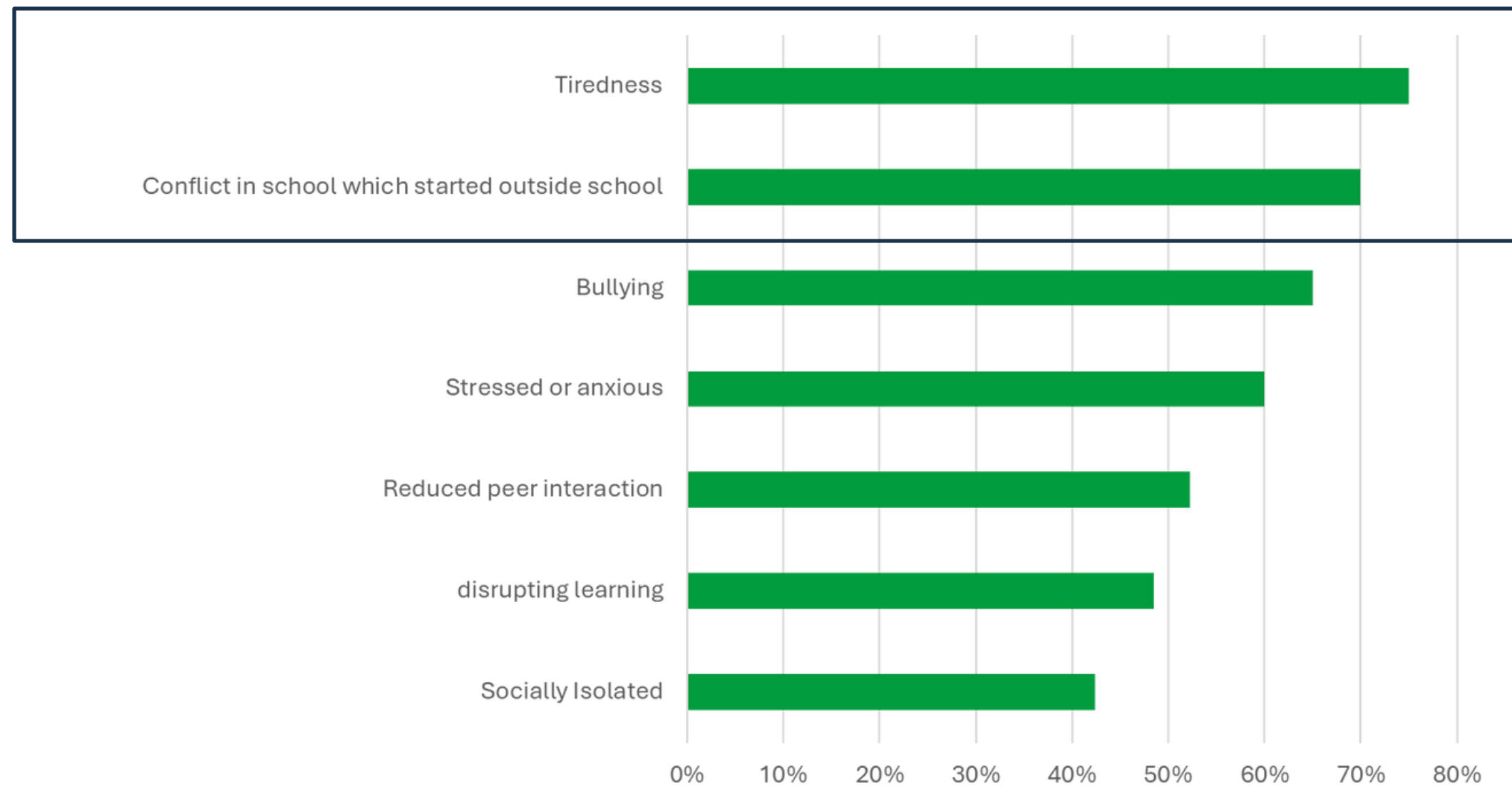


> How?





% of teachers witnessing due to smartphones



Which policy is most appealing?

> Which policy is most appealing?

POLICY	STUDENTS	PARENTS	STAFF
No phones	1.4%	3.4%	8.0%
No smartphones (non-smart phones allowed)	0.7%	10.0%	20.5%
Phones handed in to office / tutor	1.9%	13.9%	12.2%
Locked in pouches	2.5%	22.2%	24.0%
More Restriction ↑	6.5%	49.5%	64.7%
Phones off in bags - confiscated if seen	30.2%	42.7%	33.0%
Phones allowed outside of lessons	57.5%	7.8%	1.4%
No restrictions	7.2%	0.0%	1.0%
Less Restriction ↑	64.7%	7.8%	2.4%

> Which policy is most appealing?

POLICY	STUDENTS	PARENTS	STAFF
No phones	1.4%	3.4%	8.0%
No smartphones (non-smart phones allowed)	0.7%	10.0%	20.5%
Phones handed in to office / tutor	1.9%	13.9%	12.2%
Locked in pouches	2.5%	22.2%	24.0%
More Restriction ↑	6.5%	49.5%	64.7%
Phones off in bags - confiscated if seen	30.2%	42.7%	33.0%
Phones allowed outside of lessons	57.5%	7.8%	1.4%
No restrictions	7.2%	0.0%	1.0%
Less Restriction ↑	64.7%	7.8%	2.4%

> Which policy is most appealing?

POLICY	STUDENTS	PARENTS	STAFF
No phones	1.4%	3.4%	8.0%
No smartphones (non-smart phones allowed)	0.7%	10.0%	20.5%
Phones handed in to office / tutor	1.9%	13.9%	12.2%
Locked in pouches	2.5%	22.2%	24.0%
More Restriction ↑	6.5%	49.5%	64.7%
Phones off in bags - confiscated if seen	30.2%	42.7%	33.0%
Phones allowed outside of lessons	57.5%	7.8%	1.4%
No restrictions	7.2%	0.0%	1.0%
Less Restriction ↑	64.7%	7.8%	2.4%

> Which policy is most appealing?

POLICY	STUDENTS	PARENTS	STAFF
No phones	1.4%	3.4%	8.0%
No smartphones (non-smart phones allowed)	0.7%	10.0%	20.5%
Phones handed in to office / tutor	1.9%	13.9%	12.2%
Locked in pouches	2.5%	22.2%	24.0%
More Restriction ↑	6.5%	49.5%	64.7%
Phones off in bags - confiscated if seen	30.2%	42.7%	33.0%
Phones allowed outside of lessons	57.5%	7.8%	1.4%
No restrictions	7.2%	0.0%	1.0%
Less Restriction ↑	64.7%	7.8%	2.4%

> Which policy is most appealing?

POLICY	STUDENTS	PARENTS	STAFF
No phones	1.4%	3.4%	8.0%
No smartphones (non-smart phones allowed)	0.7%	10.0%	20.5%
Phones handed in to office / tutor	1.9%	13.9%	12.2%
Locked in pouches	2.5%	22.2%	24.0%
More Restriction ↑	6.5%	49.5%	64.7%
Phones off in bags - confiscated if seen	30.2%	42.7%	33.0%
Phones allowed outside of lessons	57.5%	7.8%	1.4%
No restrictions	7.2%	0.0%	1.0%
Less Restriction ↑	64.7%	7.8%	2.4%

> Which policy is most appealing?

POLICY	STUDENTS	PARENTS	STAFF
No phones	1.4%	3.4%	8.0%
No smartphones (non-smart phones allowed)	0.7%	10.0%	20.5%
Phones handed in to office / tutor	1.9%	13.9%	12.2%
Locked in pouches	2.5%	22.2%	24.0%
More Restriction ↑	6.5%	49.5%	64.7%
Phones off in bags - confiscated if seen	30.2%	42.7%	33.0%
Phones allowed outside of lessons	57.5%	7.8%	1.4%
No restrictions	7.2%	0.0%	1.0%
Less Restriction ↑	64.7%	7.8%	2.4%

Which policy is most appealing?

POLICY	STUDENTS	PARENTS	STAFF
No phones	1.4%	3.4%	8.0%
No smartphones (non-smart phones allowed)	0.7%	10.0%	20.5%
Phones handed in to office / tutor	1.9%	13.9%	12.2%
Locked in pouches	2.5%	22.2%	24.0%
More Restriction ↑	6.5%	49.5%	64.7%
Phones off in bags - confiscated if seen	30.2%	42.7%	33.0%
Phones allowed outside of lessons	57.5%	7.8%	1.4%
No restrictions	7.2%	0.0%	1.0%
Less Restriction ↑	64.7%	7.8%	2.4%

➤ Which policy is most appealing?

POLICY	STUDENTS	PARENTS	STAFF
No phones	1.4%	3.4%	8.0%
No smartphones (non-smart phones allowed)	0.7%	10.0%	20.5%
Phones handed in to office / tutor	1.9%	13.9%	12.2%
Locked in pouches	2.5%	22.2%	24.0%
More Restriction ↑	6.5%	49.5%	64.7%
Phones off in bags - confiscated if seen	30.2%	42.7%	33.0%
Phones allowed outside of lessons	57.5%	7.8%	1.4%
No restrictions	7.2%	0.0%	1.0%
Less Restriction ↑	64.7%	7.8%	2.4%

➤ Safety & Convenience

64%

of **parents** report child is safe on commute with their phone

80%

of **students** say they are safer with their phone

48%

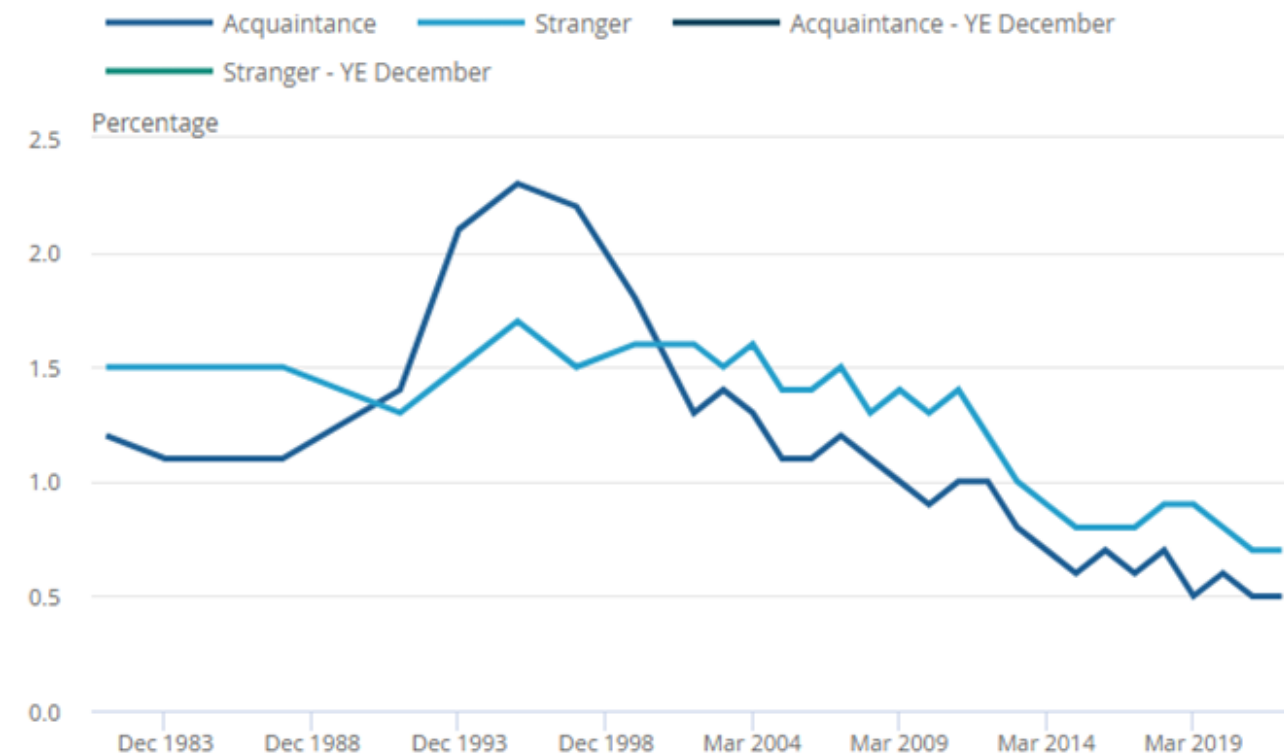
of **parents** contact their child *sometimes, often or frequently* during the day

Safety & Convenience

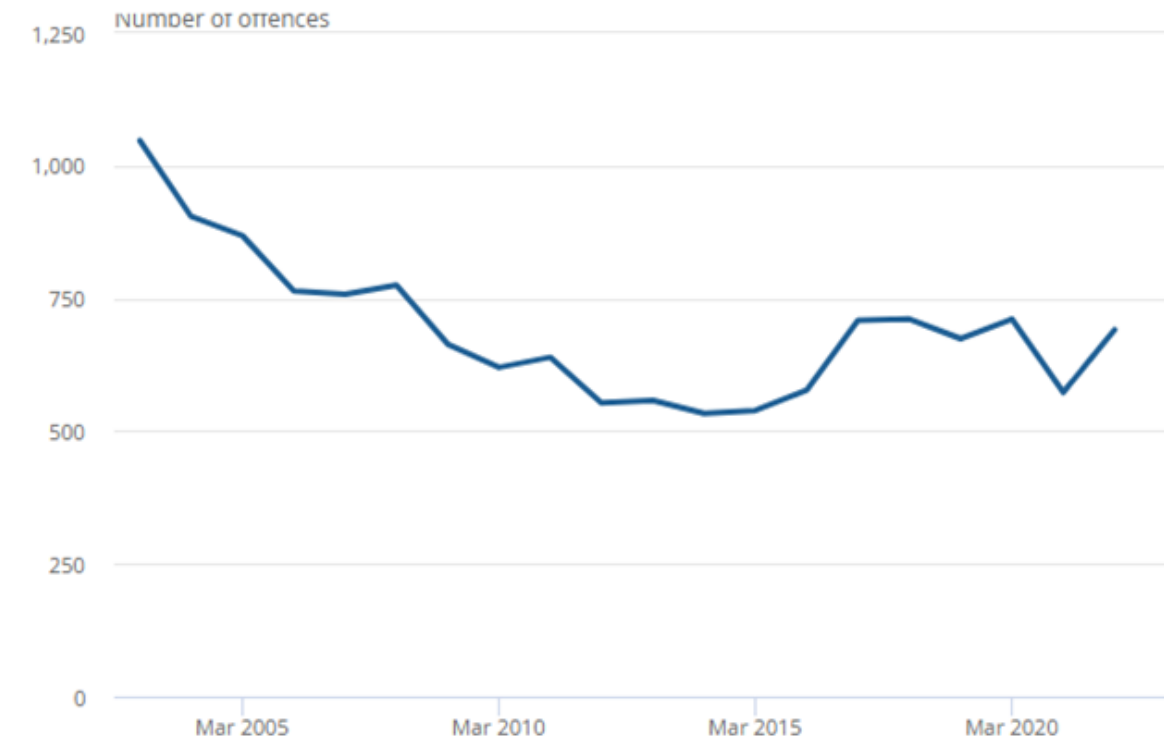
My child often walks or cycles nearly two miles to school, and having a smartphone allows us to track his journey, enhancing our peace of mind.

“We only allow / feel the need for our child to have a smartphone to buy bus tickets and school meals. Other than that, we would insist on a plain 'brick' phone for calls to us and TXT to arrange collection”

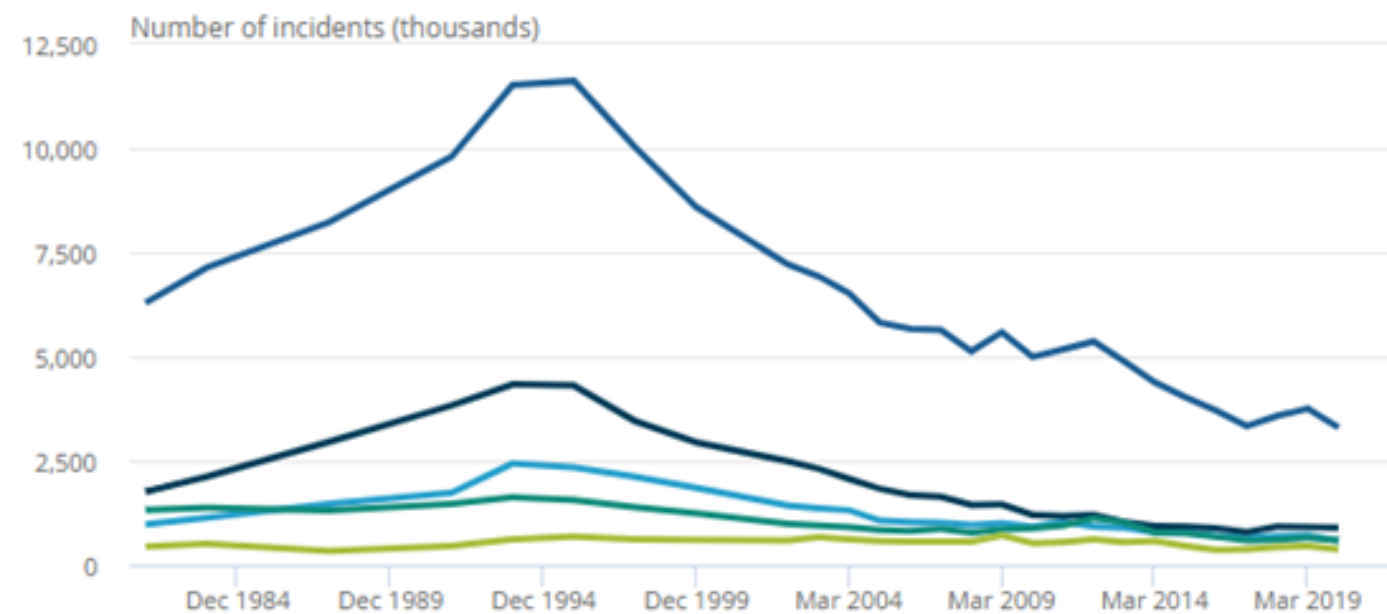
Violence



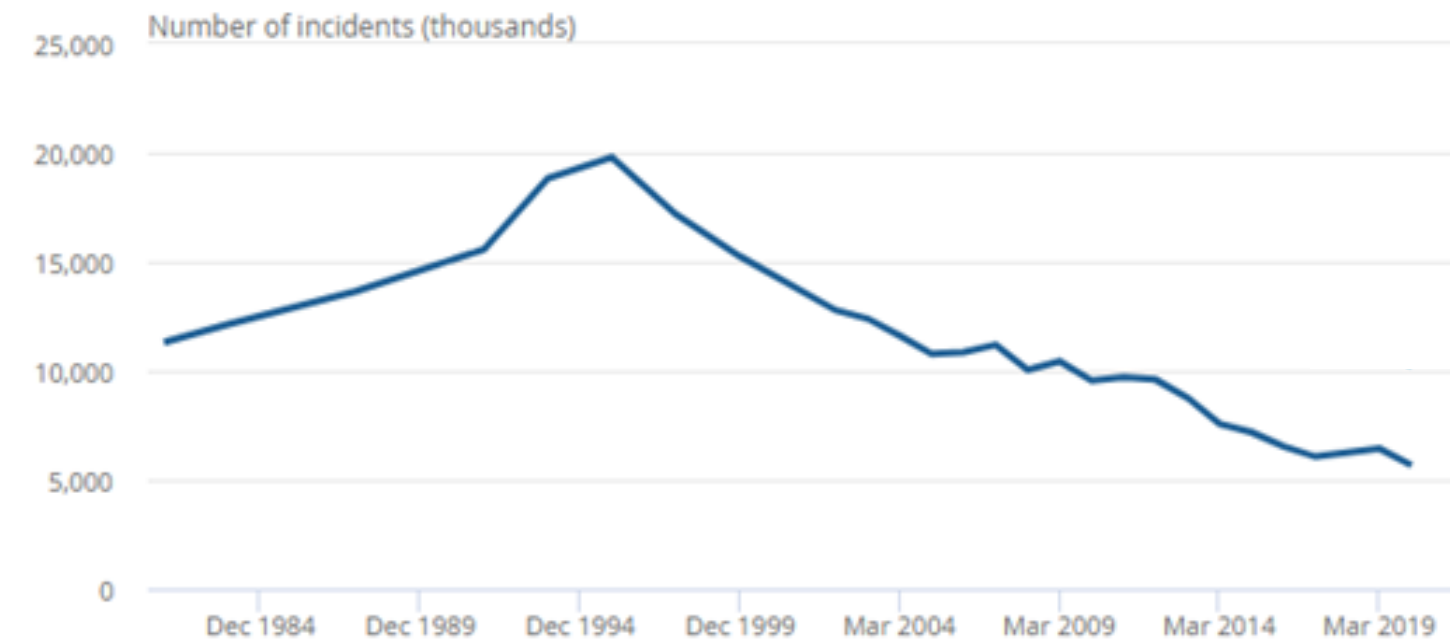
Homicide



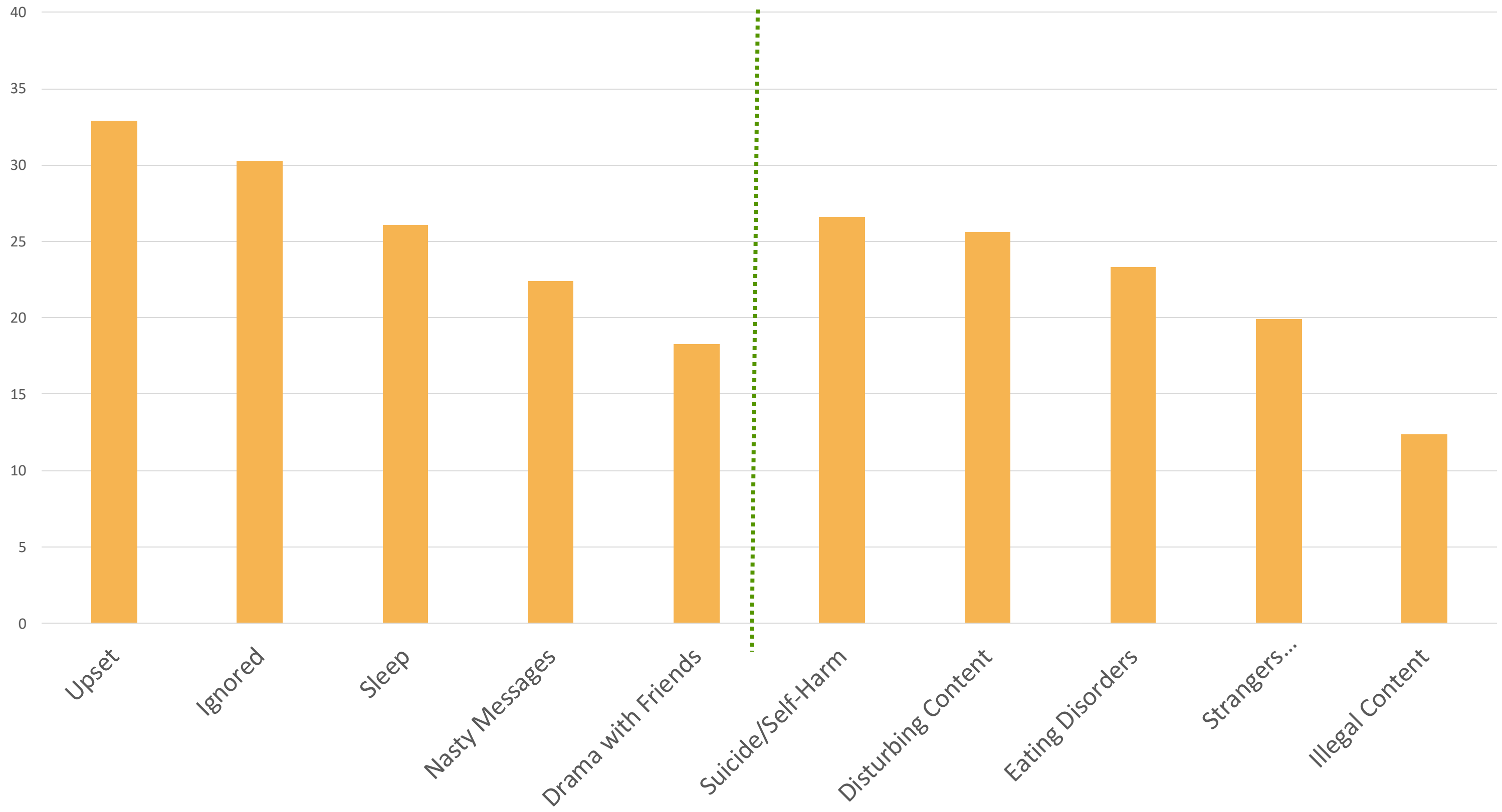
Theft



Overall crime

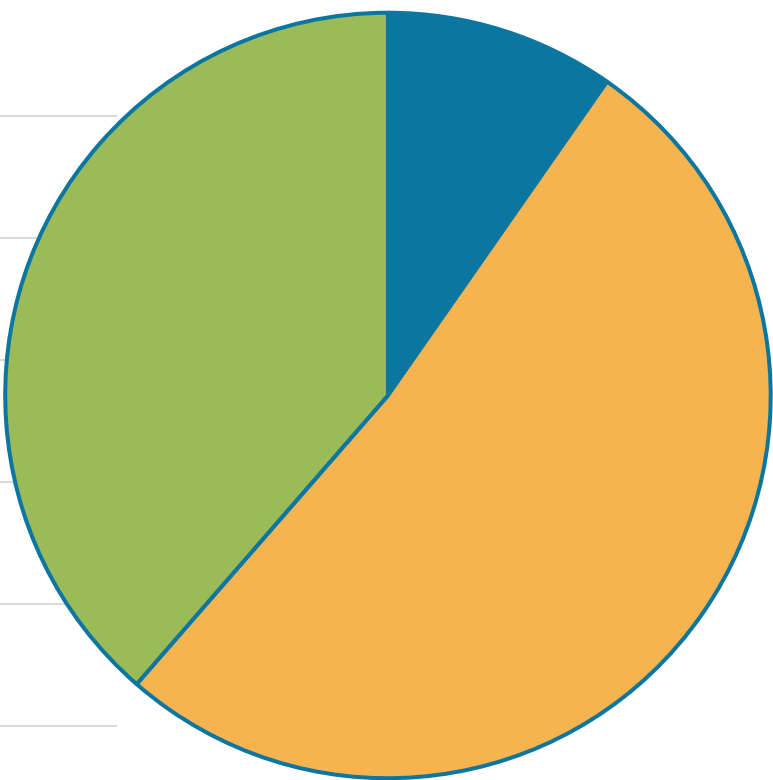
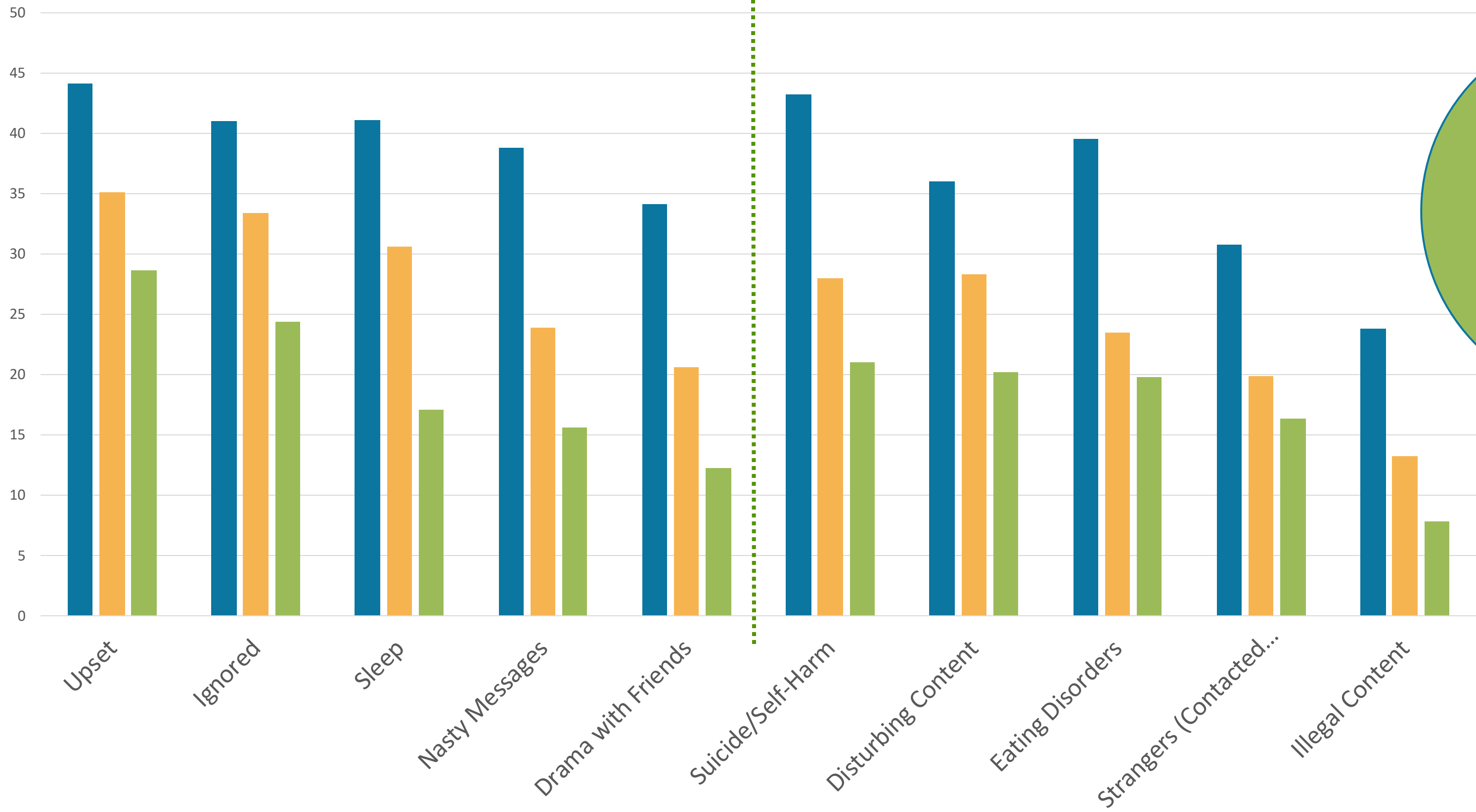


Negative Experiences on Phones



Negative Experiences on Phones

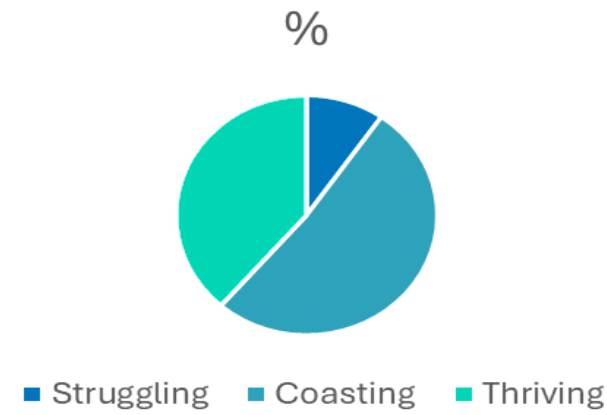
%



- Struggling
- Coasting
- Thriving

> Which policy is most appealing?

POLICY	THRIVING	COASTING	STRUGGLING
No phones	0.7%	1.9%	1.0%
No smartphones (non-smart phones allowed)	0.9%	0.3%	0.5%
Phones handed in to office / tutor	2.2%	2.0%	1.6%
Locked in pouches	3.5%	2.2%	2.6%
More Restriction ↑	13.6%	6.4%	5.7%
Phones off in bags - confiscated if seen	39.7%	28.2%	18.8%
Phones allowed outside of lessons	47.8%	59.5%	66.5%
No restrictions	5.2%	5.9%	8.9%
Less Restriction ↑	53.0%	65.4%	75.4%



Which policy is most appealing?

POLICY

No phones

No smartphones (non-smart phones allowed)

Phones handed in to office / tutor

Locked in pouches

More Restriction ↑

Phones off in bags - confiscated if seen

Phones allowed outside of lessons

No restrictions

Less Restriction ↑

THRIVING

0.7%

0.9%

2.2%

3.5%

13.6%

39.7%

47.8%

5.2%

53.0%

COASTING

1.9%

0.3%

2.0%

2.2%

6.4%

28.2%

59.5%

5.9%

65.4%

STRUGGLING

1.0%

0.5%

1.6%

2.6%

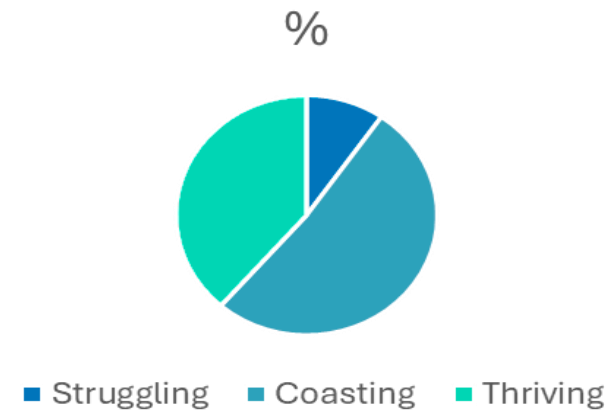
5.7%

18.8%

66.5%

8.9%

75.4%



Which policy is most appealing?

POLICY

THRIVING

COASTING

STRUGGLING

No phones

0.7%

1.9%

1.0%

No smartphones (non-smart phones allowed)

0.9%

0.3%

0.5%

Phones handed in to office / tutor

2.2%

2.0%

1.6%

Locked in pouches

3.5%

2.2%

2.6%

More Restriction ↑

13.6%

6.4%

5.7%

Phones off in bags - confiscated if seen

39.7%

28.2%

18.8%

Phones allowed outside of lessons

47.8%

59.5%

66.5%

No restrictions

5.2%

5.9%

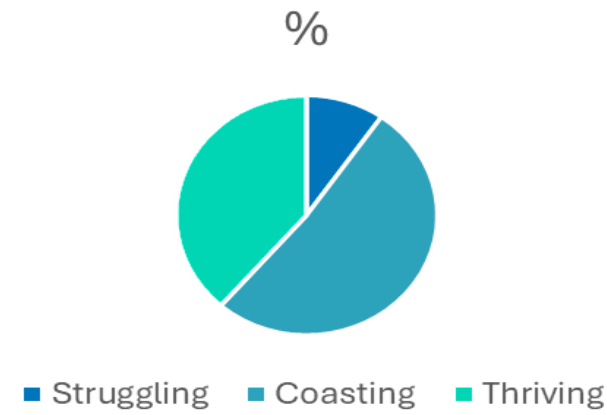
8.9%

Less Restriction ↑

53.0%

65.4%

75.4%



Which policy is most appealing?

POLICY

No phones

No smartphones (non-smart phones allowed)

Phones handed in to office / tutor

Locked in pouches

More Restriction ↑

Phones off in bags - confiscated if seen

Phones allowed outside of lessons

No restrictions

Less Restriction ↑

THRIVING

0.7%

0.9%

2.2%

3.5%

13.6%

39.7%

47.8%

5.2%

53.0%

COASTING

1.9%

0.3%

2.0%

2.2%

6.4%

28.2%

59.5%

5.9%

65.4%

STRUGGLING

1.0%

0.5%

1.6%

2.6%

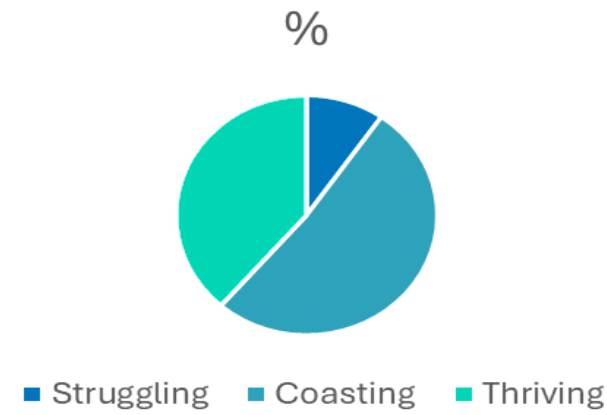
5.7%

18.8%

66.5%

8.9%

75.4%



Which policy is most appealing?

POLICY

THRIVING

COASTING

STRUGGLING

No phones

0.7%

1.9%

1.0%

No smartphones (non-smart phones allowed)

0.9%

0.3%

0.5%

Phones handed in to office / tutor

2.2%

2.0%

1.6%

Locked in pouches

3.5%

2.2%

2.6%

More Restriction ↑

13.6%

6.4%

5.7%

Phones off in bags - confiscated if seen

39.7%

28.2%

18.8%

Phones allowed outside of lessons

47.8%

59.5%

66.5%

No restrictions

5.2%

5.9%

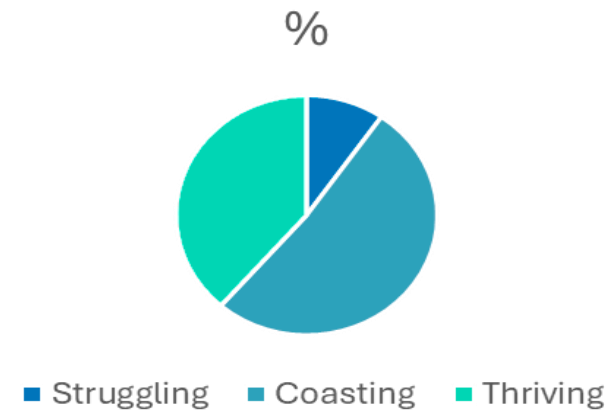
8.9%

Less Restriction ↑

53.0%

65.4%

75.4%



Which policy is most appealing?

POLICY

THRIVING

COASTING

STRUGGLING

No phones

0.7%

1.9%

1.0%

No smartphones (non-smart phones allowed)

0.9%

0.3%

0.5%

Phones handed in to office / tutor

2.2%

2.0%

1.6%

Locked in pouches

3.5%

2.2%

2.6%

More Restriction ↑

13.6%

6.4%

5.7%

Phones off in bags - confiscated if seen

39.7%

28.2%

18.8%

Phones allowed outside of lessons

47.8%

59.5%

66.5%

No restrictions

5.2%

5.9%

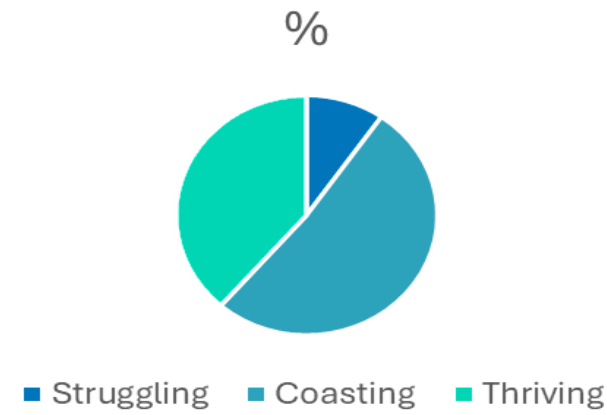
8.9%

Less Restriction ↑

53.0%

65.4%

75.4%



Which policy is most appealing?

POLICY

THRIVING

COASTING

STRUGGLING

No phones

0.7%

1.9%

1.0%

No smartphones (non-smart phones allowed)

0.9%

0.3%

0.5%

Phones handed in to office / tutor

2.2%

2.0%

1.6%

Locked in pouches

3.5%

2.2%

2.6%

More Restriction ↑

13.6%

6.4%

5.7%

Phones off in bags - confiscated if seen

39.7%

28.2%

18.8%

Phones allowed outside of lessons

47.8%

59.5%

66.5%

No restrictions

5.2%

5.9%

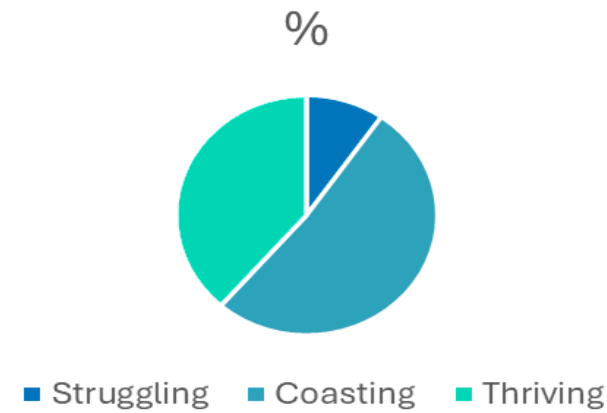
8.9%

Less Restriction ↑

53.0%

65.4%

75.4%



Which policy is most appealing?

POLICY

THRIVING

COASTING

STRUGGLING

No phones

0.7%

1.9%

1.0%

No smartphones (non-smart phones allowed)

0.9%

0.3%

0.5%

Phones handed in to office / tutor

2.2%

2.0%

1.6%

Locked in pouches

3.5%

2.2%

2.6%

More Restriction ↑

13.6%

6.4%

5.7%

Phones off in bags - confiscated if seen

39.7%

28.2%

18.8%

Phones allowed outside of lessons

47.8%

59.5%

66.5%

No restrictions

5.2%

5.9%

8.9%

Less Restriction ↑

53.0%

65.4%

75.4%

➤ **Concluding Thoughts - Secondary**

- **Exposure to negative experiences is common** and **parents know less** than they think about the really serious stuff, but **young people willing to talk**. **How to help with these conversations?**
- >At risk academically = >at risk on phones = <likely to support restrictions. **How to reach this cohort?**
- **Young people, parents** and **teachers** want **different approaches** in school, for different reasons. **How to navigate different stakeholders?**
- Fears about safety are rife, but perceptions are over-inflated. **How can parents be reassured?**

A photograph of two young children sitting at a table in a classroom, focused on drawing. The child in the foreground is a girl with curly brown hair, wearing a red t-shirt, and is using a black marker to draw on a piece of paper. She has small colorful hair ties in her hair. The child in the background is a boy with dark hair, wearing a dark blue shirt, also drawing with a pencil. On the table are various drawing supplies, including a blue plastic tray filled with markers and pencils. The background is slightly blurred, showing a typical classroom environment with shelves and windows.

PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDY

> Sample

 Schools (17)

 Parents (1359)

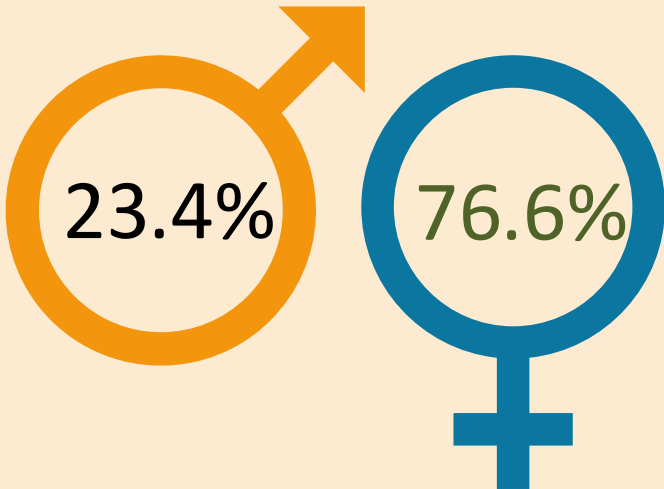
Objectives:

- Better understand views and experiences of primary parents
- Understand younger children's experiences / exposures
- Explore impact of primary-secondary transition
- Better understand motivations & pressures facing parents who have not yet given smartphones
- Support conversations between parents and schools

> Sample

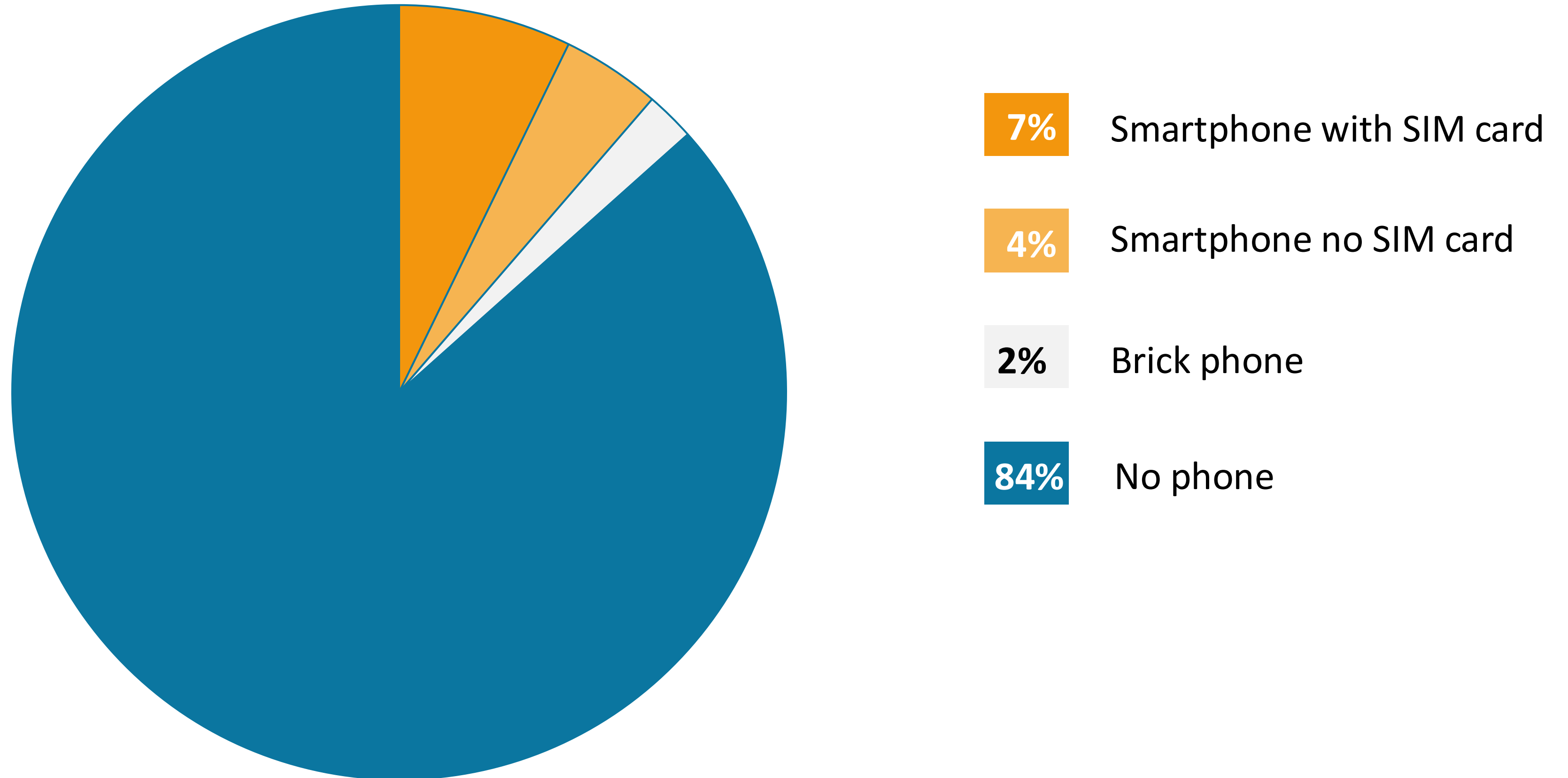
 Schools (17)

 Parents (1359)



YEAR GROUP*	% OF SAMPLE
Reception	10.2
Y1	10.0
Y2	13.2
Y3	13.1
Y4	19.3
Y5	18.0
Y6	16.2

➤ Number of primary pupils with smartphone

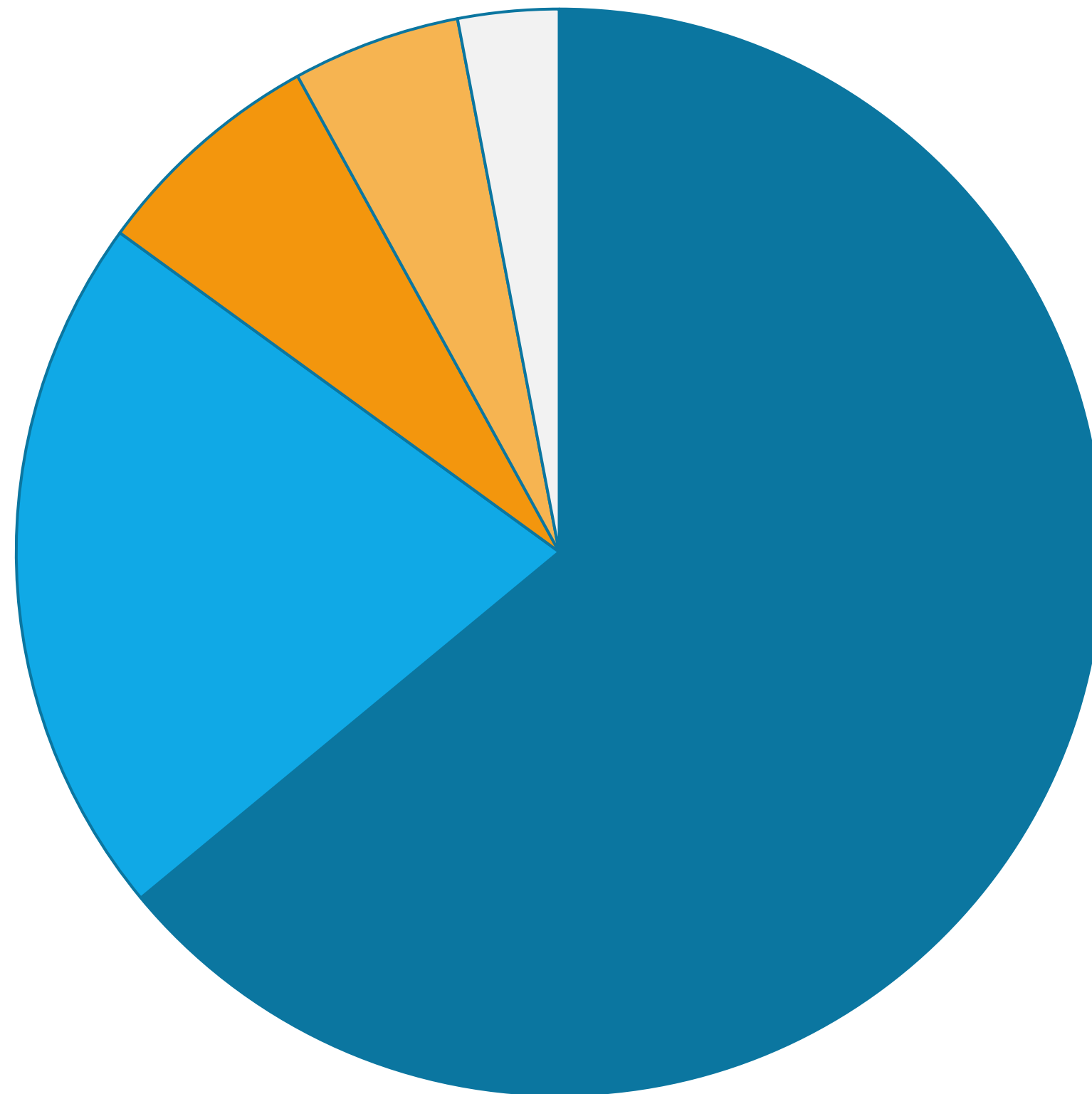


> Phone ownership by year group*

YEAR GROUP	Smartphone (SIM)	Smartphone (no SIM)	Brick-phone	No phone
Reception	1.0%	0.0%	0.0%	97.1%
Year 1	0.0%	1.8%	0.9%	97.2%
Year 2	0.7%	2.8%	0.7%	95.8%
Year 3	0.7%	5.4%	1.4%	91.8%
Year 4	2.3%	6.1%	0.5%	90.7%
Year 5	7.4%	6.4%	1.0%	82.7%
Year 6	33.3%	4.6%	8.6%	46.6%

* Not including 'other' so figures may not add up to 100%

➤ Parental comfort with child smartphone ownership



64% Very uncomfortable

21% Quite uncomfortable

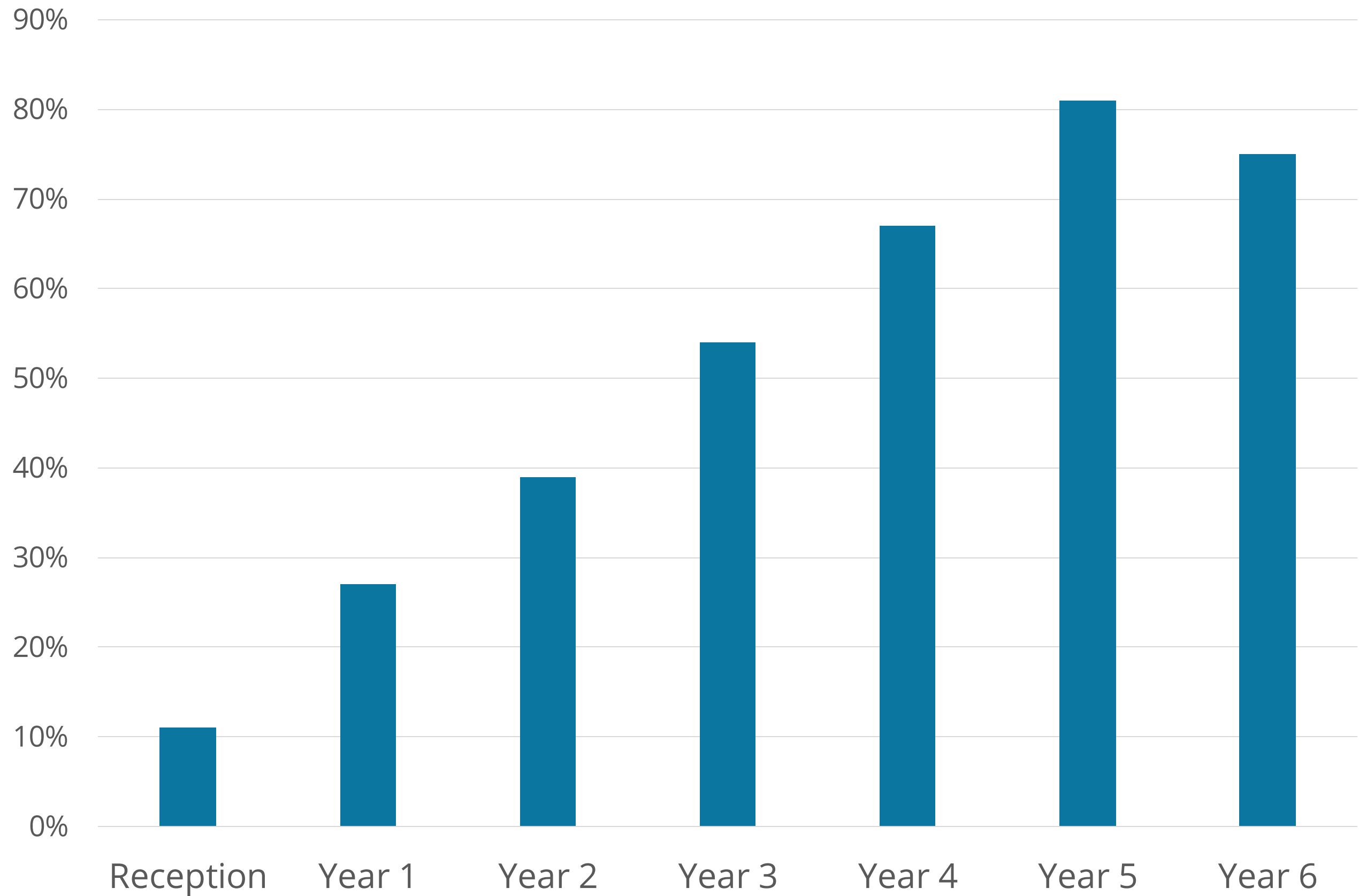
85%

7% Neutral

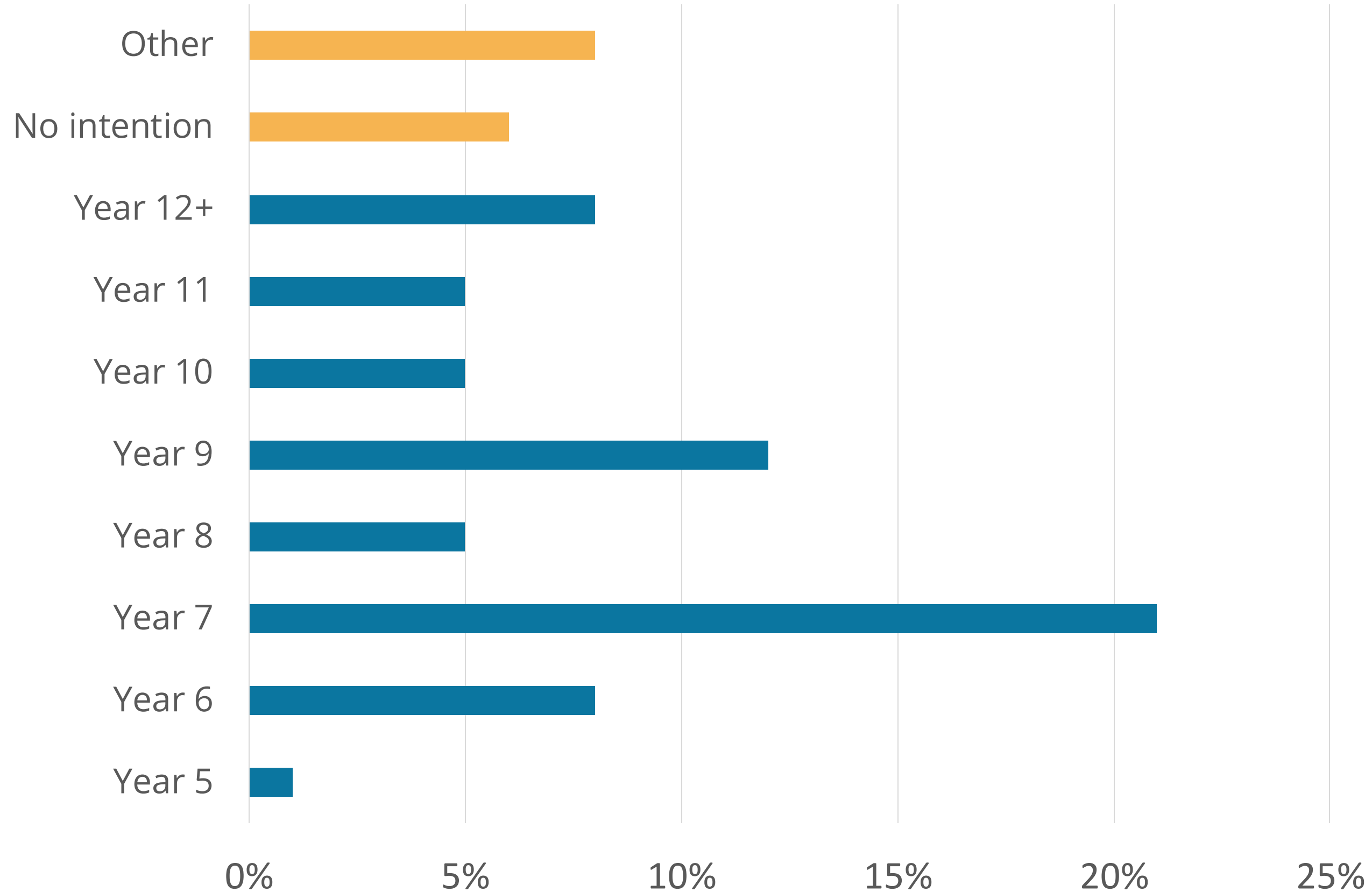
5% Quite comfortable

3% Very comfortable

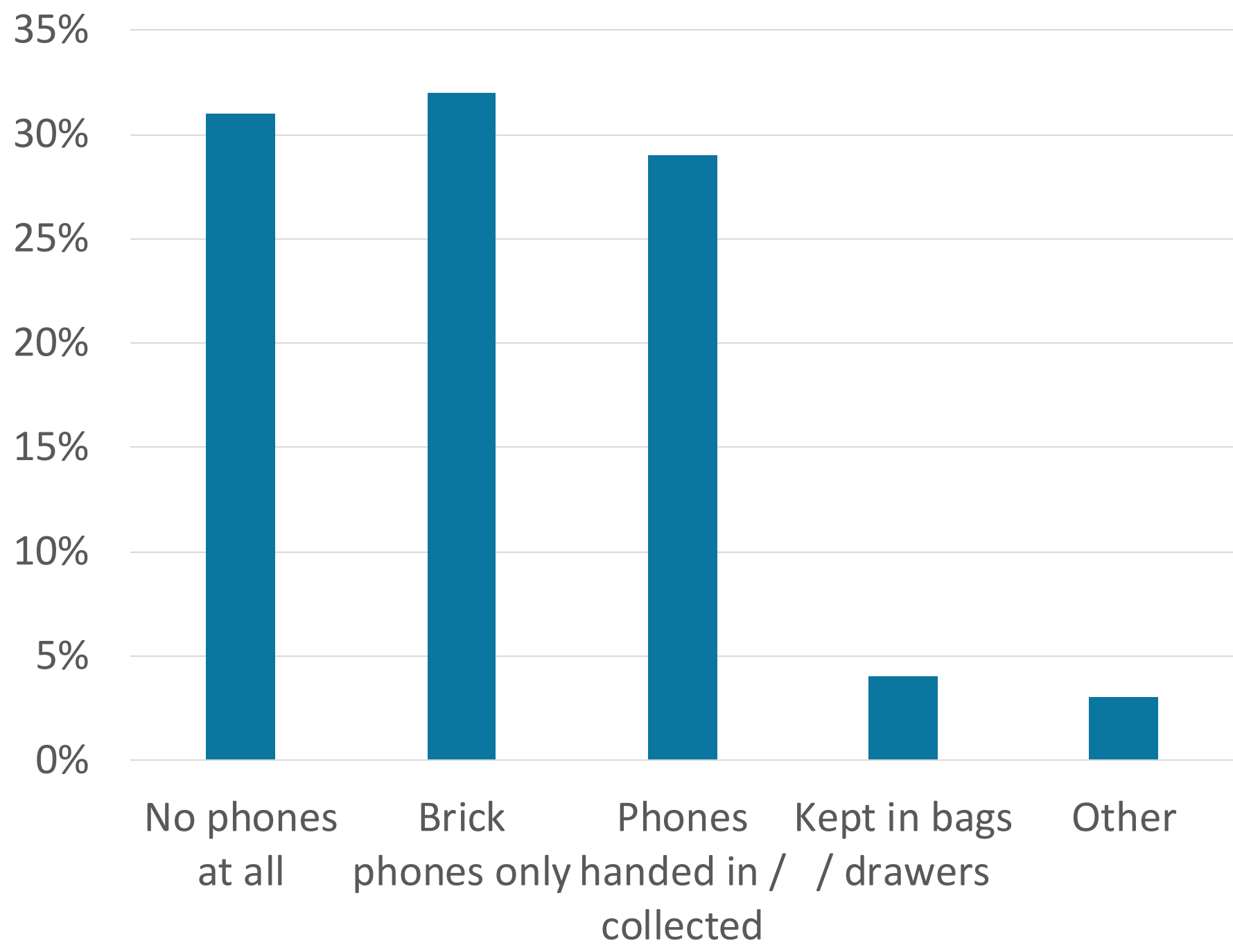
Smartphone requests



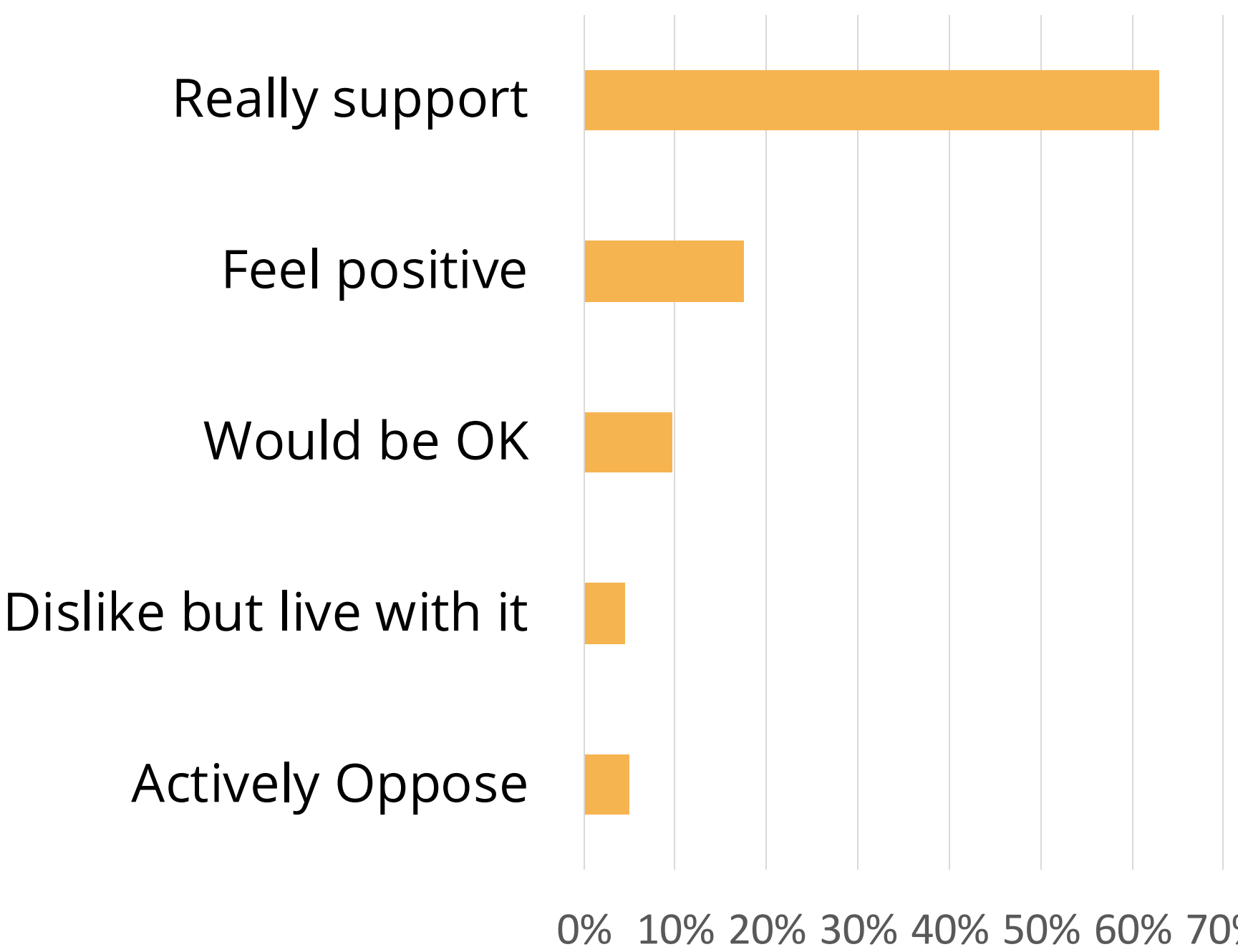
When do you expect to get your child a smartphone?



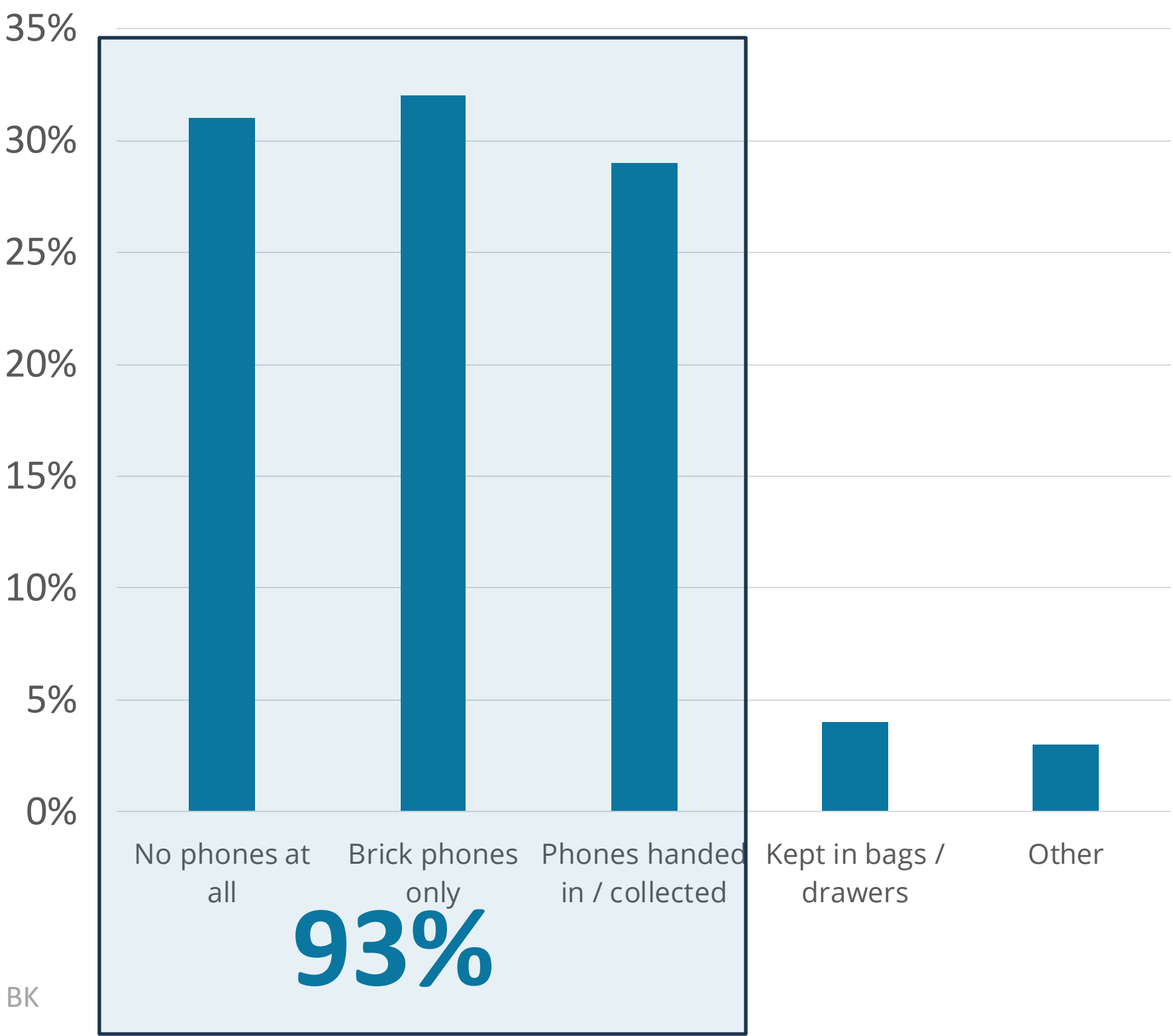
Preferred Policy



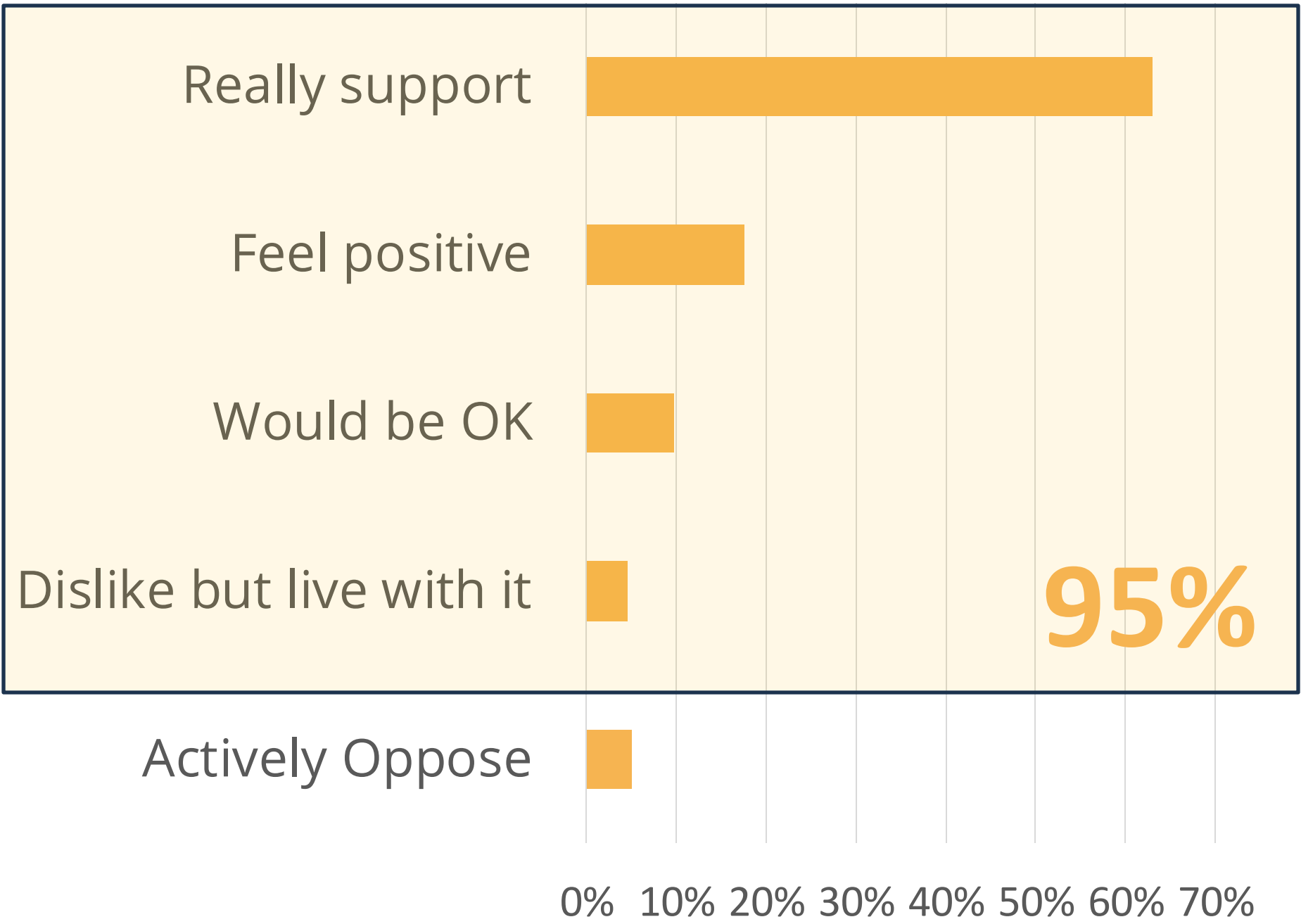
Response to Smartphone Ban



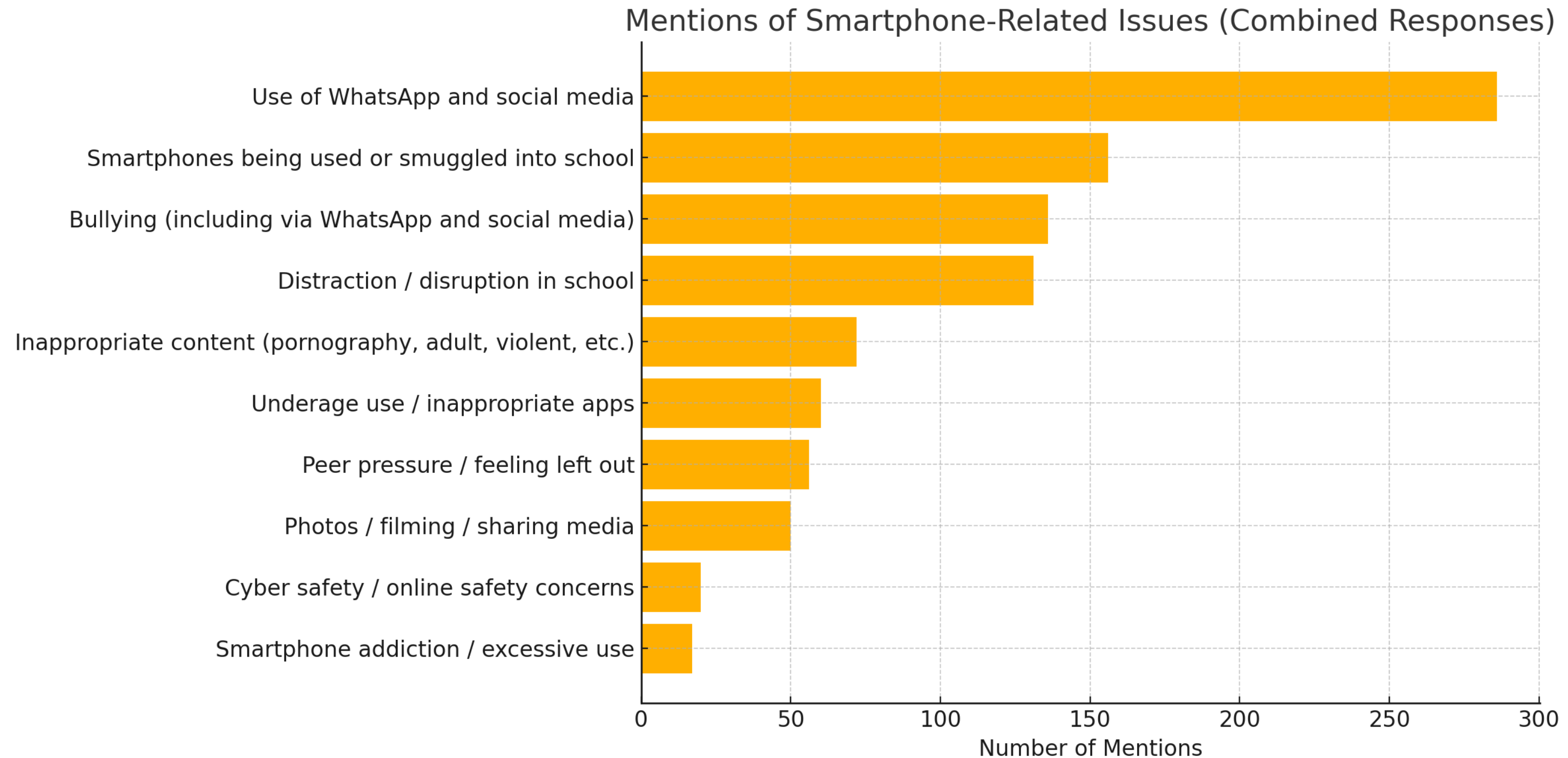
Preferred Policy



Response to Smartphone Ban



Parental Concerns/knowledge of problems



Parental Concerns/knowledge of problems

*"There is a **WhatsApp group** that some of the year 6 students who have phones have set up and I believe this has **caused friendship issues** at times."*

*"**Despite the rules** being in place **the phones are still taken** out at the end of the day and used in the playground."*

*"I've heard from others that **issues with smartphones occur out of school** with children in the older years... which then have a **knock-on effect** on relationships between them **when in school**."*

*"**Phones are a distraction**. Children should be learning social skills, talking to friends, not via social media."*

*"Our son was in Y6 last year and the boys in his class were **accessing violent porn and beheading videos** after school and talking about it in class."*

*"Children being allowed to **join WhatsApp groups** and have apps that they are **underage** for. Watching and listening to content that isn't appropriate."*

*"A friend came round and took **photos of my daughter's bedroom** and **shared it on Snapchat**... I only found out a while later."*

*"**Everyone has one**, so my child **feels very left out** already in Y5 that she doesn't and feels picked on because of it."*

➤ Are you aware of your child experiencing ... due to their smartphone*

EXPERIENCE	YES %	CONCERNED %
Using smartphone longer than intended	44.8	54.4
Addictive nature of apps/screens	41.9	66.3
Using smartphone too much	34.3	57.3
Targeted advertising	27.6	45.2
Constant FOMO	22.9	41.3
Struggling to concentrate	18.1	39.8
Lack of face-to-face interaction with friends	17.1	35.6
Lack of sleep	16.2	31.7
Missing other activities due to smartphone use	16.2	34.3
Having smartphone on mind when not using it	15.2	35.0
Being excluded socially	11.5	40.8
Online bullying	11.4	57.7
Online peer pressure	10.6	50.0
Mental health (anxiety, depression, self-harm)	10.5	60.6
Feeling impatient or anxious without smartphone	7.6	32.0
Inappropriate content (adult, disturbing, illegal)	6.7	66.0
Online grooming	3.8	66.7
Data breaches (passwords, images, locations)	1	54.3

➤ Concluding Thoughts - Primary

- Children want/expect to have smartphones, some ask for them very young. **Is a 'new norm' needed?**
- Generally, parents would prefer their children not to have phones. **But feel they have little choice as Y6-Y7 transition approaches.**
- Primary schools would experience little or no parental resistance to total bans. **Could this create a 'new norm'?**
- Parents want support, including from schools. **Is there capacity/expertise?**
- Parents are understandably concerned about children's exposure to harmful and age-inappropriate content. **What role can schools/trusts play in preventing this?**

IMPLICATIONS FOR SCHOOLS

What is the role of schools and trusts on this issue?

What would schools taking a lead on this issue look like?

How can primary and secondary schools collaborate productively on this issue?

BRISTOL SMARTPHONE EXPERIENCE & SCHOOL POLICY PROJECT

Students, Parents & Staff Perspectives



Dr Ben Knight
Dr Paul Redford



Understanding the impacts of smartphones on Cheltenham's children

Max Wilkinson MP

MP for Cheltenham





Understanding the impacts of smartphones on Cheltenham's children

Steve Jefferies

Headteacher

Cheltenham Bournside School

