

Data Protection

Topline Report

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1. The worst thing someone could steal

Young people were asked to rank from a list of items in order from 1 to 6, which would be the worst thing someone could steal from them.

Table 1: Ranked number 1 worst thing someone could steal

	Gender			Age			
	Total	Male	Female	14-15	16-17	18-19	20-21
Personal details e.g. name, date of birth, address etc	65%	61%	68%	59%	60%	67%	71%
Mobile phone	22%	21%	23%	20%	27%	21%	20%
MP3 player	5%	7%	4%	7%	7%	5%	3%
Games console	4%	8%	1%	8%	3%	3%	3%
Jewellery	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%
Expensive trainers / designer clothes	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%	0%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Two-thirds of respondents (65%) ranked personal details theft as the number 1 worst thing someone could steal from them. The next most popular answer was mobile phone with was mentioned by 22% of respondents.

A higher proportion of girls ranked personal details theft as the most awful item someone could steal from them compared to boys (68% compared with 61%).

Awareness of the danger of personal details theft also appears to increase with age, with a significantly higher proportion of 20 to 21 year olds (71%) ranking it as the worst thing compared to 60% of 14 to 17 year olds.

Within the different age groups there are also some significant differences by gender, ie:

- 63% of 16-17 year old girls ranked personal details theft as the number 1 worst thing someone could steal from them, compared to 56% of males in the same age group.
- 28% of 14-15 year old girls ranked mobile phone theft as the number 1 worst thing someone could steal from them, compared to 13% of males in the same age group.

Figures are broadly consistent by region.

2. Accepting someone on a social networking site

Young people were asked if they had ever accepted someone on a social networking site who they don't know personally as a friend.

Table 2: Accepting strangers on a social networking site

	Gender			Age			
	Total	Male	Female	14-15	16-17	18-19	20-21
Yes	66%	65%	67%	69%	73%	65%	56%
No	34%	35%	33%	31%	27%	35%	44%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Worryingly, two-thirds of respondents (66%) said that they had accepted someone on a social networking site who they didn't know personally as a friend. However, as shown in the table above, this figure is lower amongst 20-21 year olds (56%) compared to any other age group (65-73%). Almost three-quarters (73%) of 16-17 year olds had accepted a stranger on a social networking site.

Within the different age groups, figures were broadly consistent by gender with the exception of 16-17 year olds – girls aged 16-17 were significantly more likely to have accepted a person who they don't know personally as a friend than boys of the same age group (79% compared with 67%).

Figures are broadly consistent by gender and region.

3. Posting personal information

Young people were asked to select from a list, any information that they had posted about themselves on a social networking site, chatroom or blog.

Table 3: Personal information posted by young people

	Gender			Age			
	Total	Male	Female	14-15	16-17	18-19	20-21
Date of birth	60%	57%	62%	51%	56%	65%	67%
Personal email address	59%	59%	59%	57%	57%	61%	63%
Job title	24%	23%	25%	8%	20%	32%	38%
Brother's / sister's name	23%	18%	28%	26%	23%	21%	21%
Mobile phone number	22%	26%	18%	16%	20%	25%	26%
Pet's name	19%	14%	24%	22%	19%	17%	17%
None of these	18%	21%	16%	21%	20%	16%	17%
Address	9%	11%	7%	7%	6%	10%	13%
Landline number	4%	6%	3%	4%	4%	5%	5%
Mother's maiden name	2%	3%	1%	3%	2%	3%	2%
Bank account details	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%	1%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

The most common personal information posted by young people is:

- Date of birth (60%)
- Personal email address (59%).

However, over two in ten respondents also said that they had posted the following personal information on a social networking site, chatroom or blog:

- Job title (24%)
- Brother's / sister's name (23%)
- Mobile phone number (22%).

Boys appear to be slightly more cautious about posting personal information than girls, with 21% of boys saying they had posted 'none of these' compared to 16% of girls. Supporting this finding, a significantly higher proportion of girls compared to boys said they had posted their date of birth, siblings name, and pet's name. However, boys appear to be more likely to most their mobile phone number than girls.

However, as shown in table 3 above, older respondents appear to be less cautious about posting personal information on social networking sites, with a larger proportion of 20-21 year olds posting the following information compared to 14-17 year olds:

- Date of birth
- Job title
- Mobile phone number
- Address.

Within the different age groups, some significant differences were seen by gender, namely:

- Girls aged 20-21 were more likely to post their date of birth (71%) compared with boys in the same age group (62%).
- Girls aged 14-19 were more likely to post their sibling's name (26-32%) compared with boys in the same age group (15-22%).
- Boys aged 14-19 were more likely to post their mobile phone number (21-29%) compared with girls in the same age group (12-20%).
- Girls aged 14-17 (26-28%) and 20-21 (21%) were more likely to post their pet's name compared with boys in the same age group (11-17% and 14%).
- Boys aged 14-15 were more likely to post their address (9%) compared with girls in the same age group (4%).

Figures were broadly consistent by region with the exception of:

- A higher proportion of respondents in Yorkshire (33%) have posted their job title compared with respondents in London (18%).
- Respondents in the South East (28%) and Scotland (33%) were more likely to have posted their sibling's name compared with respondents in London (16%).

4. Importance of Privacy Statements

Respondents were asked to select a statement that best described the importance they attached to privacy statements.

Table 4: Importance of privacy statements

	Gender			Age			
	Total	Male	Female	14-15	16-17	18-19	20-21
They are important, but I like to meet new people so I tend	52%	51%	54%	55%	55%	53%	47%
They are very important, I layer my profile so that full acc	39%	40%	38%	37%	35%	38%	46%
They are not important at all, I want everyone to see my pro	7%	7%	6%	7%	9%	7%	4%
I don't really understand what the privacy settings do	2%	2%	2%	2%	1%	2%	2%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Encouragingly, 91% of respondents felt that privacy statements are important, with four in ten respondents (39%) saying they felt that privacy statements were 'very important, I layer my profile so that full access is only granted to a very close group of friends'. However, around half (52%) of all respondents felt that privacy statements 'are important, but I like to meet new people so I tend to leave some of my profile public'.

The largest contrasts are seen for:

- 20-21 year olds – 46% say 'very important. I layer my profile so that full access is only granted to a very close group of friends', compared to 35-38% of 14-19 year olds.
- 16-17 year olds – 9% say 'they are not important at all, I want everyone to see my profile', compared to 4% of 20-21 year olds.

Within the different age group, some significant differences were also seen by gender, ie:

- Girls aged 16-17 were more likely to say 'they are important, but I like to meet new people so I tend to leave some of my profile public' (60%) compared with boys of the same age (50%).
- Whereas, boys aged 18-19 were more likely to say 'they are not important at all, I want everyone to see my profile' (10%) compared to girls of the same age (4%).

Figures are broadly consistent by region, with the exception of a higher proportion of respondents in Scotland saying that privacy statements are not important at all (15%) compared with respondents in the East Midlands (2%).

5. Concern over personal profiles being viewed by strangers

Personal profiles being viewed by strangers does not appear to be a great concern amongst young people, with seven in ten (71%) saying this had never concerned them.

However, girls are slightly more likely to be concerned about strangers viewing their profile compared to boys (33% compared to 25%).

Overall figures are broadly consistent by age, however, a higher proportion of girls aged 16-17 were concerned about strangers viewing their personal profile (32%) compared with boys of the same age (23%).

Four in ten respondents in London (39%) showed signs of concern compared with just two in ten in the East of England (21%).

6. Information remaining online in the future

Almost six in ten respondents (58%) had never thought that what they put online now might still be there in five, 10 or 20 years.

Table 5: Information remaining online in the future

	Total	Age							
		14-15		16-17		18-19		20-21	
		Gender		Gender		Gender		Gender	
		Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Yes	42%	48%	36%	49%	29%	50%	36%	52%	41%
No	58%	52%	64%	51%	71%	50%	64%	48%	59%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

However, findings suggest that a higher proportion of boys (50%) thought about this than girls (35%). As shown in the table above, this finding was pertinent across all age groups for males.

There are no significant differences between regions.

7. Information being viewed by important people

Three-quarters of all respondents (75%) were not too concerned at the thought of important people viewing their profile (46% said 'it wouldn't matter too much' and 29% said they 'wouldn't have a problem with this at all').

Examining the sample by socio-demographics it was shown that the only significant difference was between gender, in which a higher percentage of boys (32%) in comparison with girls (27%) wouldn't have a problem with a tutor/employer accessing information about them via online mediums.

8. Reading and understanding privacy policies

During the survey, respondents were asked whether they read and understand the privacy policy on each website they sign up to, which explains how it will manage their personal details.

Table 6: Reading and understanding privacy policies

	Total
I skim-read the privacy policies and have a rough understand	52%
I never read the privacy policies so don't really know how	32%
I always read and understand the privacy policies	14%
I don't know what the privacy policy is	2%
Total	100%

Only 14% of respondents said they always read and understand the privacy policies. Over half of all young people said they skim read privacy policies and a further 32% said they never read them at all.

More girls (55%) than boys (45%) aged between 18-19 admitted to skim-reading the privacy policies. Additionally, it was found that individuals' from the North-East (7%) reported more frequently that they didn't know what a private policy was in comparison with North-West (0%).

There were no significant differences between socio-demographics on the other outcome variables measured.

9. Concern over how websites might use personal information

Over half of all respondents care a lot about websites using their personal information (54%), however 41% said it only bothers them a bit.

More boys (58%) than girls (49%) aged between 18-19 'cared a lot' about how their personal information was utilised.

There were no significant differences between socio-demographics on the other outcome variables measured.