



Research on Transforming the Crime Survey for England and Wales

Work package B: Exploring the use of an online survey to measure crime among children and young people

26th January 2023

Reference: 232893-40C

Contents

Contents	2
1. Executive Summary and Recommendations	5
1.1 Background	5
1.2 Methodology and scope	5
1.3 Conclusions and recommendations	6
2. Introduction and Background	14
2.1 Background	14
2.2 Aims and Objectives	14
2.3 Scope of the Transformation B project	16
2.4 Methodology	17
3. Literature review: methodological approaches for surveys of young people	18
3.1 Introduction	18
3.2 Profile of studies reviewed	19
3.3 Survey methodology	19
3.4 Online surveys: internet access among CYPs	23
3.5 Paired and non-paired approaches	23
3.6 Response rates and use of incentives	24
3.7 Feasibility and survey development	25
4. Literature review: ethical considerations in surveys of young people	26
4.1 Introduction	26
4.2 Informed consent and permissions	26
4.3 Age of the child and accessibility	29
4.4 Sensitive issues and safeguarding	30
4.5 Confidentiality and privacy	31
5. Review of existing survey content	33
5.1 Introduction	33
5.2 Content Review – Self Completion Module	34
5.3 Implications for the remainder of the 10-15 year old survey	35
6. Qualitative evaluation – depth interviews methodology	36

6.1	Introduction	36
6.2	Methodology	37
6.3	CYP Probe Guide	37
6.4	Parental Probe Guide	37
6.5	Pre-survey materials	38
6.6	Risk Rating materials	39
7.	Communication Materials	41
7.1	Overview	41
7.2	Young person's introductory letters and leaflets	41
7.3	Parent's introductory letters and leaflets	43
8.	Device choice and age suitability	47
8.1	Device choice and accessing the survey	47
8.2	Accessibility	49
8.3	Presence of others during the current 10-15 interview	50
8.4	Audio CASI and the ability to pause completion	53
9.	Survey Review	55
9.1	Overview	55
9.2	Questionnaire length	55
9.3	Comprehension	56
9.4	General issues relating to the questionnaire	57
9.5	Repetition	60
9.6	Self-editing of responses	60
9.7	Purpose of survey misunderstood	61
9.8	Issues specific to 16–17-year-old participants	61
9.9	Completion of the survey by siblings	62
9.10	Survey name	63
10.	Risk rating	64
10.1	Overview	64
10.2	Findings among CYP and parents on the risk rating	65
11.	Ethical issues and consent	71
11.1	Overview	71
11.2	Length of the questionnaire	71
11.3	Parental consent	72
11.4	Risk rating	72
	Appendix A: Studies included in this review	73

Appendix B – Probe Guides	76
Appendix C – Stimulus materials used	88
Appendix D – Transformation Work Package A: Summary	106
Appendix E – Summary of the 2018 risk rating research	109

1. Executive Summary and Recommendations

1.1 Background

The 10-15-year-olds' survey has been incorporated into the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) since 2009. The survey provides estimates of the levels of crime experienced by children and their risk of victimisation, within the context of an interviewer-led face-to-face survey.

As part of the Office for National Statistics (ONS) transformation programme which is investigating the feasibility of moving ONS household surveys to online and multi-mode data collection, Kantar Public was commissioned to undertake a development project (Transformation Work Package B) to understand the practical issues involved in moving the 10–15-year olds' survey online.

The core purpose of this project was to i) understand the practical issues related to conducting an online version of the survey; and ii) to explore the potential to widen the age eligibility of the survey from 10-15 years to 9-17 years, again within the context of an online survey.

1.2 Methodology and scope

Transformation Work Package B comprised of three specific workstreams:

- 1 Scoping/literature review of relevant surveys and ethical frameworks relating to children and young people (CYP).
- 2 Review of the existing children's self-completion (cybercrime) module used within the face-to-face survey, to ensure it was suitable for use as an online instrument.
- 3 Series of depth interviews with CYP aged 9-17 years, and one of their parents, to explore their reactions to the CYP survey being completed online.

The literature review (Chapter 3) and ethical review (Chapter 4) highlighted several potential methodological issues that would need to be considered as part of any transition to online including: response rates; accessibility and literacy; respondent engagement; interview length; informed consent and permissions; the ability of younger children to understand what is required of them and to self-complete online; and dealing with sensitive issues and safeguarding.

Following the questionnaire review (Chapter 5), a modified version of the 2022-23 self-completion module was tested in a qualitative setting. Dual interviews were conducted with parents and CYP (Chapter 6) to understand any issues relating to communication materials (Chapter 7), survey content and accessibility (Chapters 8-9), the risk rating used to inform parents and CYP about any potentially risky behaviours (Chapter 10), and ethical issues (Chapter 11).

1.3 Conclusions and recommendations

Sections 1.3.1 to 1.3.5 below cover general conclusions and recommendations that apply to all age groups, while section 1.3.6 covers more specific issues related to administering the survey online with younger children (ages 9-10). There was evidence that this age group found the online survey much more challenging, and as such there were some more bespoke issues relating to this age group.

1.3.1 Communication materials

In the face-to-face survey, interviewers introduce the child survey task, hand over information cards and leaflets, seek parental and child consent, and are on hand to address any concerns. In an online context, materials need to be clear, informative, and engaging and meet the conditions of informed consent so that both the parent and young person fully understand the purpose of the survey and the nature of the survey task.

To explore participant reactions to communications materials, mock-up versions of the Youth survey leaflets, a Parental Information Card, and survey invitation letters were produced, based on the existing survey where applicable, but adapted to simulate an online survey context. These were shown to participants during the depth interviews to explore the reactions of both young people and their parents.

The main findings were as follows:

- **Language was not sufficiently accessible for younger respondents:** The Youth Survey leaflet was in general well-received by those aged 11+ although there were some language comprehension issues, especially among those aged 9-10 years (see section 1.3.6 for more on this). Improving clarity is especially important in an online context, in the absence of an interviewer to guide them through the survey task.
- **Engaging visuals are important:** The use of engaging visuals where used (pictures, colour) was commented on positively and especially by younger children, and this is likely to be even more important in an online context.
- **Messaging around the aims of the survey were not always clear:** In the current face-to-face survey this is more obvious as the child survey follows the adult survey, so the parent usually¹ has a good idea what the survey involves; the interviewer can also provide more information and address queries on the spot. However, in isolation of the adult survey and in the absence of the other 10–15-year olds' modules, such as the victimisation module, there was some confusion about this and there was a perception among some (mainly older) participants that the purpose of the survey was not clear or compelling. For some, it was not always clear if the survey was a personal exercise to help educate them on how to avoid online crime, as opposed to a survey looking to understand crime levels more generally. In addition, the survey name 'Child crime survey' was misunderstood by some parents as signalling that the survey sought to find out if their child had committed any crimes, and 'Child' was regarded by some 16-17-year-olds as patronising.
- **Parents wanted more reassurance about the specific questions being asked:** The messaging for parents was in general well-received although some parents wanted more information and reassurance about the scope of the study to understand the type of questions included in each topic area. It was reassuring to parents that

¹ In the main CSEW, the adult survey could be completed by someone other than a parent, but the parent could still have been involved in the original adult selection process.

younger (primary-school aged) children would not be asked questions about sexual activities online.

Recommendations

- While it is important to provide full information to CYP and their parents to meet the requirements of informed consent, this needs to be balanced against the need for communications to be simple and accessible, especially for younger age groups. The literature review highlights other ways in which information about the survey can be made accessible to children in an online context (for example layering of information, dashboards, providing information via video etc.).
- Ensure all advance communications are sufficiently age-appropriate with the ability to be understood independently by CYP, with a focus on simplifying materials for those aged 9-12 years of age to reduce formality of language and improve engagement. Consider producing age-bespoke versions of communications which tailor to different comprehension levels. It is recommended that all advance communications are checked against readability software using age 8 as the accepted standard.
- Provide clearer messaging to parents around what the study involves and the question coverage, so they can be reassured that the topics covered are age appropriate. This should be provided alongside clear signposting to further information on the Crime Survey website for those who want more detailed information.
- Ensure that the purpose of the survey is made clearer and more compelling in all survey communications.
- Review the branding of the survey in an online context: 'Child Crime Survey' was sometimes interpreted by parents as being about whether their children had committed any crimes and the term 'child' was seen as patronising for 16-17-year-olds. To address these issues (and if the survey is to be extended to 16–17-year-olds), then the survey could be renamed along the lines of 'Youth crime and online safety survey'.
- Introduce and reinforce messaging that the child should complete the online survey in private where possible as, without an interviewer, there would be no control over the context in which the survey is completed (see section 1.3.3)

1.3.2 Questionnaire

While the current 10-15-year olds' survey consists of five modules, in this research we concentrated on exploring reactions to the cybercrime module which is already self-completed by children, albeit within the context of an interviewer-led interview. As part of the depth interviews, CYP were asked to complete the survey with a researcher observing, while parents were provided with details about the survey content to explore their reactions to this.

In the current survey, the interviewer is on hand to help the respondent if they require assistance with navigating the survey. There was therefore an interest in observing how CYP navigate this without such help, and to pick up on issues related to comprehension and usability.

The main findings were as follows:

- **Most CYP felt they could access the survey although context of survey completion varied by age:** Younger children were more likely to think they would complete the online survey on a laptop in a family/communal area, while older children

were more likely to think they would complete the survey on a smartphone in a private place. This aligns with wider survey evidence on online surveys among CYP where smartphone usage for surveys increases with age. It also aligns with wider evidence² that primary-school aged children are less likely to 'always' have internet access and are also much less likely to own a smartphone, whereas among those aged 11+, internet access and smartphone ownership is almost universal.

- **Language used in questions was not sufficiently accessible for younger respondents:** Some of the language and concepts were often inaccessible for younger children which is a prominent problem in an online context without interviewer support (see section 1.3.6 for more detail on this).
- **Survey topics were mostly engaging but questions were not always considered relevant:** Survey engagement is key for an online survey to retain interest and reduce drop-out rates. However, in places, the language, concepts and examples used did not always reflect the patterns of experiences of younger CYP aged 9-10 years (again see section 1.3.6 for more on this). At the other end of the age spectrum, older CYP aged 16-17 years approached the survey from a more mature perspective which meant that some survey questions from the existing 10-15 survey were not regarded as a good 'fit' for their age group. Some questions and the final 'staying safe online' screen were regarded as too patronising in tone, while other questions were not felt to cover what they regarded as risk in an online environment (for example, one respondent noted that, at their age, meeting someone who is younger than they say they are, is potentially riskier than meeting someone who is older than they say they are).
- **The survey was found to be long and repetitive:** There were several comments about the repetitive nature of the questions, especially those sited within 'question loops', and many found the survey too long, displaying visible signs of fatigue. There was also evidence of 'gaming' with some participants highlighting an opportunity to reduce the survey length by editing some of their responses to avoid anticipated follow-up questions. This will have implications should the survey move online, as there is increased risk of satisficing³ behaviour and survey dropout.

Recommendations

- The survey should be reviewed to ensure that language is clear and accessible for all age groups without an interviewer being on hand to assist with comprehension. While this was a particular issue for younger children, it would be recommended to review the survey more generally as, in an online context, surveys should be as accessible and engaging as possible to maximise engagement and data quality, and to reduce drop-out rates.
- Consideration should be given to producing questionnaire versions which are tailored by age (for example 10-12, 13-15, 16-17). As well as ensuring that language is appropriately targeted, this would allow questions to be better tailored to respondents' circumstances and experiences, which tend to vary considerably across the wide 9-17 age range.
- The survey should be reviewed to reduce length, in particular by reviewing question loops as these were often found to be repetitive which affected levels of interest and

² https://www.ofcom.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0024/234609/childrens-media-use-and-attitudes-report-2022.pdf

³ Satisficing' refers to when respondents get through the questions by expending minimal effort, in order to avoid the cognitive effort involved in giving a more considered or more accurate response. See for example Krosnick, J.A. (1991) 'Response Strategies for Coping with Cognitive Demands of Attitude Measures in Surveys', *Applied Cognitive Psychology*, 5, 231-236

engagement. Based on the literature review, it would be sensible to ensure the overall interview length does not exceed 30 minutes (20 minutes would be preferable) to maximise survey response and engagement. If age-bespoke questionnaire versions are produced, this should help manage length by ensuring that CYP are only asked questions which are relevant to them. However, more widely, this will be very challenging given that we only included one part of the 10-15-year-olds' survey in this review⁴.

- Even where questions remain the same as in the current survey, we recommend comprehensive cognitive and usability testing to be conducted across the eligible age range to ensure the questions are easily understood and relevant, and that CYP are able to navigate the survey instrument independently without an interviewer or parent available to help them.

1.3.3 Expectations of parental involvement when children complete the survey online

The National Children's Bureau (NCB) advises that parents or gatekeepers should ideally be in the vicinity but not too close to where data collection occurs, but that steps should be taken to enable CYP to contribute without risking being overheard or overlooked. This is much easier to control when the survey is completed in the context of a face-to-face interview.

In the 2019-20 face-to-face survey, 78% of interviews with 10-15s were conducted with a parent or guardian present in the room, and this was highest for 10-year-olds (89%). However, in this situation, the interviewer is on-hand to ensure that questions are still answered privately by the CYP (for example they can distract the parent during this phase). In an online survey, younger children aged 9-10 years often expressed a desire for a parent to be present, as the complexity of the survey materials and question wording led them to think they would need help from their parent during the survey task.

A separate data collection exercise (as part of a trial for the main CSEW survey⁵) asked parents of 9-17-year-olds how much supervision they would want if their child took part in an online crime survey. Overall, 28% said they would be happy for their child to complete in private, 36% would want to be on hand to help, 12% would want to actively supervise their child, and 24% would not be happy for their child to take part at all. The proportion who would want to actively supervise the survey varied by age of child: 23% of parents of 9–10-year-olds; 8% of parents of 11–15-year-olds and parents of 16-17-year-olds. This reinforces the findings above that a relatively high proportion of parents of 9–10-year-olds want to be actively involved.

If a parent observes or is involved in the survey, this creates a risk that the CYP will not answer with full honesty. Where parents expect to be involved, this is also likely to impact on online response rates among those who are most likely to take part in risky behaviour, as this group may be especially reluctant to take part if they think their parent will see their online responses.

⁴ Reviewing the complete 10-15 survey was out-of-scope for this project

⁵ See Work package A report: <https://kantarpublish.com/articles/transforming-the-crime-survey-for-england-and-wales>

Recommendations

- We recommend reinforcing messaging that the child should complete the survey in private and to ensure that the survey materials and questions are accessible to younger children without any requirement for parental assistance.
- Provide full transparency about the nature of the survey topics to ensure that parents fully understand what questions their child will be asked, and to ensure they feel comfortable about their child taking part independently. Where topic coverage varies by age, this information should be bespoke to avoid worrying parents of younger children. For example, as noted above in section 1.3.1, parents want to be reassured that younger primary-school aged children will not be asked questions about sexual activities online.
- As participant privacy cannot be guaranteed, a question could be added to the end of each module to ascertain how much supervision or help (if any) the CYP has received when completing the module, which would allow the results to be viewed in context.

1.3.4 Risk Rating

In the current CSEW survey, a risk rating letter is sent to children aged 10-15 years and an additional, separate version is sent to their parents. The risk rating is a score of either high, medium or low risk, generated through the child's answers to a subset of questions within the CSEW cybercrime module. The purpose of the risk assessment is to inform parents and children of the potential risk of the child's online behaviour to ensure appropriate safeguarding and to help children stay safe.

The topics covered by the risk rating include online bullying, sharing personal information and talking to strangers online, as well as sending or receiving sexual messages (with the latter asked of participants aged 13 and older only). In the face-to-face survey, information about the risk rating is provided on a Parental Information Card and the Youth Survey leaflets. Interviewers check that the CYP has read this before they begin the survey, and if the CYP has yet to read the leaflet then the interviewer provides a replacement leaflet for them to read before they initiate the child survey. Interviewers also explain this at the start of the cybercrime module before CYP begin the self-completion module and ask CYP to confirm that they have understood this. Therefore, there is a good deal of transparency within the current face-to-face survey and our interest in an online context is whether this transparency could be replicated.

Broadly the findings were as follows:

- **The risk rating was not sufficiently signposted in advance communications:** Although the risk rating is introduced in the Parental Information Card and in the Youth Survey leaflets, the evidence suggests this was not fully acknowledged or understood at the outset by either parents or CYP, and there is a risk that without an interviewer to reinforce messaging around this, this information might be missed.
- **Further messaging around the risk rating within the survey instrument was also missed:** As noted above, in the face-to-face survey, this is introduced by interviewers and interviewers ask young people to confirm that they have understood this; in an online survey this relies on young people reading and understanding this information independently. However, when testing this in an online context, this was found to be problematic at both ends of the age spectrum, as younger people failed to understand what this involved (the language and concepts were too complex) while older

participants often skim-read the 'non-question' screens ticking the 'I have understood this' consent box without really engaging with the text on screen.

- **Risk rating might inhibit honesty:** For those aged 16-17 (and to a lesser extent those aged 11-15), the knowledge that information might be shared with their parent added to their reservations about completing the survey honestly. Although the materials highlight that their specific responses will not be shared, the associated implications of a high (or even medium) rating were sometimes perceived to be too great. As such, the inclusion of the risk rating may impact on response rates to an online survey.
- **Concerns more generally about the risk rating process:** Several queries were raised about, for example, what responses might trigger a high-risk rating, what the 'next steps' should be in the event of a high-risk rating, and whether the NSPCC was an appropriate signpost (given links to child abuse). Although none of these issues are mode-specific, in a face-to-face survey there would be an interviewer to help address these concerns.

Recommendations

- Redevelop the Youth Survey leaflets and the Parental Information Card(s) to improve signposting to the risk rating process from the outset. For versions targeted at children, ensure the language is accessible so they understand what will happen next in the absence of an interviewer to explain this verbally.
- If the child online survey is to follow on from a parent survey (which might be conducted face-to-face), it is recommended that the risk rating is clearly introduced as part of the parental survey with a clear set of FAQs which can be shared with parents, and CYP-friendly versions of these which can be left behind for parents to share with their children.
- Signposting to the risk rating process should also be better reinforced in the survey instrument to minimise the risk of participants consenting without any real consideration of the information shown on the consent screen. Providing this information on screen in a more engaging way (shorter text, simpler language, use of bullet points) is recommended.
- Although not specifically an issue related to an online survey, while 16-17-year-olds are still legally classified as children, we would recommend against the inclusion of the risk rating for this cohort, unless it is adapted for their age group. This group are over the age of consent and evidence showed they are perceived as 'near-adults' by their parents. There is also a concern that their inclusion in the risk rating process may lead to dishonest and inaccurate responses, in order to avoid being sent a 'high risk' letter.

1.3.5 Ethical issues

If the survey is to move online, then the literature review raises a number of ethical issues which need to be considered.

A review of ethical guidelines indicated that these considerations fall within four main areas: informed consent and permissions; age of the child and accessibility (see section 1.3.6 for more detail on this); sensitive issues and safeguarding; and confidentiality and privacy.

Recommendations

While the ethical considerations would need to be thought about more fully in the context of the proposed methodology and online survey design, our initial recommendations are as follows:

- Informed consent and parental permissions must meet legal requirements under the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and ethical requirements under the Market Research Society's (MRS) Code of Conduct. Survey approaches that combine data collection across children and adults offer advantages including more explicit in-built consent processes.
- While parental consent would be easier to administer as part of a parental data collection exercise, the literature review identified surveys where parental consent was in-built into the online survey instrument, so this would not in itself be a barrier to online data collection.
- When the survey includes questions of a sensitive nature (as in this situation) then appropriate safeguarding would need to be considered. In a face-to-face survey, interviewers can detect when a child might find questions upsetting and can provide signposting to support sources, but this is clearly not possible in an online context. The risk rating process outlined in section 1.3.4 builds in a degree of safeguarding by informing the CYP and parent of their CYP's potentially risky online behaviours and signposting both parties to support sources. However, consideration might also be given to building safeguarding into the online questionnaire. For example, a certain pattern of responses that indicate risky behaviour could trigger a signpost to further support sources.
- In some cases, there may be a conflict between maintaining respondent confidentiality and wider social responsibilities, and this will need to be considered as part of any ethical review, especially within an online context.

1.3.6 Age-suitability of an online survey for children aged 9-10

Most ethical guidelines relating to research among CYP make a distinction between primary school (aged under 11) and secondary school (age 11+) children. While there is evidence of other self-completion surveys that include children aged under 11, these are often very short and simple. In fact, the NCB advises against the use of self-completion surveys with children aged under 12 outside of a school setting.

Consistent with these guidelines, our research identified several problems associated with extending the survey to include 9-year-olds. While 10-year-olds are already included in the current interviewer-administered approach, it is important to acknowledge that their response to the survey in an online context was more consistent with the 9-year-olds interviewed than their secondary school peers and, as such, their comprehension of and engagement with the survey instrument may diminish in the absence of interviewer support and encouragement, unless the survey is made more age appropriate.

The main findings were as follows:

- **Communication materials were inaccessible for 9-year-olds, and some did not understand the survey task:** The advance materials were largely inaccessible for 9-year-olds, creating expectations that a parent would be needed to explain what was being asked of them. Some terms and concepts (e.g., 'statistics', 'consent') were too complex for this age group. However, many simpler terms were also challenging: for example, one 9-year-old had never heard the term 'survey', and therefore in cases like

these it is very difficult to set up an expectation of what the task would involve without an interviewer to explain this verbally.

- **Parents felt that they would need to help younger children:** Many parents of this age group anticipated that they would need to be involved from the outset, as they were not convinced that they could participate independently. Relative to parents of older CYP, parents of 9-year-olds (and to a lesser extent 10-year-olds) also required additional reassurance as to the specific questions within each topic area; the Parental Information Card (adapted from the current survey) was not deemed sufficient in addressing these issues for parents of the youngest children.
- **There were cognition and usability problems in the survey instrument for this age group:** Younger children showed visible signs of fatigue when completing the survey as a result of comprehension problems and survey length, although this was more mixed among the 10-year-old participants. Some questions were misinterpreted such that innocent behaviours (for example meeting up with a 'stranger' who is in fact a friend of a friend) were at risk of being classified as 'negative', creating the potential to falsely inflate their risk status. While this potential risk was an issue across all age groups, it was particularly noticeable among the youngest participants. Also, questions relating to social media, drinking and drugs were often regarded as not relevant for this cohort, risking further confusion and/ or reduced engagement for this age group.
- **Increased internet access barriers among this age group:** It was noted in the literature review that primary-school aged children have lower levels of access to the internet at home, and under half of 9-year-olds had access to a smartphone (2022 figures) (see section 1.3.2 for more information on this).
- **Survey incentive less of a motivation:** The concept of e-vouchers was often unfamiliar to younger children and was less of a draw for this age group, many of whom did not manage their own money.

Recommendations

- We recommend that the survey is not extended to children below 10 years of age in a purely online context given comprehension issues associated with language and understanding fully what a 'survey' entails.
- For 10-year-olds, survey communications should be reviewed to ensure that language is accessible and age-appropriate, using readability assessments to help ensure this.
- Further tailoring of communications to younger children to ensure they understand what is required of them and to limit the need for parental involvement in an online context. Also, to reduce formality of language and to ensure the materials are visually engaging.
- Consider making the questionnaire more bespoke to better suit different age groups, and in particular to reduce cognitive burden and survey length for younger children who would need to complete the survey independently online.
- Consider a different approach for incentivising younger children in an online survey given that the e-voucher was found to be less appropriate for this age group.

2. Introduction and Background

2.1 Background

The 10-15-year-olds' survey has been incorporated within the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) since 2009. It covers children and young people (CYP) aged 10-15, with a target sample size of 3,000 per year since 2012-13⁶. As part of the main adult interview, interviewers initially seek to establish whether selected households contain any children aged 10-15 and, if so, attempt to interview one child (selected at random) in that age group. The primary objective of extending the survey to this age group was to provide estimates of the levels of crime experienced by children and their risk of victimisation.

As part of the 10-15-year-olds' survey, development for a new cybercrime and online behaviour module began in 2016 to measure the extent of victimisation of cyber-related crime among children. Cybercrime in this context is defined as any crimes facilitated by technology and/or the internet, including both cyber-enabled and cyber-dependent crime. As part of the development of the module, it was suggested that a mechanism to inform parents and children of the potential risk of the child's online behaviour should be developed.

As a result, a risk score was devised based on responses to key questions throughout the survey. This risk score was in turn used to develop a risk rating for each section of the module and was integrated into the existing survey process from April 2019. As such, the participant and their parents were sent a letter and accompanying leaflet notifying them whether their online activity was low, medium or high-risk.

The current 10–15-year olds' survey consists of five modules – four of these are interviewer-administered, with the cybercrime module administered as self-completion, although the interviewer remains available to address any questions or concerns that are raised by the young participant during the self-completion.

2.2 Aims and Objectives

Over recent years, there has been a policy shift towards moving government services online. As part of this strategy, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) intends to move its household surveys to multi-mode data collection with a priority focus on online self-completion. The overall aim of this transformation is to reduce costs, increase flexibility for participants, and minimise the time and burden associated with responding to government surveys.

The core purpose of 'Transformation Work Package B' was to understand the practical issues related to conducting an online version of the survey, while also potentially extending both the lower and upper age range of the survey (that is extending the survey coverage from 10-15 to 9-17). As such, the findings from this work package will help determine: i) whether the 10–15-year olds' survey will remain incorporated within an in-home interviewer-

⁶ The target sample size was 4,000 per year in 2009-10.

administered survey or move to a survey which is completed by young people online; and ii) whether this can be suitably administered with a wider age range also including 9-year-olds and 16-17 year olds.

Within these over-arching objectives, a number of specific questions were raised by ONS:

- (i) What are the current examples of measuring crime and crime-related experiences across different modes with a focus on online and multi-modal approaches in 9–17-year-olds? What are the benefits and limitations?
- (ii) Is there a minimum age at which an online self-completed survey would work effectively? Does the survey need to be tailored for different age groups and if so, how should the age groups be divided?
- (iii) How can sensitive questions on crime-related topics, such as online behaviours, be asked appropriately and safely via an online questionnaire?
- (iv) What measures need to be put in place to ensure respondents can answer these questions in privacy?
- (v) What other ethical considerations are there for asking these questions online and how can they be addressed?
- (vi) How could parents be involved in the process in terms of both consent and involvement in the online survey? Would there be areas of the survey where parental involvement should be minimised where possible? How would this be achieved?
- (vii) Could a risk rating for children's behaviour based on questionnaire responses be implemented in a similar way to the current CSEW risk rating system for online behaviour?

Some of these issues have already been examined over the previous ten years, and therefore the current project looks to build on this previous work by focussing more on the online application of these issues. Previous development work has included:

- a. Significant work prior to the 2012-13 survey to examine how to maximise response to the child crime survey. While this was in the context of an in-home interviewer-administered survey, a number of the broad findings are still pertinent to the key objectives of an online study.
- b. As noted above, there was extensive work in 2016-17 to understand how cybercrimes and online behaviour affected children aged 10 to 15 and to develop a survey instrument to measure this.
- c. A small-scale pilot of the risk rating process was conducted in 2018 with parents and children to explore reactions to the risk rating process and the understanding of the scoring of the potential risks among parents and 10–15-year-olds.

2.3 Scope of the Transformation B project

The Transformation Work Package B included three specific workstreams, outlined below:

- 1 Scoping/literature review of relevant surveys and ethical frameworks that relate to surveys among CYP up to the age of 17 years of age
- 2 Review of the existing self-completion (cybercrime) module, currently used in the face-to-face survey, to ensure it was suitable for testing in an online context
- 3 Series of depth interviews with CYP aged 9-17, and one of their parents, to address issues related to online survey administration from the perspective of both the parent and the child.

As part of the development of the project, various design elements were initially discussed but were ultimately not included in the final project design.

A summary of each of these is shown below.

2.3.1 Sample design

The children's survey has been linked to the adult survey (main CSEW) since its inception, such that the 10–15-year-old selection and adult selection are made from the same household. Furthermore, the 10–15-year old's interview can only be analysed in conjunction with a completed adult survey from the same household at present⁷, and initial discussions confirmed that the 10–15-year-old survey was likely to continue with this approach for the foreseeable future.

As such, while there was a preliminary discussion as to the merits of developing an independent CYP survey to sit alongside the main (adult) survey, this was not reviewed or evaluated in any real detail as part of this project.

However, separating the CYP survey from the main adult survey may still merit further consideration in the future. For example, such a separation would help maximise the potential sample size and likely lead to a more (cost) effective design overall.

2.3.2 Questionnaire content

Although the original proposal indicated the requirement for a full review of the existing 10–15-year-olds questionnaire, it was ultimately agreed that the depth interviews should focus purely on the existing self-completion (cybercrime) module.

The rationale for focussing on this module was that it was already available in a self-completion format and therefore required limited amendments to work in an online setting. As such, it was considered more realistic to focus solely on this module given the timescales involved on the project.

⁷ Adult survey data is needed to weight the 10–15-year olds' data – as such 10-15 data is only included if it has an accompanying adult survey. Interviewers are reminded of the need to interview an adult and a child in any household where a 10–15-year-old is surveyed

2.3.3 Multi-modal approach

For the purposes of this specific project, it was agreed that the key focus should be on the current (in-home) CAPI approach versus the potential to migrate the survey online. Other approaches such as paper (PAPI) or via telephone (CATI) have not been considered in any real depth as part of this report. Similarly, while some self-completion surveys among children are conducted in schools, the assumption was that the survey would remain household-based and a switch to a schools-based approach was not considered.

As a result of all three of the above, it was acknowledged that the overall scope of the project was slightly narrower than was assumed at the outset.

2.4 Methodology

As noted, this project consisted of three workstreams. A summary of the methodology is provided below.

Workstream 1 Scoping/literature review (Chapters 3 & 4): The scoping/ literature review included a rapid evidence review of online surveys and surveys in other modes (predominantly face-to-face) conducted with CYP to assess both the benefits and limitations of different methodological approaches. In addition, it included a review of ethical and legal frameworks and guidelines for conducting research with young people, including consent and confidentiality issues for children of different ages.

Workstream 2 Review of questionnaire content (Chapter 5): While the current 10–15-year olds' survey consists of five modules, this review focused exclusively on the self-completion module given that this component was already in a self-complete format and the issues associated with movement online were therefore less complex for this component. Although the module was already developed for a CYP to self-complete online, it was acknowledged that some elements of the existing module would need to be adjusted to reflect the lack of involvement from an interviewer at the beginning and close of the module.

Workstream 3 Depth Interviews (Chapters 6 to 11): involved a series of parallel interviews with one researcher interviewing the child and another interviewing the parent. The child's interview included a trial completion of the self-completion survey on a laptop, with the researcher observing throughout. Alongside this, the CYP was asked to evaluate the pre-survey communications to understand their initial reactions to these. Similarly, they were also asked to review the risk score leaflet and letters, both in terms of their comprehension of these and the potential impact of the risk rating on their willingness to participate.

Parents of CYP were similarly asked to evaluate the pre-survey communications and their reaction to the risk rating materials and were also asked to review the survey questions to explore whether the initial communications set up an accurate expectation of the survey and its content, and to explore their views on survey content and willingness to allow their child to participate.

3. Literature review: methodological approaches for surveys of young people

The literature review findings are covered over two chapters. This chapter (Chapter 3) covers methodological and design features, while Chapter 4 covers ethical and consent procedures.

3.1 Introduction

As part of the scoping review, we conducted a literature review of existing evidence on conducting online surveys with CYP to investigate the advantages and challenges associated with this mode, and different methodological approaches.

While the review was largely associated with online surveys among CYP, and surveys that covered crime, online safety, and risky behaviour, we also looked at high-quality surveys with CYP on other topics and using other modes (including mixed-mode) to gain more general insight into the pragmatic and ethical considerations of conducting surveys with this audience. The literature search was restricted to surveys conducted since 2015 and, while it mainly focussed on UK-based surveys, some international surveys were included.

The review focussed on surveys which covered CYP within the age group of interest for the current study, that is those aged 9-17, although some surveys also included younger children.

A total of 68 studies were initially identified. However, more than half of these were subsequently excluded from the review after applying a set of quality selection criteria. These exclusions included studies which involved small samples, where there was insufficient information about the methodology, where the study was an assessment rather than a survey and where the study was a more simplistic online poll.

This reduced the total count to 31 studies included in the final review. The remainder of this chapter synthesises the overall review and examines the emergent key themes. A summary table of sources is provided in Appendix A. Where a source is cited in this chapter the reference ID (for example, *ID6*) maps across to this table.

The full spreadsheet matrix covering the detailed findings can be found in a separate file⁸.

In addition to reviewing past surveys of CYP, we also reviewed ethical guidelines produced by organisations such as the Market Research Society (MRS), NSPCC and the National Children's Bureau (NCB) which are discussed separately in Chapter 4.

⁸ See <https://kantarpublish.com/articles/transforming-the-crime-survey-for-england-and-wales>

3.2 Profile of studies reviewed

Table 3.1 below indicates the profile of studies reviewed by their key features.

Table 3.1: Profile of studies reviewed

Key features	Number of studies
Pattern of data collection	
Cross-Sectional	18
Longitudinal (including tracker/panel)	13
Survey Mode	
CAWI only (including push-to-web)	10
CAWI - school based	5
CAPI only	5
Paper and pen (at home)	1
Paper and pen (school)	1
Mixed mode	7
Unknown	2
Geographical coverage	
UK/GB/England/One UK nation	27
International (mainly EU)	3
City/regional	1

3.3 Survey methodology

In general, surveys among CYP included in the review involved one of the following approaches:

- School-based surveys (online or paper-based self-administered data collection)
- Face-to-face surveys in-home
- Push to web online surveys
- Surveys conducted as part of a longitudinal or recontact study
- Alternative survey approaches, such as those which use online panels or convenience sampling

Higher quality surveys among young people, that is those that involve random probability sampling, usually involve one of the first four methods above.

Telephone (CATI) approaches were rarely used although this was sometimes included as part of a mixed-mode approach when following up panel survey respondents.

More detail about each of these approaches is provided below.

3.3.1 School-based surveys

In these types of survey, a two-stage sample process is usually employed: a sample of schools is drawn, and then whole classes within schools are sampled to target the required age groups. Data collection is usually conducted within a class-based setting (sometimes under 'exam' conditions) and can involve either paper-based and/or online data collection. Surveys administered in this way are usually designed to take less than

one hour to fit into a lesson period and are sometimes incorporated within PHSE⁹ classes. Most studies in this category exclude pupils in nurseries, Pupil Referral Units (PRUs), special schools and very small schools. Some, but not all, studies included independent schools.

A key advantage of school-based surveys is that they offer an opportunity to reach a large sample of young people cost-effectively. However, they involve increased lead time and management due to the requirement to liaise with schools to encourage them to take part and to organise the administration of the survey. Another key disadvantage is that individual pupils are not usually identifiable, which means that there is no possibility of linking to either a parent interview or external databases (for example the National Pupil Database which includes information on contextual factors such as free school meals and SEND status). This would also preclude any follow-up contact. A further drawback of school surveys is that they can exclude populations who would be covered as part of a home-based sample (for example those not in mainstream education or home-schooled).

3.3.2 Face-to-face surveys in-home

In this methodological approach, young people are typically interviewed as a follow-up to an adult face-to-face survey. In these cases, households are usually selected using a household administration dataset (for example, the Postcode Address File, Child Benefit records, NHS Patient Register, or the DfE National Pupils Database). In some cases, these sample frames directly reference a named child, and in others the sampling of the child is done via first collecting data from the adult to enumerate the household members.

The child interview is usually conducted as part of face-to-face interview, although there is often a self-completion component embedded within the interview (paper-based or online) for more sensitive questions. Face-to-face surveys with an embedded self-completion element included the Survey of the Mental Health of Children and Young People 2017 (MHCYP *ID9*), Millennium Cohort Study MCS *ID28*), the Longitudinal Survey of Young People in England LSYPE2 *ID31*), Growing up in Scotland *ID4*), and the current Crime 10-15 year olds' survey *ID11*), although on MHCYP data was collected by proxy from the parent for participants under the age of 11.

Where child interviews are completed online following a face-to-face household interview, this was usually in the context of a later follow-up survey as part of a longitudinal survey (see section 3.3.4 below).

Face-to-face surveys of young people are typically longer than self-completion surveys (which are usually limited to 30 minutes maximum), sometimes lasting over an hour.

Face-to-face surveys have the advantage of higher response rates, more flexibility in survey content (for example, longer and more complex interviews), the ability to collect additional information (such as bio measures), mitigation of issues related to literacy or

⁹ Personal, Social, Health, and Economic education

accessibility, and the ability to link data to parental survey data and other administrative datasets.

In terms of disadvantages, the most significant drawback is increased cost per completed interview. Other drawbacks include increased risk of social desirability bias, for example a potential to under-report risk-taking behaviours in the presence of an interviewer (unless these questions are included within a self-completion component) and the potential for interviewer effects.

3.3.3 Push-to-web online surveys

In these surveys, households are usually selected via an administrative database (as noted in 3.3.2) but letters are sent to households asking young people to complete the survey online using a log in and password details. Reminder mailings are usually employed to maximise response. Studies based on this design model included COSMO (*ID1*), Pupil and Parent Panel (*ID6*), Young Lives, Young Futures (*ID3*), Science Education Tracker (SET, *ID21*) and Active Lives, Children and Young People Survey Year 1 (2015-16) (*ID30*).

Sometimes, paper questionnaires are sent during selected mailings to help improve response rates and increase accessibility, although it is rarer to include this alternative mode in CYP surveys as lack of internet access is much less likely to be a barrier for this audience (see section 3.4). Paper-based questionnaires are also much more limiting in terms of questionnaire design and content and are associated with poorer data quality and increased data editing requirements.

Interview lengths in push-to-web surveys tended to be shorter than face-to-face surveys (typically 15-30 minutes) as it is more difficult to keep up survey engagement without an interviewer to keep up the rapport. Surveys are usually designed to be completed on any online device including laptops, tablets and smartphones.

The main advantages of a purely online approach are reduced unit cost (allowing a larger sample size for an equivalent face-to-face budget), rapid data collection, and high-quality data.

Disadvantages of a purely online approach include lower response rates relative to interviewer-led modes, reduced accessibility as respondents need to have the required literacy skills, reduced engagement, and increased risk of satisficing behaviours¹⁰.

3.3.4 Surveys conducted as part of a longitudinal or re-contact survey

For larger-scale longitudinal surveys such as the Longitudinal Survey of Young People in England (LSYPE, *ID31*) and the Millennium Cohort survey (MCS, *ID28*), households are typically recruited and surveyed face-to-face at the initial wave, but later data collection sweeps are usually mixed-mode, often with a primary focus on online data collection.

¹⁰ 'Satisficing' refers to when respondents get through the question by expending minimal effort, in order to avoid the cognitive effort involved in giving a more considered or more accurate response.

These respondents tend to be more committed as they become part of a long-running panel, with regular communication from the survey agency and sponsor. COSMO (*ID1*) is an unusual example of a panel survey where initial recruitment to the panel was done online – this is because the panel survey was set up during the pandemic when all face-to-face fieldwork was suspended. A second and simpler type of longitudinal survey is a recontact survey, where young people are re-sampled based on having taken part in an earlier study, without necessarily linking the data across waves. This represents a quick and easy method of accessing a representative sample of young people as the survey communication can utilise previously collected contact details (emails, SMS etc.). In some cases (MHCYP 2020, recontacted from *ID9*; SET recontact survey, recontacted from *ID21*), this approach was utilised during the pandemic when fresh data collection (especially face-to-face) was not possible, and therefore it represented a pragmatic alternative approach to reaching a representative sample of young people who could be contacted online. However, such an approach will result in a narrowing of the age range as those in the youngest age band in the original survey were not replaced by equivalent fresh sample of this age group in the subsequent iteration.

3.3.5 Alternative survey approaches

There are also some more pragmatic, lower quality, approaches to surveying CYP (not based on random probability sampling) which tend to involve one of the following approaches:

- Recruitment via an online panel (for example, YouGov's online panel)
- Recruitment via convenience sampling (for example, by channelling through institutions, charities and other organisations who have links to audiences of young people, by posting on social media or via online advertising). These samples tend to be self-selecting and non-representative.

While some such studies have been included in this review (for example, because they have a highly relevant topic focus), they were not a core focus.

3.3.6 Other survey design features

Aside from mode of administration and overall survey design, there were also some other features of surveys with CYP that are worth noting.

- Many repeat surveys needed to change their methodology during the pandemic, with an increased focus on online data collection during this period.
- Most surveys were based on standard survey-based data collection, although some surveys involved additional data collection elements such as physical or bio measurements, or app-based measurement (for example, tracking time spent using a smartphone).
- International surveys often used varying approaches depending on country-based survey infrastructure.

- Most survey samples were nationally (or regionally) representative, although some included boosts which involved over-sampling populations of particular interest, for example, lower-income or disadvantaged families, ethnic minority groups, or children with special educational needs (SEND).

3.4 Online surveys: internet access among CYPs

In the context of reviewing the appropriateness of online surveys among CYP, it is important to consider online access among young people.

Online access is still a barrier for some members of the adult population; recent Ofcom data¹¹ indicates that 14% of adults aged 18+ (almost exclusively in the 55+ age group) did not use the internet in 2020.

However, it is not considered a barrier for CYP at secondary school. Further Ofcom data¹² notes that in 2021, 99% of households with children aged 0-17 had internet access and used it in the home. Most CYP aged 11+ owned a mobile phone, rising from 91% of 11 years olds to 100% of those aged 15+, and 97% of secondary school children had access to an internet-enabled device at home, at least some of the time.

However, it is worth noting that access to the internet among younger children at primary school is lower. Based on the same data source, more than a third of parents (36%) said their primary school-age children did not 'always' have access to an internet-enabled device at home (compared to just 17% of parents of secondary school-age children). Within these groups, 11% of primary-age children rarely or never had access to the internet, compared to just 3% of those in secondary school.

Under half (44%) of those aged 9 had a mobile phone, rising to 62% of 10-year-olds and 91% of 11-year-olds, indicating that the crucial years for acquisition of a mobile phone are between 9 and 11 years old.

3.5 Paired and non-paired approaches

Many surveys with young people are operated as part of a household interview, where a parent, and sometimes other household members, are also interviewed. This has the advantage that parental consent is more easily built into the survey process (the issue of consent and obtaining appropriate permissions is discussed in more detail in Section 4.2.2). Another advantage is that parental interviews can provide additional household data (for example, parental occupation, socio-economic group, income, qualifications) which can help contextualise the young person's responses¹³.

There are examples of paired approaches in both a face-to-face context (for example, LSYPE2 Wave 1, *ID31*) and online push to web (for example, COSMO Wave 1, *ID1*). It is generally not possible to include a parental data collection exercise when surveys are

¹¹ https://www.ofcom.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0013/220414/online-nation-2021-report.pdf

¹² https://www.ofcom.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0024/234609/childrens-media-use-and-attitudes-report-2022.pdf

¹³ MRS guidelines do not allow for respondents aged under 16 to provide personal information about their parents without the consent of their parent. Also, many young people would not know this information anyway so the data collected would be unreliable.

conducted in school, although some school-based surveys also involve collection of data from teachers or other school staff.

3.6 Response rates and use of incentives

Ideally, this review would have identified the studies with the highest response rates and identified the mode, methods and administrative features associated with more successful response rates. However, in practice, response rates were difficult to directly compare, given varying sampling methodologies (for example, home-based or school based), scope of coverage (regional, national or international), method of completion (interviewer-administered or self-completion), mode (face-to-face, paper-based, online or mixed-mode), use of incentives or not, whether part of household interview also involving a parent, and whether the survey was a one-off or part of a longitudinal survey with more committed respondents.

However, despite these challenges, some patterns have been identified in relation to response rates, discussed below in relation to self-completion approaches.

3.6.1 School-based surveys

Surveys administered in the school setting, whether paper or online, generally had very high response rates (often 85% or over) once the school had been recruited. However, typically only around 25%-33% of schools opted to take part (affected by survey topic, timing, level of burden on the school, and workload of school), so the real response rate was usually much lower.

Most surveys in schools did not offer individual incentives and instead offered the school a conditional incentive of around £100-£200. In some cases, schools were offered aggregated data reports or classroom posters based on their pupils' responses¹⁴ or learning resources.

3.6.2 Push-to-web surveys

These types of CYP surveys had much lower response rates compared with face-to-face surveys due to the following factors:

- Absence of an interviewer who can help build engagement, rapport and motivation.
- Recruitment of the CYP often relies upon the adults in the household choosing to take part and passing on a survey invitation letter or paper survey to their child. Therefore, the CYP response rate becomes conditional on the adult response rate.

¹⁴ Disclosure risks would need to be considered in these cases given potentially small school-based samples

- The respondent is asked to access a website by typing in the URL (which requires a little more effort) although the increasing use of QR codes can help shortcut this process.
- The approach also relies on households opening letters, and the need to ensure these don't look like a generic circular. Some surveys found that the use of survey logos (or for government surveys "On her Majesty's Service") can increase the opening rate. More information on messaging for push-to-web surveys can be found here¹⁵.

Financial incentives (in the form of vouchers such as Amazon or Love2Shop) were typically offered and were generally in the region of £5-£10, although some surveys offered differentially higher incentives to harder-to reach groups. Incentives in push-to-web surveys were usually conditional on completion although some longer-term panel surveys such as LSYPE (*ID31*) and USOC (*ID10*) use unconditional vouchers at later waves. There was also evidence of longitudinal studies including study branded 'gifts' such as stress balls or headphones.

Response rates for one-off push to web surveys among CYP are variable, although typically lie in the range 25%-60%, dependent on audience, context, survey topic and length of survey.

3.7 Feasibility and survey development

Feasibility and development work was often carried out in advance of launching a new survey. The types of development included the following:

- Cognitive testing to test comprehension, relevance, language and acceptability of questions, and suitability for different age groups
- Usability testing to test online survey administration via a range of devices (laptops, tablet and smartphones), operating systems and internet browsers
- Survey development focus groups to explore branding, communications and naming of studies
- Development work to ensure that specific questions (such as those related to disability or gender) are asked sensitively and appropriately
- Pilot surveys
- An investigation of survey paradata, for example, to detect whether there were any trigger points for survey break-offs
- Some surveys involved an element of co-design with a CYP audience

¹⁵ <https://gss.civilservice.gov.uk/policy-store/respondent-engagement-for-push-to-web-social-surveys/#section-8>

4. Literature review: ethical considerations in surveys of young people

4.1 Introduction

This chapter focusses on ethical considerations when conducting surveys among CYP, based on a review of relevant ethical frameworks, and with reference to examples of practical applications of these, drawing on the surveys included in the literature review.

The following ethical guidelines were reviewed:

- [The Market Research Society \(MRS\) Code of Conduct \(2019\)](#)
- [NSPCC Research Ethics Committee and guidance \(2020\)](#)
- [The National Children's Bureau \(NCB\) Guidelines for Research with Children and Young People \(2011\)](#)
- [The Social Research Association \(SRA\) Research Ethics Guidance \(2021\)](#)

Ethical considerations fell into four main areas: Informed consent and permissions; Age of the child and accessibility; Sensitive issues and safeguarding; and Confidentiality and privacy. Each of these is discussed below.

4.2 Informed consent and permissions

4.2.1 Informed consent

The SRA defines informed consent as:

- *Participation is voluntary and people are not put under pressure to take part*
- *Prospective participants are given a brief description of the study and of what participation entails, and the researcher can be reasonably confident that participants understand this*
- *Consent is best viewed as a continuous process rather than as a discrete and irreversible decision: participants need to be aware that they can withdraw at any point, for any or no reason.*

The NCB further provides a checklist of issues that research participants should be informed about. These include the purpose of the research; who is funding it; who is carrying it out; what participants will be asked to do; what will happen to the data; the degree of confidentiality and anonymity provided; how the information will be analysed (e.g. whether results are to be aggregated); who will see the results of the study; the potential benefits of the study for participants or the wider community; and contact details

for a researcher in case they have questions or complaints about the research. Information should also ensure that potential participants understand their rights to refuse to participate without adverse consequences; not answer specific questions without having to give a reason; and to withdraw from the research at any point without adverse consequences.

However, the level of detail provided to respondents also needs to be considered alongside requirements for research materials to be accessible and age appropriate. This is covered in more detail in section 4.3.2.

4.2.2 Obtaining appropriate permissions

The ICO considers anyone under the age of 18 to be a child, in accordance with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child¹⁶. However, legal and ethical guidelines point to different approaches depending on the age of the child.

Permissions and consent for CYP to take part in research must meet legal requirements under the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)¹⁷ which stipulates parental consent for all children under the age of 13, and ethical requirements under the Market Research Society's Code of Conduct which requires the permission of a parent or guardian to interview a child aged 15 or under.

Broadly speaking, this means that parental consent is required in all cases where children are aged under 16, but more stringent permission processes are required for younger children aged under 13. For those aged 16 or over, parental consent is optional from a legal and ethical point of view, although many surveys extend the permission processes for those aged 16-17, or at least make the parent aware that their child has been invited to take part.

Where parental consent is required, this should be sought from a parent or other responsible adult, defined by the MRS as *'an individual who has personal accountability for the well-being of a child or a vulnerable adult, for example a parent, guardian, carer, teacher, nanny or grandparent'*.

The NSPCC further notes that the child's decision should always take precedence: *'... a child or young person's refusal of assent or consent should always over-rule the parent's or guardian's consent to take part in the research'*.

Broadly speaking, the following principles have been applied across surveys with CYP covered in the review:

- Parental consent mechanisms depend on the mode of administration:
 - In face-to-face surveys, where CYPs are often invited to take part after a parent interview, verbal, written or signed parental permission (based on informed consent) is usually sought and then recorded by the interviewer. Supplementary field materials (such as an information leaflet) are often provided. Such an approach is also viable where the subsequent child survey is completed online; that is consent can be

¹⁶ [Children and the UK GDPR | ICO](#)

¹⁷ Ibid

sought from the parent/guardian at the face-face stage before issuing an invitation for the child to complete the survey online.

- In online push-to-web surveys, permission processes are usually more explicit and built into survey instruments.
 - For example, in the Active Lives 2015-16 survey (*ID30*), where data collection involved both an adult and a CYP online interview, consent to contact the CYP (where an eligible CYP in the household was identified) was built into the adult survey which then triggered a survey invitation letter to the CYP directly.
 - In the Science Education Tracker online survey of 11-18 years olds (*ID21*) there was no separate parental data collection exercise and therefore parental consent had to be sought in a different way. While CYP aged 16 or over were sent survey invitations directly, CYP aged under 16 were contacted via a parent meaning each mailing contained two letters: i) a letter directed to the parent which explained the nature of the survey and provided details to allow them to opt out on behalf of their child if they wished; and ii) a second survey invitation letter directed to the CYP which parents or guardians were asked to hand on to their child if they were happy for their child to take part. For children aged 11-12, an extra layer of more explicit consent was built in, with parents required to complete a parental consent 'survey'; children aged 11-12 were then blocked from taking part in the survey until the parental consent form had been completed and consent had been logged.
 - The main issue with this approach is that the response to the child survey becomes conditional on the parental response rate. In the above example, the response rate for 11-12-year-olds, which were all channelled via a parental consent survey, was lower (41%) than most other age groups 13-18 (around 50%).
- For school surveys, the usual approach was for schools to contact parents (via letter and/or email) and provide parents with an opportunity to withdraw their child from the study. CYP should also have the choice to decline to take part even if their parent has consented.
- Informed consent: as discussed in section 4.2.1, respondents must be given full information about what their decision involves, including the benefits and risks, and they must have the capacity to understand the information provided to them. Information should be provided on all survey communication, including letters, leaflets and survey websites. Online surveys often ask respondents to click a statement at the start of the survey to verify that they have read the relevant survey information, while some online surveys include a requirement to read through and click past privacy notices before they can access the survey. More information about how to make this information accessible is covered in section 4.3.2.
- As part of the above, participants should be informed about any potentially distressing questions (for example suicide or self-harm). See section 4.4 for further detail on this.

- Where permission of a parent or other responsible adult is required, the identity and relationship to the child of this person should be recorded in a form which is verifiable (in an online survey this should be recorded within the questionnaire).
- Response to the survey should be fully voluntary and respondents should be made aware of their right to withdraw consent at any time, or to request that their data is deleted after completion. The study should clarify and share policies related to these rights.
- CYP should be provided with the opportunity to choose the option “I don’t know” or “Prefer not to say” for all questions of a potentially sensitive nature.
- If data linkage to external datasets is required, consent is usually sought for this, with an explanation as to what this process involves. There are many examples of this including the Millennium Cohort Study (MCS, *ID28*), COSMO (*ID1*), Young Lives Young Futures (*ID3*) and LSYPE2 (*ID31*)

4.3 Age of the child and accessibility

4.3.1 Age at which children can take part independently

Most guidelines make a distinction between primary and secondary school age children. The NCB suggests that for CYP of secondary school age, most methods that would be used with adults can be considered, but with a degree of adaptation to reflect appropriate levels of literacy and cognitive ability. However, the NCB further advises against the use of on-line self-completion surveys with children aged under 12 outside of a school setting (where help would be available), to ensure that younger children, and especially those with learning difficulties, are not excluded or negatively impacted by the process.

Despite this, there is evidence that some surveys, including the current 10–15-year olds’ survey, attempt to reach a younger audience via self-completion methods. The Big Ask survey (*ID7*) includes children from the age of 4 up to 17, although only results for age six and upwards appear in the report. However, the survey appeared to only include five simple questions, and children aged 6-8 were presented with a simpler, shorter version of the questions.

In many surveys, data for children aged under 11 is collected by proxy via the parents, although the threshold for when children are asked to complete at least part of the survey independently varies by study: from age 6 (Big Ask, *ID7*); age 7 (MCS, *ID28*); age 8 (Children’s Patient survey, *ID16*; Ofcom, *ID14*); and age 11 (MHCYP, *ID9*). The decision on the age at which a child can take part independently is likely to vary depending on the subject matter and the simplicity of the survey task. It also depends on context (i.e., mode). The examples cited above include a range of modal contexts including: a publicly available online link (Big Ask); self-completion as part of a household face-to-face interview (MCS, MHCYP); paper-based survey sent postally via parents (Children’s Patient survey), and use of an online panel (Ofcom).

4.3.2 Accessibility

The NSPCC notes that information leaflets about the research, and consent forms, should be tailored so that they are age-appropriate, and use lay language rather than technical terms and jargon. In some cases, this will mean it is necessary to produce several versions of an information leaflet, tailored by age. Researchers are advised to use readability tests¹⁸ to assist with this process.

The SRA acknowledges that giving people too much information can be counter-productive and suggests that weblinks to more detail should be provided where appropriate. It also suggests that the use of a short video or sound recording may be helpful for people who have difficulty with written information or remembering details. The ICO¹⁹ also suggests various ways in which privacy notices can be made more accessible including use of icons, layering, dashboards, and mobile-friendly adaptations.

Some surveys include additional options to widen access to the survey for those who have additional literacy needs. Approaches included audio-CASI; an 'easy read' accessible version of the survey; translations or use of interpreters for EAL students; use of accessible questionnaire software; and for younger children features such as simple child-friendly fonts and visuals.

The NCB notes that where a survey is not able to be fully inclusive (for example if there is no possibility of reaching young people with EAL or who are not in mainstream education) this should be acknowledged in the final survey outputs and consideration should be given to how this impacts on the findings.

The NSPCC also recommends consideration of the production of findings that are specifically aimed at and suitable for children.

4.4 Sensitive issues and safeguarding

All ethical frameworks emphasise the need for appropriate measures to be put in place when the survey includes questions of a sensitive nature, for example: appropriate risk assessment; gaining ethical approval where required; informed consent; allowing participants to enter their data privately; and access to help and support. Safeguarding protocols need to be clearly communicated to participants as part of the consent process.

In some cases, there may be a conflict between maintaining respondent confidentiality and wider social responsibilities, for example when a CYP reveals an intention to harm themselves or others or is at risk of abuse. Clear safeguarding protocols should be set up in these situations, which need to be communicated to participants as part of the consent process.

For face-to-face surveys, safeguarding protocols were usually set up for interviewers, and sometimes interviewers also received safeguard training. Some school surveys also included safeguarding protocols for schools.

The ethical frameworks' focus on safeguarding is mainly centred around the role of the researcher/ interviewer and the necessary steps they would need to take where a CYP

¹⁸ For example, Flesch-Kincaid or Hemingway

¹⁹ [What methods can we use to provide privacy information? | ICO](#)

discloses a potential risk. However, safeguarding can be built into fully online surveys by employing more indirect approaches to ensure safeguarding issues are addressed in a timely manner.

Two of the surveys reviewed - MHCYP (ID9) and COSMO (ID1) - employed a within-survey approach to safeguarding. Where a respondent provided an answer that could indicate they required some support (such as answering 'yes' to questions about self-harm or suicide) they were immediately directed to a targeted screen which provided information on where to seek further help (for example, the Samaritans). A number of common practice initiatives were identified as part of the surveys review; these are summarised below:

- In some cases, survey and administration procedures were reviewed and approved by internal and/or external ethics committees to assure that ethical and legal obligations are respected (in each country where relevant). In some cases, survey content was reviewed by expert organisations such as the NSPCC.
- Codes of practice (for example MRS, NHS statistical Governance policy) were followed where relevant.
- Privacy policies are generally signposted (for example signposts to where these are located on a survey website) and, as discussed in section 4.3.2, in many cases age-appropriate versions were produced for younger people.
- When the survey includes sensitive topics, survey communications (letters, leaflets, websites) often provide signposts to further sources of help and support. Sources of support can also be directly flagged up within or at the end of the survey.
- In the current CSEW crime survey (ID11), a risk rating (based on responses to the survey) is sent to parents and children after the interview, informing them of the potential risk of the child's online behaviour. Parents and young people are informed of this process before they start the survey.
- Where open-ended (or other) data is provided that indicates a potential safeguarding issue, there is need to consider if data should be shared and with whom, and it is important to ensure that respondents are suitably informed upfront of any such policy.

4.5 Confidentiality and privacy

When young people self-complete online, the context of the survey completion will offer varying degrees of privacy for the young person.

The NCB notes that *'In most circumstances, a parent or gatekeeper would ideally be in the vicinity but not too close to where data collection occurs – within view or calling distance, but not able to overhear what is being said. However, if a child wants their parent or a gatekeeper to be present you should agree to this, and for very young children or disabled CYP, a parent or carer may need to be present to provide physical help or assist with communication'*

The NCB further advises that in studies including sensitive issues, such as alcohol or drug use or sexual behaviour, the researcher should consider using research methods that enable CYP to contribute without risking being overheard or overlooked, for example using a self-completion approach. This is a common approach across many studies (see Chapter 3) and privacy can be controlled by the interviewer in a face-to-face setting. However, if a child is conducting survey in a purely online context there is a lack of control over how much privacy the child is given (see section 8.3.1 for more detail on this).

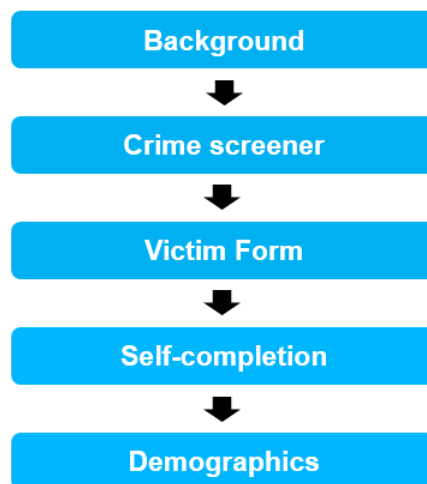
5. Review of existing survey content

5.1 Introduction

The 10–15-year-old questionnaire was first introduced in 2009-10, with the approach remaining broadly consistent since inception.

As part of the main adult interview, interviewers initially seek to establish whether selected households contain any children aged 10-15 and, if so, attempt to interview one child (selected at random) in that age group.

While the questionnaire follows a similar structure to the adult survey it is shorter. Although this has averaged 15-20 minutes historically, the average length exceeded 25 minutes in 2019-20²⁰. The survey currently comprises five modules:



A brief summary of each module is shown below:

- a) **Background:** This is a very short introduction and contains basic questions about the CYP's age, gender and school year
- b) **Crime Screener:** This follows the same broad structure as the adult screener but only covers a small number of personal crimes (theft, deliberate damage, violence and threat of violence)
- c) **Victim Form:** Again, this follows the same broad structure as the adult version, but is less detailed with each CYP only being asked to complete a maximum of three victim forms²¹

²⁰ Although the survey has historically averaged 15-20 minutes, this has increased in recent years with the average length of the 2019-2020 survey being 27 minutes overall, in part due to the development work that had been carried out in relation to cybercrime in earlier years. The average length for those aged 10 years old was 30 minutes, falling to 25 minutes for those aged 15 years of age.

²¹ In comparison, adults are asked to complete up to a maximum of six victim forms

- d) **Self-completion (cybercrime) module:** Whereas all the other modules are interviewer-administered, this module is completed by the CYP and covers four key areas (internet use/ online behaviour, bullying, school truancy, as well as drugs and drinking)
- e) **Demographics:** Once the laptop has been returned to the interviewer, the CYP is asked to complete one final (brief) module about their health and well-being, nationality and religion

Therefore, four of the five modules are interviewer-administered, with the cybercrime module self-administered by the child. However, while the child is conducting the self-completion, the interviewer is in close proximity to ensure they are able to answer any queries from the participant.

5.2 Content Review – Self Completion Module

It was agreed that the self-completion (cybercrime) module of the current 10-15 years old survey would be evaluated as part of the depth interviews with CYP so that we could observe how they approached the survey and note if there were any problems related to cognition or usability.

Although the original proposal indicated a full review of the existing 10–15-year-olds questionnaire, it was ultimately agreed that the depth interviews should focus purely on the existing self-completion (cybercrime) module.

One of the key reasons for this was that the instrument had recently been reviewed as part of the development of the 2022-23 survey instrument and therefore it was anticipated that limited (additional) development would be needed to move the instrument from a self-administered CAPI survey to a CAWI survey. The other reason for focussing on this element was that the survey was already in a self-completion mode. As such, it was considered more realistic to focus solely on this module given the timescales involved on the project. In comparison, a significant amount of work would have been required to adapt the other sections to work in a self-completion format.

Once the self-completion module had been updated for the full 2022-23 survey, there was an additional review stage to ensure the survey was suitable for online self-completion administration as part of the depth interviews.

In reality, this development stage was relatively brief given the existing self-completion focus of the bulk of the module, so this primarily involved adjusting the start and end of the module to reflect the lack of involvement of the in-home interviewer in the overall process. With this in mind, the explanations normally provided by the interviewer at the beginning and end of the module were adjusted so that they would instead be read directly by the respondent. These included:

- How to navigate through the survey
- Confirmation that the CYP could skip any question should they want to by answering 'don't know' or 'prefer not to say'
- Confirmation that the information would be treated as confidential
- Confirmation of the risk rating process

While this was a relatively straight forward (and necessary) task, migrating these interviewer-administered introductions to respondent-centred introductions had a notable impact on setting up expectations of the survey process, particularly in relation to the comprehension of the risk rating process. This is discussed in more detail in Chapter 10.

Furthermore, the broadening of the age range from 10-15 to 9-17 highlighted areas within the script that would need to be addressed to ensure it remained age appropriate across the whole age range, if a decision is made to widen the age eligibility. This was a particular issue for younger participants aged 9 and 10 years²² in terms of their comprehension and the suitability of certain questions, but there were also some areas where adjustment would need to be considered for those aged 16-17 years as well. This is discussed in more detail in Chapter 9.

5.3 Implications for the remainder of the 10–15-year-old survey

It is also important to highlight that the depth interviews focused on what was considered to be the most straight-forward module, in terms of the potential transition to an online (CAWI) approach in the future. The self-completion module, by its very definition, is already intended to be completed with minimal external support, save for the introductory and end screens that book-end the module.

All other modules in the children's survey are currently administered by the interviewer and while these are relatively short, they would still need further development work to ensure they are suitable for online self-administration should the decision to move online ultimately be confirmed.

Should ONS subsequently look to move the instrument online then the screener section and the victim form in particular would need significant development work. However, we acknowledge that much of this should be informed by the Transformation Work Package A research that has been running in parallel with Transformation Work Package B in recent months²³.

²² Although 10-year-olds are already included in the core age range, the testing highlighted that many introductions and questions were not well understood by this cohort, not just those aged 9 years of age

²³ See Work package A report: <https://kantarpublish.com/articles/transforming-the-crime-survey-for-england-and-wales>

6. Qualitative evaluation – depth interviews methodology

6.1 Introduction

Interviews took place across three consecutive Saturdays (12th March 2022, 19th March 2022 and 26th March 2022) in London (two sessions) and Manchester (one session).

We aimed to interview 20 children aged 9-17 and one of their parents, but in fact we achieved 22 overall²⁴. Recruitment quotas were placed on gender, age, ethnicity and whether the child had a special education need (SEND) to ensure a good spread by important groups of interest identified by ONS.

Recruitment was carried out by an external agency.

Quota	Target (20)	Achieved (22)
Gender		
Male	8-12	10
Female	8-12	12
Age		
9	3-4	4 ²⁵
10-11	4-5	4
12-13	4-5	5
14-15	4-5	5
16-17	3-4	4
Ethnicity		
White	8-12	12
Mixed/ multiple ethnic groups	1-3	3
Asian/ Asian British	1-3	2
Black/ African/ Caribbean/ Black British	1-3	4
Arab/ other ethnic group	1-3	1
SEND		
Diagnosed/undiagnosed SEN or learning difficulty (such as dyslexia, dyscalculia, ADHD, speech and language need, ASD)	5+	6

²⁴ Recruitment assumed a small number of 'drop-outs' on each fieldwork day, but in the event, there were very few

²⁵ One of the children was due to turn 9 a day or two after the completion of the interview.

6.2 Methodology

Interviews were conducted in parallel, with one researcher interviewing the parent and another interviewing the child, with a brief review of the joint findings taking place between the two researchers after each completed interview 'pair'. To facilitate recruitment and as a thank you for their time, parents were given a payment of £60 and CYP were given either £30 or £40 depending on their age.

Both interviews were scheduled for an hour, with probe guides used to guide the interviews. The probe guides were structured in broadly the same way, although there was a greater emphasis on the survey instrument itself among the 9–17-year-olds than with the parents.

In the sections below, we provide a summary of the structure of both probe guides and an outline of the respondent-facing materials included in the review. The full probe guides are included in Appendix B and all materials are included in Appendix C.

6.3 CYP Probe Guide

Following an introduction to the research objectives and a brief warm up to help the participant feel comfortable with the overall process, the guide covered four key areas:

- a. A review of the pre-survey communication materials to explore whether the information provided was suitable and age-appropriate and to understand their initial thoughts as to whether they would feel comfortable and able to complete the survey independently online.
- b. The CYP then completed the self-completion survey online with the researcher observing. This allowed the researcher to explore whether the initial communications set up an accurate expectation of the survey, the CYP's reactions to their experience of carrying out the survey online, and to test usability of the survey instrument. While cognitive testing of the survey questions was not a primary focus, in practice we did find some problems with interpretation of some of the questions and this was explored further with the CYP where relevant.
- c. A review of the risk score leaflet and letters, both in terms of their comprehension of the information and how the provision of such a rating might impact their willingness to complete the survey in a 'real-life' setting.
- d. A final brief section exploring other issues such as thoughts on their siblings participating (where relevant), any potential data security concerns and the survey name.

6.4 Parental Probe Guide

Again, following an introduction of the objectives of the research and a brief warm up, the probe guide covered four key areas:

- a. A review of the pre-survey communication materials to explore whether the information provided was sufficient for the parents to feel comfortable about giving consent for their child to participate independently in the online survey in a 'real-life' setting.

- b. A review of the risk rating leaflet and letters and how the provision of such a rating might impact on how they felt about their child completing the survey (both in general and with a specific focus on their child completing the online survey independently and in private).
- c. A review of the survey questions to explore whether the initial communications set up an accurate expectation of the survey and to explore their reaction to the survey content as a parent. As part of this section there was again a particular focus on how parents felt about their child completing the online survey independently and in private.
- d. A final brief section explored thoughts on multiple children in the household participating (where relevant), potential data security concerns, and thoughts on the survey name.

6.5 Pre-survey materials

It is important to note that in the current in-home survey, the 10–15-year-old screening process and the survey itself are conducted *after* the completion of the adult face-to-face CSEW interview. Parents and guardians are asked to give their consent (provided in person) and, assuming this is given, the 10–15-year-old themselves is subsequently asked to give their consent (again, in person), before the survey can be started.

This means that in the current in-home survey, in the majority of cases the parent would have at least some prior knowledge of the Crime Survey and its contents before the interviewer obtained their consent for the 10–15-year-old to participate, as the parent would often have taken part in the adult version of the survey by this point. It should be noted however that the adult respondent of the main Crime Survey can be someone other than the CYP's parent or guardian, for example an adult sibling or another adult in the household. However, even where this is the case, the parent might have been involved in the initial selection interview or would have had the opportunity to read the initial introductory letter and leaflets when they arrived. Therefore, it is likely that in the in-home setting, the parents would have had some kind of active involvement which would help prime them to understand the context of the survey.

While the depth interview participants were provided with some information about the survey at the recruitment stage, their recruitment process was very different compared to the approach normally taken in the face-to-face survey²⁶ and therefore their introduction to the Crime Survey had to be adapted to suit the specific format of the depth interviews.

Due to the artificial nature of the depth interviews we were not able to fully replicate obtaining parental consent in the traditional way via the adult survey, or the lead up to the discussions around the young person's participation, but parents and children were shown the existing CSEW materials where relevant (these are provided in Appendix C):

- a. **CSEW Parental Information Card** – the 2022-23 version of the card was used, although adapted to cover the wider age range of 9-17

²⁶ That is to say, an initial receipt of an advance letter and accompanying leaflets prior to being contacted by the interviewer, followed by the in-home random selection of an adult to participate and subsequent random selection of a child aged 10-15 to participate

- b. **CSEW Youth Survey Leaflets** – again, the 2022-23 versions of the leaflets were used, with the only edit being a revision of the age ranges. As such, the age 10-12 leaflet was shown to the 9–12-year-olds, and the age 13-15 leaflet was shown to the 13–17-year-olds.

However, given the artificial nature of the approach and the fact we could not truly replicate the lead up to the discussions around the young person’s participation as would happen in a real-life scenario, we also showed the parent and the child an introductory letter providing some initial information on the survey. These were broadly designed to mimic a survey invitation letter to an online survey.

There were four versions of the letter:

- i) Introductory letter for parent of CYP aged 9-12
- ii) Introductory letter for parent of CYP aged 13+
- iii) Introductory letter for CYP aged 9-12
- iv) Introductory letter for CYP aged 13+

The letters were modified versions of those used on existing online surveys with CYP, although in a real-life push-to-web survey the parents of under 13s would need to provide an additional formal level of consent for their younger children to take part in the survey (see section 4.2.2)²⁷.

The letters also helped prompt discussion as to how participants would *expect* to receive the survey link and explore reactions to potentially receiving the survey invite via a letter or by email (see section 7.2).

6.6 Risk Rating materials

Although the risk rating is mentioned in the Parental Information Card and the Youth Survey leaflet the risk rating letters and accompanying leaflets were not shown to the CYP until after they had completed the survey to mirror the current in-home interview process.

At this point, participants were shown the risk rating leaflet and all of the example letters (low, medium or high-risk²⁸). All of these were again based on the 2022-23 templates, with the only difference between the letters being the risk classification and the paragraph that accompanied this. The risk classification was also colour coded for the CYP, depending on the level of risk that had been calculated (green for low, amber for medium and red for high-risk).

The parents were also shown modified versions of the parental risk rating leaflet and accompanying letters (low, medium or high-risk), but unlike the CYP versions of the letters these were not colour coded. Again, these were based on the 2022-23 versions of

²⁷ Again, we need to note the artificial nature of the CYP recruitment from the existing CSEW and the fact we were not able to fully replicate the usual process. Parental consent is collected face-to-face at present, and it is assumed this would be retained even if the 10–15-year-old survey migrated online. As such the two-stage consent mechanism would not be necessary in this scenario.

²⁸ A fourth letter was also shown (where no rating was possible), but this was not discussed in detail.

materials. The risk rating materials for the CYP and their parents used in the depth interviews are included in Appendix C.

7. Communication Materials

7.1 Overview

This chapter explores how young people initially reacted to the introductory letters and advance leaflets before breaking the analysis down to examine differences by age group.

Given the expansion of the age range from 10-15 years of age to 9-17 years of age, we have divided analysis into three key groups – 9-10s, 11-15s²⁹ and 16-17s.

While the age range in the current in-home survey is 10–15-year-olds, the feedback from the children (and their parents) indicated it was more appropriate to look at the 9- and 10-year-olds collectively, rather than looking at 9 year olds separately from their 10 year old peers, as the issues tended to be similar in this primary-school age bracket.

7.2 Young person's introductory letters and leaflets

The introductory letter's call to action ("we need your help!") was seen as a strong motivator for most, as was the suggestion of an incentive.

Young people were surprised at the potential to receive their own letter in the post inviting them to participate in a survey, although one or two acknowledged they would be unlikely to read this. Parents generally expected that they (the parent) would be more likely to read the invitation if it came in the post, but their child would be more likely to read an invitation sent to them via email. MRS guidelines require that all correspondence to young people aged under 16 should be channelled through a parent or guardian. However, if parental consent is collected at the end of an in-home interview, then it would be possible to send the letter directly to the CYP.

The Youth Survey leaflets were regarded more positively, due to the combination of pictures, colour and reduced formality than the letter. Again, the call to action was mentioned positively as it made the younger participants in particular feel special, while the help/contact information was also regarded positively. The participants were also reassured by confirmation that the survey was not mandatory and that they could similarly choose not to answer specific questions if they didn't want to.

However, researchers noted problems around inaccessible language in both the letters and the leaflets, and while this was heightened among 9–10-year-olds, it was also cited as an issue among those aged 11-15.

²⁹ While quotas were set for 10-11s, all children recruited to this quota were aged 10. Although we didn't interview any 11-year-olds, we have assumed that the findings would be broadly equivalent to 12-years olds.

Whilst the Youth Survey leaflet included a paragraph emphasising the purpose of the survey this was not perceived to be sufficiently clear or compelling, with some CYP in secondary school recommending the inclusion of a summary paragraph to help improve understanding and increase potential participation.

While the reference to the risk rating was not actively acknowledged by many participants at this stage, the reaction for those who did mention it was mostly negative, with a range of concerns raised in relation to this. This is discussed in more detail in Chapter 10.

Furthermore, additional confirmation around how the survey could be accessed would be needed should the survey ultimately move online³⁰.

7.2.1 9–10-year-olds

While the younger participants (9–10-year-olds) made an effort to read the letter within the context of the depth interview., the over-riding impression was that in reality this would not be read in detail and that the parent would need to take the lead in explaining this. The Youth Survey leaflet was more engaging and while the level of understanding for the Youth Survey leaflet was better, the majority of this cohort acknowledged that they did not understand much of the content of the letter. Furthermore, participants voluntarily mentioned the potential need to discuss with their parents to confirm their overall understanding was correct or *“just in case it’s a scam or anything.”* (female, 9, White British)

As an example, some words or phrases which were not understood by 9-year-olds included ‘on behalf of’, ‘statistics’, ‘consent’, ‘accompanying’ and ‘immediately’. Importantly, one 9-year-old had never heard of the term ‘survey’ before which instantly created a barrier to understanding what their participation involved. Comprehension issues were less noticeable among 10-year-olds at this stage, but there were some instances noted, for example, one 10-year-old was uncertain what was meant by ‘confidential’.

Despite the general comprehension concerns, the website and phone numbers were regarded as helpful, with Childline being the most recognised organisation across this age group (in part due to an out-reach programme to various schools).

While participants liked the idea of an incentive, the specific format of the current CSEW incentive (Love2Shop gift card or e-voucher) was unfamiliar to younger participants and, in reality, they would expect the incentive to go to their parent in the first instance. We found that e-vouchers were less of a draw for younger respondents, many of whom did not manage their own money or shop online.

³⁰ Given the initial focus of the research on the potential switch to online, the practicalities around the survey link and how this could be accessed in reality was not a key focus of the research but would clearly need to be explored in more detail should a decision be made to move the survey online in the future.

7.2.2 11–15-year-olds

Overall, the letter was considered clear and easy to read (“*It was easy to read. I would be fine reading it by myself*” (female, 14, White British)), although it wasn’t considered particularly engaging for participants in this age group, who were also more positive in relation to the Youth Survey leaflet.

These slightly older participants were also more likely to focus on how they might receive the link than those aged 9-10 years, although there was no clear consensus on a preferred approach for this.

As with younger children who also mentioned scams, there was some concern that receiving the link in an email could lead to issues around the legitimacy and validity of the link. While there was an acknowledgment that a letter may seem more legitimate, there was also recognition that a letter may not always be opened and read. Overall, there was a sense that receiving the survey information in an email and letter (potentially including a QR code) would be the best approach overall to allow participants to access the survey.

The incentive was seen as positive for most, even if the value was seen as too low by one or two, but again there was a lack of familiarity with the current gift card provider (Love2Shop).

For those who picked up on the reference to the risk rating, it wasn’t always clear if the survey was a personal exercise to help educate them on how to avoid online crime, as opposed to a survey looking to understand crime levels more generally. This indicates that, even for this older cohort, there were some issues relating to general comprehension of the messaging.

7.2.3 16–17-year-olds

Those aged 16-17 registered no real concerns about the language used in the introductory letter (“*Clarity is good*” (male, 17, Black British)) or the Youth Survey leaflet, with the £5 incentive again cited as a positive by most participants in this age range.

However, it was noticeable that this cohort tended to scan the contents of the materials more quickly than younger participants and it was not always clear whether all of them had fully read and understood the content when probed on this. This was further reinforced when exploring the risk rating in more detail later in the depth interview when it became clear that many had not completely understood this process at the outset (See Chapter 10 for more details).

In addition, the potential name of the survey used in the letter (“Children’s survey”) was not always considered appropriate among older audiences, with one or two considering the name to be “*a little bit condescending*” (male, 17, Black British).

7.3 Parent’s introductory letters and leaflets

Initially the combination of the introductory letter and the Parental Information Card was well-received by most parents.

However, the 'call to action' felt muted for some who felt that more could have been done to encourage participation and reassure CYP as to the purpose of the survey. It is important to say that this was based on the information in the Parental Information Card, but this echoes with some of the feedback received from the CYP in relation to the Youth Survey leaflets themselves.

Further investigation indicated that the Parental Information Card did not always provide sufficient clarity and granularity as to the key topic areas. While the topic area summary is sufficient for most parents, some would be keen to know more about the specific questions asked in these areas.

There was significant resistance from one of the parents interviewed, which was strong enough to lead one of them to say that they wouldn't agree to their child completing the survey in a real-life situation³¹. Another expected to supervise their child in case they needed to terminate the interview at any stage (*"I could say 'no', that's not what we signed up for"* Parent of participant, Female, 9, White British).

While there was no consensus as to whether the parents would want to receive the information by email or by post, there was acknowledgement that emails could get lost in the parent's in-box or go into their junk mail folders without being read; receiving a permission for consent link purely via email would also create concerns around suspicious emails for some.

It was noticeable how few parents of children made reference to the risk rating status in the Parental Information Card. While there was a paragraph included on this, an emergent theme was for parents to subsequently re-read the Parental Information Card once they had reviewed the risk rating documents to check whether this had indeed been mentioned earlier in the overall process.

Furthermore, the risk rating element was not always perceived positively by those who did pick up on it at this stage, with concerns around the potential implication of the risk rating itself and whether this was something they would want to know. Parents also questioned whether the presence of the risk rating would inhibit honesty from their children, particularly those with children aged 16-17. The implications of these issues are discussed in more detail in Chapters 10 and 11.

7.3.1 Parents of 9–10-year-olds

Parents were reassured that the questions relating to sexual messages would not be asked of those aged 9-12 years of age and were similarly reassured that the survey was voluntary and that questions could be skipped if the child wished, but further information around why the child had been selected would have been helpful for some parents³².

However, there was a feeling from the outset among parents of this age group that they would expect to be involved in the completion of the survey if the survey was online (*"I will*

³¹ Parent of 15-year-old, male, white British, SEN

³² Again, while this was discussed with the participants, the lack of understanding was to some extent linked to the artificial nature of the recruitment for the depth interviews

have the power to monitor everything" (Parent of 9-year-old female, Chinese)). This was driven by a number of factors:

- There was a concern around the child's comprehension ability (and willingness) to read the questions in full before answering at this young age. In effect, the parents were concerned that without their involvement the youngest children interviewed would not be able to answer the questions adequately.
- Parents were also keen to understand the type of questions their child could be asked, to reassure themselves as to the scope of the survey. While the Parental Information Card gives a brief overview of the key topics and themes, this was insufficient for some parents who wanted more granularity and clarity as to the questions that would be asked. In one case, this extended to an assumption that they would be able to access the online script themselves prior to their child's completion, to understand the full scale of the endeavour and ultimately determine whether the child could (and should) complete the survey on their own or whether they (the parent) will need to be on-hand throughout.
- While less pronounced than other concerns, some parents were also concerned that their child may be asked to share sensitive information that the parent may not wish them to provide. Parents cited concerns that questions might relate to personal information, such as household income and details of their property. In reality, such questions would be asked in the adult survey, rather than asked of the child³³.

The ability to check the Crime Survey website and / or call the Crime Survey helpline was regarded positively. Given that the existing 10–15-year-old survey questionnaire is available for parents and young people to review on the Crime Survey website, a similar approach for an online child crime survey could offer a solution to help alleviate concerns around the types of questions that would be asked and help negate any potential concerns that overly sensitive information may be included.

7.3.2 Parents of 11–15-year-olds

Parents of this cohort echoed the concerns raised by their children that the call to action should be strengthened to help maximise participation. As part of this, a few parents felt that reinforcing the message that there were no right or wrong answers and that the information was being used purely for research purposes would be beneficial. However, it is also important to highlight that the lack of familiarity with the ONS was a barrier for some, leading to concerns as to the legitimacy of the research and how the information might subsequently be used.

While initial concerns echoed those raised by parents of 9–10-year-olds, some parents felt they would need to be involved to ensure their children were sufficiently honest in their responses. One parent cited their child's responses to the alcohol and drug questions, while another expected their child to complete as quickly as possible unless they were

³³ While this is again linked to the artificial nature of the recruitment process compared to the current CSEW, it is important to remember that even in the current face-to-face interview, the parent may not be the adult surveyed in the household. Similarly, having been asked for this information themselves, they might feel similar questions could be included in the 10–15-year olds' survey.

supervised. However, other parents recognised that allowing their child to complete on their own would be the best way to get honest responses.

It is important to flag that the parental perceptions might not necessarily be a true reflection of their child's willingness to be honest in the survey. However, a potential consequence of a parent's involvement to 'help' with the interview process could ultimately be a reduction in the quality of the data collected, with the CYP's responses influenced by the presence of their parent. This is discussed in more detail in Chapter 8.

Alongside this, there were concerns that some the question areas may be too upsetting or triggering for their child. For some parents it was due to their uncertainty as to what might be included in the survey, rather than a concern about a specific question, but online bullying and sexual messages were cited by one parent in this regard as they could be a trigger where children have experienced this in the past:

"As a mother...you say to your kid 'could you just do this for me' but you have no idea what that could lead to" (Parent participant, Female, 14, Asian British)

7.3.3 Parents of 16–17-year-olds

While the level of information in pre-survey communications was felt to be thorough and addressed their initial questions, some of the concerns raised by parents of 11–15-year-olds were amplified by parents of 16–17-year-olds, with heightened concerns around whether their child would be wholly honest when answering the survey. This was linked to a sense that older teenagers were likely to be more protective of their personal lives and how much they were willing to share on specific topics.

However, there were again doubts from some parents as to whether their child would be sufficiently engaged with the process and thereby might look to complete as quickly as possible,

8. Device choice and age suitability

8.1 Device choice and accessing the survey

Most of the children expected to complete the survey at home via a laptop or a smartphone, with the propensity to prefer smartphone completion increasing by age.

The ability to complete on a smartphone was also seen by some of the 16–17-year-old participants as a way of increasing their privacy to ensure their answers were not seen by parents or siblings.

Participants were keen to have the ability to access the survey via a standard survey link that they can type in, and/or by QR codes, although experience of the latter was mixed; some were very used to QR codes while others felt they could be glitchy.

Thinking specifically about the use of QR codes instead of the survey link, a few participants from the younger to mid-level ages were concerned about being a victim of fraud or a scam when trying to potentially access the survey. One participant preferred to see the address of the survey link to avoid being scammed.

“I don’t trust QR codes, don’t know where they are taking me” [Male, 15, White British]

In reality, increasing access to meet the needs of a diverse range of children would mean giving young people the choice over how they access the survey, for example including both the survey link and the QR code in the introductory letter.

A summary of the findings by each age range is again shown below.

8.1.1 9–10-year-old participants

Most younger participants (9-10s) said that they would use a laptop, or a computer situated in a communal area of the family home. The 9-year-olds, in particular, highlighted they preferred this because they expected that they would need help from an adult to complete the survey.

This is linked more to the participants’ concerns around their understanding of the survey questions, rather than being linked to difficulties navigating the survey; this is discussed in more detail in the next section (Section 8.2).

For all of these participants the default expectation is that any help they receive would come from their parent, rather than another adult in the household, not least because they would expect their parent to provide consent to complete the survey in the first place.

Among this younger age group, there is limited evidence that the CYP would be concerned about their parent seeing their responses, although it is acknowledged that few expect they will need support for every question, even though this subsequently proved to be the case in some instances. One or two explicitly said they would be happy for their parents to see their responses, while one CYP perceived that their answers would be 'better' with their parent's help as parents would help them to correctly interpret the questions to ensure their responses are more accurate.

It is also important to highlight that this expectation mirrors the initial assumption of the parent; where the participant is 9-10 years of age, both child and parent expect that the child will need at least some help to complete the survey and, as noted later, support may in fact be a necessity for 9–10-year-olds.

Having said this, one younger participant who had special educational needs (SEN) cited a strong preference to complete the survey face-to-face in an interview setting as they had difficulty concentrating and focusing on tasks and felt they would need support.

"I would definitely want to complete the survey with someone like this (in the room with a moderator)" [Male, 10, Mixed Race]

However, despite this, the participant was subsequently able to navigate their way through the survey on a laptop.

Again, this reinforces the potential risks associated with some participants being asked to complete the survey independently. More detail on the response from SEN participants is covered in Section 8.2.1 below.

8.1.2 11–15-year-old participants

The majority in this age range also expected to complete the survey on a laptop at home in a communal area, although some (predominantly those aged 14-15 years of age) expected to complete it in private (in their bedroom), again either on a laptop or on their phone. While some of those expecting to use a laptop in a communal area confirmed they would use their own device, this was not always clear from the participant's feedback.

Propensity to want to complete privately is in part determined by the young person's expectations as to whether they would be able to complete the survey without support. Those who perceived they will need at least some help recognised that completion on a communally located laptop would facilitate this. Again, this is discussed in more detail in Chapter 9.

8.1.3 16–17-year-old participants

Perhaps not surprisingly, the older cohort all expected to complete on their own, on a laptop, a tablet or more likely on their phone.

The majority expected to complete the survey at home, although for some there was an assumption that they would be able to complete while 'on the go', for example on a bus or while waiting for friends.

For those completing at home there is an expectation they would look to complete in private so that the rest of the family couldn't see their answers while they are completing the survey.

8.2 Accessibility

As outlined in Section 3.3.3 a key potential disadvantage of a purely online approach is reduced accessibility as respondents need to have the requisite literacy skills to complete the survey. This was reinforced in the interviews, with many younger children, and particularly those aged 9-10 years, stating that they would need their parents help to complete the survey. However, even among secondary school age children (11+³⁴), there was a recognition that they might need at least some help from a parent to complete the survey.

In the current (interviewer-administered) survey, any queries about the survey can be addressed to the interviewer who is trained to answer in a consistent, neutral manner to negate any risk of bias. If the assumption is that the survey should be solely completed by the CYP then the survey will likely need to be simplified to offset the interviewer's absence. Moving the survey to an online model as it currently stands risks creating an excessive cognitive burden for the CYP and exacerbates the risk of parental influence, both in terms of them explaining or paraphrasing the questions and in the response that is subsequently recorded. While our feedback is based solely on the cybercrime module, we need to acknowledge that the full survey could be much longer, particularly where participants report one or more incidents of crime in the crime screener.

Feedback from parents reinforces the expectation that they would need to be involved, and especially so in the case of the youngest participants. The idea that 9–10-year-olds might be asked to complete the survey on their own may lead to reservations from parents and children alike and potentially reduce the overall likelihood of participation. Adjustments to the advance materials to further reassure both the child and the parent can help to alleviate this to some extent (see section 7.2 and section 7.3), but in reality, the survey instrument would also need to be modified to improve comprehension from the outset.

At present the survey is not accessible to 9-year-olds without adult support (either from a parent or interviewer). The survey can be made more age-appropriate, although this would necessitate major re-development of the survey questionnaire. Without these adjustments, there is a risk that the survey could inadvertently transform into a proxy interview, creating issues relating to parental influence and social desirability bias.

However, even with a re-development of the survey instrument there is a concern as to how far this would need to be simplified to meet the needs of the youngest participants, given the degree of support observed in the depth interviews. As mentioned in Chapter 3, surveys are already asked of very young children, but these are heavily modified to

³⁴ While quotas were set for 10-11s, all children recruited to this quota were aged 10. Although we didn't interview any 11-year-olds, we have assumed that the findings would be broadly equivalent to 12-years-olds.

simplify the survey relative to the questions asked of their older peers. As such there is a legitimate question as to whether or not this cohort should be included in the survey.

Accessibility among 10-year-olds was more mixed, with some participants completing the module without issue, while others of the same age had issues with both comprehension and fatigue. Although 10-year-olds are included in the current interviewer-administered approach there is therefore a concern that their comprehension and engagement with an online survey instrument may diminish in the absence of interviewer support and encouragement unless the survey is made more age-appropriate.

8.2.1 Accessibility for SEN participants

Across the depth interviews, 5 participants were recruited with special education needs (SEN) or learning difficulties; two children aged 9-10 years, with the others aged 12, 15 and 16 years.

Broadly speaking, the feedback from these participants was strongly linked to their age, with the advance materials and the survey instrument proving inaccessible for the youngest participant, and no real concerns raised by the two older participants who completed the survey without issue.

The 10- and 12-year-olds with a SEN were able to read the advance materials and complete the survey without any real problems, but acknowledged at the outset they would prefer to have someone with them when completing, in case something 'unsafe' came up in the survey (12-year-old with SEN).

Parental feedback was broadly consistent with those of their children, with parents of the 9–12-year-olds with a SEN expecting to be on hand to help their child through the survey, although the parent of the 15-year-old said they would not want their child to participate in the survey in a real-world situation.

8.3 Presence of others during the current 10-15 interview

A number of the objectives of this project relate to the need to ensure privacy for the participant when completing the survey (objective iv), while also investigating the extent to which the parents could or should be involved and where their involvement should be minimised (objective vi).

Based on the current interviewer-administered 10-15 year olds' survey, it is important to note that during the most recent CSEW survey year where data is available (2019-20³⁵) only 19% of 10-15s surveyed were interviewed with just the interviewer present (that is to say, without a parent or other family member in attendance), falling to just 10% for children aged 10 and 13-14% for children aged 11 and 12.

³⁵ The 2019-20 Technical report is available here: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/file?uri=/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/methodologies/crimeandjusticemethodology/201920csewtechnicalreportvolume1.pdf>

In contrast, 10% of the interviews were conducted with another child from the household present, but more significantly, 78% of the interviews were conducted with a parent or guardian present, rising to 89% for children aged 10 and 82-84% for children aged 11 and 12.

It is reasonable to assume that any queries that the child had, or any elaborations on the wording of a specific question, were directed at the interviewer, rather than the parent. However, the close proximity of the parent in the current in-home setting amplifies the potential challenges of trying to ensure that the child interview is conducted in private (to encourage honest responses). This also raises notable safeguarding issues, given the possibility that the child might be reporting on incidents perpetrated by someone in the household.

The Parental Information Card and the Youth Survey leaflets both lead to an expectation that the parent might need to be involved, particularly in the case of younger participants. This is discussed in more detail in the next section.

8.3.1 Potential risk of excess parental support

Even where comprehension is not an issue, several parents highlighted a desire to be involved to be reassured that the survey questions were not overly sensitive or to ensure their child completed the survey correctly (being honest in their responses).

Improvements to the Parental Information Card should hopefully mitigate concerns as to the inclusion of overly sensitive questions but migrating to an online approach could still increase the potential risk of 'excess' parental involvement, impacting on the privacy of the CYP and reducing the quality of the data collected.

A parallel project (Transformation A) which included a live trial of an online version of the adult survey provided an opportunity to include some questions which were asked of parents about their views of their children taking part in a child crime survey. The findings of Transformation Work Package A further highlight the potential appetite for parental involvement should the survey migrate to online. While this is briefly covered below, more detail on this parallel work is included in Appendix D.

Transformation Work Package A initially asked parents if they would be happy for their child aged 9-17 to take part in an online survey 'about children's experiences of crime and negative experiences online' and if so, whether they would be happy for them to complete the survey in private, whether they would want to be on hand to help if needed, or whether they would want to supervise their child's responses. Where parents had more than one child in this age range, they were asked to think of their youngest child in the age range when answering.

While these findings are useful as a guide to parental involvement, it should be noted that they are not fully representative of what would happen in reality as parents did not have all the information and reassurances that would be available to parents in a real-life setting.

A summary of the weighted findings is shown below:

	Total (659) %	Age of youngest child within range:		
		Child aged 9- 10 years (203) %	Child aged 11-15 years (328) %	Child aged 16-17 years (128) %
Happy for child to take part and for them to complete the survey in private	28	15	26	54
Happy for child to take part, but would want to be on hand if needed	36	37	39	24
Happy for child to take part, but would want to supervise their responses	12	23	8	8
I would not be happy for them to take part in this survey	24	25	27	15

Among parents of 16–17-year-olds, over half of the parents questioned (54%) said they would be happy for their child to complete the survey in private, with a further 24% saying they would want to be on hand to help if needed. For the latter, the assumption is that the child would be able to answer in private unless there is need for support on a specific question.

At the other end of the age range, only 15% of parents with children aged 9-10 years of age would expect them to complete in private, with a further 37% saying they would want to be on hand to help if needed. By comparison, the figures for parents with children aged 11-15 years of age are 26% and 39%, respectively.

However, a minority of parents expect that they will supervise their child’s responses throughout, even among parents of 16–17-year-olds.

Among the oldest cohort, 8% of parents said they would want to supervise their child’s responses, with a similar percentage among parents of those aged 11-15 (8%) and 23% for those aged 9-10.

As noted in section 7.2.1, the depth interviews indicate that there are concerns from 9–10-year-olds that they would need supervising throughout the survey, though there is more limited evidence of this among children aged 11-15 or aged 16-17. However, the Transformation A live trial findings suggest that a minority of parents would feel this is necessary, regardless of the child’s age.

Emphasising that the child should complete the survey independently risks creating concerns for parents and CYP alike. While there may be an obvious benefit in the participant completing the survey in private, an online survey setting cannot guarantee this.

If the survey were to move online, it would be useful to add a question at the end of each module to ascertain the level of involvement from the parents to understand just how much support the child has received at each stage. This is similar to the question currently asked at the end of the adult self-completion modules confirming how much support the participant has required from the interviewer.

Alongside this, a significant minority (24%) of parents said they would not give their consent for their child's involvement, ranging from 15% for parents with children aged 16-17 and 25-27% for those with children 9-15 years of age.

While not directly comparable, a review of the 2019-20 in-home data indicated that 16% of parents did not give their consent for their child's involvement when initially asked with little variation across the 10-15 age range.

This suggests that there could be more objection to an online survey compared with the current in-home survey, but this does need to be caveated. In the current in-home survey, the parent bases their decision on much more information (fieldwork materials, interviewer explaining the survey) whereas in the live trial none of this information was provided. It is therefore reasonable to assume that the percentage who said they would object is an over-estimate.

8.4 Audio CASI and the ability to pause completion

While the audio-CASI³⁶ option was discussed, this was not fully understood by all participants with some feeling that this might end up being more of a distraction than a benefit; however, this could be overcome by improving CYP understanding as to how this would work at the outset of the cybercrime module.

While the audio feature was mentioned as a potential positive for some of the youngest participants (9–10-year-olds), the broader comprehension issues led to concerns that this would not improve the accessibility of the survey unless question wording was also made more age-appropriate for this cohort. One participant perceived they would be able to ask the audio to explain the meaning of questions and ask for definitions (similar to Siri). Some participants pointed out that, although they personally wouldn't use an audio feature, they understood that it could benefit some who would otherwise struggle to read the questions. However, moving the survey online increases the likelihood that the CYP would look to involve their parent. Even where the audio feature was commented on positively, some CYP said they would still prefer to complete with a parent.

³⁶ The audio CASI option allows participants to plug in a set of headphones to the laptop for the self-completion (cyber-crime) module. As such, the questions can be read to the participant, so that they do not need to read the questions themselves. However, they will still need to answer the survey via the keyboard. The purpose of audio-CASI is to increase accessibility for those with more limited literacy skills.

The most recently available Child Crime survey data (2019-2020) indicates that 15% of 10–15-year-olds used the audio CASI throughout the module, with very little difference by age. A further 4-5% used it for at least some questions, with again very little recorded difference by age, highlighting that there remains a role for this facility.

Reinforcing the availability and benefits of this feature in the communication could be beneficial for those who have difficulty reading, but this will not help overcome basic comprehension issues for those who do not understand what they are being asked.

The feature to stop and come back to the survey was seen as potentially useful, especially if the survey was felt to be overly long, but participants also highlighted how the ability to 'pause' the survey in this way could increase the potential for them to leave the survey incomplete.

9. Survey Review

9.1 Overview

As part of the depth interview, young people were asked to complete the cybercrime module of the child survey and the researcher observed the interview to check for cognition and usability issues. It should be noted that we did not conduct a full cognitive interview as this was not a primary focus of this project, although we were able to pick up some general themes relating to comprehension and navigation of the survey questionnaire.

The general feedback to the survey module was positive, but there were some survey questions that proved more difficult than others, and the interviews highlighted a number of areas that would need to be considered prior to any transition to online administration.

However, the review of the self-completion module by the younger participants reinforced the earlier concerns, raised by the young people and their parents to varying degrees, that some level of support would be needed for younger respondents based on the current content and wording of the child survey.

In the case of younger participants in the core age range (10–12-year-olds), this varied from having problems with a small number of questions through to a potential that the entire survey would be inaccessible without some external support.

Similarly, there are further concerns as to whether the survey should be extended downwards to those aged 9 years of age given the high level of support they required to understand the questions as currently worded, with the inaccessibility of the current survey most apparent among these youngest participants.

While accessibility issues were less consistent among 10-year-olds, these were still noted, indicating that even for 10-year-olds the instrument would benefit from modification to ensure it is age-appropriate and to help mitigate for the lack of interviewer support and encouragement should the survey subsequently migrate online.

A summary of the key issues is outlined below.

9.2 Questionnaire length

Many participants found the survey too long, especially for the younger participants (9–10-year-olds), although others within the existing CSEW age range aged 10-13 also commented on the length of the survey.

In these situations, participants showed visible signs of fatigue and queried how much longer the survey was likely to take, leaving them feeling a little overwhelmed. This in turn led to several participants acknowledging they would be unlikely to continue with the

survey in real life or that they would at the very least look to take a break before deciding whether or not to return.

In the current face-to-face survey, the interviewer would be on hand throughout and would be able to recognise the early signs of fatigue. They could then look to minimise this by suggesting a short break, or alternatively look to reassure the participant that they were close to the end (if the participant makes it clear where they are in the module). Similarly, they would be able to reassure the participant that once they had finished the self-completion module, there would only be a handful of demographic questions remaining before the survey was completed.

However, even if the participant accepted the suggestion of a short break, it would be with the expectation that the survey would be completed soon after this, that is to say, during the same visit. All completed 10–15-year olds' interviews in 2019-20 confirm that the survey was completed during one visit.

In comparison, the switch to online would create the potential risk that the participant would pause their completion and not return in the future, even if there were only a handful of questions left to complete overall.

At this point it is worth reiterating that participants were asked to complete just one of the five modules as part of this research programme. If we decided to replicate the full survey as it is in the main Crime Survey, it would be much longer for many participants depending on their experiences of crime. With this in mind, it is worth noting that the average interview length of the full 10–15-year olds' survey was 27 minutes in 2019-20, but the average among those who reported being a victim of crime was 39 minutes. Analysis of the 2019-20 data indicates that the self-completion cybercrime module accounted for 19 minutes on average although this was higher for the youngest respondents: 10-year-olds completing the self-completion module in 2019-20 took 21.5 minutes on average, whereas those aged 15 took 17.5 minutes on average.

The average length of the full interview (including all modules in the child survey) was 27 minutes, ranging from 30 minutes for 10-year-olds to 25 minutes for 15-year-olds, but it is important to remember that the remaining modules were interviewer-administered self-completion and it is possible that the variation by age would be increased if all five modules were self-completion.

Survey fatigue and complex, unfamiliar language used in the survey was a concern for most parents who reviewed the survey content for the age group of 9-15, but again this was seen to be most problematic for parents of children aged 9-10 years of age.

9.3 Comprehension

Again, this was primarily an issue for the younger participants (9–10-year-olds), with some problems also reported with those aged 11-15 years of age.

Comprehension issues often started with the initial introductory screens which were perceived to be too long and wordy, with even the practice questions being an issue for some who were unfamiliar with the concept of a survey. Similarly, while the 'staying safe online' tips included at the end were seen as helpful for some, these were lost on the

youngest participants who needed to have the information heavily paraphrased by the researcher to ensure some degree of understanding.

In the current interviewer-administered survey, the interviewer is able to support the participant to ensure that any comprehension issues are overcome in a consistent manner. Even where the participant is completing the cybercrime module, the interviewer would be available should they need clarification or additional explanation in relation to a particular question.

However, switching the current survey instrument online would be an issue for some given their level of overall comprehension, potentially leading to a reduction in the quality of the data being collected, either because the CYP has misunderstood the question, or because their response has been influenced by their parent.

There has been some previous discussion as to the potential need for age-tailored questionnaires to be available to allow the survey to be more age appropriate across the sampled age range (for example for those aged 10³⁷-12 years, 13-15 and potentially also 16-17).

While this would involve substantial development work, the varying levels of understanding across the age ranges suggest that this would be essential if the survey were to move from being interviewer-administered to online self-completion. Careful consideration would need to be given to such a change given the wider implications of this, but the depth interviews indicate that more needs to be done at present to reduce the cognitive burden on participants.

Having said this, there is a legitimate concern that even a modified survey would remain inaccessible for the 9-year-olds unless it was further simplified and streamlined given the degree of involvement required from the researchers throughout.

A number of factors impeded comprehension overall and these are explored in more detail below. As mentioned above, in the current interviewer-administered survey, any comprehension concerns can be addressed immediately by the interviewer to help alleviate any comprehension concerns as quickly as possible.

9.4 General issues relating to the questionnaire

Although it was not a primary focus to explore cognition and understanding of survey questions, some general issues did arise. While these issues are not explicitly linked to mode, we feel it is useful to raise these here as in an online context it is even more important that questions are simple, clear, relevant and engaging to limit survey satisficing behaviour and survey dropout, and to ensure accuracy of survey responses without extremal input.

9.4.1 Terminology that is outdated or unsuitable for the target audience

³⁷ This assumes that 9-year-olds are not included. If 9-year-olds are included then the following split could be considered: 9-10, 11-12, 13-15, 16-17

Some terminology in the survey could be regarded as out of date or not relevant for the target audience.

For example, 'instant messaging', 'social networking' and 'desktop computer' all feel a little outdated. In addition, some of the examples used were more adult focused (for example, Twitter and Facebook) whereas younger people cited greater use of social media sites such as Snapchat, Instagram and Tik Tok, and gaming sites such as Roblox. Furthermore, in the questions about drug use, the terminology relating to cannabis did not always map across to the wording used by young people themselves.

It is acknowledged that the online landscape and terminology used by young people changes rapidly over time, emphasising the importance of regularly reviewing the survey content to ensure it remains up to date and relevant.

While these types of issues were more likely to be mentioned by those aged 12 or above, some issues were also raised by the youngest participants. For the younger participants, outdated or inappropriate phrasing appeared to impact on their understanding of the answer options available and reduced their ability to make sense of the original question. By comparison, the older participants were better able to infer what the question was asking, even if the survey used terminology that didn't exactly map across to their own language usage.

For example, there were multiple instances from parents and CYP alike indicating a confusion as to what was meant by 'inappropriate websites', with the risk that a myriad of definitions could be used as the basis of their response:

"My youngest child may think anything to do with adults, alcohol, drugs, whereas my oldest may think anything sexual or Russian war related" [Parent Participant, Male, 15, Mixed Race].

9.4.2 Misinterpretation of 'risky' behaviours

In some instances, a lack of comprehension meant that innocent behaviours were at risk of being classified as 'negative', which in turn could risk falsely inflating the risk status.

On a number of occasions, innocent 'yes' answers were followed by questions that assumed a 'bad experience' or participants being 'bothered' by something when neither were appropriate to the situation being discussed. Examples of this included 'bad experience' being interpreted as things like experiencing technical problems with a website or Wi-Fi going down. Similarly, being 'bothered' was sometimes interpreted as being 'annoyed' or 'frustrated' (for example, if there are technical problems); 'meeting people in person' who they have met online was often simply meeting friends of friends with their friendship networks, which young people usually regarded as entirely safe.

This misinterpretation led to several participants being asked about a time they had been 'treated in a nasty way online', leaving them confused as to what 'nasty' behaviour was being referenced and whether there was a mistake in the questionnaire.

While this was something the researchers were able to navigate through on the day, in reality there is a real risk that participants could find themselves answering a question

which (from their perspective) has no connection to their previous answers, leading to disengagement from the survey.

As such, there may be a need to review some of the questions, clarify the wording, or give examples as to what the question is seeking to understand. The existing wording can sometimes be blurred or opaque, leading to an implication of a risk when there isn't one in reality.

Furthermore, unclear questions further inhibit young people from completing the survey independently. Linked to the point raised above, participants were sometimes unclear as to whether they should record that they had met someone in person that they initially met online where this was wholly innocent, particularly in the context of the various lockdowns that had occurred since March 2020.

While the context of the answer was established in subsequent questions, the current flow of the questionnaire can lead to an initial confusion (and second-guessing on the part of the participant) that may not be wholly negated by the follow up questions.

9.4.3 Questions that are perceived as not relevant

Some of the youngest participants (9-10 years old) stated in that some of the topics were not appropriate for them, especially around their potential consumption of alcohol and drugs, with some 9-year-olds not understanding what is meant by cannabis or marijuana (for example one participant confused this with vaping).

Alongside these, there were some topic areas that were also considered completely irrelevant for this age group as they were much more limited in their ability to access certain websites such as social media.

“I'm 9 I don't have any social media” (female, 9, White British)

While participants can obviously answer 'no' to questions, the more questions that seem unsuitable or irrelevant to the participant's own experiences, the greater the risk they will feel the survey is not appropriate for them and potentially drop out.

9.4.4 Usability concerns

A final area of concern related to usability.

Observation of participants indicated that additional clarification text on screen was often ignored with only the question text and the responses being read.

As such, guidance that was intended to help the participants was sometimes missed, creating additional confusion and further intervention from the researchers.

One frequent example of this focused on whether certain questions were asking for one answer or allowed for multiple responses. Often where this issue was cited, there were instructions included on the screen to highlight that the participant could provide more than one answer, but this instruction was missed or not fully understood by the participant.

Similarly, guidance for an upcoming question was sometimes placed on a pre-screen before the question itself, but because participants did not need to read this screen the instructions were missed. In reality, the framing of the guidance and the question text would need to be re-considered in future to ensure comprehension is not impacted.

It is important that any newly developed online survey is subject to comprehensive usability testing before being fielded.

9.5 Repetition

For those completing with minimal or no support (in general those aged 12 years of age and older³⁸) there were frequent concerns raised that the questionnaire was too repetitive.

This was primarily linked to a number of 'question loops', such that answers from previous questions were explored in more depth at subsequent questions (in some cases different loops were treated as separate events, but in fact all related to the same incident, which could feel very repetitive). This issue was most noticeable for BULOFT and to a lesser extent TRTHOW which were looped off BULONL and BULTRAD. There were also concerns that other questions seemed too similar to those asked previously, adding to their overall concerns.

This risked diluting engagement, raising some concerns as to whether participants would continue with the survey in real life. Again, it should be stressed that this research is only focusing on one module and the sense of repetition could be strengthened if the survey scope is widened, especially for participants who are victims of crime and also have to complete up to three victim forms.

9.6 Self-editing of responses

This manifested itself in a number of ways and seemed to validate some of the issues raised by parents at the outset (see section 7.3).

Those aged 14 or older were more likely to recognise the imminent arrival of a 'question loop', with some acknowledging the potential 'benefit' of answering 'no' to a question to help reduce the overall length of the questionnaire. This was explicitly observed by one researcher with the respondent stepping back from a 'yes' response on more than one occasion as a way of reducing the questionnaire task.

Whilst this is a potential risk for any looped self-completion survey, the risk is potentially magnified in this instance, given the broader concerns raised around the survey (comprehension, repetition etc.). Alongside this, a number of participants, particularly those aged 16-17, referenced the need to weigh up being honest in their responses once they understood that the risk rating letter could be sent out after the survey had been completed (see section 10.2.1).

Even though the participants understood that individual answers to questions would not be shared with their parents, the potential implications of being classified as medium or high-

³⁸ No 11-year-olds were included in this research, though it could be assumed that that 11 years olds are similar to 12-year-olds in this respect

risk would inhibit their willingness to be fully honest in their responses. While the algorithm behind the risk rating is obviously not known to young people, there is an implication that some participants could try to ‘second guess’ the risk rating process to try to ensure that they and their parents only receive a low-risk rating.

9.7 Purpose of survey misunderstood

A number of young people and indeed one or two of the parents misunderstood the purpose of the survey.

Although the purpose of the research is mentioned in the advance materials and at the start of the survey, for some it was perceived to be a test to see if they have ‘done anything wrong’. This in turn amplifies the risk that someone may self-edit their responses if they feel their responses are going to lead to greater scrutiny going forward.

When this was explored in more detail, young participants felt like this because of how some of the questions were phrased.

“Just seems very judgey!” [Female, 9, White]

As noted earlier, there are concerns that the current Youth Survey leaflets do not communicate the purpose of the research in sufficient detail and this confusion filters into the survey completion itself.

9.8 Issues specific to 16–17-year-old participants

To date, the survey has been asked of 10–15-year-olds, but should the survey be extended to those aged 16-17 years it is likely that further revision would be needed to ensure that it better reflects this age group and the issues they face.

As the survey is currently set up for a younger cohort, some the questions were considered a bit ‘patronising’ for this age group, with some participants regarding them to be much more relevant to the younger participants in the age range.

“I can see why these questions would be suitable for a 9-year-old but they don't always feel that they apply to me” (male, 17, Black)

The survey was perceived to be a bit ‘patronising’ at various points during completion, starting with the initial practice questions and continuing through to the ‘staying safe online’ advice that was provided at the end of the module. Questions that used the term ‘nasty’, such as ‘nasty messages were sent’ or ‘other nasty things happened to you’ (both used in BULONL) were also highlighted as a concern in this regard.

Furthermore, there are concerns that some of the risks for 10–15-year-olds may not fully reflect the risks that are most pertinent for this slightly older group.

For the questions linked to meeting someone in person who they had only spoken to online first, one potential risk for a 16–17-year-old is that the person in question may be younger than them, rather than aged 18 or older. Such a response is already collected as part of the current survey question, but the participant (correctly) assumes that at present

this (younger) code would not be perceived as a risk trigger for 10–15-year-olds but they would expect it to be a concern given their own age.

Similarly, as older 'near adult' participants, there is a risk that more everyday activities may accidentally be recorded as a risk; for example, one person answered 'yes' to a question about whether they have sent their name/address to someone online who they have never met in person, but this was in relation to booking an uber car.

While this may be perceived as an unusual scenario and may ultimately be negated or clarified by their responses at subsequent questions, it highlights the concern that the current survey was not intended for the slightly older age group who may ultimately have more freedom than their younger counterparts. Further consideration would also need to be given to the ambiguity around the sending and receiving of sexual messages; this age group is over the age of consent and as such there is a question as to whether the existing risk rating categories would be applicable to this cohort. For participants in this age range, it was perceived that these messages could be sent in the context of 'mutual consent and respect' and while the risk rating is sensitive to this to a degree, the opaque nature of the initial questions could further limit the honesty of participants.

As such, if the survey is to be extended, any survey of 16–17-year-olds would need to ensure it best reflects their behaviours and experiences.

Separately, given the 'near adult' status of the 16–17-year-olds, and the fact they are treated as such in the main CSEW, the use of the risk rating in general is questioned for this group (see section 10.2.2). The potential that the risk rating letters would be sent to their parent would make participants hesitant about reporting their behaviour on a number of key questions, negating the benefits of their inclusion in the survey. In effect, the chances of self-editing are even more pronounced within this age range.

While the risk rating is seen as a barrier for a number of participants, this is particularly strong for this older age group.

9.9 Completion of the survey by siblings

All of the 9–10-year-olds interviewed were either the eldest child in the household or had no siblings, so in reality there were no real opportunity to explore this topic within this age group.

By comparison, a number of 11–15-year-olds had siblings aged 9-17 years of age. Most saw no issue with their sibling also completing the survey, if they both received the incentive (rather than being asked to share the £5 voucher between them). Furthermore, one participant spontaneously raised the likelihood that they would compare their responses with siblings after the event.

Only one of the 16–17-year-olds had siblings aged 9-17, but they were also happy for their younger siblings to take part. Indeed, the parent of this 17-year-old felt that the survey was more appropriate for their slightly younger children (13 and 15 years of age) than the actual participant.

Overall, if the parent was happy for one child to participate, they were likely to be happy for other qualifying children in the household to also participate, although consistent with

wider findings from this research some parents raised concerns about their likelihood to let their youngest children (9 years of age) take part, given the length and their likely comprehension.

9.10 Survey name

The potential survey name ('Children's Crime Survey') elicited very little reaction from the participants aged 9-15 but was felt to be 'patronising' by those aged 16-17, given their near adult status. Referencing 'youth' rather than 'children' may make the survey more applicable to a wider age range.

In comparison, the reaction among parents is mixed.

A number of parents feel that the name works well to describe the survey and the topic areas that have been discussed. However, for others it creates confusion and could act as a potential barrier to providing consent for their child to complete the survey, in part due to the implied inference from some parents that the survey is looking to understand whether their children has committed any crimes, rather than whether they have been the victim of a potential incident. This is reinforced by the finding that at present the Parental Information Card and the Youth Survey leaflets do not provide sufficient clarity as to the overall purpose of the research (see section 10.2.1).

To help alleviate this, some parents suggest broadening the title to include the safety element of the survey would be more appropriate, for example, 'crime and safety survey.'

10. Risk rating

10.1 Overview

As outlined in section 6.6, a risk rating letter is sent to children aged 10-15 who take part in the current CSEW and an additional, separate version is sent to their parents. The risk rating is a score of either high, medium or low risk, generated through the child's answers to a subset of questions within the CSEW questionnaire, although in some circumstances a 'no rating' letter is necessary where the participant has not answered in sufficient detail³⁹. Examples of the key letters and leaflets for both participants and parents are included in Appendix C.

The risk rating is linked purely to the answers given in the self-completion module and focuses on the participant's use of the internet and their online behaviour and experiences. The topics covered by the risk rating include online bullying, sharing personal information and talking to strangers online, as well as sending or receiving sexual messages (asked of participants aged 13 and older only). Although other questions were included in the self-completion module, such as smoking, drinking and taking drugs these are not currently included in the risk rating although there is wider interest in understanding whether these additional questions could or should be included in the risk rating process going forward.

Findings from the depth interviews with both children and their parents showed the risk rating to potentially be one of the most problematic elements of transitioning the survey online as it stands. However, it is also acknowledged that most of the concerns relate to the use of the risk rating in general, rather than being solely connected to the potential migration to online administration. However, such a switch is likely to exacerbate a number of the issues highlighted as the interviewer would not be available to ensure that advance materials have been reviewed and / or to address any queries or concerns (See Section 10.2).

Although the concept of the risk rating was outlined towards the beginning of the depth interview, it is clear both parents and participants of all ages did not fully understand what was meant by this until tangible examples of the risk rating letters and accompanying leaflets were introduced later on, despite their review of the advance materials and their progress through the online questionnaire itself.

Prior to the introduction of the risk rating on CSEW, a small-scale pilot was conducted in 2018 to explore participants' reactions to the proposed methodology. The findings from the depth interviews detailed in this report mirror those of the pilot to some extent. A summary of key findings from the earlier work can be found in Appendix E.

³⁹ This would occur where a high level of 'don't know' responses or 'I don't want to answer' responses have been recorded or where there was an early break off

10.2 Findings among CYP and parents on the risk rating

This section details findings from the depth interviews with CYP in relation to the risk rating. Findings focus on emergent themes and indicate whether the theme applied to CYP, parents or both and the relevant age groups of the CYP.

The issues uncovered in the interviews tended to relate to the risk rating process and materials, in general, rather than specifically to the potential switch to online administration. Indeed, as Appendix E highlights many of the findings were apparent in the initial pilot in 2018, albeit to varying degrees.

However, some of the issues that emerged are likely to be magnified in an online setting, specifically where an interviewer is not present to administer the survey and the wider processes including the risk rating. These issues tended to relate to **practical** aspects of the risk rating and are presented first below. Secondly, issues that related more generally to the risk rating process are presented. These issues were more **conceptual** in nature, focusing on the notion of the risk rating as a whole.

10.2.1 Specific issues in relation to a shift to online administration

The table below details issues that emerged during the CYP depth interviews for which there is expected to be a potential impact if there was a switch to online administration. The columns on the right-hand side indicate whether the issue was emergent for CYP (C) and / or parents (P) and the relevant age groups...

Issue	9-10	11-15	16-17
<p>Information being ignored or skim-read: The risk rating materials involve asking CYP to read a lot of information. Exploring the risk rating materials came at the end of the depth interviews and it was clear that some of the younger participants in particular had done enough reading and concentrating by this point to fully engage with the detail and some appeared visibly tired. One participant said it felt <i>“like information overload”</i> (Female, 9, White British).</p> <p>Despite this, some of the key information was taken in: overall risk rating and colour coding, parents being able to request their answers if under 16, where to go if you want advice or have concerns about your risk rating. On CSEW currently, the interviewer has the flexibility to decide how best to provide the Youth Survey leaflet and information on the risk rating. They check with the CYP that they have read the leaflet before taking part and read out the introduction to the risk rating process at the start of the self-completion module, ensuring this is understood before the laptop is handed to the child. With online administration these tailored checks are much more difficult. A duplicate of the leaflet could be sent along with the survey link (either in a letter or as part of the email to the parent) but there is the risk that CYP will skim over or ignore the leaflet and start</p>	C	C	C

<p>the survey without having taken in these key pieces of information.</p> <p>The messaging around the risk rating within the survey instrument is also likely to be missed without the interviewer being able to introduce this. Younger participants are likely to miss this due to a lack of understanding, while older participants are at risk of skim-reading the ‘non-questions’ screens, ticking the consent box without really engaging with what they have agreed to on-screen. The potential switch increases the risk that the CYP would complete the survey without any understanding of the risk rating process, thereby being unaware of the risk rating process until the letter arrives in the post.</p> <p>Findings also showed that at present the signposting to the risk rating letter in the Parental Information Card is not strong enough for some parents, such that both CYP and parent may be surprised by the arrival of the letter.</p>			
<p>Confusion around how the risk rating is generated and terminology: For those aged 11+, there was a degree of confusion over which questions would inform the risk rating and it was not sufficiently clear that only online behaviours would be taken into account. Participants assumed the behaviours covered in the latter part of the questionnaire would be included in the risk rating including drinking and drug use.</p> <p>As with some of the child participants, there was a level of uncertainty among parents surrounding which questions would inform the risk rating and it was not sufficiently clear that only online behaviours would be included. There was the view that this restriction meant the rating was not fully reflective of what is happening to the child and other behaviours such as in-person bullying should be included. A parent of a 16-year-old assumed the drug and alcohol use questions would be included in the risk rating saying <i>“Children at that age are very experimental and I don’t think they will put it down correctly if they know it’s going to flag up a risk assessment. I think that may put a child off answering honestly”</i> (Parent of 16-year-old boy, Black British). This confusion could mean parents are misled into thinking their child is taking drugs or being bullied.</p> <p>Additionally, some of the terminology was found to be confusing among the youngest age group, for example words such as ‘precautions’ and ‘engaging’. While the communication could be adapted to use simpler language to better suit such a young age group, issues around their understanding of some of the integral concepts of the risk rating would be more difficult to alleviate. As above, without an interviewer there to help explain the risk rating process, finding ways to help younger participants understand</p>	C	C P	C P

<p>the more complex aspects and address any queries or concerns, key information might be missed by the CYP.</p>			
<p>Concern about negative parental reaction: Participants across all three age groups commented that their parents would be concerned by a high-risk rating. One of the youngest participants felt they would suffer consequences as a result, and that their parent would remove devices or their access to the internet. Participants in the older two age groups also commented that their parents may be concerned if they received a medium or high rating and, as a reaction, become ‘more strict’.</p> <p>Parents of participants across all age groups responded to the idea of the risk assessment by describing how they would feel to receive it. The language parents used was emotive and included words such as ‘alarming’, ‘scared’, ‘worrying’, ‘concerning’, ‘guilt’, ‘flip-out’, ‘upset’, ‘anxious’ and ‘off-putting’ and this would be particularly so for parents who are not familiar with the online world. Despite this, some parents felt the risk rating to be <i>“something you [as a parent] need to know”</i> (Parent of 10-year-old boy, White British) in order to be able to start a conversation about it if there is anything other than a low rating. Another parent said, <i>“I think the survey becomes a bit meaningless if you didn’t have that [the risk assessment]”</i> (Parent of 14-year-old girl, White British).</p> <p>While this issue relates to the overall concept of the risk rating, namely that the rating is made available to parents, the emotional reaction to the high-risk rating letter in the depth interviews is likely to be exacerbated where neither the CYP nor the parent expects the letter to arrive (which, as mentioned above, is more likely to be the case if an interviewer has not fully explained the process). Therefore, it is possible that such a reaction will be heightened for both parent and child where the implications of the process were not fully understood by either party.</p>	<p>C P</p>	<p>C P</p>	<p>C P</p>
<p>Confusion around how the letters would be received: While these participants appeared ‘unfazed’ by the idea of the risk rating, there was evidence that they did not completely understand the process of what would happen regarding the letter being sent to them and their parents at their home address or how the score would be generated. Requests for and provision of reassurances about how these communications would be received would be easier with a face-to-face interviewer present.</p>	<p>P</p>		

10.2.2 General issues among CYP and parents

The issues in this section are conceptual in nature and relate to the risk rating more generally rather than specifically in terms of a switch to online administration. That said, the lack of a presence of an interviewer is likely to affect all issues to some degree as any issue that may arise could potentially be discussed with an interviewer if the participant wished to do so.

As before, the columns on the right-hand side indicate whether the issue was emergent for CYP (C) and / or parents (P) and the relevant age groups.

Issue	9-10	11-15	16-17
<p>Risk rating score felt to be insufficient: Among 11–15-year-old participants, there was a feeling that the risk rating itself wouldn't be enough information in the case of a high/red rating score and participants would want more detailed information about why they had been classified as high-risk. Participants commented that they would like more information and support if they were to receive a high-risk rating.</p> <p>Parents also felt that a simple rating was not enough, this was too generic, and the letter would need to be better tailored to each child. Parents perceived that examples of the types of risk, an explanation of how the rating was calculated for their child and a list of the questions which led to a medium or high rating should be provided to enable parents to determine next steps and decide who to involve (for example, doctors, teachers). These measures would help parents feel less alarmed. One parent pointed out that the letter says to contact NSPCC if you have concerns, but you wouldn't necessarily know what these concerns are. Another parent said, <i>"It's like the doctor saying something is wrong with you, but not telling you what it is"</i> (Parent to 14-year-old boy, White British, SEN). A parent of a 10-year-old similarly commented that it would be useful to know the context of where most children place on the rating scale so they can compare against their own child.</p>	P	C P	P
<p>Letter felt to be insufficient: There was also the sense among parents that a letter would not suffice in cases of a high-risk rating, and that more support should be provided and an actual person, such as a community or outreach worker, available to speak to directly. One parent said, <i>"I would feel a bit helpless... (my child) is high (risk) but I don't know what to do"</i> (Parent to 9-year-old girl, Chinese). There was an expectation that there would be a next step and that the letter is not the end of the line. For example, a parent said, <i>"I would want to know what the next steps would be, I'd want to know what they are going to do about it, that sort of thing"</i> (Parent of 9-year-old girl, Mixed race, SEN). A parent of a 14-year-old said they would contact their child's school if they received a high-risk rating.</p>	P	C P	P

<p>Not answering honestly or at all: Evidence was mixed for 11–15-year-old participants concerning whether the sending of the risk rating would impact on their responses. Linked to the point above, while participants said they would give the same answers regardless, there was a feeling that many young people would not be honest and that knowing their parents would be sent a risk rating might put them off participating.</p> <p>Participants aged 16-17 said they were unlikely to answer honestly or would regret (or limit) their participation if they knew their responses, albeit at an overall level, were to be shared with their parent or guardian via the risk rating letters. One said, <i>"I probably would have answered it differently if I knew my parents were getting it, you wouldn't want to worry them"</i> (Female, 17, White British)⁴⁰.</p>		C	C
<p>Risk rating inappropriate for 16–17-year-olds: While 16–17-year-old participants had no issues understanding the concept of the risk rating, there was a sense that, while it might be relevant for younger children under 15, it was inappropriate for this age group to have such a letter sent to their parents given their 'near adult' status.</p> <p>It was also clear that, while this age group are still legally classified as 'children', parents were not nearly so concerned about their online activity as children only slightly younger than them. One parent highlighted their child's 'near-adult' status by the fact they (the parent) are no longer able to make a doctor's appointment on behalf of their child to demonstrate their change in status, relative to their 15-year-old child. Some of the questions included in the risk rating cover 'normal' behaviours for older teens, such as sending and receiving messages of a sexual nature and should not be automatically considered risky.</p>			C P
<p>Mis-classification of rating: As indicated, the risk rating was best suited to the middle age group, 11–15-year-olds. For the youngest and oldest age groups there was evidence that ratings could potentially be mis-classified. Some 9–10-year-olds misunderstood some questions which meant that minor incidents could potentially be classified as 'risky'. While these minor incidents may feel important to young participants, such issues could mean the risk rating algorithm, not developed with 9-year-olds in mind, could inaccurately lead to innocent situations triggering an inaccurately high rating.</p> <p>Similarly, for 16–17-year-olds, as the risk rating was not initially designed for this 'near adult' age group, it may not 'work' in the intended way for them. Some of the behaviours classified as</p>	C		C

⁴⁰ This echoes the concerns raised by parents when reviewing the advance materials in Sections 7.3.2 and 7.3.3

high-risk are in fact taking place in a safe way, such as meeting up with people first met online and sending photos or pictures to people they have only met online. Therefore, without adaptation for this age group, there is a risk that the generation of a high-risk rating and sending a letter may mean giving young people and their parents potentially inaccurate or misleading information.			
Risk rating and non-response: While the inclusion of the risk rating generally did not impact on whether parents would be happy with their child taking part, there were two parents who said they did not want to receive the risk rating and it would put them off agreeing to consent to their child participating (parent of a 10-year-old and parent of a 15 year old).	P	P	
Support signposting useful: While the leaflet was often found to be rather dense with potential to simplify messaging, CYP and parents were pleased that links to further support such as websites and organisations was provided but some parents felt that more was needed. Examples would be including links to videos about online safety that parents could watch with their child and information on parental controls of the internet and devices.	C P	C P	P
Inclusion of NSPCC felt extreme: Signposting NSPCC as one of the organisations to contact for help led parents to worry about the seriousness of these issues give the associations that the NSPCC has with child abuse and safeguarding. This felt extreme without context and may ring alarm bells for the parent.	P	P	P

11. Ethical issues and consent

11.1 Overview

Several potential ethical issues were raised in this area including the appropriateness of the younger child completing the survey independently.

A number of concerns were also raised in relation to the risk rating, both in terms of the broad understanding of the risk rating process and with a specific focus on the implications of receiving a high-risk letter. Many of the issues raised have been highlighted throughout this report, although have been summarised again below.

11.2 Length of the questionnaire

As outlined in Section 9.2, most of the younger respondents (9-year-olds and 10-year-olds) found the length of the survey long and tiring, leaving a number of them feeling overwhelmed.

Furthermore, it is important to remember that this was just one of the five modules in the full survey and while this is one of the longer modules, the victim form module could be even longer for those who report two or more incidents. The average length for someone completing at least one victim form in 2019-2020 was 39 minutes, at a time when four of the five modules were interviewer administered.

As noted in the literature review (Chapter 3), in-home interviews can be quite long – up to an hour on occasion – as the interviewer is able to offer support to the respondent where needed, which in turn can help maintain their engagement with the survey.

This can range from helping them to reduce the cognitive burden by explaining the meaning of questions where CYP show signs of confusion, through to more general support and encouragement where the participant is showing early signs of fatigue. This could be a case of offering a few minutes break at the end of a module, for example at the end of the victim form before the begin the cybercrime module, through to confirmation that ‘they are nearly there’ and that they have completed the bulk of the survey.

In contrast, self-completion surveys are traditionally shorter (usually 15-30 minutes), to try to mitigate for the risk of drop-out.

Even where the survey does not trigger fatigue in the older participants there is a wider concern that without an interviewer present the overall length of the survey may increase the risk of drop out relative to the current face-to-face iteration of the survey.

11.3 Parental consent

While parents broadly confirmed they were likely to give their consent for completion, there were a number of reservations among the parents of children aged 9-10 years of age, who wanted to be sure they were not going to be asked anything inappropriate or overly sensitive.

In one case, there was an assumption the parent could review the survey script prior to their child aged 9 years of age completing it, although other parents of 9–10-year-olds were also eager to have more granularity on the type of questions that could be included. Given the unusual nature of this request it further reinforces the concern as to whether the survey should be extended to 9-year-olds. As this is mentioned by just one parent, then caution needs to be taken when considering the impact of this, but it is a further indicator of the parental concerns around the inclusion of the youngest participants.

Some parents felt that their expectations of the survey content provided by initial communications did not match the actual content when they reviewed this. Although this was in part a function of the fact that the initial letter was shown in advance of the Parental Information Card, the need for reassurance reinforces that the information in the latter is not sufficiently clear at present.

11.4 Risk rating

As outlined in Chapter 10, the risk rating leads to a number of concerns, with the limited comprehension at the outset exacerbating the later impact of the letters, creating the potential that participants and parents are not fully aware of the process around the risk rating letters until these are received by the child and their parent.

As acknowledged in the earlier chapter a number of these were identified to varying degrees in the original pilot, but the removal of the interviewer from the wider process and the lack of signposting of the risk rating in the advance materials and the introduction to the cybercrime module means that a number of these are likely to be exacerbated by the switch to online.

Given the feedback from the depth interviews, it is critical that more is done to ensure that young people and indeed their parents understand that the risk rating will be sent after the interview's completion.

The fact that participants and their parents did not fully appreciate the initial references to the risk rating exacerbates the perceived impact of the high-risk letter when it is introduced, leading to concerns that the letter alone would be inadequate for parents who receive the high-risk letters. As a result, some parents feel that more support is necessary to help shape how they approach the issue with their child to ensure they address the concerns raised in the right way.

Appendix A: Studies included in this review

The full review matrix is included at <https://kantarpublish.com/articles/transforming-the-crime-survey-for-england-and-wales>.

A summary is provided below, with links to relevant technical reports. Studies are broadly provided in date order, with the most recent at the top, although a small number of these have been updated at the start of 2023. However, the Review ID has not been revised to reflect the updated publication dates.

Review ID	Survey name	Most recent publication date
1	COSMO	2022 (Updated)
2	Covid-19: Supporting Parents, Adolescents and Children during Epidemics	2022
3	Young Lives, Young Futures	2022 (Updated)
4	Growing Up in Scotland	2022
5	BeeWell	2022
6	Pupil and Parent Panel (PPP)	2021
7	The Big Ask/Big Answer- The Children's Commissioner	2021
8	Student Health and Wellbeing Survey in Wales	2022 (updated)
9	Survey of the Mental Health of Children and Young People 2017 (MHCYP) and 2022 follow-up Survey of the Mental Health of Children and Young People 2022 follow up	2022 (updated)
10	Understanding Society - Youth survey	2021
11	Current ONS Child Crime Survey	2020
12	Active Lives Children and Young People	2022 (updated)

13	Annual bullying survey (Ditch the label)	2020
14	Children and Parents Media Use and Attitudes Survey	2020
15	EU Kids Online 2020 (lse.ac.uk)	2020
16	Children and Young People's Patient Experience Survey 2020	2020
17	TeenCovidLife	2020
18	The Emerging Adults Gambling Survey	2020
19	Young people and Gambling	2022 (updated)
20	YouCope	2020
21	Science Education Tracker 2019	2019
22	ESPAD report 2019. Results from the European School Survey Project on Alcohol and Other Drugs	2019
23	Smoking, Drinking and Drug use among Young People in England (NHS Digital)	2019
24	LGfL-DigiSafe-Report-Hopes-and-Streams-2018.pdf (internetmatters.org)	2018
25	Youth Voice Survey	2018
26	PISA – Programme for International Student Assessment	2018
27	The Scottish Schools Adolescent Lifestyle and Substance Use Survey (SALSUS) (SALSUS will be superseded by the new schools health and wellbeing census, which was expected to launch in 2020).	2018
28	Millennium cohort study (Age 17 sweep)	2017
29	Project deSHAME: Young People's Experiences of Online Sexual Harassment	2017
30	Active Lives Children and Young People	2016
31	The Longitudinal Survey of Young People in England 2 (LSYPE2)	2016

Ethical frameworks consulted are covered below.

- [The Market Research Society \(MRS\) Code of Conduct \(2019\)](#)
- [NSPCC Research Ethics Committee and guidance \(2020\)](#)
- [The National Children's Bureau \(NCB\) Guidelines for Research with Children and Young People \(2011\)](#)
- [The Social Research Association \(SRA\) Research Ethics Guidance \(2021\)](#)

Appendix B – Probe Guides

Participant aged 9-17 years Probe Guide

Parent of participant aged 9-17 years Probe Guide

Work Package B qualitative research

Guide for use with children aged 9-17 - Topic Guide

Introduction

(2 minutes)

Introduce research, reassure about confidentiality and set tone of discussion

- **Introduction**

- Introduce moderator and Kantar Public
- Research on behalf of ONS
- Aim of the discussion is to explore their views on participating in the survey on crime that Kantar Public run for ONS. We have designed a questionnaire and are asking a small group of people what they think of it before it is asked as a larger online survey. That will help us identify any issues and allow us to improve the questionnaire before the questions are asked on a larger scale in the 'real' survey.
- Interview length – 60 minutes
- Research is confidential – your personal details will not be shared
- Explain to the child that though the research is confidential, if they disclose anything to you that can cause them harm or others, you will have to take further action.
- Explain Kantar's privacy policy can be accessed on our website:
<https://www.kantar.com/uki/surveys>
- Research is completely voluntary, you can withdraw at any time, skip questions if you don't want to answer

- Explain how the interview will work – outlining both parts. You will be asked to fill in an online questionnaire. Because we're testing the questions it would be really helpful if you could tell me what you're thinking about at each question and how you found answering. Please answer as you would do in 'real-life' and don't worry about saying you're not sure about something or that you don't like a particular question. Helping us identify where there are problems or where it might be confusing is helpful as then we can improve it for everyone who takes part in the survey this year.

- Explain the risk rating process to the participant.
 - After you have filled in the online questionnaire, we will send a letter to you and a letter to your parent or guardian. This won't reveal any of your individual answers from the questionnaire, but the letter will say whether your online activity is low, medium or high-risk.
- No right or wrong answers, we are testing the questionnaire (not you) and we are interested in your honest opinions
- Any questions?

- **Recording**

Ask participant for permission to record, then start recording and confirm consent

Warm-up

(5 minutes)

To make the participant feel comfortable

- **Introduction**

- Who's at home?
- What do you like to do in your free time?
- What brings you joy or excites you?
- What do you have planned for the rest of the weekend?

Communication materials

(10 minutes)

To explore whether the information materials provided are sufficient for children to participate in completing the survey independently online

Give participants the introductory letter (young person, tailored to their age)

- **Initial reactions**

- First thoughts on reading through

- **Further reactions**

- Were they able to read the letter independently?
- How did they understand what the letter was saying?
- Is there anything they were unsure about in the letter?
- Would they need/want help from an adult to understand it?
- Would they ask an adult to help them? Who would it be?
- Any questions after reading the letter?
- Is there anything that's not in the letter that they think should be?
- Would they read the letter if it was posted?
 - What if it was handed to them by an interviewer?
 - What if it was emailed to them?
- Could the language be improved?
- What would they change about the letter if they could?
- How would they feel about answering questions on crime-related topics based on the letter alone?
- Would it make a difference to their feelings if the letter included their name or not?
- Any initial thoughts on the incentive?

Give participants the information sheet (young person, tailored to their age)

- **Initial reactions**

- First thoughts on reading through

- **Further reactions**
 - Were they able to read the information sheet independently?
 - How did they understand the content?
 - Was anything unclear?
 - Would they need/want help from someone else to understand it?
 - Would they ask someone else to help them? Who would it be?
 - Any questions after reading the information sheet?
 - Is there anything that's not in the information sheet that they think should be?
 - Would they read the information sheet if it was posted?
 - What if it was handed to them by an interviewer?
 - What if it came by email?
 - Could the language be improved?
 - What would they change about the information sheet if they could?

- **Reflect on expectations of the survey so far**
 - What have they learned about the survey so far?
 - How would they describe it to someone else?
 - Would they take part in this survey?
 - If they received a letter by post
 - If they were handed a letter by an interviewer
 - If they received an email about it

- **Expectations for completing the survey (high priority)**
 - What device would they use?
 - Is it their own?
 - Where would they complete it?
 - Public or private spaces?
 - Would they expect to complete it alone or with their someone else? Who? Why?
 - Do their parents monitor/restrict/supervise their online behaviour more generally?
 - How would this affect their feelings about completing the survey online?
 - How would they like to access the survey?
 - Would it be easier to receive a link or scan a QR code?

- **Level of comfort with the survey so far (High priority)**
 - How do they feel about completing this survey?
 - How do they feel about completing this survey independently, in private?
 - If they feel the need to involve someone else, probe reasons why
 - Do they think they would be allowed to complete it on their own?

Survey review

(40 minutes)

To explore whether the information materials provided set up an accurate expectation of the survey, and to explore reactions to the experience of carrying out the survey online

Using your laptop let the young person complete the survey online. Allow them to go through each section and encourage them to think aloud as they go. Make a note of any observations to probe later e.g., if they appear to be taking longer to complete a section

- **Initial reactions**
 - First thoughts on the survey
 - How did they feel about answering questions on crime-related topics?
 - Did anything surprise them?
 - Was it as described in the letter/information sheet?
 - Are they thinking about who will see their answers as they go through? Who (parents, teachers, the 'government')

- **Usability (High priority)**
 - Were they able to navigate their way through the survey?
 - Was it clear how to move from one question to another?
 - Was there anything confusing or difficult for them?
 - Would they find an audio feature in the survey, where the survey question is read aloud useful?
 - How did the survey length compare to your expectations?
 - How would they feel about other online features
 - Ability to go back and change answers
 - Ability to save for later and come back another time
 - Ability to minimise the screen if interrupted

- **Revisit expectations for carrying out the survey at home (High priority)**
 - What device would they use?
 - Is this their own device or a shared one?
 - Are there parental controls?
 - Where would be the best place to complete the survey?
 - Would they be allowed to complete it by themselves?
 - Would they be able to complete it on their own?
 - If not, what would they do/who would they ask for help?

- **Revisit level of comfort with the survey (High priority)**
 - How do they feel about completing this survey?
 - Would they feel safe completing the survey online? (e.g., people around them looking at their answers)
 - Would they feel upset at any point while completing the survey? Why?
 - Was there anything that made them feel uncomfortable?

- What support do they think should be available/provided to people completing the survey?
- **Revisit and focus on any issues with specific questions (referring to electronic or paper copy of the questionnaire as needed) (Lower priority)**
 - Any questions that were hard to understand?
 - Any questions that were difficult to answer?
 - Any questions that did not feel relevant?
 - Any questions that made them feel uncomfortable?
 - Any questions where the answers did not capture their experience properly?
- **Reflection on honesty**
 - How easy or difficult is it to be honest when answering these questions?
 - What could affect this?
 - How would they feel about their parents seeing their answers?

Give participants the risk score leaflet and letter (Lower priority)

- **Initial reactions**
 - First thoughts on reading through
- **Further reactions**
 - How did they understand the content?
 - Was anything unclear?
 - Would they need/want help from an someone else to understand it?
 - Would they ask someone else to help them? Who would it be?
- **Impact on level of comfort**
 - Does the provision of a risk score affect how they feel about completing the survey?
 - What if this risk rating was based on all answers/only the online behaviour answers?
- **Reflection on any ethical issues (High priority)**
 - Are there any concerns that the survey could be upsetting/triggering?
 - How could these be addressed?
 - What difference would it make if an interviewer was present while they completed it? How do they imagine completing it online would compare to this?
- **Reflection on communication materials**
 - What are the key things that a child their age needs to know about this survey?
 - In order to participate
 - In order to complete it independently, in private
 - Was anything missing from the letter/information sheet?
 - Should anything be given more emphasis?

To capture any final thoughts

- **Any final thoughts**
- **Thoughts on data security**
 - If not mentioned spontaneously, do they have any concerns about the security of their data?
 - Would they agree to be recontacted to take part in a similar survey in the future? What method would they prefer?
- **Thoughts on sibling participation**
 - If they have a sibling aged 9-17, how would they feel about them taking part in the survey as well?
- **Thank and close**
 - Confirm incentive payment £30/£40 depending on age.

Work Package B qualitative research

Guide for use with parents - Topic Guide

Introduction

(2 minutes)

Introduce research, reassure about confidentiality and set tone of discussion

- **Introduction**

- Introduce moderator and Kantar Public
- Research on behalf of ONS
- Aim of the discussion is to explore their views on their child participating in the survey on crime that Kantar Public run for ONS and the practical issues of conducting an online survey with those aged 9-17
- This information will be used to improve the way we communicate with parents
- Interview length – 60 minutes
- Research is confidential and voluntary – your personal details will not be shared
- - Kantar's privacy policy can be accessed on our website:
<https://www.kantar.com/uki/surveys>
- No right or wrong answers – we are testing if the questionnaire is suitable for children to complete online (not you) and are interested in your honest opinions
- Explain the risk rating process to the participant.
 - After your child has filled in the online questionnaire, we will also send a letter to you and a letter to your child. This won't reveal any of their individual answers, but the letter will say whether their online activity is low, medium or high-risk.
- Any questions?

- **Recording**

Ask participant for permission to record, then start recording and confirm consent

Warm-up

(10 minutes)

To make the participant feel comfortable

- **Introduction**

- Who's at home
- Age of selected child and other children in the household
- What they enjoy doing in their free time
- How has lockdown been

- **Attitudes to parental control to children's online activity**

- Do you monitor your child's online activities?

- How do you do that? (e.g., set controls, use parental filter)
- **Initial reactions to the topic**
 - How would they feel about their child being invited to take part in a survey about crime they may have experienced in the past year?
 - What information, if any, would you like to know about the survey?

Communication materials

(20 minutes)

To explore whether the information materials provided are sufficient for the parents to allow children to participate in completing the survey independently online

Give participants the pre-notification letter (parent)

- **Initial reactions**
 - First thoughts on reading through
- **Further reactions**
 - How did they understand what the letter was saying?
 - Is there anything they were unsure about in the letter?
 - Any questions after reading the letter?
 - Is there anything that's not in the letter that they think should be?
 - Would they read the letter if it was posted?
 - What if they were handed it by an interviewer?
 - What if the invitation came by email instead?
 - How could the language be improved?
 - What was their initial reaction of the title of the survey?

Give participants the information sheet (parent)

- **Initial reactions**
 - First thoughts on reading through
- **Further reactions**
 - How did they understand the content?
 - Was anything unclear?
 - Any questions after reading the information sheet?
 - Is there anything that's not in the information sheet that they think should be?
 - Would they read the information sheet if it was posted?
 - What if they were handed it by an interviewer?
 - What if the information sheet came by email instead?
 - How could the language be improved?
 -
- **Reflect on expectations of the survey so far (high priority)**

- What have they learned about the survey so far?
- How would they describe it to their child?
- How do they envisage their child would complete the survey?
 - What device would their child use?
 - Where would their child be while completing it? (home/at school)
 - What support, if any, would their child need to complete the survey?
 - What challenges, if any, do they envisage their child would encounter to complete the survey (e.g., access to internet/ device)?
- **Level of comfort with the survey so far (high priority)**
 - How do they feel about their child completing this survey?
 - How do they feel about their child completing this survey independently, in private?
 - If they feel the need to oversee completion, probe reasons why (concern around appropriateness of content, concern around literacy/ability to complete it independently, concern around technical aspects of online completion)
- **Giving consent online**
 - Would they be happy to go online to give consent for their child to participate (12 and under)?
 - Would they be happy for their child to give consent themselves to participate (13 and over) and for them not to be asked?
 - Would they prefer to be involved in this? Why?
- **Level of information**
 - Throughout the discussion, listen out for references to ‘too much information’ or ‘not enough information’ and probe further
 - If not mentioned spontaneously, prompt ‘some people have said there is too much information/not enough information...’ – how do they feel about that?
 - What are the key things that they need to know to feel comfortable about their child participating independently and online?

Give participants the risk score leaflet and letter

- **Initial reactions**
 - First thoughts on reading through
- **Further reactions**
 - How did they understand the content?
 - Was anything unclear?
 - Is there enough information?

-
- **Impact on level of comfort**

- Does the provision of a risk score on online behaviour affect how they feel about their child completing the survey?
- Does the provision of a risk score on online behaviour affect how they feel about their child completing the survey independently, in private?
- Would they like the risk score to cover other aspects of the survey? Which ones?

Survey review

(20 minutes)

To explore whether the information materials provided set up an accurate expectation of the survey, and to explore reactions to the survey as a parent

Give participants a paper copy of the power point presentation, explaining that this is the survey questions that that the child would complete online and preferably independently. Allow them to go through each section and encourage them to think aloud as they go.

- **Initial reactions**

- First thoughts on reading through

- **Further reactions**

- Did it meet with their expectations?
- Was it as described in the letter/information sheet?
- Was anything unexpected?

- **Revisit expectations for their child carrying out the survey (high priority)**

- What device would their child use?
- Where would they be while completing the survey?
- Would they be able to complete it independently?
- Would they be able to complete it accurately?
- Probe for any concerns
 - Ease of navigation
 - Comprehension of questions
 - Suitability of questions

- **Revisit level of comfort with the survey (high priority)**

- How do they feel about their child completing this survey?
- How do they feel about their child completing this survey independently?
- If their comfort level has changed from before, probe reasons why
- If they feel the need to oversee completion, probe reasons why
- Would there be any reasons to withhold consent?

- **Expectations of confidentiality (low priority)**

- Would you be happy for your child's answers to remain private?
- Or would they have expected to see the answers?

- If so, why?
 - If they have concerns about not seeing the answers, how could these be addressed?
 - Does the risk rating mechanism help to address these?
 - Would they like to see the risk rating covering other aspects of the survey, not only online behaviour?
- **Revisit any concerns with the survey**
 - What is the cause of these concerns?
 - How could these concerns be addressed?
- **Reflection on communication materials**
 - What are the key things that a parent needs to know about this survey?
 - In order for their child to participate
 - In order for their child to complete it independently, in private
 - Was anything missing from the letter/information sheet?
 - Should anything be given more emphasis?

Close

(10 minutes)

To capture any final thoughts

- **Any final thoughts**
- **Thoughts on multiple children participating (if relevant)**
 - How would they feel if more than one child in their household took part in the survey?
 - Would their feelings about participation differ depending on which child was invited to take part? And why?
- **Thoughts on data security**
 - If not mentioned spontaneously, do they have any concerns on the security of their child's data?
 - Would they agree for them to be recontacted? Through what contact method?
- **Thoughts on the survey name**
 - Is 'Children's crime survey' an appropriate name?
 - Do they have any suggestions for other names?
- **Thank and close**
 - Confirm incentive payment £60

Appendix C – Stimulus materials used

Introductory letters

Youth Survey Leaflets

Parental Information Card

Risk Rating letters

Risk Rating leaflets



Dear [CHILD AGED 9-12],

We need your help!

We are writing to you today to invite you to take part in the **Children's Crime Survey**, an important online survey of 3,000 young people in England and Wales. The survey explores how crime affects young people aged 9-17 and asks them whether they have experienced any crimes in the last 12 months.

The Children's Crime Survey is carried out by Kantar Public (an independent research organisation) on behalf of the Office for National Statistics. The results will be used by Government and other organisations to tackle and help prevent crime against young people in England and Wales.

As a thank you, you will be rewarded with a **£5 voucher** immediately after completing the survey. You can choose from a range of high street or online shops such as Amazon, Boots and Love2shop, which can be used at various stores.

What do I need to do next?

You do not need to do anything now. We will write to you again in the next few days with details on how to complete the survey online. Your parent or guardian will also be asked to complete a short online consent form so we can check they are happy for you to take part.

Answers to some common questions are included on the accompanying leaflet, as well as relevant contact details if you have any further questions.

Many thanks,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Nick Stripe".

Nick Stripe
Head of Crime Statistics, Office for National Statistics



Dear [CHILD AGED 13+],

We need your help!

We are writing to you today to invite you to take part in the **Children's Crime Survey**, an important online survey of 3,000 young people in England and Wales. The survey explores how crime affects young people aged 9-17 and asks them whether they have experienced any crimes in the last 12 months.

The Children's Crime Survey is carried out by Kantar Public (an independent research organisation) on behalf of the Office for National Statistics. The results will be used by Government and other organisations to tackle and help prevent crime against young people in England and Wales.

As a thank you, you will be rewarded with a **£5 voucher** immediately after completing the survey. You can choose from a range of high street or online shops such as Amazon, Boots and Love2shop, which can be used at various stores.

What do I need to do next?

You do not need to do anything now. We will write to you again in the next few days with details on how to complete the survey online.

Answers to some common questions are included on the accompanying leaflet, as well as relevant contact details if you have any further questions.

Many thanks,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Nick Stripe".

Nick Stripe
Head of Crime Statistics, Office for National Statistics



Dear Parent or Guardian of (CHILD AGED 9-12),

Your child has been selected to take part in the **Children's Crime Survey**, an important research study which has run alongside the Crime Survey for England and Wales since 2009 and involves around 3,000 young people. I am writing to you today to give you some information about the study.

In a few days' time your child will be asked to complete a **short survey online**. The survey explores how crime affects young people aged 9-17. It is important to understand their views and experiences to tackle and help prevent crime against them.

The children's survey lasts around 15-20 minutes. As a thank you for their time, we will provide all young people with a **£5 voucher** which can be used in a range of high street and online stores.

Before your child can take part, you will be asked to complete a short online consent form so we can check that you are happy for your child to take part. This will only take a couple of minutes.

What will happen next?

You do not need to do anything now. In the few days we will send a further letter inviting your child to take part. This will provide information on how to access the survey online.

Further information

The Children's Crime Survey is carried out by Kantar Public (an independent research organisation) on behalf of the Office for National Statistics. The results will be used by Government and other organisations to tackle and help prevent crime against young people in England and Wales.

If you have any questions, please call freephone 0800 051 0882 or email crimesurvey@kantarpublish.com. For more information about the types of questions included, and information about how we keep your child's data safe, you can also visit www.CrimeSurvey.co.uk/inhome.

Many thanks,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Nick Stripe".

Nick Stripe
Head of Crime Statistics, Office for National Statistics



Dear Parent or Guardian of (CHILD AGED 13-15),

Your child has been selected to take part in the **Children's Crime Survey**, an important research study which has run alongside the Crime Survey for England and Wales since 2009 and involves around 3,000 young people. I am writing to you today to give you some information about the study.

In a few days' time your child will be asked to complete a **short survey online**. The survey explores how crime affects young people aged 9-17. It is important to understand their views and experiences to tackle and help prevent crime against them.

The children's survey lasts around 15-20 minutes. As a thank you for their time, we will provide all young people with a **£5 voucher** which can be used in a range of high street and online stores.

What will happen next?

You do not need to do anything now. In the few days we will send a further letter inviting your child to take part. This will provide information on how to access the survey online.

Further information

The Children's Crime Survey is carried out by Kantar Public (an independent research organisation) on behalf of the Office for National Statistics. The results will be used by Government and other organisations to tackle and help prevent crime against young people in England and Wales.

If you have any questions, please call freephone 0800 051 0882 or email crimesurvey@kantarpublish.com. For more information about the types of questions included, and information about how we keep your child's data safe, you can also visit www.CrimeSurvey.co.uk/inhome.

Many thanks,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Nick Stripe".

Nick Stripe
Head of Crime Statistics, Office for National Statistics

Where can I get more information?

If you would like more information you can call the Crime Survey information line free on 0800 051 0882 or you can email

crimesurvey@kantarpublish.com

If you have any questions about how Kantar look after your information, you can read our Kantar UK Privacy Policy any time by visiting

www.crimesurvey.co.uk/en/surveyprivacypolicy.html

Here are some useful websites and telephone numbers you can contact if you have been concerned by any issues discussed in the interview.

Childline:

You can talk to a counsellor about anything that is worrying you

www.childline.org.uk

t: 0800 1111

FRANK:

Provides help and advice for any drug related issues

www.talktofrank.com

t: 0800 776600

Thinkuknow:

For help and advice on how to stay safe online, visit

www.thinkuknow.co.uk

Or call Childline on 0800 1111

Anti-Bullying Ambassador Programme:

For help and advice if you are being bullied, visit

www.antibullyingpro.com/support-centre

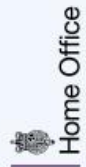
Or call Childline on 0800 1111



Crime Survey
for England & Wales



The views of
young people
Have your say



KANTAR

CSEW20/Youth 10-12/M1/Issued Feb 2020

The Crime Survey for England and Wales has been designed for young people and asks them whether they have experienced any crime in the last 12 months.

There are also some questions about cyber bullying, whether the police treat young people fairly and safety measures taken to keep belongings safe when out in public.



The Home Office and professionals who study crime use information from the Crime Survey in their work to reduce crime against young people. The Crime Survey is carried out by an independent research agency Kantar.

Will anyone see my answers?



After the interview, we will send a letter to you and your parent/guardian(s) about whether your online activity is low, medium or high risk.



We will not reveal any of your answers as these are confidential, no one outside of Kantar will know what answers you gave.



However, as you are under 16, your parent/guardian(s) do have a right to request access to the information you have given us. If they made a legal request, we might have to share the answers you gave with them.

Do I have to take part?

You don't have to take part but we hope that you will because your thoughts and experiences are really important. Everyone can take part regardless of their experiences and you don't have to answer anything that you do not want to.

How has the Crime Survey helped?

The Crime Survey has shown that young people are more likely to have their phone stolen and as a result they have been targeted in advertising campaigns by the police.

Where can I get more information?

If you would like more information you can call the Crime Survey information line free on 0800 051 0882 or you can email crimesurvey@kantarpubic.com

If you have any questions about how Kantar look after your information, you can read our Kantar UK Privacy Policy any time by visiting www.crimesurvey.co.uk/en/surveyprivacypolicy.html

Here are some useful websites and telephone numbers you can contact if you have been concerned by any issues discussed in the interview.

Childline:

You can talk to a counsellor about anything that is worrying you
www.childline.org.uk
t: 0800 1111

Thinkuknow:

For help and advice on how to stay safe online, visit www.thinkuknow.co.uk
Or call Childline on 0800 1111

FRANK:

Provides help and advice for any drug related issues
www.talktofrank.com
t: 0800 776600

Anti-Bullying Ambassador Programme:

For help and advice if you are being bullied, visit www.antibullyingpro.com/support-centre
Or call Childline on 0800 1111



The views of young people
Have your say

KANTAR

CSEW20/Youth 13-15/v1/Issued Feb 2020



Home Office



The Crime Survey for England and Wales has been designed for young people and asks them whether they have experienced any crime in the last 12 months. There are also some questions about cyber bullying, whether the police treat young people fairly and safety measures taken to keep belongings safe when out in public.



The Home Office and professionals who study crime use information from the Crime Survey in their work to reduce crime against young people. The Crime Survey is carried out by an independent research agency Kantar.

Will anyone see my answers?



After the interview, we will send a letter to you and your parent/ guardian(s) about whether your online activity is low, medium or high risk.



We will not reveal any of your answers as these are confidential, no one outside of Kantar will know what answers you gave.



However, as you are under 16, your parent/guardian(s) do have a right to request access to the information you have given us. If they made a legal request, we might have to share the answers you gave with them.

Do I have to take part?

You don't have to take part but we hope that you will because your thoughts and experiences are really important. Everyone can take part regardless of their experiences and you don't have to answer anything that you do not want to.

How has the Crime Survey helped?

The Crime Survey has shown that young people are more likely to have their phone stolen and as a result they have been targeted in advertising campaigns by the police.



INFORMATION FOR PARENTS OR GUARDIANS

In addition to adults' experiences and views on crime we are interested in how crime affects young people aged 10-15. It is important to understand their views and experiences to tackle and help prevent crime against them.

What does the survey cover?

The survey has been designed for young people. It is shorter than the adult interview and will take an average of 15 to 20 minutes.

It covers topics that are relevant to this age group, such as:

- Their experiences of crime and bullying
- Drinking alcohol or taking drugs
- Street gangs and carrying knives
- Online behaviour such as:
 - Whether they share personal information online
 - Whether they have had a negative experience online
 - Whether they have spoken to or exchanged messages with someone online who they had not met in person
 - Whether they have met up in person with anyone they had only spoken to online first. If so, did anything about this upset them?
 - Whether they have ever sent or received sexual messages (only young people aged 13 to 15 will be asked this)

Any questions they don't want to answer can be skipped. If they don't know the answer to something, they can say 'don't know'.

Following the interview, we will write to you and the participating child with a risk assessment of their **online activity**. This gives a risk score based on the child's responses to the survey, and indicates the extent to which their online behaviour and experiences reported in the survey may be putting them at risk. This risk rating will not cover any aspect of online activity that is not asked about in the survey, or any offline behaviour that is covered in the survey.

All the information provided by the child will be treated in confidence. The risk assessment will indicate whether the child's level of risk is low, medium or high. It will not include any specific responses. All answers given will be kept confidential and will not be shared with you.




Dear [CHILD NAME],

Crime Survey for England and Wales

We're writing to you because you recently took part in the Crime Survey for England and Wales. The survey asked you questions about your views and experiences of crime, bullying and the things you do online.

You may remember that our interviewer explained to you that we would use your answers to let you know how risky the things you have experienced or done online are. We used your answers to see if the things you have experienced or done were low, medium, or high risk. This information is only being shared with you and your parent(s) or guardian(s).

This letter is to let you know that we have checked your answers and the things you have experienced or done online are:

	<p>A low risk rating means: The answers given suggest that you are taking reasonable precautions when experiencing or engaging in the types of online activity covered in the survey.</p>
--	--

This rating only covers the online experiences or activity that you told us about in the survey. If you didn't answer some of the questions, we don't know how risky your online experiences or activity covered by those questions are.

If you are concerned about this rating, you should speak to your parent or guardian and ask them about how to stay safe online.

You can find out more information about how to stay safe online at www.thinkuknow.co.uk or if you would like to speak to someone about anything that is worrying you visit www.childline.org.uk or call 0800 1111. We have included more information about this rating on the other side of this letter.

It's important to remember that everyone who uses the internet is at some risk and this rating only covers the things we asked you about. We can't tell you how risky any other things you have experienced or done online might be.

Yours faithfully,



Nick Stripe

Head of Crime Statistics, Office for National Statistics


Dear [CHILD NAME],

Crime Survey for England and Wales

We're writing to you because you recently took part in the Crime Survey for England and Wales. The survey asked you questions about your views and experiences of crime, bullying and the things you do online.

You may remember that our interviewer explained to you that we would use your answers to let you know how risky the things you have experienced or done online are. We used your answers to see if the things you have experienced or done were low, medium, or high risk. This information is only being shared with you and your parent(s) or guardian(s).

This letter is to let you know that we have checked your answers and the things you have experienced or done online are:

	<p>A medium risk rating means: The answers given suggest that you are taking some precautions when experiencing or engaging in the types of online activity covered in the survey, but some of your experiences or activities might open you up to risk.</p>
--	---

This rating only covers the online experiences or activity that you told us about in the survey. If you didn't answer some of the questions, we don't know how risky your online experiences or activity covered by those questions are.

If you are concerned about this rating, you should speak to your parent or guardian and ask them about how to stay safe online.

You can find out more information about how to stay safe online at www.thinkuknow.co.uk or if you would like to speak to someone about anything that is worrying you visit www.childline.org.uk or call 0800 1111. We have included more information about this rating on the other side of this letter.

It's important to remember that everyone who uses the internet is at some risk and this rating only covers the things we asked you about. We can't tell you how risky any other things you have experienced or done online might be.

Yours faithfully,



Nick Stripe

Head of Crime Statistics, Office for National Statistics




Dear [CHILD NAME],

Crime Survey for England and Wales

We're writing to you because you recently took part in the Crime Survey for England and Wales. The survey asked you questions about your views and experiences of crime, bullying and the things you do online.

You may remember that our interviewer explained to you that we would use your answers to let you know how risky the things you have experienced or done online are. We used your answers to see if the things you have experienced or done were low, medium, or high risk. This information is only being shared with you and your parent(s) or guardian(s).

This letter is to let you know that we have checked your answers and the things you have experienced or done online are:

 A red rounded rectangle with the text "High Risk" in white.	A high risk rating means: The answers given suggest that you may have had a negative experience, either as a result of how others have behaved online, or through some potentially risky online behaviour you have engaged in.
--	--

This rating only covers the online experiences or activity that you told us about in the survey. If you didn't answer some of the questions, we don't know how risky your online experiences or activity covered by those questions are.

If you are concerned about this rating, it may be useful to speak to your parent or guardian and ask them about how to stay safe online.

You can find out more information about how to stay safe online at www.thinkuknow.co.uk or if you would like to speak to someone about anything that is worrying you visit www.childline.org.uk or call 0800 1111. We have included more information about this rating on the other side of this letter.

It's important to remember that everyone who uses the internet is at some risk and this rating only covers the things we asked you about. We can't tell you how risky any other things you have experienced or done online might be.

Yours faithfully,



Nick Stripe
Head of Crime Statistics, Office for National Statistics



Dear [ADULT NAME]

Crime Survey for England and Wales
9-17 year old survey

Your child recently took part in the Crime Survey for England and Wales.

Part of the questionnaire for 9-17 year olds included questions about their use of the internet and their online behaviour and experiences. This covered topics like sharing personal information and talking to strangers online, as well as online bullying. Children aged 13 to 17 were also asked about sending or receiving sexual messages.

Your child's online risk rating

You may recall that the survey interviewer outlined how this information would be used to produce a risk rating. This rating gives an indication of the extent to which the child's online experiences or behaviour asked about may be putting them at risk, and categorises the level of risk as either low, medium or high.

This letter is to let you know that we have checked your child's answers and the things they have experienced or done online are considered to be low risk. This information is only being shared with you and your child.

Low Risk	The answers given suggest that your child is taking reasonable precautions when engaging in or experiencing the types of online activity covered in the survey.
-----------------	---

What does the risk rating mean?

The risk rating is based on your child's answers to the questions in the survey. The rating can only provide an **indication** of risk based on the answers given. Your child may not have answered all of the questions. The survey does not ask about future behaviour, so the assessment is based on your child's answers about their past online experiences and activity only. The risk rating does not cover any aspect of your child's online experiences or activity that are not asked about in the survey.

What should I do next?

It may be useful to talk to your child about how they use the internet and how they can stay safe online.

The NSPCC can provide help and support for parents about online safety. Information is available on their website or by calling 0808 800 5000.

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/>

If you would like to see the questions that the risk rating is based on, these are available on the crime survey website (www.crimesurvey.co.uk/inhome/en/10-15yearOldsSurvey). If you have any further questions about the risk rating please contact the Survey Enquiry Line at the Office for National Statistics on 0800 085 7376.

Yours faithfully,



Nick Stripe

Head of Crime Statistics, Office for National Statistics



Dear [ADULT NAME]

Crime Survey for England and Wales
9-17 year old survey

Your child recently took part in the Crime Survey for England and Wales.

Part of the questionnaire for 9-17 year olds included questions about their use of the internet and their online behaviour and experiences. This covered topics like sharing personal information and talking to strangers online, as well as online bullying. Children aged 13 to 17 were also asked about sending or receiving sexual messages.

Your child's online risk rating

You may recall that the survey interviewer outlined how this information would be used to produce a risk rating. This rating gives an indication of the extent to which your child's online experiences and behaviour asked about may be putting them at risk, and categorises the level of risk as either low, medium or high.

This letter is to let you know that we have checked your child's answers and the things they have experienced or done online are considered to be medium risk. This information is only being shared with you and your child.

Medium Risk	The answers given suggest that your child is taking some precautions when engaging in or experiencing the types of online activity covered in the survey, but some of their activities or experiences might open them up to risk.
--------------------	---

What does the risk rating mean?

The risk rating is based on your child's answers to the questions in the survey. The rating can only provide an **indication** of risk based on the answers given. Your child may not have answered all of the questions. The survey does not ask about future behaviour, so the assessment is based on your child's answers about their past online experiences and activity only. The risk rating does not cover any aspect of your child's online experiences or activity that are not asked about in the survey.

What should I do next?

It may be useful to talk to your child about how they use the internet and how they can stay safe online. This is particularly important where the risk rating is medium or high.

The NSPCC can provide help and support for parents about online safety. Information is available on their website or by calling 0808 800 5000.

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/>

If you would like to see the questions that the risk rating is based on, these are available on the crime survey website (www.crimesurvey.co.uk/inhome/en/10-15yearOldsSurvey). If you have any further questions about the risk rating please contact the Survey Enquiry Line at the Office for National Statistics on 0800 085 7376.

Yours faithfully,



Nick Stripe

Head of Crime Statistics, Office for National Statistics



Dear [ADULTNAME]

**Crime Survey for England and Wales
9-17 year old survey**

Your child recently took part in the Crime Survey for England and Wales.

Part of the questionnaire for 9-17 year olds included questions about their use of the internet and their online experiences and behaviour. This covered topics like sharing personal information and talking to strangers online, as well as online bullying. Children aged 13 to 17 were also asked about sending or receiving sexual messages.

Your child's online risk rating

You may recall that the survey interviewer outlined how this information would be used to produce a risk rating. This rating gives an indication of the extent to which your child's online experiences or behaviour asked about may be putting them at risk, and categorises the level of risk as either low, medium or high.

This letter is to let you know that we have checked your child's answers and the things they have experienced or done online are considered to be high risk. This information is only being shared with you and your child.

High Risk	The answers given suggest that your child may have had a negative experience online, either as a result of how others have behaved online, or through some potentially risky online behaviour they have engaged in.
------------------	---

What does the risk rating mean?

The risk rating is based on your child's answers to the questions in the survey. The rating can only provide an **indication** of risk based on the answers given. Your child may not have answered all of the questions. The survey does not ask about future behaviour, so the assessment is based on your child's answers about their past online experiences and activity only. The risk rating does not cover any aspect of your child's online experiences or activity that are not asked about in the survey.

What should I do next?

It may be useful to talk to your child about how they use the internet and how they can stay safe online. This is particularly important where the risk rating is medium or high.

The NSPCC can provide help and support for parents about online safety. Information is available on their website or by calling 0808 800 5000.

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/>

If you would like to see the questions that the risk rating is based on, these are available on the crime survey website (www.crimeresurvey.co.uk/inhome/en/10-15yearOldsSurvey). If you have any further questions about the risk rating please contact the Survey Enquiry Line at the Office for National Statistics on 0800 085 7376.

Yours faithfully,



Nick Stripe

Head of Crime Statistics, Office for National Statistics



What does the risk rating mean?

Everyone who uses the internet is exposed to some level of risk. The level of risk can depend on what you have experienced or done online and the security measures you take. The risk rating gives an indication of how safe your online experiences or behaviour are. This rating is based on your answers to questions about experiences and behaviour in the Crime Survey for England and Wales. This rating is only based on the types of online experiences and behaviour asked about in the survey and cannot account for any behaviour, experiences or activity not covered in the survey. The rating relies on the answers you gave and does not cover every aspect of your online experiences or activity.

Low Risk

A low risk rating means:

The answers given suggest that you are taking reasonable precautions when experiencing or engaging in the types of online activity covered in the survey.

Medium Risk

A medium risk rating means:

The answers given suggest that you are taking some precautions when experiencing or engaging in the types of online activity covered in the survey, but some of your experiences or activities might open you up to risk.

High Risk

A high risk rating means:

The answers given suggest that you may have had a negative experience, either as a result of how others have behaved online, or through some potentially risky online behaviour you have engaged in.

What should I do next?

- If you are concerned about this rating, visit our website www.crimesurvey.co.uk/inhome/en/10-15yearoldssurvey for links to where you can find more help and support
- If you would like to talk to someone about something that is worrying you, you can contact Childline on 0800 1111

Where can I find more information?

- To look in more detail at the questions that the risk rating is based on you can visit www.crimesurvey.co.uk/inhome/en/10-15yearOldsSurvey
- For information on how to help you stay safe online, visit www.thinkuknow.co.uk

Contact us

- If you have further questions, please contact the Survey Enquiry Line at the Office for National Statistics on 0800 298 5313

What does the risk rating mean?

Everyone who uses the internet is exposed to some level of risk. The level of risk can vary depending on the activities someone engages in and the security measures taken. The risk rating is designed to give you an indication of how safe your child's online behaviour is.

This rating is based on your child's answers to questions about their experiences and behaviour in the Crime Survey for England and Wales. This rating is only based on the types of **online experiences and behaviour** asked about in the survey. It cannot account for any offline experiences or behaviour covered in the survey, or any online experiences, behaviour or activity that are not covered in the survey. The rating relies on the answers given by the child and may not cover every aspect of their online experiences or activity.

Low Risk	A low risk rating means: The answers given suggest that your child is taking reasonable precautions when experiencing or engaging in the types of online activity covered in the survey.
Medium Risk	A medium risk rating means: The answers given suggest that your child is taking some precautions when experiencing or engaging in the types of online activity covered in the survey, but some of their experiences or activities might open them up to risk.
High Risk	A high risk rating means: The answers given suggest that your child may have had a negative experience online, either as a result of how others have behaved online, or through some potentially risky online behaviour they have engaged in.

How do we calculate the risk rating?

This rating is calculated using scores assigned to answers which suggest a level of risk. We calculate a risk rating of low, medium, or high for each section in the module. These sections are; online bullying, speaking to strangers and meetings stranger and for children aged 13-15, sending, and receiving images of a sexual nature. The highest rating across all these sections is then taken as the overall risk rating for your child.

What should I do next?

If you are concerned about this rating, it may be useful to talk to your child about how to stay safe online. The NSPCC can provide help and support for parents about online safety. Information is available on their website or by calling 0808 800 5000.

www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/online-safety

Where can I find more information?

To look in more detail at the questions used to calculate the risk rating you can visit

www.crimesurvey.co.uk/inhome/en/10-15yearOldsSurvey

For information on how to help your child stay safe online, visit www.thinkuknow.co.uk or

www.internetmatters.org

Contact us

If you have further questions, please contact the Survey Enquiry Line at the Office for National Statistics on 0800 085 7376.

Appendix D – Transformation Work Package A: Summary

Background

The core purpose of Transformation Work Package A was to develop and test an online self-completion questionnaire, based on the current CSEW survey, that could be used to estimate the prevalence and incidence of crime among adults aged 16+.

As this built on a previous large-scale scoping and testing project, the overall scope of Work Package A was much broader than Work Package B:

- a) Initial scoping review (rapid evidence review and synthesis of the evidence on the benefits and limitations of online crime surveys)
- b) Review of the existing online questionnaire to ensure the survey is fit for purpose for the live test
- c) Redevelopment of the existing script to take on board the findings of a) and b)
- d) Pre-test of the re-developed online questionnaire with people who have 'complex' crime histories to explore whether the online screener questions and victim forms are working as intended
- e) Live trial to assess the reliability of a wholly web version of the CSEW questionnaire
- f) Post-hoc cognitive/ usability interviews targeted with respondents from the live trial who are identified as complex cases

The live trial provided an opportunity to include two questions, at the end of the online crime survey to be asked of parents of children aged 9-17 years, to help provide additional context for Transformation Work Package B.

The two questions are shown below:

WPCHPART

We are developing a survey about children's experiences of crime and negative experiences online. If they were invited to take part, your child would be asked to complete a 20-minute survey online.

You mentioned that you have a child in the age range 9-17. If you have more than one child aged 9-17, please think about your youngest child in this age range.

Which of the following statements best describes how would you feel about this child taking part in an online survey about crime?

- *I would be happy for the child to take part and for them to complete the survey in private*
- *I would be happy for the child to take part but I would want to be on hand to help if needed*

- *I would be happy for the child to take part but I would want to supervise their responses*
- *I would not be happy for them to take part in this survey*

WPCHCONC⁴¹

What concerns, if any, might you have about this child taking part? (OPEN question)

Summary of findings

As noted in the question introduction, where parents had more than one child aged 9-17 years, they were asked to consider the youngest of these when answering, with a summary of the (weighted) findings shown below:

	Total (659) %	Age of youngest child within range:		
		Child aged 9-10 years (203) %	Child aged 11-15 years (328) %	Child aged 16-17 years (128) %
Happy for child to take part and for them to complete the survey in private	28	15	26	54
Happy for child to take part, but would want to be on hand if needed	36	37	39	24
Happy for child to take part, but would want to supervise their responses	12	23	8	8
I would not be happy for them to take part in this survey	24	25	27	15

Participants who said they would not be happy for their child to take part in the survey were then asked a follow-up question to understand what concerns, if any, they had with the survey.

190 participants were asked this follow-up question (24%), but over half of these (52%) said they had no specific concerns with the survey.

⁴¹ This was only asked of those who said they would not be happy for their child to take part in the survey

Among parents who cited at least one concern, one of the key barriers to their consent was a concern that the survey would scare their child or create unnecessary concern. However, it is important to highlight that in the current survey the parental consent is based on much more information than was included in the live trial. In the absence of this information, it is possible that parents anticipated that the children's survey would be more closely aligned to the adult version than would otherwise be the case.

Other drivers of concern were linked to the age of the child, specifically that they were too young and their child having SEN.

Appendix E – Summary of the 2018 risk rating research

Background

A small-scale pilot of the risk rating process was conducted in November and December 2018 to explore the reaction to the risk rating and understanding of the score among parents and 10–15-year-olds.

The original research had three aims:

1. To understand how parents and children interpreted the information about the survey and the risk rating
2. To understand whether the risk rating and confidentiality statements affected children's responses to the self-completion module
3. To understand the reaction of parents and children to the risk rating and survey materials

It is important to say that unlike the 2018 research the risk rating process was not the primary focus of the Transformation Work Package B research programme. Similarly, this later research covers both younger (9-year-olds) and older participants (16–17-year-olds). However, the earlier research foreshadows some of the concerns raised in this later project.

CYP reaction to the risk rating process in the 2018 pilot

Most children in the pilot said they did not think about the confidentiality statement, or that their parents may be able to see their answers, while completing the survey. As such, most children reported that they answered honestly and were not influenced by this. Only one participant admitted that they might not have been completely honest at all questions. However, it is important to note that this was prior to the discussion around the high-risk rating letter (see below). Some parents were slightly more sceptical about the extent to which their child may have adjusted answers to ensure that they received a low rating.

However, understanding of what the risk rating meant varied. Some children thought that this meant that they were at low risk online and that they took precautions and knew what to do online. Other children did not have as good an understanding, one child thought that this rating would relate to their general risk of being a victim or committing crimes, both online and offline. This participant did not appear to engage with the survey leaflet at all which explained the content of the survey and risk rating.

Participants all received a low or medium rating, with discussions around the high rating being purely hypothetical for this cohort.

Children who received a medium risk rating were generally less happy with their rating but understood that it demonstrated they took some precautions while also taking some risks. When asked how they felt about their parent's reaction some of the children were concerned about how their parents would react to a higher risk rating. One child was very disappointed she had received a medium risk rating rather than a low rating. As the interview continued, she became more concerned about her parents' reaction to her rating and was visibly distracted. When asked about her concern, the child said she had a YouTube channel and thought her parents would block her access.

Furthermore, these CYP felt that some children would be more worried to take part if they knew they would receive a letter if they were high-risk. These children were split on whether they would answer honestly or alter their responses. Some children said they would still answer honestly as they would want to know their risk rating was accurate. Other children said they thought other children would be more likely to change their scores to ensure that they did not receive a high-risk rating.

Parental reaction to the risk rating process in the 2018 pilot

After reading the Parental Information Card, most parents/guardians had a good understanding of the child survey and what the survey would ask their child. However, some expressed concerns about what risk rating their child would receive and many parents were concerned their child may receive a higher rating. One parent raised concerns about the nature of the questions asked, this was in reference to the sending and receiving messages of a sexual nature section. Once it was explained that the questions had been specifically tailored for children and all questions included an option not to answer they were happy for their child to participate.

Parents who received a low-risk rating for their child's online behaviour, were happy with their child's rating. However, some parents did express doubt about the accuracy of the score as they thought their child knew enough about what they were supposed to do online to give the 'correct' answers required to generate a low-risk score. One parent was concerned that the score may not be accurate as the child knew they could potentially see their answers, while another suggested their child would deliberately adjust their answers.

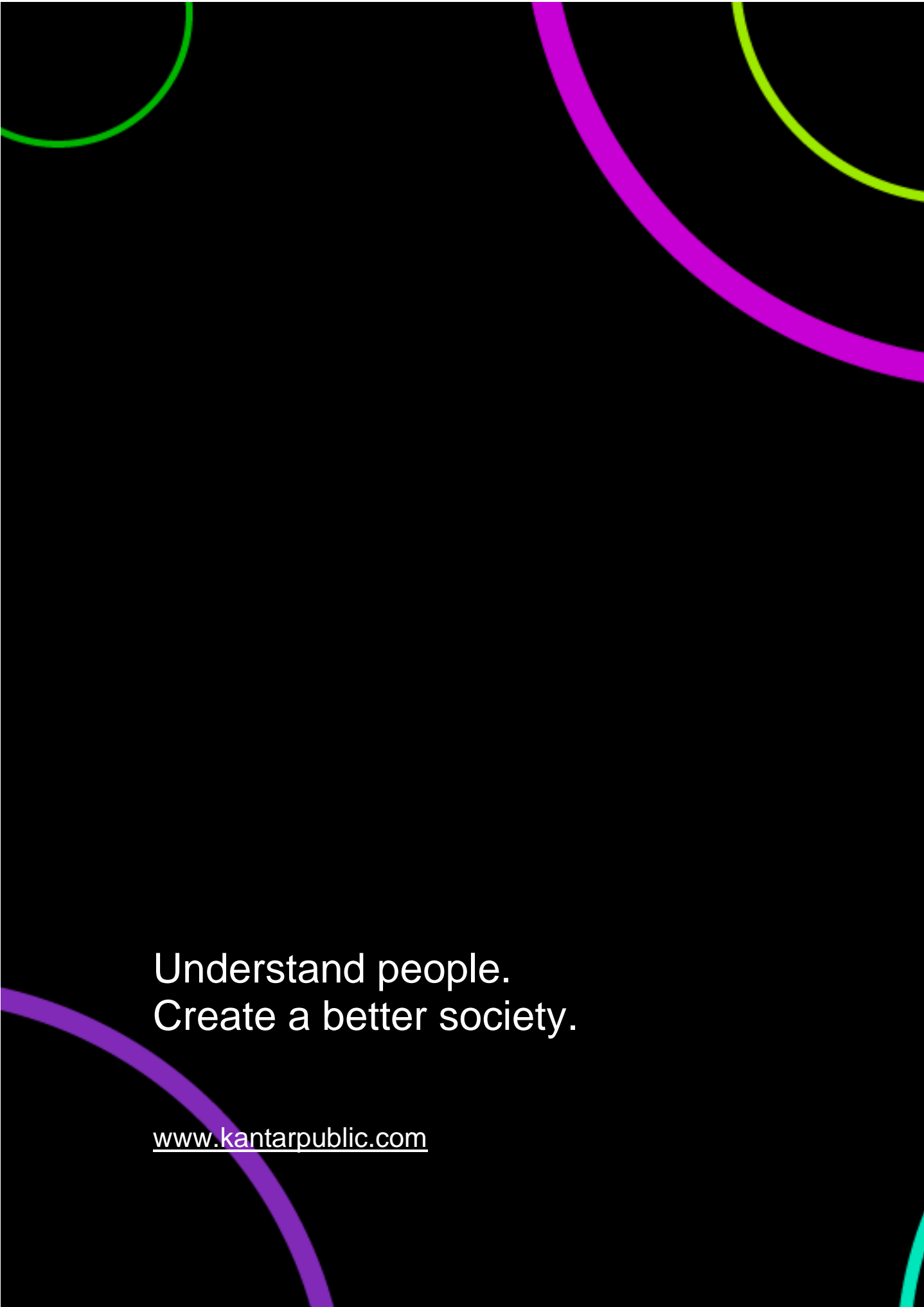
Parents who received a medium risk rating for their child, were more concerned by the rating. One parent did expect the rating to be medium and wanted to know where the risk was coming from. After telling this parent that her daughter had received a medium risk rating, she spoke of 'repercussions', specifically taking her daughter's phone away.

As such, parents or guardians who received a medium risk rating were more likely to consider interventions, limitations, or restrictions regarding their child's online behaviour. Some said they would like to see their child's responses so that they could know how to tailor these conversations. Other parents said they would look at the questionnaire online to understand what topics they may need to talk to their child about.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, all parents or guardians said they would be much more concerned if their child had received a high-risk rating.

In this scenario, most said they would need more information, with some saying that the information in the letter would not have been sufficient and would have worried them. One parent said that the letter would have caused "panic" in their household as they felt the

letter did not provide enough information about why the child was at risk. They felt that any letter informing them that their child was at high-risk would cause concern. Most parents or guardians said they would need to know what specifically put them at high-risk. Some parents felt they would need guidance on what to talk to their child about. A number of parents commented that being able to see the questions that were asked would be a useful resource to help frame their discussions with their child.



Understand people.
Create a better society.

www.kantarpublic.com