'My child added £16,000 of products into my Amazon basket'; parents admit most surprising things their children have done online in new survey

- 87% of children use the internet whilst still in primary school, including more than 3 quarters of 5 to 7 year olds
- Only 27% of parents admitted to feeling completely confident that their child was safe when using the internet

Internet habits of 5-7 year olds

24% have sent a photograph to friends/family
16% have sent an email
11% have used a live chat
9% have used a photo editing app
6% have subscribed to an online club/service
*From a survey of over 1000 parents

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Internet habits of 5-11 year olds

50% have used video calling
34% have sent a photograph to friends and family
34% have listened to/streamed music
22% have watched a TikTok video
17% have used a live chat
*From a survey of over 1000 parents

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Internet habits of 8-11 year olds

42% have sent a photograph to friends/family
37% have sent an email
23% have used a live chat
23% have used a photo editing app
11% have subscribed to an online club/service
*From a survey of over 1000 parents

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They may not know their nine times table or how to tie their shoelaces yet, but over 16% of children aged between 5 to 7 have sent an email and over 11% use live chat.

New research has also revealed that over a third of primary school children, aged between 5 and 11, use the internet to share content. This includes 34% using it to send a photograph to friends and family, 50% for video calling and 34% to listen to music using services such as Spotify and iTunes.

A nationwide survey conducted by Natterhub this week asked over 1,000 parents about the internet habits of their children.

Growing up with YouTube, Netflix and Spotify, the results reveal that 87% of children at primary school age are using the internet for a range of purposes.

The results reveal that before they even reach secondary school, 23% of 8 to 11year olds have used a photo editing app and as many as one in ten have subscribed to an online club or service.

Among children aged between 5 and 7, the figures are lower but still show that 9% had edited a photo and 6% had subscribed to a club or service online.

The survey also asked parents to share some of the most surprising things their children have done online, with the results revealing the most common things to be:

1. **Sharing embarrassing photographs.**
   Almost a quarter of children aged between 5 and 7, along with 42% of 8 to 11year olds, have sent a photo to friends or family using the internet, results have shown. One parent described their mortification when their child recorded them snoring on the sofa and shared it with a WhatsApp group of other parents with the caption 'even with a bad chest, there is enough oxygen to make this noise'.

2. **Buying things that they shouldn't.**
   One parent revealed that their child added £16,000 of products to their Amazon basket but that they had fortunately disabled one-click purchasing. Although 79% of parents confirmed that they have parental locks and control settings in place, the research suggests that some children still manage to bypass these. For example, another parent described how their child bought £130 worth of games after hacking passwords and parental locks, and 10% of parents surveyed actually admitted to not using any protective tools at all.

3. **Using social media.**
   According to the survey, 7% of children aged 8 to 11 years have viewed social media posts, as well as 4% of 5 to 7year olds, despite the minimum age for any social media account being 13 years old. One parent disclosed how their child accesses their Facebook account and uses the love heart emoji on any photo they come across, even those of strangers.

4. **Sending emails.**
   Most children are still learning how to correctly punctuate a sentence in primary school as part of the National curriculum in England. However, the survey revealed that more than 36% of children between 8 and 11 years old have sent an email, as well as 16% of 5 to 7year olds. One parent described how their child emailed a newspaper to complain about an article on a popular celebrity that didn't mention they were home-schooled. The newspaper later asked the child to write an article about home education, the first time the parent knew about it was when it was published.

The survey was conducted by Natterhub, a secure social media platform, with support from global educational publisher, Twinkl, in order to understand the technological capabilities of children aged between 5 and 11 years old.

Manjit Sareen, Co-Founder and CEO of Natterhub and a parent of two young boys said: "As a result of growing up in the digital age, children are becoming increasingly advanced at using technology. This is generally positive and vital for their future, but at the same time we need to be aware that it is likely that their technological skills are advancing faster than their social and emotional maturity.

"We know that parents are using lots of different parental locks and settings to try and protect their children online but children today are digital natives. Being born in the millenium, they have grown up with the internet at their fingertips and so in some cases they have better technical skills than adults."

Over half of parents surveyed (53%) admitted to their child helping them with tasks online, including how to remove a virtual background they'd installed on Zoom, how to set a reminder on Amazon Echo, and how to create a playlist on Spotify.

Manjit continued: "Children buying something completely random online could seem harmless, comical almost, once the payment has been stopped or been refunded, but it is important to consider that they do not know how to judge the legitimacy of websites or to understand the risks of credit card scams. Essentially, they do not know how to deal with situations faced online or make informed decisions in the same way that an adult does."

Natterhub is a secure social media platform that has been created for teachers to share with their pupils and use in the classroom and at home. Created for children aged 5 to 11, it creates an online community for children and allows them to learn about social media and the internet in a safe environment.

Caroline Allams, Co-Founder, Parent and CCO, added: "In an increasingly digital world, it is not enough for children to know only how to use technology in a physical way. Children also need to know how to understand how to use the internet appropriately if they are to navigate their digital lives safely and thrive online.

"Children need to know how to be savvy and sceptical when using the internet, which is why we created Natterhub. Natterhub gives children the opportunity to learn and practice appropriate behaviour in an environment overseen by their teacher, enabling them to develop their cognitive maturity to match their technological skills."

Out of over 1000 parents, only 1 in 4 (27%) admitted to feeling completely confident that their child was safe when using the internet and only accessing appropriate content. This suggests being digitally savvy is more important than ever and underlines the importance of teaching children how to behave online in a manner that is both appropriate and safe.

For more information, please visit www.natterhub.com

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For more information please contact media@twinkl.co.uk or call 0114 360 0225

About Natterhub:

- Natterhub was founded by Caroline Allams and Manjit Sareen with the aim to prepare all children to thrive online. The idea to create the platform first came to the duo in 2017. In the years following they have conducted extensive research with teachers, parents and children.
- Natterhub joined TwinklHive in 2019 to support the continued development of the Natterhub platform.
- Online safety is set to become a compulsory subject of the National Curriculum in September 2020.
- Natterhub was set to launch in May, to be used in schools in time for the new compulsory RSE curriculum. In light of the current situation, alterations have been made to make it ideal for home-use and available for free to support teachers, parents and carers during the current school closures.
- Natterhub has been subscribed by over 1500 users in over 35 countries in the first three months of launch.
- More information can be found at natterhub.com