



ONLINE LEARNING

AND PARENTAL CONTROLS



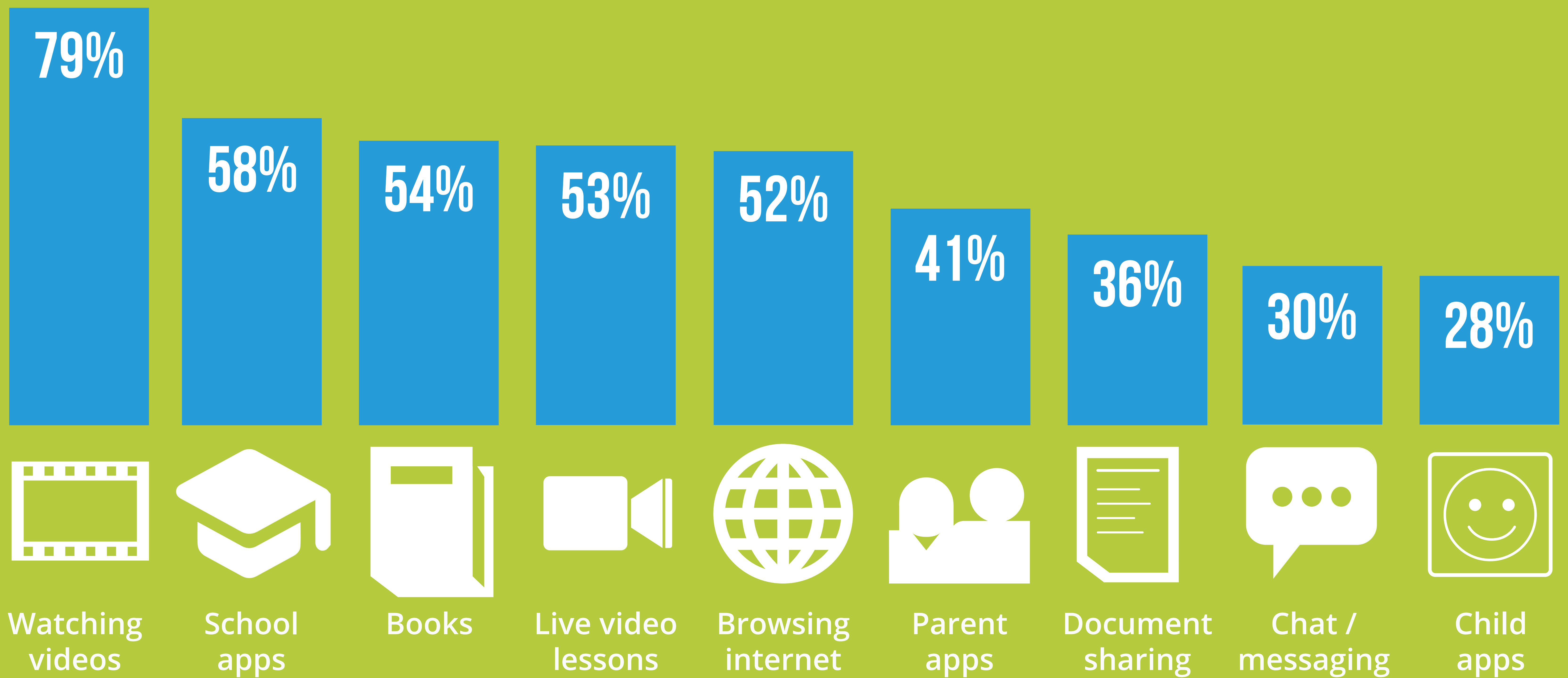
With the recent explosion in online learning as a result of the coronavirus pandemic (an estimated 1.2 billion children have been impacted), we looked at what the main concerns of parents have been and how effective they feel parental controls are in tackling those concerns.

We surveyed a representative group of 1,173 parents - 707 in the US and 466 in the UK. A majority of them said they use parental controls. However, the types of controls and their effectiveness as well as parental concerns about online learning vary significantly across different age groups.

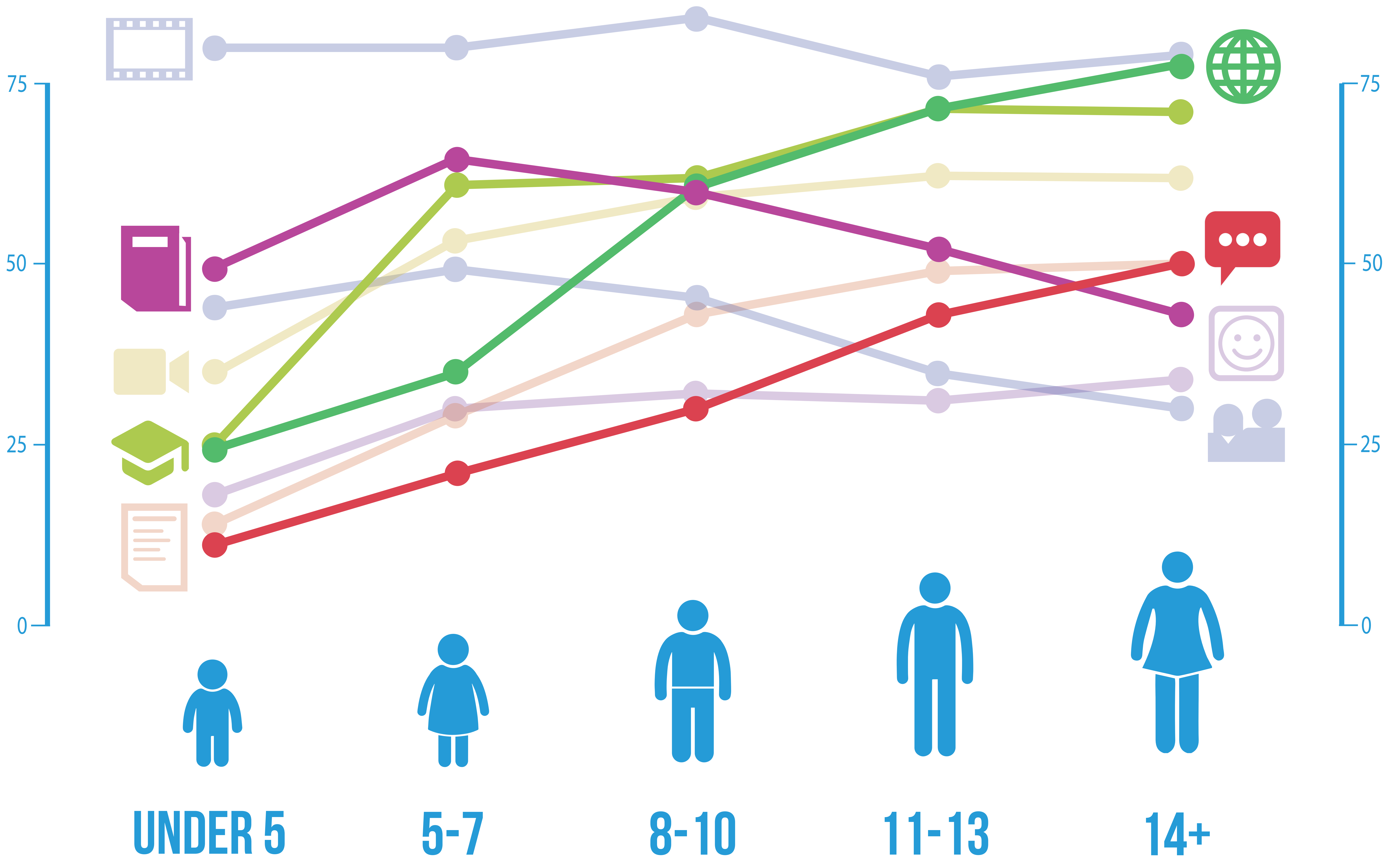
We hope this graphic will provide both parents and policymakers with a better understanding of what online learning - which remains a largely unsupervised activity - looks like and what we can do to make it safer for children.

More information is available in an accompanying report at [iffor.org](https://www.iffor.org).

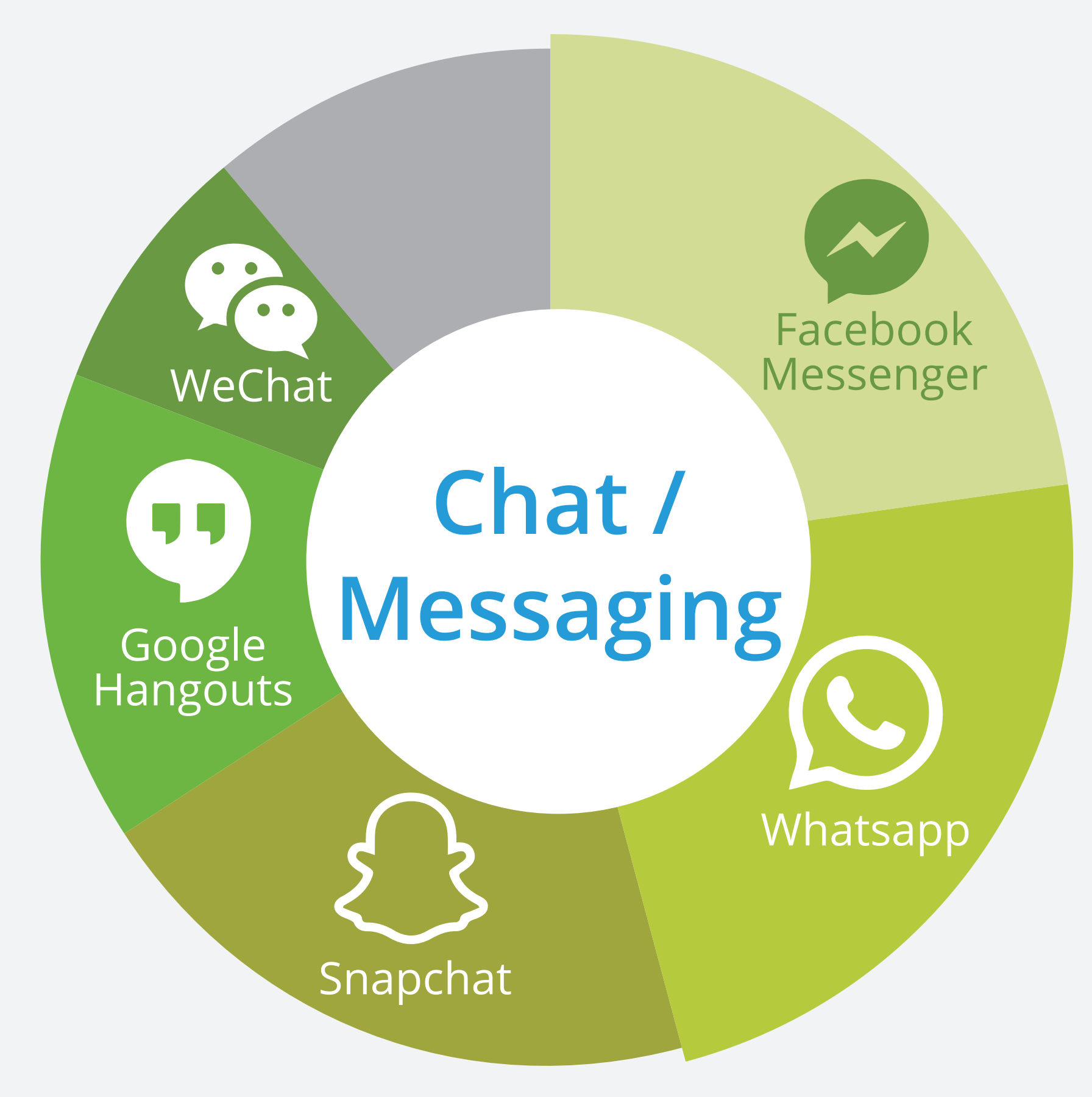
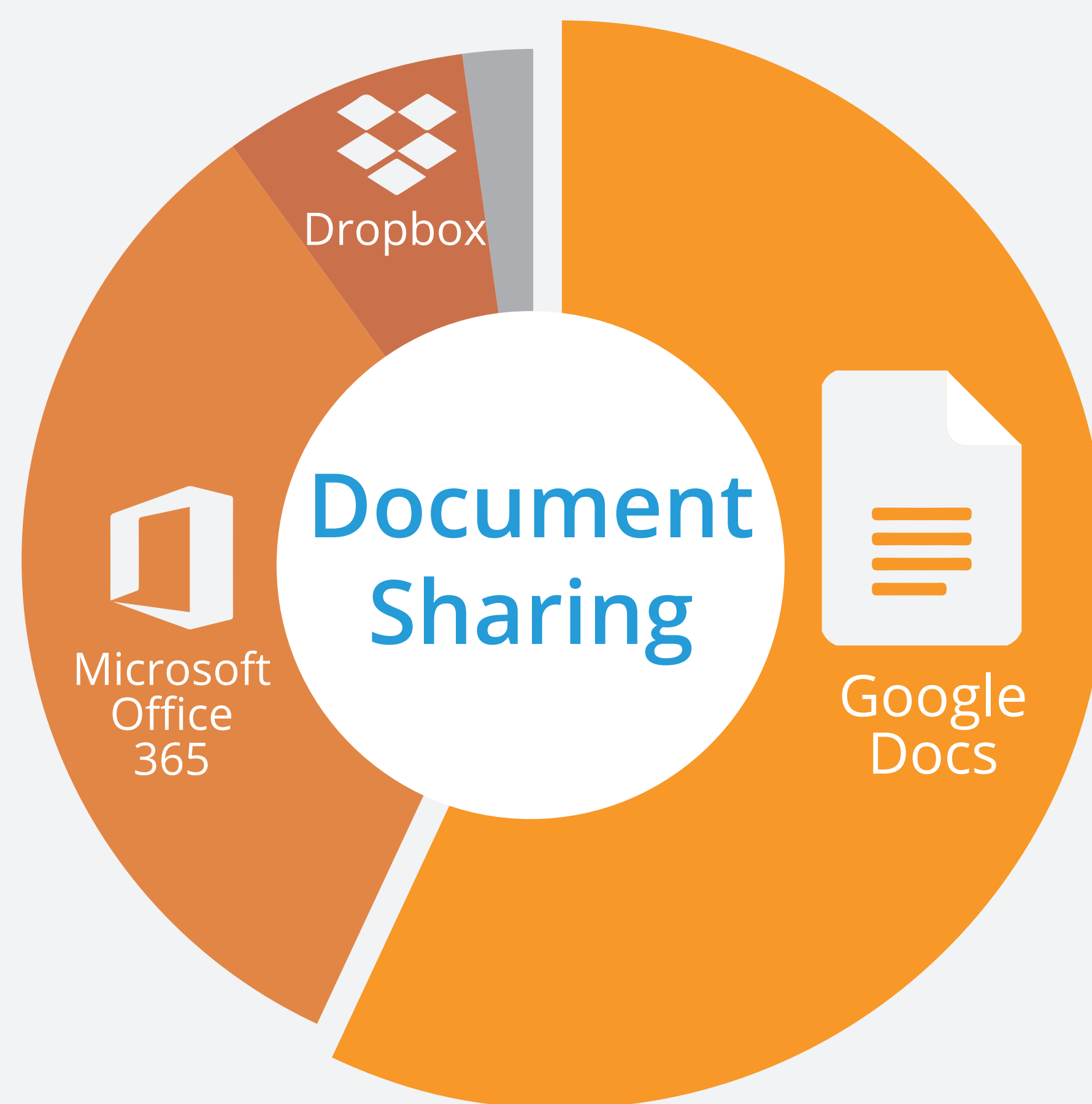
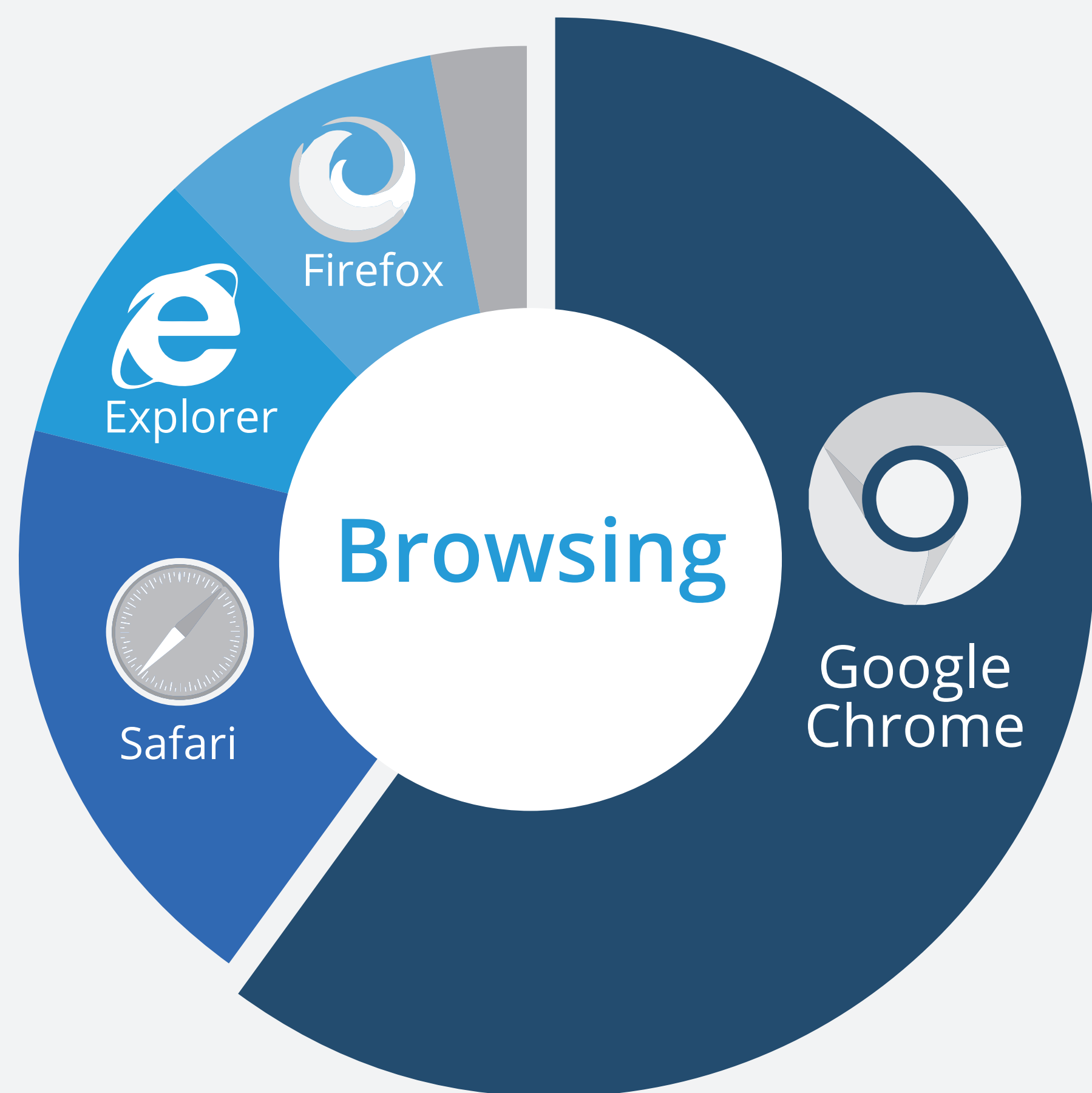
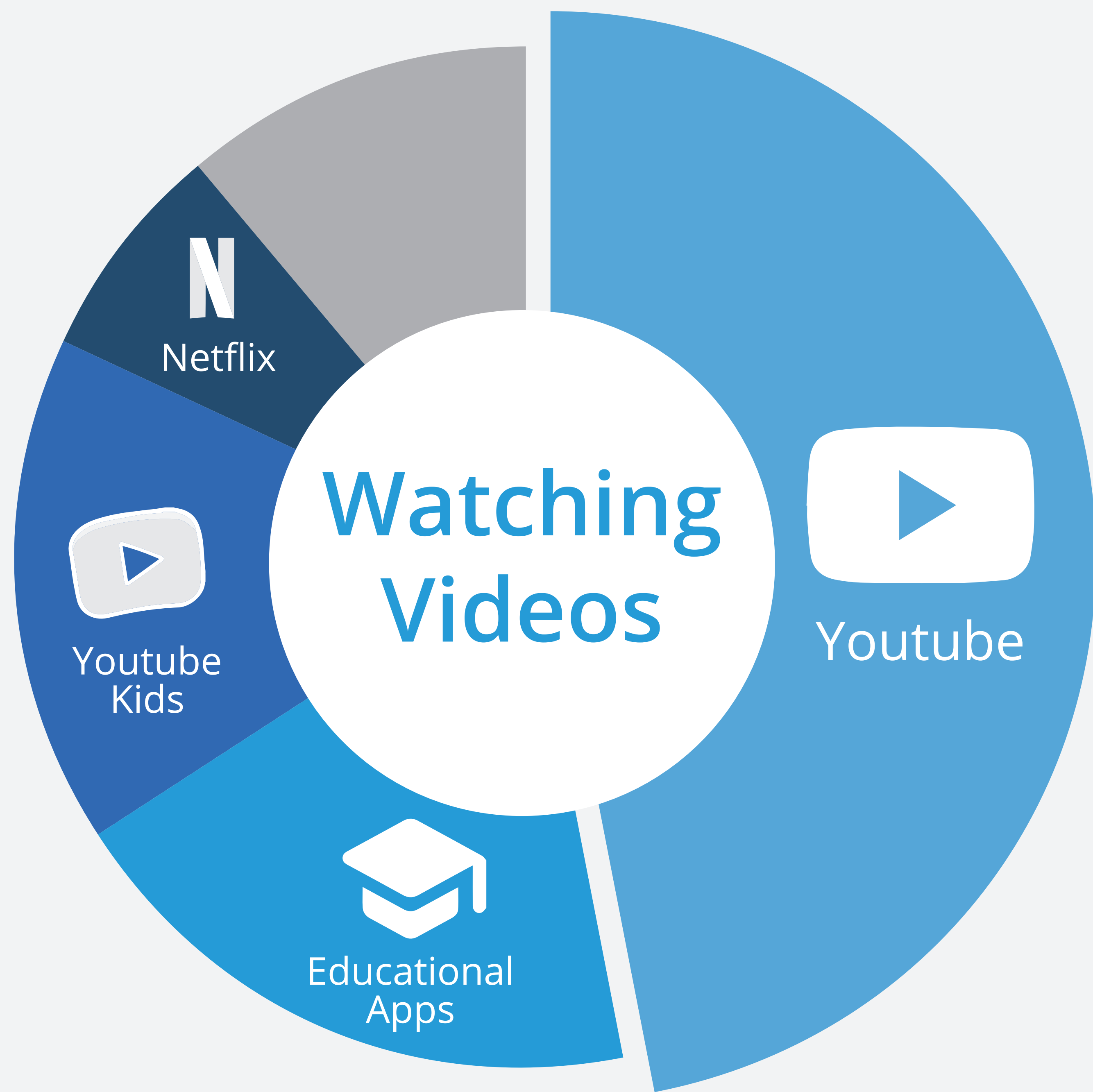
WHAT? are the most common types of online learning



The type of online learning changes significantly across age groups

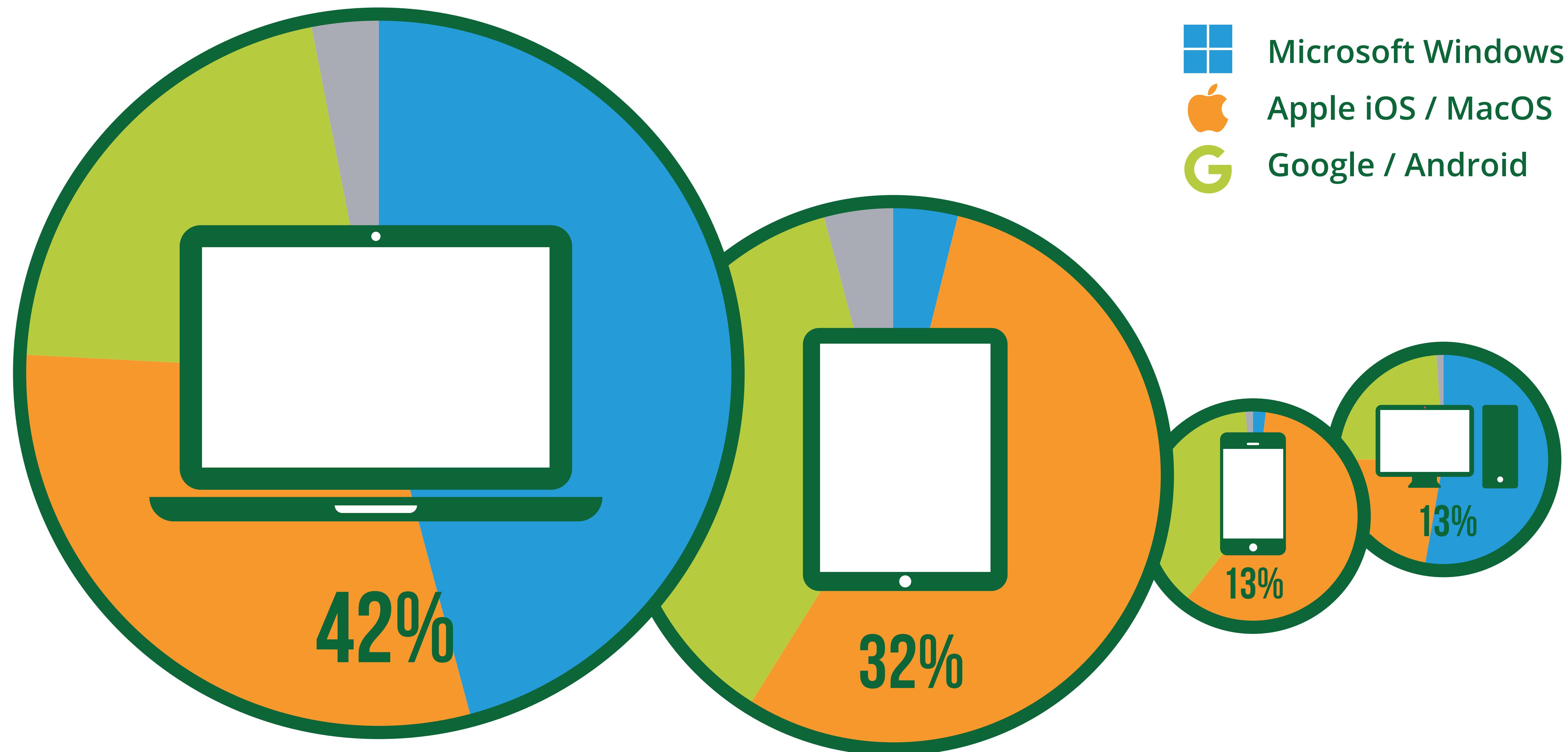


Breakdown of software used for each type of learning

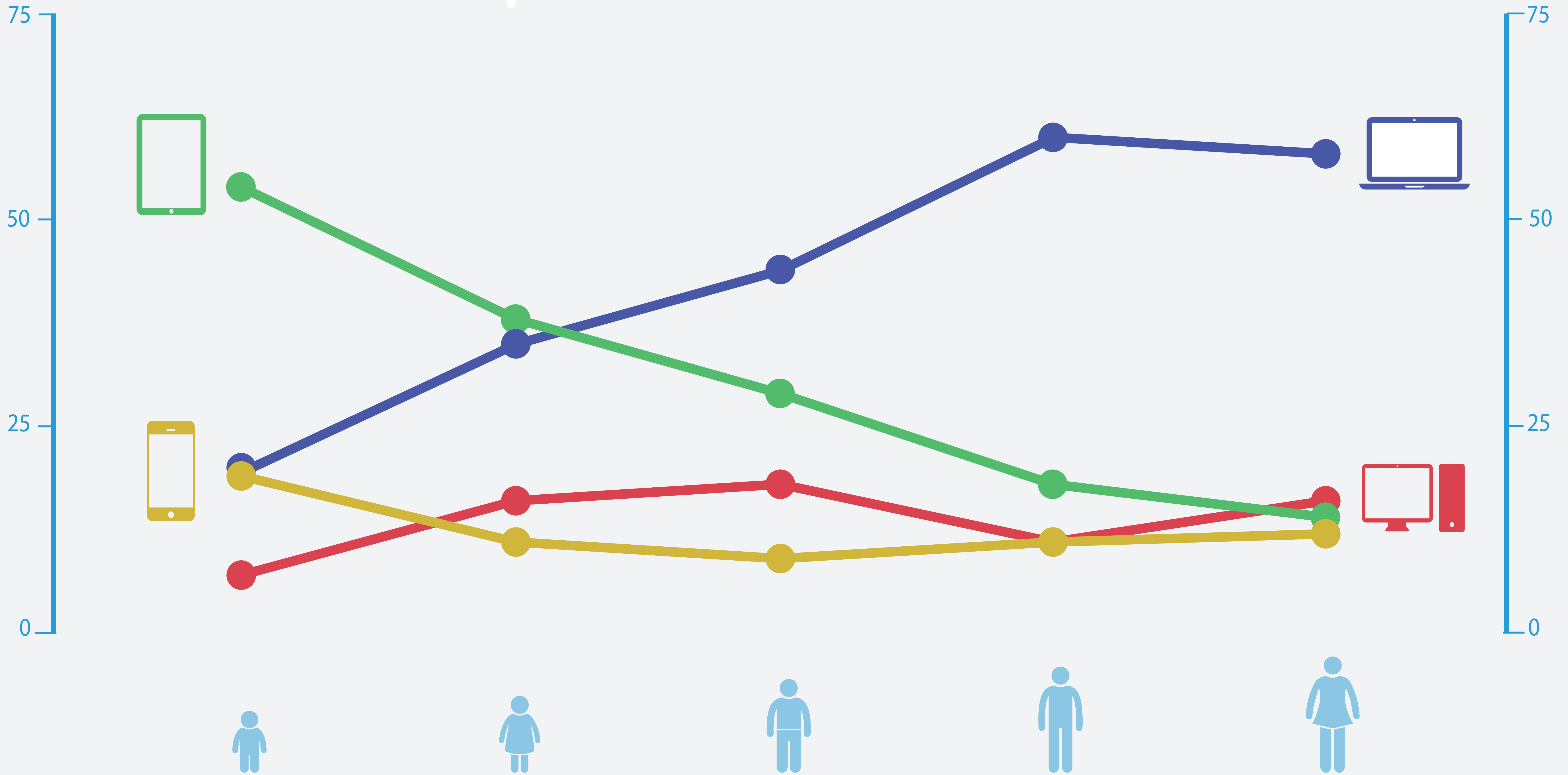


DEVICES

We asked parents what their children's primary device was for online learning



The primary device changes significantly across age groups



PARENTAL CONCERNS

We asked parents what their primary concern is with online learning

Seeing inappropriate content

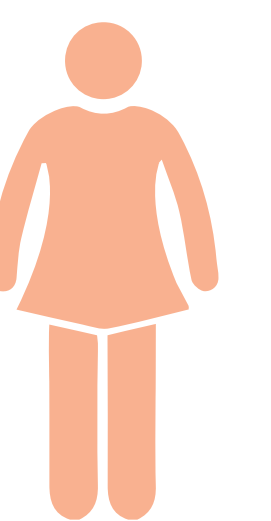
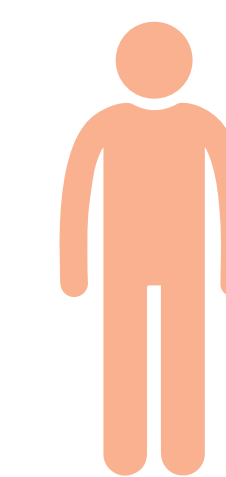
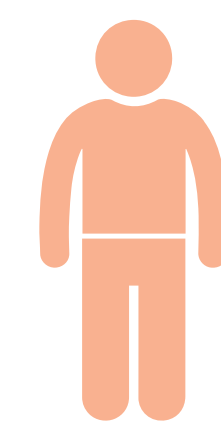
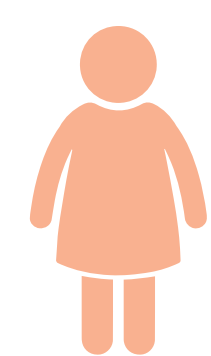
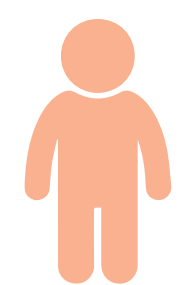
Talking to Strangers

Downloading something dangerous

Lack of real learning/ understanding

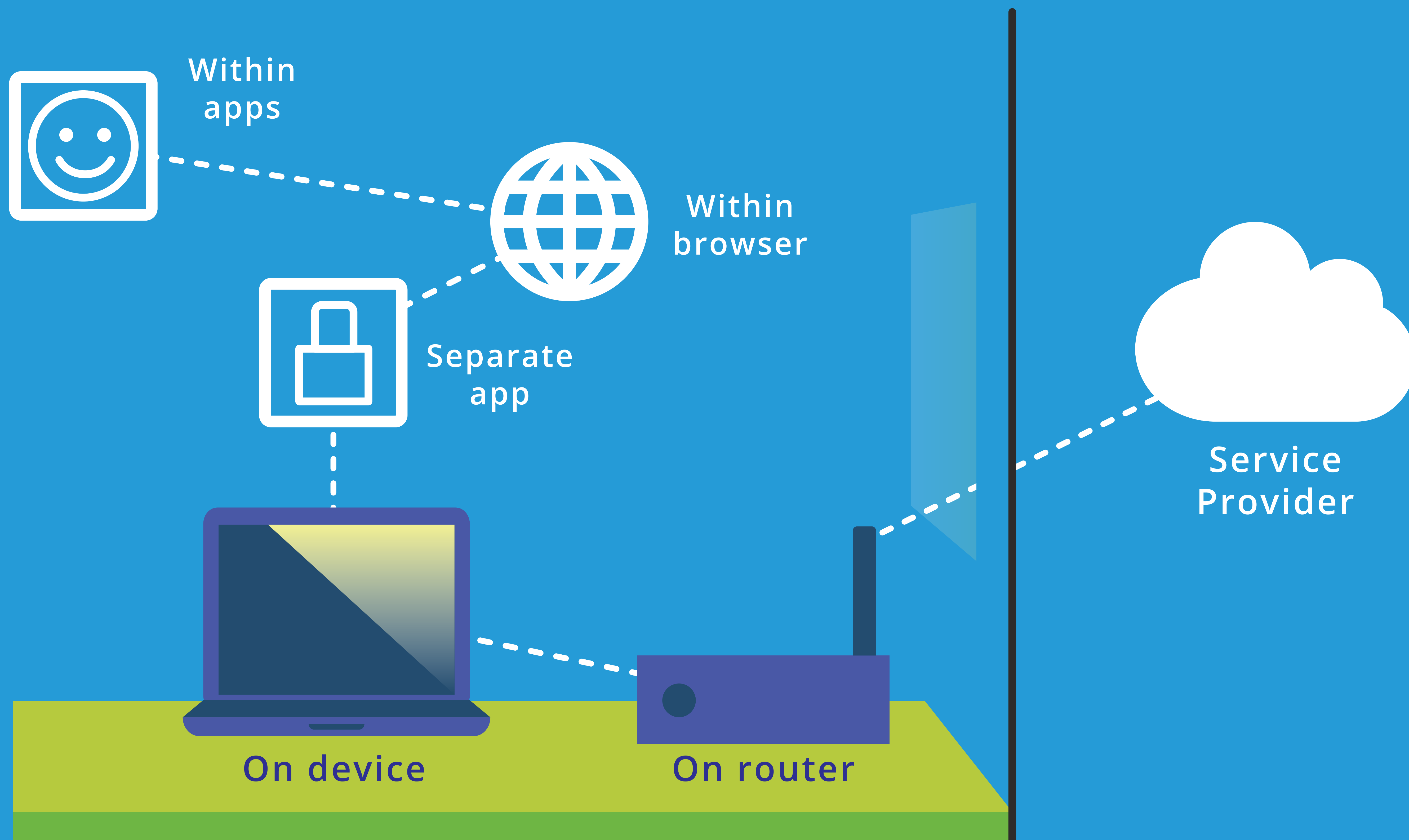
Learning unsupervised

Online bullying

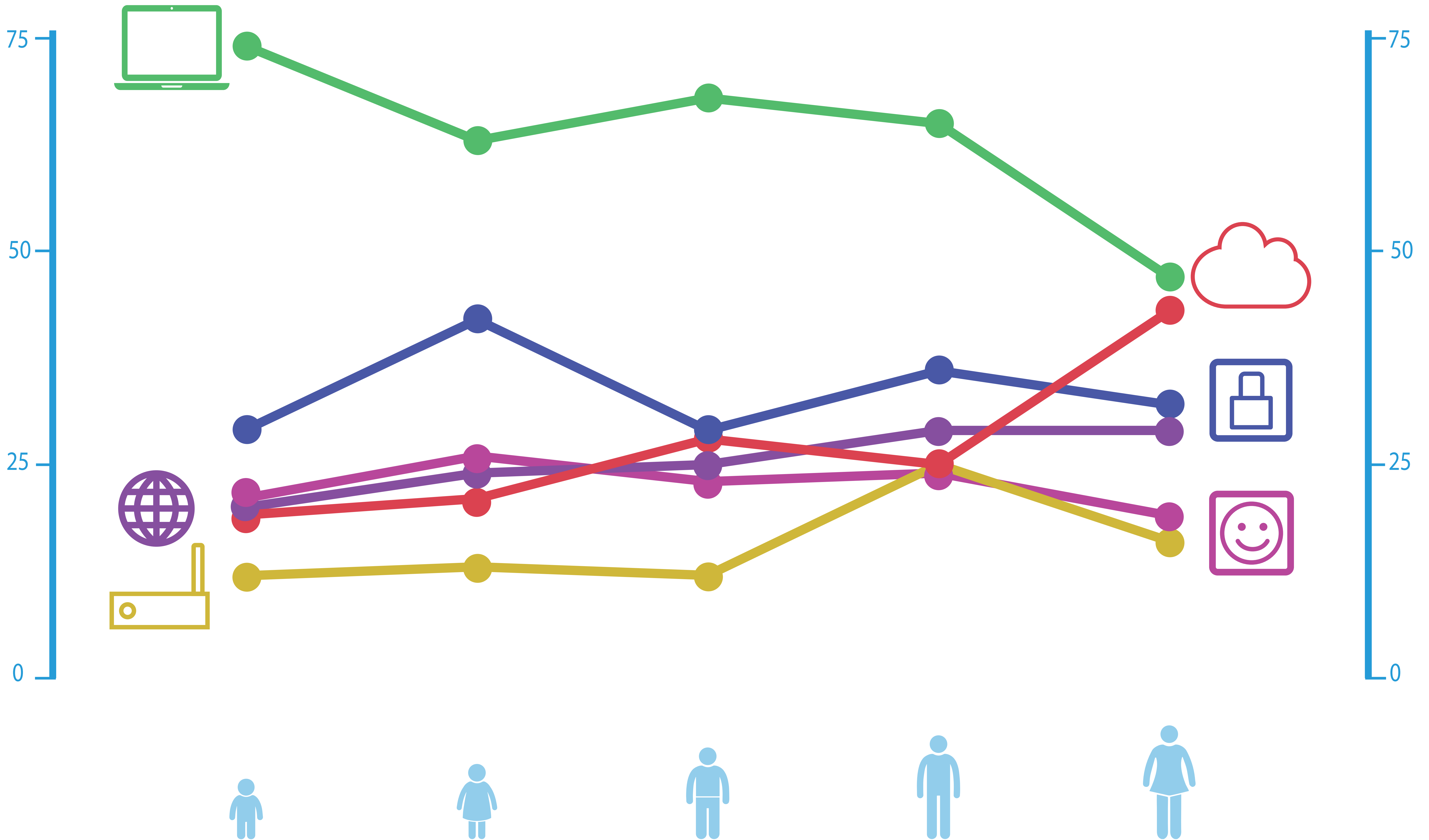


PARENTAL CONTROLS

Parental controls can be added at multiple stages in the flow of information from the internet to the user



The use and position of parental controls changes across different age groups



YOUTUBE COMPARISON



YouTube



YouTube Kids

Most service providers offer a range of parental controls.

A good example is YouTube and its separate YouTube Kids app.

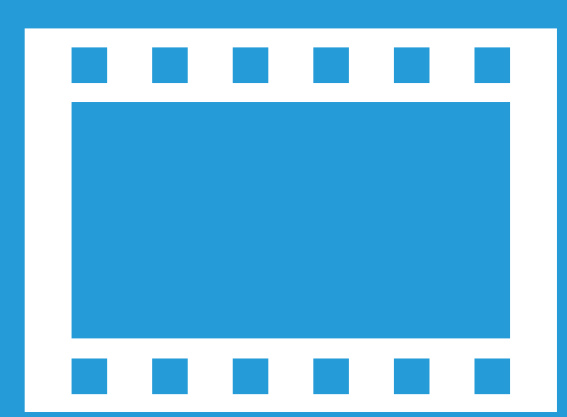
Unfortunately, there is no standard industry approach or even terminology so every developer/publisher tends to adopt their own approach.

	YouTube	YouTube Kids
Content Restrictions	✓	✓
Adult content	✓	✓
Age appropriate content		✓
Choose specific collections		✓
Report content	✓	✓
Restricted search		✓
Turn on/off		✓
Clear/pause search history		✓
Volume control		✓
Timer		✓
Requires setup		✓
Stops ads		✓
Stops comments		✓

AGE GROUPS

While primary issues, activities and devices are often the same for all children, secondary concerns, controls and actions vary widely across age groups.

As such we broke out our data by age group and identified a distinctive concern and use case for each group. We have combined that with parents' ratings for parental controls *for that specific use case*, along with comments on controls overall.



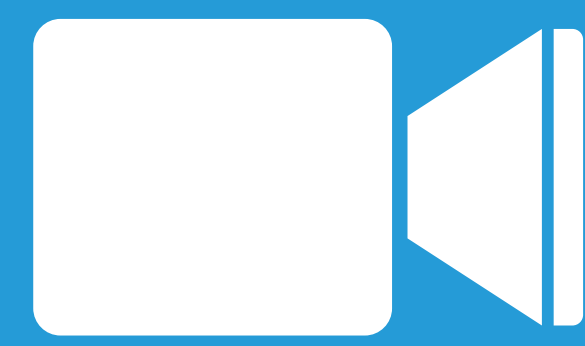
Watching videos



School apps



Books



Live video lessons



Chat / messaging



Browsing internet



Youtube



Zoom



Whatsapp



Chrome

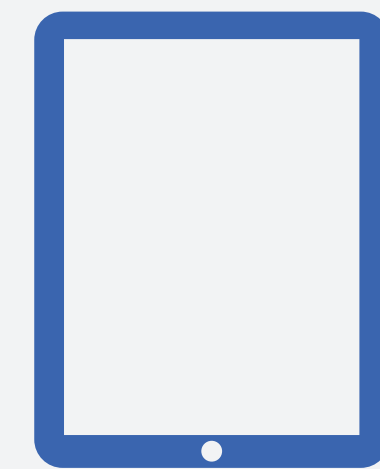
UNDER 5



CONCERN

Seeing inappropriate content

USE CASE



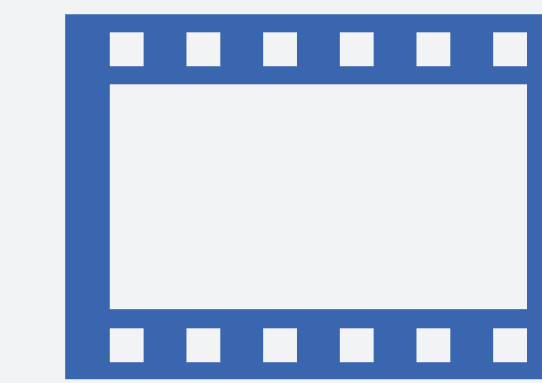
DEVICE



OPERATING SYSTEM



SOFTWARE



ACTIVITY

I don't need parental controls if I'm paying attention to them.

I'll need more controls when she's older.

CONTROLS

Effectiveness

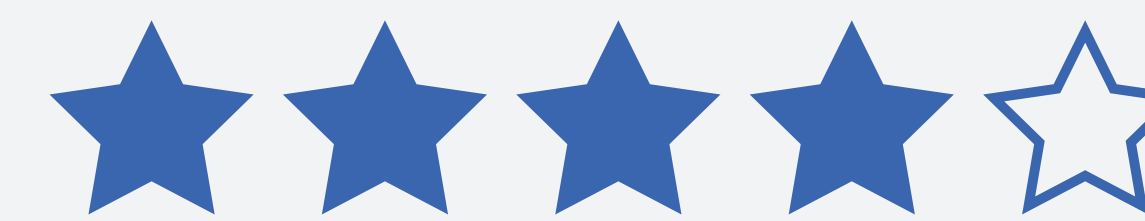


Used by

60%

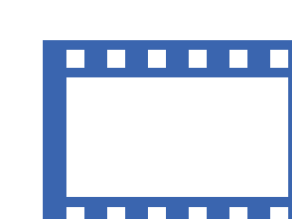
of parents

Ease of use



MOST COMMON

Seeing inappropriate content



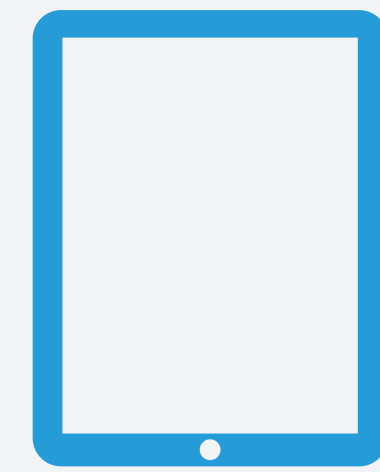
AGES 5-7

CONCERN

Learning Unsupervised



USE CASE



DEVICE



OPERATING SYSTEM

VARIOUS

SOFTWARE



ACTIVITY

We use parental controls for fun time on their tablets. It's nice to have the tablet be the "bad guy" instead of me.

I'm too often notified about irrelevant or unimportant things which causes me to ignore or overlook the more useful notifications.

CONTROLS

Effectiveness



Used by

62%

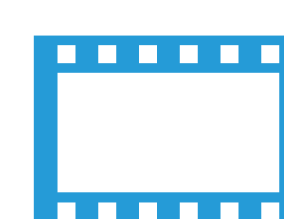
of parents

Ease of use

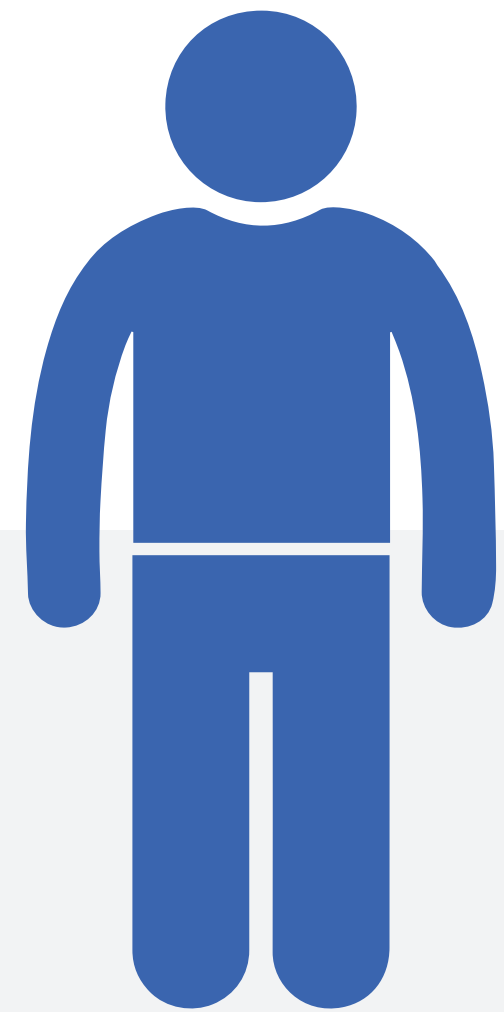


MOST COMMON

Seeing inappropriate content



AGES 8-10



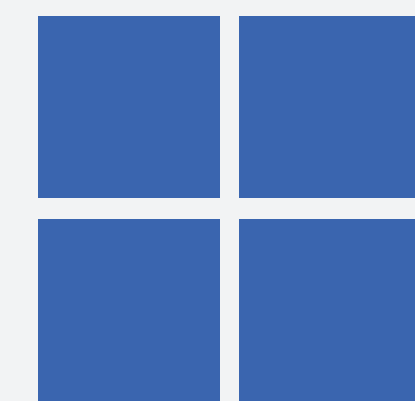
CONCERN

Talking to strangers

USE CASE



DEVICE



OPERATING SYSTEM



SOFTWARE



ACTIVITY

Parental controls works great if you are really interested and work towards it.

I don't really understand [parental controls] and worry that if he needs to use the Internet for research his search responses will be limited because of the controls.

CONTROLS

Effectiveness



Used by

80%
of parents

Ease of use



MOST COMMON

Seeing inappropriate content



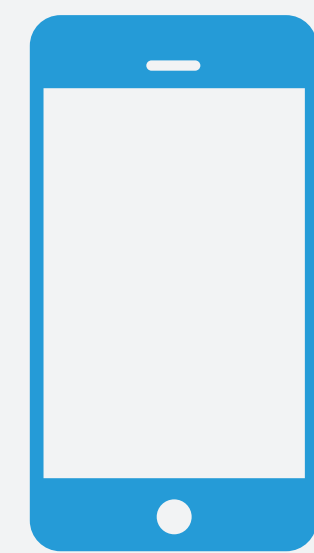
AGES 11-13



CONCERN

Online bullying

USE CASE



DEVICE



OPERATING SYSTEM



SOFTWARE



ACTIVITY

It is very hard to get a good balance between reasonable parenting control and privacy invading.

The age groups are iron clad based on someone's opinion. Kids constantly come to us to use something that is restricted but really shouldn't be.

CONTROLS

Effectiveness



Used by

33%

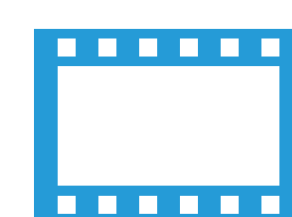
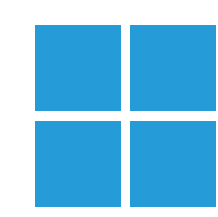
of parents

Ease of use

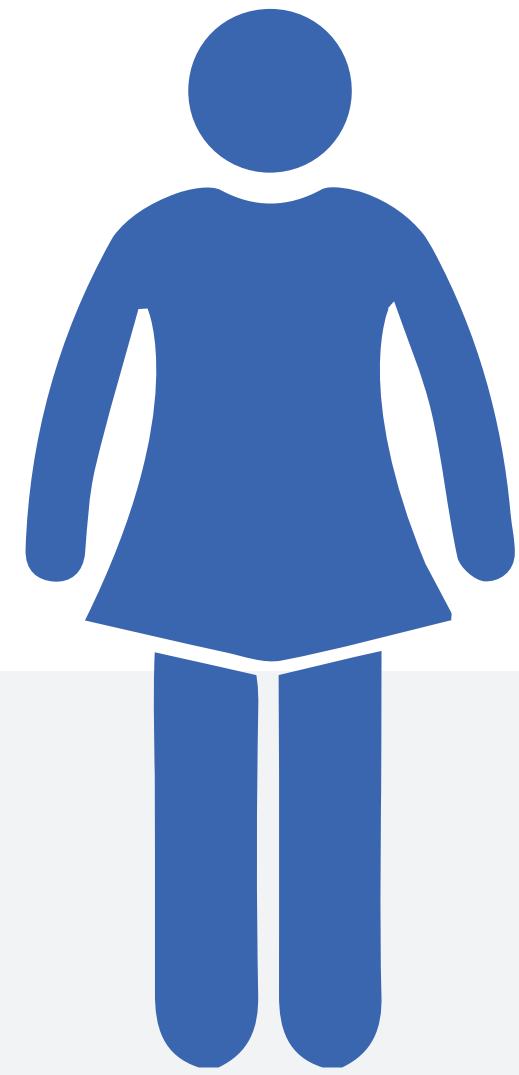


MOST COMMON

Seeing inappropriate content



AGES 14+



CONCERN

Lack of real learning/understanding

USE CASE



DEVICE



OPERATING SYSTEM



SOFTWARE



ACTIVITY

Older teens find ways around parental controls.

I feel I can trust my child to talk to me about issues. [Controls] are pretty unnecessary, your child will lose trust in you.

CONTROLS

Effectiveness



Effectiveness

Used by

47%

of parents

Ease of use



MOST COMMON

Seeing inappropriate content



OTHER FINDINGS

- The absence of standards in both software and terminology, combined with a huge array of devices, apps and services, has created a level of complexity in the parental controls market that defies easy explanation.
- Parental controls are not static and change constantly as technology companies update their software. This has the knock-on impact of causing guides to parental controls to rapidly fall out of date
- Most parents report being happy with their ability to control for their largest concerns, but they are also quick to identify problems and possible improvements
- Parental controls are only a partial solution: it is critical for parents and teachers to educate children on how to learn safely online

If you wish to know more about this research, how it was conducted, who carried it out or to read an in-depth rundown of our findings, please read the accompanying report on **iffor.org**.