

Online Safety 2024 Report

By Virtually Safe

Evaluating Young People's Unsafe Experience,
Online Activity And Online Safety Practices using
a questionnaire returned by 437 schools across
22 states in Nigeria.

Introduction

The continuous surge in internet usage among young people has opened doors to both risks and opportunities in their online experiences. As young people are spending more time online than ever before, with 81% of 15 to 24 year olds online in Nigeria, creating unprecedented opportunities for young people to communicate, learn, socialize and create new jobs which has helped to improve the quality of life for many young people.

While the Internet is a great way to access quality content and services, it can also serve the purpose of ill-intentioned people. Globally, there are more than 2.2 billion people under the age of 18 years, making young people the biggest vulnerable group in our societies.





Therefore, educating young people on how they can navigate the internet to ensure they are protected, respected and empowered online is now a must and the mission of Virtually Safe Initiative.

Virtually Safe is working towards creating a safer internet for young people in Nigeria, with the mission to improve digital safety for internet users, support parents, educators and young people in their digital wellbeing while promoting the positive and enriching use of digital technology through various projects like the Online Safety School Tour.

The goal of the school tour is to create online safety awareness in a 3 weeks activation where volunteers will visit schools reaching students in large numbers simultaneously across Nigeria to facilitate online safety lessons and distribute online safety tool kits to schools and students.



About This Report

In order to understand how young people are experiencing harm online, Virtually Safe examined the association between young people's unsafe experience online, their online activity, and their safety practices using a questionnaire returned by 437 private and public secondary school students across 22 states during the Online Safety School Tour in Nigeria with support from Google.org and Impact Amplifier

The school tour took place between 1st of May - 15th of June 2024. Over 600 Volunteers were recruited, trained and equipped with online safety school kits for educators and students, **the kit included a data collection tool called baseline and endline report form which was distributed to students across the 437 schools**, the endline and baseline responses is what forms this research.

Summary

Data from this year's research shows that young people generally understand online safety concepts and 85% of young people agree that there are risks that come with using the internet and 90% of young people have felt bad about an online interaction and only 15% thought they can report the issue either to a trusted adult or their parents. 40% of young people admit they have their parents and teachers as friends on their social media pages, while 55% say they would rather not have their parents and teachers on their social media pages.

90% of young people have felt bad about an online interaction and only 15% thought they can report the issue.



From the report 39% of young people have betted online and only 3% of this number has won a bet. When asked about what they'd do if the internet affects their mental health only 10% says they'd report the issue, while 90% are unsure or don't know what to do. This shows that young people feel confused about what to do when they have negative experiences on the internet and are mostly not sure about the best course of action.

**39% of young people
have betted online and
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Data Collection Tool

Our primary data collection tool for this report was the Baseline and Endline assessment we created which was shared to students in every school by our amazing volunteers.

Endline Assessment

What are the risks that come with using the internet?
some one can abuse you

How would you explain Online safety?
mean that you being aware of the nature of the possible threat, this is what I understand.

What should you do if you're being bullied online?
don't be posting your pics because many people will share it and abuse you

What would you do if the internet affects your mental health?
I cannot believe if it affect my mental health, I will just block my account

How can you stay safe online?
1- By practice safe browsing
2- Be careful what you post

How can you protect your personal information on the internet?
By changing some of the informations


www.virtuallysafe.org

Baseline Assessment Data Report



Question 1

DO YOU THINK THERE ARE ANY RISKS
THAT COME WITH USING THE INTERNET?

YES - 85% ●

NO - 10% ●

NO ANSWERS OR DON'T KNOW - 5% ●

It is safe to say from these responses that there is a general knowledge and agreement that despite the huge growth and potential the internet brings it is not without risks.



Question 2

WHAT ARE THE RISKS THAT COME WITH USING THE INTERNET?

Here are the top answers we got in response to internet risks



This response shows that young people are aware of the risks that may happen online, thanks to the various online safety awareness programs by organizations in Nigeria, however, further questions in the endline would prove that awareness is not enough, young people are not been prepared on how to handle these issues should they happen.

Question 3

HAVE YOU EVER BETTED ONLINE?

YES - 39% ■

NO - 56% ■

OTHER - 5% (Either no response or left blank) ■



Sadly, despite the existing law prohibiting children from gambling or betting, this report shows that the law is being broken, as underage gamblers regularly participate in gambling, particularly online betting. We also noticed that for this particular question, a number of responses marked 'Yes' and then cancelled to mark 'No'.

The growth of online gaming platforms has made it easier than ever for young people to access these activities. Many of these young people, who are not yet aware of the long-term effects of their behavior, see gambling as a fun pastime or a swift way to make money.

Question 4

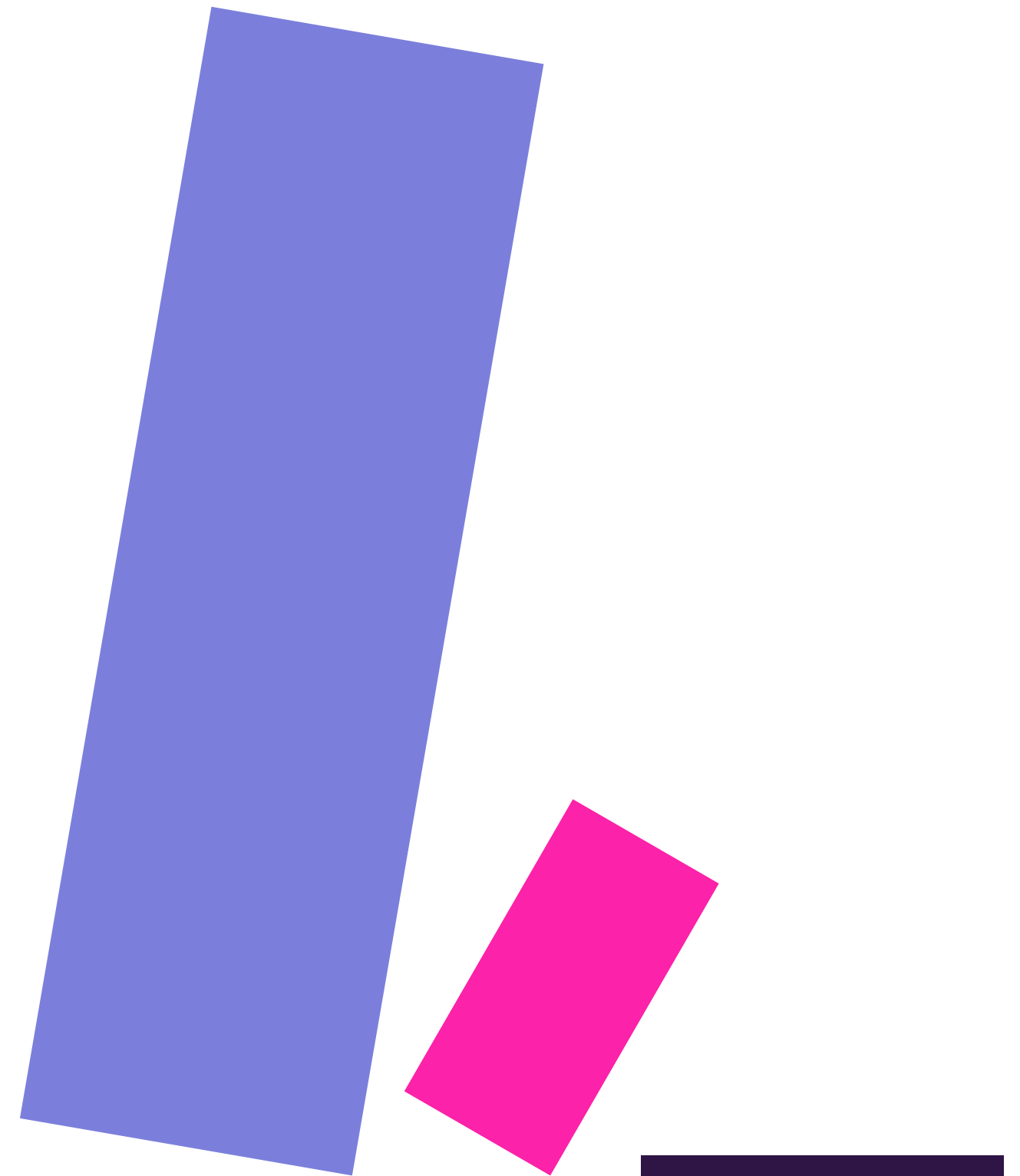
HAVE YOU EVER WON AN ONLINE BET?

YES - 3% 

NO - 97% 

OTHER - 0 

Only 3% out of the 39% in the previous question said they have won an online bet, one of them commented further to say he had won Five Thousand Naira (N5000), he didn't mention if it was a couple time or just one time win.



Question 5

HAVE YOU EVER FELT BAD ABOUT AN
ONLINE INTERACTION?

YES - 90% ●

NO - 8% ●

OTHER - 2% (either not sure or no response) ●

90% of young people from this report says they have felt bad about an online interaction, either they have witnessed other people being mean or cruel on social media, the most common negative online experience reported by young people were; cyber bullying, unwanted contact and contents and threats and abuse.



Question 6

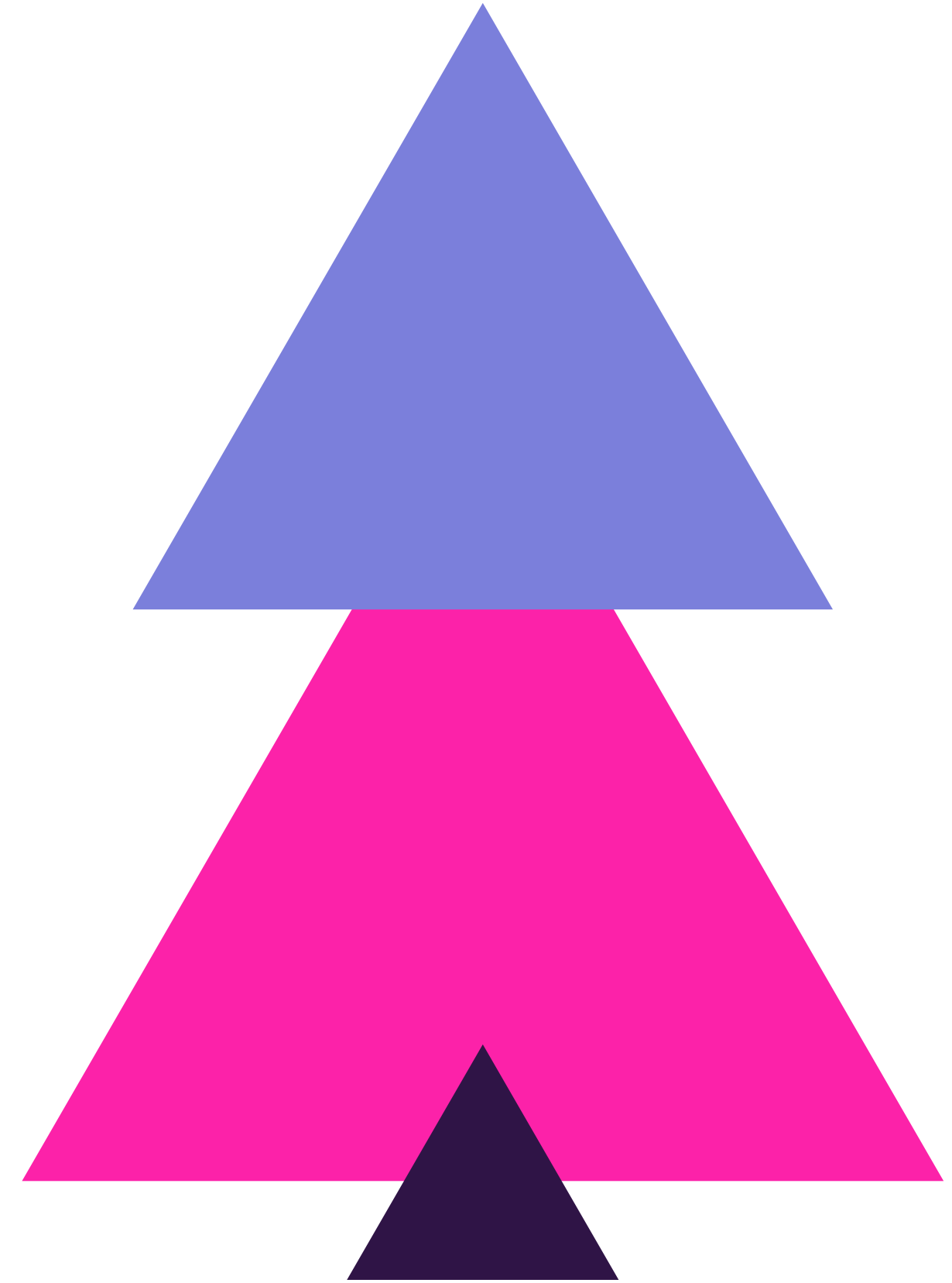
**ARE YOUR PARENTS OR TEACHERS ON
YOUR FRIENDS LIST OR FOLLOWERS ON
SOCIAL MEDIA?**

YES - 40% ▲

NO - 55% ▲

OTHER - 5% (either not sure or no response) ▲

One way many parents consider monitoring their kids' social media use is through following them on the various platforms, from these data seems the young people themselves do not want to be monitored.



QUESTION 7

LIST 5 SITES OR APPS YOU USE REGULARLY?

Top and most frequent answers on the list were;

1. Tiktok
2. Instagram
3. WhatsApp
4. Google
5. YouTube
6. Snapchat
7. Telegram
8. Call of Duty

From these report, young people engage the internet for mostly entertainment, learning, communication and play.



Question 8

HAVE YOU EVER SEEN AN ADVERT YOU FOUND ANNOYING OR INAPPROPRIATE WHILE BROWSING OR USING AN APP?

YES - 98% ■

NO - 0% ■

OTHER - 2% (either not sure or no response) ■

Almost every response said 'Yes' to have seen an inappropriate or annoying advert.



When asked “If Yes, tell us in a short sentence what the advert was about?”
Top on the list;

- 1. Sexual Content**
- 2. Betting Adverts**
- 3. Dating Apps**
- 4. Forex Trading**
- 5. Adverts asking to send nudes for \$100.**

Young people are being targeted at a large scale by internet groomers. In 2022 Internet Watch Foundation stated that as at 2021, there was a three-fold increase in imagery showing 7-10year olds who have been targeted and groomed by internet predators.

Endline Assessment Data Report



Question 1

WHAT ARE THE RISKS THAT COME WITH USING THE INTERNET?

Here are the top answers we got in response to internet risks

1. **Cyber bullying**

2. **Pornography**

3. **Online Betting**

4. **Online Grooming**

5. **Internet Fraud**

6. **Hacking**



This response shows that young people are aware of the risks that may happen online, thanks to the various online safety awareness programs by organizations in Nigeria, however, further questions in the endline would prove that awareness is not enough, young people are not been prepared on how to handle these issues should they happen.

Question 2

HOW WOULD YOU EXPLAIN ONLINE SAFETY?



90% of young people understand online safety concept and the definitions.

Online safety refers to the act of staying safe online, this is replete in the responses we got, but knowing the definition doesn't mean they always know how to stay safe. For most of these young people, the decision-making part of the brain isn't yet fully formed, which makes them more likely to do risky things 'just for fun' – and this can include taking risks online.

Question 3

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF YOU'RE BEING BULLIED ONLINE?

Top answers

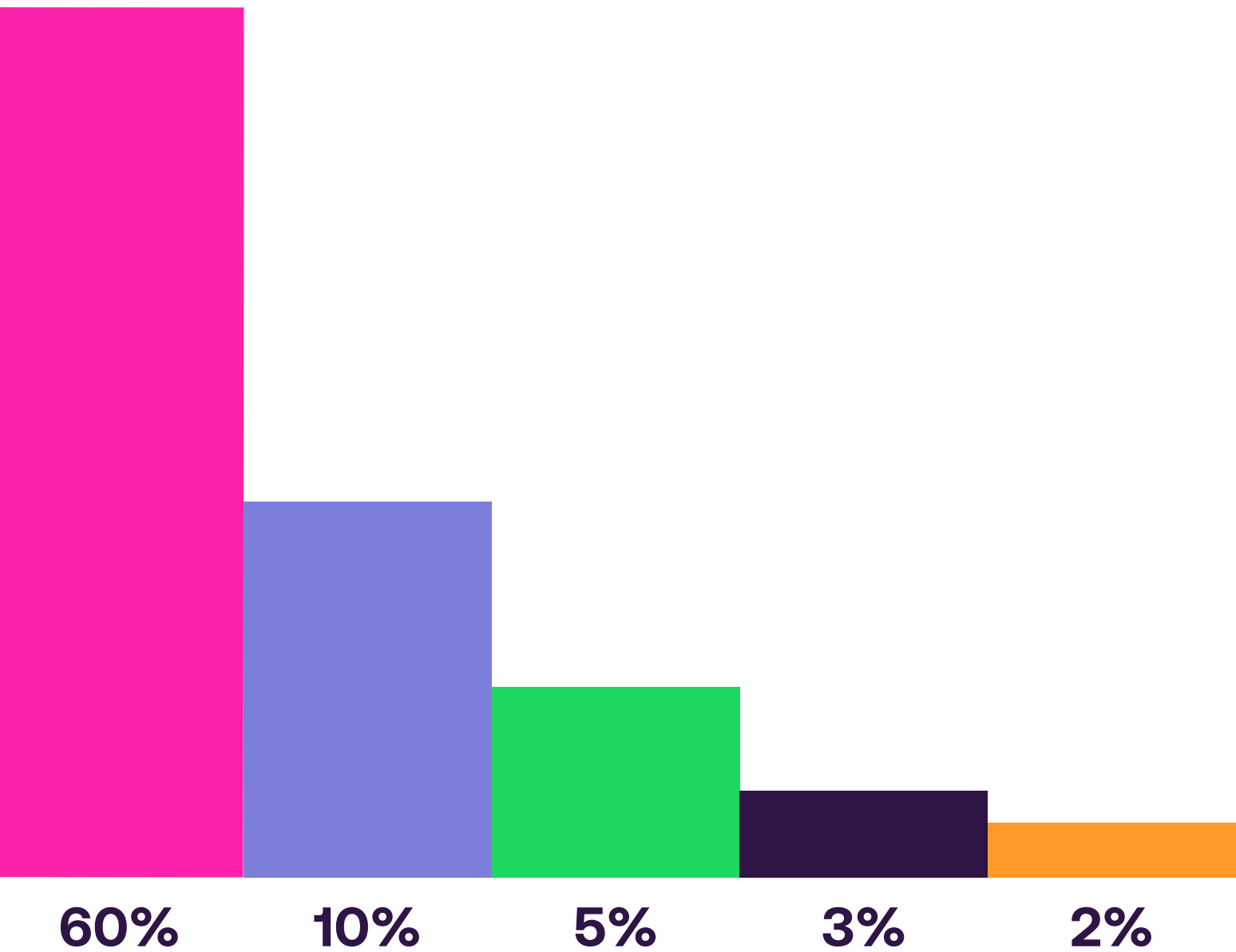
1.	Curse them and block them
2.	Report to parents
3.	Report to an Adult
4.	Block the person
5.	Start a fight



Question 4

WHAT WOULD YOU DO IF THE INTERNET AFFECT YOUR MENTAL HEALTH?

Top answers



60% says they don't know what they'd do if the internet affects their mental health, **10%** says visit a counsellor, while **5%** says they'd stop using the internet for a while and **3%** confirms they'd visit a psychiatrist hospital, we had **2%** blank responses for this question.

Question 5

HOW CAN YOU STAY SAFE ONLINE?

Top answers

1. **Use strong passwords**
2. **Keep passwords safe**
3. **Don't engage strangers online**



Young people seem to have the basic idea of online safety, like using strong password and stranger danger on the internet, however there are more complex issues that young people face everyday on the internet and they need to be prepared for those issues.

Question 6

HOW CAN YOU PROTECT YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION ON THE INTERNET?

Top answers

**By not posting your
personal information
on social media**





CONCLUSION

Over the years, online safety education and training for young people has focused on the basics, raising awareness on online dangers, with strong passwords, bullying, fraud and phishing being the key areas but these young people are not necessarily being prepared for how to react should these things happen and the ever increasing issues online. Online Safety education needs to evolve at the same speed as young people's exposure and curiosity peak.

Many young people lack reliable and authoritative sources to learn about staying safe online. There's a need for online safety lessons and curriculum developed with internet safety module being taught in every classroom across Nigeria with students engaged with various online safety resources. Schools should be equipped with online safety tool kits and educators thoroughly furnished to teach online safety lessons.



To keep advancing online safety intervention we must identify the issues and perceived blockers that really matter to young people and understand the changes they want to see. This is exactly what we have begun to do at Virtually Safe by creating resources in various formats, as boardgames, storybooks, competitions, curriculum and modules and lessons and above all putting young peoples' voices at the heart of our activities, whilst encouraging them to shape the online safety support they receive.

**Want to dig a bit deeper into our findings
around internet safety?**

Visit our website **www.virtuallysafe.org** to find
other insights around young people's attitudes,
behaviours, perceptions and experiences as
internet users.

Google.org



The logo for Teens Can Code, featuring the text '< TEENS CAN CODE >' in a blue, sans-serif font, with green arrowheads at the beginning and end.



Virtually Safe