Communication difficulties

Children and young people with communications difficulties may face additional challenges online. Below we share some research and insights into how this may affect their wellbeing and safety.[1]

In this research children and young people identified with the following statements:

"I need help with English"

"I have speech and language difficulties"

"I have hearing difficulties"

Predicted risks

Young people's offline vulnerabilities can be used as a predictor for the online risks they may come across

Young people with communication difficulties are particularly vulnerable to conduct risks and cyber scams. Children with communication challenges are also more likely to experience cyber aggression.

Key Insights

29% of young people with speech difficulties often see content about self-harm[1]

31% of young people with speech difficulties have also seen content supporting religious extremist views of terror acts[1]

Young people with hearing loss were **twice as likely** to send nude images as non vulnerable peers[2]

59% of young people with hearing loss who sent sext messages were coerced into doing so

They are **5 times more likely** to say that the 'internet often left me with thoughts and feelings that were upsetting'

Twice as likely to be cyberbullied than their non-vulnerable peers

1. Cybersurvey 2019, by Youthworks in partnership with Internet Matters. 2. Look at Me - Teens, Sexting & Risks report p 18

Risks explained

Conduct risks *are associated with:*

- use of chat rooms

- looking at pages meant for adults

- visiting gambling sites

- downloading music without paying

Content risks *involve visiting or being exposed to websites that:*

- urge young people to be very thin

- talk about self-harming or suicide

- promote hatred or racist views

- give dangerous advice

- sell illegal goods

- show nude pictures or videos that weren't searched for

- show very violent pictures or videos that young people didn't want to see

Victims of **cyber scams** *have experienced abuse of their personal data and tend to agree with statements such as:*

- My social media account has been hacked

- My personal details have been stolen or hacked

- I've had credit card details stolen and used

- I've been tricked into paying money for something I did not want to buy

- I've been tricked into buying fake goods

Contact risks *have high risk online relationships involving sexting with reasons for doing so including:*

- being pressured / blackmailed to do it

- being tricked into it

- being in a relationship and pressured to or wanting to share nudes

- sharing due to threats

- trying it for fun

Cyber aggression: *online aggression that isn't always viewed as bullying. It can include comments, insults or threats due to appearance, race, religion, sexuality, gender or disability. It can also include threats to harm a person or their family.*

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Data by Youthworks