Responding to Online Threats: Minors' Perspectives on Disclosing, Reporting, and Blocking

Findings from 2020 quantitative research among 9–17 year olds

THORN   Benenson Strategy Group

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Methodology & Research Design

Research on this subject presents unique challenges to ensure it is safe and rigorous, while remaining nimble enough for findings to be relevant in an ever-changing digital world. Survey authors have included here a brief discussion of these challenges and the actions taken to mitigate them, in addition to the final research design deployed.

Challenges

CHALLENGE — The use of traditional peer-reviewed research methods are not nimble enough for the digital landscape and issue at hand: the technologies and platforms intersecting with this issue are in constant change, as are the habits of the minors who use them.

> *Actions:* This research relies on dynamic social research methodologies, which enable faster collection and analysis of data, to ensure it best reflects the current landscape.

CHALLENGE — Attitudes towards sexuality vary widely across demographics.

> *Actions:* This is a universal issue, but the way it impacts minors differs across demographics. This research primarily aimed to identify trends among minors overall, as well as within age groups (i.e., 9–12 years and 13–17 years). A secondary objective

was to get a broad understanding of how trends around this issue manifest differently across demographics. Given sample size limitations, some of the identified trends within subgroups are more appropriately viewed as starting points. Future research will continue to focus on understanding differences between demographics at a more granular level.

CHALLENGE — Entrenched stigma and sensitivity surrounding the topic may lead to an undercounting of the scale and frequency.

> *Actions:* Asking individuals —*especially minors*— to open up about a subject as delicate and personal as sharing nude images of themselves or their peers requires designing survey instruments that are safe and supportive. Sequence was important in our research instruments, so that sensitive questions were prefaced with a note acknowledging the difficulty of discussing the topic and reiterating the anonymity of the responses. Questions were also written in a manner that gave the space or permission for individuals to answer generally about "people they know" in lieu of asking them only point blank about their own engagements with sharing nudes. Resources for additional information and referrals for real-time support were highlighted in all survey instruments.

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CHALLENGE — There are many different support systems where minors can turn for help when confronted by a potentially harmful online experience. Studying them all simultaneously risks a shallow understanding of the habits and behaviors that drive or suppress the use of a given support system.

Actions: Choosing depth over breadth, this study zeroed in on a handful of key offline and online support systems. Offline support systems included parents, trusted adults, and peers, while online support systems included platform reporting, blocking, and muting. These channels had been identified in previous Thorn and Benenson Strategy Group research as critical people/systems to which minors often look as they navigate potentially harmful online experiences. Future research will look to better understand the breadth of other potential support systems, such as law enforcement and educators.

Research Design

In preparation for survey design, Thorn interviewed representatives of Trust and Safety teams at five popular social networking platforms to learn more about in-platform safety tool designs and policies. In addition, members of the research team tested a variety of platform reporting and blocking systems to see the paths through which users might report or block unwanted contacts.

The final survey focused on the experiences and attitudes of minors aged 9–17. The quantitative online methodology included several opportunities for minors to respond to questions in an "open-ended manner" (i.e., in their own words, long-form). Including a series of open-ended questions allowed us to get greater texture on minors' lived experiences than is otherwise possible through a purely quantitative methodology.

Quantitative Online Survey
The quantitative research was designed to track trends in minors' online behaviors from our national benchmark research[1] in 2019, and explore additional topics such as barriers to disclosure of online harms.

In total, 2,002 minors from across the United States participated in a 20-minute online survey from October 26 to November 12, 2020.[2] Specifically, sample makeup included:

- N=742: 9-12 year olds
- N=1,260: 13-17 year olds

[1] Thorn. (2019). Self-Generated Child Sexual Abuse Material: Attitudes and Experiences. Available at https://www.thorn.org/self-generated-child-sexual-abuse-material-attitudes-and-experiences/

[2] Survey dates were mistakingly reported in earlier versions of this report as October 25 to November 11, 2020.

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However, only the demographic questions and some of the broader questions, such as platform usage, were asked of the entire sample. For the majority of the survey, kids were split evenly and randomly into two groups and shown a set of questions based on the group they were assigned to. This report will focus on the Hurdles to Disclosure questions, which were asked of 1,000 minors. Specifically, this group included:

- N=391: 9–12 year olds
- N=609: 13–17 year olds

To ensure a representative nationwide sample, data was weighted to age, gender, race, and geography. These weights were also held within each of the two groups to ensure they independently represented the nation's demographics.

A Note on Privacy and Safety

Ensuring the privacy and safety of those who chose to participate in this research was paramount. In each phase of research, in order for minors to participate, their caregiver had to sign a release form detailing the nature of the study. In addition, help resources were provided to participants in the event they wanted to learn more about the topics discussed or needed professional support to talk about these issues.

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Introduction

In 2019, Thorn conducted research to examine the attitudes and experiences around Self-Generated Child Sexual Abuse Material (SG-CSAM). SG-CSAM refers to explicit imagery of a child that appears to have been taken by the child in the image. While risky, not all experiences minors have with SG-CSAM are fundamentally harmful. This imagery can result from exploitation (such as grooming or sextortion) as well as from normative sexual exploration among peers in a digital age. The resulting imagery is the same: child sexual abuse material. It is illegal and its non-consensual distribution to peers or adult offenders represents serious harms. However, understanding the motivations for producing the imagery, and the resulting outcomes for minors, is critical in delivering relevant and effective safeguarding programs.

Thorn's 2019 SG-CSAM Report[3] found that the sharing of "nudes" was being viewed as somewhat commonplace among minors.[4] Approximately 40% of 13-17 year olds reported it was "normal for people my age to share nudes with each other," and 1 in 5 girls ages 13-17 and 1 in 10 boys ages 13-17 said they have shared their own nudes. A recent year-to-year comparison study fielded in 2020[5] showed that the prevalence of this behavior may even be increasing among young people.

The 2019 SG-CSAM Report unearthed an additional concerning dynamic: young people have a lack of trust in the protective systems around them, both in-person and online. Concerns of being blamed, shamed, or ignored may isolate victims and put them at greater or prolonged risk. Empowering young people to come forward and seek help when faced with online threats will require building online and offline support systems that are accessible and trusted.

To this end, Thorn has invested in further research to understand minors' experiences when seeking help in the face of potentially harmful online encounters. Minors look to different offline outlets - such as caregivers, educators, peers, and law enforcement - based on variables like perceived risk and access. Each of these support systems represents a different experience for young people. Over the coming year, Thorn will examine different pathways of support to gain a clearer understanding of how these systems are distinct and where there is overlap, pinpointing the opportunities or advantages of one pathway, while overcoming the limitations of another. At base, we are asking the question: what makes or breaks a minor's decision to turn to a specific support system?

[3] Thorn. (2019). Self-Generated Child Sexual Abuse Material: Attitudes and Experiences. Available at https://www.thorn.org/self-generated-child-sexual-abuse-material-attitudes-and-experiences/

[4] In the context of this report, and unless otherwise noted, the term "minors" is being used to describe young people represented in the survey sample (9-17 year olds).

[5] Thorn. (2020). SG-CSAM Attitudes and Experiences: Year-to-Year Findings. Unpublished data.

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Understanding how minors weigh these factors and ensuring they have support when managing risky experiences will be a continued focus for Thorn's research.

For many, the first line of defense in escaping an online threat are platform-based safety tools such as blocking and reporting. Unfortunately, participants of the 2019 research - particularly those who'd shared SG-CSAM - expressed a general distrust of online platforms' security features. Two in five minors (41%) said they thought "nothing happens if you try to report an inappropriate photo or video to an online platform or app," and 63% of minors that have shared their own nudes said the same.

In 2020, Thorn surveyed 1,000 minors, ages 9-17, about their attitudes and experiences around blocking and reporting instances of potentially harmful online sexual interactions. Four key insights emerged:

1 **Minors are having online sexual interactions with both peers and individuals they believe to be adults at concerningly similar rates.**

2 **Minors are more than twice as likely to use online safety tools to combat potentially harmful online sexual interactions than they are to use offline support systems, such as caregivers or peers.**

3 **Blocking is viewed by minors as a more accessible and less punitive tool to respond to online threats. As a result, blocking is much more common than reporting among minors.**

4 **Neither blocking nor reporting sufficiently protect minors from continued harassment by another user on the platform.**

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Frequency of Potentially Harmful Online Experiences

REPORT HIGHLIGHT

1 IN 3

Participants reported having had an online sexual interaction

Young people use many of the same widely popular platforms as adults, often in spite of age limitations put in place by the platform. They are drawn to opportunities to meet new people, generate content and build a following, and explore without fear of judgement. While the internet offers boundless opportunities to connect and discover, it also creates new opportunities for risk and harm. Nearly half of participants (48%) said they had been made to feel uncomfortable, been bullied, or had a sexual interaction online.

Potentially Harmful Online Experiences[6]

While the most common experiences reported involved bullying or generally being made to feel uncomfortable (38%), 1 in 3 participants reported having had an online sexual interaction. Response options coded as an "online sexual interaction" in analysis included: being asked for a nude image or video, being asked to go "on cam" with a nude or sexually explicit stream, being sent a nude photo or video, or being sent sexually explicit messages. The most common online sexual interactions that participants reported involved receiving sexual

Fig 1 | Potentially harmful online experiences for minors

Either someone I believed was 18 or older or someone I believed was younger than 18...	ALL MINORS	AGES 9-12		AGES 13-17		LGBTQ+	NON-LGBTQ+
		GIRLS	BOYS	GIRLS	BOYS		
Potentially harmful online experience (any selection)	**48%**	**46%**	**48%**	**54%**	**40%**	**57%**	**46%**
Bullied/made uncomfortable online (any selection)	**38%**	**38%**	**36%**	**46%**	**25%**	**45%**	**37%**
Online sexual interaction (any selection)	**33%**	**26%**	**27%**	**41%**	**31%**	**42%**	**30%**
...asked me to send a nude photo or video	18%	14%	14%	28%	11%	24%	16%
...asked me to go 'on cam' with a nude or sexually explicit stream	12%	10%	6%	16%	12%	19%	10%
...shared a nude photo or video of themselves with me	18%	11%	15%	25%	17%	22%	17%
...shared a nude photo or video of another kid with me	10%	9%	9%	11%	11%	17%	9%
...sent me sexual messages	21%	16%	13%	32%	17%	32%	18%
...bullied me	24%	29%	26%	24%	16%	29%	24%
...made me feel uncomfortable	27%	19%	24%	39%	16%	34%	25%

[Q19B] Please indicate if you have ever experienced any of the following on a platform? Please select all that apply and remember that your answers are anonymous.

[6] "Potentially harmful online experiences" is a label applied by researchers during analysis to describe any of the response options.

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REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

25%

Of 9-17 year olds reported having had a sexual interaction with someone they believed to be an adult

19%

Of 9-12 year olds reported having had a sexual interaction with someone they believed to be an adult

messages (such as a "sext," 21%), receiving a nude photo or video of the sender (18%), or being asked for a nude photo or video (18%).

Demographic Trends for Potentially Harmful Online Experiences: LGBTQ+ minors were among the most vulnerable to potentially harmful online experiences. A majority of LGBTQ+ minors (57%) reported having had a potentially harmful online experience, over 10 percentage points higher than non-LGBTQ+ minors that same age (46%).

Online experiences of bullying or being made to feel uncomfortable were particularly pronounced among LGBTQ+ minors. Indeed, 45% of LGBTQ+ minors reported being bullied or made uncomfortable online, compared to 37% of non-LGBTQ+ minors.

Online sexual interactions were also much more prevalent among LGBTQ+ minors: 42% of LGBTQ+ minors experienced a sexually explicit online interaction, compared to 30% of all non-LGBTQ+ minors. More than 1 in 4 (28%) LGBTQ+ minors have had a nude photo or video shared with them online, compared to 1 in 5 (20%) non-LGBTQ+ minors.

Over half (54%) of teen girls surveyed reported having had a potentially harmful online experience and 41% reported experience with an online sexual interaction. By comparison, 40% of teen boys reported having had a potentially harmful online experience and 31% reported experience with an online sexual interaction.

Teen girls were nearly three times more likely to be solicited for a nude (28%) than teen boys (11%). Teen girls were also nearly two times more likely to have been sent sexual messages (32%) than teen boys (17%).

Sexual Interactions with Adults: Concerningly, minors are having online sexual interactions with adults and other minors at similar rates. One quarter of participants (25%) reported having had a sexually explicit interaction with someone they thought was 18 or older compared to the 23% of participants that have had a similar experience with someone they believed to be under 18 years old.

> *"There's people that you don't even know that will randomly send you nudes out of nowhere and they're like 40-year old men."*
>
> — Girl, 15 years old, [race not disclosed], West[7]

[7] Thorn. (2020). Focus Groups with Youth and Caregivers. March, 2020, Denver. Unpublished data.

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Fig 2 | **Potentially harmful online experiences for minors involving peers and adults**

Someone I believed was <u>18 or older</u>… [Left columns indicated in white]

Someone I believed was <u>younger</u> than 18… [Right columns indicated in grey]

Potentially harmful online experience	ALL MINORS		GIRLS		BOYS		ALL 9-12 YEAR OLDS		GIRLS		BOYS		ALL 13-17 YEAR OLDS		GIRLS		BOYS	
Potentially harmful online experience (any selection)	38%	36%	38%	40%	35%	31%	36%	37%	34%	38%	37%	35%	39%	36%	41%	41%	32%	28%
Online sexual interaction (any selection)	25%	23%	26%	24%	22%	21%	19%	19%	16%	19%	21%	19%	29%	27%	34%	28%	23%	23%
…asked me to send a nude photo or video	12%	11%	15%	15%	7%	7%	8%	8%	7%	10%	8%	7%	15%	14%	22%	19%	7%	6%
…asked me to go 'on cam' with a nude or sexually explicit stream	9%	8%	10%	9%	6%	6%	5%	6%	6%	8%	3%	3%	12%	9%	13%	9%	9%	8%
…shared a nude photo or video of themselves with me	12%	10%	14%	10%	9%	10%	8%	7%	7%	6%	8%	8%	15%	13%	20%	13%	9%	12%
…shared a nude photo or video of another kid with me	6%	7%	6%	7%	6%	6%	5%	5%	3%	8%	6%	3%	7%	8%	8%	7%	5%	8%
…sent me sexual messages	16%	13%	19%	16%	11%	9%	10%	9%	10%	10%	9%	6%	20%	17%	26%	20%	12%	11%
…bullied me	15%	17%	15%	22%	15%	11%	16%	19%	15%	25%	18%	14%	15%	15%	15%	19%	13%	8%
…made me feel uncomfortable	19%	17%	23%	19%	13%	13%	14%	14%	14%	11%	15%	17%	22%	18%	30%	26%	11%	10%

[Q19B] Please indicate if you have ever experienced any of the following on a platform? Please select all that apply and remember that your answers are anonymous.	ALL MINORS		GIRLS		BOYS		ALL 9-12 YEAR OLDS		GIRLS		BOYS		ALL 13-17 YEAR OLDS		GIRLS		BOYS	
	ALL AGES						AGES 9-12						AGES 13-17					

The likelihood of these online sexual interactions occurring with someone the participant believed to be over the age of 18 appears to increase with age: 29% of teens reported having had an online sexual interaction with someone they believed to be an adult compared to 19% of 9-12 year olds. This is particularly noticeable among girls specifically: approximately 1 in 3 teenage girls (34%) reported having had an online sexual encounter with someone they believed to be over 18 compared to approximately 1 in 6 (16%) 9-12 year old girls.

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Fig 3 | **Potentially harmful online experiences for minors involving peers and adults**

	Someone I believed was 18 or older… [Left columns indicated in white]		Someone I believed was younger than 18… [Right columns indicated in grey]			
Potentially harmful online experience (any selection)	38%	36%	47%	45%	35%	35%
Online sexual interaction (any selection)	25%	23%	32%	30%	22%	22%
…asked me to send a nude photo or video	12%	11%	16%	17%	10%	10%
…asked me to go 'on cam' with a nude or sexually explicit stream	9%	8%	15%	9%	7%	7%
…shared a nude photo or video of themselves with me	12%	10%	17%	11%	10%	10%
…shared a nude photo or video of another kid with me	6%	7%	10%	10%	5%	6%
…sent me sexual messages	16%	13%	26%	21%	13%	11%
…bullied me	15%	17%	19%	22%	15%	16%
…made me feel uncomfortable	19%	17%	27%	22%	17%	16%
[Q19B] Please indicate if you have ever experienced any of the following on a platform? Please select all that apply and remember that your answers are anonymous.	**ALL MINORS**		**LGBTQ+**		**NON-LGBTQ+**	

Unfortunately, perhaps influenced by the more prominent role of online communities for social connection,[8] this research also found that LGBTQ+ minors were more likely to have had an online sexual interaction with someone they believed to be an adult.

Nearly 1 in 3 LGBTQ+ minors (32%) reported an online sexual encounter with someone they believed to be over 18, ten percentage points higher than their non-LGBTQ+ peers (22%).

[8] Lucero, L. (2017). Safe spaces in online places: Social media and LGBTQ youth. *Multicultural Education Review, 9*(2), 117–128. 10.1080/2005615X.2017.1313482

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The Digital Landscape

The digital landscape minors navigate today is sprawling and it presents them with limitless possibilities - good and bad. As in Thorn's 2019 SG-CSAM research, participants were presented with an extensive list of platforms to understand which platforms they use, and how frequently they use them.[9] This list included both widely used platforms along with new and less commonly used platforms. This list is wide-ranging but the message is clear: potentially harmful experiences are not isolated to dark corners of the internet – they can, and are, occurring on every major platform.

Fig 4 | Platform usage habits

	AT LEAST ONCE A DAY			EVER USED				AT LEAST ONCE A DAY			EVER USED		
	ALL MINORS	AGES 9-12	AGES 13-17	ALL MINORS	AGES 9-12	AGES 13-17		ALL MINORS	AGES 9-12	AGES 13-17	ALL MINORS	AGES 9-12	AGES 13-17
Amino	3%	4%	3%	10%	8%	11%	Reddit	10%	8%	12%	32%	20%	41%
Among Us	23%	13%	31%	43%	23%	59%	Roblox	17%	22%	13%	47%	42%	50%
Byte	1%	1%	1%	5%	5%	4%	Signal	1%	2%	1%	2%	3%	2%
Call of Duty	18%	20%	16%	48%	45%	51%	Slack	2%	2%	2%	6%	5%	6%
Discord	19%	12%	25%	34%	20%	45%	Slither.io	3%	2%	4%	31%	17%	42%
Facebook	36%	45%	28%	62%	66%	60%	Snapchat	47%	40%	52%	71%	67%	74%
Fortnite	17%	22%	13%	47%	47%	47%	Tagged	1%	2%	0%	4%	5%	3%
Google Hangouts/Meet	33%	36%	30%	64%	63%	65%	Telegram	6%	10%	3%	11%	17%	7%
Grand Theft Auto	12%	14%	11%	39%	36%	42%	TikTok	45%	41%	49%	69%	66%	71%
Houseparty	3%	3%	3%	15%	10%	19%	Triller	2%	2%	2%	7%	8%	7%
Instagram	50%	40%	59%	76%	65%	85%	Tumblr	13%	18%	9%	40%	45%	36%
Kik	4%	5%	3%	14%	11%	16%	Twitch	14%	14%	14%	36%	30%	41%
Marco Polo	2%	3%	1%	10%	12%	8%	Twitter	28%	30%	27%	59%	56%	62%
Messenger	32%	38%	27%	62%	69%	56%	VSCO	3%	2%	4%	12%	8%	15%
Minecraft	20%	23%	17%	62%	57%	65%	WhatsApp	26%	39%	16%	47%	55%	40%
Monkey	2%	2%	2%	7%	7%	8%	Whisper	1%	1%	1%	4%	5%	4%
Nintendo Switch	17%	21%	13%	43%	43%	42%	Wink	2%	2%	2%	5%	6%	5%
OnlyFans	3%	2%	3%	6%	4%	8%	YouNow	3%	5%	1%	7%	10%	5%
Pinterest	16%	13%	17%	45%	36%	52%	YouTube	80%	78%	81%	97%	98%	97%

[Q14B] How often do you use/check/play each of the following?

This figure presents usage rates for all of the platforms surveyed in the research. The remainder of the report only focuses on platforms with base sizes above n=100.

[9] These questions were asked of a sample of n=2,002 minors (subsequent questions focused specifically on blocking, reporting, and disclosure were asked of a subset of this sample, n=1,000 minors).

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Throughout this report we look at experiences on platforms in two different ways: (1) the share of all minors 9–17 who have had a given experience on a specific platform, and (2) the share of a platform's users who have had a given experience. The former lets us learn where the greatest number of minors are having online sexual interactions while the latter illustrates which platforms have the highest rate of these experiences for users. In other words, more minors overall may have a sexual interaction on some of the bigger platforms, but there might be a greater likelihood of users having a sexual interaction on other platforms.

Where the Most Minors Are Encountering Potentially Harmful Online Experiences: No online platform is without risk, but widely popular platforms are where a majority of these potentially harmful interactions occur.

The platforms with the highest number of survey participants reporting a potentially harmful online experience included Snapchat (26%), Instagram (26%), YouTube (19%), TikTok (18%), and Messenger (18%).

Platforms where the most participants said they have had an online sexual interaction were Snapchat (16%), Instagram (16%), Messenger (11%), and Facebook (10%). Following these four, WhatsApp, Google Hangouts/Meet, TikTok, Twitter, and YouTube each had 9% of participants say they had a sexual interaction on the platform.

Fig 5 | **Potentially harmful online experiences by platform**

	Who use each platform	Who have had a potentially harmful online experience (any selection)	Who have had an online sexual interaction (any selection)		Who use each platform	Who have had a potentially harmful online experience (any selection)	Who have had an online sexual interaction (any selection)
Amino	10%	4%	2%	Pinterest	45%	6%	3%
Among Us	43%	8%	3%	Reddit	32%	4%	2%
Call of Duty	48%	9%	5%	Roblox	47%	9%	3%
Discord	34%	7%	5%	Slither.io	31%	2%	1%
Facebook	62%	17%	10%	Snapchat	71%	26%	16%
Fortnite	47%	8%	3%	Switch	43%	4%	2%
Google Hangouts/Meet	64%	15%	9%	Telegram	11%	5%	2%
Grand Theft Auto	39%	6%	4%	TikTok	69%	18%	9%
Houseparty	15%	2%	1%	Tumblr	40%	11%	7%
Instagram	76%	26%	16%	Twitch	36%	6%	3%
Kik	14%	4%	2%	Twitter	59%	16%	9%
Messenger	62%	18%	11%	VSCO	12%	2%	1%
Minecraft	62%	10%	3%	WhatsApp	47%	15%	9%
				YouTube	97%	19%	9%

[Q20] For each of the following platforms, please indicate if you have ever experienced any of the following? Please select all that apply then click next. Remember that your answers are anonymous. [Q14B] How often do you use/check/play each of the following?

Percentages of those who had a potentially harmful online experience and those who had an online sexual interaction are among all participants, not users of each platform.

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Demographic Trends: Although the data shows that in general, LGBTQ+ minors are more likely to encounter potentially harmful online experiences (i.e. being made to feel uncomfortable, bullying, or potentially harmful sexual interaction) than their non-LGBTQ+ peers, both groups of minors are for the most part using the same platforms at similar rates.

For both LGBTQ+ and non-LGBTQ+ minors, Snapchat (33% of LGBTQ+ minors and 25% for non-LGBTQ+ minors) and Instagram (29% for LGBTQ+ minors and 25% for non-LGBTQ+ minors) had the highest rates of potentially harmful experiences.

Teen girls, who are also particularly vulnerable to online sexual interactions, are having the majority of these experiences on Snapchat (21%) and Instagram (21%) —mirroring those of minors overall (16% on Snapchat and 16% on Instagram).

Where Users are Most Likely to Have Potentially Harmful Online Experiences: Platform popularity alone does not account for platforms with higher rates of potentially harmful encounters among users.

Along with being some of the most used apps by participants, Snapchat (38%), WhatsApp (36%), and Instagram (35%) are also among the platforms on which the greatest number of users have had a potentially harmful experience of any kind. These platforms are also the ones with some of the highest rates of users reporting having had a sexual interaction: more than one-fifth of users (23% Snapchat, 22% Instagram, 21% WhatsApp) have reported experiencing sexually explicit interactions on one of these platforms.

Fig 6 | **Potentially harmful online experiences by platform**

	LGBTQ+	NON-LGBTQ+
Amino	8%	3%
Among Us	10%	7%
Call of Duty	3%	11%
Discord	8%	7%
Facebook	16%	18%
Fortnite	5%	9%
Google Hangouts/Meet	13%	16%
Grand Theft Auto	4%	7%
Houseparty	0%	3%
Instagram	29%	25%
Kik	6%	3%
Messenger	13%	20%
Minecraft	11%	10%
Pinterest	5%	6%
Reddit	5%	3%
Roblox	7%	10%
Slither.io	1%	2%
Snapchat	33%	25%
Switch	2%	5%
Telegram	3%	6%
TikTok	27%	17%
Tumblr	14%	11%
Twitch	6%	7%
Twitter	16%	17%
VSCO	0%	2%
WhatsApp	10%	17%
YouTube	22%	18%

[Q20] For each of the following platforms, please indicate if you have ever experienced any of the following? Please select all that apply then click next. Remember that your answers are anonymous.

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In addition, online sexual interactions between participants and someone they believed to be an adult were reported at high rates on Snapchat and Instagram. These two platforms appear to host the highest concentration of sexually explicit interactions between minors and adults. Nearly one-sixth of users have experienced an online sexual interaction with someone they believed to be an adult on Snapchat (15%) and Instagram (13%); about 1 in 10 users have experienced similar situations with adults on WhatsApp (11%), Facebook (10%), and Messenger (10%).

Importantly there are a number of newer, less popular platforms with some of the highest rates of sexually explicit interactions among users. Users are more likely to experience sexual interactions on platforms such as Kik (23%), Telegram (21%), and Amino (20%) than on the average platform.

Concerningly, users on these platforms are also disproportionately more likely to encounter sexually explicit interactions with someone they believe to be an adult. Users of platforms such as Kik (14%), Telegram (14%), and Amino (13%) have experienced sexually explicit interactions with someone they believed to be an adult at a particularly high rate.

Lastly, there are platforms (many of which are for gaming) that have below average usage rates and below average rates of minors saying they have had sexually explicit interactions on them. For these platforms, no more than 10% of users, and less than 5% of all participants, said they had a sexual interaction on that platform. While these platforms appear less risky based on this survey, responses may not be accounting for experiences such as minors being groomed on these platforms for abuse that takes place on a different platform or offline.

Fig 7 | **Online sexual experiences by platform**

	AGES 13-17	
	GIRLS	BOYS
Amino	1%	3%
Among Us	4%	3%
Call of Duty	3%	4%
Discord	4%	5%
Facebook	8%	10%
Fortnite	2%	6%
Google Hangouts/Meet	5%	12%
Grand Theft Auto	2%	4%
Houseparty	2%	1%
Instagram	21%	15%
Kik	4%	2%
Messenger	8%	12%
Minecraft	3%	4%
Pinterest	2%	3%
Reddit	2%	4%
Roblox	3%	3%
Slither.io	1%	1%
Snapchat	21%	14%
Switch	1%	3%
Telegram	1%	2%
TikTok	6%	10%
Tumblr	4%	8%
Twitch	2%	3%
Twitter	4%	10%
VSCO	2%	1%
WhatsApp	4%	13%
YouTube	5%	10%

[Q20] For each of the following platforms, please indicate if you have ever experienced any of the following? Please select all that apply then click next. Remember that your answers are anonymous.

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Fig 8 | **Online sexual interactions with both peers and adults by platform**

	% OF <u>USERS</u> WHO HAVE HAD:		% OF <u>ALL MINORS</u> WHO HAVE HAD:	
KEY: **ABOVE AVERAGE %**	An online sexual interaction	An online sexual interaction w/ someone they thought was 18+	An online sexual interaction	An online sexual interaction w/ someone they thought was 18+
AVERAGE	**13%**	**8%**	**4%**	**2%**
Amino	**20%**	**13%**	2%	1%
Among Us	6%	5%	3%	2%
Call of Duty	11%	5%	**5%**	2%
Discord	**14%**	8%	**5%**	**3%**
Facebook	**16%**	**10%**	**10%**	**6%**
Fortnite	8%	5%	4%	2%
Google Hangouts/Meet	**15%**	**9%**	**9%**	**5%**
Grand Theft Auto	10%	5%	4%	2%
Houseparty	8%	4%	1%	1%
Instagram	**22%**	**13%**	**16%**	**9%**
Kik	**23%**	**14%**	3%	2%
Messenger	**18%**	**10%**	**11%**	**6%**
Minecraft	5%	3%	3%	2%
Pinterest	7%	5%	3%	2%
Reddit	7%	4%	2%	1%
Roblox	5%	2%	3%	1%
Slither.io	2%	2%	1%	1%
Snapchat	**23%**	**15%**	**16%**	**10%**
Switch	6%	3%	2%	1%
Telegram	**21%**	**14%**	2%	1%
TikTok	**14%**	7%	**9%**	**5%**
Tumblr	**20%**	**12%**	**7%**	**4%**
Twitch	9%	4%	3%	2%
Twitter	**15%**	8%	**9%**	**5%**
VSCO	**14%**	**10%**	2%	1%
WhatsApp	**21%**	**11%**	**9%**	**5%**
YouTube	9%	5%	**9%**	**5%**

[Q20] For each of the following platforms, please indicate if you have ever experienced any of the following? Please select all that apply then click next. Remember that your answers are anonymous.

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Minors' Use of Age-Gated Platforms: This survey asked about use of a number of platforms that are supposed to be exclusively for adults 18+, such as dating apps and some content sharing platforms. The data show that age-gating alone does not fully keep minors off these platforms. Overall, 17% of minors have used a dating app, including 9% of minors who say they are currently using at least one of the dating apps included in this survey.

Use of online dating platforms poses a unique challenge. They are specifically geared towards online romantic or sexual interactions and may encourage people to meet in person. As such, any usage by minors comes with an inherent risk of sexual interactions with adults - virtually and in person. Concerningly, 9-12 year old boys (27%) are among the most likely to say they have used a dating app.

Among teen boys, 19% have ever used a dating app and among teen girls, 9% have used a dating app. LGBTQ+ minors appear to be slightly more at-risk for online sexual interactions via dating apps. Overall, 19% of all LGBTQ+ minors have used a dating app before.

Fig 9 | **Dating app usage**

17% All Minors	**14%** Girls (9-12)	**9%** Girls (13-17)	**17%** Non-LGBTQ+

[QApps] Do you use any of the following dating apps?

Participants were asked about Bumble, Grindr, Hinge, and Tinder, as well as given an option to select "Other" and specify the app

27% Boys (9-12)	**19%** Boys (13-17)	**19%** LGBTQ+

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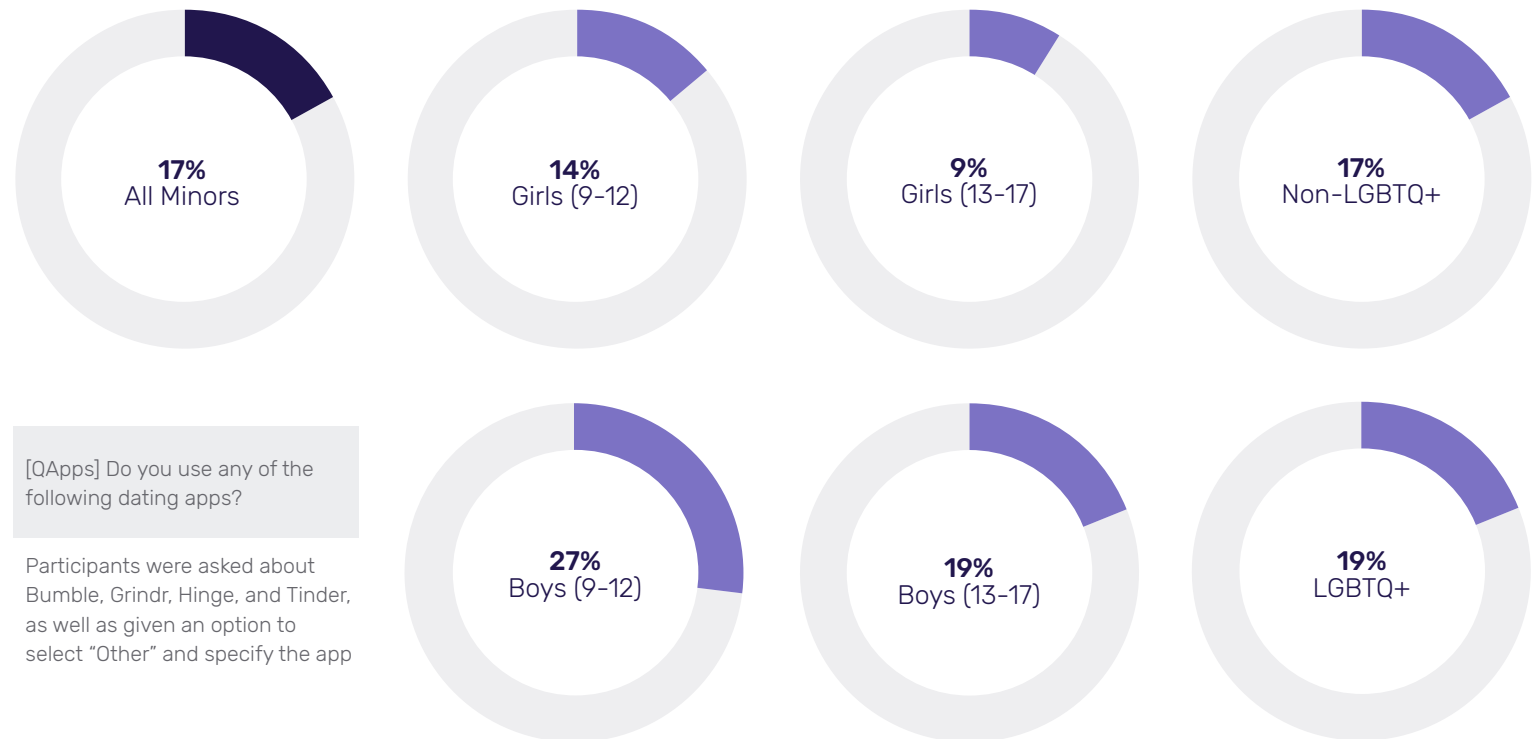
How Minors are Responding to Online Risks

Many minors who experience something negative or harmful online do not look for help or tell anyone what has happened to them. A 2017 survey[10] of survivors of "sextortion" found close to 1 in 3 survivors had never disclosed their experience. Feeling ashamed or embarrassed, holding the belief that telling someone won't help (and might even hurt), and the desire to be self-reliant can all inhibit a minor's likelihood of asking for help.[11]

The current research found a similar trend: one in four 9-17 year olds (24%) who have had a potentially harmful online experience turned to "no one" for support. Of these minors, nearly two-thirds (62%) said they chose not to report because they felt it was not "a big deal" and one in four said they didn't because of anonymity concerns (24%) or embarrassment (23%).

Fig 10 | **Understanding why minors don't seek out support** *(Among minors who turned to 'no one' for support after having...)*

% said reason why they turned to 'no one' for support	...a potentially harmful online experience (any selection)	...an online sexual interaction (any selection)*
You felt this was not a big deal	62%	49%
You worried your report would not be anonymous	24%	23%
You felt embarrassed and worried of being judged	23%	17%
You worried about being in trouble with your family	19%	26%
You worried about police or law enforcement getting involved	15%	19%
You worried about not being allowed to use a platform	15%	19%
You felt like you were to blame or partly to blame for the situation	15%	12%
You worried about losing friends	8%	9%
You worried about being in trouble with your school	5%	6%
You worried about getting bullied at school	5%	2%

[Q34] Which of the following describe why you did not look for additional support following experiences you have had on a platform?

*Base size is < 100; Columns will total more than 100 because question was select multiple

[10] Thorn. (2017). Sextortion: Summary findings from a 2017 survey of 2,097 survivors. Available at https://www.thorn.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Sextortion_Wave2Report_121919.pdf

[11] Kids Helpline. (n.d.). Empowering young people to ask for help. Available at https://kidshelpline.com.au/parents/issues/empowering-young-people-ask-help. Accessed April 14, 2021.

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REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

83%

Of 9-17 year olds who had an online sexual interaction reacted with reporting/blocking/muting

37%

Of 9-17 year olds who had an online sexual interaction told a parent/caregiver/trusted adult/peer

Among minors who had an online sexual interaction, 26% didn't report it to anyone, with nearly half (49%*) saying they didn't report because it wasn't a big deal. Additionally, one in four (23%*) worried it would not be anonymous and one in six (17%*) said they felt embarrassed.

Fundamentally, minors who've had potentially harmful online experiences and do decide to take action are more open to using online safety tools than turning to offline support systems such as a caregiver or a friend. Among those that have had a potentially harmful online experience, minors were more than twice as likely to use online reporting tools than seek help offline: 85% responded with an online safety tool (block/report/mute) and 41% turned to an offline support system (caregiver/trusted adult/peer); 16% chose to ignore it.

The gap between online and offline support becomes slightly larger for minors who have experienced an online sexual interaction: 83% responded with an online safety tool (block/report/mute) and 37% reported it offline (peer/caregiver/trusted adult); 14% chose to ignore it.

Offline support systems, such as caregivers and peers, are crucial in educating youth about online risks and empowering them to navigate digital environments. They can also act as trusted, non-judgemental safe harbors when threats arise. However, whether for reasons of preference, opportunity, or safety, many young people turn first, and at times only, to in-platform safety tools to protect against unwanted contacts. This underscores the critical role platforms play in the safety of young people online.

Fig 11 | **What minors do when confronted with a potentially harmful online experience**
(Among minors that have had...)

% said they did each of the following in response to the experience	...a potentially harmful online experience (any selection)	...an online sexual interaction (any selection)
Total offline action (parent/caregiver/trusted adult/peer)	**41%**	**37%**
Total online action (blocked/reported/muted)	**85%**	**83%**
Blocked the person	66%	65%
Reported the person to the platform	46%	47%
Muted the person	27%	20%
Told a friend what happened	26%	21%
Told a parent, caregiver, or other trusted adult what happened	29%	23%
Ignored it	16%	14%

[Q21A] You indicated that you have experienced the following. For each, when this happened to you, which of the following did you do in response?

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Offline Help-Seeking: Caregivers, Trusted Adults, and Peers

Among the 41% of participants who disclosed a potentially harmful online experience to someone in their offline support system, 29% reported to a caregiver or trusted adult and 26% disclosed it to a peer.

When it comes to offline support for a potentially harmful online experience, there is a significant disconnect between how minors say they will respond, and what they actually do. In theory, more than 2 in 3 minors (68%) said they would report a potentially harmful online experience offline to a caregiver or a peer. However, in practice, for those who've actually had a potentially harmful online experience, far fewer (41%) have sought help from the people in their lives.

Fig 12 │ **Who minors are turning to for offline support** *(Among minors that said they have had a potentially harmful online experience - any selection)*

Total offline action (Parent/Caregiver/ Trusted Adult/Peer)

Told a peer

Told a parent, caregiver, or other trusted adult

[Q21A] You indicated that you have experienced the following. For each, when this happened to you, which of the following did you do in response?

	Total offline action	Told a peer	Told a parent/trusted adult
All Minors	41%	26%	29%
Girls	46%	30%	35%
Boys	37%	22%	23%
Ages 9-12	50%	30%	40%
Ages 13-17	35%	22%	21%
LGBTQ+	37%	29%	22%
Non-LGBTQ+	42%	25%	31%

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6%

Of 9-17 year olds turned to a parent/caregiver/trusted adult after being sent a nude by someone they thought was an adult

For those experiencing an online sexual interaction, the gap increases: there was a 12 to 25 percent discrepancy (depending on the type of interaction) between minors who said they would tell a caregiver hypothetically and those who did following a lived experience. The most drastic of these involved someone they believed to be an adult sending nude content of themselves to a minor: 37% said they'd turn to an offline resource like a friend, caregiver, or trusted adult in theory, but following a lived experience, only 15% said they actually reported the experience offline.

Importantly, the decrease in reporting offline hypothetically versus actually is predominantly attributed to fewer minors reporting to caregivers: 31% of minors said they would in theory tell a caregiver if someone they believed to be an adult sent a nude photo of themselves, but just 6% of those who have had this experience told their caregiver. By comparison, minors were as likely, and in most instances involving an online sexual interaction slightly more likely, to turn to a peer in reality.

"I trust my parents but sometimes I don't trust them in that way because like you said, they don't have as much experience on social media and stuff. They know about it but they don't really have personal experience."

— Girl, 17 years old, White, West[12]

[12] Thorn. (2020). Focus Groups with Youth and Caregivers. March, 2020, Denver. Unpublished data.

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Fig 13 | Offline Resources: What minors say they will do vs. what they actually do

(Among minors that haven't had the experience and minors that have had it)

If someone I believed was <u>18 or older</u>… [Left columns indicated in white]

If someone I believed was <u>younger</u> than 18… [Right columns indicated in grey]

	TOTAL OFFLINE ACTION (PARENT/CAREGIVER/ TRUSTED ADULT/PEER)				TOLD A PARENT, CAREGIVER, OR OTHER TRUSTED ADULT				TOLD A PEER			
	SAY THEY WOULD DO		ACTUALLY DID		SAY THEY WOULD DO		ACTUALLY DID		SAY THEY WOULD DO		ACTUALLY DID	
...asked me to send a nude photo or video	38%	39%	20%	22%	32%	32%	12%	13%	10%	9%	10%	12%
...asked me to go 'on cam' with a nude or sexually explicit stream	37%	35%	24%	20%*	31%	29%	14%	12%*	9%	8%	16%	10%*
...shared a nude photo or video of themselves with me	37%	36%	15%	19%	31%	30%	6%	11%	9%	10%	11%	10%
...shared a nude photo or video of another kid with me	40%	38%	23%*	33%*	32%	31%	14%*	16%*	11%	11%	13%*	22%*
...sent me sexual messages	39%	34%	22%	28%	32%	27%	12%	15%	10%	10%	11%	16%
...bullied me	36%	28%	32%	29%	28%	22%	22%	19%	10%	10%	19%	17%
...made me feel uncomfortable	32%	28%	27%	25%	26%	22%	19%	15%	8%	9%	10%	15%

[Q21] You indicated that you have not experienced the following. For each, if this did happen to you, which of the following would you be likely to do in response?
[Q21A] You indicated that you have experienced the following. For each, when this happened to you, which of the following did you do in response?

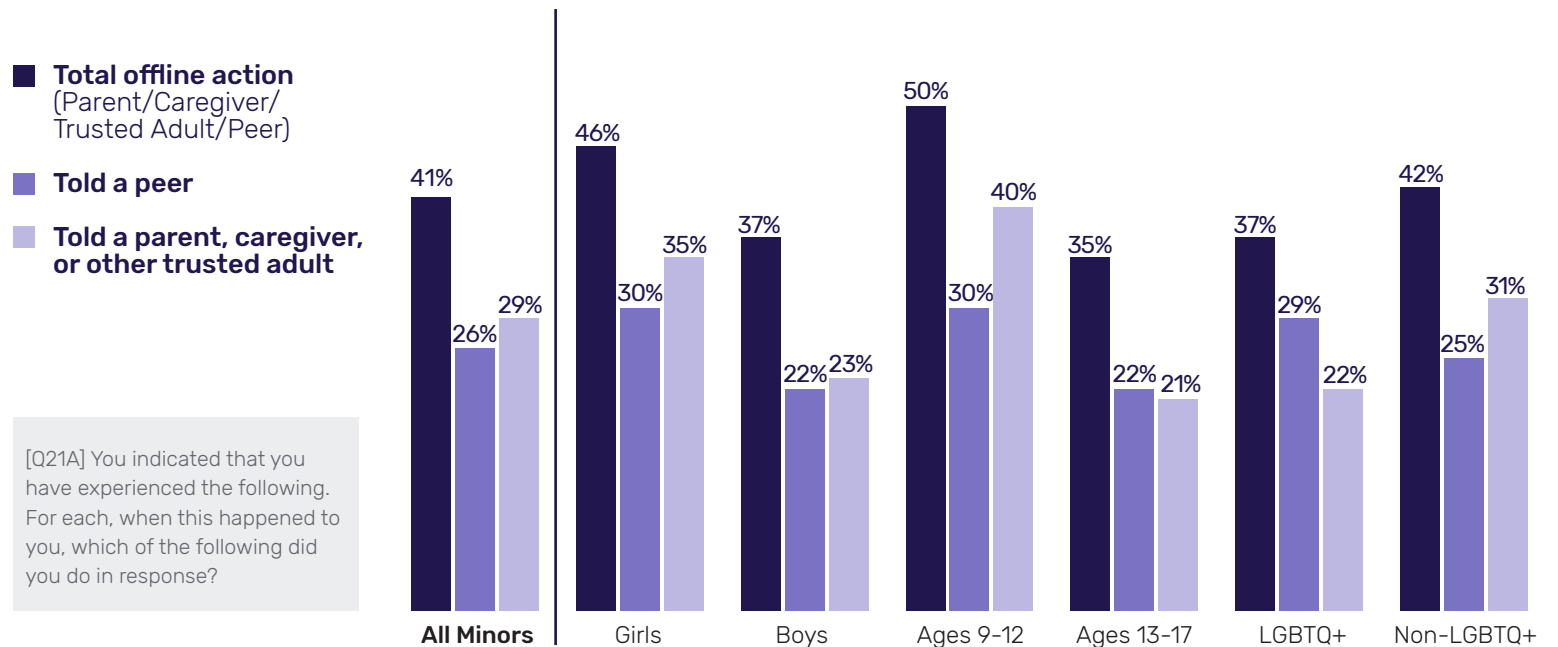*Base size is < 100; Minors that haven't had the experience were asked to say what they WOULD DO in that situation, while minors that have had the experience were asked what they ACTUALLY DID

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Fig 14 | **Who minors are turning to for offline support** *(Among minors that have had a potentially harmful online experience)*

- ■ **Total offline action** (Parent/Caregiver/Trusted Adult/Peer)
- ■ **Told a peer**
- ■ **Told a parent, caregiver, or other trusted adult**

[Q21A] You indicated that you have experienced the following. For each, when this happened to you, which of the following did you do in response?

Demographic Trends around Offline Help-Seeking:
Younger minors who have had a potentially harmful online experience report offline at a much higher rate than their older counterparts: 50% of 9–12 year olds have reported offline, compared to 35% of 13–17 year olds.

Younger minors are also more likely to report to a caregiver than a peer (40% vs. 30%), while older minors are equally as likely to report to a caregiver as a peer (21% vs. 22%). This suggests that with age, minors both report less offline generally, and less to their caregivers specifically.

LGBTQ+ minors are less likely to report potentially harmful online experiences offline to caregivers or trusted adults than non-LGBTQ+ minors (22% vs. 31%). Similarly, LGBTQ+ minors are more reluctant to disclose online sexual interactions to caregivers or trusted adults than non-LGBTQ+ minors (13% vs. 25%). However, LGBTQ+ minors are just as likely to disclose non-sexual online experiences as non-LGBTQ+ minors (28% vs. 25%).

LGBTQ+ minors rely more heavily on peer networks for support/reporting than non-LGBTQ+ minors: 29% of LGBTQ+ minors that have had a potentially harmful online experience reported it to a friend. LGBTQ+ minors are as likely to report sexually explicit interactions to a friend (22%) as bullying or uncomfortable experiences (22%).

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Fig 15 | **Who minors are turning to for offline support** *(Among minors that have had...)*

Total offline action
(Parent/Caregiver/
Trusted Adult/Peer)

Told a peer

**Told a parent,
caregiver, or other
trusted adult**

[Q21A] You indicated that you
have experienced the following.
For each, when this happened to
you, which of the following did
you do in response?

**...a potentially harmful online experience
(any selection)**

	All Minors	LGBTQ+	Non-LGBTQ+
Total offline action	41%	37%	42%
Told a peer	26%	29%	25%
Told a parent/caregiver	29%	22%	31%

...an online sexual interaction (any selection)

	All Minors	LGBTQ+	Non-LGBTQ+
Total offline action	37%	29%	39%
Told a peer	21%	22%	22%
Told a parent/caregiver	23%	13%	25%

Online Help-Seeking: Blocking and Reporting

Among participants who have had a potentially harmful online experience, 85% said they responded by using an online safety tool (reporting/blocking/muting). Specifically, 66% blocked the contact, 46% reported the contact to the platform, and 27% muted the contact (see previously referenced Figure 11).

Unlike offline support systems, there was not always a significant drop off between how minors said they would respond with online safety tools and how they actually responded. When it comes to blocking, there are very strong majorities of minors who would block potentially harmful online experiences hypothetically as well as in practice. Blocking, in this respect, is the online tool of choice.

"I usually block people. It's the easiest way to stop getting messages from somebody, and keep it out of your mind."

— Cis Male, 13–17 years old, White, South[13]

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In theory, 8 in 10 minors (81%) said they would block someone if they were concerned about a potentially harmful online experience. In practice, a majority of minors (66%) who've had a potentially harmful online experience did turn to blocking. Looking at reporting, nearly 7 in 10 minors (68%) said they would hypothetically report a potentially harmful online experience to the platform. However, in practice, less than half (46%) of those who've had a potentially harmful online experience ended up reporting it to the platform on which it took place.

For those experiencing an online sexual interaction, overall there was NOT a meaningful gap between the hypothetical and reality: while 87% of minors said they would theoretically respond to an online sexual interaction using an online safety tool, in reality 83% who had this experience responded with blocking, reporting, or muting.

In many specific experiences, minors were actually more likely to take action online than they predicted in a hypothetical situation. For instance, among minors who have not experienced the aforementioned scenario of an adult sending a nude photo of themselves, 67% said they would use an online tool to address the situation; among minors who have experienced this, 71% did in fact use an online tool in response. This suggests that minors do a good job of anticipating their use of online tools in potentially harmful scenarios, but significantly overestimate the likelihood they will disclose these experiences to trusted people in their lives, further underscoring the importance of online reporting tools to keeping kids safe.

Muting was the least likely online tool to be both hypothetically (40%) and actually (27%) used by minors after having a potentially harmful online experience. This number is even lower for an online sexual interaction: only 20% reported muting contacts in these instances. While this remains a valuable tool for minors to curate their online experiences, it appears to be used much less often for combating potentially harmful experiences.

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Fig 16 | Online Tools: What minors say they will do vs. what they actually do
(Among minors that haven't had the experience and minors that have had it)

If someone I believed was <u>18 or older</u>… [Left columns indicated in white]

If someone I believed was <u>younger</u> than 18… [Right columns indicated in grey]

	TOTAL USE ONLINE TOOL (BLOCK/REPORT/MUTE)				BLOCK				REPORT TO A PLATFORM				MUTE			
	SAY THEY WOULD DO		ACTUALLY DID		SAY THEY WOULD DO		ACTUALLY DID		SAY THEY WOULD DO		ACTUALLY DID		SAY THEY WOULD DO		ACTUALLY DID	
	18+	younger	18+	younger	18+	younger	18+	younger	18+	younger	18+	younger	18+	younger	18+	younger
…asked me to send a nude photo or video	71%	66%	71%	76%	47%	43%	48%	56%	36%	34%	30%	34%	11%	9%	8%	9%
…asked me to go 'on cam' with a nude or sexually explicit stream	68%	67%	79%	72%*	44%	44%	55%	49%*	38%	36%	31%	25%*	11%	9%	4%	4%*
…shared a nude photo or video of themselves with me	67%	69%	71%	75%	43%	44%	42%	55%	36%	36%	36%	25%	9%	10%	7%	9%
…shared a nude photo or video of another kid with me	69%	67%	81%*	81%*	45%	43%	53%*	45%*	40%	38%	29%*	33%*	9%	10%	13%*	16%*
…sent me sexual messages	66%	68%	77%	65%	42%	44%	58%	44%	36%	30%	35%	27%	9%	12%	12%	9%
…bullied me	66%	68%	76%	83%	46%	44%	52%	57%	25%	24%	35%	32%	13%	14%	18%	20%
…made me feel uncomfortable	67%	68%	73%	80%	45%	46%	50%	58%	25%	24%	25%	28%	12%	12%	16%	20%

[Q21] You indicated that you have not experienced the following. For each, if this did happen to you, which of the following would you be likely to do in response? [Q21A] You indicated that you have experienced the following. For each, when this happened to you, which of the following did you do in response?

*Base size is < 100; Minors that haven't had the experience were asked to say what they WOULD DO in that situation, while minors that have had the experience were asked what they ACTUALLY DID

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Demographic Trends around Online Help-Seeking:
The frequency of blocking is notably higher among teen girls: over three-quarters (76%) of 13-17 year old girls have blocked someone for a potentially harmful online experience, compared to just 56%* of their teen male counterparts.

LGBTQ+ minors are equally as likely to report a potentially harmful online experience to a platform (46%) as non-LGBTQ+ minors (47%). However, there's a drastic difference when it comes to reporting online sexual interactions: LGBTQ+ minors are more than ten percentage points less likely to report online sexual interactions to a platform (39%*) than their non-LGBTQ+ peers (51%). LGBTQ+ minors' lower likelihood of reporting may reflect a normalization of online sexual interactions, which are higher for this demographic.[14]

At the same time, LGBTQ+ minors are slightly more likely to report bullying or uncomfortable experiences (39%*) than their non-LGBTQ+ peers (35%).

Fig 17 | **What minors do when confronted with a potentially harmful online experience**
(Among minors that have had each of the following experiences)

Blocked the person [Left columns indicated in white]

Reported to the platform [Right columns indicated in grey]

	ALL MINORS		GIRLS (AGES 9-12)		BOYS (AGES 9-12)		GIRLS (AGES 13-17)		BOYS (AGES 13-17)		LGBTQ+		NON-LGBTQ+	
Potentially harmful online experience (any selection)	66%	46%	68%*	54%*	60%	49%	76%	47%	56%*	43%*	68%	46%	66%	47%
Online sexual interaction (any selection)	65%	47%	67%**	44%**	60%*	44%*	72%	52%	54%*	48%*	68%*	39%*	65%	51%

[Q21A] You indicated that you have experienced the following. For each, when this happened to you, which of the following did you do in response?

*Base size is < 100, **Base size is < 50

[14] Gámez-Guadix, M., & Incera, D. (2021). Homophobia is online: Sexual victimization and risks on the internet and mental health among bisexual, homosexual, pansexual, asexual, and queer adolescents. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 119, 106728. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2021.106728

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Optimizing Reporting

Maintaining safe online spaces for young people requires a combination of tactics - building safe ecosystems, safeguarding exploration, detecting harmful content and bad actors at scale, and responding swiftly and fully to public reports of potential threats.

Minors are currently more likely to use blocking tools than reporting. While this offers some protection from an aggressor, it is often viewed as a temporary measure and does not give platforms the level of detail that may be required to not just block contact between two accounts, but to identify and remove bad actors from their platforms. In cases of child endangerment and exploitation, one child reporting may make the difference for dozens of other children being targeted by the same user.

Platforms have recognized that user reporting is a critical component of keeping online spaces safe, particularly in private environments with limited opportunities for technical moderation solutions. In light of this, it's important to learn from the experiences of young people to encourage their engagement with reporting tools. Quality engagement can deliver valuable and actionable reports for platforms, ultimately improving outcomes for both individuals and digital communities alike.

Minimizing Harmful Experiences

The most common reason minors who had a potentially harmful online experience decided not to report someone was because they felt what happened was not important enough to report (43%). In their own words:

> *"I thought of it as a joke and just didn't care about them."*

— Cis Girl, 15 years old, Asian, West

> *"I just felt like it isn't necessary."*

— Cis Girl, 17 years old, Black, Midwest

This sentiment is not unique to deciding whether or not to report to a platform. As noted in the previous section, when asked what stopped a minor who had experienced something harmful online from disclosing at all - online or offline - 62% said they didn't feel it was a big deal. For those who had experienced an online sexual interaction and told no one, 49%* also felt it was no big deal.

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Minors view blocking and reporting differently. Blocking is about self-protection: creating a wall between themselves and an aggressor. Reporting is about making a judgement call: did an aggressor break the platform's policies or break the law? When asked to describe the differences between blocking and reporting in their own words, over half of minors interviewed (55%) said reporting was more punitive than blocking, but blocking did more to prevent further harassment (28%) or stop the aggressor from continuing to see their content (23%). In fact, when asked what their desired outcomes were for reporting, only slightly more than one-third (36%) wanted the person they reported kicked off the platform entirely.

More often, young people wanted to never be contacted again by the person they reported (52%); wanted the person to be blocked from seeing their content, but not necessarily kicked off of the platform entirely (48%); and wanted any uncomfortable content to be removed (46%).

"Reporting someone is when you tell on them so they get in trouble and blocking someone is when you make it so they can't say anything to you and you can't see each other online anywhere."

— Cis Boy, 9 years old, White, Midwest

Fig 18 | **Minors' aspirations for reporting repercussions**

	ALL MINORS
The person would never be able to contact you again	52%
The person would be kicked off the platform	36%
Any content posted by the individual that made you feel uncomfortable would be removed	46%
The person would no longer be able to see your activity on the platform, but wouldn't be kicked off the platform	48%

[Q18B] If you reported someone on one of the platforms you use, which of the following would you want to happen?

Column will total more than 100 because question was select multiple

Fig 19 | **Differentiating between reporting and blocking** *(Asked of a random quarter of all participants, open-ended)*

	ALL MINORS
Reporting them is more punitive	55%
Blocking someone keeps them from harassing me	28%
Blocking prevents them from seeing your content	23%
Blocking is for content I don't want to see	23%
Reporting is used when you are being harassed	5%
Both are similar	5%
Blocking content hides the problem	4%

[Q18A] In your own words, how would you describe the difference between reporting someone to a platform and blocking them? When does it make sense to block someone and when does it make sense to report someone?

Answers coded from open-ended responses

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REPORT HIGHLIGHT

72%

Of 9-17 year olds want platforms to provide information on how to stay safe from risky online sexual interactions

"I would block someone if I had personal issues with them and I would report them if they did something wrong such as something that violates that specific platform's terms of service."

— Transgender Boy, 16 years old, White, South

Given this view of blocking versus reporting, combined with their tendency to downplay harmful experiences, it is not surprising that young people turn more often to blocking over reporting.

When asked what resources they would want platforms to incorporate, minors overwhelmingly want more information on the reporting process. Three in four minors (74%) said that they would want platforms to provide information on how to report people, how to block people (75%), and how to protect themselves from uncomfortable or risky sexual interactions online (72%).

Girls 9-12 years old in particular are the most passionate about having additional resources available to them. This also highlights the need to clarify users' understanding of potential outcomes for reporting versus blocking—information that minors also crave.

Fig 20 | **Desired platform resources and actions as expressed by minors**

% Strongly Yes [Left columns indicated in white]

Total Yes (Strongly + Not Strongly Yes) [Right columns in grey]

	ALL MINORS		GIRLS (9-12)		BOYS (9-12)		GIRLS (13-17)		BOYS (13-17)		LGBTQ+	
Information on how to report people	56%	74%	65%	78%	53%	78%	53%	73%	51%	69%	59%	76%
Information on how to block people	54%	75%	63%	79%	48%	75%	56%	75%	49%	71%	61%	79%
Information on how to protect yourself online from uncomfortable or risky sexual experiences	51%	72%	56%	77%	43%	67%	54%	69%	51%	72%	53%	72%
Tutorial videos on how to report or block someone	48%	68%	53%	76%	49%	68%	45%	67%	46%	64%	49%	67%
Pop-up messages that check in on how safe you feel on their platform	40%	63%	52%	76%	41%	67%	37%	59%	33%	57%	41%	67%
Support or counseling if you've had a bad experience on their platform	41%	67%	39%	70%	41%	70%	42%	65%	42%	63%	41%	70%
	ALL MINORS		**GIRLS**		**BOYS**		**GIRLS**		**BOYS**		**LGBTQ+**	
			AGES 9-12				**AGES 13-17**					

[Q32] Thinking about the platforms you use, would you want them to provide you with each of the following when you use the platform? Please answer yes or no and indicate how strongly you feel about your answer.

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Personal Privacy, Shame, and Embarrassment

Concerns about being shamed or blamed play a significant role as young people decide if, when, and how to seek help. The majority of minors and caregivers surveyed in the 2019 SG-CSAM Report[15] either exclusively or predominantly blamed the victim depicted in leaked nudes.

> *"I'll feel a little bad for the girl [whose nudes got leaked], but then again she kinda asked for it when she decided to send them to anyone in the first place, soooooo."*
>
> — Cis Girl, 13-17 years old, [Race not disclosed], West[16]

For participants who have had online sexual interactions and told no one, 23%* cited anonymity concerns and 17%* said they felt embarrassed (see previously referenced Figure 10).

Anonymity, as a natural defense against negative consequences such as shame and blame, plays a key role in reporting to platforms. More than two-thirds (68%) of participants said they'd be more likely to report if the process was anonymous. This speaks to the two outcomes participants named that made them least likely to report: being de-platformed themselves (49%) or knowing that the reportee would be aware of who reported them (47%).

Fig 21 | What makes minors more likely to report online

	% MORE LIKELY	% LESS LIKELY
Your report would be anonymous	68%	16%
Your report would be evaluated and responded to by a real human being who works for the platform	68%	18%
You only know the person online	61%	20%
You believe the person is lying about who they are or their identity in some way	61%	23%
Your report would go to an independent organization for review	55%	25%
You know the person offline/in real life	40%	40%
Your report would be evaluated and responded to by an artificial intelligence program or bot	39%	41%
The user whom you reported would know you were the one who reported them	37%	47%
There is a possibility you could be kicked off of the platform in response	34%	49%

[Q30] Regardless of the specific situation, if another user on a platform did something that made you feel uncomfortable or unsafe, would knowing the following make you more or less likely to report them to the platform?

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15 Thorn. (2019). Self-Generated Child Sexual Abuse Material: Attitudes and Experiences. Available at https://www.thorn.org/self-generated-child-sexual-abuse-material-attitudes-and-experiences/

16 Thorn. (2019). Self-Generated Child Sexual Abuse Material: Attitudes and Experiences. Available at https://www.thorn.org/self-generated-child-sexual-abuse-material-attitudes-and-experiences/

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This was especially true for girls, particularly younger ones. Three-quarters of 9-12 year old girls (76%) said knowing a report would be anonymous makes them more likely to use the tool compared to just two-thirds of 9-12 year old boys (65%). Similarly, 72% of 13-17 year old girls say anonymity would make them more likely to report compared to 62% of 13-17 year old boys.

Anonymity and privacy concerns may also be contributing to different reporting rates for potentially harmful online experiences. Minors are more reluctant to report people they know in real life: 40% said they would be less likely to report someone they knew in person, while 20% said they would be less likely to report someone they only knew online. This difference presents unique challenges for cases which may include peer on peer violence or adults with offline access to the minor.

Fig 22 | **What makes minors more likely to report online**

	% Total MORE likely [Left columns indicated in white]											
	% Total LESS likely to report [Right columns indicated in grey]											
Your report would be anonymous	76%	13%	65%	22%	72%	14%	62%	17%	70%	17%	69%	16%
Your report would be evaluated and responded to by a real human being who works for the platform	74%	15%	64%	23%	67%	19%	68%	15%	66%	21%	68%	18%
You only know the person online	70%	13%	66%	22%	61%	19%	52%	26%	66%	20%	61%	20%
You believe the person is lying about who they are or their identity in some way	59%	32%	64%	25%	64%	18%	58%	20%	60%	26%	62%	23%
Your report would go to an independent organization for review	58%	19%	63%	20%	50%	29%	50%	28%	62%	27%	53%	25%
You know the person offline/in real life	43%	39%	53%	36%	32%	46%	37%	38%	38%	48%	41%	38%
Your report would be evaluated and responded to by an artificial intelligence program or bot	40%	39%	52%	33%	30%	52%	39%	39%	39%	44%	40%	40%
The user whom you reported would know you were the one who reported them	31%	53%	53%	37%	22%	58%	43%	37%	35%	56%	37%	45%
There is a possibility you could be kicked off of the platform in response	34%	48%	46%	43%	24%	57%	34%	47%	35%	55%	34%	47%
	GIRLS		BOYS		GIRLS		BOYS		LGBTQ+		NON-LGBTQ+	
	AGES 9-12				AGES 13-17							

[Q30] Regardless of the specific situation, if another user on a platform did something that made you feel uncomfortable or unsafe, would knowing the following make you more or less likely to report them to the platform?

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Integrating humanity into the reporting process can also help mitigate concerns of shame and embarrassment. While young people want anonymity, they also want human connection. More than two-thirds of participants (68%) reported they would be more likely to use reporting tools that connect the user with a real human being rather than an automated system. This is most pronounced among 9-12 year old girls: 74% said this would make them more likely to report compared to 64% of 9-12 year old boys. While it's neither scalable nor safe for content moderators to work directly with minors attempting to report harmful online experiences, this does present an opportunity for platforms to surface alternative resources, such as crisis services, helplines, or online help resources.

Reporting Ease

The process for reporting varies widely across platforms, and even within platforms from a mobile versus desktop interface. In addition to the features being found in different places, the terminology to describe harmful experiences is inconsistent and does not have strong recognition among young people. But overall, minors say they know how to use these tools effectively. On average (weighted), 81% of users that have reported on a platform said that it was "easy" to do, and 87% were satisfied with their reporting experience.

> *"If I was to report someone I would give details on why I'm reporting"*
>
> — Cis girl, 17 years old, Latinx, Northeast

However, while minors say they are confident in their ability to use platform reporting tools to address their concerns, when given a series of commonly available options from reporting menus, many indicated that none of the options fit the situation. Nearly a quarter said they "don't feel like any of these choices fit the situation" of being solicited for SG-CSAM by someone they believe to be an adult (23%) or someone they believe to be under 18 (24%).

In instances involving one minor asking another for a nude image or video, the most frequently selected reporting category was "Sexually explicit or suggestive content" (29%).

In instances involving a minor being asked for a nude image or video by someone they believed to be an adult, the most frequently selected reporting category was again "Sexually explicit or suggestive content" (26%).

Boys 9-12 years old are the most likely to not feel that any of these categories accurately fit the situation: about one-third chose this option both for when an adult hypothetically solicited SG-CSAM (33%) and for when a peer did (31%).

LGBTQ+ minors are also more likely to not feel like any of the categories fit the situation: over one-quarter chose this option both for when an adult hypothetically solicited SG-CSAM (26%) and for when a peer did (28%).

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Fig 23 | Desired reporting categories if a user...

REPORT HIGHLIGHT

23%

Of 9-17 year olds don't feel like reporting categories fit if they're solicited for nudes by an adult

	...that I believed was 18 or older asked me for nude photos or videos		...that I believed was younger than 18 asked me for nude photos or videos									
Nudity	12%	13%	11%	12%	9%	13%	13%	17%	13%	11%	9%	9%
Sexually explicit or suggestive content	26%	29%	24%	25%	17%	21%	30%	32%	29%	32%	25%	30%
Pornography	15%	14%	15%	12%	12%	16%	19%	12%	14%	16%	17%	12%
It's abusive or harmful	24%	20%	31%	27%	29%	18%	17%	15%	22%	20%	22%	21%
I don't feel like any of these choices fit that situation	23%	24%	19%	23%	33%	31%	20%	23%	22%	21%	26%	28%
	ALL MINORS		GIRLS		BOYS		GIRLS		BOYS		LGBTQ+	
			AGES 9-12				AGES 13-17					

[Q31A] Which of the following reporting categories would you select to report a user to a social media platform if that user is an adult 18+ who asked you for nude photos or videos? [Q31B] Which of the following reporting categories would you select to report a user to a social media platform if that user is a person under 18 who asked you for nude photos or videos?

Columns may not total to 100 due to rounding

In both of these hypothetical examples of online experiences, "Nudity" was the least frequently selected reporting category with 13% selecting it if they believed the person asking was a minor versus 12% who selected it if they believed the person asking was an adult.

However, when offered a selection of possible secondary reporting categories to minors who chose "Nudity," options involving the word "sexual" seemed to resonate the most: 63% of chosen secondary reporting terms for when an adult user asks for nudes included the word "sexual," suggesting the importance of incorporating the term into reporting terminology. Similarly, 56% of minors who initially chose "Nudity" for when someone under 18 asks them for SG-CSAM selected a secondary reporting term that included the word "sexual."

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Fig 24 | **Secondary reporting categories** *(Among minors that said 'nudity' was the best reporting category)*

Sexual exploitation
- 26%
- 18%

Sharing private images
- 15%
- 13%

Sexually suggestive
- 9%
- 9%

Sexual content
- 28%
- 30%

Involves a child
- 18%
- 25%

I don't feel like any of these choices fit that situation
- 5%
- 6%

Any selection containing "sexual"
- 63%
- 56%

■ Among minors who said "nudity" for a user they believed to be an **adult**

■ Among minors who said "nudity" for a user they believed to be a **peer**

[Q31AA] And which of the following secondary reporting categories would you select to report a user to a social media platform if that user is an adult 18+ who asked you for nude photos or videos? [Q31BB] And which of the following secondary reporting categories would you select to report a user to a social media platform if that user is a person under 18 who asked you for nude photos or videos?

Totals may not equal 100 due to rounding

In instances where a minor was attempting to report their own nudes being leaked, 22% said they "don't feel like any of these choices fit the situation" and no one term is universally seen as relevant; the most commonly selected reporting category was "It's abusive or harmful" (26%) and "Nudity" remained the least likely selection (16%). Unlike with the requests for nudes, "Sexually explicit or suggestive content" was the second least likely category to be selected (17%).

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REPORT HIGHLIGHT

22%

Of 9-17 year olds don't feel like reporting categories fit if their nudes are leaked

Fig 25 | **Reporting category if your nudes were leaked**

Legend:
- ■ All Minors
- ■ Girls (Ages 9-12)
- ■ Boys (Ages 9-12)
- ■ Girls (Ages 13-17)
- ■ Boys (Ages 13-17)
- ■ LGBTQ+

Nudity: 16%, 15%, 15%, 17%, 17%, 15%

Sexually explicit or suggestive content: 17%, 18%, 17%, 16%, 17%, 14%

Pornography: 20%, 28%, 13%, 21%, 16%, 23%

It's abusive or harmful: 26%, 19%, 27%, 23%, 29%, 20%

I don't feel like any of these choices fit that situation: 22%, 20%, 29%, 22%, 20%, 28%
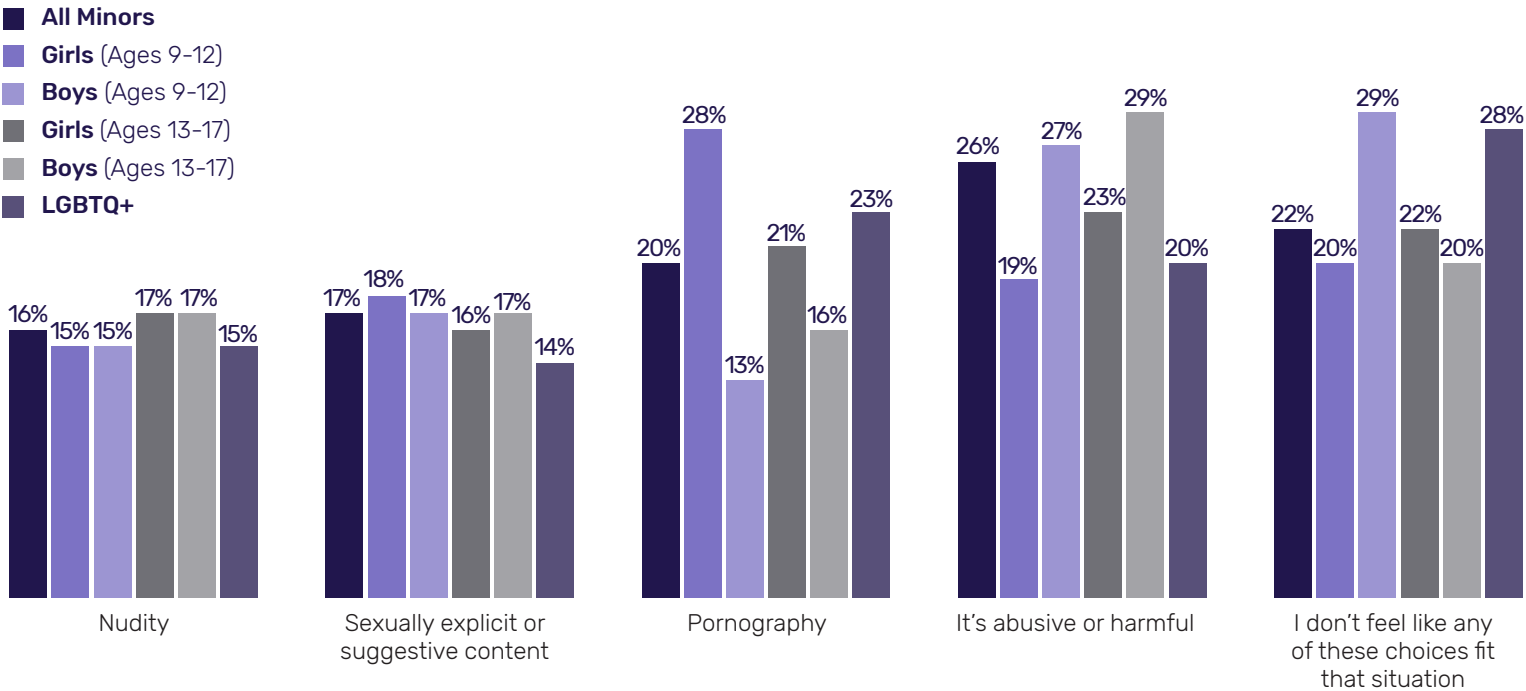
[Q31C] Which of the following reporting categories would you select to report a user to a social media platform if that user leaked nude photos or videos of you?

Columns may not total to 100 due to rounding

Interestingly, when choosing between "secondary" categories for nudity, only 40% of minors selected a category with the word "sexual" in it when it came to their own nudes being leaked. Instead, the leading category was "Sharing private images" (34%).

This suggests that minors may be less comfortable reporting their own content as "sexual" than reporting solicitations as such. It may be that these minors find "sexual" to be a stigmatizing descriptor of their own content that they want help protecting. No matter what, it's critical that platforms identify better language to help minors feel safe coming forward to report leaked SG-CSAM and prevent its spread.

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Fig 26 | **Secondary reporting categories** *(Among those who said "nudity" was the best reporting category)*

Category	Percentage
Sexual exploitation	18%
Sharing private images	34%
Sexually suggestive	4%
Sexual content	18%
Involves a child	22%
I don't feel like any of these choices fit that situation	4%
Any selection containing "sexual"	40%

[Q31CC] And which of the following secondary reporting categories would you select to report a user to a social media platform if that user leaked nude photos or videos of you?
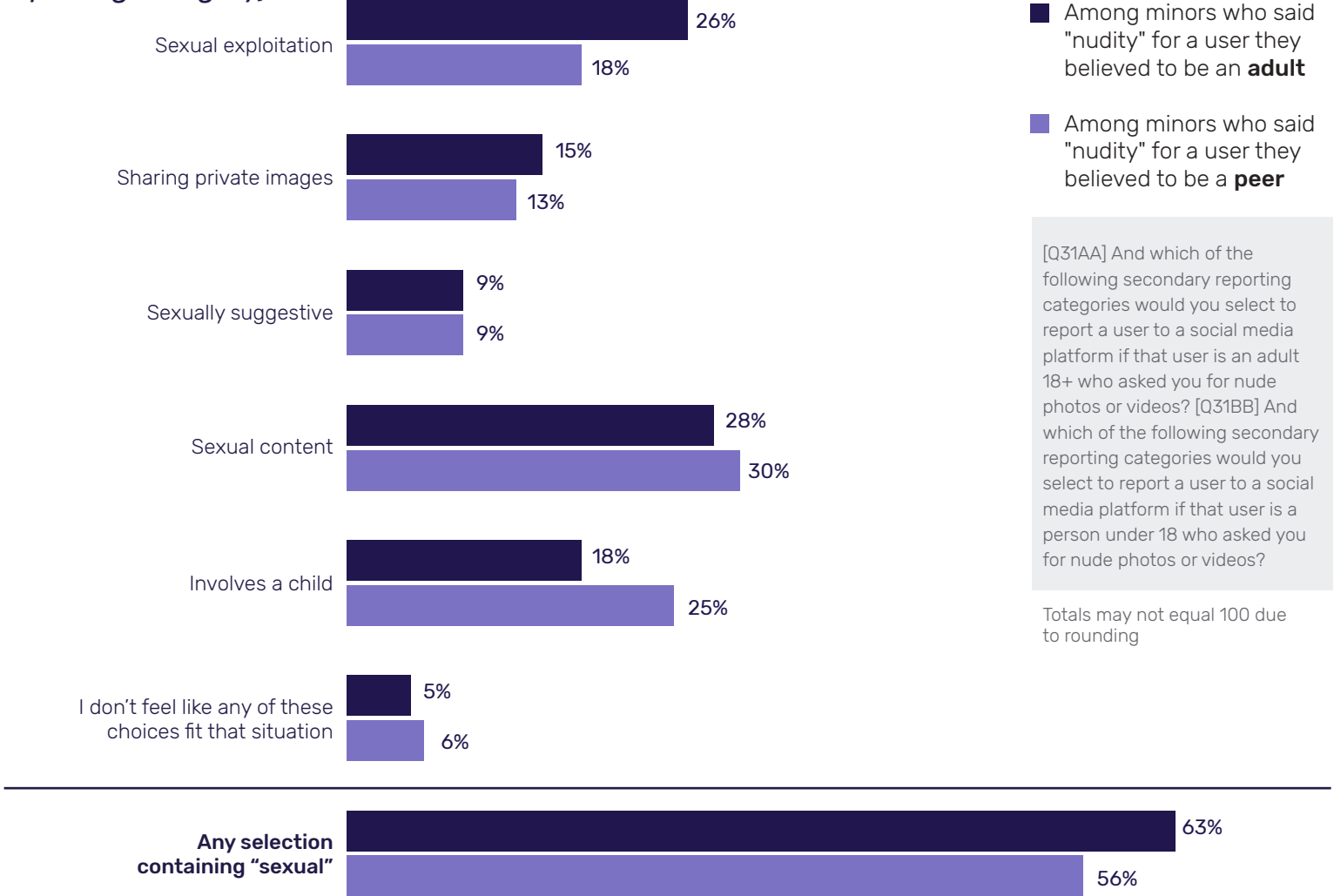
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Report Resolution and Recontacts

The rate at which reports on a platform are considered resolved by young people is seen as good. Around 9 in 10 minors (91%) that have reported something to a platform said that their report was addressed and resolved, including 3 in 4 (73%) that said it was dealt with within a day.

However, for many, the resolution drags out and at times never comes. One in three minors (33%) who have reported something to a platform said it took over a week for their report to be handled, including nearly a quarter (22%) who said they have had a report that was never resolved. This is a critical window during which the child remains vulnerable to continued victimization.
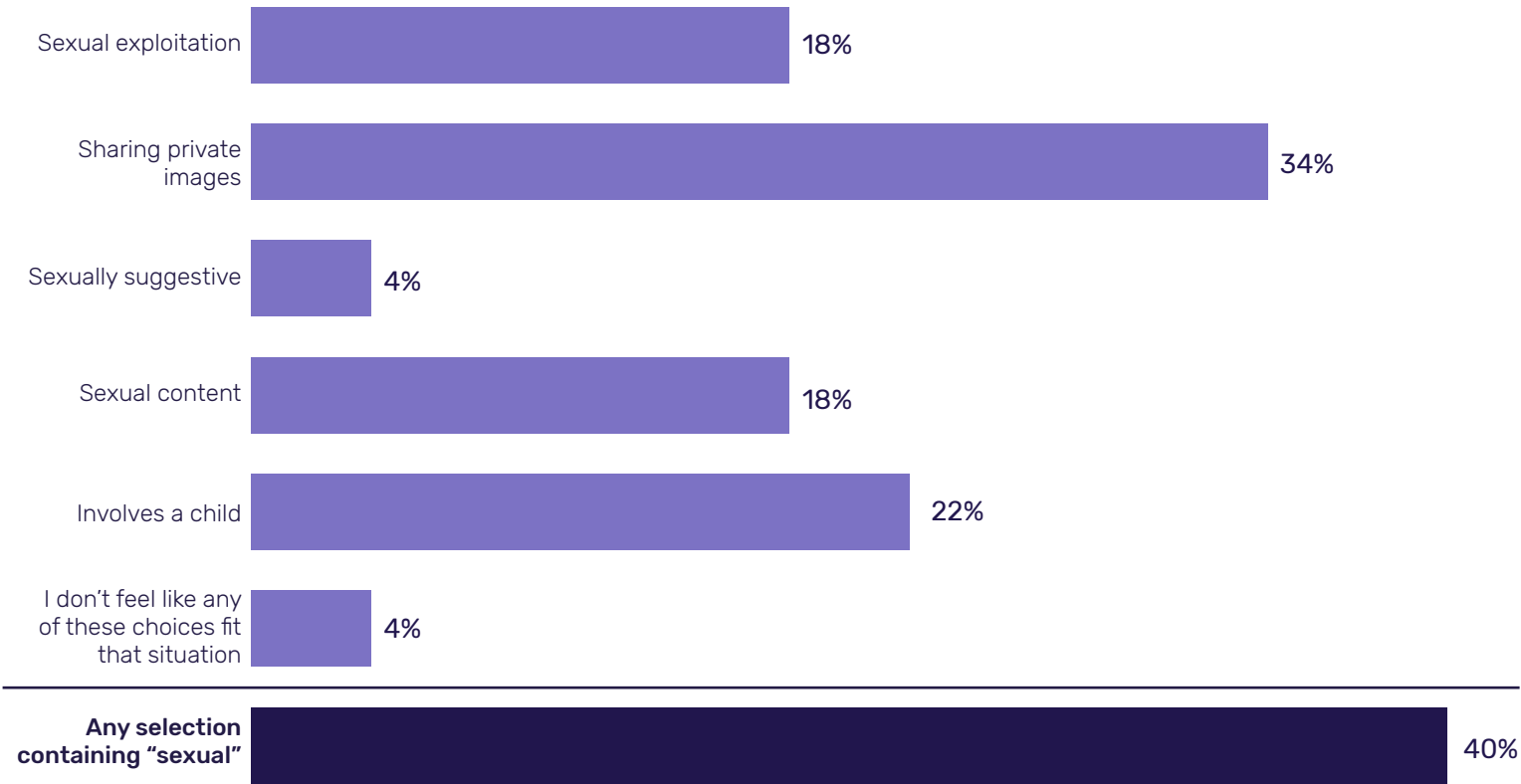
Fig 27 | **Report resolution times** *(Among minors who have reported someone on any platform)*

22%
Have had a report stay **unresolved**

91%
Have had a report **resolved**

73%
Resolved within a day

86%
Resolved within a week

19%
Resolved longer than a week
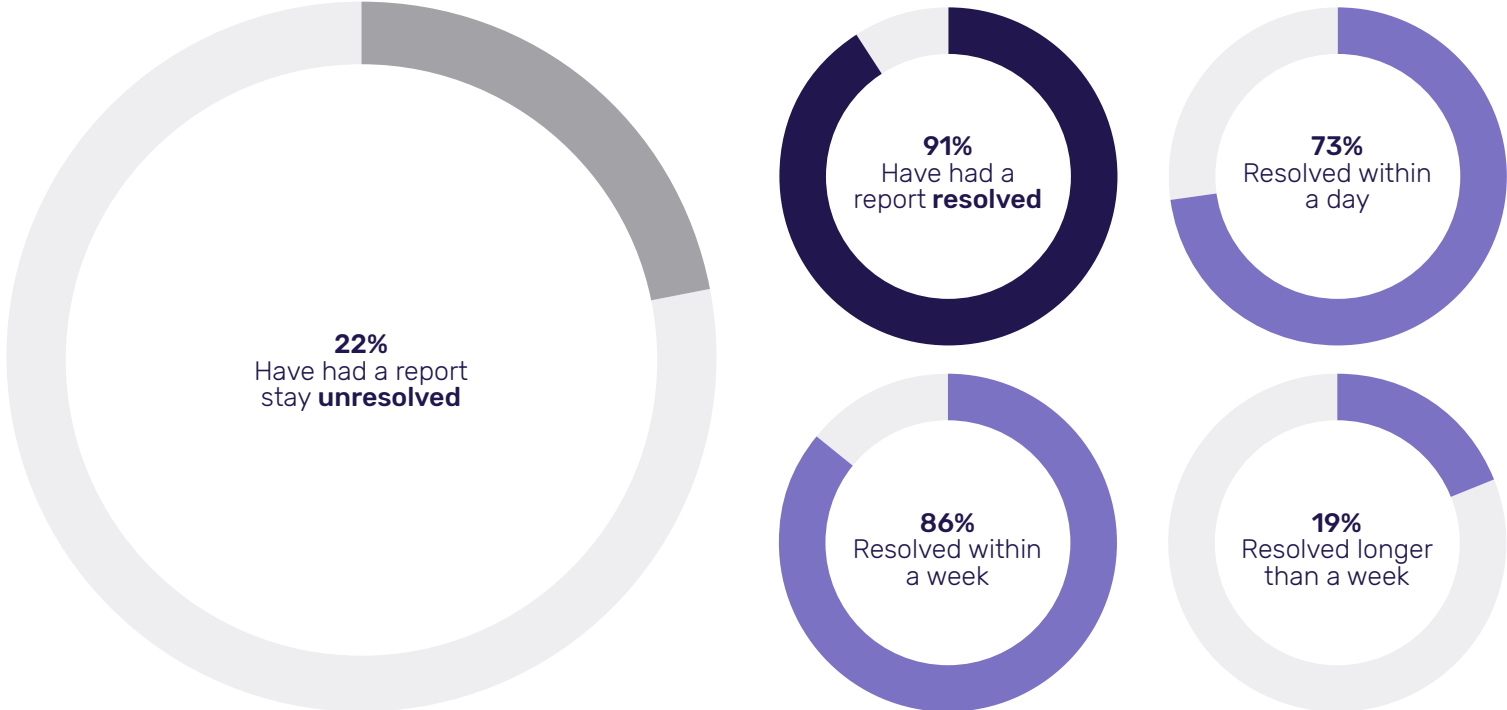
[Q27] After you reported someone to each of the following platforms, how long did it take before you felt the issue or your concern was addressed and resolved?

Charts will total more than 100 because minors who have reported on multiple platforms may have had different wait times until resolution

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"Reporting them takes longer then [sic] just blocking them and all they do when reporting them is lock them out of their account."

— Cis Girl, 16 years old, Latinx, South

Recontacts: "Recontacting," where an individual who has been blocked or reported by a person on a platform seeks to re-connect with the person who has attempted to break their connection, is a significant problem for minors and a red flag that blocking and reporting is failing to prevent continued harassment of one platform user by another, irrespective of how "satisfactory" users may rate the tools across platforms.

A majority of minors who have either reported or blocked someone say they have been recontacted by that person. Over half of participants (54%) who had blocked someone they only knew online said they were recontacted. For those who reported a user they only knew online to the platform, the rate of recontacts was slightly lower (51%).

Minors are slightly more likely to be recontacted by someone if they also have an offline relationship, irrespective of if they used blocking or reporting. Among participants that knew the aggressor offline, 61% of those who blocked and 67% of those who reported were recontacted.

Fig 28 | **Recontacts after blocking or reporting** *(Among minors who have blocked/reported someone they knew online and/or offline)*

After **blocking** someone they...

...only knew online
54%

...also knew offline
61%

After **reporting** someone they...

...only knew online
51%

...also knew offline
67%

[Q24A] Below is the list of platforms you indicated you have blocked someone you only know online. For each please indicate if after you blocked someone on this platform, that person ever... [Q29A] Below is the list of platforms you indicated you have reported someone you only know online on. For each please indicate if after you reported someone on this platform, that person ever... [Q24B] Below is the list of platforms you indicated you have blocked someone you also know offline/in real life. For each please indicate if after you blocked someone on this platform, that person ever... [Q29B] Below is the list of platforms you indicated you have reported someone you also know offline/in real life on. For each please indicate if after you reported someone on this platform, that person ever...

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When minors are recontacted, it is slightly more common to occur on the same platform on which the initial blocking or reporting took place (rather than on another platform), indicating the aggressor maneuvered around a child's defenses by contacting them under a new account. For minors that have blocked someone before, 45% said they have been recontacted on the same platform compared to 43% on a different platform. Similarly, for those that reported someone, 47% said they were recontacted on the same platform compared to 40% on another platform.

Fig 29 | **Where minors are being recontacted** *(Among minors who have blocked/reported someone)*

After **blocking**

After **reporting**

55% Total recontacted after **blocking** someone (online or offline contact)

55% Total recontacted after **reporting** someone (online or offline contact)

45% On the same platform under a new identity

47% On the same platform under a new identity

43% On a different platform
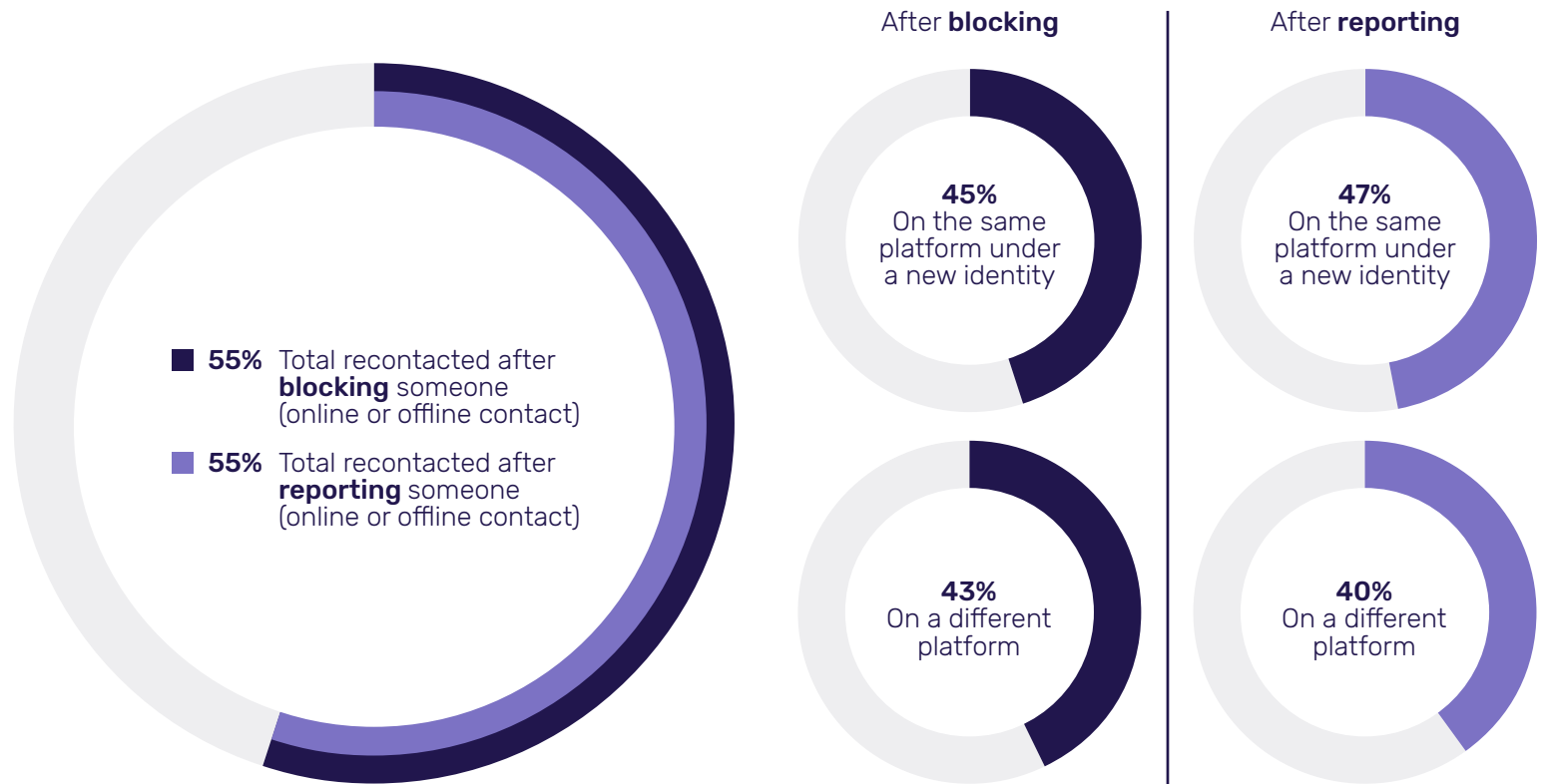
40% On a different platform

[Q24A] Below is the list of platforms you indicated you have blocked someone you only know online. For each please indicate if after you blocked someone on this platform, that person ever... [Q29A] Below is the list of platforms you indicated you have reported someone you only know online on. For each please indicate if after you reported someone on this platform, that person ever... [Q24B] Below is the list of platforms you indicated you have blocked someone you also know offline/in real life. For each please indicate if after you blocked someone on this platform, that person ever... [Q29B] Below is the list of platforms you indicated you have reported someone you also know offline/in real life on. For each please indicate if after you reported someone on this platform, that person ever...
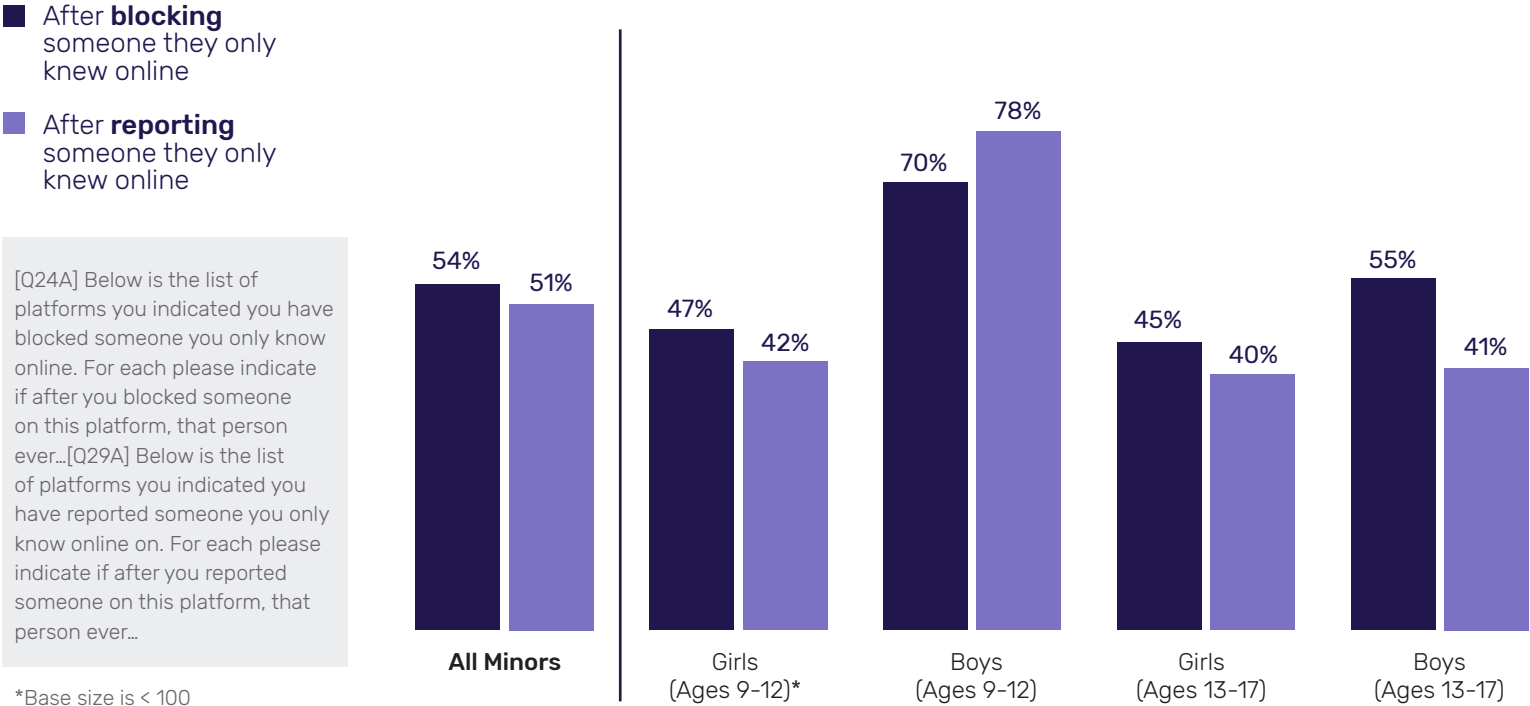
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REPORT HIGHLIGHT

78%

Of 9-12 year old boys had been recontacted by someone they reported

Boys, and particularly younger boys (ages 9-12), were the most likely to be recontacted after either blocking or reporting someone they only knew online. Overall, 70% of 9-12 year old boys who have blocked someone they only knew online were recontacted compared to just under half of 9-12 year old girls (47%*). Among teens, 55% of 13-17 year old boys who have blocked someone they only knew online have been recontacted compared to 45% of 13-17 year old girls.

Among younger minors (ages 9-12), the same demographic story holds true after reporting someone they only knew online: 78% of 9-12 year old boys were recontacted compared to well under half of 9-12 year old girls (42%*). However, there's no significant difference among recontacts experienced by 13-17 year old boys (41%) compared to 13-17 year old girls (40%).

Fig 30 | **Recontacts after blocking or reporting** *(Among minors who have blocked/reported someone they only knew online)*

■ After **blocking** someone they only knew online

■ After **reporting** someone they only knew online

[Q24A] Below is the list of platforms you indicated you have blocked someone you only know online. For each please indicate if after you blocked someone on this platform, that person ever…[Q29A] Below is the list of platforms you indicated you have reported someone you only know online on. For each please indicate if after you reported someone on this platform, that person ever…

*Base size is < 100

All Minors: 54% / 51%
Girls (Ages 9-12)*: 47% / 42%
Boys (Ages 9-12): 70% / 78%
Girls (Ages 13-17): 45% / 40%
Boys (Ages 13-17): 55% / 41%

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Looking Ahead

This body of research provides important findings for the field and recommendations for areas of future investigation. As we continue to build and refine our understanding of this issue, these initial findings shed light on the challenges young people face in reporting online harms and the opportunities that exist to better support them.

1 Minors are having sexual interactions online with both peers and individuals they believe to be adults at concerningly similar rates.

Recommendation: For young people, age is not an absolute guardrail for romantic or sexual relationships. This has long been the case in offline relationships and remains true for online relationships. However, age gaps clearly represent different experiences and levels of risk. The experience of a 19 year old sending sexual messages to a 17 year old is not equivalent to a 19 year engaging in the same behavior with a 14 year old, and even less so with a 9 year old. And certainly, none of this changes the fact that any explicit imagery of the minor - irrespective of the age of the recipient - is illegal and presents the potential for lifelong harm to the child in the image. Understanding these norms and distinctions, and applying that knowledge to our interventions, can serve us better than a one size fits all approach.

2 Minors are more than twice as likely to use online safety tools to combat potentially harmful online sexual interactions than they are to use offline support systems, such as caregivers or peers.

Recommendation: While not a substitute for the protection and support that caregivers and peers can provide, online tools are uniquely able to offer young users immediate recourse in the face of potential harm. Because youth are already using these pathways with some frequency, platforms have a crucial opportunity to encourage and facilitate online help-seeking, and can even be a bridge to a broader set of trusted support systems, such as independent online safety resources and anonymous helplines.

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3 **Blocking is viewed by minors as a more accessible and less punitive tool to respond to online threats. As a result, blocking is much more common than reporting among minors.**

Recommendation: Making the decision to take action against an online threat isn't always easy for kids, and yet many are regularly using blocking features in response to unwanted contacts. However, blocking does not raise the same flags for platforms as reporting. If platforms view reporting as a critical tool to empower users to protect themselves in public and private digital environments, either the process for reporting needs to more closely align with kids' needs or blocking needs to deliver some of the same value as reporting to platforms. Reporting must become more transparent, with accessible and relatable language, and with recognition of the sensitive and private nature of the experience a young person may be reporting.

4 **Neither blocking nor reporting sufficiently protect a user from continued harassment by another user on the platform.**

Recommendation: The high rate of recontacts kids experience highlights two important things:

1) Users enlist tools like blocking and reporting to protect themselves from other users on the platform. However, the rate at which reported users appear to be evading these blocks is concerning, particularly if the reported account was deplatformed in response to the initial report. If this is unavoidable, as admittedly content moderation at scale comes with

challenges, the reliability of these tools should be clear and recommendations to additional systems of support - such as online resources and helplines - elevated.

2) Offenders targeting kids for exploitation are not easily deterred and will actively pursue potential victims across platforms. This makes combating these threats all the more challenging, as offenders move to increasingly private spaces where detection tools are most limited, effectively hiding conversations as they progress from friendly to threatening. This reality puts an unreasonable burden on kids to be their own first line of defense and to seek protection across multiple platforms. This can mean needing to block/report numerous times across systems that use different reporting terminology and processes.

Platforms are uniquely positioned to simplify this process. Shared terminology and iconography could offer a recognizable pathway to report/block across multiple platforms. In addition, using the act of blocking/reporting as an opportunity for users to opt-in to also blocking screen names on other platforms would amplify a single help-seeking act and broaden protections in digital spaces.

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Final Thoughts

Young people get immense value from exploring, connecting, and experimenting online, but this can also introduce new types of risk-taking. We must understand what these moments look like and the trade-offs young people are weighing to identify the greatest opportunities to empower and support them.

Offline support systems play a critical role in keeping kids safe and secure; however, many kids are not turning to them in times of crisis. Instead, they leverage the tools platforms build in - blocking and reporting - and have faith these steps will be sufficient to defend against unwanted and harmful encounters. To this end, platforms are the first line of protection for their users, particularly young people.

And while many companies are leaning into this responsibility, platforms' systems and policies intended to protect young users are not keeping up with the risks they face online. Moving forward we must close this gap, investing in relevant and accessible solutions for young people that deliver on their promise: vibrant digital ecosystems in which kids have the agency and tools to explore safely.

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Understanding the complex intersection of technology and child sexual abuse empowers us to safeguard kids from the ever-evolving threats they face online. Without direct insights from kids who are encountering these issues every day, we risk falling behind in developing valuable resources for them to navigate the digital age safely.

THANK YOU

We are grateful to the kids who took time to participate in our survey. Without their gracious participation, we would not be able to share these key insights about the hurdles to disclosure for online harms.

thorn.org | info@thorn.org