

UK Children Go Online – Schedule for focus group discussions (Ages 15-19)

Introduction

- Introduction of the research project/today's discussion
- Name labels (bring sticky labels and felt pen)
- Explain confidentiality - their names and name of college to be changed
- Discussion will be recorded - is that OK? Complete consent forms (or return if completed)
- Get everybody to introduce themselves: name, age, course, where they mainly use the internet (have home access?) and what they use it for, maybe favourite site etc.

(Note: Questions in a paler shade are for ages 17+.)

Internet literacy/ expertise

- Show advert for **Orange mobiles** with young boy as training manager
- Have you seen these adverts for Orange where this young boy is the manager of training and he teaches adults how to use their mobiles? They're also on TV.
- Is that also true about the internet - young people know more about it than adults?
- Do you think that you are the expert on the internet in your house? In what way? Are parents and teachers catching up?
- If they're not the experts, who is? Can you think of someone you know who is really good at using the internet?
- How do you tell they are good at it? What do they know that others don't know so well? How do you think they became so good at it?
- Think of someone who's useless at using it – what do they not know? How could they learn?

Communication

- Refer to **Orange ad** again: How do you decide when to phone someone and when to email them or use instant message or text messaging? Does it depend on what you want to say, or who they are, or how you feel? (Can you say different things online vs face to face? Do you know people differently online?)
- How do you keep in touch with your friends now? Did you know you are sometimes called the 'always on' generation – is that true? Why?
- Do you keep in touch with family in the same way (family in your house/ family elsewhere)
- Do you meet new people through the internet? How many people are you in touch with online, and where did you meet? How do you mix on and offline

communication? Is it important to you that the people you email/IM with are local or in the UK or perhaps overseas?

- If you didn't see someone face to face anymore, would you be able to stay in touch on the internet? Would it be the same?
- Do you communicate with people the same age as you or older/younger? (How do you know?) Do you sometimes pretend to be older when you're online?
- Does age matter less online? Do you feel you can have more of a say online?
- Have you ever sent an email to someone famous/ a politician/ someone important?

Participation

- The reason why I'm asking is because the internet is said to be more democratic, people can write directly to their MP or to the Prime Minister... Or are you not really interested in politics? Why do you think young people are seen as rather apathetic?
- I'm sure you remember the recent **stop-the-war protests** which also a lot of kids went to. They have been organised by email or on the internet. Do you think the internet is a good way to organise things like this?
- What about your **school web site** (show print out) (or local community site)? Do you use this site? If yes, for what?
- Do you think it's good? What would you like to see on it? What would be a good school web site (or good community web site)?
- Have you ever used the internet to find out what's going on round where you live? What was it for? Going out, cinema, some local club, sports club, football? Was it on a specific site, chat room etc.?
- Do you use the internet to **create content** yourself? Maybe you have your own homepage or you've posted messages in an online community on a message board or you've written a review of something etc.?

Music

- Something that's quite popular with young people is downloading music from the internet? Do you do that as well? Or do you prefer to buy CDs from a shop?
- Do you buy the album after you've heard it online and decided you like it?
- Which sites do you go on? What do you think about record companies wanting to close down such sites?
- Do you download other stuff as well, such as games or videos?

Undesirable content

- Show **Korean spam** from Yahoo Mailbox. ("I get 10 of these a day, I don't know how they got my email address, I can't even read them. I get rude ones as well, but I didn't print them out. Have a look, can you see what they're trying to say, because I don't know....")
- Do you get spam in your mailbox as well? What sort of spam do you get? Any sexually explicit ones? What do you usually do with it? Are you able to block/ filter spam?

- What about advertising on the internet, what types of adverts have you seen (different formats)? (Do they recognise only pop-ups as ads or more 'hidden' advertising/sponsorship)
- The adverts you usually come across, what are they for? (Do they remember/ pay attention). Do they annoy you or are you not bothered?
- If you **compare the internet with other media**, like TV, videos or magazines, do you think that the internet has more advertising?
- Some say the internet is all porn and spam – how do you see it? Is that your own personal experience? Can you give examples? Or just what you heard from others (myths/hearsay)?
- Do you think it is more risky than other media? Have you found more inappropriate things online (email, www, chat, message boards, etc) than on TV, video, radio or in magazines?

Internet safety: Rules

- Are there rules for using the internet at college? What do they say? What about at home?
- Do you stick to all of the rules or do you try to get round some of them?
- Show the **Rules from Youth Club**. What do you think? Do these rules apply to you? Why/not? What age group are they for?
- Should children younger than you be allowed on the internet (ages, issues, reasons)? Would you say the internet is dangerous for younger children? (sources of risk – sex, porn, gambling, race hate, misinformation, bullying, other?)
- If you were a parent, would you let your kids use the internet? What rules would you have?
- When you compare the internet with the street, kids know not to talk to strangers, tell their parents when they see someone dodgy or only go out in a group at night. What's different on the internet? Should there be similar rules?

Internet safety: internet filtering software

- Show advert for **Net Nanny** software
- Do you have similar software at college/at home? Do you know what gets filtered out?
- Does it work, can you get round it? Does it block useful sites? Or does it get it wrong? Do you know someone who tried accessing sites they shouldn't have? What happened?
- Would you prefer what's called a walled garden – where content is checked to make sure it's OK for you (safe, reliable, useful)? Or do you want to search everything yourself (free and diverse, but inefficient and risky)?
- Should sites be banned or would it be better if you were taught more about what's good and bad online? Whose responsibility is this?

Internet safety awareness: Hear'say story (Girls)

- Show them a printout of the story about Hear'say fan and say what it's about (A girl wrote to Myleene from Hear'say, how she was looking forward to meeting her....)

- Four quotes from readers, representing different arguments; each girl to read one and discuss.
- What rules do you think should people observe in chat rooms and when planning to meet up with someone from a chat room?

Internet safety awareness: Thinkuknow campaign and paedophiles (Boys)

- Have you seen this ad about paedophiles on the internet where you hear a boy's voice as if he was in a chat room, talking about football, and in the end it turns out to be some old bloke? What did you think of it? There was a web site, called Thinkuknow.co.uk. Did you go on it?
- There were also some pop-up ads for this campaign on the internet, in chat rooms. Did you come across those? Do you think there should be more such campaigns?
- Do you think you are in danger on the internet? Why (not)? How do you protect yourselves? How do you know who you're talking to in a chat room? Is it different for boys and girls?
- What rules do you think should people observe in chat rooms and when planning to meet up with someone from a chat room?
- Could **show them** Mirror/ Sun articles about online paedophile: Have a look at that. That was in the papers a couple of weeks ago. (A paedophile got 3 years for having sex with young girls he groomed in chat rooms). Have you heard anything about it on the news?

Internet past, non-use and exclusion

- Can you remember the **first time** you used the internet? What did you do? What was it like?
- How have things changed since then? Do you use the internet for different things now?
- Now that the internet is here and part of your life, what difference would it make if you no longer had access yourself?
- What difference would it make if the internet disappeared altogether? Would things be better or worse?
- Do you think we pay too much attention to computers in our society? Do we overrate the internet and how it can change things?
- What about those **left out**, those people who don't have internet access? Why might they not have or not want to have internet access? (luddites, disadvantaged/poor, etc).
- Do you think they're missing out on something? What consequences does it have for them? (no email – no peer network? No web – poor homework?)

Education

- Do you use the internet to revise for exams or for course work? Is it useful for that?
- Which web sites do you use? (commercial/ public service – do they notice?) Are they educational web sites, or do you just go to a Search Engine and see what comes up?

- Why do you think the sites are put there? Does it make a difference who put them there and why they did it?
- Do you think you can trust the information on the internet? How do you know the information on a web site is true? How do you tell when the information is not reliable?
- Do you particularly look for stuff from UK sites? (do you notice, how do you tell? How world wide is the web that you use?)
- Do you use books and the library less now that you can use the internet? Why?
- How would it make a difference if you didn't have the internet?

Transition from college to university/work

- Is college your main internet access point? After leaving college, where will you be using the internet then? Do you think you'll be using it more/less?
- How will you keep in touch with your friends from college (email, phone/mobile etc.)?

Help with personal problems

- **Show them message** from a girl upset about her parents breaking up.
- Some young people have started using the internet as a place to get advice. If you needed some advice about a personal problem, for example about relationships, family, health etc., where would you go? (Parents, books, magazine, teachers, friends, someone in your community, doctor, a telephone advice service, internet etc.)?
- Why/not use the internet? Girls also get their advice from teen mags. What about boys?

Privacy

- Who do you share with/let see what you do online? Friends, parents, brothers and sisters, etc. Who sees your emails, favourites, the sites you've visited in the cache, your MSN buddies list?
- Is what you do on the internet public or private? Compare with phone, face to face etc.
- How do you manage your privacy on the internet? (check who's watching over your shoulder? Deleting emails in inbox? Passwords? Etc) How successful are you in this? Do your parents check what you do on the internet? Does it bother you?
- What about external threats to your privacy – commercial organisations? Strangers?

Interest in the internet

- How much do you and your friends talk about the internet? Or other media
- Invite stories – what's the funniest story you've heard about the internet, the nastiest story, the scariest, the most surprising? (Discuss the likely reality of these stories.)

At the end: Letting them ask questions

- When we started the discussion, or before the discussion, what did you think it was going to be like, what did you think we would ask you? Or was it what you expected?
- Do you think there's anything else we should have asked you? Or anything else you would have liked to talk about – about the internet?
- Are there things you wonder about? Is there maybe something you'd like to ask for example Bill Gates about the internet?
- We're also going to interview some younger kids. What do you think we should discuss with them? What should we ask them? Any suggestions?

Debriefing

- Do you have any questions about the research or about what we'll do with the recording?
- **THANK YOU.**

UK Children Go Online

Schedule for focus groups: Media Cards (Ages 12-14)

Introduction

- Introduction of the research project/today's discussion
- Name labels (bring sticky labels and felt pen)
- Explain confidentiality - their names and name of college to be changed
- Discussion will be recorded - is that OK? Complete consent forms (or return if completed)
- Get everybody to introduce themselves: name, age, where they mainly use the internet (have home access?) and what they use it for, maybe favourite site etc.

Media cards: Communication

Images:

email, instant messaging, chat, SMS, mobile phone, landline telephone, fax machine, face-to-face conversation, letter writing (leave some blank cards in case they want to add something)

Questions:

- These cards show different ways of how we can talk to people and communicate with them. Which of these types of communication **have you used** / not used before?
- Which types of communication do you use **most often**?
- **What do you use it for?** To say what? To contact who?
- Which types do you use to stay in touch with **friends**?
- For communicating with **family** members? (family in your house/ family elsewhere)
- **How do you decide when to phone** someone and when to email them or use instant message or text messaging? Does it depend on what you want to say, or who they are, or how you feel? (Can you say different things online vs. face-to-face? Do you know people differently online?)
- Which ones do you think are best for meeting **new people**?
- Do you meet new people through the internet? How many people are you in touch with online, and where did you meet? How do you mix on and offline communication? Is it important to you that the people you email/IM with are local or in the UK or perhaps in other countries?
- Which one's do you think are best for fun/ **joking**?
- Flirting/ **dating**?
- Talking about serious issues or **problems**?
- Which ones are the **fastest/ slowest**?

- Do you think some of them are **dangerous**? Which ones? Why? Which are **safer**? What do you do or what do your parents do to **protect** you?
- Which ones are **cool** for kids your age?
- Which ones are used more **by adults**?
- Which ones are **old-fashioned/modern**?

Media cards: Information, education, entertainment

Images:

Internet, computer, printer, CD-rom, video games console, gameboy, TV, digital TV, video recorder, camcorder, satellite, radio, stereo, walkman, discman, books, comics, magazines, newspapers (leave some blank cards in case they want to add something)

(ALSO INCLUDE MOBILE PHONE?)

Questions:

- Now I will show you some different cards. Most of these you will all know and some you will have at home. But there are some which aren't very common. Are there any **things you don't know** much about?
- Which ones of these do you **have at home**?
- First I'd like you to divide these into **groups** of things that go together. You decide what the groups should be. There are no right or wrong answers, just what you personally think.
- Let's look at what you've done. How did you decide?
- Which are the **most/least interesting** groups?
- Can you give each of the groups a label or **title**? (Can you describe them?)
- What would a **typical user** be like? What kind of person would never use these things?
- Tell me about **typical situations** when you would use these things.
- Thinking of the ones you have at home, which one would you **miss most** if it broke down or if you couldn't get it anymore? Why? What would you do instead?
- Let's say you come home from school and you're **on your own**. What would you do? Would you use one of these?
- And if you come home **with a friend**, what would you do? Would you use one of these? Can you explain why that would be good?
- Are there any of these things that you think of as **old-fashioned**? Why?
- And which are the things you think of as really new – **modern**? What's new about them?
- Is there anything here that's really **exciting**, good fun? Why?
- Is there anything there that **absorbs you completely** so that, for example, if your mum called you might not hear her? Tell me a bit about what that's like.
- Is there anything that's really dull and **boring**? Why?

- What are the things that are **cool** to have for kids of your age? What about older kids/ younger kids? Is it the same?
- Now finally, can you pick out the ones that your **parents** think are good for you, the ones they like you to spend time with? Why do they approve of these? Do you agree?
- Do you like any of the things your **parents disapprove** of? When do you use them? Why do you like them?
- I want you to think about when you **last got a piece of new equipment** like this. Who specially wanted it in your family? Did you spend a lot of time with it? Do you still spend a lot of time with it? What was fun about it? Was it disappointing at all? Does it ever annoy/frustrate you?
- How did it change your life when you got it? Do you now use any of the other things you've got less?
- And thinking about the things you don't have, what would you like to get for your next **birthday** or for Christmas? When would you use it? How would it change things? Is there anything you would do less of? Do you know anyone who has it? Have you already used it anywhere before?

Debriefing

- Do you have any questions about the research or about what we'll do with the recording?
- **THANK YOU.**

UK Children Go Online

Schedule for focus groups: Mind maps (Ages 9-11)

Introduction

- Introduction of the research project/today's discussion
- Name labels (bring sticky labels and felt pen)
- Explain confidentiality - their names and name of college to be changed
- Discussion will be recorded - is that OK? Complete consent forms (or return if completed)
- Get everybody to introduce themselves: name, age, where they mainly use the internet (have home access?) and what they use it for, maybe favourite site etc.

Instructions for mind maps

- Introduce discussion: "An Alien from another world has been watching people here on the planet Earth very carefully. It has been able to see everything but meeting you is the first opportunity it has had to ask questions about things it has seen. It wants to know what the internet is, and you have to explain..."
- Place large sheet of paper (flip chart) on the table, each child gets a felt pen.
- In the middle is a picture of a little green alien with speech bubbles around it:
"What is the internet?"
"What can you do with it?"
"Where can you use it?"
- The children will be asked to make quick drawings or just write words (no long sentences).
- Remind them that this is not a test and we don't want to hear what they've learned at school and that it doesn't matter if some of them write/draw the same things at the same time.
- Each child can write/draw something to the question of their choice and then draw a line, indicating which of the alien's question they have answered.
- Encourage them to explain their words/ drawings further (i.e. when someone writes 'email' or 'chat', ask them to write/draw more around that, explaining what it means and drawing further connecting lines.
- "Can you explain that in more detail to the alien?"
- Then take a break from writing/drawing and ask them to explain:
"You wrote .../ You drew a ... Why is that important? Why does the alien need to know that?"
"Is that how/where you use the Internet? Can you tell me what you do?"
- Let them comment on each other's keywords/ drawings.

- Let them have another go at answering these questions if they haven't produced very much so far, otherwise add new questions:
- The alien also wants to know: (stick new speech bubbles on paper with blue tack)
"What's the best thing about it?" (What's good about it?)
"What's the worst thing about it?" ("What's bad about it?")
OR:
"What's fun about it?"
"What's boring about it?"
ALSO:
"What's dangerous about it?"
"What are the rules for using it?"

Debriefing

- Do you have any questions about the research or about what we'll do with the recording?
- **THANK YOU.**