



# Plugged In Switched Off Summary Report

APRIL 2021



Prepared by  
Clíodhna Purdue Training Executive,  
Online Safety Programme

Supported by



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Thank you for attending Plugged In Switched Off, – our first webinar about Digital Wellbeing and Screen time, organised by the Barnardos Online Safety Programme supported by Google.org. We hope you found it useful and informative.

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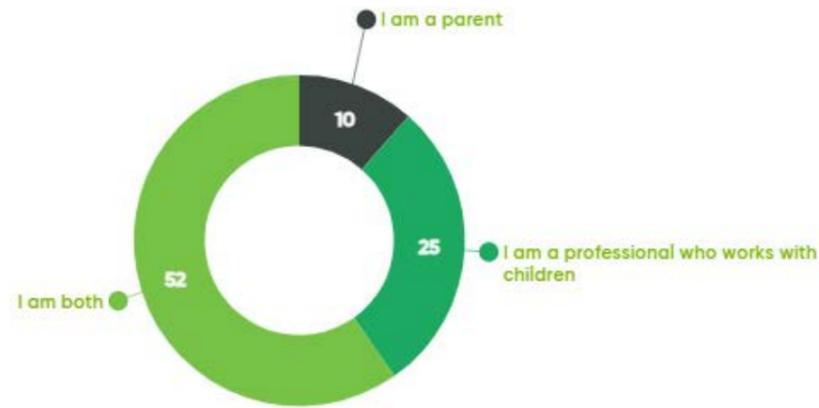
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# Learnings from event: Mentimetre results

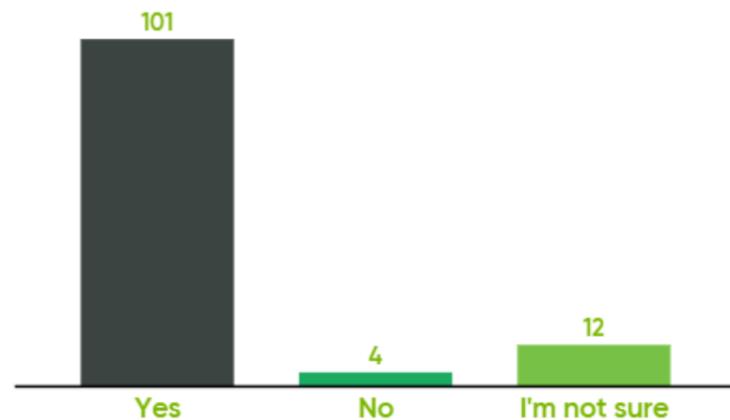
## Question 1 - Who is here today?

I am a parent: 10  
 I am a professional working with children: 28  
 I am both: 82



## Question 2: Do you think you and your children spend too long on screens everyday?

Yes: 101  
 No: 4  
 I'm not sure: 12



## Question 3 - In 2 or 3 words, what does Digital Wellbeing mean to you?

Key words: safe/safety/balance/fun



## Insights from speakers

Link to Youtube plenary on Barnardos website until 5th May: [barnardos.ie/pluggedin](https://www.barnardos.ie/pluggedin)

Clíodhna Purdue, Training Executive, Online Safety Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Spoke about the <a href="#">online safety workshops</a> Barnardos are rolling out in school across the country and how to book them</li> <li>Demonstrated Barnardos' child-centred approach, and highlighted this through a video made in consultation with young people</li> <li>How young people define <a href="#">Digital Wellbeing</a></li> </ul>
Joanna Fortune, Clinical Psychotherapist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Spoke about child development and <a href="#">offered many suggestions</a> and ideas for how parents can engage in more playful activities with children aged 8-12, as this is generally when video games and screen time can take over.</li> <li>Not all screen time is the same</li> <li>Spoke about how parents need to be role models as young children only want their parents' attention</li> </ul>
Almudena Lara, Child Safety Lead, Google	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Spoke about Google's approach to safety online for children and signposted <a href="#">Be Internet Legends</a>, a website for children, parents and teachers and a game called Interland for children</li> <li>Spoke about <a href="#">Family Link</a> – a tool for parents to help control Screen time</li> </ul>
Alexandra Evans, Child Safety Lead, Tik Tok	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tik tok's mission is to spread joy. There are 10,000 moderators on Tik Tok enforcing community standards</li> <li><a href="#">Spoke about Family Pairing</a>: creating boundaries between parents and teenagers</li> </ul>
Karl Gilmartin/Lily Byne, Webwise Youth Advisory Panellis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduced Webwise, Ireland's Safer Internet Centre and showed the <a href="#">Full Picture video</a></li> <li>Karl spoke about how being online helped him through lockdown, participating in coding seminars and cookery demonstrations, but also that being online so much affected his sleep</li> <li>Lily spoke about the benefits of technology allowing her to keep learning and to do school work while restrictions were in place in school. She also encouraged parents to engage more with their children online</li> </ul>

## Insights from workshops

### Workshop 1: Being a good role for children: How to empower parents

Chairs: Catherine Joyce/Catherine McCurdy (Barnardos staff)

Poll results – combined from 2 workshop (35)

#### 1. Question: I find managing screentime extremely challenging - both for myself and my children

I agree: 74% (26)

I neither agree nor disagree: 11% (4)

I disagree: 5% (2)

#### Questions asked of participants

- What are the main challenges you face with regards to screen time: your own and your children's?
- What works for you? Any tips or best practice to share? If none, what would help?

#### Challenges:

- It can be difficult to sell a programme or support to parents and young people when sessions are taking place online. We know the work can still be beneficial but it can be hard to show a parent how this can work.
- In terms of supporting parents, bridging the gap between parents and children/young people is difficult. Parents do not feel they have the skills or knowledge to manage online and screen time, especially as their children get older.
- As a parent, getting the balance right is a challenge, especially in the current situation. Young people are using their screens for school work, for connecting with friends and family, for entertainment with Netflix's and social media. We are trying to support the reduction of screen time but there is such an expectation for young people to be using their screens it can be hard to manage the balance.

#### What works? Top tips:

- Keep the lines of communication open. Take an interest in your child's screen time and learn from them.
- Be a role model for your children. As a parent set an example and follow the same boundaries that you want your children to follow. For example, no phones at the table during meal times.
- Using distraction with young children works. Engaging in imaginative play with children reduces their want or need to have screens.
- No screens/devices in the bedrooms. No screens after a certain time (including adults).
- Make boundaries at home, go to a family meeting with ideas, explain the options while you are working and after work.
- Need to give time countdown when screen/games will be stopped. The same way you would not pull your child off the football pitch – you would not do the same when child is in the middle of a game with others. Just the importance of putting a time on it first.

## Workshop 2 – Screentime and Digital Learning: a teacher’s perspective

Chair: Lorna Kerins (CYPSC), Scott Vance (principal St Peters Bray)

### Questions asked of participants:

1. What do you see are the challenges faced by children you work with regards to screen time/digital learning?
2. What are the benefits of screen time and digital learning for children?

### Challenges

1. Engaging children depends on parents’ engagement (talked about seesaw).
2. Keeping motivation up can be hard as a teacher.
3. Difficult to keep work fun for the kids.
4. Zoom Fatigue.
5. Children’s motivation dips and it can be hard to engage with them online.
6. Anxiety around attending zoom calls.
7. Teacher of special needs students found a variety of responses to the transition from in-person to online learning:
  - Some preferred being at home online and found there was less pressure for them.
  - Those that found it difficult, found teaching for subjects like Maths impossible online. Children said it felt very different to having the person there beside you helping you.
8. Youth group perspective: found when they reopened (before schools) many children who came to the in-person group still wanted to spend time on their phone. They didn’t want to miss out on the latest video/meme/ etc that their friends were talking about.

### Benefits

1. Good they can see their friends.
2. Good to get visual feedback eg. can see how a child is holding their pen when writing.
3. Connection with friends gives a boost.



## Workshop 3 - Defining Digital Wellbeing: how to promote it more in Ireland?

Chairs: Cybersafekids/Dr Eoin Whelan (NUIG)

### Poll 1: How confident are you that we’ve got the balance right for children in our society in terms of digital wellbeing? 13 responses

- Confident
- Quite confident 21% (3)
- I don’t know 7% (1)
- Fairly unconfident 69% (9)
- Not confident at all 7% (1)

### Poll 2: In your view, who has the greatest responsibility to safeguard or to create structures for children’s digital well being? (33 responses)

- Government
- Schools
- Families: 21% (7)
- Children themselves
- Tech industry/online service providers 3% (1)
- All of the above: 75% (25)
- I don’t know

### Poll 3: What age should a child be to receive their first smart phone? 17 answered

- 10 years 11% (2)
- 12 years 29% (5)
- 13 years 35% (6)
- 14 years 11% (2)

## Responsibilities for Safeguarding Children’s Digital Wellbeing:

1. Thinking about those responsible for safeguarding or promoting digital wellbeing for children, what can they do to make this a reality? (ie. Government/families/big tech/schools)
2. In general, what needs to happen or change at societal level to promote digital wellbeing for children?

Individual/parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents need to understand how to make devices safer</li> <li>• Parents need to understand we live in a digital age, they need to understand more about screen time/balance</li> <li>• If parents don't know, they need to source skills and knowledge around this information</li> <li>• Awareness raising, personal responsibility-from all elements mentioned before</li> <li>• Parents need more support as parents can lack confidence, some are too tough and some are too dismissive</li> <li>• Need to weigh up pros and cons and realise that is how children connect these days, it can be a cause of family tension</li> <li>• Adults need to monitor how their children are online</li> </ul>
Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legislation to support – need to catch up so that overarching legislation is in place</li> <li>• The internet is greater than everyone, we all need to help out to make it a better place</li> <li>• Minimum standards need to be in place</li> <li>• Funding from government to raise awareness of digital wellbeing</li> <li>• Legislation to protect and empower online</li> <li>• Government funding to help raise awareness in schools, in homes, in communities about online safety and digital wellbeing</li> </ul>
Society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education need – everyone needs to understand roles and responsibilities</li> <li>• Everyone’s responsibility – lots of challenges, but everyone needs to step up to the mark</li> <li>• Education and awareness –embed in education system so it becomes the norm so that we can empower young people</li> <li>• 24/7 – constant focus, relationship abuse (encourage signs of abuse – control over reading messages etc.)</li> </ul>
Big tech	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More awareness</li> <li>• Short workshops on specific platforms – helpful for parents to know specific safeguards</li> <li>• Guided by rules – there needs to be accountability</li> </ul>

## Feedback/evaluations from delegates

**68 responses out of 220**

96%  
rated the webinar favourably, saying it was good or excellent

66%  
would like a webinar in the future

81%  
would attend a similar event in the future

66%  
would like a webinar in the future

25%  
would like a mixture of webinar/face to face

### When asked what topic they would like further guidance on for future webinars, it was mixed:

30%  
empathy/cyberbullying and online safety

16%  
protecting vulnerable children online

20%  
how to help children think critically online

14%  
Trends in online safety

17%  
special educational needs and online safety

1%  
Other



## What delegates liked about the webinar:

**Variety of speakers, length of webinar, content was interesting and relevant, key note speaker was excellent.**

“The whole webinar was amazing, lots of great, helpful information, clearly and engagingly given. The mixture of experts was wonderful and allowed us (the viewer) to see multiple points of view.”

“Extremely well presented. Great range of presenters. Loads of experience talking and well worth listening to!”

## What delegates said we could improve on:

**Workshops were too short, more guidance needed on how to access different platforms, sound/tech issues in some workshops**

“Very good content and discussion, Joanne Fortune excellent, a lot packed in and ran out of time in breakout room. An extra half hour with time for break would have been good.”

“More guidance needed about how to navigate between YouTube / Zoom. Discussion time in break out room too short, no conclusions drawn. Good source of resources but little advice on how to engage clients/parents. Joanne Fortune very good, but too short.”

## Next steps

We will continue to deliver our online safety workshops in schools and we hope in September that this can happen face to face.

By listening to the needs brought to us in these workshops, as well as insights from this webinar, we will work to create a new webinar/workshop in 2022, as well as updating our parent workshops to make sure they are relevant and current.

**If you would like to sign up to our mailing list to receive further information and learn when our next webinar will be, please email us on [onlinesafety@barnardos.ie](mailto:onlinesafety@barnardos.ie) and we will add you to the list.**

See our [website](#) for details on how to book your workshop.



## Our Partners

Since September 2019, with support from Google.org, we are rolling out a 5 year online safety programme across the country, with the aim of reaching 1,000 schools and 75,000 students overall. As part of this Barnardos/Google partnership, we signpost Be Internet Legends, a free multifaceted programme designed to teach younger children (age 7-11 year olds) about online safety. There are family guides for parents and lesson plans for teachers and can be used as a 'before' or 'after' teaching resource to our workshops.

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Barnardos' vision is a country where no child has to suffer and every child is able to reach its full potential.

Barnardos' mission is to deliver services and work with families, communities, and our partners to transform the lives of vulnerable children who are affected by adverse childhood experiences

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