

# Secure Digital Parenting : Challenges & Way Forward



**Report by :**

Institute for Governance, Policies & Politics (IGPP)  
in collaboration with  
Social Media Matters

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# Introduction

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**Across the globe, there has been a phenomenal expansion in the use of Information and Communication Technologies. The increasing number of people having personal computers, laptops, or android phones and easy access to the internet has reshaped the digital lives of millions of people. Among other technological innovations, internet use is spreading rapidly in daily life. Since the internet has infiltrated our daily lives, millions of people have started using the internet for multiple purposes.**

**The emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic has increased and expanded the internet engagement of the people in their lives. As a result, families, and schools are allowing more flexibility in terms of technology use, particularly in the context of online learning. However, the flexibility and expansion of the technology use have also created several risks and vulnerabilities. In this context, the Institute for Governance, Policies & Politics, and Social Media Matters proposed this study to understand parental concerns and their online safety mechanisms for a safe and positive online environment for their children.**

51%

# Objectives

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- To understand the parental concerns about kids' engagement with the internet and technology and their positive online experience.
- To understand the parental use and experience of different technology for the online safety of their kids.
- To explore the challenges of the parents to use technology in this sphere.

# Research Questions

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- What are the major concerns of parents about the kid's engagement with the internet?
- How do the parents are negotiating with the new digital environment and their kid's digital socialization?
- What is the penetration of child protection technologies are available and used by the parents?
- How do the parents use parental control in their home?
- What are the possible methods of interventions to be initiated by the schools and social organizations and other stakeholders?
- What kinds of challenges do parents face in terms of parental control in digital platforms?
- How the big tech firms can improvise their operation to meet the needs of the parents?
- How do technology industries as a whole do better to improve their products to suit the family needs?

# Methodology

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This study used a quantitative research technique. For data collection, we conducted an online survey of the parents whose wards are internet users. The sample design considered the regional and age-specific diversity, in order to best represent a true representation of the popular opinion. The collected data was then be analyzed to triangulate information.

**Survey Design:** We used the following sampling design for this study.

**Sample size:** We aim for a 99% level of confidence for our estimates. Using Cochran's method of sample calculation(1977)

This works under the following realistic but rigorous assumptions:

$$n_o = \frac{[(z_{0.005}^2) * p * (1 - p)]}{d^2}$$

- p = estimated proportion of attributes present in the population
- no is the sample size
- “d” is the desired level of precision or confidence interval
- the population size is infinite

Plugging in the z-value at 99% level of confidence, p=0.5 and (+/-) 5% precision level (or confidence interval), d=0.05, we get a sample size of

$$[(2.58)^2 \times (0.5) \times (0.5)] / (0.05)^2 = 665.64 \text{ or } 666 \text{ (after rounding off)}$$

Based on this calculation we, propose a sample size of 666 parents to be conducted online.

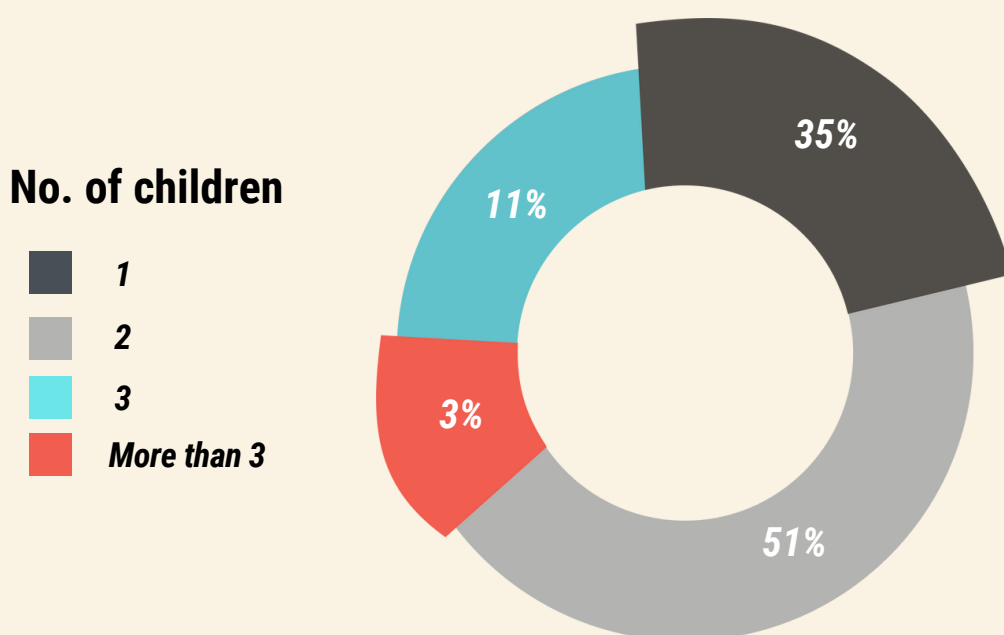


# Major Findings

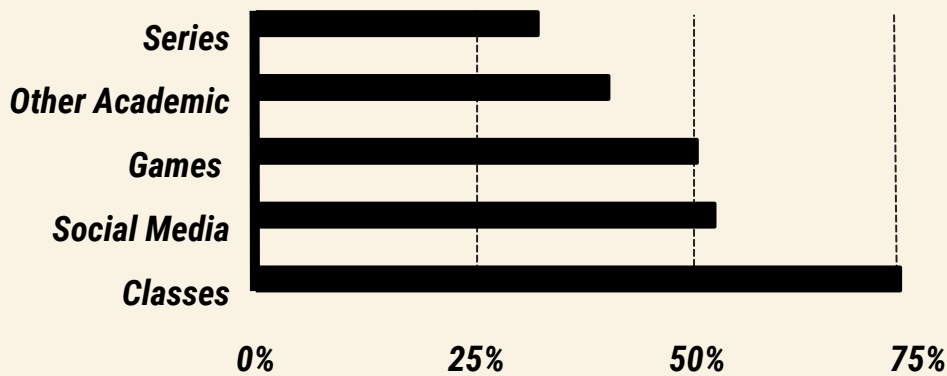
In an online survey 685 parents were interviewed. The survey was meant to gauge the problem of internet abuse among children and the growing anxiety of parents related to it. The basic findings are listed below.

**Figure 1: Age-wise Distribution of the Children of the Responding Parents**

- Half of the respondents had reported having more than two children.
- Another 35% of them reported having a single child family.
- A moderate section of 11% reported having three children.
- Only a thin share of 3% reported having with more than three children.



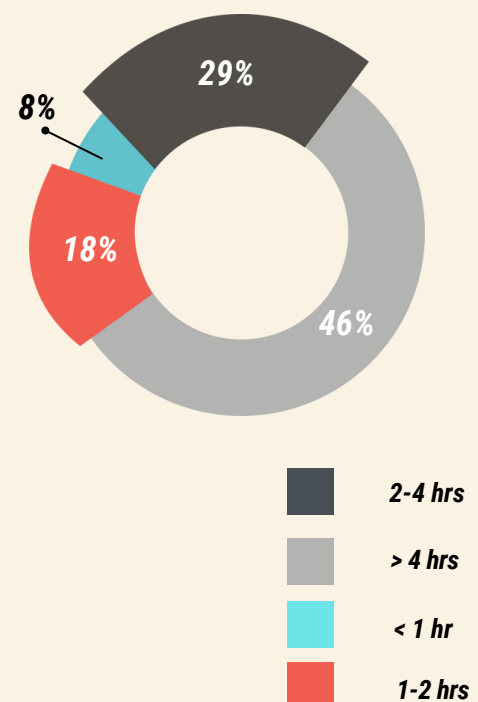
**Figure 2: Usage of the Internet by the Wards According to the Parents  
(multiple answers were allowed)**



- Children use the Internet mostly to attend online classes.
- Almost 52% of parents said that their wards use this for social media.
- According to 50% parents their children use the internet for gaming.
- Academic activities other than classes is the reason for 40% of the Internet use.
- According to 32% parents their children use the internet for watching online series.

**Figure 3: Time Spending Pattern of the Children of the Respondents**

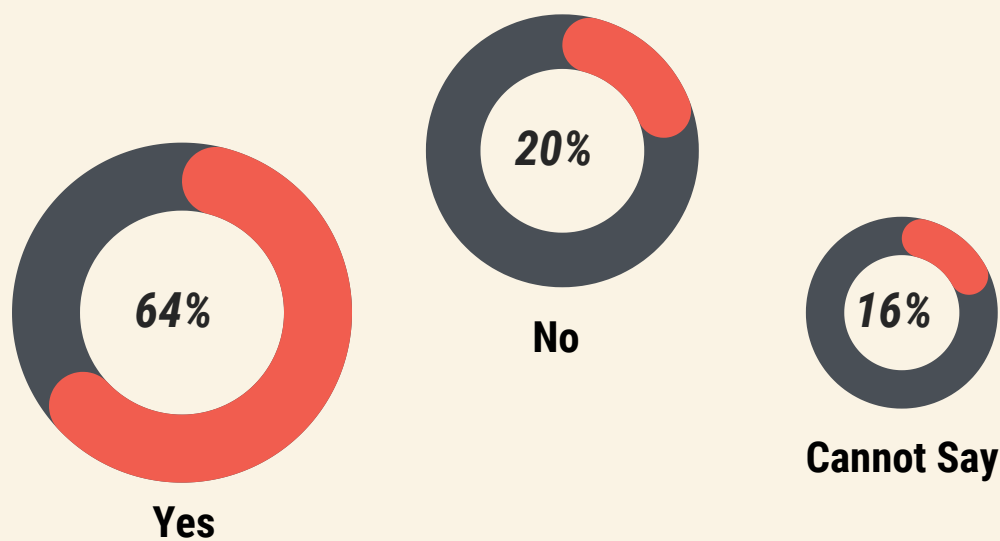
- According to more than 46% of the parents, their children spend more than four hours on the internet.
- Another 29% replied that their wards use the internet for more than two hours a day.
- Only according to 8% of the parents, their children use the internet for less than an hour.



# Cyber Addiction

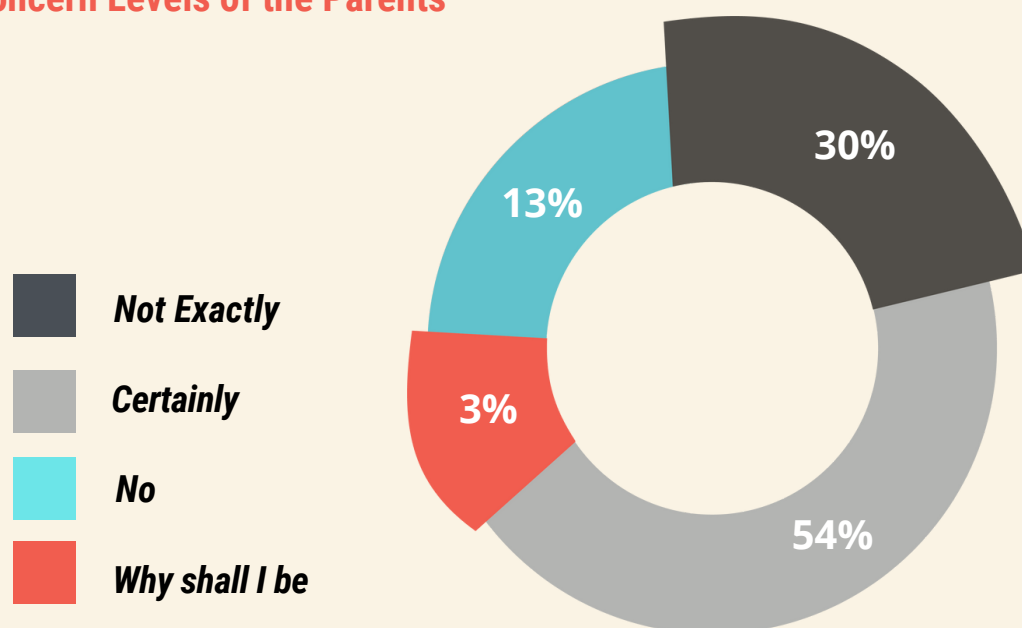
The addiction of internet, especially social media is a well-known phenomenon. Adults and teenagers are especially been found to be prone to it. The survey questionnaire had a question that asked the parents that whether they think that their wards are spending too much time on the internet. The reply pattern is depicted in the **Figure 4**.

**Figure 4: Addiction of the Wards**



- The majority of the parents think that their son and daughters are spending more time than necessary.
- Another 16% were not sure about their answer.
- Only 20% of the parents said that their children were not spending too much time on it.

**Figure 5: Concern Levels of the Parents**



The predominance of the addiction to the internet among teenagers have caused their parents to concerned about it.

- Almost 54% of the parents said that they are seriously concerned about the addiction of their sons and daughters.
- Only 30% of the respondent parents replied that they are not at all concerned.

★ **Table 1 is a cross-tabulation between the time spent by the children and the level of concern raised by their parents.**

The figures in the parenthesis show the chi-square contribution of each of the values. The overall chi-square score is 50.73, which is much higher than the tabulated value of the Chi-square distribution at the confidence interval of 95%. This means that with 95% probability we can infer that there is a causal relationship between children spending excessive time on the devices and the level of the concern of their parents.

**Table 1: Relation between Parents' Concern and the Addiction of their Wards**

**Number of Concerned Parents**

Addiction	Certainly	No	Not Exactly	Why Shall I be Concerned	Row Total
I Cannot Say	40(2.789)	13(0.023)	38(2.453)	6(3.01)	97(8.275)
No	51(3.628)	36(25.292)	33(0.587)	4(0.007)	124(29.514)
Yes	239(3.599)	30(8.394)	116(0.121)	9(0.827)	394(12.941)
Column Total	330	79	187	19	615

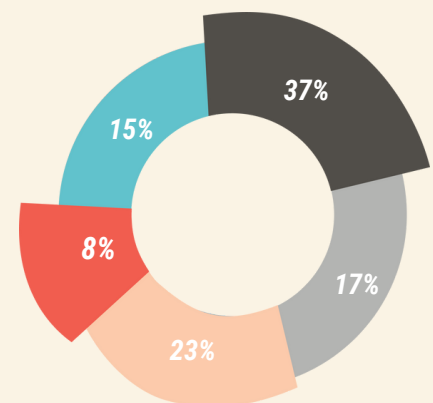
Calculated value of Chi-Square =	50.73
Tabulated value of Chi-Square at 99% with df =6	16.81
df =(3-1)x(4-1)	6

**Hence Null is cancelled, and there is a relationship between the variables.**

Figure 6 shows the response pattern of the parents' observation about the impact of cyber addiction on their children

**Figure 6: Impact of Excessive Usage of the Internet on Children According to the Parents**

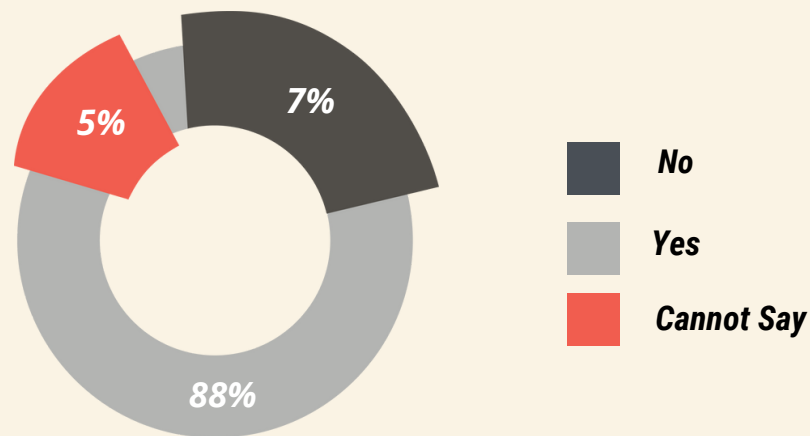
- 17% reported a drop in concentration resulting in the exam performance.
- 23% of parents reported that their children have reduced socialising.
- 37% of the parents reported that their children have stopped or reduced their extracurricular activities.



- Stopped Extracurricular Activity
- Drop in Concentration
- Too Much Social Media
- Others
- Drop in Socialising

## Figure 7: Impact of Lockdown on Screen-Time

- According to 88% of the respondents, the cyber addiction of their children has increased during the lockdown.



**Table 2: Relation between Increased Addiction and the Concern of the Parents**

### Increase During Lockdown

#### Parents Concerned about excess Screen-Time

Addiction	Cannot Say	Yes	No	Row Total
I Cannot Say	5(5.327)	4(1.005)	28(0.678)	37(7.01)
No	3(0.175)	8(7.779)	36(0.741)	47(8.695)
Yes	8(1.217)	9(2.706)	218(0.506)	235(4.429)
Column Total	16	21	282	319

Total value of Chi - square (Calculated Value)

20.13

Df= (3-1)x(3-1)

4

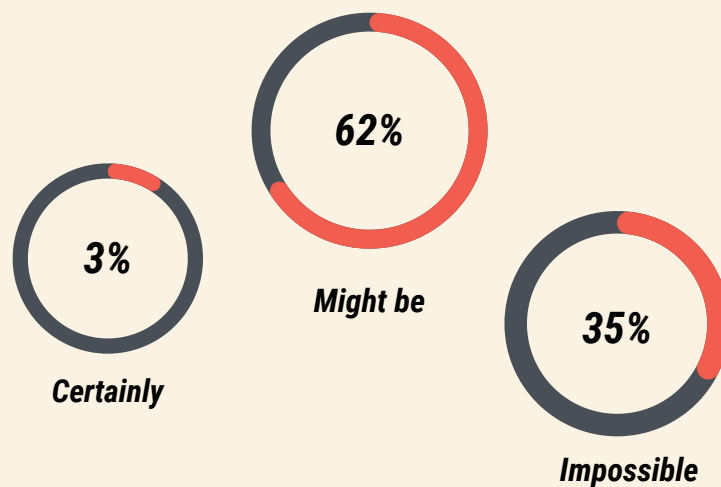
Tabulated value @99% with df= 6

13.28

### Hence Null is Rejected

- ★ Table 2 is a cross-tabulation between increased addiction in lockdown and the level of concern raised by their parents. The figures in the parenthesis show the chi-square contribution of each of the values. The overall chi-square score is 20.13, which is much higher than the tabulated value of the Chi-square distribution at the confidence interval of 95%. This means that with 95% probability we can infer that there is a causal relationship between the two variables.

**Figure 8: Parents' Opinion on the Possibility of Their Wards Watching Cyberporn**

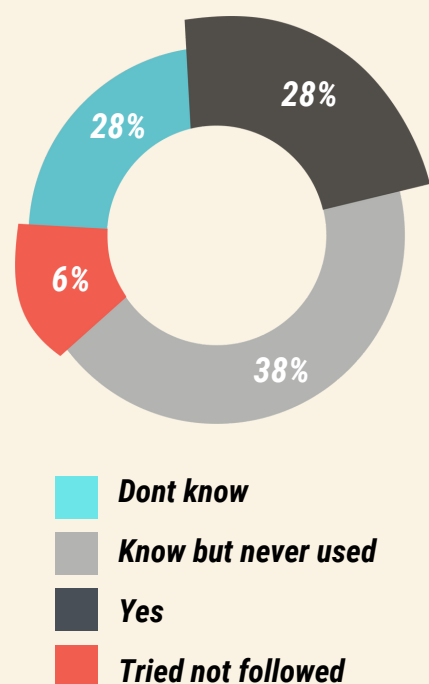


- Only 35% of parents were sanguine and confident about the fact that their children are not engaged in watching cyberporn.
- 3% of them were certain that their children are engaged in such activities.

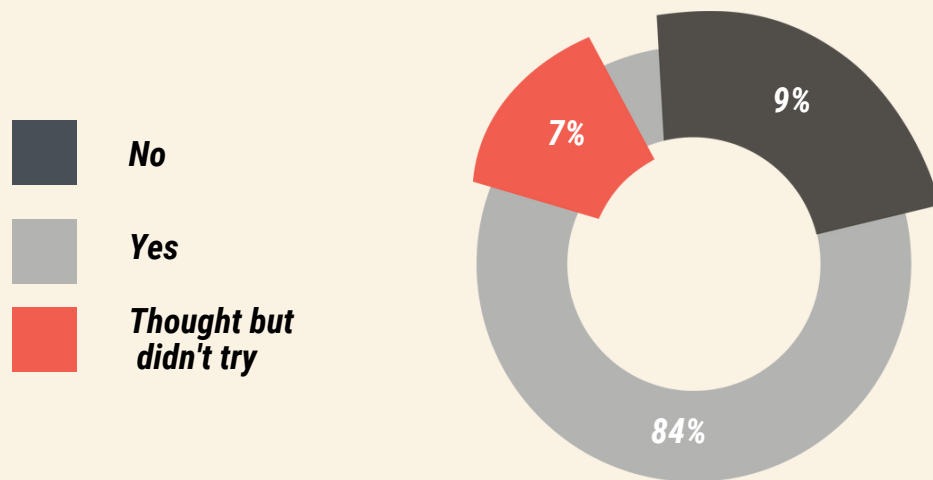
## Precautions

**Figure 9: Parents Opinion on Child-lock**

- Only 28% of the parents use the child lock facilities.
- Another 38% responded that they are aware of such facility but never used it.
- 6% of them tried their hands with it, but could not follow the process till the end.
- 28% of the parents were found to be unaware of this facility.



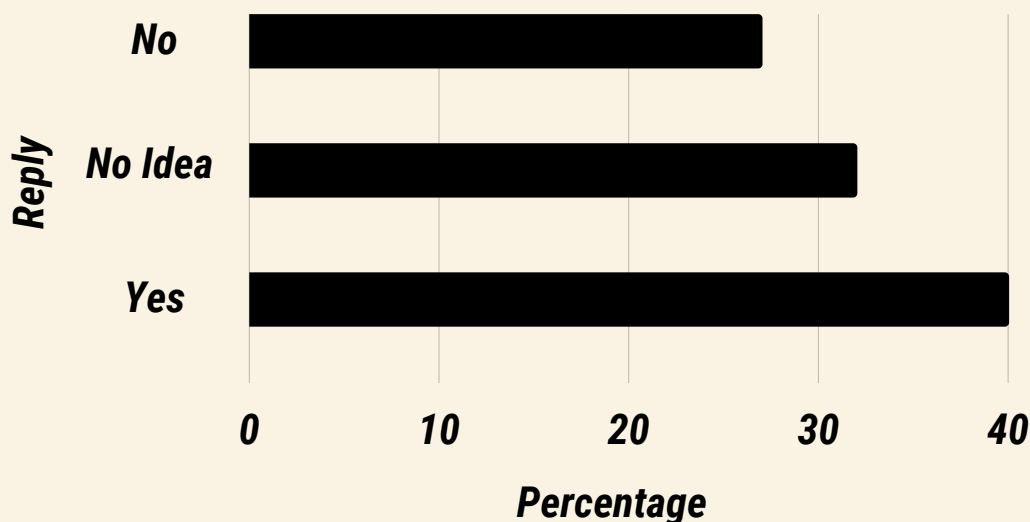
**Figure 10: Parents Who Discussed the Negative Impact of Internet Addiction With Their Children**



- A Considerable majority of 84% of the parents have discussed issues related to cyber addiction and cyber security with their children.

**Figure 11: Discussed in Schools**

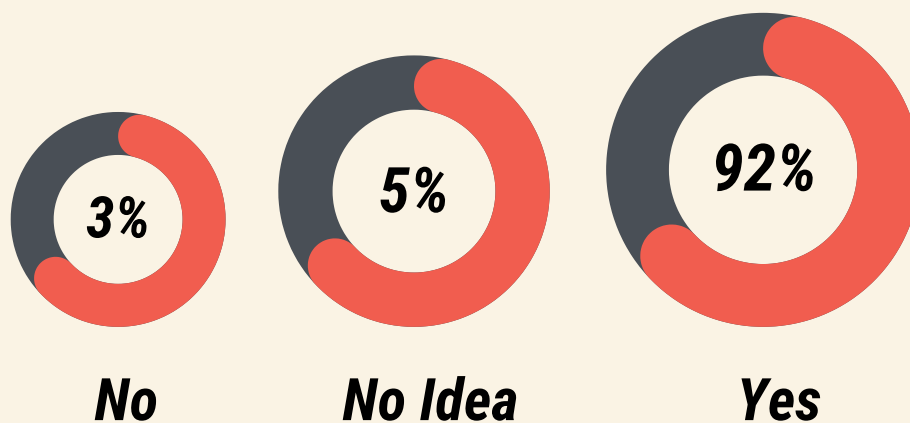
Only according to 40% of the respondents, issues related to cyber security was discussed in the school of their children.



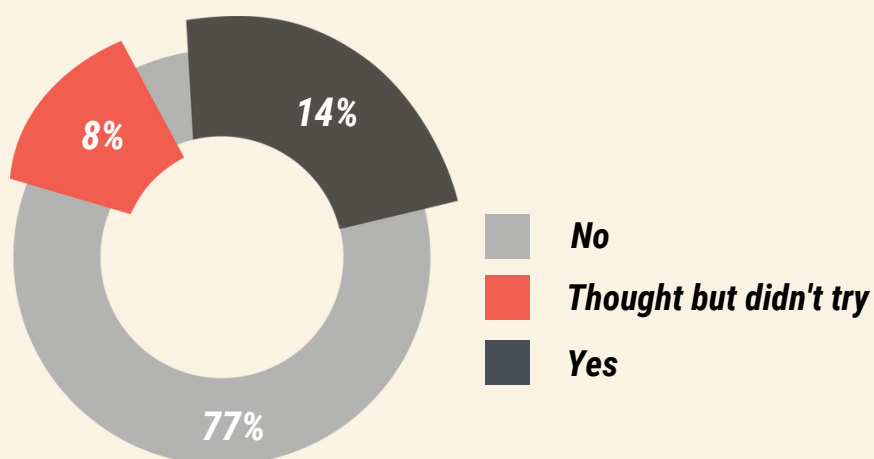


**Figure 12: Parents Who Want This to be Discussed in Schools**

- An overwhelming majority of 92% of parents opined that they would really appreciate the schools taking some initiatives towards educating the children regarding cyber security.



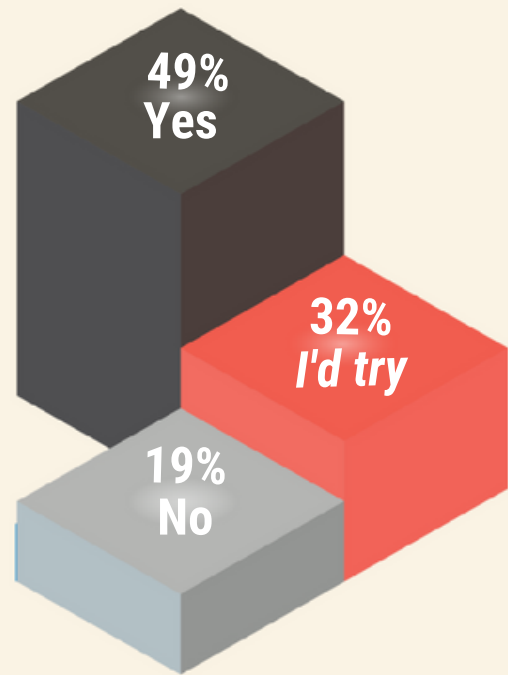
**Figure 13: Parents Who Attended Workshop on Cyber Security**



- A whopping majority of 77% of the parents admitted that they never attended any workshop on cyber security.

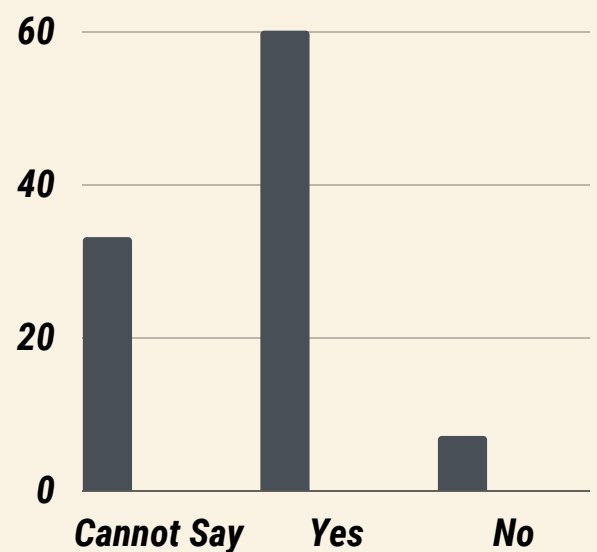
**Figure 14: Parents' Willingness to Join Such Workshops**

- In the last diagram, we found that only thin share of parents have attended workshops on cyber security.
- Though in this tree map, it is interesting to observe that almost half(49%) of the parents have expressed the desire to join such workshops.



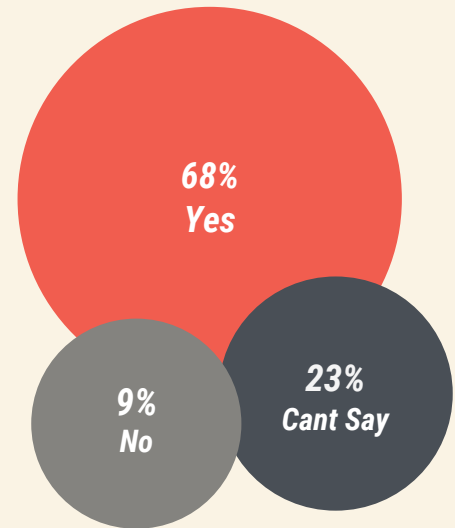
**Figure 15: Parents' Who Think That Big Tech Companies Should Take Responsibility**

- Almost 60% of the parents opined that big tech firms like Facebook, Google & Twitter cannot avoid their responsibility towards spreading consciousness regarding internet safety and security.



**Figure 16: Parents' Who Think Government Should Take Responsibility**

- Two third of the parents(68%) opined that the Government has some responsibility in this light .



# Annexure: Questionnaire

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- Age of the respondent
- Number of children (of the respondent)
  - 1
  - 2
  - more than 3
- Age of the children
  - Below 5
  - 5-10
  - 10-14
  - 14-18
  - 18-21
- State
  - Andaman and Nicobar Island
  - Andhra Pradesh
  - Arunachal Pradesh
  - Assam
  - Bihar
  - Chandigarh
  - Chhattisgarh
  - Dadra and Nagar Haveli
  - Daman and Diu
  - Delhi NCT
  - Goa
  - Gujarat
  - Haryana
  - Himachal Pradesh
  - Jammu and Kashmir
  - Jharkhand
  - Karnataka
  - Kerala
  - Ladakh
  - Lakshadweep
  - Madhya Pradesh
  - Maharashtra
  - Manipur
  - Meghalaya
  - Mizoram
  - Nagaland
  - Odisha
  - Puducherry
  - Punjab
  - Rajasthan
  - Sikkim
  - Tamil Nadu
  - Telangana
  - Tripura
  - Uttarakhand
  - Uttar Pradesh
  - West Bengal
- Income bracket

## Major Concern

- What are the purposes for which your kids use mobile phone?(multiple answers allowed for this question)
  - Online classes
  - Other academic activities
  - Games
  - Online series
  - social media
  - Other (Specify)
- How much time do your kids spend on mobile or other devices?
  - Less than 1 hour
  - 1-2 hours
  - 2- 4 hours
  - More than 4 hours
- Do you think that they are spending too much time on these devices?
  - Yes
  - No
  - I cannot Say
- Are you concerned by their online activities
  - not exactly
  - no
  - Certainly
  - Why shall I be
- Any specific problem that you think your kid is facing because of spending too much time on mobile
  - S/he is too much into social media
  - S/he has decreased interacting with people/ friends
  - concentration has dropped, and grades deteriorated
  - Stopped pursuing other extra curricular activity
- Do you think that onscreen attachment of your child/children has increased during the lockdown?
  - Yes
  - No
  - Cannot Say
- Do you think s/he might be watching pornographic content or other illegal content online?
  - Its impossible
  - unlikely
  - Might be, but I am not sure
  - Certainly

- Have you ever thought of using apps/technologies like child lock facility or Screen time display alarms
  - Yes
  - I do not know about them
  - I know about them but never used them
  - Tried but could not follow up
- Have you ever talked to your child/ children about the negative impacts of spending too much time on internet?
  - Yes
  - No
  - thought of it but never tried
- Are these things discussed in their schools?
  - Yes
  - No
  - No idea
- Do you support the idea that such things should be discussed in the schools?
  - Yes
  - No
  - No idea
- Have ever attended any workshop on this topic?
  - Yes
  - No
- Would you attend such workshop if one happens in your locality
  - Yes
  - No
  - Cannot say
- Do you think that the big tech firms can improve their operation to meet these needs?
  - Yes
  - Cannot Say
  - No
- Do you think that the Governments should intervene to address these needs?
  - Yes
  - Cannot Say
  - No
- Do you think that the Civil Society Organisations are working sufficiently to improve this situation?
  - Yes
  - Cannot Say
  - No