



Photo was taken from a recent Online Safety Awareness Training at a local public school.

M'Lop Tapang

Online Safety Survey Analysis and Findings
August 2022

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I. Introduction

Beginning in May 2022, M'Lop Tapang began to compile a survey that would help gauge and understand current technology trends among youth in Cambodia around the following areas: general internet/app usage, and risks and dangers encountered online, including stranger interaction frequency. Youth surveyed are primarily from Sihanoukville, Cambodia, however there are a few respondents from other parts of the country. During this study, our online safety team surveyed a variety of youth from different social-economic backgrounds, but primarily conducted the survey at local public schools where we also teach about online safety to older primary school students and some secondary and high school students as well.

To date (August 2022), we have had a total of **212 youth surveyed**.

All the surveys were anonymous, most were conducted in person, paper surveys were distributed, and youth completed the survey on their own concluding an online safety presentation. An online survey was available as well, but there were limited success with this approach, and we only received a handful of responses.

While we do feel confident in the results and believe this study provides an accurate glimpse into the overall situation in Cambodia, the results are preliminary, and due to the sensitive nature of some of the questions, there is most likely a higher margin of error in a few of the very specific questions related to pornography and interactions with strangers online.

Nevertheless, the results will contribute to our child protection teams being able to enhance our programs that truly help bring better awareness of the potential dangers youth and children encounter online.

During the survey process, our team was keenly aware of youth disclosing personal information related to a past incident they may have faced, trauma that may have been triggered or not being fully aware of some the issues discussed on the survey. As such, we make the children aware of our confidential 24hr hotline in the event they would like to discuss any of the above forementioned with our hotline specialists. As well as this, trained child protection workers were in the classroom present during completion of the surveys in case any youth needed immediate support or wanted to discuss any concerns they experienced.

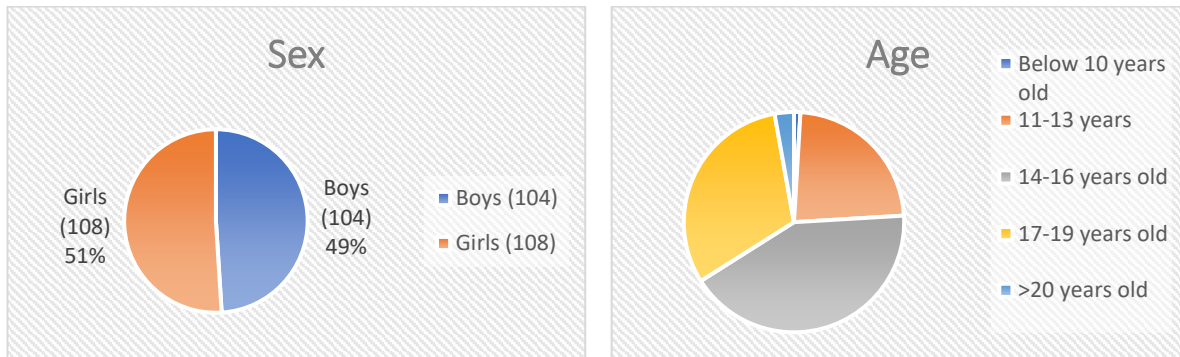
Survey Results

II. Demographics

2.1. Total number of respondents: 212 surveys (F=108, 51%, M=104, 49%)

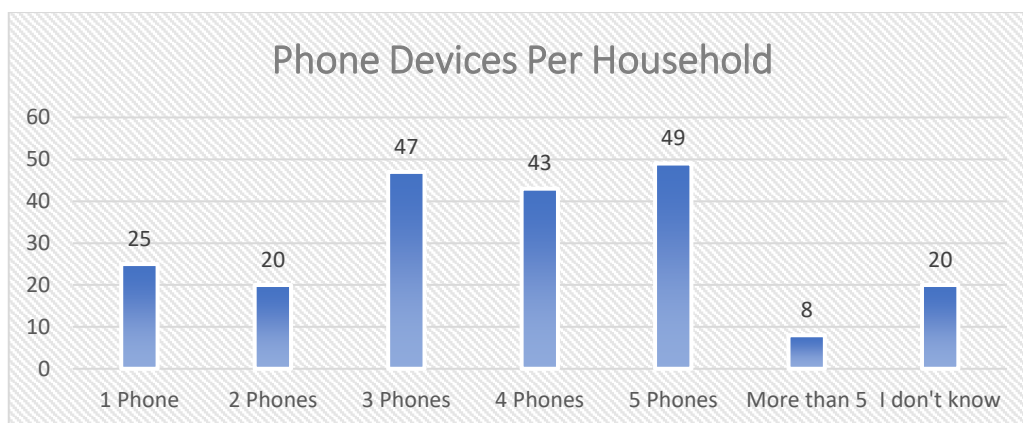
2.2. **Age:** 42% of the respondents were between 14-16 years old, while 31% of and youth surveyed were between 17-19 years old. 23% of the respondents were ages 11-13 years old and there were two children that were 10 years old and a handful over 20 years old.

2.3. **Location:** As this survey targeted mainly children and youth in Sihanoukville, it's not surprising the majority were from Preah Sihanouk Province (95%) while a few others were from other provinces such as Kampot and Phnom Penh.



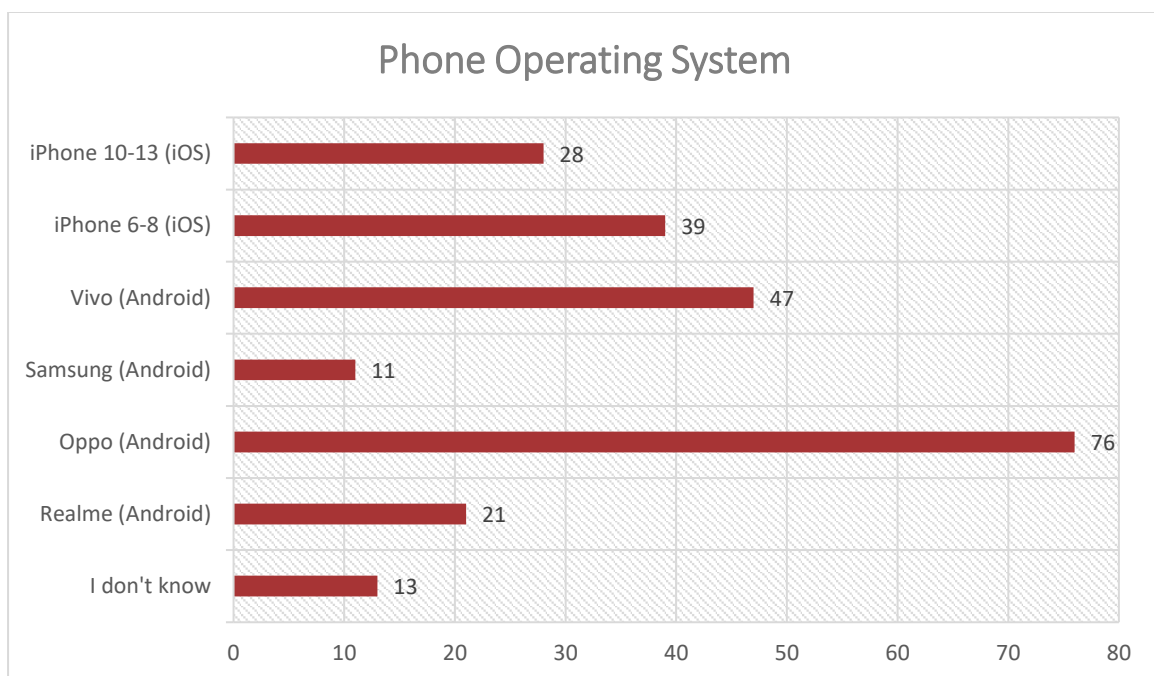
2.4. **Education:** Overwhelmingly, most youth surveyed were in secondary and high school (190 or 90%) and 22 or 10% were in primary school.

2.5. **Phones in Household:** Everyone surveyed had at least 1 device per household, while 66% of youth surveyed had 3-5 phones per household.



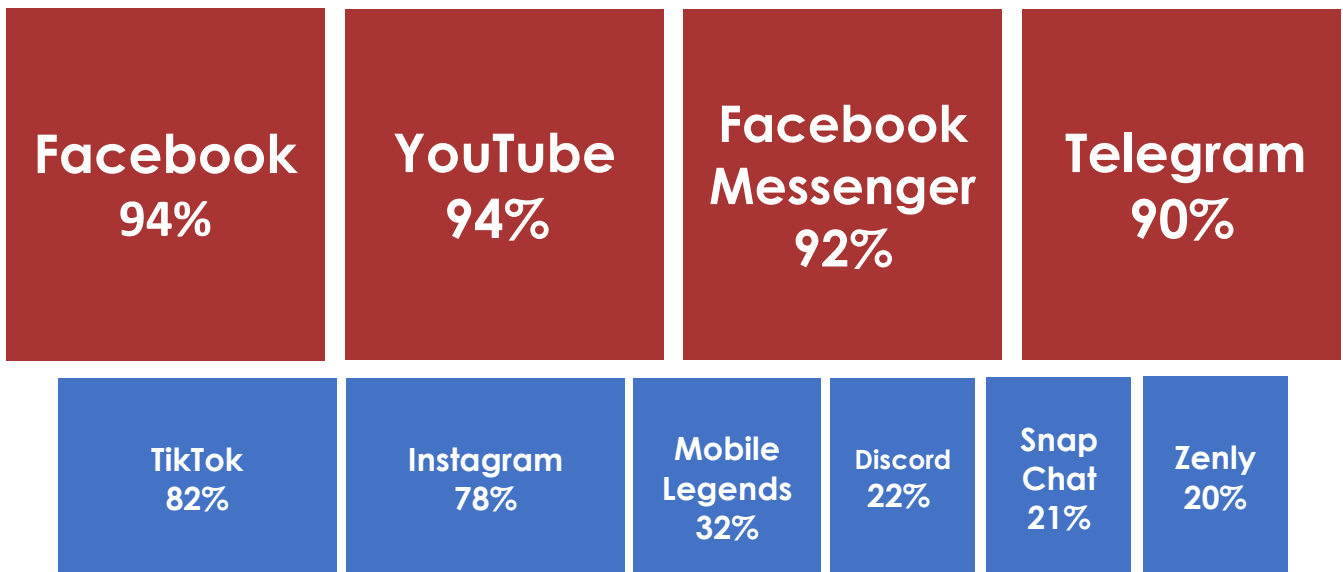
2.6. **Android or iOS:** Unsurprisingly, those surveyed mostly use Android devices, while a small percentage use older model Apple iPhones and even fewer use newer model Apple iPhones. Interestingly, we discovered with the older students 17-19yrs old, that new iPhone models (iPhone 10-13) were much more prevalent.

Within the Android market, there are many companies producing multiple models which makes Android devices more accessible due to its price point and popularity. Oppo, for example is by far the most popular brand and accounts for the most devices being used among youth surveyed. [Oppo provides 6 different models starting at less than \\$200 for a brand-new device.](#)



III. Mobile Phone Usage

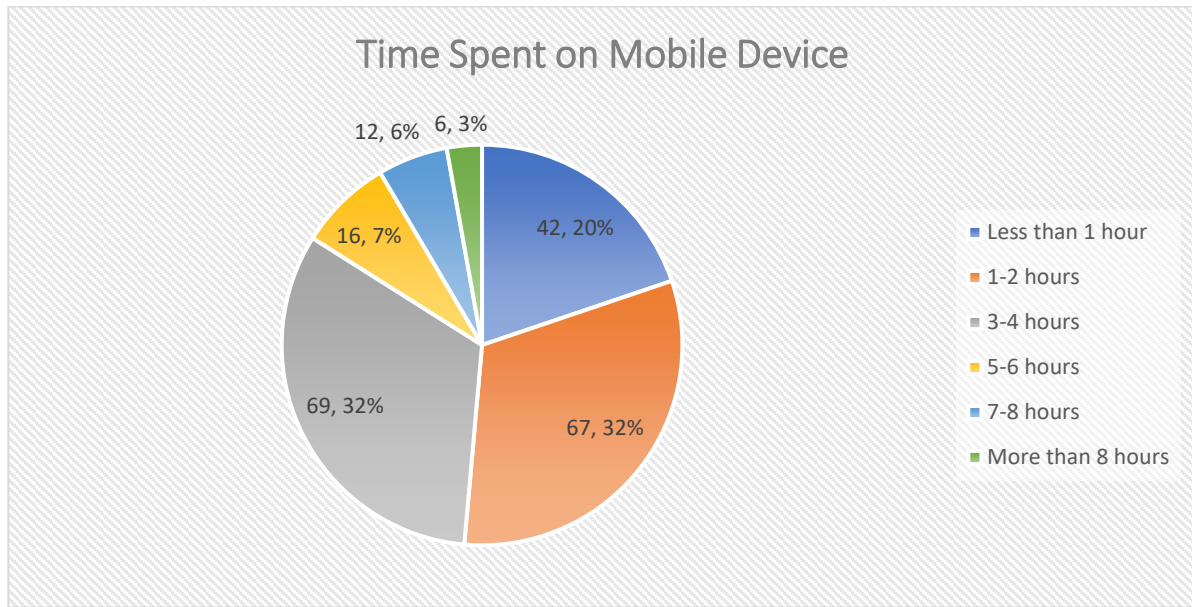
Understanding what apps are most widely used, how much time is being spent on those apps and what activities are most common, brings to light potential issues that are problematic for youth. It's no surprise that most youth are using Facebook (200 respondents, 94%) and Facebook Messenger (196 respondents, 92%) as their top go-to apps, but Telegram (190 respondents, 88%) comes in at a close 3rd. We discovered an interesting trend – among females and older youth, Snapchat usage increased. Snapchat is nowhere as popular here in Cambodia compared to the West, however it is something to monitor as Snapchat is causing major problems in other developed countries with issues such as: easy access to buy/sell drugs, child sexual abuse material (CSAM), sextortion, etc. Also, Discord, which is a popular gaming-chat platform is more popular among older youth as well.



| OTHER SOCIAL MEDIA APPS | | | OTHER GAMING APPS | |
|-------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|---|
| Twitter 17% | Roblox 19% | WhatsApp 12% | PUBG 13% | Other apps mentioned, but numbers are insignificant: Hayday, Google Drive, Google Chrome, Minecraft, Reddit, Gmail, Candy Crush, Zoom, Weibo, V Live, Clash of Clans, Capcut, 8 Ball Pool, Shadow Fight |
| Line 16 8% | WeChat 6% | Bigo Live 5% | Free Fire 22% | |

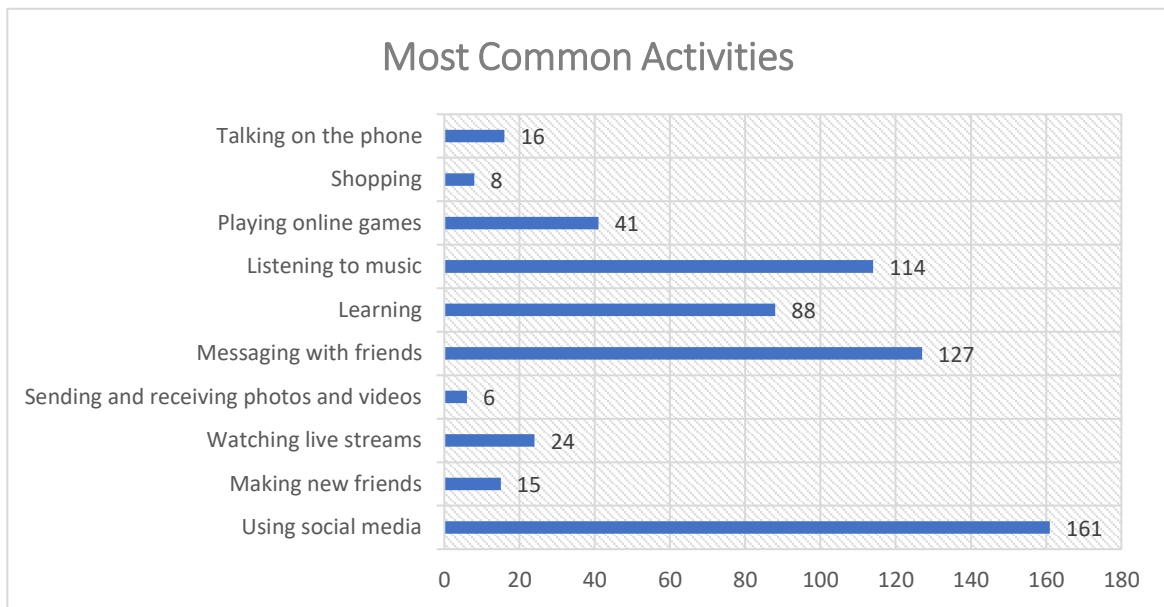
Note: the 212 respondents can choose multiple apps

Time Spent Using Mobile Phone: The average time being spent on a mobile device per day is between 2-3 hours, while there were some that reported spending 5 hours and upwards (34 respondents, 16%) on their device.



Based on 212 respondents

Top 3 Activities Online: Unsurprisingly, the most common activity while using a mobile device was social media (161 respondents, 76%), followed by messaging with friends (127 respondents, 60%) and listening to music (114 respondents, 54%).

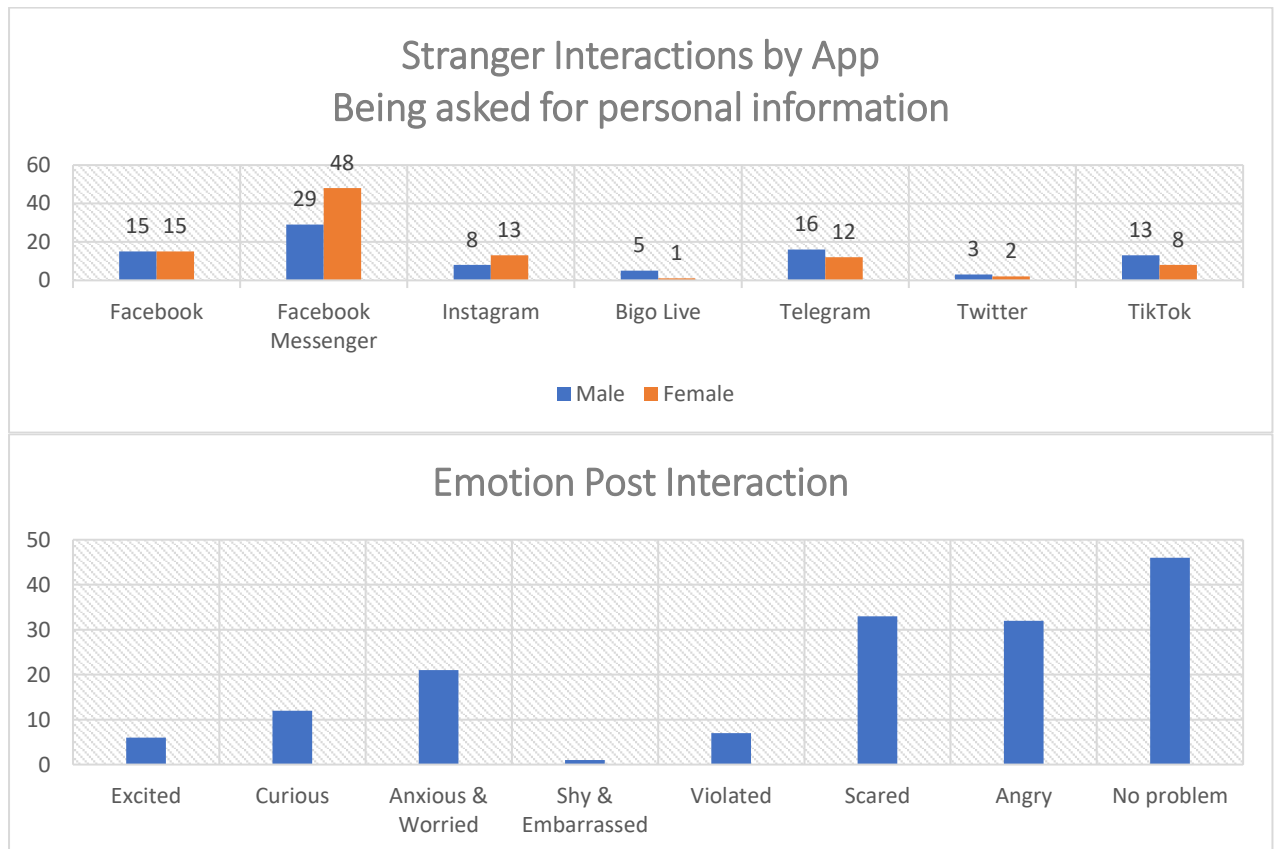


IV. Online Safety

In this section, we asked questions about interactions with strangers online, including asking of personal information and making inappropriate requests. Some respondents were comfortable providing additional information about those interactions including how they felt after being contacted. The results are not surprising, but alarming, nonetheless.

Survey question: *While using your phone, have you ever had a stranger ask for you for personal information through an app? (e.g., where are you from, where do you live, do you have a boyfriend/girlfriend, are you married, etc.).*

This question helps inform about the onset of potential grooming taking place. Of the 212 respondents, 104 unique respondents or nearly half (49%) said that they had an interaction with a stranger online, many of which selected multiple platforms in which the interaction took place. The top app that most interactions took place was Facebook Messenger (78 respondents, 75%), followed by Telegram (28 respondents, 27%) and then Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok. There were also a few respondents that selected they had contact from strangers asking for personal information from Twitter and Bigo Live. Insignificantly, there were a few that mentioned they had been contacted by strangers via gaming apps such as Mobile Legends and Free Fire as well. This is a risk that parents often underestimate as this can be the starting point for grooming. Predators will often create fake profiles to lure their victims on gaming apps, build their trust and then move to other apps where further communication and grooming can take place more easily.

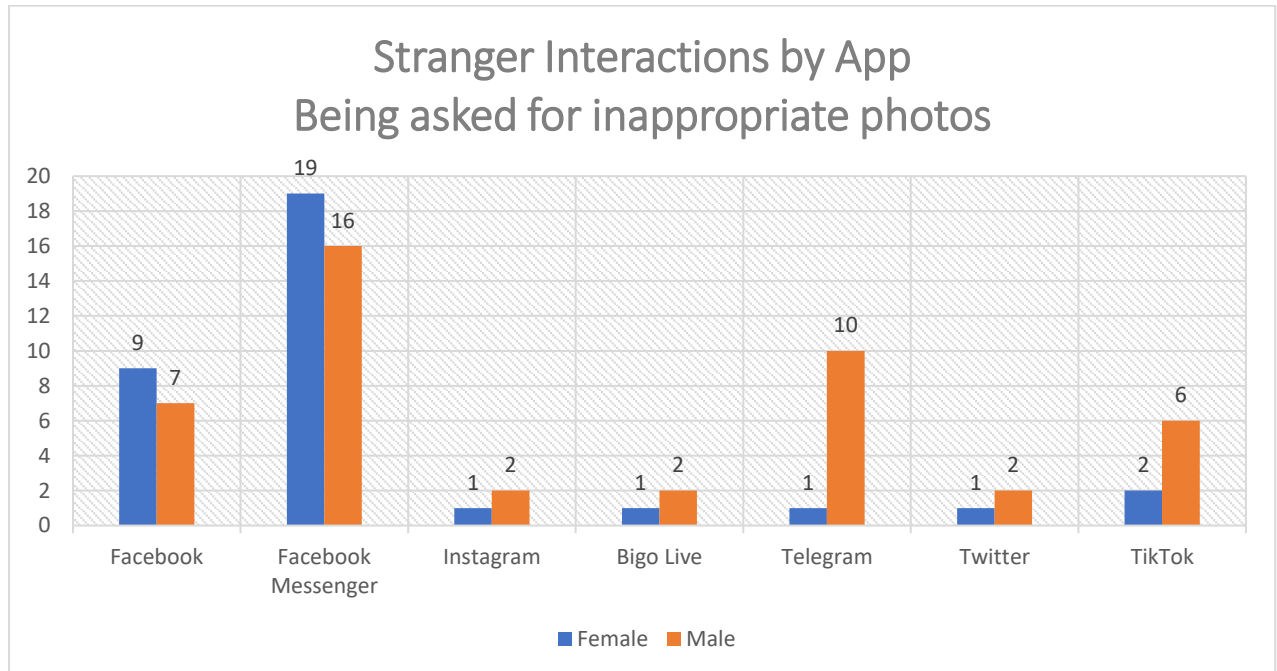


Based on 104 unique respondents that said they had a stranger interaction. Respondents could make multiple selections.

The subsequent question dived a bit deeper to understand how far the interactions went.

Survey question: *While using your phone, has a stranger ever contacted you and ASKED for inappropriate photos of yourself through an app? (e.g., photos with less clothes on, naked photos, genital photos, photos/videos of yourself performing sexual acts by yourself or with others, etc.)*

While the number of affected youth was much lower, there were still a total of 53 unique (Male 27, Female 26) respondents that reported having been asked for inappropriate photos. This number represents 25% of the 212 total number of those surveyed. This is a high-risk activity that puts youth at risk for grooming, sextortion and child sexual abuse and exploitation.



Based on 53 unique respondents. Respondents were able to make multiple selections.

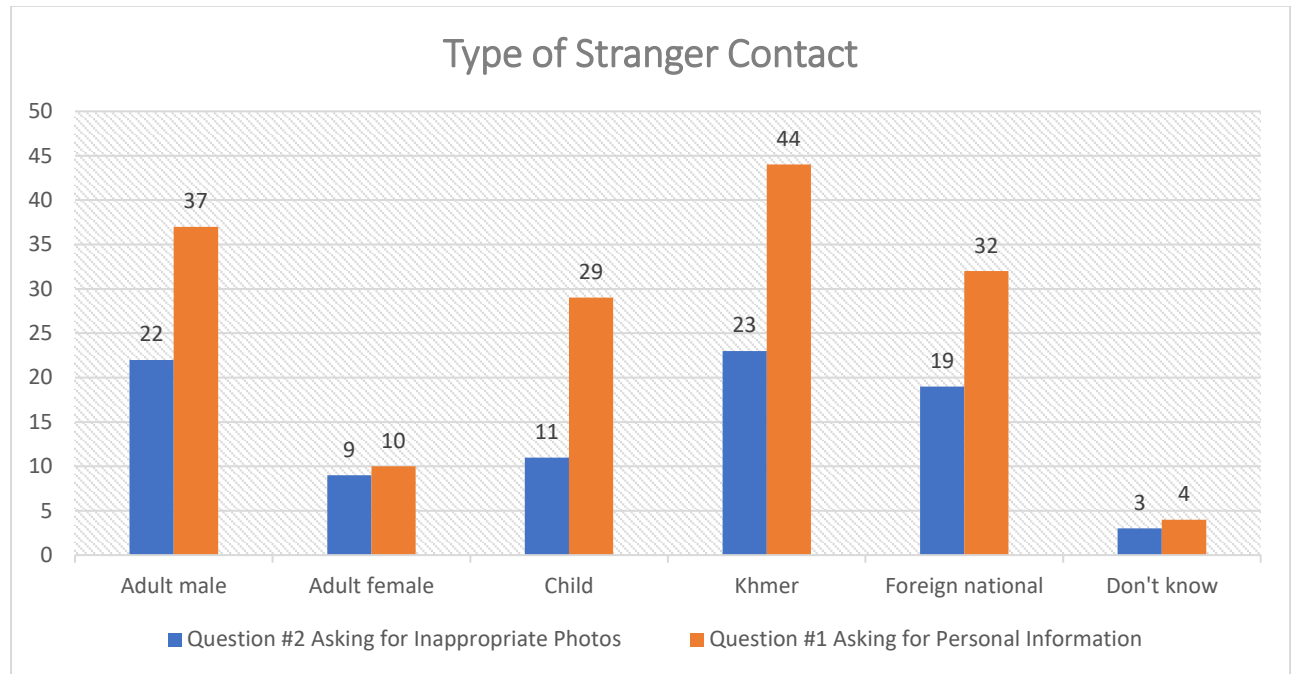
Interestingly, with some apps there were more male youth that experienced strangers asking for inappropriate photos than female youth like Telegram, TikTok and Facebook.

The Facebook Messenger app ranks the highest with 35 or 66% of respondents having said that while using this app, they were contacted by strangers asking for inappropriate photos.

Looking at the follow up question about how the youth felt post stranger interaction, it's not surprising that most felt either, anxious (12, 23%), violated (13, 25%), scared (19, 42%), and/or angry (25, 47%). There were also 9 or 22% that chose curious and 16 or 39% that chose normal, no problem. It's clear however, there were a significant number of youth that experienced strong emotions that suggest the negative impact this encounter had on them.

Across the two questions that inquire about stranger interactions, we also asked about who contacted them. There was a total of 243 selections made (respondents could make multiple selections). Observations from the data here show that adult males ranked highest in those contacting

youth via an app. Next was children contacting children, adult females and a few didn't know.

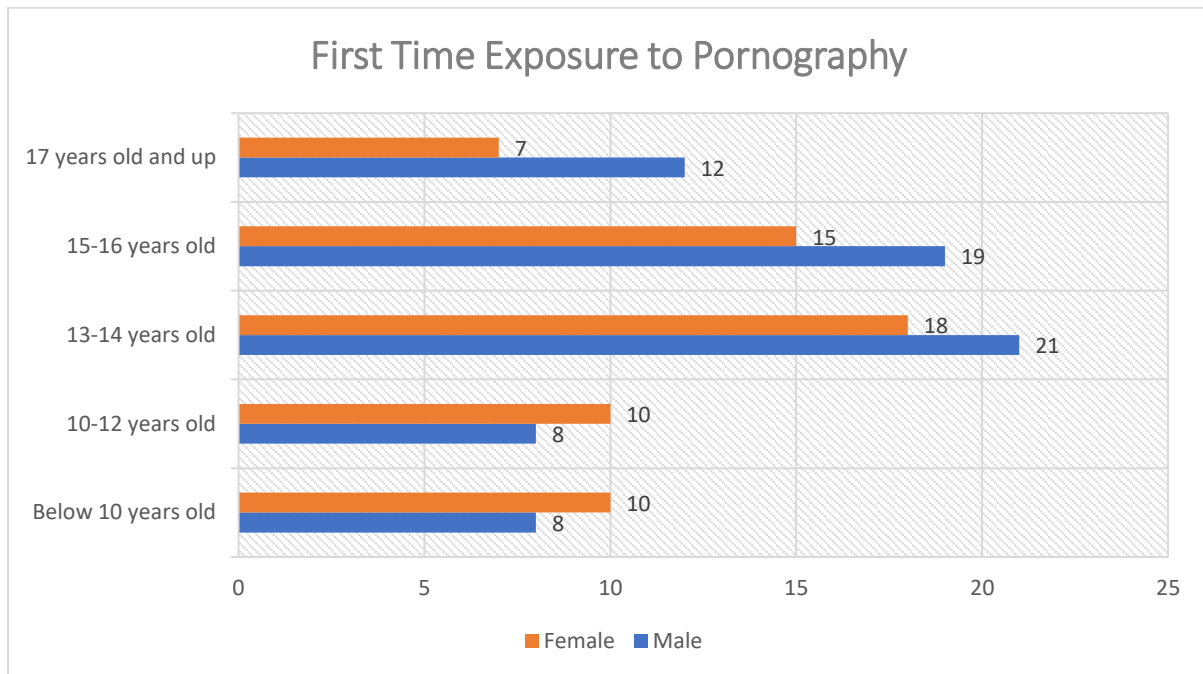


Based on 243 selections, respondents could choose multiple categories.

V. Pornography

Looking at the effects of pornography on adolescents can help determine a course of action for our online safety team. The survey confirmed some assumptions about young people viewing pornography and help us glean insight into how they are being exposed for the first time and their feelings around the experience. Unsurprisingly, 60% (128) of surveyed admitted being exposed to pornography at some point. [According to a study conducted by the Australian Government \(Australian Institute of Family Studies\)](#), exposure to pornography at a young age can have damaging consequences on an adolescent's development and how they view sex and is often times their source of sex education. M'Lop Tapang Child Protection Team provides "Good Touch, Bad Touch" teachings and our online safety lessons do include facts about the potential harm pornography can have on a child in addition to reinforcing the facts around how prevalent child sexual abuse material (CSAM) and child sex is online and what to do in case it's witnessed.

According to the survey results, we didn't identify any difference whether the respondent identified as male or female in first time pornography exposure. The average age for first time pornography exposure was 14-15 years of age while 36 or 28% of respondents were 12 years old and younger followed by 15% or 19 of 17 years old and up.



5.1. First time exposure (although students were only supposed to make one selection, many students selected more than one response): An alarming metric is how children and youth were first exposed to pornography. While self-discovery is the highest method of first-time exposure (92 responses, 52%) and isn't surprising, being shown pornography by a stranger interaction was 29% (51 responses) is concerning. This shows a larger issue around child protection. The survey, however, didn't isolate whether the stranger interaction was an adult or not, but nonetheless this is something that needs to be studied deeper. 10% (17 responses) said that a friend showed them pornography for the first time followed by girlfriend/boyfriend (5 responses), neighbor (5 responses), café/internet gaming place (4 responses) and lastly a family member (3 responses).

5.2. Feeling post exposure (respondents could select multiple emotions): The majority of responses (47 or 23%) indicated it wasn't a problem or normal when first looking at pornography, but closely following, 21% (42) indicated shy/embarrassed which demonstrates some inherent shame.

Others felt:

Scared – 38 responses, 19%

Angry – 27 responses, 13%

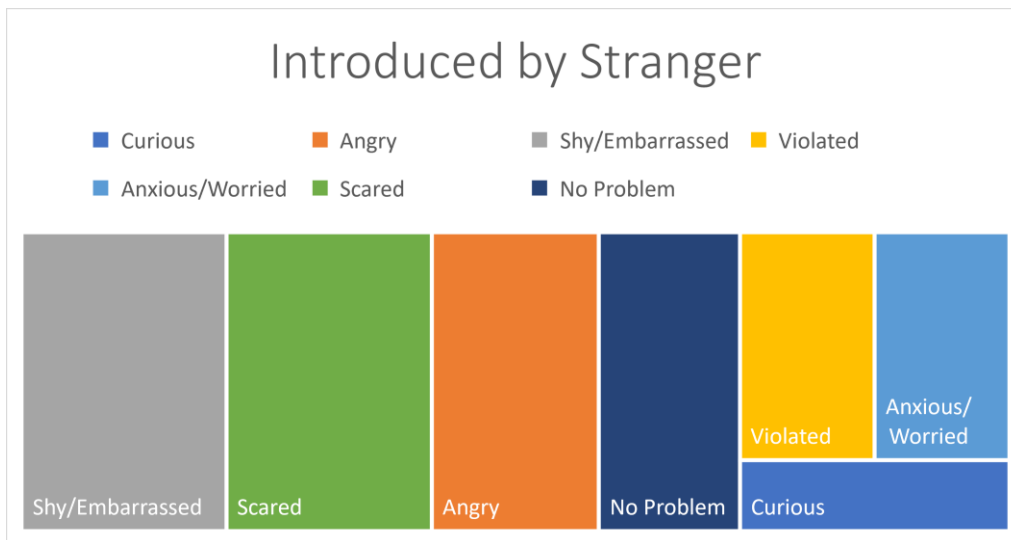
Anxious/worried – 19 responses, 9.3%

Violated – 12 responses, 6%

Curious – 11 responses, 5.4%

Excited – 7 responses, 3.4%

Digging a bit deeper, it's interesting to look at the correlation between emotion and how the respondents were introduced to pornography, especially by being exposed by a stranger.

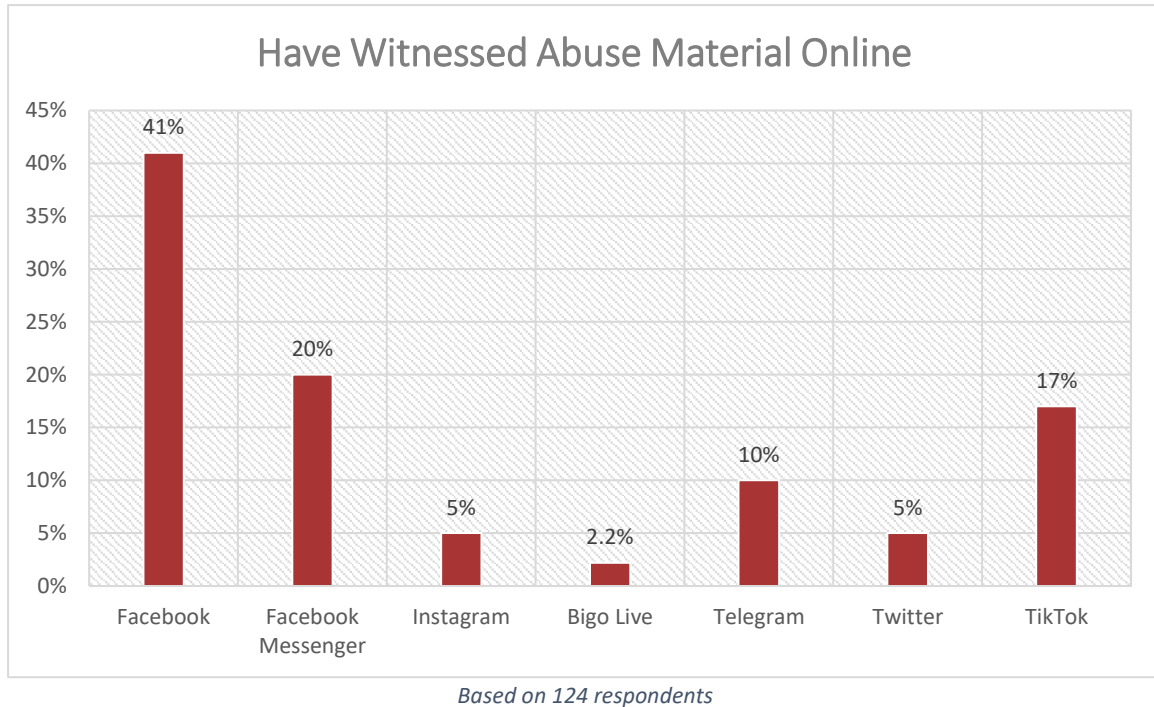


VI. Have Witnessed Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM) and Other Forms of Abuse

Unfortunately, there is lots of abuse material being posted on social media sites such as Facebook, Telegram, Twitter and other apps. Out of 180 respondents providing response for this question, Facebook and Facebook Messenger (110 respondents, 61%) top the charts with the most abuse material posted according to the survey, followed by TikTok (30 respondents, 17%) and Telegram (18 respondents, 10%). Instagram, Bigo Live, Twitter were also reported, but numbers were insignificant.

While not represented here, Telegram is trending in a very concerning area – CSAM is being actively sold, traded, and shared on this platform. Telegram is an extremely popular app in Cambodia and besides Facebook Messenger, Telegram is the top messaging app of choice according to the survey. Users can easily create an account with a telephone number and nothing else. Messages can be encrypted, and messages can be deleted without leaving a trail. The reporting mechanism in Telegram isn't very robust and there isn't any follow-up. While numbers are still small, pornography Telegram groups are exploding in popularity. In the near future, the team is confident that they will begin seeing this represented on the survey. Facebook, Facebook Messenger, Instagram, Twitter and TikTok have stronger reporting mechanisms. If there is illegal material, it's easy to report and cases are followed

up on by the companies with the user. Automated systems are also better equipped on these platforms to remove this material if posted or shared. Furthermore, accounts are either suspended or banned alerting the user that the content is illegal and goes against community standards.



Follow up question

Survey Question: If you have witnessed abuse material online, what did you do?

It was good to see that almost half (53 or 43%) of the 124 respondents said they reported the incident, followed by 42% or 42% ignored the incident. 15% or 18 respondents shared the material with a friend and only 1 reported sharing it to their own profile.

VII. Conclusion and Further Action

The survey results have highlighted and confirmed areas that will help our Online Safety Team further strengthen our current awareness training and feed into the development of new material that will bring stronger education to children and youth to help keep them safe online. According to the survey, we discovered that are generally aware there are risks online and if they knew of a situation where someone was unsafe online, over half of the youth (111 respondents, 52%) surveyed would be comfortable telling a guardian, followed by M'Lop Tapang, a teacher, police, and a friend.

A few takeaways from the study for potential further action are:

- Ongoing research with new trends, apps and platforms. The technology world is every-changing so it would be advantageous to be on top of new trends that arise and how apps are being used. M'Lop Tapang's Online Safety Team will continue to survey youth during our awareness training to determine what these latest trends are in addition to doing our own research.
- Additional lessons on the effects of pornography are necessary to help youth understand the impacts of pornography on their development and how it effectsaffects their perception of healthy relationships.
- Highlighting and helping bring awareness to the newest development of CSAM being shared in Telegram groups.
- Increase our lessons on the risks and dangers associated with stranger interactions. While some youth seem to be aware, it's an area that needs to be reinforced.
- Further develop parental training so that parents and guardians can learn to be more involved in understanding the risks that are associated with their children being online.
- More frequent meetings with youth focus groups to understand current challenges they face online – to give them a voice and helping steer material we develop.

VIII. Appendix – Survey Questions

If you wish to review the survey in its entirety, please feel to download and view here.

[Online Safety Survey – English Edition](#)