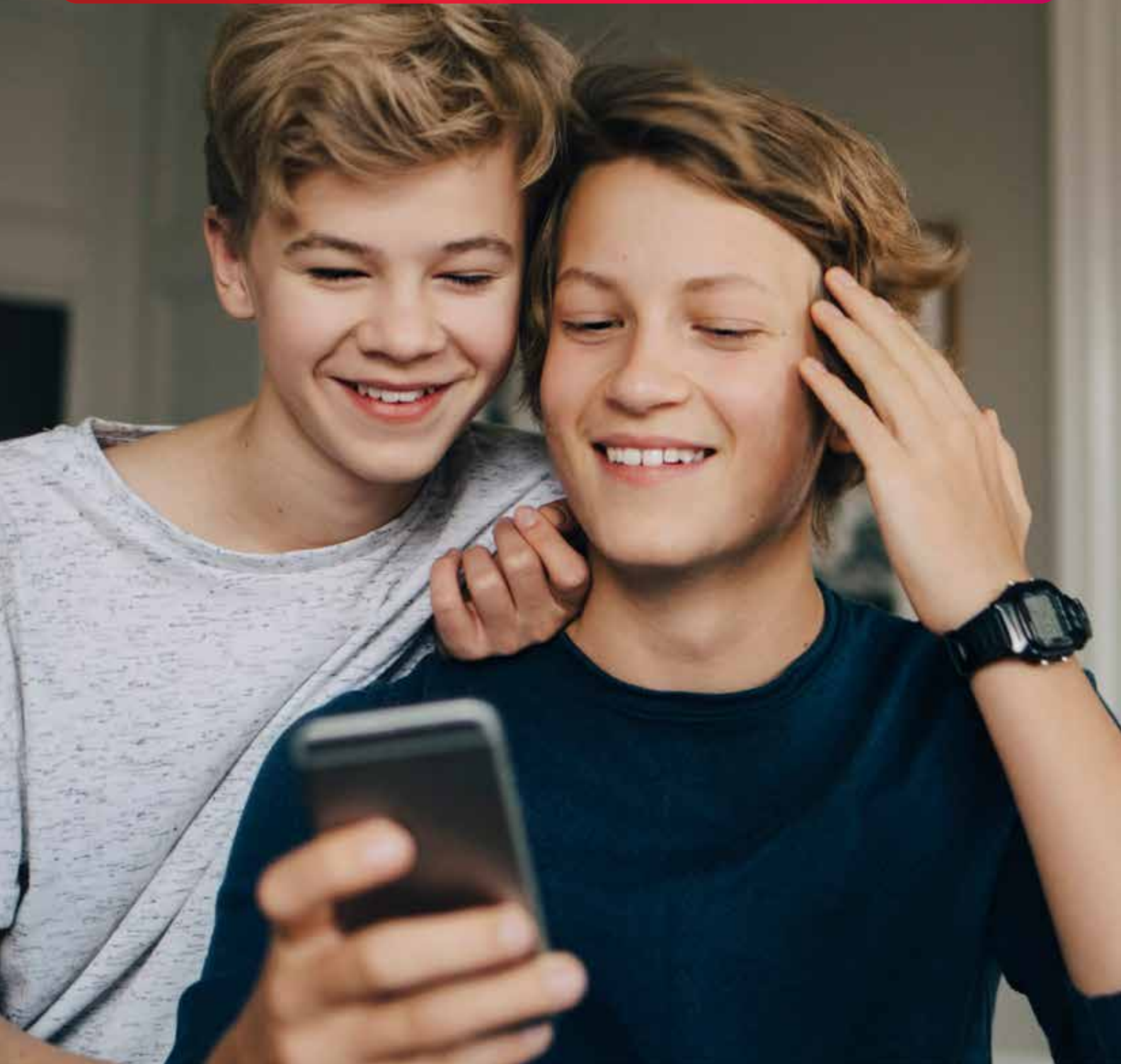




# Life Behind the Screens of Parents, Tweens, and Teens

The 2022 McAfee® Connected Family Study—Canada



## Executive Summary

McAfee's first-ever Global Connected Family Study furthers our commitment to keeping families safe in a connected world, through understanding, education, and empowerment. In this ten-country study, we spoke with parents and their children to understand how they connect and protect themselves online.

Here, we uncovered universal beliefs about online protection, along with several nuances, all of which pinpointed tensions between parents and children when it comes to staying safe while enjoying life online.

The complete findings can be found in our full global report, available [here](#). In this regional report, we'll take a look at findings specific to Canada—where families differed from global trends and instances where they set some of their own.

- **Comparison One:** Mobile Maturity
- **Comparison Two:** Top Devices
- **Comparison Three:** Concern and Frequency of Cyberbullying
- **Comparison Four:** Account Theft and Financial Information Leaks
- **Comparison Five:** Gendered Protection Bias



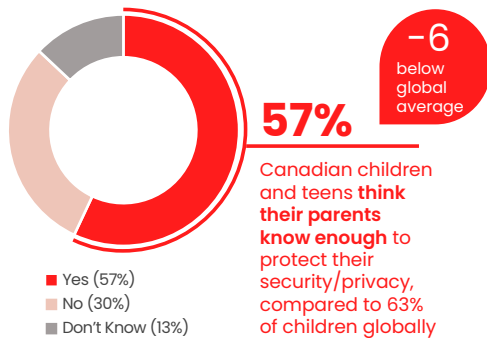
## Unique Trends in Canada

Children in Canada have less confidence in their parents when it comes to keeping them safe online—and parent action lags behind the rest of the world when it comes to taking precautions for their children.

Fewer Canadian children say their parents know what is needed to protect them online. This figure came in at 57%, which is 6% lower than the global average. Moreover, nearly half of children feel that their parents do not know as much as they do about the online world. This figure was 11% above children in other nations.

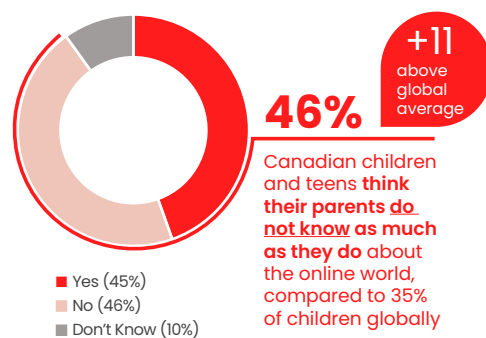
### Perception of Parents' Knowledge to Protect Children's Security

Canadian Children, Total



### Perception that Parents Do Not Know as Much about the Online World

Canadian Children, Total



C20. Do you think your parents know enough to protect your online security and privacy? (Base: Canadian children, n=1,164)  
 C21. Do you think your parents know as much as you do about the online world? (Base: Canadian children, n=1,164)

As for Canadian parents, they lag behind parents worldwide when it comes to taking precautions for children on their PCs and laptops. The lag is yet more pronounced when it comes to protections for their children's smartphones. For example, they reported use of antivirus software at a rate 10% lower than the global average on PCs and laptops and 9% lower on mobile.

Parents in Canada also report that they're slightly less likely to check browsing and email history on PCs and laptops (4% lower), yet much less likely to do so on smartphones (10% lower).

### Security/Privacy Precautions Implemented on Child's PC/Laptop and Mobile/Smartphone

Canadian Parents, Total	PC/Laptop	Gap from Global Avg.	Mobile/Smartphone	Gap from Global Avg.
Installed Antivirus	47%	-10	29%	-9
Password/passcode protect the device	41%	-3	40%	-2
Regularly update Operating system to latest version	41%	-1	32%	-5
Only use reputable online stores*	40%	-	32%	-6
Check browsing and email history	34%	-4	22%	-10
Regularly educate you on how to protect yourself	36%	+1	31%	+1
Restrict usage to only certain sites	28%	-5	23%	-6
Installed malware remover	29%	-2	18%	-2
In-person monitoring of usage	28%	-3	24%	-4
Turned off location trackers	32%	+2	24%	-2
Parental Controls Software	30%	-1	25%	-2
Installed Virtual Private Network (VPN)	18%	+1	16%	2
Subscribe to Identity Protection services^	13%	-1	12%	-

PC7. Which of the following security/privacy precautions have you taken for your child on their PC/laptop? Select all that apply. (Base: Canadian parents who indicate their children use a PC/laptop, n=769)  
 PC8. Which of the following security/privacy precautions have you taken for your child on their mobile phone/smartphone? Select all that apply. (Base: Canadian parents who indicate their children use a mobile/smartphone device, n=1,049) | \* This included the example "(e.g. Google Play, Apple Store)." ^this included the description "(monitoring of illegal use of email and bank accounts)"



## Comparison One: Mobile Maturity

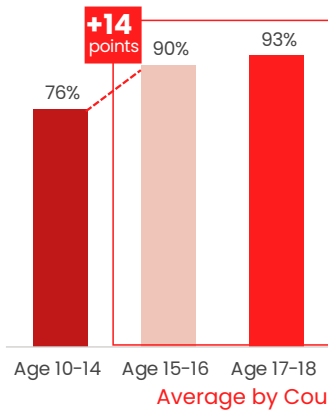
Younger children in Canada report using mobile devices at a noticeably lower rate than other children do and then increase their smartphone usage at a slightly lesser rate than the rest of the world as well.

As mentioned above, children worldwide reported a major uptick in mobile device usage as they approached their mid-teens. Our study found that children hit their online stride right about the same point in life, between 15 and 16 years old. At this point, their mobile usage jumps significantly, so much so that it approaches levels that they will carry into adulthood.

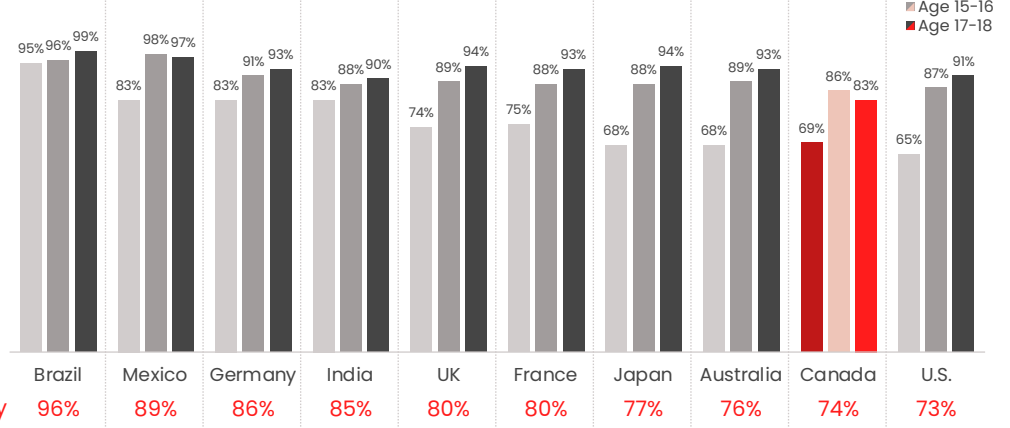
Yet their connected lives start much earlier, with smartphones and mobile devices leading the way online—which exposes them to the broader internet full of apps, chats, entertainment, and social media—along with the benefits and risks nearly right away.

### Mobile/Smartphone Device Usage

Children, Total by Age



Children, Total by Age and Country



C1. Which of the following devices do you use? (Base: Children, n=12,057)

For children in Canada, this trend holds true when compared to other children around the world, although less strongly so. Of note, smartphone use at a younger age trailed well behind the international average by 8%. By the mid-teens, they still trailed the global average by 4% and then saw a dip as Canadian children approached adulthood, dropping them 10% below average.





## Comparison Two: Top Devices

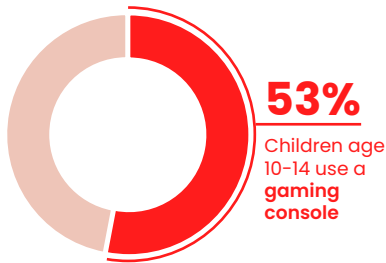
While smartphones come in first for parents and children alike, the second-most important device differs—yet they both view their devices as far less overall important than other families do worldwide.

Parents and children in Canada alike say that their mobile device is the most important one in their life. Parents placed mobile in their top two with their smartphone at 50% (versus 59% globally) followed by their computer or laptop at 36%. Tweens and teens put their smartphone at the top of the list as well, yet at 62% (versus 74% globally), followed by their gaming console at 60%. So while Canadian families name their smartphone as their top device, they report doing so at a significantly lower rate than families around the world.

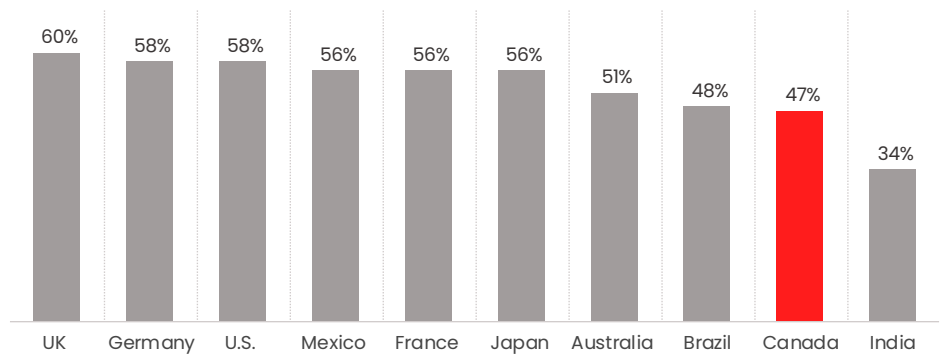
Tweens and young teens in Canada fall just below the average in gaming console usage, with 47% of them saying that they play on connected game systems, 6% lower than the rest of the world.

### Gaming Console Device Usage

Children, Age 10-14



Children, Age 10-14 by Country

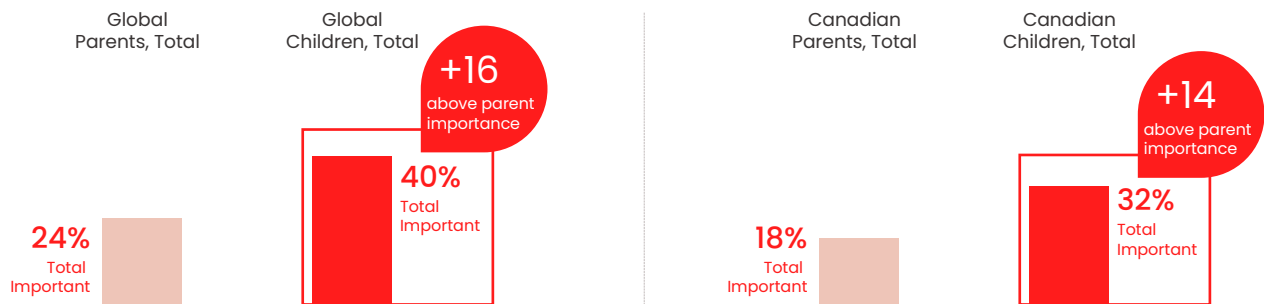


C1. Which of the following devices do you use? (Base: Children age 10-14, n=7,571)

## REPORT

Of further interest is that children said their gaming console is their second-most important device for keeping connected with family, with 32% expressing this—lower than the global average at 40%. Meanwhile, parents appear to place a much lower importance on the gaming console as a way to connect with family at 18%.

### Perceived Importance of Gaming Consoles when Connecting with Family



Perhaps unsurprisingly, both parents and children said the smartphone was the most important device for maintaining family connections, with parents at 50% and children at 53%—both of which fell below the global norm, which was 59% for parents and 64% for children.



So while Canadian families name their smartphone as their top device, they report doing so at a significantly lower rate than families around the world.



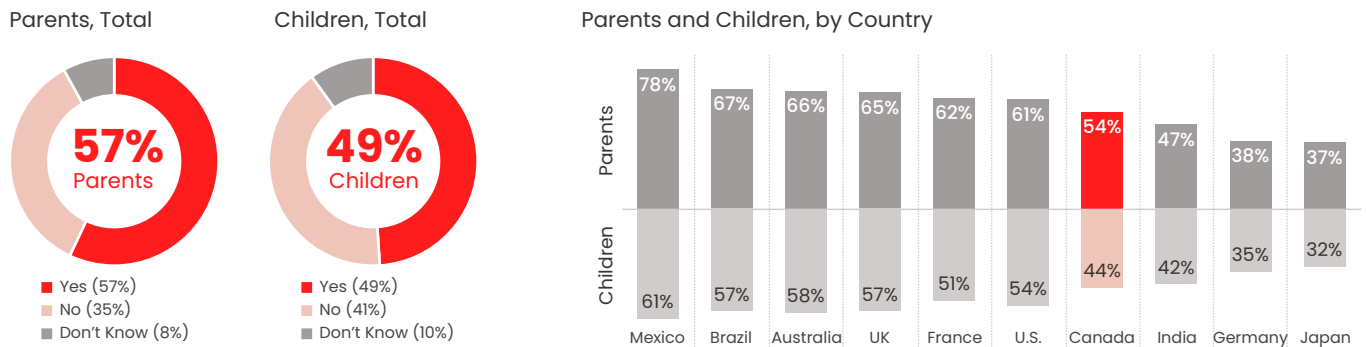
### Comparison Three: Concern and Frequency of Cyberbullying

While children claim that the smartphone is the most important device they own, risks come with that, including early exposure to cyberbullying—although parents say they are less aware of when it happens to their children.

Both parents and children expressed mixed feelings about posting on social media because it could possibly lead to bullying or abuse. Globally, 57% of parents worried about such bullying and abuse on social media, while 49% of children said they held the same worry.

In Canada, those figures trended slightly lower, with 54% of parents stating their worry, 3% below the global average—and 44% of children saying likewise, 5% below the global average.

#### Perception that Posting on Social Media and Public Forums Could Expose Children to Bullying or Abuse



PC15B. Do you think posting on social media like Facebook, Tiktok or other public forums could expose your child to bullying or abuse? (Base: Parents, n=15,156)  
 CI5B. Do you think posting on social media like Facebook, Tiktok or other public forums could expose you to bullying or abuse? (Base: Children, n=12,030)

These figures trended highest in Mexico, with parents at 78% and children at 61%. Brazil was not far behind at 67% and 57%. Note the low end of the scale, Germany's figures were 38% and 35% with Japan at 37% and 32%.

As far as exposure to cyberbullying, 15% of children in Canada reported having experienced it at some time. Globally, children reported a rate of 17%, putting Canada two points below the global average. Note how this compares to the highest and lowest reported rates, with the U.S. at 28% and Japan at 6%.

Additionally, Canada revealed a broader gap in parental awareness of cyberbullying. Of the 15% of children who reported it, only 12% of parents said they knew of it, a 3% difference. Typically, this figure only differs by one or two percent, if at all, when compared to parents worldwide.



### Comparison Four: Account Theft and Financial Information Leaks

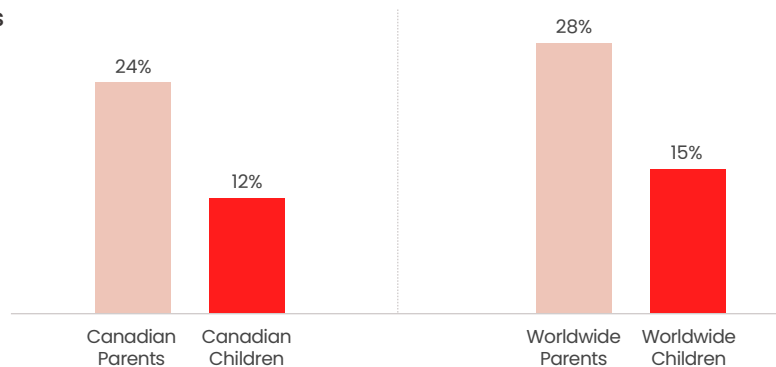
In addition to cyberbullying, families reported their experiences with other online threats, indicating issues with online privacy and security—although relatively at or below the global average.

Parents in Canada reported the attempted theft of online accounts at 24% with their children at 12%. There was a slight difference in reporting here, however. When asked if their child had been exposed to possible online account theft, 10% of parents said so—two points lower than what children reported.

That 24% figure for parents in Canada is just below the global average, with the international data putting parents at 28%. The same holds true for children. The international figure for children is 15%—which is 3% higher than for children in Canada. As for that difference in reporting, 14% of parents worldwide reported that their child had been exposed to possible theft—once again, one point lower than what children reported.

#### Attempted Theft of Online Accounts

Reported Rate



Both parents and children reported leaks of financial information as well, which could include bank info, credit or debit card info, or other identifying information. In Canada, 21% of parents said they had experienced it at some point in the past—while 7% of children reported the same.

Canadian parents and children reported this threat at a similar rate to families worldwide, with parents right on the 21% average and children 3% lower than the 10% average.



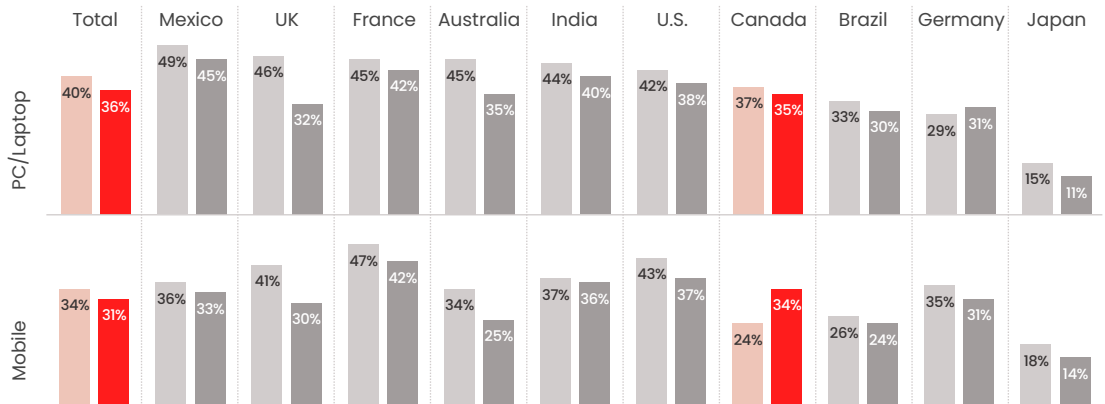


## Comparison Five: Gendered Protection Bias

Globally, research showed that girls receive more protection and oversight online than boys, yet Canadian families break this trend in some noteworthy ways, especially on mobile for younger boys.

Using the presence of parental controls software as one measure, girls are protected more than boys worldwide—on both their computers and smartphones. This holds partly true in Canada. On computers, 37% of girls have parental controls software installed compared to 35% of boys, a difference of 2%. The gap flips on mobile, however. Girls have them at a rate of 24% with boys at 34%, a full 10% gap—which breaks an otherwise global trend.

Parent has Installed Parental Controls Software on Child’s PC/Laptop or Mobile Device



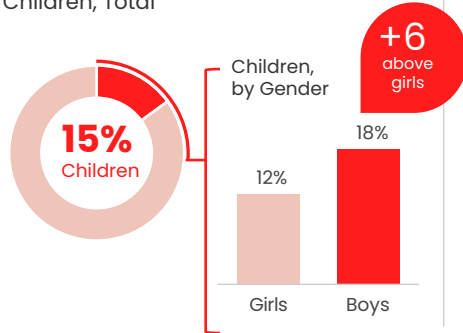
PC7. Which of the following security/privacy precautions have you taken for your child on their PC/laptop? Select all that apply. (Multiple responses allowed) Parental Controls Software (Base: Parents with children age 10-14 who use a PC/laptop, n=3,569) | PC8. Which of the following security/privacy precautions have you taken for your child on their mobile phone/smartphone? Select all that apply. (Multiple responses allowed) Parental Controls Software (Base: Parents with children age 10-14 who use a mobile/smartphone, n=5,740)

This break in the trend continues as we look at other forms of protection and oversight. When asked if they checked on the websites and apps their child visits or uses, 53% of parents said they do so for girls and 54% for boys aged 10 to 14—again flipping a global trend where girls typically see more of this. The trend flips back when parents were asked if they check calls and texts, with girls at 40% and boys at 38%.

Of note, any such gap should be seen in light of the following: boys worldwide report experiencing threats online at a rate higher than girls.

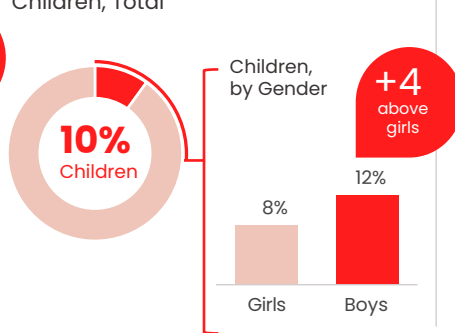
Experience with Attempted Thefts of Online Accounts

Children, Total



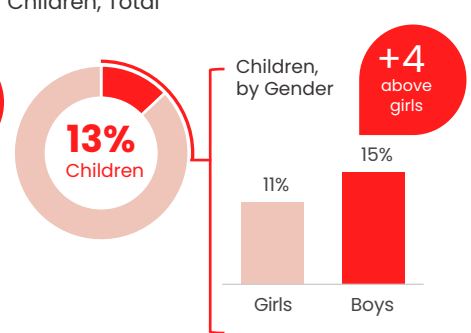
Experience with Leaks of Financial Information

Children, Total



Experience with Unauthorized Use of Personal Data

Children, Total



C16A. Have you been exposed to attempts of theft of your online accounts (gaming, social, etc.) in the past? (Base: Children, n=12,030)

C17A. Have you been exposed to leaks of your financial information (bank, credit card, passport or other identifying information) in the past? (Base: Children, n=12,030)

C18A. Have you had unauthorized use of your personal data (spam, fraud, attempts to send virus to my contacts) in the past? (Base: Children, n=12,030)

In all, this stands as a reminder that all children can stand to benefit from online protection and oversight from their parents.



Globally, research showed that girls receive more protection and oversight online than boys, yet Canadian families break this trend in some noteworthy ways, especially on mobile for younger boys.





For the full 2022 McAfee Connected Family Study Report, along with its detailed global findings, visit us for a [free download](#).

## Survey Methodology

In December 2021 McAfee LLC conducted a study about beliefs and behaviors around digital participation and online protection among members of connected families—as individuals and as a family unit.

Global survey of parents and children, with children answering alongside their parents.

Parents and children were surveyed together, with parents answering first and then bringing their children in to consent and answer.

These findings represent connected families not collections of individuals.

In multiple countries 15,500 parents of children in the age 10–18 participated in the study, as well as more than 12,000 of their children.

The research was conducted between December 13th–29th, 2021 by MSI-ACI via an online questionnaire to 15,500 parents and 12,057 children from 10 countries.

## About McAfee

McAfee is a global leader in online protection. We're focused on protecting people, not devices. Our solutions adapt to our customers' needs and empower them to confidently experience life online through integrated, easy-to-use solutions.

For more information about online protection, visit us at [mcafee.com/blogs](https://mcafee.com/blogs)