



## **Online grooming or abuse is the main worry for Spanish families, according to a study carried out by Qustodio**

**Qustodio, the digital safety and wellbeing platform, takes a look at the aspects of the digital world that most worry families, as well as parents' attitudes towards new technology and the internet:**

**For Spanish parents with children aged between 5 and 11, the main worry is cyberbullying, while for those with children over 12, grooming (sexual abuse of minors via the internet) is growing exponentially.**

**Worry about whether children are accessing pornographic material begins at age 9 in Spain, much earlier than in the US.**

**Almost 90% of 10-year-olds have access to the internet and 1 in 4**

**owns a mobile, according to figures from the National Statistics Institute (NSI).**

**Despite this, 6 out of 10 Spanish parents with children over 12 do not consider it necessary to supervise their children's use of technology, a figure which is almost double that of US families (38%).**

**Time limits and allowing children to use the internet only when accompanied, are the most common control measures used by Spanish families.**

**Only 26% of Spanish parents use a parental control tool compared to 34% in the USA.**

**Barcelona, 5 March 2019.** Qustodio, the digital safety and wellbeing platform, presented the conclusions from its study '**Minors and the internet: the pending topic for Spanish parents**' today at a press conference near its headquarters in Barcelona. The revealing report includes more than 2000 interviews with mothers and fathers across the country, and parents in the United States with children between the ages of 5 and 17.

*"The results of this study help us to understand what parents worry about in this increasingly digital world," said **Eduardo Cruz**, CEO and co-founder of Qustodio. "Grooming, the main concern for parents, as well as cyberbullying and pornography, can be detected, prevented, and managed with the help of Qustodio to give families greater peace of mind."*

According to statistics from the **ANAR Foundation**, online sexual abuse of minors, also known as grooming, has increased by 410% over the last few years: an alarming statistic in a country in which almost 90% of 10-year-olds have access to the internet and 1 in 4 owns a mobile.

In light of these figures, it's not surprising that **grooming** is what most worries Spanish parents most online, followed by **cyberbullying and pornography**. By age group, cyberbullying is the biggest worry for Spanish families with children aged between **5 and 11**; concern about exposure to pornographic content begins when children reach 9 years of age, much earlier than in the United States; and it's from age 12 on, that the worry about grooming grows exponentially, taking first place in the list.

On the other hand, children accessing **violent content** is last on the list of internet worries, reaching its highest level for parents of children aged between **5 and 8**.

## **Supervision**

According to our report, how children use **technology** is still a **secondary worry for parents**, compared to issues such as education, health, and abuse in Spain, or psychological development and communication between children and parents in the United States.

The level of supervision in the digital world is determined by a child's age. In this way, **6 out of 10 Spanish parents with children over 12 years old do not consider it necessary to supervise how their children are using technology**, a figure that is much higher than that of U.S. families (38%). And this is even though the **degree of worry** about the risks of technology and the internet reaches its maximum level when children are between **9 and 14 years of age**.

The most common means of control used by parents in Spain include **limiting connection time** and **accompanying the child while they are connected**. In the USA, parents' preferred options are reviewing their children's **search history** and the use of parental control tools. In fact, 34% of U.S. parents use one of these tools, compared to 26% of Spanish parents. In both countries, they are used most commonly in families with children aged between **5 and 11** and lessens as the children get older.

Qustodio recommends parents use parental control tools to **supervise and protect their children and to help them to manage how their children use the internet**,

and advises parents to be open and transparent with their children about how they use them.

## **Devices and activities**

Fully aware that children today are using a multitude of devices to access the internet: computers, tablets, mobiles, **Qustodio** wanted to pinpoint the relationship between the device chosen to access the internet and the child's age. In this way, we can see that the use of tablets is highest among the youngest children in both countries. From age 8, or 11 in the USA, the use of tablets starts to fall, becoming the least used device

by teens. Smartphones are much more common among Spanish children who start using them regularly at the age of 12, with U.S. children starting to use them at age 15.

If we analyze children's online activity, **YouTube** is the first choice for online content for children aged between 5 and 17 in the USA, while in Spain its use starts to drop slightly from age 14 onwards, being replaced with chats and instant messaging services. Additionally, there has been an increase in the use of **Instagram** in Spain, much more so than in the USA from the age of 12, becoming extensive during adolescence.

### **Qustodio**

Created in 2012 in Barcelona, Qustodio is the leading platform for digital safety and wellbeing for families, with over 70 employees and 2 million users worldwide in 245 countries. Designed to help families protect their children in the online world, detect cyberbullying and online predators, as well as prevent online addiction, the app works on different operating systems (Windows, Mac OS, Android, iOS, and Kindle) and is available in 8 languages (Spanish, English, French, Italian, Portuguese, German, Japanese and simplified Chinese). For more information: <https://www.qustodio.com/en/>