**DIGITAL MIGRATION**

**Online access surged**
- 22% increase in web access
  - Verizon (US)
- 35-60% increase in weekday daytime traffic
  - UK BT (UK)

**Demand for content increased**
- Facebook, WhatsApp, Messenger, Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat and Twitter all broke their respective records for time spent in-app
- 57% average increase for top ten news sites in Australia

**WARNINGS AND PREDICTIONS**

- "Millions of children are at increased risk of harm as their lives move increasingly online during lockdown in the COVID-19 pandemic."
  - (Unicef)
- "Adults working remotely subsequently are not able to supervise their children’s internet activity."
  - (Europol)

- "There are a minimum 300,000 individuals in the UK posing a sexual threat to children."
  - (UK’s National Crime Agency’s threat assessment)

- "Spending more time on virtual platforms can leave children vulnerable to online sexual exploitation and grooming, as predators look to exploit the COVID-19 pandemic."
  - (Global Partnership to End Violence)

- "Greater unsupervised internet use means children are likely to be exposed to greater risk of sexual exploitation online."
  - (We Protect Global Alliance)

**IMPACT**

**Child Sexual Exploitation**

**OVER 200%**
Increase in posts on known child sex abuse forums
(We Protect Global Alliance)

- "AF and its partners blocked at least 8.8 million attempts by UK internet users to access videos and images of children suffering sexual abuse."
- During Covid-19 restrictions

- "...increased online activity by those seeking child sexual abuse material."
  - Europol director Catherine De Bolle

**CONCLUSION**

- "The heightened risks of online harm for children put a particular responsibility on tech companies and service providers. This is not the time to lessen the priority on children’s safety."
  - Her Majesty Queen Silvia of Sweden

- Policymakers will need to consider and accommodate the impacts of COVID-19 on children for many years to come.

**Health and Wellbeing**

- Girls aged 15 to 18 feel under more pressure to look a certain way on social media e.g. lose weight or exercise (24%) and be online all the time (20%)
  - (Glimits)

- 32% of 2,111 young people with a history of mental health needs agreed that it had made their mental health much worse
  - (Young Minds)

- Teachers said school closures would have a 72% negative impact on pupil wellbeing and safety.
  - (University of Exeter)

- "The heightened risks of online harm for children put a particular responsibility on tech companies and service providers. This is not the time to lessen the priority on children’s safety."
  - Her Majesty Queen Silvia of Sweden

- Policymakers will need to consider and accommodate the impacts of COVID-19 on children for many years to come.

**There will, without doubt, be a lasting impact on children from COVID-19.**