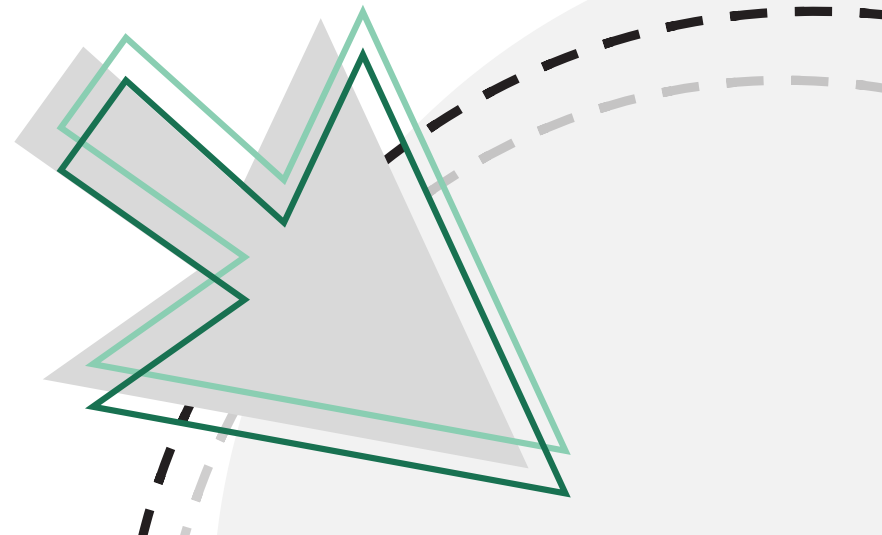


Insights and Trends:

Analysis of Report Harmful Content

2024



RHC Introduction/summary:

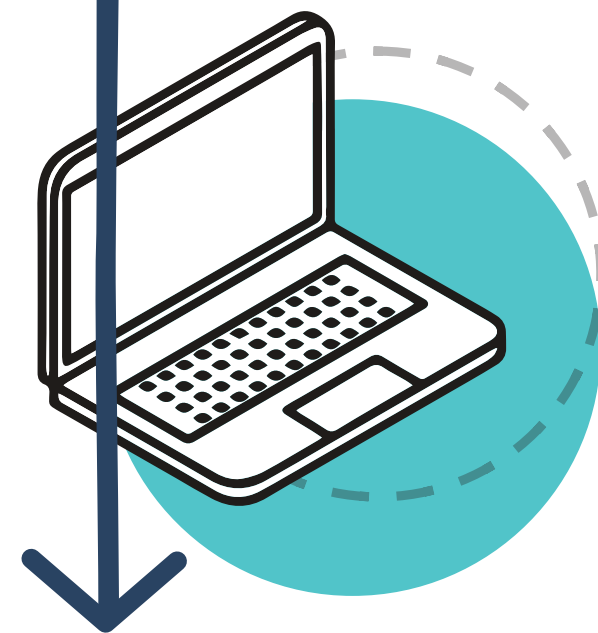
Report Harmful Content (RHC) is a national impartial dispute resolution service provided by the UK Safer Internet Centre and operated by SWGfL, that has been designed to assist everyone with reporting harmful content online. It empowers anyone over the age of 13, based in the UK, to report harmful content by providing up-to-date information on the platform's community standards and direct links to the correct reporting facilities.

The service also provides further support to clients who have already submitted a report to the platform but are not happy with the outcome and would like to have it reviewed. RHC acts in this mediatory role with multiple industry platforms with whom it has a trusted flagger partnership, and their reporting flows integrated into the RHC website.

This light touch analysis has analysed the cases of the RHC service from January to December 2024. During this period, the service dealt with 6,222 reports through the RHC website and our out-of-hours chatbot Reiya, a 20.5% increase on 2023. This includes cases that fall outside the scope of what RHC can support with, including platforms outside of the trusted flagged partnerships, illegal harms (such as terrorist and child sexual abuse material), and clients who reside outside of the UK. In 86% of cases, the helpline was able to successfully encourage industry to take action to remove content.

RHC can respond to cases where online harm has occurred on one of the 25 industry platforms with whom it has a trusted flagger partnership, and whose reporting flows are integrated into the RHC website. The forthcoming analysis will centre on instances reported to RHC where cases have occurred on one of these platforms and where RHC was able to intervene.

Report Harmful Content's impact is in educating people and in providing a tool to help people understand how they can report the content themselves. The service has proved effective in communicating and supporting users to report, and also in taking down content.



Taking down content

Across the 2024 reporting period, Report Harmful Content were able to action and take down content within 24 hours from initial communication with the client in 42% of cases. For the remainder of reports, 13% were actioned within 24-48 hours, 8.5% in 48-72 hours and 19% in over 72 hours.

The service always works to achieve a takedown within 24 hours but due to the varying nature of reports, the response times and accommodation from industry, timings are dependent on a case-by-case basis.

Headline stats:

Total number of ALL reports (incl chatbot)

6,222

Out of remit cases

52%

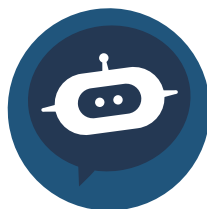
In remit cases

34%



Channel of enquiry
(website/chatbot breakdown %)

32.5%



increase from 2023
(via webform);

16%

(chatbot sessions)

21%

overall increase in reports to
the helpline (web form
& chatbot) compared to
the previous period (2023 -
2024)



Removal rate

86%

removal rate of
cases in remit
(compared to 89% last year)



Website views

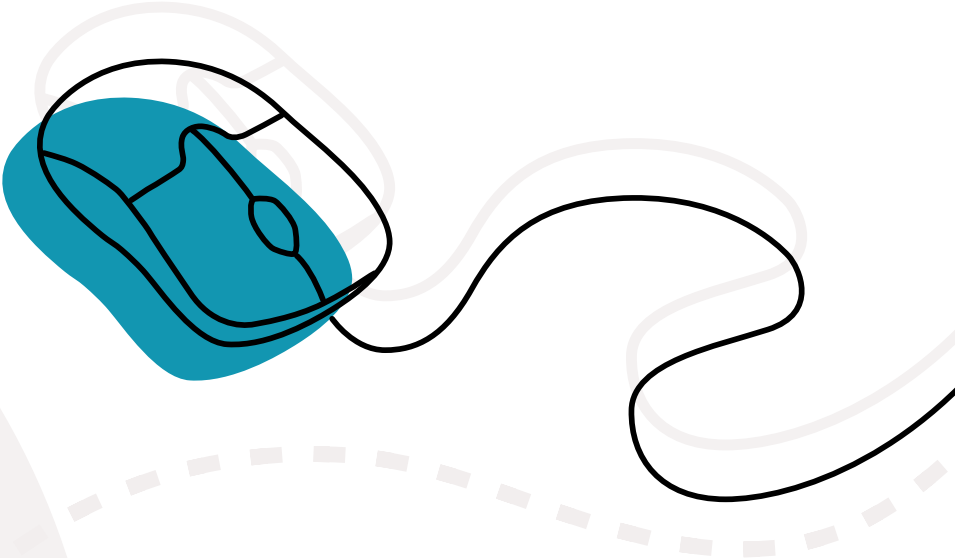
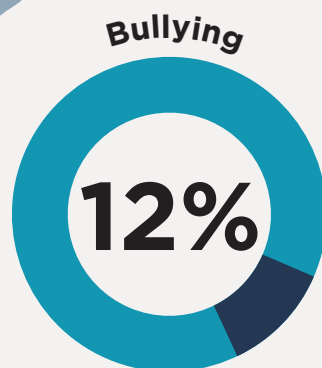
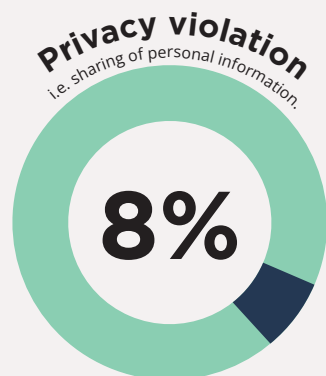
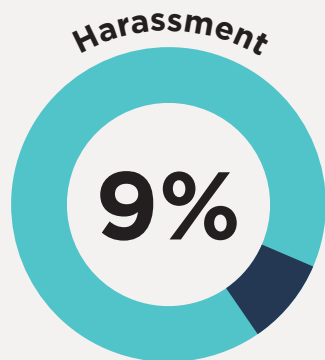
210,233

(Down 7% from 226,603)

Where the content was found

Out of the overall caseload handled by the Helpline, we were able to identify the location of 1,859 instances of harmful content. Of these, nearly half (49.7%) were found on mainstream social media platforms, with Facebook accounting for 273 incidents and Instagram for 189. This demonstrates the persistent role of large platforms in hosting intimate image abuse, despite ongoing moderation efforts. Notably, 37% of the harmful content was located on smaller, high-risk platforms, which present a significant danger due to their lower moderation capabilities and greater potential for repeated harm. This is particularly concerning in the context of the Online Safety Act's classification system, which distinguishes platforms by size but must also account for the disproportionate harm that can arise from smaller, less regulated services.

Among individuals who reported online harm, the top three reported issues were:



Out of the 2,215 helpline cases where an issue type was recorded, the most prominent concerns reported in 2024 were bullying (219 cases), witnessing Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM) (201 cases), harassment (162 cases), privacy violations (149 cases), and allegations of abuse (112 cases). These top five issue types reflect the wide-ranging and complex harms users experience online. The diversity of issue types also highlights the need for platforms and policymakers to consider both well-established and emerging harms when crafting protections and responses

Client demographics

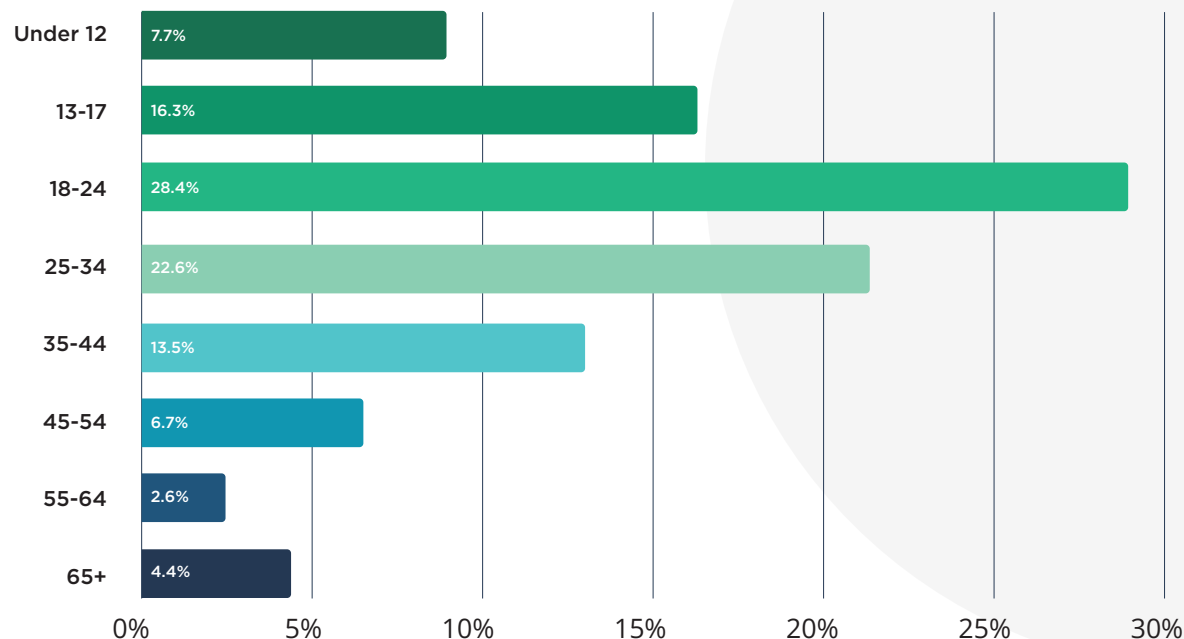
In 2024, we started collecting more detailed data on age.

Out of 1,804 reported cases of individuals who experienced or witnessed online harm, nearly a quarter involved children and young people under the age of 18. This includes 140 cases involving children under 12 and 296 cases involving those aged 13 to 17, amounting to over 24% of the total. This is particularly concerning and reinforces the urgent need for stronger safeguards and online safety protections for children, who remain among the most vulnerable users online.

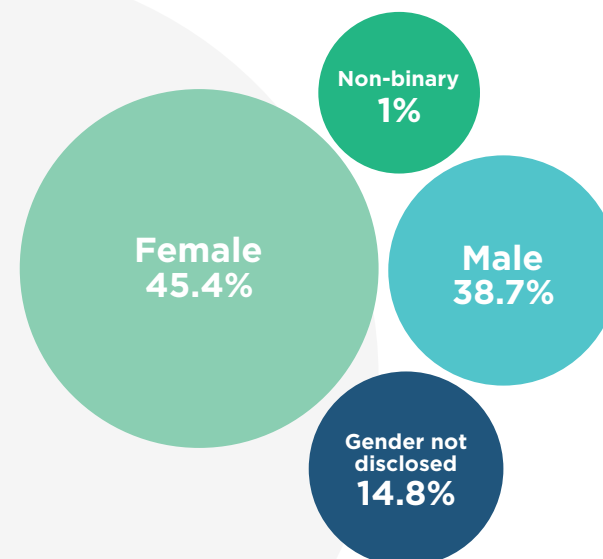
The highest proportion of cases came from the 18–24 age group, which accounted for 28.4% of all reports, followed by the 25–34 age group at 22.6%, highlighting that young adults also face significant exposure to harmful content.

At the same time, it is important not to overlook older users. While the numbers are smaller, 48 reports came from those aged 55–64 and 36 from individuals over 65. These cases demonstrate that online harm affects people across the entire age spectrum and that protections must be inclusive of older demographics, who may face different types of risks and barriers when seeking support.

Age



Gender



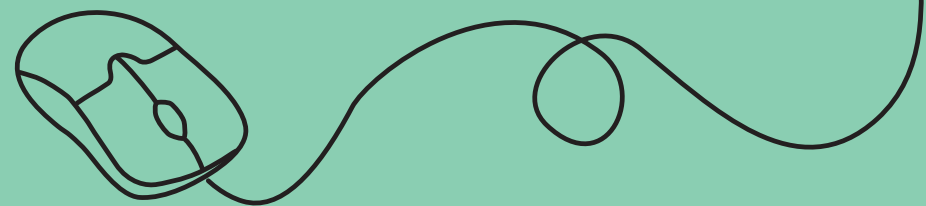
Of the 1,804 reports received, 873 (48.4%) came from individuals who had witnessed online harm, while 542 (30%) were submitted by those who had directly experienced it themselves. A further 268 reports (14.9%) were made on behalf of someone who had witnessed harm, and 121 (6.7%) were on behalf of someone who had experienced it. These figures not only highlight the volume of harmful content encountered online but also demonstrate a significant level of bystander concern, with over one in five reports made by individuals on behalf of others.

Report Harmful Content Resources

Report Harmful Content

Report Harmful Downloads and Resources

Report Harmful Content Annual Report 2023



Further Resources

SWGfL

Revenge Porn Helpline

Professionals Online Safety Helpline

UK Safer Internet Centre

Childnet

Internet Watch Foundation (IWF)

Action Counter Terrorism (ACT)