



# Online safety perceptions, needs, and expectations of young people in Southeast Asia

Consultations with young people in  
Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, and Vietnam

DR GIRISH LALA

DR SHIVA CHANDRA

DR NUKTE OGUN

MS LILLY MOODY

PROFESSOR AMANDA THIRD

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UNIVERSITY



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write to:

Professor Amanda Third  
Institute for Culture and Society Western Sydney  
University Locked Bag 1979  
Penrith NSW 2751  
a.third@westernsydney.edu.au

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**Dr Girish Lala**

Research Fellow  
Young and Resilient Research Centre  
Western Sydney University

**Dr Shiva Chandra**

Research Officer  
Young and Resilient Research Centre  
Western Sydney University

**Dr Nukte Ogun**

Research Officer, Impact  
Young and Resilient Research Centre  
Western Sydney University

**Ms Lilly Moody**

Centre Manager  
Young and Resilient Research Centre  
Western Sydney University

**Professor Amanda Third**

Co-Director  
Young and Resilient Research Centre  
Western Sydney University



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The Young and Resilient Research Centre is an Australian-based, international research centre that unites young people with researchers, practitioners, innovators, and policymakers to explore the role of technology in children's and young people's lives and how it can be used to improve individual and community resilience across generations.

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# INTRODUCTION

The *General Comment No. 25 on Children's Rights in Relation to the Digital Environment* affirms that digital service providers should 'actively engage with children' and 'give their views due consideration when developing products and services' (United Nations, General Comment No. 25, 2021: 3). Put another way, this means including and elevating young people's insights and experiences and enabling them to influence decisions which shape their online experiences.

This report presents analysis and outcomes from research undertaken by the Young and Resilient Research Centre at Western Sydney University (Y&R), where young people in Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, and Vietnam took part in workshop-based consultations, facilitated by local partner organisations, to:

1. Identify, explore, and present young people's experiences and perceptions about how to ensure they can maximise the benefits of online engagement while being protected against its risks and harms; and
2. Contribute to an evidence base to contextualise and uplift online safety measures, across cultures and international contexts.

The report and associated outputs show how young people in these countries in Southeast Asia perceive and experience key elements of their lives online, and their ideas and aspirations about how to ensure young people remain safe online. Outputs are intended to help inform stakeholders including governments, industry, and other civil society organisations, about young people's experiences and perceptions, in young people's own words and contextualised for their local and regional environments. The national and combined youth-centred outputs discussed and presented here promote the role and agency of people who use online services. Accordingly, these outputs are intended to be a broadly accessible resource for key stakeholders to plan, develop, and operationalise responses that embed the perceptions, needs, and expectations of young people and a safety by design approach into their current and future products and services.

## OUTCOMES AND OUTPUTS

The data from the consultations show that our young participants had a strong sense of the benefits and positive experiences associated with their lives and the lives of other young people online. Equally, though, they displayed a keen understanding and awareness about the need to ensure young people's online experiences are safe. The ideas they expressed about how the technology industry and other groups, organisations, and agencies should facilitate young people's safety online are evidence of their appreciation of the complexity and interrelatedness of factors contributing to young people's online safety.

That appreciation suggests an approach that recognises how interconnecting factors and actors can contribute towards the overarching goal of safety online for young people. For example, young people highlighted the diversity of elements driving online safety and the

importance of recognising relationships between those diverse elements. They thought about finding an appropriate balance between individual and industry/organisational responsibilities for online safety. And they acknowledged the role technical or functional factors (like the systems and tools platforms use) as well as personal or human-centred factors (like people's feelings or perceptions) play in keeping people safe online.

Assessing the entirety of young participants' data surfaced a set of key norms that ground young people's views. These norms reflect the overarching ideals young people want to see governments, industry, communities, and their peers aim for. They are standards young people expect key actors to have in place to ensure designs for young people's online safety are meaningful and effective.

The norms also informed the development of country-specific and overarching vision statements that emerged from what participants told us they feel needs to happen to keep them safe online. Vision statements describe key, specific needs and wants that young participants identify as necessary to keep them safe and healthy online. Country-specific statements provide a contextualised understanding of young people's views in each country while the joint statement presents a synthesised vision across all four countries.

Our consultations, and the norms and visions that flowed from our analysis, reveal that the young people who took part in our research take a holistic view of online safety. For them, online safety is about ensuring different people, groups, and organisations work together for their wellbeing, and that alongside that cooperative environment young people can also access the tools, functions, and settings on digital platforms they need to keep themselves safe. It follows then that an effective pathway for the technology industry to create safe platforms involves external collaboration and inclusion of young people (and other end-users) when designing safety features.

# WE NEED NORMS TO ENSURE SAFETY ONLINE

## PEOPLE HAVE A RIGHT TO BE SAFE ONLINE

The online world is part of the natural order of things and so online safety is a basic and inalienable standard that industry and other actors are obliged to respect and work to realise

## COLLABORATION IS ESSENTIAL

Entities cannot work alone to effectively ensure young people's online safety. Collaboration between companies, organisations, and agencies strengthens efforts to make young people safer online

## YOUNG PEOPLE'S AGENCY MUST BE RESPECTED

Children and young people's knowledge and experience have value and so they must have pathways to meaningfully contribute online

## INDUSTRY CULTURE NEEDS TO CHANGE

Industry needs to do more. It must embrace and enact ideals and goals valuing online safety as a social good over and above commercial considerations

## INDUSTRY NEEDS TO EARN PEOPLE'S TRUST

Industry must be trustworthy. It must actively demonstrate it acknowledges online safety as a right and genuinely support initiatives that enable online safety

## INDUSTRY MUST BE RESPONSIVE

Industry must consult with and listen to the people who use their products and services, and respond authentically and meaningfully in a timely way

## POLICIES MUST BE DEVELOPED AND IMPLEMENTED

Governments and institutions must develop and implement smarter and more effective rules and policies to keep young people safe online, and take responsibility for making sure those policies are followed

## PEOPLE'S DATA BELONGS TO THEM

Personal data and information are sacrosanct and must be safeguarded. People must have control of what they share, when they share, how they share, and what happens to their data

## INFORMATION MUST BE ACCESSIBLE AND USEFUL

Education, awareness raising, and information must be designed so people can access, understand, and use it. Different materials should be made to suit different groups

# JOINT STATEMENT

INDONESIA, MALAYSIA, THAILAND, VIETNAM

## YOUNG PEOPLE SAY, WE WANT...

- **to do all the things online that are meaningful to us**, like connect with others, be entertained, learn, and do other everyday tasks, **without fear**
- **online experiences that are good for our mental health**, so we feel happy and don't worry about our safety
- **trustworthy platforms** that will keep our data **secure and respect** our privacy
- all young people **to feel safe online** regardless of their gender, sexuality, race, or other differences
- all young people **to be protected from online harms** like exploitation, harassment, strangers, and inappropriate content, and to have privacy and security safeguards against scamming, misinformation, and viruses
- **online experiences where all people are treated with kindness, dignity, and respect**. We don't want to experience hateful comments, be ostracised, harassed, bullied, or have personal information about us made public
- **our parents and our teachers** to know about online safety so they can help us stay safe online. We want them to provide us with **support, guidance, and information** about how to protect ourselves
- **digital platforms and businesses to prioritise our safety over profits**. We want them to listen to us, give us ways to provide feedback, and act with our wellbeing in mind
- **moderation that effectively deals with harmful content** and reports from users. We want platforms to actively monitor what happens and to regulate content appropriately
- **rules and policies** that ensure we have positive online experiences, and **that support our wellbeing**
- **to be educated about how to keep ourselves safe**. We want that education to happen in creative and fun ways, like through videos and animations!
- **collaboration**. We want the whole community to come together. We want online platforms, government, police, parents, schools, and organisations to collaborate and work with young people. **We want to be included in what happens** and play an active role in ensuring our online safety

# BACKGROUND

Globally, children and young people's access to digital devices and online spaces is fundamental to what it means to be a young person in the contemporary context (Hollis et al., 2020). Moreover, global COVID-19 pandemic effects have increased young people's use and reliance on digitised experiences internationally. Children's access to digital technology earlier in life, and in greater numbers, has resulted in increased societal awareness and concern about ensuring young people's safety and wellbeing online. For example, a NetClean report for 2020 found the pandemic led to an increase in child sexual abuse online, including 'online grooming, sexual extortion, self-produced material and livestreaming' (NetClean, 2021: 16). One manifestation of that concern, intensified in the wake of the pandemic, is through calls for online platforms to take greater responsibility in safeguarding the privacy and wellbeing of users.

When interest in online safety first gained prominence, resources dedicated to understanding the online experiences of young people were frequently focussed around populations in high-income countries. That attention has shifted to include more diverse regions as research and initiatives on online safety have developed (e.g., Global Kids Online, 2019). Nevertheless, it remains important that online safety work is attuned to the complexities of conditions in diverse countries, with different economic, geographical, and demographic contexts, and that it seeks deep understandings of those complexities so that it can support those who are most marginalised and in need.

In Southeast Asia, penetration and use of online technologies are rapidly advancing (e.g., Broom, 2020; Deloitte and Fintech, 2020; Kemp, 2021). There is also a growing body of work that asserts that the most effective way to ensure online systems and platforms are safer for the people who use them is for the industries that operate those systems and platforms to adopt a human-centric approach in their creation and development processes. Put another way, by definition, safety by design 'position[s] user safety as a fundamental design consideration' (eSafety Commissioner, n.d.b) and so necessitates that industry meaningfully engage with the populations and groups that use their services. It follows then that young people in Southeast Asia, as a region where rapid technological advances are taking place, should also be included in discourses about and practices for online safety, to better understand how safety by design can be applied in this context. This project contributes to that by focusing on the online experiences of children and young people in four countries in the region: Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, and Vietnam.

## ONLINE SAFETY CONCERNS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

Existing literature on young people's online safety in Southeast Asia highlights concerns such as sexual exploitation, cyberbullying, and exposure to other harmful content or behaviour. For example, UNICEF and the Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention (2020: 7) found that young people in Southeast Asia receive 'sexual messages and images on social media', and that online associations can lead to sexual assaults in offline contexts, or the trafficking of

young people. Along similar lines, Marret and Choo (2018) surveyed young people in Malaysia (N=1,005) to explore offline youth victimisation by online acquaintances. They found 5.5% of respondents who attended a face-to-face meeting, 'reported that they had been assaulted' in some way, with a small number (13 males, 5 females) also reporting instances of forced sexual intercourse (Marret and Choo, 2018: 2364). Household survey data of 967 children and parents in Thailand found that of 'the 101 children who received unwanted requests to talk about sex, 37 said the last such request happened through an online game' (ECPAT, INTERPOL, and UNICEF, 2022a: 39). This suggests children experience tensions between online recreational pursuits, and their safety. In a Thai study on youth aged 15-24, Ojanen and colleagues (2015: 164) found that of 1,234 respondents, 49.3% reported being victims of online harassment, 43.2% reported being perpetrators of online harassment, and 76.6% indicated they had witnessed harassment in online spaces. Along with sexual exploitation and harassment, others have explored internet addiction in the region. For example, Rakhmawati et al. (2021) highlight that for boys in Indonesia, online addiction can affect their day-to-day functioning, with some experiencing physical effects such as fatigue and weakness due to poor eating habits and limited rest. Importantly, young people may also be exposed to everyday online risks such as online viruses, and spyware, which affect internet users broadly (Luong et al., 2019).



Scholars have also raised concerns about cyberbullying specifically, examining factors that lead individuals to cyberbully (Tudkuea et al., 2019), its prevalence (Sittichai, 2014), and coping strategies (Sittichai and Smith, 2018). For example, in a Thai sample of 1,183 students, Sittichai (2014) found that approximately 15% had one to two experiences of cyberbullying. In a Vietnamese survey of 648 grade 6 students, researchers found that 9% reported being cyberbullied and the ‘experience of being cyberbullied was significantly associated with self-harm’ (Nguyen et al., 2020: 5-6). That study also highlights that ‘parental acceptance’ reduced the rate of ‘self-harm and suicidal behaviors, including suicidal ideation, suicidal planning, and suicide attempts’ (Nguyen et al., 2020: 6). In context, parental acceptance was defined as a parenting style where the child was regarded ‘as a full-fledged member of the family, neither concentrated upon nor overlooked’ and where parents ‘encourage their child to fulfill his or her [their] potential as best as possible’ (Nguyen et al., 2020: 3). Importantly, this research highlights that while children may experience cyberbullying and resulting adverse impacts, certain family relationships can serve as protective factors in these situations.

Research globally also demonstrates that young people can face a range of negative experiences in online spaces, illustrating how concerns in Southeast Asia speak to a broader international context. For example, in a focus group study with 42 young people in the United Kingdom, Gordon found that negative experiences included ‘cyberbullying, threats, harassment, unwanted contact, unwanted content, negative consequences for mental health, the “toxic” nature of interactions’ and concerns about privacy (2021: 72). In an Australian study, Hanckel and Chandra (2021: 28) found that queer young people were exposed to ‘transphobic, homophobic, sexist, and racist’ material online. Respondents also felt discrimination against sexuality and gender diverse people was not taken seriously by platforms. Such negative online experiences can have a range of mental health impacts on young people. For example, Kowalski et al.’s (2014: 1124) meta-analysis of literature on youth cyberbullying found victims experience ‘stress, anxiety, depression, loneliness, conduct problems, emotional problems, somatic symptoms, and drug and alcohol use’.

## ADDRESSING ONLINE HARMS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA AND GLOBALLY

In light of such concerns, government, industry, and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are making concerted efforts to improve young people’s online safety globally, and in Southeast Asia specifically. For example, the United Nations General Comment 25 explains how the Convention on the Rights of the Child can be operationalised for digital and online environments (United Nations, General Comment No. 25, 2021). The Regional Plan of Action for Protection of Children from All Forms of Online Exploitation and Abuse in ASEAN provides guidelines on how to protect children in Southeast Asia (ECPAT, 2022). WeProtect Global Alliance (n.d.) has developed a Global Strategic Response to eliminate online child sexual exploitation and abuse across the globe, which calls for international collaboration, whilst recognising contextual specificities. The Response identifies six key areas, which include policy/legislation, criminal justice, support and empowerment for victims, the technology sector, societal development, and ongoing research (WeProtect Global Alliance, n.d.).

Other efforts have included a collaboration in 2020 between the Association of Southeast Asian Nations Foundation and Google to create a webinar series 'which aimed to not only promote safe and positive online experiences for youth' in Southeast Asia, but also 'advocate the value of digital citizenship' (ASEAN Foundation, 2021). In Southeast Asia specifically, World Vision has undertaken online violence prevention strategies, which use 'child-friendly activities such as plays, songs, quizzes and competitions to increase awareness' of online safety (End Violence Against Children, n.d.). That initiative has also included training to increase parents' and teachers' understanding of how to protect children from online violence. This can be particularly important as 'many parents feel uncertain as to how to manage children's internet use' or may 'lack the confidence or competence to do so' (Global Kids Online, 2019: 25).

Alongside these efforts, governments in Southeast Asia have also attempted to safeguard young people's online safety through policy, legislation, and education. In 2021, Vietnam's government approved its first National Programme on Child Online Protection for 2021-2025 'to protect children from violence, exploitation and abuse on the internet and support them to have safe and healthy online interactions' (UNICEF, 2021). Sulaiman and colleagues (2022: 964) report that in Malaysia, governmental agencies, non-governmental organisations, and the private sector 'have launched national-level cyber safety awareness campaigns'. Participating bodies have included, the Ministry of Women, Family, and Community Development, the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission, Cybersecurity Malaysia, and Digi Telecommunications (Sulaiman et al., 2022: 964). The Malaysian government also introduced the Sexual Offences against the Children Act 2017, to tighten legislation around the production of child pornography (Cooray et al., 2020).

ECPAT, INTERPOL, and UNICEF (2021a: 17) found that while Indonesia has 'been successful in implementing general online child protection policies' there is scope to do more, as these policies do not specifically address online child sexual exploitation and abuse. However, the government in Indonesia has initiated 'a draft for an online child protection policy' and 'a child protection roadmap to define their duties and functions in protecting children from online risks' (ECPAT, INTERPOL, and UNICEF, 2021a: 17). In Thailand, the penal code criminalises 'possession of child sexual abuse material', and 'producing, importing, exporting, selling, possessing or circulating' such material (ECPAT, UNICEF, and INTERPOL, 2021b: 6). Despite such protections, legislation can go further as, neither 'the Thai Penal Code nor any other law explicitly criminalises live-streaming of child sexual abuse, online grooming, or sexual extortion' (ECPAT, INTERPOL, and UNICEF, 2022a: 9).

These examples are evidence that various governmental and social institutions, as well as NGOs, in Southeast Asia recognise the importance of young people's online safety. Those institutions are beginning to prioritise ongoing work on online safety and attempting to provide young people with the skills to navigate online spaces safely and in ways conducive to their wellbeing.

## ENRICHING THROUGH SAFETY BY DESIGN

While young people may have adverse experiences online and offline, we must balance our desire to protect young people from harm with providing young people access to benefits in online spaces (e.g., Third, et al. 2014; Third, et al. 2017; Third, et al. 2020). Following Marret and Choo (2018: 2371), it is important to remember that ‘complete elimination of risks may not be feasible and would concurrently deprive young people of important benefits such as access to opportunities for learning and development’. Young people use digital technology for a plethora of reasons and in ways that enrich their lives, such as communication and connection, accessing and sharing information, and consuming entertainment (Gayatri et al., 2015; Third and Moody, 2021). Research also highlights the benefits and opportunities young

### eSafety Commissioner

The eSafety Commissioner (eSafety) is Australia’s independent regulator and educator for online safety. eSafety helps safeguard Australians from online harms and promotes positive and safer online experiences. In the pursuit of these goals, eSafety works with governments, industry, and other stakeholders and actors in Australia and around the world.

One important eSafety initiative is Safety by Design, which encourages technology companies to proactively anticipate, detect and eliminate online harms to make digital environments safer and more inclusive, especially for those most at risk. This includes people who may be at risk of higher levels of online abuse due to their ‘gender, age, race, religion, disability, sexuality, cultural background or geographic location’ (eSafety Commissioner, n.d.a: 1). Safety by Design puts the onus on online platforms and services to minimise harms experienced on their platforms and centres the safety and rights of users in the process of design, development and deployment of online products and services.

eSafety’s Safety by Design initiative is underpinned by three key principles:

- Service provider responsibility
- User empowerment and autonomy
- Transparency and accountability

people access by engaging online (Collin, et al. 2011; Swist et al. 2015). Accordingly, it is clear that online safety should be geared towards fostering online environments where young people can engage safely, without constraining their positive online experiences (Meurens et al., 2022: 9).

A safety by design approach encourages industry to implement measures to promote online safety without compromising young people’s full participation in the digital sphere. By definition, safety by design requires consulting with and responding to consumer insights and experiences (including those of young people) to achieve a balanced approach to their digital wellbeing. The Down to Zero Alliance recognises the importance of safety by design highlighting that ‘rather than designing preventive features, platforms are reactive, often only taking remedial action once harm is done’ (Meurens et al., 2022: 8). WeProtect Global Alliance’s (n.d.) strategic response recommends safety by design in their international guide to eliminate online child exploitation

and abuse, highlighting how industry can play their part in global efforts. The *Disrupting Harm in Thailand* report also recommends that industry must prioritise ‘safety by design by considering children’s needs in product development processes’ (ECPAT, INTERPOL, and UNICEF, 2022a: 98), which has also been reiterated in the *Disrupting Harm in Viet Nam* report (ECPAT, INTERPOL, and UNICEF, 2022b).

While existing research on online safety in Southeast Asia is important and useful, much of that work is based on quantitative data, where variables, topics and the range of responses are limited. This makes it difficult to develop our understanding of young people’s online experiences, *as understood by them*. Including young people in conversations about what it means to be safe online, through workshops involving rich and detailed activities, allows this study to produce deeper understandings of how children and young people in Southeast Asia relate to digital technology. This depth will help contextualise how safety by design can be applied in Southeast Asia so young people can participate in online spaces and reap the benefits of doing so, whilst safeguarding their wellbeing.



# METHODS

The study utilised the Young and Resilient Research Centre's Distributed Data Generation (DDG) methodology, which is 'grounded in a rights-based approach to research and consultation with children' (Third et al., 2021: 174). The approach seeks to channel young people's insights into the decision-making processes that affect their lives.

The study also drew on approaches used by eSafety's Safety by Design initiative. When the Safety by Design principles were first developed, eSafety consulted and worked with young people in Australia to prepare a vision statement (eSafety Commissioner, 2019). This statement lays out what young Australians want in terms of online safety and how they expect the technology industry to help users navigate online environments freely and safely. The principles have also supported the development of more recent initiatives, for example, eSafety's youth engagement strategy report and aspirational statement (Moody et al., 2021).

In this study, Y&R extend ideas explored in those original consultations with Australian youth to young people in Southeast Asia. As with DDG, both the earlier work in Australia and the Southeast Asian consultations reported on here are underpinned by a child rights framework emphasising that the 'rights of every child must be respected, protected and fulfilled in the digital environment' (United Nations, General Comment No. 25, 2021).

The DDG methodology is workshop-based, where children and young people are invited to complete a series of creative and engaging activities over an extended period, so they can explore their experiences, feelings and ideas on issues affecting them. Workshops are implemented by child-facing organisations in multiple countries simultaneously, who share the data with our research team. The data is then analysed to produce cross-cultural policy and programming insights.

Collaborating with local child-facing NGOs (hereafter, local partners) who have extensive experience and expertise in working with young people enables the research to be delivered in ways that are contextually and culturally appropriate and meaningful. Partner organisations also inform the analysis phase of the research, sometimes participating as co-analysts, but, even where that is not possible, they provide insights that help the Y&R research team to interpret the data in accordance with the local context.

In this project, DDG was implemented to generate qualitative data with 150 young people aged 12-18 in Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, and Vietnam, from May 2022 to July 2022.

Workshop activities explored:

- Participants' perceptions and experiences of engaging online, including opportunities and challenges for young people in the digital sphere
- Participants' perceptions about, and potential solutions for, online risks and harms
- Participants' opinions about who should be responsible for keeping young people safer online
- Participants' visions for industries' role in helping to keep young people safer online

Respondents worked together in small groups to complete a series of brainstorming activities including discussions, character generation and storytelling, and designing a digital platform. This use of such activities allows young people to explore and discuss sensitive topics, such as online risks and harms, while safeguarding their wellbeing. For example, activities avoid personalising difficult topics so as not to cause distress to participants. An overview of workshop activities can be found in **Table 1**.



Figure 1 - Design a Platform activity (Malaysia)

**Table 1: Overview of Workshop Activities**

Name of Activity	Objective
What is online Safety?	To understand how participants think about online safety and the terms they use to describe it.
Exploring online safety	To explore challenges to online safety, and how participants navigate them.
Online risks	To understand what participants perceive and experience to be the biggest online safety issues for them and their friends.
Keeping safe	To understand participants' ideas about adverse online experiences and help-seeking behaviours.
Who's responsible	To explore who young people think are responsible for keeping them safe online.
The platform you use	To identify the platforms participants use and how they think platforms keep users safe online.
Design a platform	To identify participants' ideas about what they would like an ideal online platform to look like.
Protecting users	To prompt participants' thoughts about safety by design by asking them how they would make their newly designed platform safe.
Your vision for online safety	To identify participants' ideal visions for what industry should be doing to keep young people safe online.
Journal	To understand how participants felt about the research process, its relevance, and how it can be improved.

The Y&R research team worked closely with a local partner in each country to recruit for and implement workshops. The team supported partners to implement research activities in their local contexts by providing a training and cultural adaptation session; detailed workshop facilitators manual; and ongoing support through the process. The manual and training session included instructions about recruitment; ethical principles and processes for working

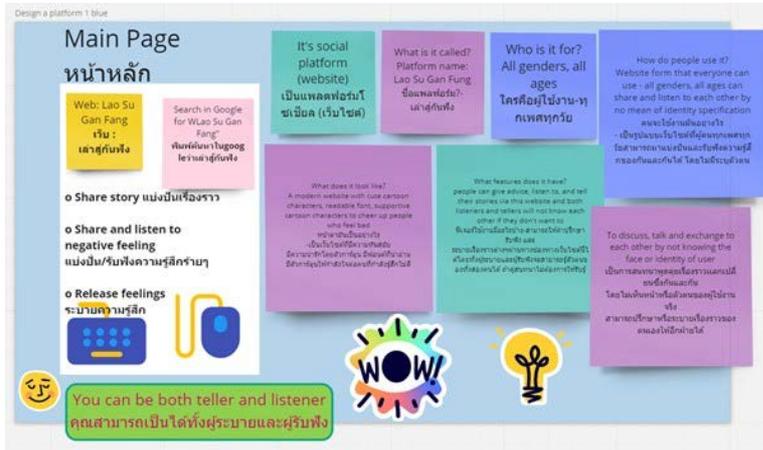


Figure 2 - Design a Platform activity (Thailand)

with children; comprehensive descriptions of workshop activities; and instructions for sharing workshop outputs with the research team for analysis.

Partner organisations used text from the workshop facilitators manual to advertise the opportunity to take part in workshops to diverse children in their networks. We purposefully sought to recruit a diversity of young people,

prioritising those from communities who might not ordinarily take part in this type of research. Participants came from a mix of urban and rural locations, and a few were from remote areas. Young people from a variety of backgrounds took part, including from different cultural, ethnic, and religious communities, as well as refugees, migrants, indigenous young people, orphans, and young people who identify as LGBT. Participants also came from a mix of socio-economic backgrounds, ranging from very low- to high-income.

In Thailand, the majority of the sample were from low- and middle-income families, and in Indonesia from medium- and high-income families. Two main groups took part in Malaysia, refugees and asylum seekers and children from the general population. The sample in Vietnam was the most diverse including participants from minority ethnicities, with disabilities, from low-socioeconomic backgrounds, and with low literacy levels. Access to connected devices was also limited in the areas where workshops were held and so workshops there were run face-to-face. To ensure all participants engaged fully with activities, individual facilitators in Vietnam worked closely with small participant groups within workshops to discuss and record group responses.

Overall, the sample across all countries was skewed towards female participants (60%), and so the insights herein slightly emphasise young women’s experiences and perceptions.

We note that the DDG methodology makes no claims about results and outputs being ‘representative’ of young people’s views in participating countries. Rather, the aim is to surface a range of deep and different experiences that may usefully guide policy, programming, and practice.

**Table 2: Participants by Country**

Country	Total	M	F	Other	Age Range
Indonesia	42	11 26%	31 74%		12-18 years old
Malaysia	37	14 38%	23 62%		12-17 years old
Thailand	31	13 42%	18 58%		15-18 years old
Vietnam	40	19 48%	18 45%	3 7%	13-17 years old
Total	150	57 38%	90 60%	3 2%	12-18 years old

Workshops were conducted online using Zoom and Miro. Miro is an online collaboration platform that allows researchers to create digital workshops which are then completed by participants. Participants were assigned to smaller groups in each workshop and completed activities collaboratively. Each participant sub-group completed two 2.5-hour long workshops (each individual participated in a total of 5 hours of workshops), ensuring adequate time to explore issues, formulate opinions and share recommendations.

Workshops were delivered in local languages in all four participating countries. Data was translated into English by partner organisations prior to secure transfer to the Y&R team for analysis and presentation.

The Y&R team analysed the data using textual and visual analysis techniques to generate findings and recommendations (see Third et al., 2021 for further detail).



Figure 3 - Who's responsible activity (Vietnam)

Analysis distilled key overarching themes to capture young people's ideas about digital safety and synthesised insights relating to the project's research questions.



Figure 4 - Design a Platform activity (Indonesia)

The project received ethics approval from the Western Sydney University Human Research Ethics Committee (Approval No. H14267). Following standard practice, all participants and their caregivers provided informed consent prior to the workshops. Participants received an honorarium for taking part to compensate for their time and expertise. Honoraria amounts were determined by local

partners to align with local youth sector standards.

Quotes from participants illustrate findings and analyses in this report. In some instances, quotes have been lightly edited for clarity; for example, minor corrections to spelling or grammar have been made to aid readability or to correct transcription errors. Content has not otherwise been altered. Quotes are identified by country of origin and workshop activity.



A close-up photograph of a young woman with dark hair, looking down at a smartphone she is holding in her hands. The lighting is warm and soft, suggesting an indoor setting with natural light. The background is out of focus, showing a light-colored wall.

***'When we listen to children, we will know what they want and need.***

***Therefore, it is very important to listen to children to help them develop comprehensively'***

(Vietnam, Journal activity)

# FINDINGS

This project deployed a participatory online workshop-based methodology to generate and collect qualitative data from young people in Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, and Vietnam to identify and explore their ideas about how to best equip young people to maximise their online experiences while safeguarding them against online risks and harms. Participants collaborated online in small groups to complete creative activities surfacing their experiences and perceptions of the types of online interactions they and their peers commonly encounter and their thoughts about who and how they should be kept safe. Because participants completed research activities in small groups, data and analyses are presented as group-level findings in this report.

Key findings about young people's experiences and perceptions of online interaction aligned to and are presented here under three broad thematic categories 1/ What young people do and want to do online, 2/ What online safety means to young people and, 3/ Responsibilities and help seeking. We then present key points of comparison between each country and young people's visions for online safety, canvassed across activities.

## WHAT YOUNG PEOPLE DO AND WANT TO DO ONLINE

The ubiquity of digital devices and online technologies for our young participants came through clearly in responses from all countries. Platforms used by our participants and other young people in their country included TikTok, Facebook, Instagram, Line, Zalo, Twitter, YouTube, Discord, Twitch, WhatsApp, WeChat, Pinterest, Messenger, Telegram, Mymo, gaming platforms, and Netflix. Across these different platforms, the data suggested online experiences fulfil many and varied functions in participants' daily lives, including providing them with entertainment, opportunities to learn, connection and sociality, vocational opportunities, the ability to manage finances, and opportunities to create and view content. Participants noted an array of specific activities and behaviours under each function:

- **Sociality/Connections:** post videos, messages, photos, pictures, and stories; send messages; have group meetings; make calls; chat to people; read, comment, and respond to other people's posts; follow accounts; make friends; join groups; connect

*Online spaces provide young people with opportunities to access their preferences [i.e., pursue their interests] and meet their needs. Effective digital safety enables them to take advantage of opportunities while facilitating their wellbeing.*

- with friends; create threads; update status and others about daily life; see what others are doing; share information; live stream.
- **Entertainment:** watch videos, clips, shows, and movies; listen to podcasts; play and watch games; listen to songs/music; see posts from idols; stream; watch streamers; look for memes.
- **Learning:** study; watch videos that impart knowledge; follow the news; keep up with politics; watch tutorials (e.g., make-up); learn foreign languages; find information.
- **Vocation:** sell things; find jobs.
- **Commerce:** transfer money; deposit money; borrow money; give loans.
- **Creation/Sharing:** create and post video clips; make reels; post articles; take and view photos; post stories.

## Sociality

Participants used their platforms for a range of purposes. However, their responses evidenced the particular value of sharing and social functionalities:

‘TikTok - Create and share video clips, upload dancing clips and content creating’ (Thailand, The platforms you use activity)

‘Instagram - Photos because there are good filters, upload stories, see idol posts, make new friends, Interaction with friends (DM, comment post, reply SG), post stories, see people's activities, communicate with friends, You can view and respond to posts from people you follow’ (Indonesia, The platforms you use activity)

‘Discord - People hang out with friends and family.’ (Malaysia, The Platform you use activity)

Reinforcing the importance of online sociality, when asked to think about an ideal online platform for young people, many participants included social elements in the platforms they designed, allowing users to interact and connect with others as key features. In one illustrative example, a group of young participants from Vietnam created a platform called ‘Be Friends’ for ‘matching friends globally’ (Vietnam, Design a platform activity). Similarly, young participants in Malaysia designed the ‘Teen Page’ platform where ‘[young people] can share their idea[s] with other teens’ and ‘interact with one another across the world’ (Malaysia, Design a platform activity).

## Entertainment

Young people’s ideas for design also highlighted the need for platforms to be entertaining and to facilitate entertainment. Young people viewed platforms as time-out mechanisms where content could be easily discovered and accessed purely for recreation, entertainment, or leisure time, reinforcing findings from previous research with young people in the region (Third and Moody, 2021). Consumption of images and videos through key platforms, such as TikTok and Instagram, was mentioned by participants as a popular means for entertainment,

while participants also noted the value of posting material themselves (e.g., on Facebook, Instagram):

'Facebook - Watch entertaining clips, post story for others to see.' (Thailand, The platforms you use activity)

'TikTok - Entertaining by watching videos.' (Vietnam, The platforms you use activity)

'Instagram - Post interesting things that happen around them.' (Malaysia, The platform you use activity)

The significance of entertainment for young people's online experiences was also evident in the platforms they designed. Participants' designs featured affordances such as the ability for their users to watch videos, play games, and listen to music:

'[Platform includes] chat, sharing photos, study, listen to music, watch movies, games.' (Indonesia, Design a platform activity)

'[Users] watch movies or entertainment.' (Thailand, Design a platform activity)

'[Platform is meant] to entertain and play games.' (Vietnam, Design a platform activity)

## Learning

Young participants also identified the capacity for online technologies and platforms to facilitate learning, where learning was understood in broad terms, as encompassing knowledge gained through both formal and informal learning processes. Participants highlighted how their exposure to different and varied ideas and experiences online increases their knowledge and skills to advance wellbeing and personal growth.

'TikTok - Entertainment, Learning, Make friends, Expand knowledge, etc.' (Vietnam, The platforms you use activity)

'Instagram - Explore yourself, find hobbies, post photos & videos, see world developments, and organizational need.' (Indonesia, The platforms you use activity)

Participants' designs also illustrated that they see online platforms as spaces that enrich their lives in diverse ways, presenting platform ideas that are multifunctional. For example, one group of young participants from Indonesia designed a platform 'for learning together with other people even from abroad [that has] game, chat, music, and movies' (Indonesia, Design a platform activity). Another group from Thailand designed their platform for people who 'enjoy watching comedy videos' and 'communicate with only people we want to chat to' (Thailand, Design a platform activity). And young participants from Vietnam saw their 'Be Friends' platform as a way to 'practice conversing in English and other languages and to make friends [from] all over the world'

(Vietnam, Design a platform). These designs also reflect how young people already use existing platforms to meet multiple needs.

Some participants' designs specifically referenced the potential for online systems to help young people achieve positive mental health by helping them to learn about and access assistance with mental health problems. For example, participants in Thailand designed a platform where users could 'consult and exchange with persons who have same problems' (Thailand, Design a platform activity). A group in Indonesia adopted a more direct pathway for the provision of support, proposing a platform 'that helps children to consult with a psychologist' (Indonesia, Design a platform activity).

## WHAT ONLINE SAFETY MEANS TO YOUNG PEOPLE

### Ubiquity and Rights

*Young people understand platforms as channels to advance multiple needs, including material endeavours such as language acquisition and wellbeing-focussed pursuits like sociality, entertainment, and help-seeking.*

Young people who took part in this project linked the need for online safety with the ubiquity of digital devices and the internet. Participants in Indonesia and Thailand argued that online safety is necessary because digital technologies are a pervasive, important, and indispensable part of their everyday lives:

'Now is an era where everything is online, and young people must be able to feel comfortable doing activities online.' (Indonesia, Vision for online safety activity)

'It is close to us, because we used online media every day as it's part of our life.' (Thailand, Vision for online safety activity)

'The online realm is the future.' (Indonesia, Vision for online safety activity)

Young people recognise being online is a key feature of everyday life in the 21st century and, thus, see their online safety as critical. For some young participants, online safety is about protecting and enforcing their rights. For example, in Thailand young participants explained 'safety on internet [is] when our personal rights aren't violated' (Thailand, What is online safety activity). In Vietnam, another group asserted that online safety means there is 'no violation of privacy rights' (Vietnam, What is online safety activity).

Participants also linked online safety to freedom of expression. For example, an Indonesian participant said that people should 'feel safe and free to express opinions on social

media' (Indonesia, What is online safety activity). Similarly, participants in Vietnam reported that being safe means not being exposed to 'attacks on personal opinions' (Vietnam, Exploring online safety activity); and those in Malaysia reported that 'online safety is where I can feel safe and express my feelings without needing to worry about being bullied or harassed' (Malaysia, What is online safety activity). In Vietnam, however, participants also reported some ambivalence about expressing opinions online. In Vietnam, some participants' views on free speech appeared to be in tension with a recognition of the potential for online discourse to disrupt social harmony by, for example, 'inducing violence' and creating 'uncertainty in the society'.

## Feeling Safe

Participants expressed concern about the potential impacts of unsafe experiences on young people's ongoing presence and engagement online. For example, in Indonesia some participants were concerned that negative online experiences could deter others from using digital spaces, explaining that 'if users don't feel safe when they're online, it's likely that the user's interest in using the application will be reduced' (Indonesia, Vision for online safety activity). Along similar lines, participants in Thailand explained that feeling safe online results in 'wanting to use social media more' (Thailand, What is online safety activity).

Significantly, for our participants, online safety has affective dimensions; online safety is about how young people *feel* as well as what they experience. Participants associated a range of positive feelings with online safety, including happiness, comfort, being free from worry, joy, peace, calm, warmth, being relaxed, optimism, excitement, fun and having a sense of empowerment. When describing online safety, participants said:

'[It] means using media comfortably, happily, with no worry.' (Thailand, What is online safety? activity)

'[Online safety is being] happy, comfortable, assured.' (Vietnam, Vision for online safety activity)

'By using safe social media, we will also be more comfortable and calm when using social media.' (Indonesia, Vision for online safety activity)

In research on cyberbullying amongst Malaysian university students, Faryadi (2011: 28) found victims 'suffer from emotional and psychological stress'. Those findings align with the views expressed by young people in this project. For them, online safety is very much about *feeling* a sense of safety, underpinned by practical measures to enforce and reinforce that feeling.

*Young people recognise online spaces are central to their everyday experiences of mental wellbeing. For them, to be well in life is to be well online; there is no separation between the two.*

This affective component of online safety was also evident in concerns young people expressed about mental health. Young participants explained that adverse online experiences could cause individuals to feel negative emotions or to experience negative mental health outcomes.:

'The disadvantages if we don't maintain security online are very many because it can sacrifice mental health and others.' (Indonesia, Vision for online safety activity)

'[It is important for young people to be safe online] so that they do not have traumatic incidents happening to them and so they can be safe and also mentally and emotionally stable at all times.' (Malaysia, Vision for online safety activity)

'[People may experience] attack and mental abuse by the online community'. (Vietnam, Exploring online safety)

'[young people should be safe online] so they will not face emotional problem like depression or anxious due to cyberbullying.' (Malaysia, Vision for online safety activity)

## Security, Privacy, and Content

Concerns about data security and privacy were front of mind for the young people who took part in this project. Participants spoke about the importance of keeping their information secure, ensuring that data is not stolen, and making sure information is not disclosed to other parties. For example, participants explained that online safety is:

'Complete Privacy.' (Malaysia, What is online safety activity)

'Making sure online information is kept confidential.' (Vietnam, What is online safety activity)

'Online security is the security of someone's privacy of smartphones or the online world.' (Indonesia, What is online safety? activity)

Participants' concerns about data security were tied to fears of being hacked, fraud, theft, applications surreptitiously recording daily activities, leaking of personal information/photos, having accounts stolen, and the undesirable use of data more broadly. For example, young participants in Thailand explained that online safety means 'others can't use our data in the wrong way' (Thailand, What is online safety? activity). In Malaysia, one group of participants reported that 'private information being leaked out causes a lot of danger to our family, friends, and surroundings' (Malaysia, What is online safety exercise). Malaysian young people also expressed concern that their information is monitored via 'for example, ads showing stuff that you browsed on another application (Lazada or Shopee on a Google ad)' (Malaysia, What is online safety). Respondents also worried about being scammed online. Participants in Vietnam explained that they should 'block websites that are potentially scams' (Vietnam, Exploring online safety activity). In one scenario-building activity designed to depersonalise thoughts about online harms,

participants were asked to create a character of a young person and to tell a story about them having a negative experience online. At least one group of young people in each of the four participating countries described a situation where their character had been scammed.

Young participants also linked unwanted or unsolicited content (including being subject to malicious software) to online safety. They did not want to be exposed to spam, phishing, pop-up ads, malware, viruses, fake news, fake accounts, fake emails, adult material, or hoaxes.

Participants' definitions of online safety included:

'[Not being exposed to] inappropriate images.' (Vietnam, Exploring online safety activity)

'[Not being exposed to] random advertisement.' (Malaysia, Exploring online safety activity)

'There's no proper porn photo or video clip blocking on social media so children and youth can enter and see such things easily.' (Thailand, Exploring online safety activity)

'[No] unsecured pop-up sites, hoaxes, fake messages, malware, hackers,' (Indonesia, Exploring online safety activity)

While young people placed considerable emphasis on data security and privacy, some participants also recognised the need to contemplate those factors side-by-side with online safety considerations. So, for example, participants wanted to safeguard information and data from misuse by bad actors, but some also called for mechanisms to screen or protect against bad information that could lead to harmful personal or social effects. These responses reflect broader debates about the potential tensions between privacy and protection and show that at least some of our young participants are thinking about and appreciate the necessity to balance privacy, safety, and security.

## Negativity from Others

Other significant concerns for our young participants revolved around being subject to negative behaviour or actions from others, including cyberbullying, hateful comments/posts, rumours, threats, identity theft, defamation, reputational damage, blackmail, having personal information revealed ('doxing'), others misusing your picture, and being socially chastised.

Young participants explained unsafe online environments are characterised by:

'Personal photos getting leaked.' (Malaysia, What is online safety activity)

'Cyberbullying.' (Vietnam, Exploring online safety activity)

'Lots of negative comments.' (Indonesia, Exploring online safety activity)

'No impairment to honour, integrity, and healthy information when engaging in social media.' (Vietnam, What is online safety activity)

'Hateful comments that hurts one's emotion.' (Malaysia, Exploring online safety activity)

In Malaysia, young people also explained that online spaces can perpetuate 'negative stereotypes', body shaming, and 'racism' (see 'Experiences of at risk groups' below).

*Young people are keenly aware of how their online actions can have lasting consequences for their lives more broadly. They recognise that online safety extends beyond the immediacy*

In the scenario-building exercise, many participants' stories involved others acting unkindly towards the characters they had created. For example, in Thailand, one group wrote about an influencer who ends up 'thinking too much about negative comments from people to the point of having trouble sleeping' (Thailand, Keeping safe activity). Their story also included concerns that 'negative comments by Netizens' lead to adverse mental health impacts, with the character experiencing 'depression due to bullying'. Similarly, in Malaysia, participants wrote about a character whose 'photo is being used for some inappropriate contents', which makes him

'feel depressed' (Malaysia, Keeping safe activity). Another group in Thailand explained that being coerced into transferring money to someone makes their character 'feel bad' so she 'wants to kill herself' (Thailand, Keeping safe activity). In other activities, young participants in Indonesia emphasised the danger of 'hate comments or bullying' (Indonesia, Vision for online safety activity), and in Vietnam a group described their character receiving 'derogatory comments about themselves' (Vietnam, Keeping safe activity).

Participants in Thailand and Vietnam were also cognisant of how online spaces can have broader social repercussions for their lives. For example, Thai participants developed a story in which the key character becomes a pornographic dancer and is 'criticized and not accepted by people in society' (Thailand, Keeping safe activity), while another group narrated a story about a character who was defrauded and 'scare[d] of being insulted and blamed' (Thailand, Keeping safe activity). Other participants said:

'Using the Internet inappropriately will lead to behaviours that deviate from social standards, causing a bad image for the person themselves and the community.' (Vietnam, vision for online safety activity).

'[Bad experiences online can] affect [people's] future reputation and career.' (Thailand, vision for online safety activity).

'[It is important to have] no impairment to honour, integrity, and [good]... information when engaging in social media.' (Vietnam, What is online safety activity)

## Harassment and Exploitation

Participants expressed apprehension about harassment and exploitation, the prevalence of which has been noted in the existing literature (ECPAT, INTERPOL, and UNICEF, 2022a; UNICEF and the Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention, 2020). For example, in Thailand, participants' scenario-building stories revolved around young women experiencing sexual violence, having strangers ask them for sex, or being coerced into producing online pornographic content. One group of participants explained that 'someone asks for having sex' (Thailand, Keeping safe activity) with their character, while another group wrote about a character who is 'seduced and persuaded to be an online prostitute by recording video clips and spreading via internet' (Thailand, Keeping safe activity). Similarly, in Indonesia, a participant group asserted that 'child online exploitation' (Indonesia, Online risks activity) is a serious concern. Young people in Malaysia explained that it can be dangerous when people convince 'someone to run away from home' (Malaysia, Online risks). Vietnamese participants also said that 'being approached about prostitution on Facebook' (Vietnam, Online risks) is a risk of harm in online spaces.

Participant groups in Indonesia noted the possible effects of stalking and cyberstalking and how experiences of those online behaviours were not conducive to young people's online safety. Young people in Vietnam expressed concerns about 'harassment and possible kidnapping due to stolen personal information' (Vietnam, Online risks). In Malaysia, young participants also referred to dangers such as 'child abuse materials', 'unknown people', 'weirdos', 'strangers', 'stalkers', 'being sexted by strangers' and 'paedophiles' (Malaysia, Online risks and Exploring online safety activities), and one group highlighted how people may be 'harassed by gamers' while gaming with others online, as 'they will ask for your contact to stalk you' (Malaysia, Online risks activity).

## Other Concerns

Young participants in Indonesia, Thailand and Vietnam expressed particular concerns about online gambling as a potential threat to young people's online safety. In Thailand participants advised how people should avoid entering 'online gambling websites' (Thailand, Exploring online safety activity), explaining that 'government agencies have to seriously take action of gambling website' (Thailand, Exploring online safety activity). Similarly, in Vietnam, participants said that individuals may be 'enticed into playing bets on social media' (Vietnam, Online risks activity). Participants also described how young people's age made them vulnerable online as they lacked life experience and were more susceptible to negative influence:

'The risk is that when children fall into negative things, usually they will tend to follow what they see.' (Indonesia, Vision for online safety activity)

'[It is important] to protect young people from being defrauded easily since they have less experience and knowledge than adults.' (Thailand, Vision for online safety activity)

'Young people (pupils and students) are still at a naive age, keeping them safe online is important.' (Vietnam, vision for online safety activity)

'As young people are at the age of psychological and physical formation and development (puberty), being safe on social media is extremely important. Negative influences will lead to wrong ways of thinking and subsequently inappropriate behaviours' (Vietnam, Vision for online safety activity)

In Indonesia, participants felt dangerous influences could include unsafe online challenges. Indonesian participants also expressed anxieties about internet addiction (see Rakhmawati et al., 2021 for related work). As one group explained, 'the risk is that young people cannot be controlled because they are already addicted to the online realm' (Indonesia, Vision for online safety activity). Young people in Thailand, in their character-building exercise, wrote about a boy who 'plays game too much, doesn't focus on studying so he fails to pass' (Thailand, Keeping safe activity). Nevertheless, despite such concerns about young people's online vulnerability, participants also explicitly recognised young people's ability to exercise agency and to take care of themselves in digital spaces, as we explore below.

## Experiences of At-Risk Groups

When asked if certain people or groups were more vulnerable than others to online harms, participants had mixed responses. Some felt that everyone was equally vulnerable, whilst others singled out teens as more vulnerable. Participants in Indonesia highlighted that '[members of] certain racial [groups]' and 'religious groups' were particularly vulnerable. And, in Malaysia and Indonesia, there were concerns that people who do not fit beauty 'ideals' or those deemed 'unattractive' may experience harmful 'body shaming' online.

Young participants had mixed opinions about whether men and boys, on the one hand, and women and girls, on the other, were equally vulnerable to online harms. Some groups reported the latter were more likely to experience exploitation and negativity from others online. For example, participants in Indonesia explained that 'cyberbullying is more common in women' (Indonesia, Keeping safe activity) and groups in Malaysia explained that 'men think they can harass or bully a girl [online] as they think she is weak and vulnerable', and that 'sexualising young girls is quite common in our society' (Malaysia, Keeping safe activity). Other participants however, perceived no difference between boys' and girls' vulnerability online. For example, in Thailand, participants wrote about someone who is asked for sex, explaining 'it can happen to everyone' (Thailand, Keeping safe activity), and a group in Malaysia explained that stalking 'can happen to all genders and races' (Malaysia, Keeping safe activity). Recent research provides interesting context to participants' mixed responses about online exploitation, victimisation, and gender. For example, research in Southeast Asia shows that there are 'no statistically significant differences between the number of girls and boys in 'who had received sexual messages on their account' (UNICEF and the Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention, 2020:

48). Significantly though, at the same time, other research shows that girls are more vulnerable than boys to a variety of other forms of online harms (UN Women, 2020).

Young people in Malaysia highlighted that, along with girls, queer individuals are also vulnerable in online spaces, explaining that ‘LGBTQ and girls should not be bullied – harassed so that they are always safe’ (Malaysia, Vision for online safety activity). Similarly, Vietnamese participants argued that ‘the LGBT+ community’ (Vietnam, Keeping safe activity) is at risk of online harms, reflecting concerns that have been raised in other research (Hanckel and Chandra, 2021).

Participants from Indonesia and Malaysia explained that racism can be an issue online. In Malaysia, they said that ‘Native Americans experience racism’; ‘Black people get more racism’; and that Asians are also subject to online harms (Malaysia, Keeping safe activity). Another group in Malaysia said that ‘disabled, people with special needs (autism, down syndrome) get more hate than other normal (sic) people’ (Malaysia, Keeping safe activity). These expansive, and at times international, concerns indicate that for these young people online safety requires the inclusion of difference and diversity. Put another way, this evidence adds support to the idea that, to promote online safety, industry and other organisations and institutions must foster inclusion and belonging for all.

## RESPONSIBILITIES AND HELP SEEKING

### Young People

Participants reported that young people exercise some level of agency to keep themselves safe online. They suggested young people do this by being cautious and careful in online spaces and exercise vigilance to keep safe. This reflects a key principle of safety by design, which seeks to empower users, and to respect their autonomy. Participants said that keeping safe online entails: being wary of or not responding to strangers online; not trusting people too easily; not clicking on untrustworthy or non-child friendly websites; not opening links from others; thinking about the credibility of the authors/media owners; being careful about who you socialise with; not entering suspicious websites; using reliable websites to look for material/information; filtering information; not downloading pirated files, not sharing passwords; being careful when sharing information; not logging into accounts on public devices; not befriending strangers; being wary about posting too much information online; using a VPN; and not saving passwords online:

‘Don’t open any links that other people have given.’ (Indonesia, The platforms you use activity)

‘I do not save my passwords online.’ (Malaysia, What is online safety activity)

‘Shouldn’t trust strangers online.’ (Thailand, Exploring online safety activity)

‘Refrain from trusting appealing offers from strangers online.’ (Vietnam, What is online safety)

‘Be more careful when entering the website or to the link.’ (Indonesia, Exploring online safety activity)

‘Young people ourselves are the direct participants in such situations, therefore we need to be vigilant, take precautions and stay away from malicious sites/pages that are not transparent and clearly verified, and avoid being lured into online scams.’ (Vietnam, Traffic light activity)

Participants noted practical measures they could use to keep safe online, including creating strong passwords, implementing 2-step verification, changing passwords if they notice suspicious activity, installing extensions to prevent pop-ups and ads, using firewalls, making use of anti-virus software, using a checker for malicious files and URLs, and implementing a blocker for suspicious websites. Participants also said they are aware of the technical protections available to them on social media platforms for keeping safe such as blocking, flagging, and reporting material, or deactivating their own comments:

‘Use safe, complicated but easy to recognize password.’ (Thailand, Exploring online safety activity)

‘[If someone makes you feel unsafe] block them or report their account.’ (Malaysia, What is online safety activity)

‘Install ads blocker, report bad content, use anti-virus.’ (Indonesia, Exploring online safety activity)

‘Block as soon as you meet a suspicious person.’ (Vietnam, What is online safety activity)

In Indonesia, participants suggested that young people might be better able to safeguard themselves against harms if, for example, they had access to youth-friendly resources to ‘learn about various other types of fraud/crime modes on the internet’ (Indonesia, Exploring online safety activity).

## Resilience

In addition to these technical protections, young people also talked about the importance of building and exercising personal resilience. As illustrated earlier in this report, and also in other research (see, for example, Kowalski et al. 2014), young people in this study were aware that adverse online experiences can have detrimental impacts on mental health. Even so, they acknowledge the importance of their own agency and resilience, highlighting how feeling comfortable, good, and confident about yourself even when others may be negative about you online helps to protect you online. Participants in

*Government and industry should recognise young people’s agency and consider how online spaces can actively build young people’s skills and resilience to keep themselves safer*

Indonesia asserted the value of thinking positively and building self-confidence for their capacity to deal with challenges they may face online. They explained that, to feel safer online, young people should ‘reflect and not care about comments that only harm yourself; [and] report and block if someone crosses the line’ (Indonesia, Exploring online safety activity). In a similar manner, participants in Thailand advised young people to ‘don’t pay attention to bullying words – let it go – no overthinking’ (Thailand, Exploring online safety activity). Participants in Malaysia explained they can overcome adversity online ‘by believing in ourselves and having faith in ourselves’; by ‘ignoring the trolls’; by ‘reporting when necessary to appropriate parties’ and by ‘processing my thoughts rationally’ (Malaysia, Exploring online safety activity).

While, by referencing resilience, young participants acknowledge that they have a role to play in securing their online safety, this does not absolve industry or other social or political actors of responsibility for creating safe online spaces for young people. Rather, the entirety of our analysis suggests that young participants believe strongly that third-party actors, such as governments and industry have a critical role to play in advancing online safety. Moreover, they urged industry and government to acknowledge young peoples’ agency and rights to participate in the planning and implementation of online safety initiatives.

## Relationships and Community

Young participants asserted the importance of relationships and communities for online safety, underscoring the extent to which young people think about online safety in *relational* terms. Participants said that personal connections in their everyday lives, such as friends, schools/teachers, counsellors, and their broader communities, play an important role in keeping them safe by, for example, sharing experiences, offering advice, or guiding them towards formal safeguarding process and procedures:

‘Friends: tell the things you didn’t know before.’ (Indonesia, Exploring online safety activity)

‘School should give knowledge about [online safety].’ (Thailand, Exploring online safety activity)

‘My online friends [have had] experiences like mine before.’ (Malaysia, Exploring online safety)

‘Teachers consult [and] guard from harm.’ (Vietnam, Exploring online safety)

‘Parents can help by telling us what to do. Friends can advise us what to post and what not to. Counsellors can help us by organizing safety talks and workshops in school.’ (Malaysia, Exploring online safety activity)

Of the relationships that support their online safety, across the data set, young people highlighted parents as particularly important. This aligns with research showing that positive relationships with parents can help to protect young people from online harms (Nguyen et al., 2020). Young participants explained that parents teach children about online safety, guide them, and supervise what they do. Participants tied parents’ role in online safety to parents’

broader responsibilities for their children's wellbeing and care. For example, participants explained:

'Parents keep young people safe online because they are the one[s who] guide us.' (Malaysia, Traffic light activity)

'[Parents] support... us when there are problems.' (Thailand, Traffic light activity)

'[Parents] share information with your children, give advice, and help them realize the risks and dangers associated using the internet.' (Vietnam, Traffic light activity)

'[Are most responsible] because all our responsibility lies with the parents.' (Indonesia, Traffic light activity)

Participants said that parents should play a general educative and guiding role in young peoples' online safety by, for example, trying to 'raise awareness even more and give directions on how to take care of yourself on the internet' (Indonesia, Traffic light activity). But participants also noted the importance of formal rules as a means through which parents could and should support young people to stay safe online, including putting in place ongoing rules about children's online usage, and monitoring and closely guiding children's online activities:

'Watch over and always pay attention or you can also install a family link.' (Indonesia, Traffic light activity)

'Observe children's online and offline behaviours.' (Vietnam, Traffic light activity)

Overall, young people felt religious institutions had little responsibility for keeping young people safe online, clearly illustrated by responses from participant groups in Thailand and Vietnam: 'they don't focus on taking care of this issue or some of them is not responsible for this e.g., religious leaders' (Thailand, Traffic light activity); 'religious organizations have no duty to protect cyber security' (Vietnam, Traffic light activity). In contrast, however, young participants in Thailand felt that community leaders have some responsibility for keeping young people safe online, stating, 'community leaders promote [online safety] through the community (outside school) (Thailand, Traffic light activity)'.

A young boy with dark hair is sitting on a set of stairs. He is wearing a white t-shirt, a dark backpack, and olive green pants. He is holding a black smartphone in his left hand and has his right hand covering his eyes. The background shows a tiled wall and a metal handrail. The lighting is soft and natural.

***'The things adults  
consider trivial and  
unimportant, in  
fact, can have a  
great impact on  
children'***

(Vietnam, Journal activity)

*The importance of parents to young people's understanding of online safety reinforces the value of creating online spaces that allow parents to play an active role in ensuring their children's safety.*

An important caveat to young people's ideas about the responsibility of parents and community actors to keep them safe online is that such efforts should not limit young people's ability to independently enjoy, explore and make meaningful use of online spaces. For example, while parents and governments may disapprove of LGBT+ identities, online spaces can be crucial for such individuals and their wellbeing (Hanckel and Chandra, 2021). That caveat is reflected in an observation by Indonesian participants that 'there may still be

some parents who have a negative point of view of social media, even though there are many positive impacts on social media' (Indonesia, vision for online safety). Put another way, as industry, government and other entities work to secure young people's online safety, it is equally important to challenge parents' negative perceptions about online spaces and highlight how digital technologies can enrich their lives. As a participant in Malaysia summarised: 'I want to change the stigma where parents are totally responsible for their child's online safety. The government must also play a critical role in enforcing online safety and treating it the same as safety in real life' (Malaysia, Vision for online safety).

## **Government, Organisations, and Institutions**

Young people said that formal institutions like government, police, and organisations have an important role in keeping them safe online. Participants explained that 'government agencies have the right to regulate our lives online' (Indonesia, Traffic light activity), and that 'cyber security police investigate cybercriminals' (Vietnam, Exploring online safety activity). In Thailand, participants surfaced how the Ministry of Digital Economy and Society and the Damrongdhama Center (dispute resolution) are crucial features of the online safety network. Indonesian participants identified UNICEF and ECPAT as having roles in keeping young people safe, while young participants in Malaysia highlighted the work of Interpol. Respondents in Malaysia also contended that tech companies should collaborate 'with companies like NGO and Cyber Security' (Malaysia, Vision for online safety activity) in efforts to keep young people safe online. Participants were aware they can call helplines for support if things did go wrong online, or report to agencies. For example, in Thailand, young people said they can 'call hotline 1323 to consult with a psychologist' (Thailand, Exploring online safety activity), while in Vietnam they said, 'cyber security police provide assistance and advice' (Vietnam, Exploring online safety activity).

Although they were aware of agencies and institutions that provide support on online safety issues, young participants felt that more can be done by organisational actors to keep young

people safe online. For example, Thai participants said ‘government agencies have to seriously take action on gambling website, scamming call centres, maybe set up a specific agency to deal with this’ (Thailand, Exploring online safety activity). Participants also thought government can work faster, enforce sanctions, ‘tighten policy’, and ‘provide education for safe social media usage’. In Malaysia participants felt that ‘police don’t give enough attention to cases involving online safety for children’ (Malaysia, Traffic light activity). And they expressed related sentiments about authorities more broadly, stating ‘I want to influence the government to take online security more seriously. They have to play a bigger role as other parties has already played their part’ (Malaysia, Vision for online safety activity).

Expressing a similar sentiment, young participants in Thailand said that ‘police delay on their work, don’t pay attention when people contact them at police station (in some cases)’ (Thailand, Traffic light activity). While responses from Vietnam indicate young people feel government has some responsibility to keep them safe online, one group of participants offered a contradictory opinion, noting that government departments are only in charge of big social issues, the economy and the country; not individual safety’ (Vietnam, Traffic light activity). Generally, however, our young participants recognise the role government, organisations and institutions play in their online safety but urge more to be done to ensure they are safe online.

## Social Media and the Technology Industry

Alongside community and institutional actors, young participants identified social media platforms and the broader technology industry as responsible for ensuring young people’s safety online. Participants highlighted five key ways social media platforms currently keep young people safe:

- **Platforms moderate content:** online platforms block harmful comments and clips; ban accounts that violate rules; ban inappropriate content; provide features that scan and delete explicit messages; censor inappropriate language.
- **Platforms provide young people with features to take care of themselves:** private account; privacy settings; ability to disable comments; ability to block people; ability to create lists of close friends on platforms; capacity to select friends on platforms; enable users’ control over how their content is shared; allow users to block and report; provide safe browsing options; offer security check-ups; enable creation of multiple accounts; capacity to hide user information from strangers; not requiring sharing of personal data.
- **Platforms create design features for safety:** requirement of passwords; identity-verification; 2-step verification; authentication processes; minimum age requirements; age-based platform settings; banks have OTP codes for money transfer; features to approve actions on apps; notifications when others try to log into your account, or take a screenshot of message; you can remain anonymous when you watch videos or are using a platform; features that allow parents to be involved; ID/phone number required to add friends; not being able to run an app on 2 phone

devices; chats are not revealed to others; user information is hidden from strangers; limited viewing time for photographs/videos; keeping users data secure; encryption; age to determine appropriate content; having different chat options; built-in app locks; special privacy settings for under 18 users.

- **Platforms have protocols:** they do not reveal personal data to others; they protect personal data/information; ban pornographic clips/inappropriate videos; banks do not disclose client details; there are terms of service that need to be agreed to; user protection policies; user guidelines.
- **Platforms have education:** there are promotions to use social media in appropriate ways and education about online safety.

*Platforms must not simply present information but ensure that young people understand it.*

While young people recognised the various ways they are kept safe online by the technology industry, they also argued that these can further extended and strengthened. Participants said that it is essential for tech businesses to **continuously update strong security systems** and 'so that no loopholes can be found' (Indonesia, Vision for online safety activity). They asserted the importance for businesses to **well-protect users'**

**data**, and have **rules, policies, age restrictions, verification measures, and comprehensive security settings:**

'That app must be credible, doesn't expose our personal data to others, make us feel convenient.' (Thailand, Vision for online safety activity)

'Create a policy on privacy protection.' (Indonesia, Vision for online safety activity)

'Issue rules on safe usage.' (Thailand, Vision for online safety activity)

'Determine what content users can view by age.' (Indonesia, Vision for online safety activity)

And they emphasised that **monitoring content and platforms**, and **regulating** what happens in online spaces would continue to make them feel safe:

'Tech companies should have safety features and take actions to any reports to prevent it happening again.' (Malaysia, Vision for online safety activity)

'Strict handling of social network abuse.' (Vietnam, Vision for online safety activity)

'It is necessary to handle and restrict inappropriate words, thus providing a good user experience.' (Vietnam, Vision for online safety activity)

## Accountability

For young participants, the **accountability of platforms** is essential: participants said the technology industry should **prioritise young peoples' safety over profits**. They explained users should have reporting channels, they should be listened to, and actions should be taken to deal with their concerns:

'Never ignore reports and criticisms received; put the safety and comfort of users first and act.' (Indonesia, Vision for online safety activity)

'Tech Companies don't care much. They want people to just download their apps.' (Malaysia, Traffic light)

'Make stronger commitments.' (Vietnam, Vision for online safety activity)

'People involved should always make sure they are alert on reports and other bad things happening on social media. They should not just be earning money but not doing anything.' (Malaysia, Vision for online safety activity)

'Most other social media applications ignore the online safety of their users even though it is very important.' (Indonesia, Vision for online safety activity)

The importance of accountability was also evident in young peoples' reflections about how they would keep users safe when they designed their own ideal online platforms. Participants included a range of safety measures and features, such as **age verification** measures, **content monitoring, strong privacy and security settings, information/education for users about online safety, access to support, privacy policies, and robust and effective mechanisms to report** adverse experiences:

'Add a feature that can stop teenagers from posting certain pics - like if they try to snap inappropriate pics, a notification can pop up' (Malaysia, Protecting users activity)

'We will establish a team specialized in consulting and solving issues for customers through a helpline or hotline' (Vietnam, Protecting users activity)

'[users will have to] agree to the privacy policy and sign up with an authentication code that is connected to personal message or email' (Indonesia, Protecting users activity).

Participants also suggested more rigorous ways to verify identities, such as using ID cards and birth certificates. For example, a group in Vietnam explained that their platform would verify identities through a 'system to crosscheck the name and age of the user against their uploaded documents (ID/birth certificate)' (Vietnam, Protecting users exercise). However, in suggesting such measures, young people were also attuned to the potential risks they entailed. For example, they explained 'during registration we will ask about their id card info, but we will keep it private' (Malaysia, Protecting users exercise). That is to

say, young people expect rigorous identity verification measures, which are balanced with concerns about privacy.

While attempting to ensure the safety of users on their self-designed platforms, participants also explained that if things did go wrong:

‘We will apologize first to the person who reported this unsafe content and then proceed with reporting and deleting the content and researching the users who have uploaded the content for follow up.’ (Indonesia, Protecting users activity)

‘Apologize and improve quality’ (Vietnam, Protecting users activity)

Participants’ desire to apologise to users when undertaking the role of a platform designer, suggests their preference that the platforms they use have a similar sense of accountability and duty of care towards them. A group in Indonesia also raised the importance of ethical data use, explaining that on the platform they created, they would ‘not sell data to maximize profit’ (Indonesia, Protecting users). Participants explained that collaboration between tech companies and law enforcement, IT agencies, government, foundations, ministries, specialised security organisations, rights-based organisations, NGOs, the media,

*Young people want industry to work with them and allow them to play an active role in how they stay safe online.*

school, social workers, and parents, would help to protect young online users:

‘cooperating with UNICEF in ensuring the safety of children by disseminating information about cyber space, cyber crime, and cyber law, then making invitations for young people to dare to report their discomfort’ (Indonesia, Vision for online safety activity).

‘Cooperating with government departments and officials to handle acts of scamming, insulting other users’ dignity, or engaging in illegal online trading’ (Vietnam, Vision for online safety activity)

## Consultation and Inclusion

Participants also emphasised that they should be included in efforts to keep them safe because their opinions are important, and they are experts in their own lives. They suggested further research involving young people, workshops, and conventions (i.e., conferences) would help with their inclusion. As a participant group in Malaysia said, ‘they should organize workshops and talks for young people – ask them about their ideas on how to make online platforms safer’ (Malaysia, Vision for online safety exercise).

Our analysis suggests it is essential that in any attempts to engage in collaborative work with young people, platforms consider seriously how young people think and feel about aspects of design. For example, young participants in Malaysia explained that on the platform they

designed, users 'are needed to answer a form with questions based on the rules and regulation so that they really understand what not to do' (Malaysia, Protecting users activity). Similarly, participants in Indonesia said that to maintain security it is important to ensure that information is 'easily understood by young people' (Indonesia, Protecting users activity).

*Young people want practical, user-centred safety, like embedded features that activate when danger arises, and clear, accessible, and engaging communications that ensure young people understand how platforms work.*

Participants suggested creative methods that could help users understand information, such as videos on online safety, periodic notifications, or including young people as transmitters of information. For example, a participant group in Indonesia designed a platform where 'the explanation is in the form of a short and dense animated video to make it more interesting.'

(Indonesia, Protecting users activity).

In Malaysia participants explained 'young people are normally influenced easily by people around the same age hence by involving young people that can be a great role model helps to influence other

youngsters' (Malaysia, Vision for online safety activity). Participants also suggested ways for young people to be notified of potential risks when they emerge:

'Always warn users when someone sends them an external link. [...] Warn users when there are signs of intrusion into the account right after they log in. The warning message could be: "Be alert of strangers, if you find a user that doesn't follow the rules, please report to us by..." (Vietnam, Protecting users activity)

'Yes, when they share their location or id, the app will pop up an online safety, to confirm the users want to share their personal info' (Malaysia, Protecting users activity)

More broadly, young people felt online platforms could play an educative role, helping young people learn about online safety, and how they can keep themselves safe:

'[It is important to] work with different foundations to spread knowledge of online safety to general people' (Thailand, Vision for online safety)

'Tech companies should demonstrate and educate young people about cybersecurity' (Vietnam, Vision for online safety)

'Guide them [young people] how to use internet safely or website' (Malaysia, Vision for online safety)

# CONCLUSION

In this project, the creative and participatory workshops conducted with young people in Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, and Vietnam surfaced a rich and diverse array of digital practices and ways of being online. It is clear that young people across the region highly value the role digital technology plays in their everyday lives and that they are exploring ways to use that technology constructively – to learn, to socialise, to relax and seek information.

Importantly, our young participants' sense of wellbeing is tied to their capacity to engage safely in online spaces, and they reported that a range of issues potentially compromise their sense of safety and wellbeing in those spaces. Among other experiences, they particularly highlighted threats to their privacy and security; exposure to age-inappropriate content; and scams. They also reported forms of negativity, such as cyberbullying, doxing, and negative comments. So too, many are deeply concerned about encountering strangers, harassment, and exploitation online. Our participants say that such experiences can have effects on young people's security, their sense of safety, and their mental health. But not all young people felt these risks affect everyone equally. Some young people told us that gender, sexuality, race, and ability can structure experiences of risks of harm.

At the same time, young people said they have a range of strategies in place to manage potential harms. They told us that learning to deal with online risks is an important part of building their capacity to develop resilience – although, crucially, they were realistic about the extent to which personal resilience could protect young people from harm and wanted to see online safety initiatives that strengthen and build people's agency and resilience. Our participants see parents, schools, industry, government, and the community broadly, as vital to their capacity to be safe online. And they call on these actors to step up and do more to support their safe digital practices.

The experiences and perceptions about online risks and harms that our young participants shared with us, and their opinions and ideas about how to safeguard young people against those challenges, underscore the importance of designing products and platforms to support users' safety with the people who use them. In that spirit, to contribute to online safety efforts and inform both broader and more contextualised understandings of a safety by design approach in Southeast Asia, young people in each country, with the generous support of participating organisations in this project, developed content for country-specific vision statements that specifically highlight their needs and wants. Building on those country-specific statements, we synthesised and refined the ideas and visions that young people generated across the entire project into an overarching joint statement describing conditions young people would ideally like to see in place so that their online safety and wellbeing can be achieved. It is our hope that stakeholders invested in engaging young people in online spaces will heed these national and joint visions as they adopt a safety by design mindset to help them craft the systems, tools, and platforms that will shape our digital futures.

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*'Adults need to know  
what young people  
want and how young  
people feel'*

(Thailand, Journal activity)

# APPENDIXES

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## APPENDIX 1: LOCAL PARTNERS

### Indonesia: SEJIWA (Semai Jiwa Amini Foundation)

(SEJIWA, [sejiwa.org](http://sejiwa.org)). Semai Jiwa Amini Foundation is a non-profit organization, located in Jakarta, focussed on the safety and protection of children in real life and in cyberspace. SEJIWA trains and helps parents and educators to create supportive and comfortable environments for children where they can build character, grow, and develop. SEJIWA is a member of the Child Rights Coalition Asia ([www.crcasia.org](http://www.crcasia.org))

### Malaysia: Protect and Save the Children

(P.S. The Children, [www.psthechildren.org.my](http://www.psthechildren.org.my)). P.S. The Children began in April 1999 in response to the need for a voice for sexually abused children. The organisation's vision is to build safer communities where children are protected from sexual abuse and exploitation. P.S. The Children advocates and establishes effective prevention education for both adults and children, strengthening treatment and support services, and forges partnerships within communities. P.S. The Children is a member of the Child Rights Coalition Asia ([www.crcasia.org](http://www.crcasia.org)), Child Rights Coalition Malaysia, and End Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (End CSEC Network, Malaysian chapter of ECPAT International)

### Thailand: The Life Skills Development Foundation

(RAKDEK, [www.rakdek.or.th/en](http://www.rakdek.or.th/en)). The Life Skills Development Foundation is a non-governmental organization striving to improve the quality of life for vulnerable children and their families in upper Northern Thailand, following the general principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), ratified by the government in 1992. Rak Dek (Thai for "to protect children") provide a range of programs to aid disenfranchised, vulnerable, disadvantaged, under-served, neglected, abused, or HIV/AIDS-affected children to attain their rights to survival, protection, development, and participation. RAKDEK is a member of the Child Rights Coalition Asia ([www.crcasia.org](http://www.crcasia.org))

### Vietnam: Save the Children

(Save the Children, [vietnam.savethechildren.net](http://vietnam.savethechildren.net)). Save the Children began work in Vietnam in 1990 and have since expanded their programs to include six key program areas: Education, Health and Nutrition, Child Protection, Child Rights Governance, Child Poverty, Disaster Risk Reduction and Emergency Response. They cover 22 provinces across Vietnam and have more than 150 staff with a wide range of technical expertise and program qualification. Save the Children works in close partnerships with government agencies, civil society organizations, the private sector, academic and research institutions to implement their range of programs.

# APPENDIX 2: VISION STATEMENTS

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# YOUNG PEOPLE SAY, WE WANT...

## OUR VISION

- **online experiences that are good for our mental health**, so we feel happy and don't worry about our safety
- **trustworthy platforms** that will keep our data secure and respect our privacy
- all young people **to be protected from online harms** like strangers, inappropriate content, scamming, misinformation, malware, and viruses
- **to do all the things online that are meaningful** to us, like connect with others, be entertained, and learn without fear
- our parents and our teachers to know about online safety so they can help us stay safe when we are online. We want them to provide us with **support, guidance, and information** about how to protect ourselves
- **digital platforms and businesses to prioritise our safety over profits.** We want them to listen to us, let us provide feedback, and act with our wellbeing in mind
- online experiences where **all people are treated with kindness, dignity, and respect.** We don't want to experience hateful comments, or cyberbullying
- online experiences that allow us **to develop in positive, enriching, and healthy** ways
- **clear moderation processes** that effectively deal with harmful content and reports from users. We want platforms to actively monitor what happens and to regulate content appropriately
- rules and policies geared towards ensuring we have **positive online experiences and** that support our wellbeing
- **to be educated on how to keep ourselves safe** in more engaging ways, like with videos and animations!
- finally, **collaboration.** We want the whole community to come together. We want online platforms, government, police, parents, schools, organisations to collaborate and work with us. **We want to be included in what happens** and play an active role in ensuring our online safety

# YOUNG PEOPLE SAY, WE WANT...

## OUR VISION

- **online experiences good for our mental health**, so we feel happy and do not worry about our safety
- **trustworthy platforms** that will keep our data secure and respect our privacy
- all young people **to be protected from online harms** such as strangers, exploitation, harassment, inappropriate content, and scamming
- **to do all the things that are meaningful to us**, such as connect with others, be entertained, and gain new knowledge, without fears of being online
- our teachers, and especially our parents, to know about online safety, so they can help us stay safe when we are on the web. This means making sure they are equipped to provide us with **support, guidance, and information** about how to protect ourselves
- **digital platforms and businesses to prioritise our safety over profits.** This means including young people in their online safety efforts, monitoring and moderating content, and having policies and rules that protect us
- our government, police, and other official agencies to make **regulations and laws that are relevant and appropriate** for our needs to protect us from online harms
- online experiences where **all people are treated with kindness, dignity, and respect.** This means people do not expose personal data or cyberbully us
- **young people to feel safe online** regardless of their gender, sexuality, race, or other differences
- **to be educated about how to keep ourselves safe**, which can include more engaging methods like videos!
- finally, we want **collaboration.** This means the whole community must come together. Online platforms, government, police, parents, religious and community leaders, schools, organisations, and young people must collaborate. The community must work with young people, and include us in what happens, as we play **an active role in ensuring our online safety**

# YOUNG PEOPLE SAY, WE WANT...

## OUR VISION

- **online experiences good for our mental health**, so we feel happy and don't worry about our safety
- **trustworthy platforms** that will keep our data secure and respect our privacy
- all young people **to be protected from online harms** like inappropriate content, scamming, misinformation, and viruses. We particularly want to make sure girls and women are safe online. It is extremely important to us that they are not sexually exploited online
- **to do all the things online that are meaningful** to us, like connect with others, be entertained, learn, and do other everyday tasks, without fear
- our parents and our teachers to know about online safety so they can help us stay safe online. We want them to provide us with **support, guidance, and information** about how to protect ourselves
- **digital platforms and businesses to ensure our safety**. We want them to let young people provide feedback and have rules that take care of us
- online experiences where **all people are treated with kindness, dignity, and respect**. We don't want to experience cyberbullying
- **moderation that effectively deals with harmful content** and reports from users
- to be educated about how **to keep ourselves safe online**
- finally, we want **collaboration**. We want the whole community to come together. We want online platforms, government, police, parents, schools, and organisations to collaborate and work with young people. **We want to be included in what happens**, and we want to play an active role in ensuring our online safety

# YOUNG PEOPLE SAY, WE WANT...

## OUR VISION

- **online experiences that are good for our mental health**, so we feel happy and don't worry about our safety
- **trustworthy platforms** that will keep our data secure and respect our privacy
- all young people **to be protected from online harms** like sexual harassment, inappropriate content, scamming, and misinformation
- **to do all the things online that are meaningful** to us, like connect with others, be entertained, learn, and do other everyday tasks, without fear
- our parents and our teachers to know about online safety so they can help us stay safe when we are online. We want them to provide us with **support, guidance, and information** about how to protect ourselves
- **digital platforms and businesses to prioritise and commit to our safety**. We want them to let young people report adverse experiences, and we want them to act on our reports
- online experiences where **all people are treated with kindness, dignity, and respect**. We don't want to be attacked, harassed, or ostracised
- **an internet that enriches our community** and contributes to the wellbeing of our society
- **effective moderation** that deals with harmful content and reports from us. We want platforms to be responsive to users and to regulate content appropriately
- rules, policies, and regulations geared towards ensuring we have **positive online experiences** and that support our wellbeing
- to be educated on how **to keep ourselves safe online**
- finally, we want **collaboration**. We want the whole community to come together. We want online platforms, government, police, parents, schools, organisations, to collaborate and work with young people. **We want to be included in what happens** and play an active role in ensuring our online safety

# Online safety perceptions, needs and expectations of young people in Southeast Asia



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