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75% of parents spying on their kids online

8-12 year olds going on social networking websites

by Katie Scott published on 7 August 2008

Online fraud busting outfit, Garlik, has carried out a new survey on what kids are up to online.

Its findings echo other reports in detailing how much time children, young children in particular, are spending on websites they are too young to access.

Garlik found that children as young as eight are visiting sites such as Facebook, Myspace and Bebo.

In fact, more than 750,000 children aged between the ages of 8 and 12 use one, despite minimum age restrictions of 13 or 14.

The report adds that more than a quarter of eight to 15-year-olds admit they have strangers as friends on their profile pages, while one in five have met up with strangers they have only ever encountered online.

Two-thirds also admit posting personal information on their pages such as where they go to school and their mobile telephone number.

But the survey, which saw 1000 children aged eight to 15 as well as a sample of 1030 UK parents quizzed, also revealed that parents are now taking action.

Three quarters of those who replied to the survey admitted to snooping on their children online.

One in four parents admit to secretly logging on to their child's social networking page, while the same number have also set up their own page to spy on their kids.

Government proposals on online safety measures



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for children are expected to be formalised in the coming months.

But Garlik says social networking websites need to do more.

Garlik CEO Tom Ilube said: "The recent proposals by the culture select committee could go a long way to safeguarding children online, but in the meantime what are Facebook, Bebo, Myspace and the others doing to help?"