

# Parents' Internet Monitoring Study

Prepared for Cox Communications and The National  
Center for Missing and Exploited Children and  
NetSmartz  
by the Ketchum Global Research Network

# Methodology

- National telephone survey conducted among 503 parents of teens
- Interviews conducted February 7-13, 2005
- Respondents were screened to meet the following criteria:
  - Have a child between the ages of 13-17
  - Have at least one computer in the home with Internet access
- Research conducted by Braun Research

# Key Findings

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- The family room (34%) and the bedroom (30%) are the top two areas where teens access the Internet.
  - **41% of households that have one computer keep it in the family room.**
  - **61% of households that have three or more computers have at least one of them in a bedroom.**
- Over half (51%) of parents either do not have, or do not know if they have, software on their computer(s) that monitors where their teenager(s) go online and with whom they interact.
- Nearly 9 out of 10 families (87%) who have Internet monitoring software review where their teenagers have been online and with whom they have communicated.
  - **Although 23% of parents review their teens' online activities via monitoring software on a daily basis, one-third (33%) of parents review this information once a month or less.**

# Key Findings

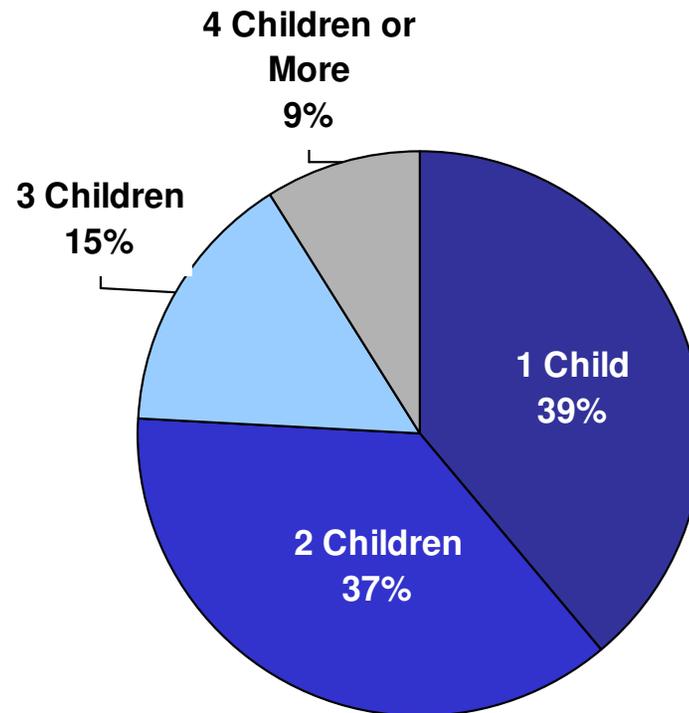
- Almost half (49%) of parents either do not have, or do not know if they have, software on their computer that blocks specific websites or key words.
- 61% of parents say their teen(s) participate in chat rooms and/or use instant messaging.
  - 72% of parents say their teenager(s) do not instant message with people other than family, school friends or people they personally know.
- A majority of parents (57% or more) were unable to correctly decipher the meanings of several common Internet messaging abbreviations.

# Detailed Findings

# Number of Children

- Over three-fourths (76%) of households surveyed have 1-2 children under the age of 18.

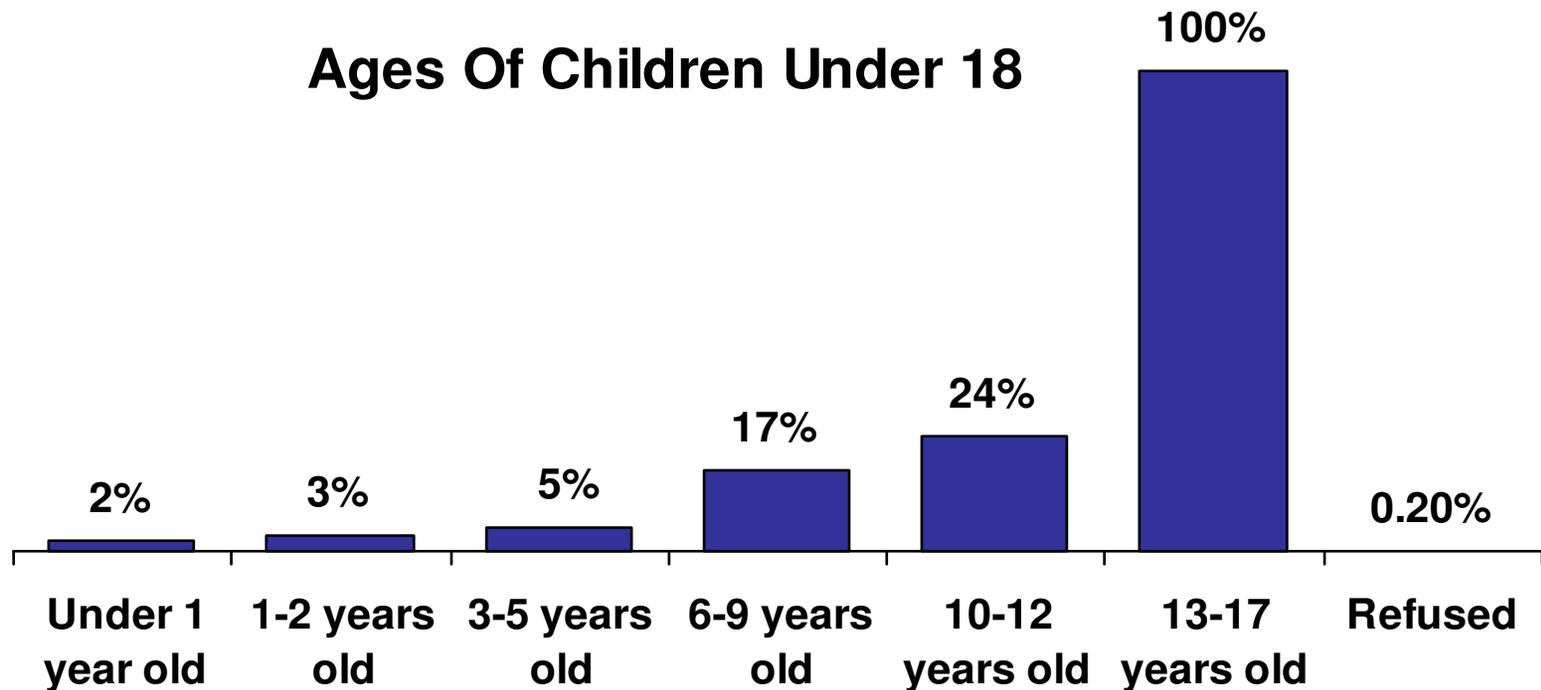
**Number of Children in Household Under Age 18**



Base = 503 respondents

# Ages Of Children Under 18

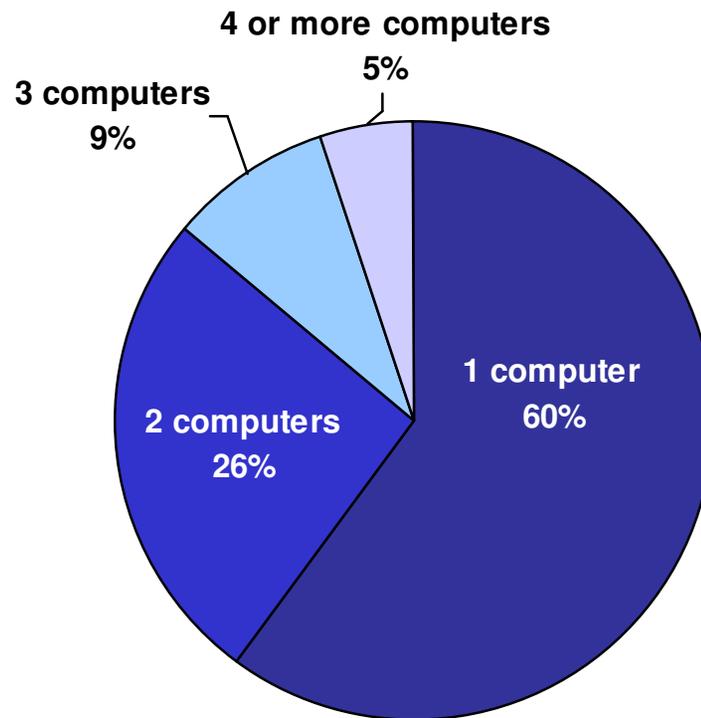
- While all respondents were required to have at least one child between the ages of 13-17, 41% also have a child between the ages of 6-12.



# Number of Computers with Internet Access in Household

- 60% of households surveyed have one computer in the home with Internet access.

**Number of Computers in Household w/ Internet Access**

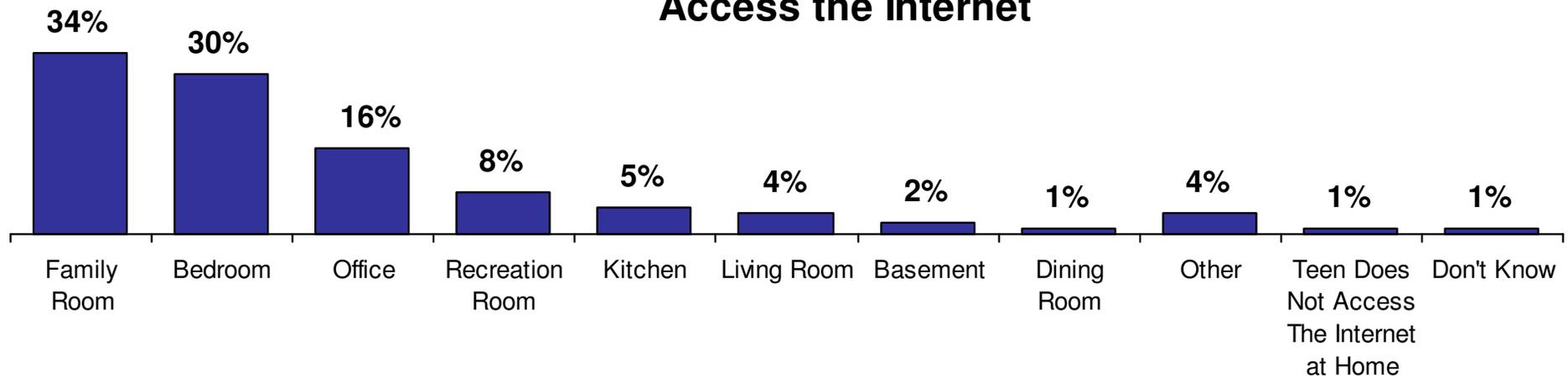


Base= 503 respondents

# Locations in the Home Where Teens Access the Internet

- The family room (34%) and the bedroom (30%) are the top two areas where teens access the Internet.
  - 41% of households that have one computer keep it in the family room.
  - 61% of households that have three or more computers have at least one of them in a bedroom.

**Areas of the Household Where Teenagers Use the Computer to Access the Internet**

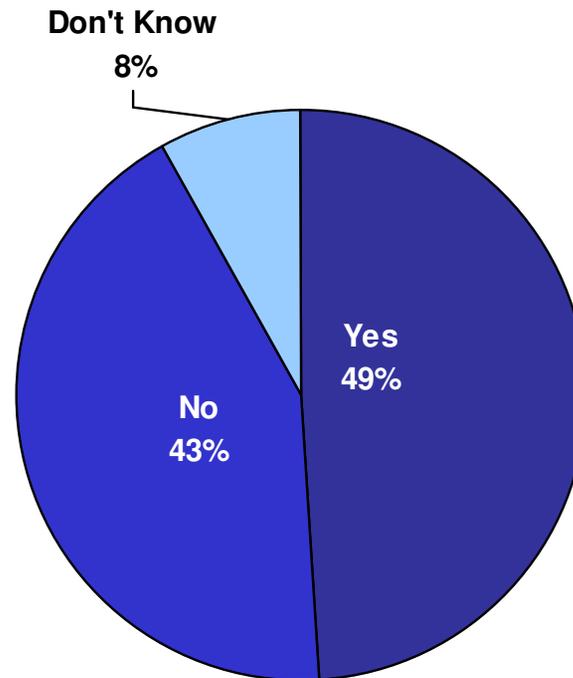


Base= 503 respondents

# Monitoring Software on Computer(s)

- Over half (51%) of parents either do not have, or do not know if they have, software on their computer(s) that monitors where their teenager(s) go online and with whom they interact.

**Number of Households with Internet Monitoring Software on their Computers**

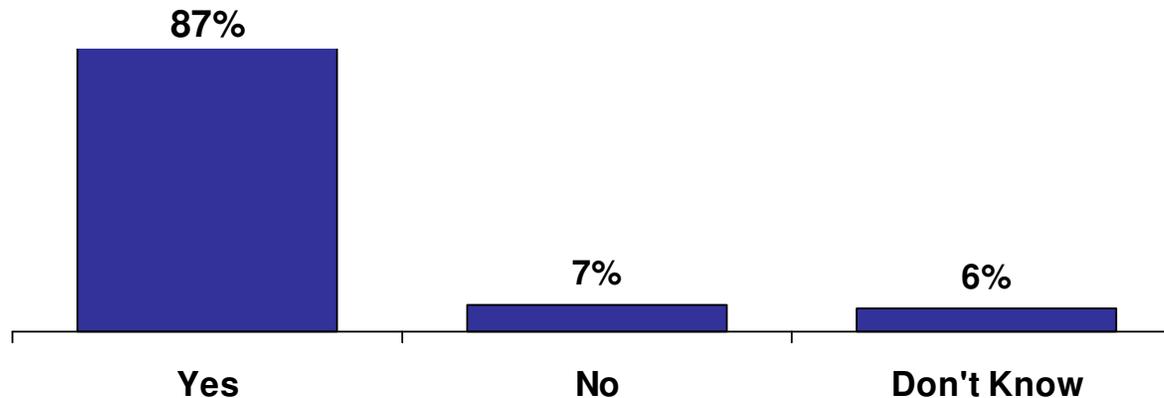


Base= 503 respondents

# Reviewing Teens' Online Activities

- Nearly 9 out of 10 families (87%) who have Internet monitoring software review where their teenagers have been online and with whom they have communicated.

**Percentage of Parents who Review their Teens Online Activities**

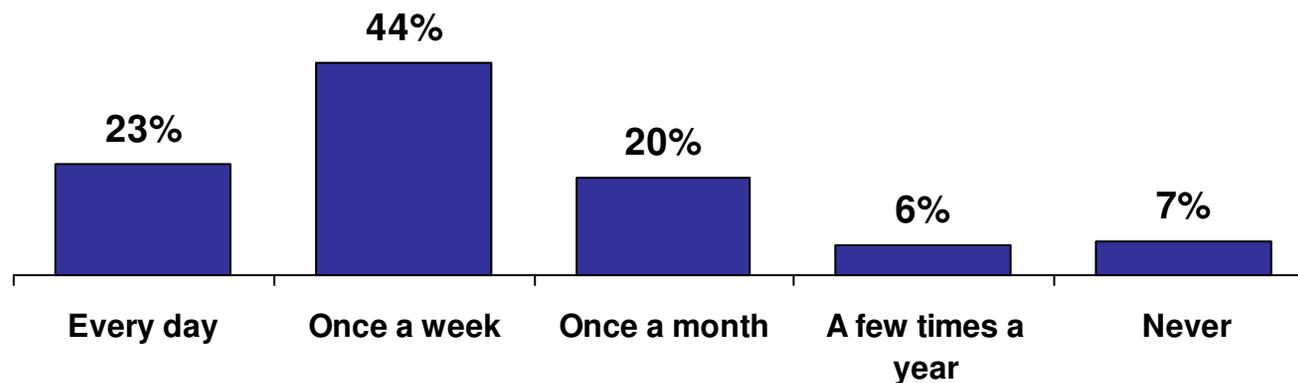


Base= 247 respondents  
Parents with monitoring software

# Frequency of Reviewing Teens' Online Activities

- Although 23% of parents review their teens online activities via monitoring software on a daily basis, one-third (33%) of parents review this information once a month or less.

## How Often Internet Monitoring Software Activity Reports are Reviewed



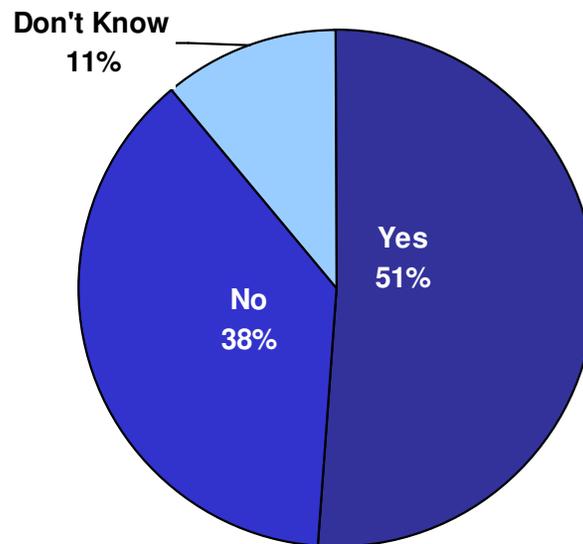
Base= 215 respondents

Parents who review monitoring software reports

# Software to Block Specific Websites/Key Words

- Almost half (49%) of parents either do not have, or do not know if they have, software on their computer that blocks specific websites or key words.

**Percentage of Households that Have Software on Their Computer that Blocks Specific Websites or Key Words**

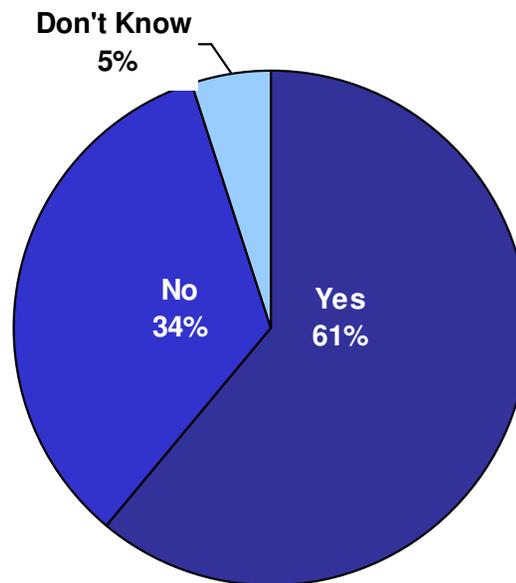


Base= 503 respondents

# Teen Participation in Chat Rooms/Instant Messaging (IM)

- 61% of parents say their teen(s) participate in chat rooms and/or use instant messaging.

**Percentage of Parents that Say their Teen(s) Participate in Chat Rooms and/or Use Instant Messaging**

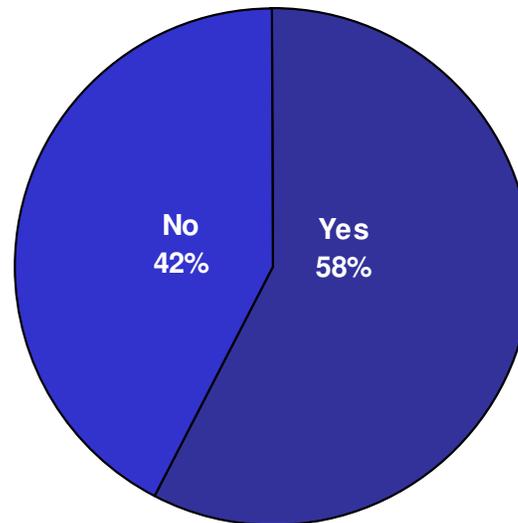


Base= 503 respondents

# Reviewing Information

- 42% of parents do not review the content of what their teenager(s) read and/or type in chat rooms or via instant messaging.

**Percentage of Parents that Review what their  
Teenager(s) Read and/or Type in Chat Rooms or Via  
Instant Messaging**



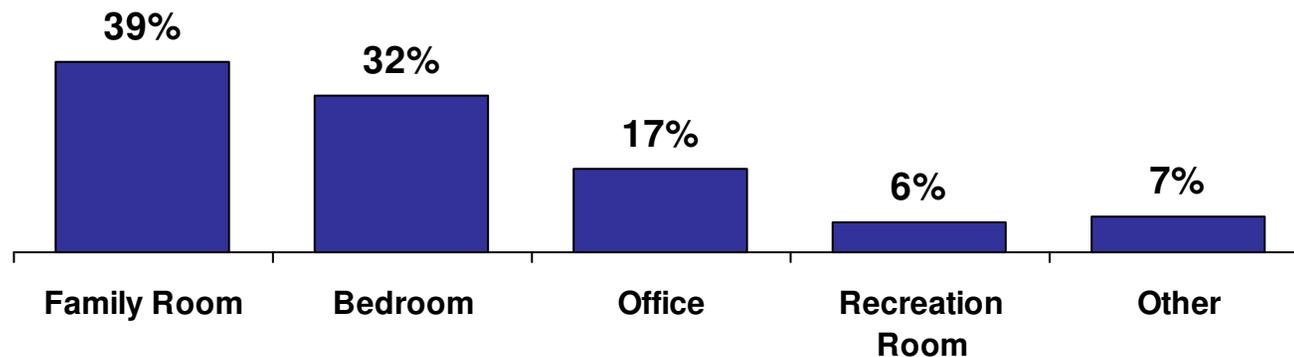
Base= 307 respondents

Parents whose teens participate in chat rooms/IM

# Location of Computer/Reviewing Information

- 39% of parents who review what their teenager(s) read and/or type in chat rooms or via instant messaging keep their computer in the family room.

**Reviewing Teens' Online Activity and Location of Computer**



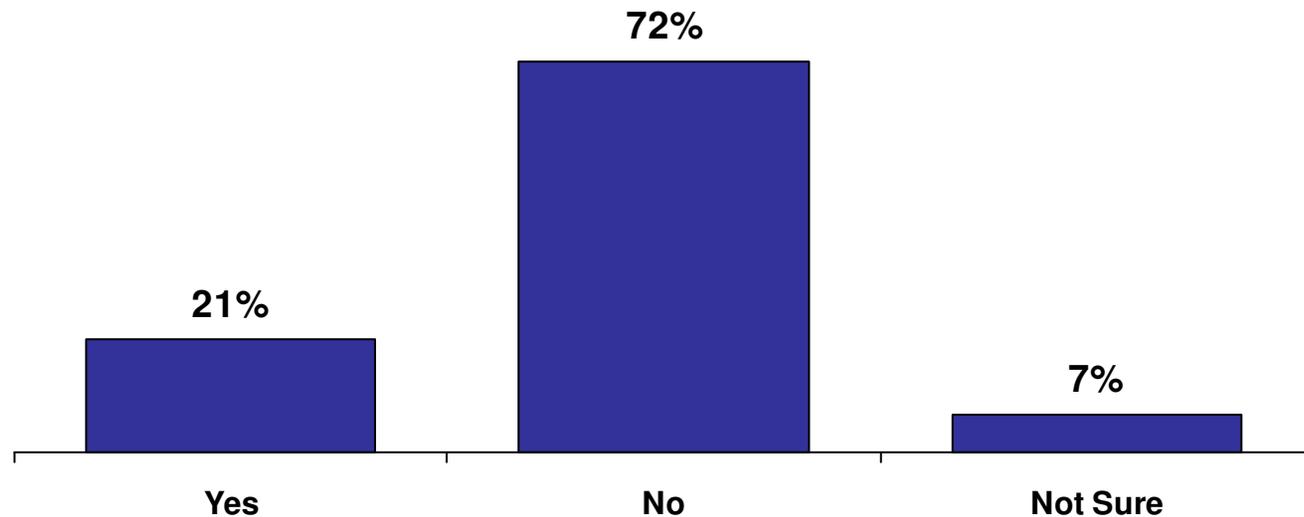
Base= 176 respondents

Parents who review what their teenager reads/types in chat rooms/IM

# Who Teens Talk with Online

- 72% of parents say their teenager(s) do not instant message with people other than family, school friends or people they personally know.
  - Out of the respondents whose teens access the Internet via a computer in a bedroom, 11% say they are not sure if their teens talk to strangers online.

## Percentage of Parents Who Say Their Teen(s) Talk to Strangers Online

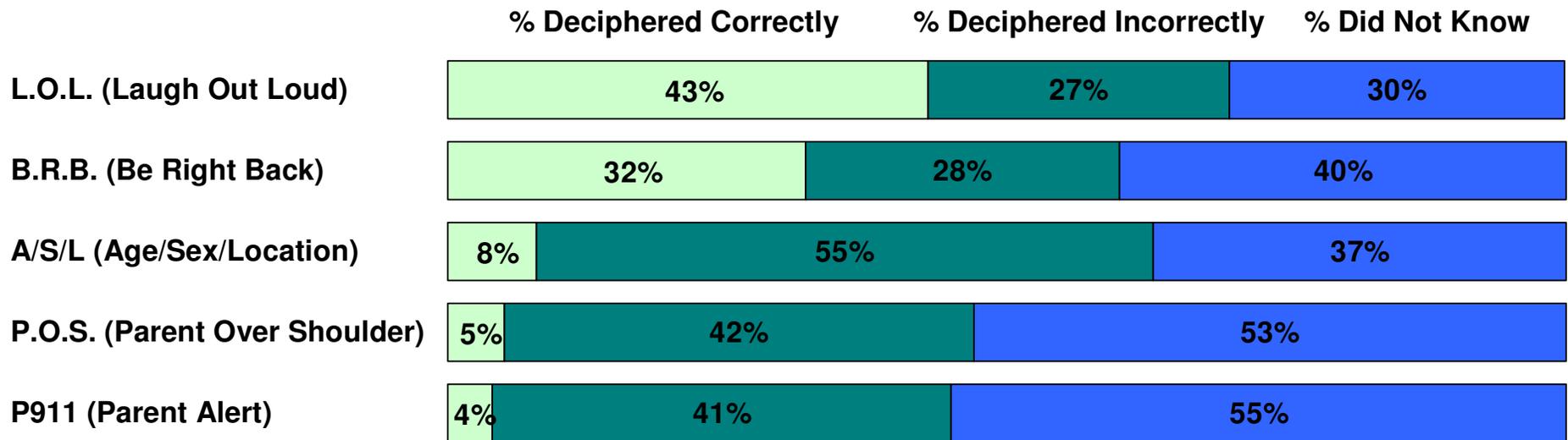


Base= 307 respondents

Parents whose teens participate in chat rooms/IM

# Deciphering IM Message Meanings

- Parents were asked to decipher the meanings of the following Internet messaging abbreviations:



Base= 503 respondents

# Deciphering IM Message Meanings

- 43% of parents were able to correctly decipher the common Internet messaging abbreviation: L.O.L. (Laugh Out Loud).
  - Nearly half (49%) of parents that were able to decode “L.O.L.” review their teens instant messaging and chat room conversations.
- Over two-thirds (68%) of parents were unable to decipher the meaning of the common Internet messaging abbreviation: B.R.B. (Be Right Back).
  - 42% of the parents that were able to correctly decode “B.R.B.” review their teens’ instant messaging and chat room conversations.
- Less than 1 in 10 parents (8%) successfully decoded the Internet messaging abbreviation: A/S/L (Age/Sex/Location).
  - However, 20% of younger parents (ages 25-34) were able to decipher the message.
- 95% of parents were unable to decipher the meaning of the Internet messaging abbreviation: P.O.S. (Parent Over Shoulder).
- 96% of parents were unable to decipher the meaning of the Internet messaging abbreviation: P911 (Parent Alert).

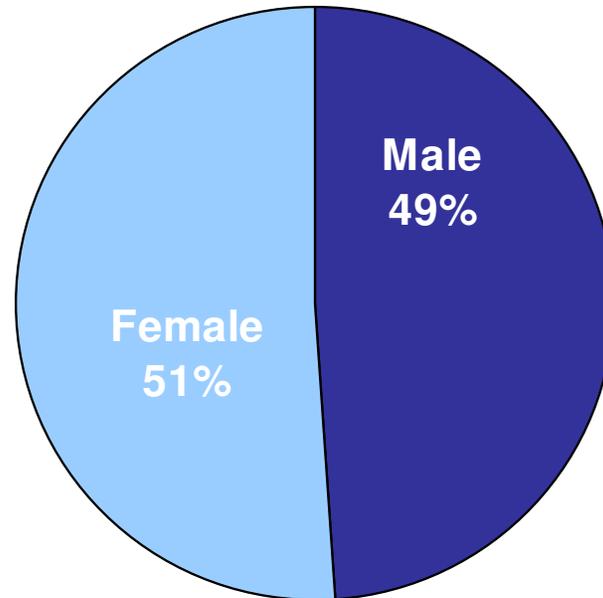
# Summary and Recommendations

- **Parents are more vigilant about where their teen(s) go online if the computer is in a public area of the household.**
  - Communications should focus on the number of teens who are accessing the Internet from private areas of the home such as a bedroom or office.
- **Parents with monitoring software are likely to review where their teen goes online on a daily or weekly basis.**
  - Still, nearly half of parents don't have, or do not know if they have, this type of monitoring software, indicating a need for education about these types of products/services.
- **The majority of parents admit that their teens participate in chat rooms and/or instant messaging. However, most claim that their teens do not talk to strangers online.**
  - Though this may be symptomatic of parents claiming to be more responsible or aware than they really are, communications should highlight the threats posed by strangers who target teens online.
- **More than 90% of parents had difficulty deciphering the meanings of frequently used Internet messaging abbreviations such as A/S/L, P.O.S., and P911.**
  - A "cheat sheet" of commonly used Internet messaging abbreviations may be of value to parents who are unaware of what these terms mean.

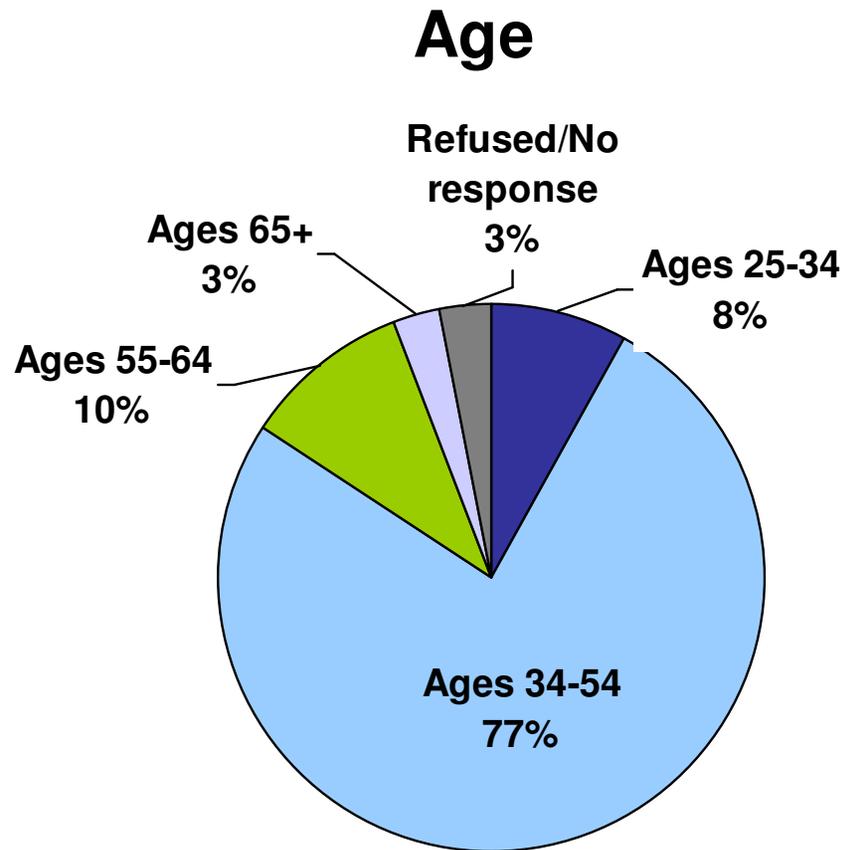
# **Respondent Demographics**

# Gender of Parent

## Gender

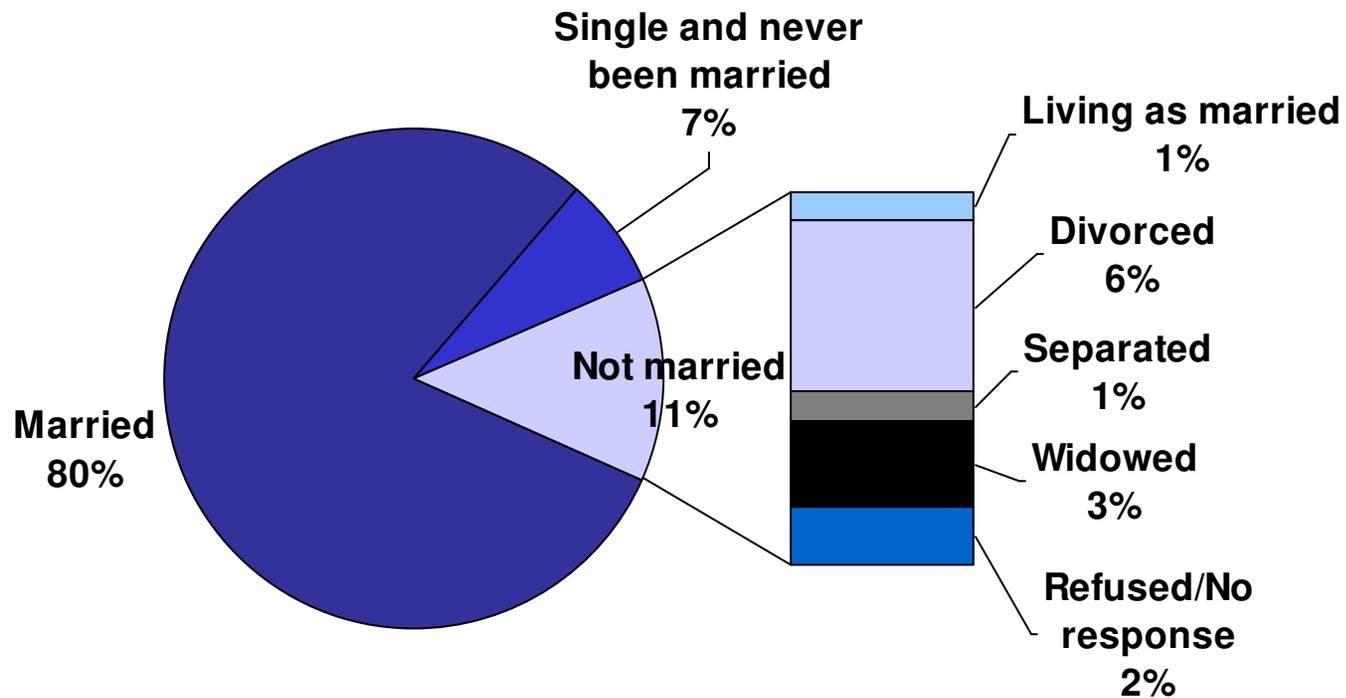


# Age of Parent



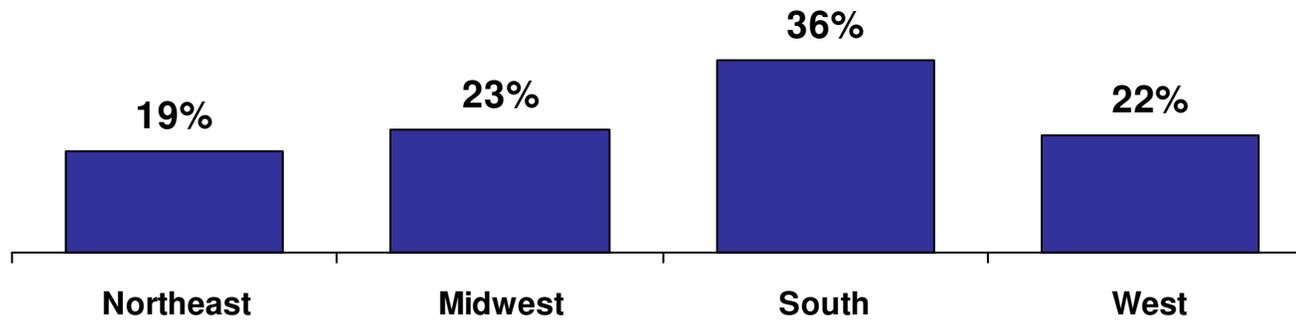
# Parent's Marital Status

## Marital Status



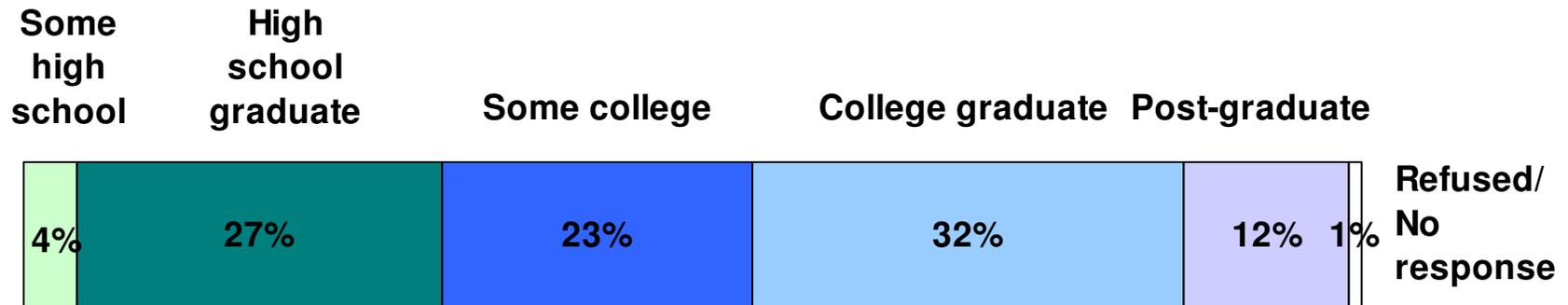
# Geographic Region

## Region



# Education and Household Income

## Education



## Annual Household Income

