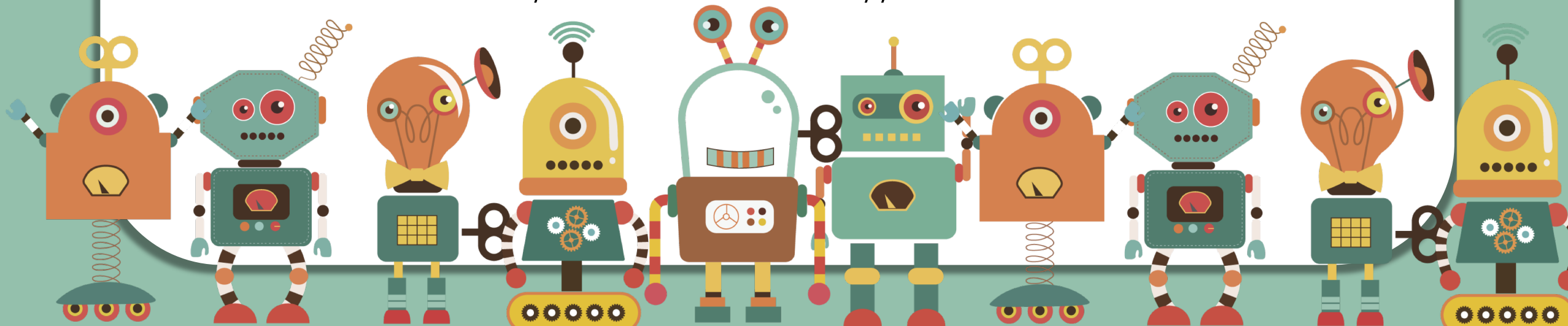
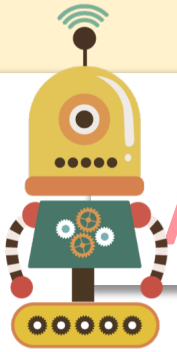
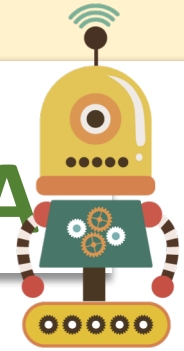
“I MAKE UP A SILLY NAME”

What concerns do Chinese parents have about their children's digital adoption and how to better support them?





ABOUT THE KOALA PROJECT



1

Kids Online Anonymity & Lifelong Autonomy

2

Young Children's privacy mental model

3

Children's digital well-being & Responsible age-appropriate design

4

Young Children's Choice of Mobile Applications

TIMELINE

2017

2017, online survey of 220 parents with children aged 6-10, mainly from the U.K. and other western countries - parents are lack of sufficient support for choosing appropriate digital content for their children

2017

2017, face-to-face interviews with 12 families in Oxfordshire and an online survey with 250 parents - Existing privacy safeguarding technologies offer little choices for raising parents' awareness of personal data collection risks or supporting their children's learning

2018

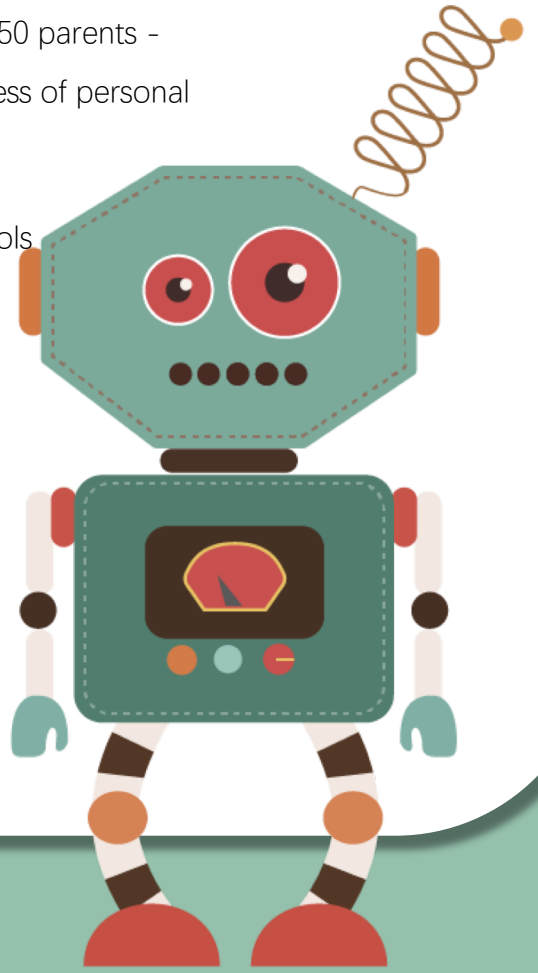
2018, 12 focus group studies with 29 children aged 6-10 from Oxfordshire primary schools - raising children's awareness and understanding of risks related to online recommendations and data tracking

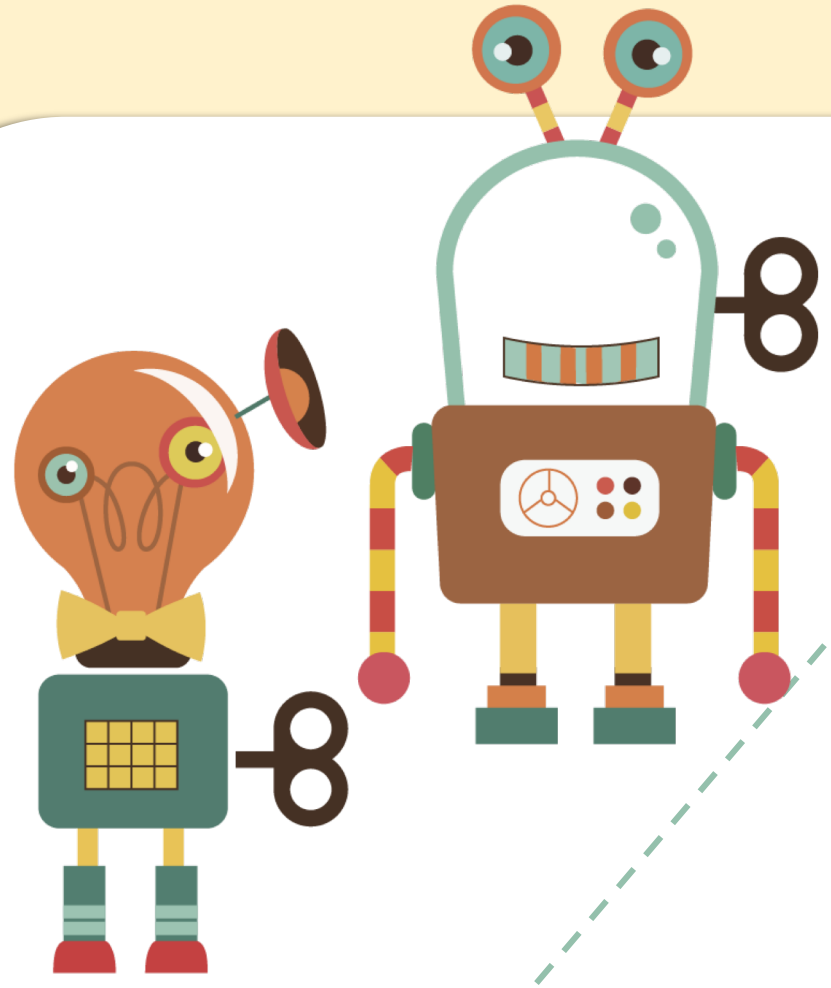
2019

2019, online survey of 593 Chinese parents with children aged 6-10

2019

In the future, responsible design of digital tools for parents and children





What concerns do Chinese parents have about their children' s digital adoption and how to better support them?

BACKGROUND

01 Nearly 60% of the overall population of China are now going online

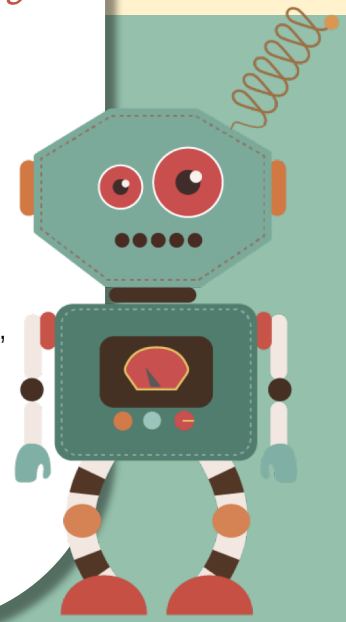
02 China is now home to *169 million Internet users under the age of 18*, 89.5% of children under 13s have been reported to have access to the internet

03 *Mobile platforms are the dominant means* for Chinese Internet users to go online, with 98.6% of the online population going online via mobile phones

04 For those under 18s, *30.3% have had exposure to inappropriate contents and 15.6% had experienced online bullying*

05 The examine of the 1404 most downloaded apps in 2018 found that *92% of Android apps requested ex-cessive core privacy permissions* (Tencent Cohen Lab)

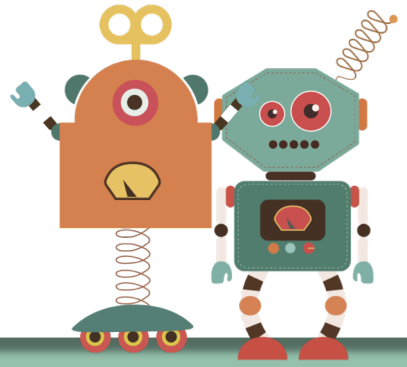
06 The goal of our study is to *investigate the digital adoption patterns* by Chinese children, from device usage to online activities, and to discuss *what concerns do Chinese parents have*.



①

Digital devices are widely adopted in Chinese families

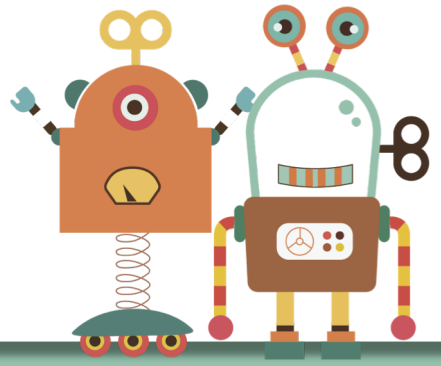
Parents' levels of concerns can be influenced by their own digital experiences. Parents with more digital experiences can have a higher level of concerns of their children's privacy online.

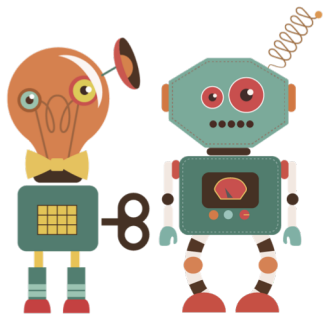


②

Parents expressed some level of privacy concerns, but are still content/screen time-oriented

However, parents' level of privacy concern increased when told about potential implications.





③

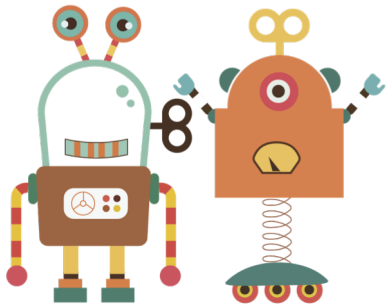
Children's most used apps are not always appropriate for their age

Online short-video platforms played an important role in Chinese young children' s daily life, however, many of these apps are not always appropriate for children' s age. *Online learning* was reported to be another major reason for children being online. We found that schools and teachers played an important role in children' s choices of apps and this is largely different from the UK children.

App	Number of use	Genre	Age rating	Sensitive personal data access
WeChat (微信)	205	Social Network	17+	YES
TikTok (抖音)	171	Social Media	12+	YES
NamiBox (纳米盒)	58	Education	4+	YES
Iqiyi Video (爱奇艺)	48	Video	17+	YES
QQ	29	Social Network	12+	YES
KnowBox (作业盒子)	26	Education	4+	YES
Baidu（百度）	16	Utilities	17+	YES
Tecent Video (腾讯视频)	14	Video	17+	YES
PUBG Mobile (刺激战场)	14	Game	17+	YES
Youku Video (优酷视频)	13	Video	17+	YES

10 Apps that were used most frequently as mentioned in the survey

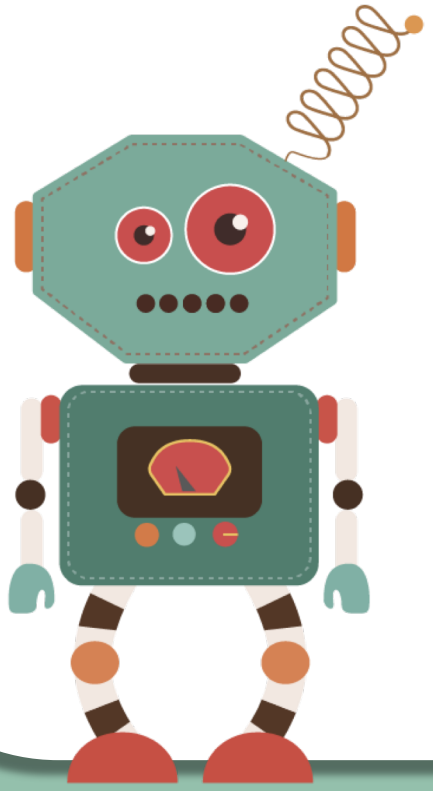
④

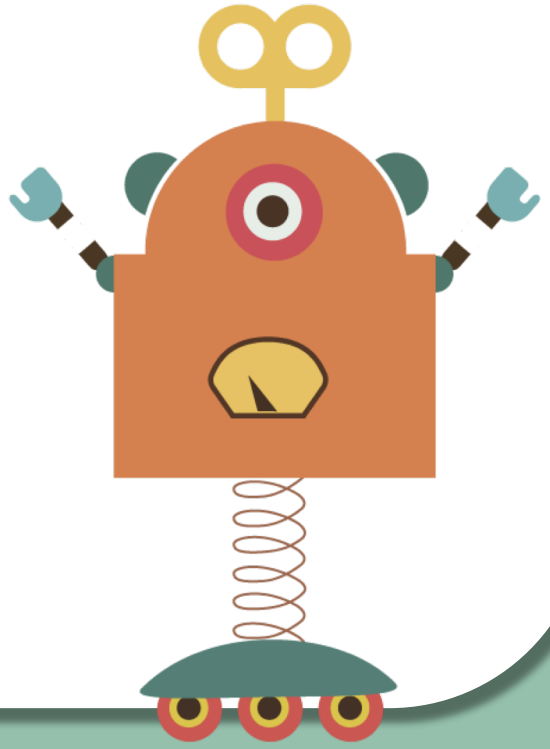


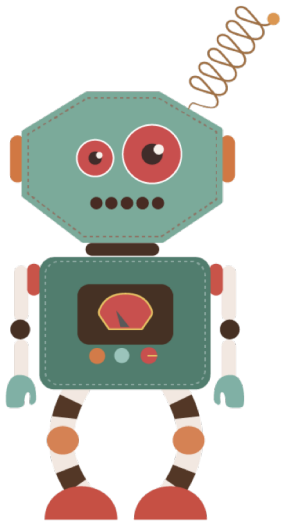
Parents adopted a range of means to safeguard their children online, however mostly through restrictive approaches

This might be realted to the *authoritarian parenting style* observed in Chinese parents. Only a small proportion of them (26.6%) regularly discussed privacy issues with their children and very few of them had sufficient awareness of the potential risks (only 10% think there exists noticeable privacy risks in their children' s daily online activities). This shows that parents would *benefit from support in tools* and indicates a *need for resources* to help parents safeguard their children online.

SUGGESTIONS

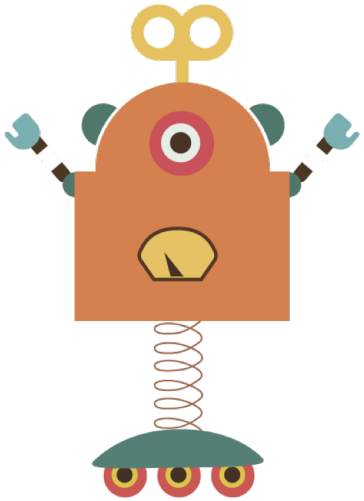






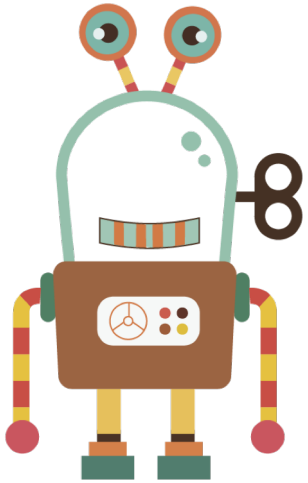
AWARENESS

Raising the general awareness of online privacy risks for both parents and children, and facilitating these discussions with young children.

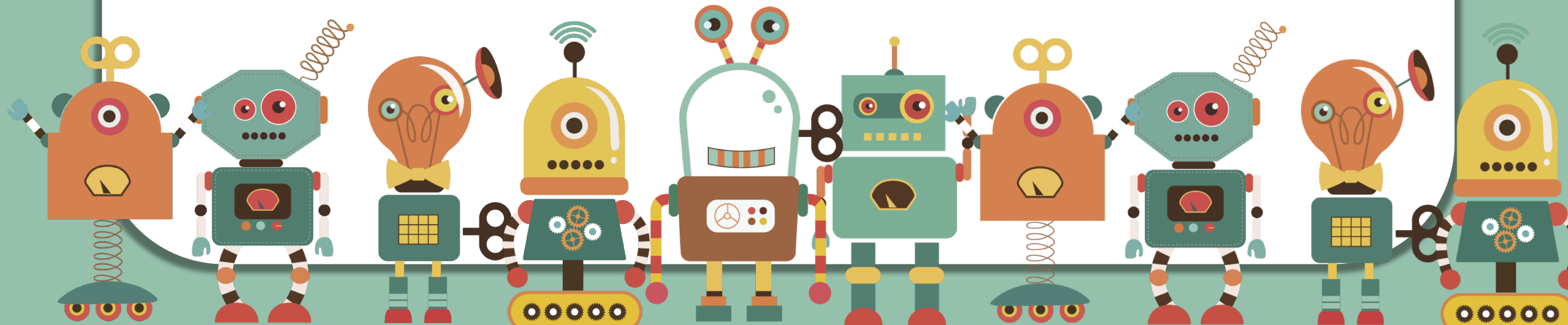


DISCUSSION

Encouraging parents to *discuss online safety issues* with their children, which provides the necessary *scaffolding process* for children's learning. This would require resource development that help parents *improve their digital skills and digital confidence*.



RESOURCE

Tool and resource developments that focus on *facilitating skill and knowledge building* for both parents and their young children that enables parents to learn more about their children's online activities, and encouraging an active *co-learning* experience.

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