LIAISON STRATÉGIES

NATIONAL SURVEY

Online Age Verification in Canada

Public support, privacy and the limits of enforcement

Field dates: October 26 to November 13, 2026

KEY FINDING

Two age-check tests, two 22-point gaps

Support is lower when the platform or website gets personal information directly.

SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS UNDER 16

Q4A / Q4B

Age-check method unspecified



72%

Every user gives the platform ID or credit-card details



50%

22-point gap

PORNOGRAPHY WEBSITES: 18+ ACCESS

D3A / D3B

Third party checks ID; website gets only age confirmation



70%

Third party checks ID; website also gets a copy of the ID



48%

22-point gap

500 respondents per version. Percentages are weighted.

Support for age checks falls when users must share ID

Support for social media age checks is 72% when the method is unspecified and 50% when every user must give the platform ID or credit-card details.

76%

Social media accounts

Support keeping under-16s off certain platforms.

77%

Online pornography

Support requiring pornography websites to check that users are 18 or older.

87%

Independent audits

Support audits to check that companies delete personal information collected for age checks.

72% support a federal law combining the two age restrictions.

About the survey

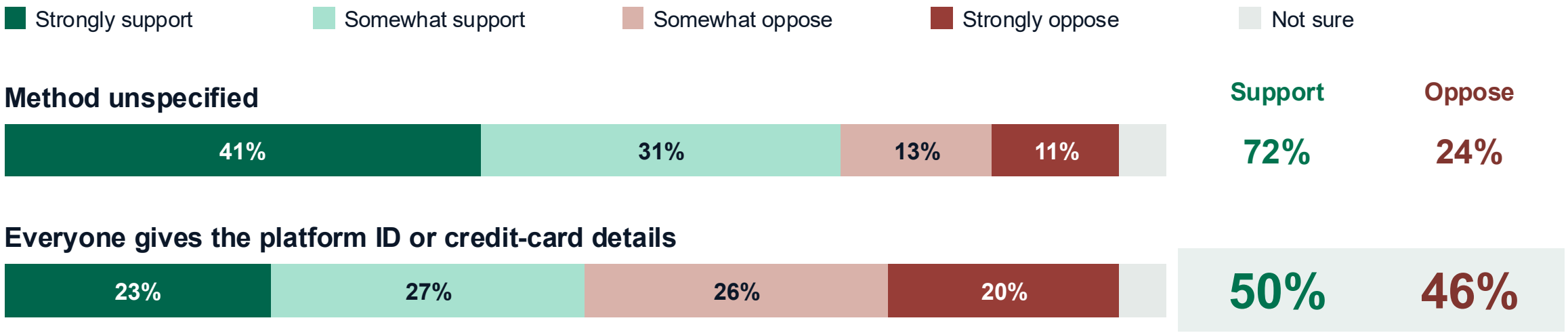
Liaison Strategies national survey on online age verification

Field dates	October 26 to November 13, 2026
National sample	Liaison surveyed 1,000 respondents.
Recruitment	Liaison called randomly selected cellphone and landline numbers.
Survey mode	Participants completed the survey by phone or online.
Split samples	500 respondents per version in each of the two age-check tests.
Reporting	Results were weighted by age, gender and region.

Margin of error: ±3.1 percentage points for the full sample, 19 times out of 20. The benchmark is higher for smaller groups.

Support is 22 points lower with direct disclosure

Would you support a law requiring certain social media platforms to check ages to prevent under-16s from having accounts?



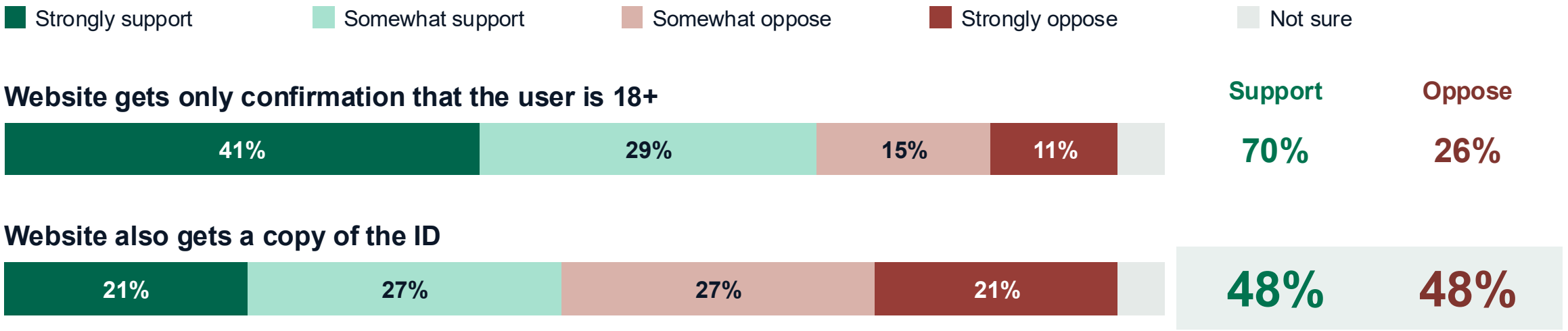
Not sure: 4% in each version. The direct-disclosure breakdown includes a one-point rounding adjustment.

Strong support: 41% with no method specified, 23% with direct disclosure.

Q4A / Q4B: 500 respondents per version. Percentages are weighted.

Support is higher when the website never gets the ID

Would you support an age-check requirement if a separate company checks ID to confirm users are 18 or older?



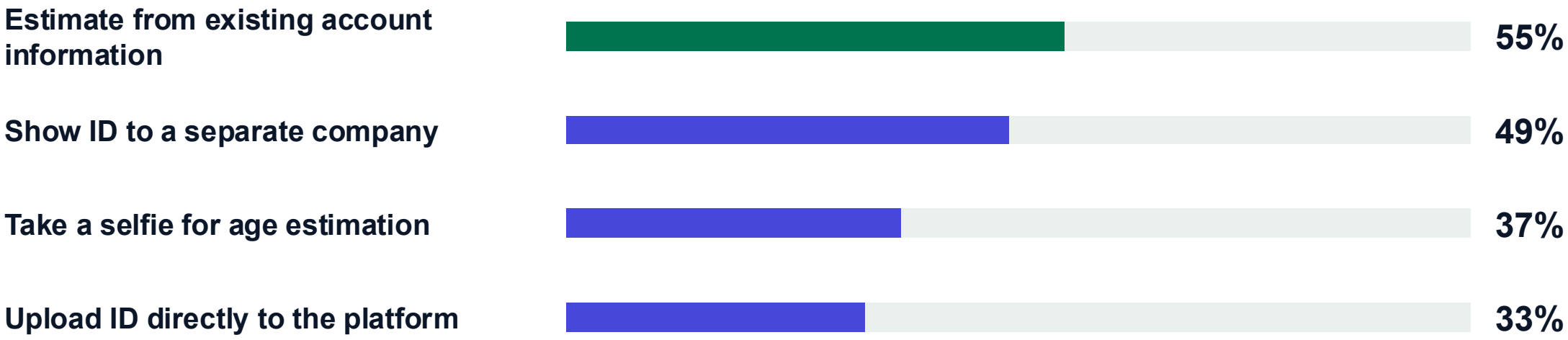
Not sure: 4% in each version.

Strong support is 41% when the website gets only age confirmation, versus 21% when it also gets a copy of the ID.

D3A / D3B: 500 respondents per version. Percentages are weighted.

Most would hesitate to upload ID to a platform

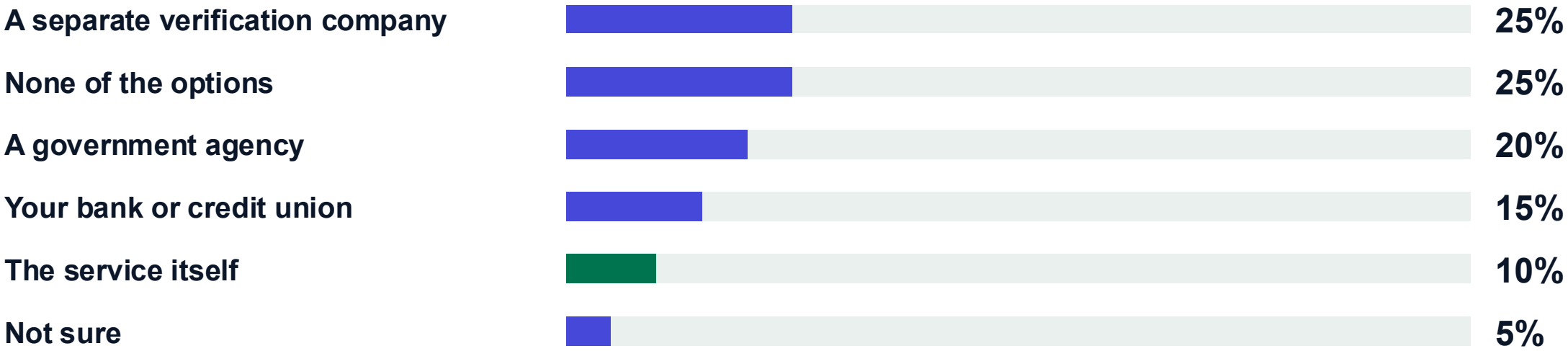
How comfortable would you be with each age-check method? Share very or somewhat comfortable.



If asked to upload ID, 22% say they would do it, 39% would ask for another way and 24% would stop using the platform.

Few pick the platform itself to check their age

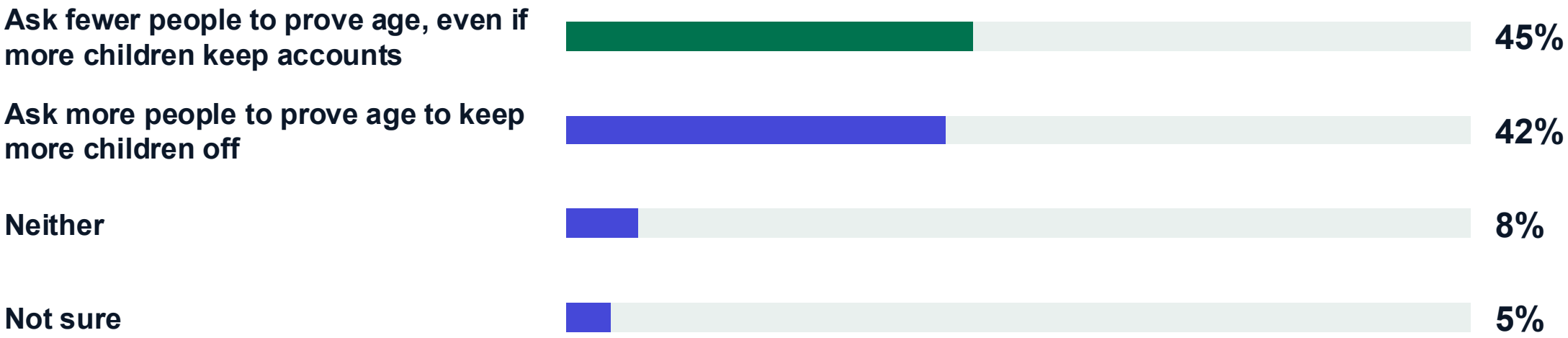
Which of the following would you trust most to check your age for an online service?



The biggest concern is misuse or exposure of personal information (39%), followed by children bypassing checks (25%).

Canadians split on how widely to require proof

Which comes closer to your view when more age checks could keep more children off restricted platforms?

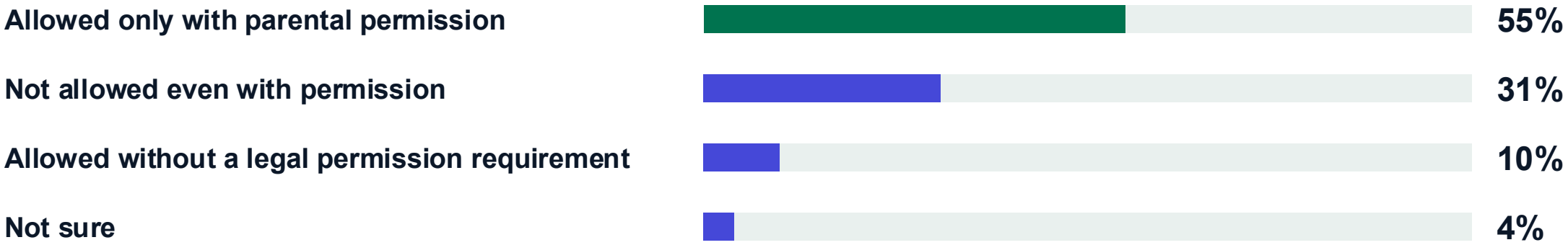


Most choose parental permission over an outright ban

76% support the federal proposal

Do you support or oppose a federal law requiring certain social media platforms to prevent children under 16 from having accounts?

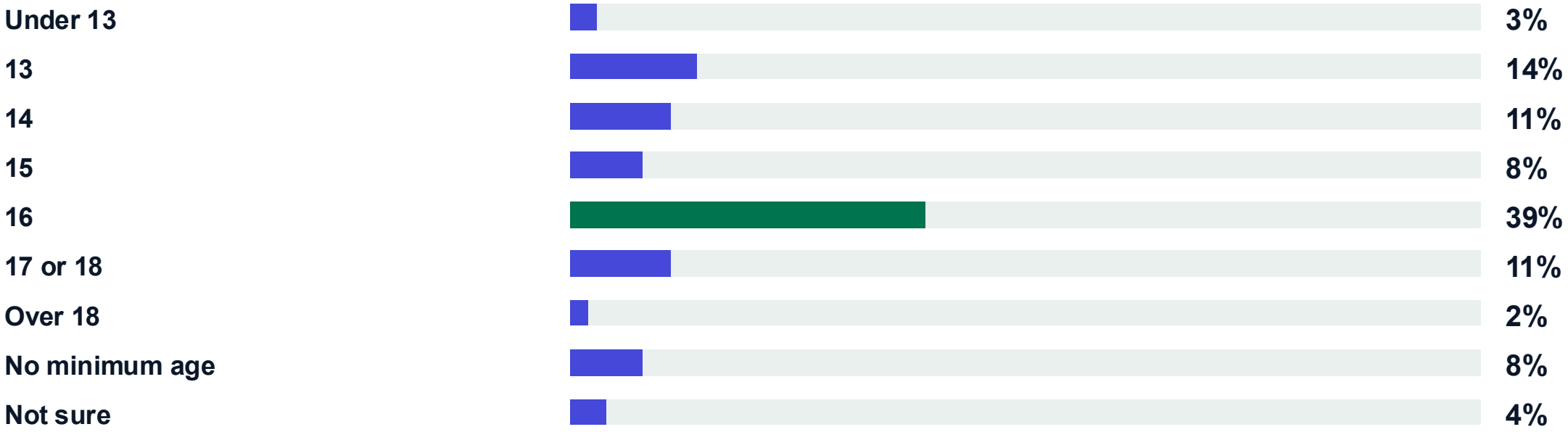
Which approach comes closest to your view on social media accounts for children under 16?



60% in households with children pick parental permission, compared with 53% in households without children.

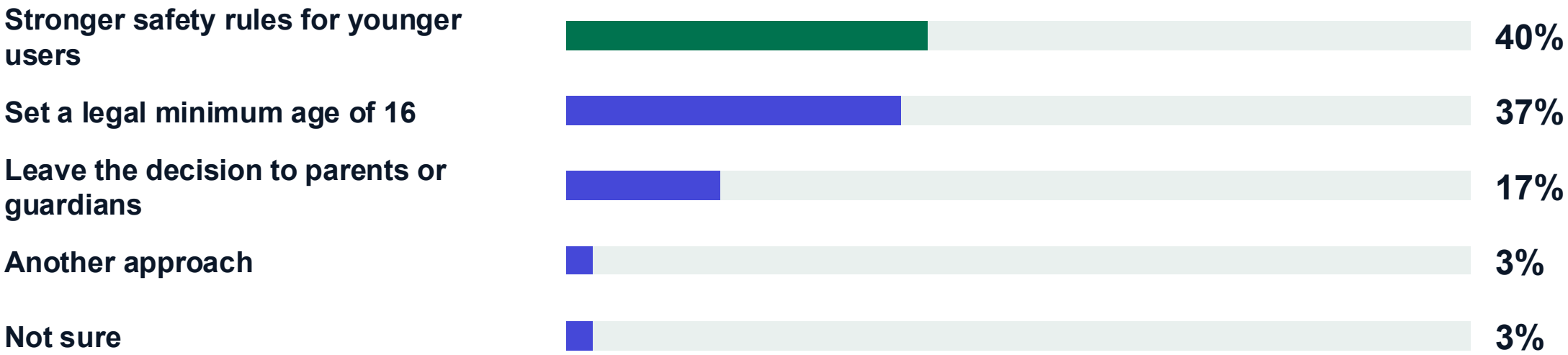
Age 16 is the most common choice without parental permission

What should be the minimum age to have a social media account without a parent or guardian's permission?



A legal minimum of 16 has no clear lead

Which approach to children's social media use would you prefer?



66% support an exception to the under-16 rule for platforms that can show they have adequate safeguards.

Households with children put more weight on permission

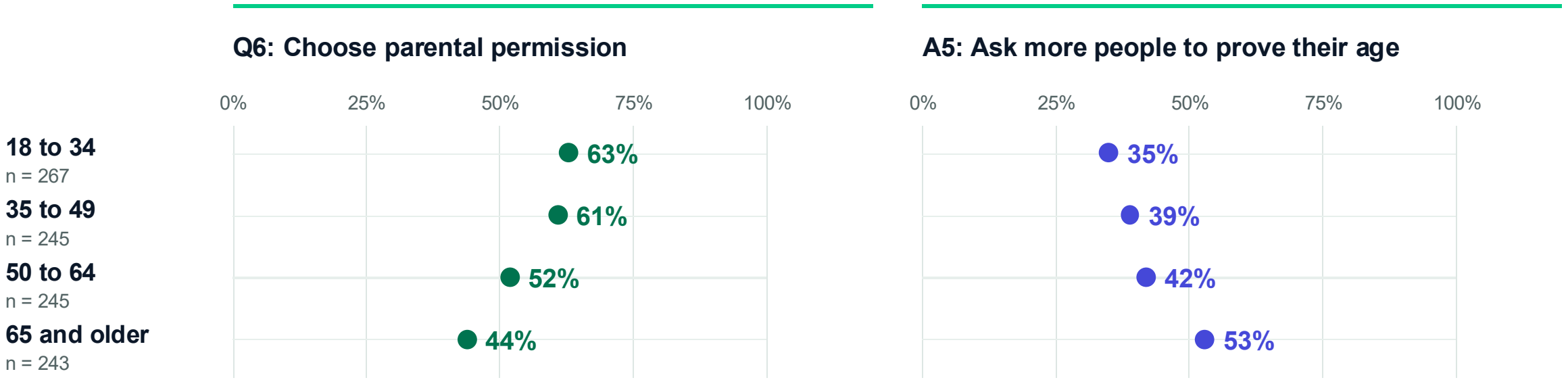
Half of households with children prefer asking fewer people to prove their age, compared with 43% of households without children.

Measure	Canada	With children	Without children
Support the initial under-16 accounts rule	**76%**	**72%**	**78%**
Choose parental permission for under-16s	**55%**	**60%**	**53%**
Support exceptions for platforms with safeguards	**66%**	**70%**	**64%**
Prefer asking fewer people to prove their age	**45%**	**50%**	**43%**
Support checks preventing one in four accounts	**47%**	**41%**	**50%**

Q1, Q6, Q8a, A5, C1a. Unweighted bases: with children n = 327, without children n = 673.

Younger adults favour permission; older adults favour broader checks

Older age groups are less likely to choose parental permission and more likely to ask more people to prove their age.



Unweighted bases at left. Percentages are weighted.

Support is higher when checks prevent more underage accounts

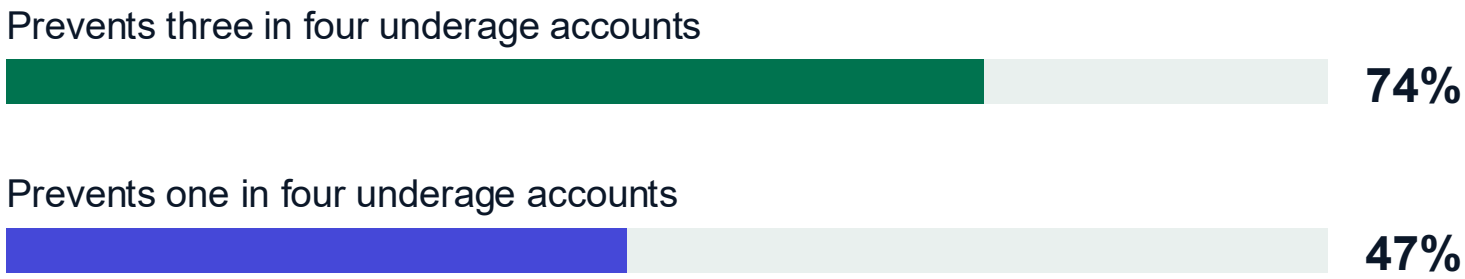
How confident are you that age checks would substantially reduce under-16 accounts? Would you support checks at each stated level of effectiveness?

40%

Very or somewhat confident

56% are not very or not at all confident. 4% are not sure.

Support at each hypothetical level of effectiveness



Support is 49% when an appeal could take a week

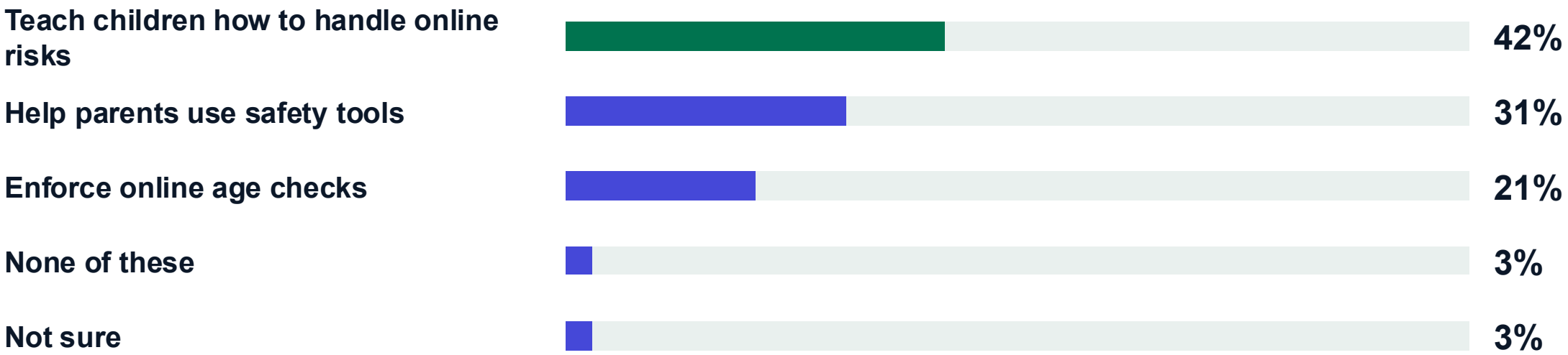
Support for age checks or enforcement under three hypothetical scenarios.



For repeat social media violations, 43% prefer a fine, 35% want better checks without a fine and 12% favour a temporary block.

Twice as many choose online safety education as enforcement

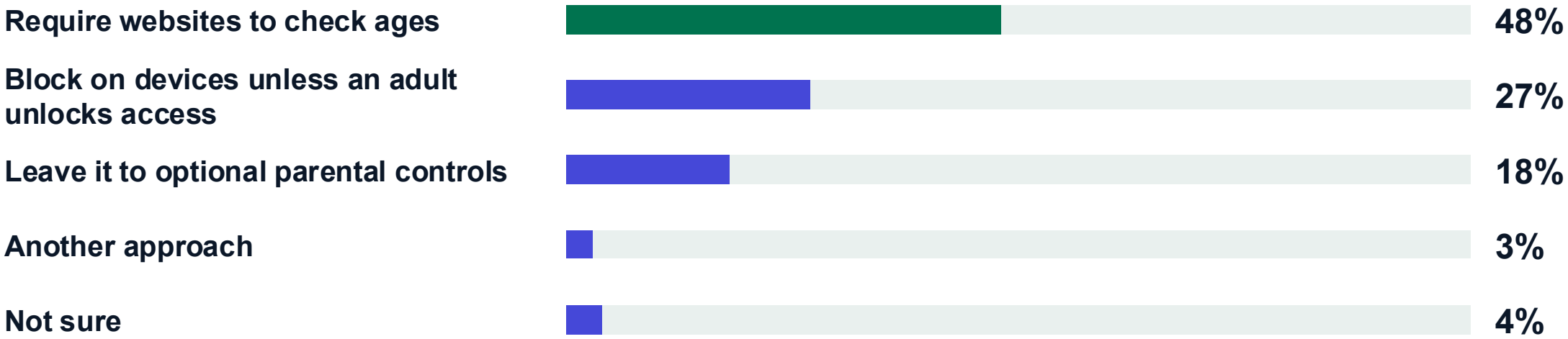
If Ottawa could fund only one option, which would respondents choose?



55% support spending $25 million annually on enforcement. At $100 million, support is 38%.

Website checks are the leading option

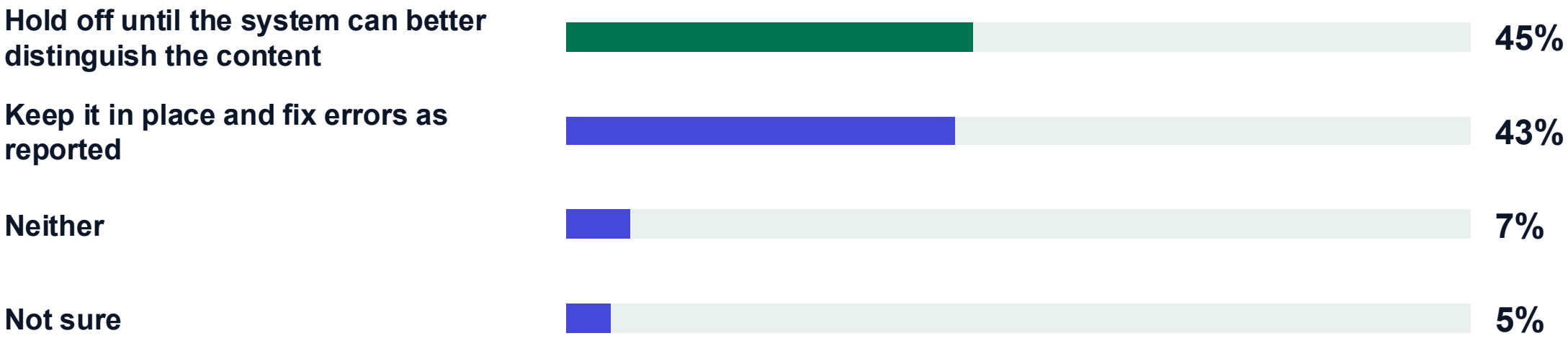
Which approach would you prefer to limit children's access to pornography?



77% also support age checks before pornography is shown on a social media platform, even if it is not the platform's main purpose.

Canadians split on whether to wait for a better filter

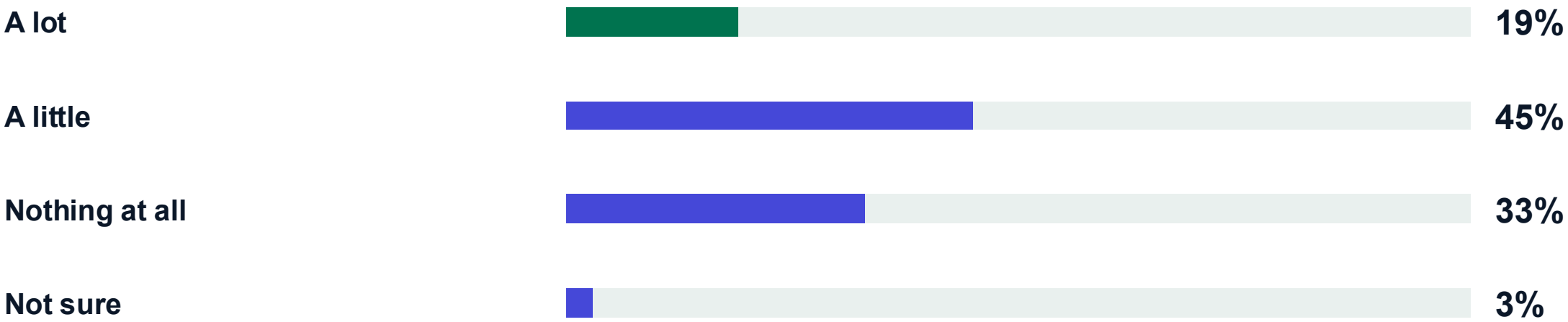
If a system blocking pornography for children also sometimes blocks sexual health information, what should happen?



57% of adults 65+ would keep the system in place while fixing errors, compared with 33% of adults under 35.

Only 19% had heard a lot about age checks

Before this survey, how much had you heard about Canadian proposals to require online age checks?



Liberal and Conservative respondents are close on both laws

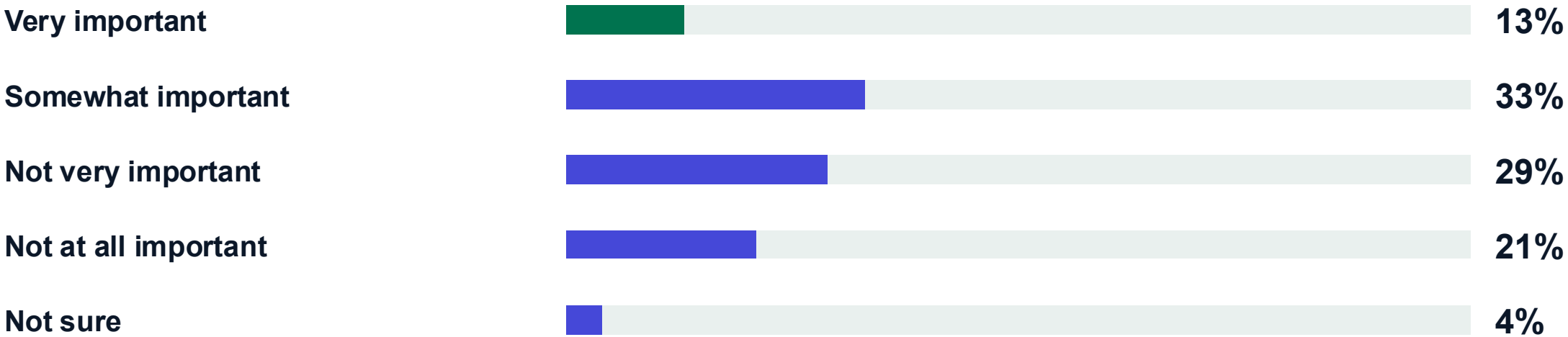
Support for federal laws restricting under-16 accounts on certain social media platforms and requiring 18+ checks on pornography websites.

Respondents	Social media	Pornography websites
18 to 34	**72%**	**70%**
65 and older	**81%**	**85%**
Children in household	**72%**	**75%**
No children in household	**78%**	**78%**
Liberal voting intention	**77%**	**78%**
Conservative voting intention	**74%**	**79%**

Q1 and Q2. Unweighted voting-intention bases: Liberal n = 391, Conservative n = 242.

13% say a party's position is very important to their vote

How important is a federal party's position on online age restrictions when deciding how you would vote?



46% say the party's position is at least somewhat important. 50% say it is not very or not at all important.

Canadians want safeguards for children and for their data

87% support independent deletion audits. Only 40% are confident age checks would substantially reduce underage social media accounts.

87%

Verify data deletion

Support independent audits of whether companies delete personal information collected for age checks.

56%

Show that checks work

Are not very or not at all confident checks would substantially reduce under-16 accounts.

55%

Keep a role for parents

Choose parental permission when asked what rule should apply to under-16 social media accounts.

How Canadians answered both age-check tests

Weighted percentages. Each test used two half samples of 500 respondents.

Proposal or scenario	Strongly support	Somewhat support	Somewhat oppose	Strongly oppose	Not sure	Total support	Table pages
Social media: method unspecified	41%	31%	13%	11%	4%	**72%**	10–12
Social media: ID or credit card goes to platform	23%	27%	26%	20%	4%	**50%**	13–15
Pornography: website gets confirmation only	41%	29%	15%	11%	4%	**70%**	88–90
Pornography: website also gets a copy of ID	21%	27%	27%	21%	4%	**48%**	85–87

Presentation rounding: ‘somewhat support’ adjusted by one point to match the published 50% for direct disclosure.

How Canadians answered the main policy questions

Weighted percentages. National unweighted base: 1,000 respondents.

Proposal or scenario	Strongly support	Somewhat support	Somewhat oppose	Strongly oppose	Not sure	Total support	Table pages
Under-16 social media account rule	47%	29%	11%	9%	4%	**76%**	1–3
18+ age checks on pornography websites	51%	26%	11%	8%	4%	**77%**	4–6
Combined federal law	41%	31%	13%	11%	4%	**72%**	97–99
Independent audits of deletion	65%	22%	5%	4%	4%	**87%**	46–48
Checks prevent three in four underage accounts	42%	32%	13%	9%	4%	**74%**	58–60
Checks prevent one in four underage accounts	18%	29%	24%	24%	5%	**47%**	55–57

Presentation rounding: ‘somewhat oppose’ adjusted by one point in the 18+ website question so responses total 100%.

Support is broad across regions

Weighted percentages. Small regional samples limit the precision of comparisons.

Measure	Canada	Atlantic	Quebec	Ontario	Prairies	Alberta	BC
Under-16 account rule	76%	77%	74%	76%	74%	77%	78%
18+ pornography checks	77%	78%	77%	77%	77%	73%	79%
Combined law	72%	59%	72%	74%	69%	72%	73%
Deletion audits	87%	88%	88%	86%	83%	91%	86%
Unweighted base	1,000	71	225	380	67	115	142

Proposals and social media rules

Question topic	National result	PDF pages
Federal rule for under-16 social media accounts	**76% support**	1–3
18+ checks on pornography websites	**77% support**	4–6
Prior awareness of age-check proposals	**19% heard a lot**	7–9
Social media checks, method unspecified	**72% support**	10–12
Social media checks, direct ID or card details	**50% support**	13–15
Minimum age without permission	**39% choose 16**	16–18
Parental permission for under-16 accounts	**55% choose permission only**	19–21
Confidence in a substantial reduction in underage accounts	**40% confident[1]**	22–24
Preferred approach to children’s social media use	**40% choose stronger safety rules**	25–27

[1] Sum of very and somewhat responses shown in the tables.

Privacy, trust and disclosure

Question topic	National result	PDF pages
Exceptions for platforms with safeguards	**66% support**	28–30
Comfort uploading ID to a platform	**33% comfortable[1]**	31–33
Comfort showing ID to a separate company	**49% comfortable[1]**	34–36
Comfort taking a selfie for age estimation	**37% comfortable[1]**	37–39
Comfort using existing account information	**55% comfortable[1]**	40–42
Most trusted age checker	**25% separate company, 25% none**	43–45
Independent deletion audits	**87% support**	46–48
Likely response to platform ID request	**39% would ask for another way**	49–51
Require more or fewer people to prove age	**45% fewer, 42% more**	52–54

[1] Sum of very and somewhat responses shown in the tables.

Effectiveness, enforcement and funding

Question topic	National result	PDF pages
Checks prevent one in four underage accounts	**47% support**	55–57
Checks prevent three in four underage accounts	**74% support**	58–60
Wrongly blocked adults could wait a week for appeal	**49% support**	61–63
Some children move to services with fewer safeguards	**53% support**	64–66
Preferred response to repeated platform non-compliance	**43% choose a fine**	67–69
One federal funding priority	**42% choose teaching children**	70–72
Spend $25 million a year on enforcement	**55% support**	73–75
Spend $100 million a year on enforcement	**38% support**	76–78
Preferred way to limit access to pornography	**48% choose website checks**	79–81

Pornography, the combined law and voting

Question topic	National result	PDF pages
Age checks before pornography appears on social media	**77% support**	82–84
Third-party check, website receives ID copy	**48% support**	85–87
Third-party check, website gets age confirmation only	**70% support**	88–90
Court-ordered blocking after repeated refusal	**64% support**	91–93
System sometimes blocks sexual health information	**45% hold off, 43% keep it**	94–96
Combined federal law	**72% support**	97–99
Biggest concern about social media age checks	**39% choose misuse or exposure of data**	100–102
Importance of party position when deciding how to vote	**13% very important**	103–105

Federal voting intention: all respondents (pp. 106–108) and decided and leaning voters (pp. 109–111).

Nobody's perfect.

But you can trust Liaison polls because our methodologies have been tested against real-world outcomes.

Ontario Poll Accuracy

1st	**Liaison**
2nd	**Mainstreet**
3rd	**Innovative**
4th	**Research Co.**
5th	**Forum**
6th	**Abacus**
7th	**Pallas**
8th	**Leger**
9th	**Nanos**
10th	**Ipsos**

Federal Poll Accuracy

1st	**Mainstreet**
2nd	**Liaison**
3rd	**Angus Reid**
4th	**Cardinal**
5th	**Nanos**
6th	**Research Co.**
7th	**Pallas**
8th	**Leger**
9th	**Forum**
10th	**Ipsos**
11th	**Abacus**
12th	**MQO**
13th	**EKOS**
14th	**Pollara**
15th	**IRG**

There's no tougher race than an election campaign. Shifting headlines, commentary on leadership debates, and millions of voters changing their minds right up to the last minute. In the most recent 2025 elections, the accuracy of Liaison's polls ranked 1st provincially and 2nd federally. Next race, who knows? There's always room to improve. **Even at Liaison**.

Contact

David Valentin, Principal

david@liaisonstrategies.ca

liaisonstrategies.ca