

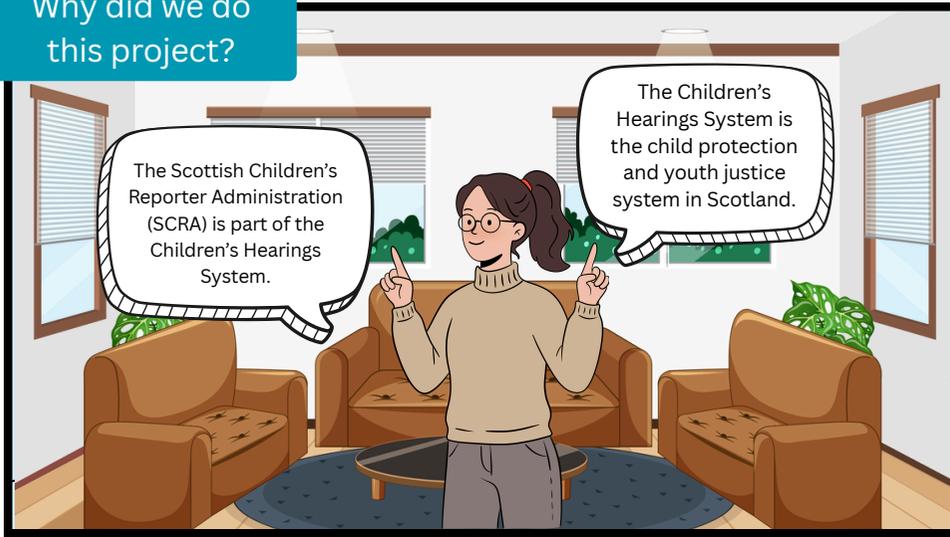
# ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN THE CHILDREN'S HEARINGS SYSTEM

March 2026

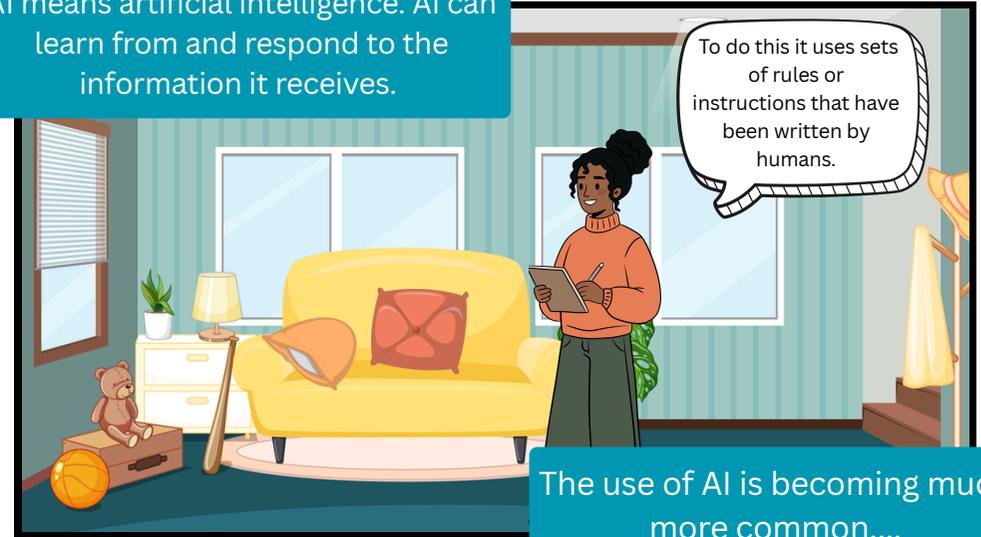


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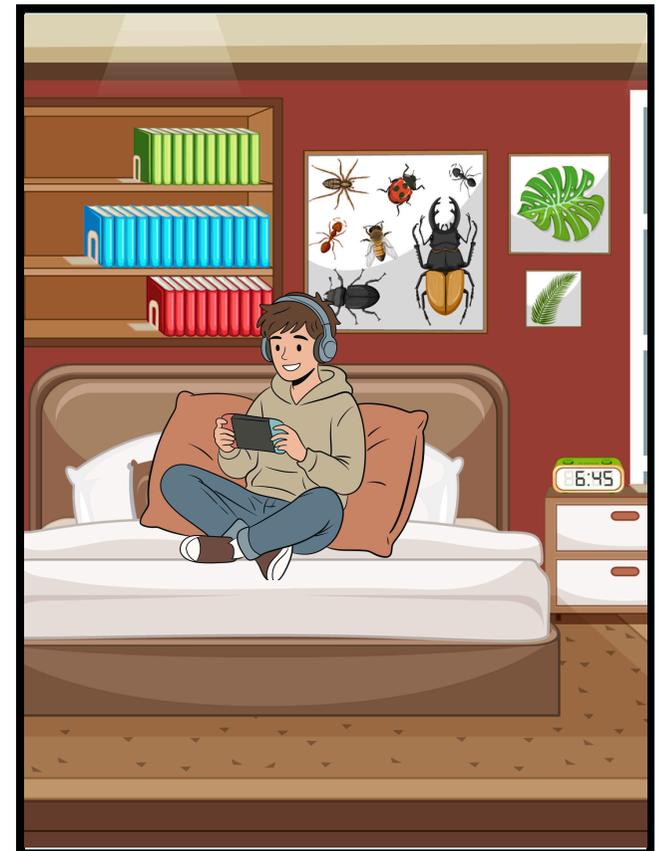
Why did we do this project?



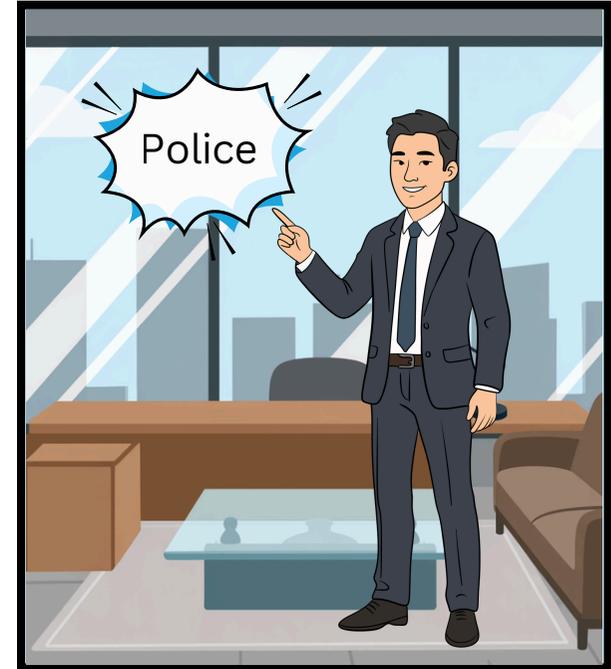
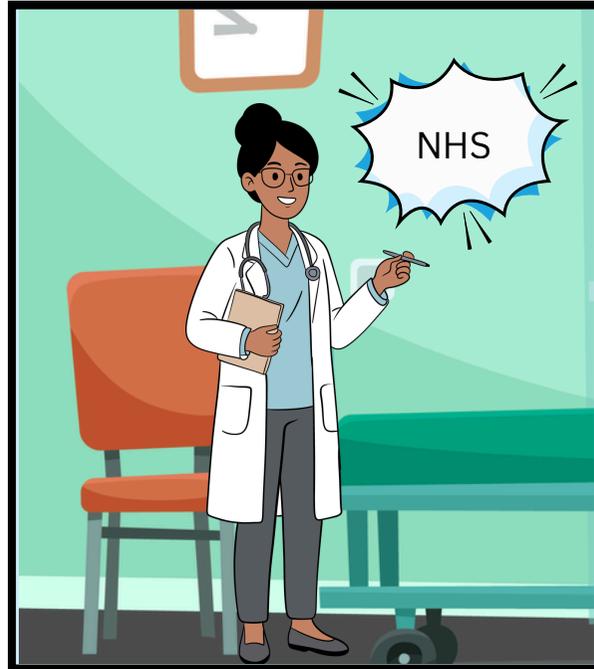
AI means artificial intelligence. AI can learn from and respond to the information it receives.



It is used in video games, online search engines, chatbots and photo tagging on social media.

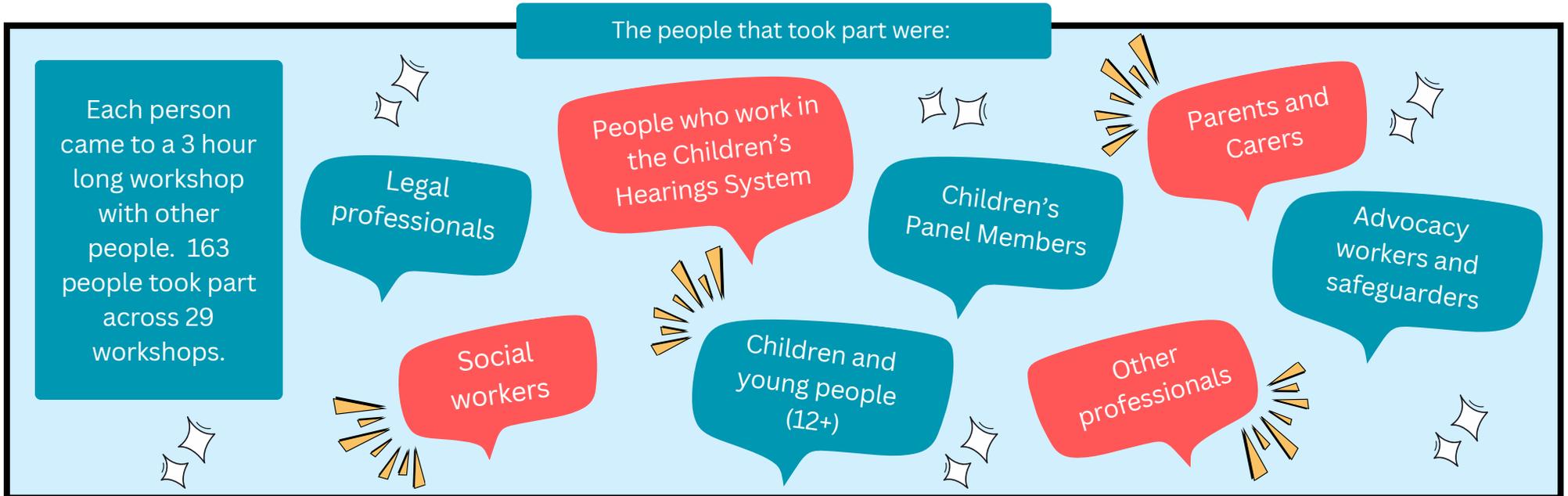
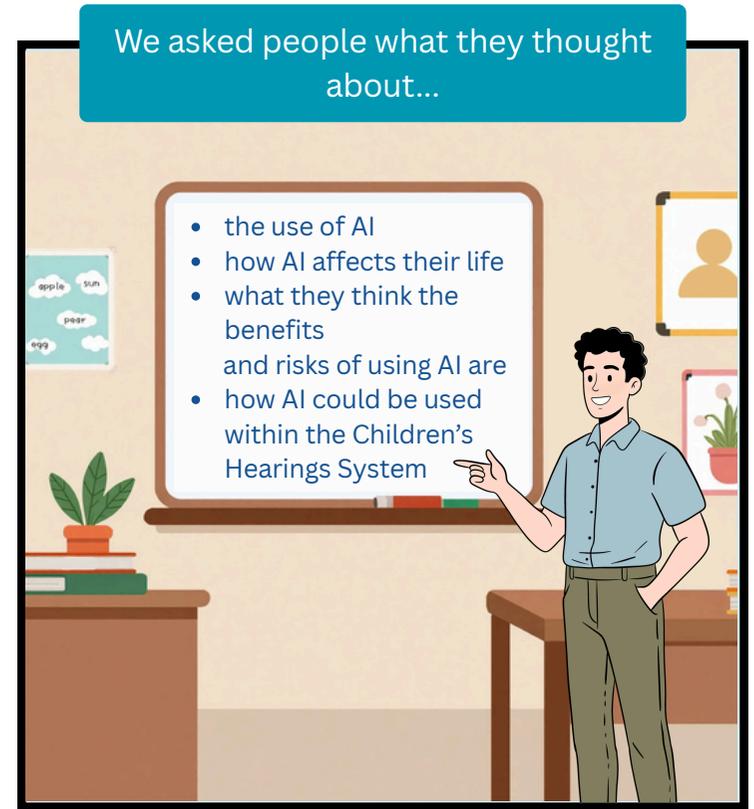
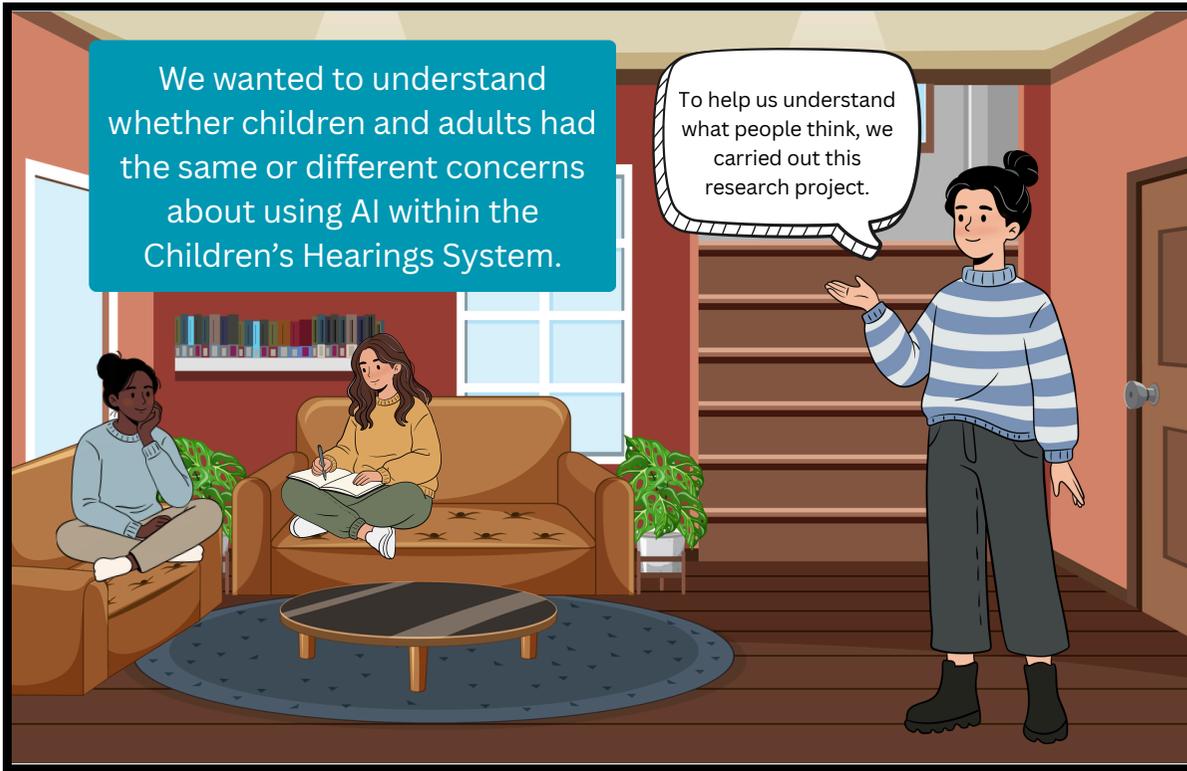


AI is also used in public services...

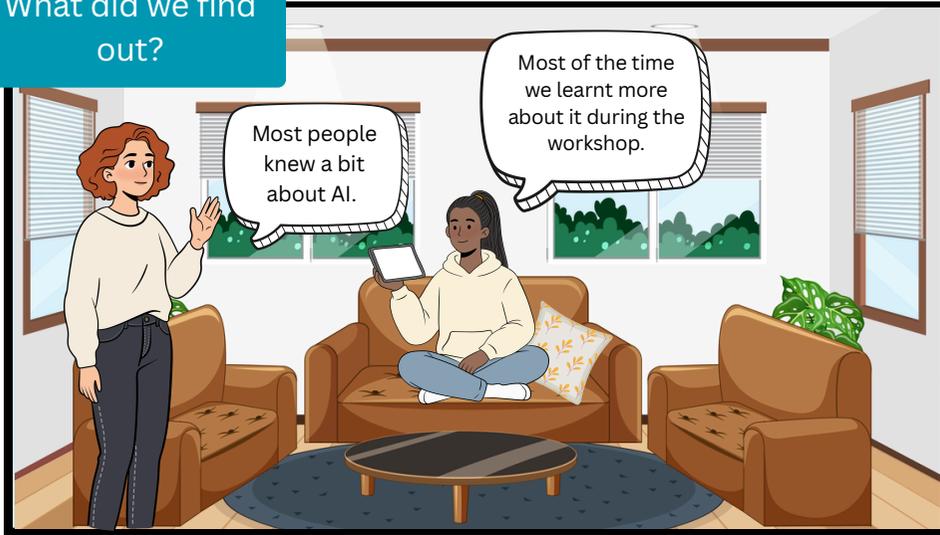


Research with children and adults has found that they have lots of concerns about AI.

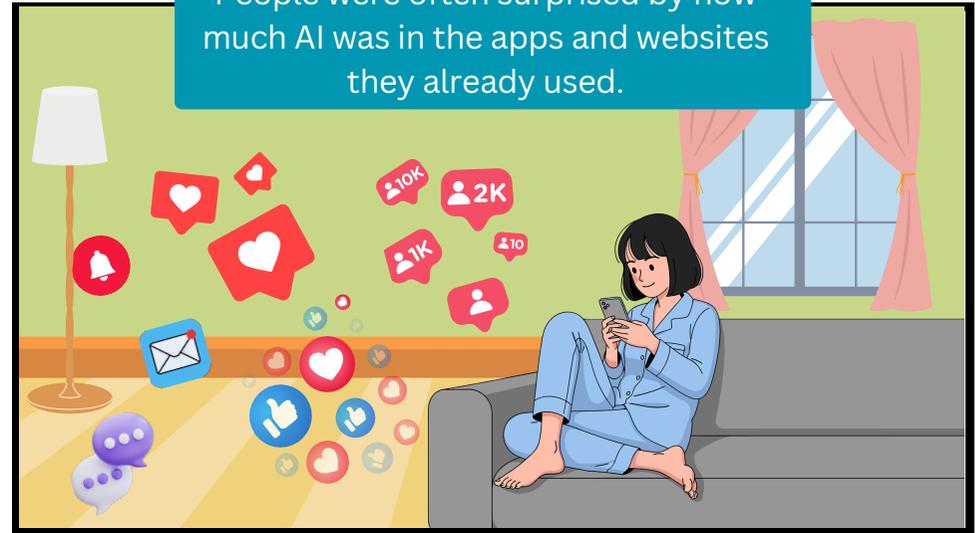




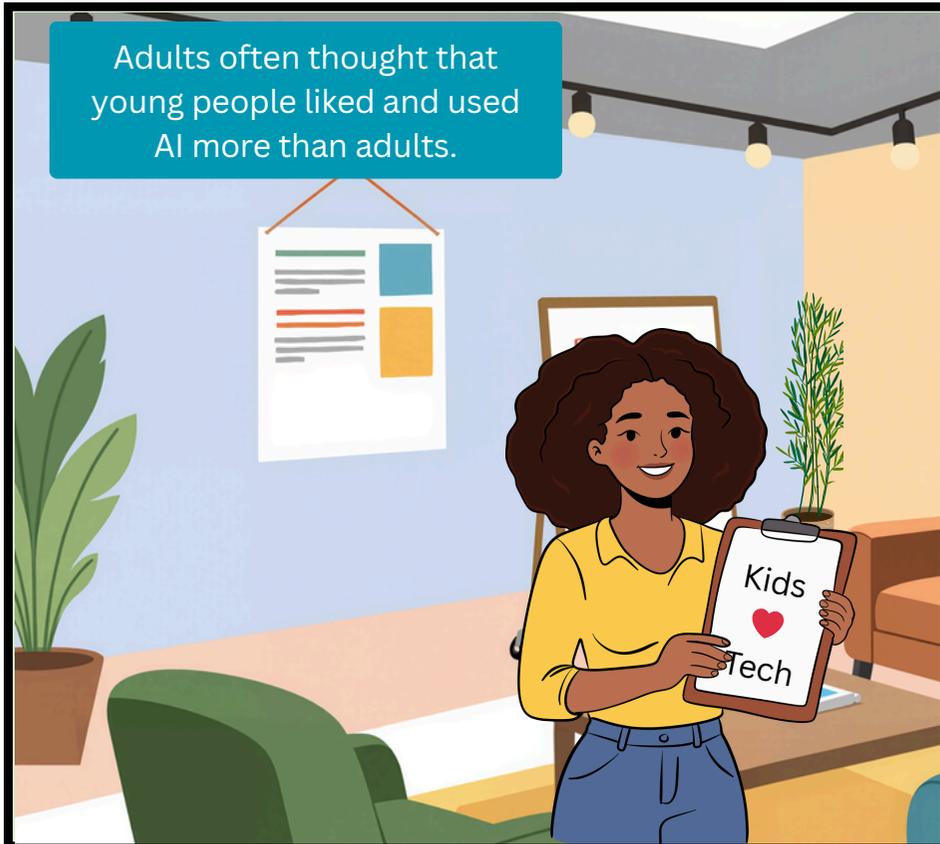
What did we find out?



People were often surprised by how much AI was in the apps and websites they already used.



Adults often thought that young people liked and used AI more than adults.



Young people said they mainly used AI for fun and not for anything important.

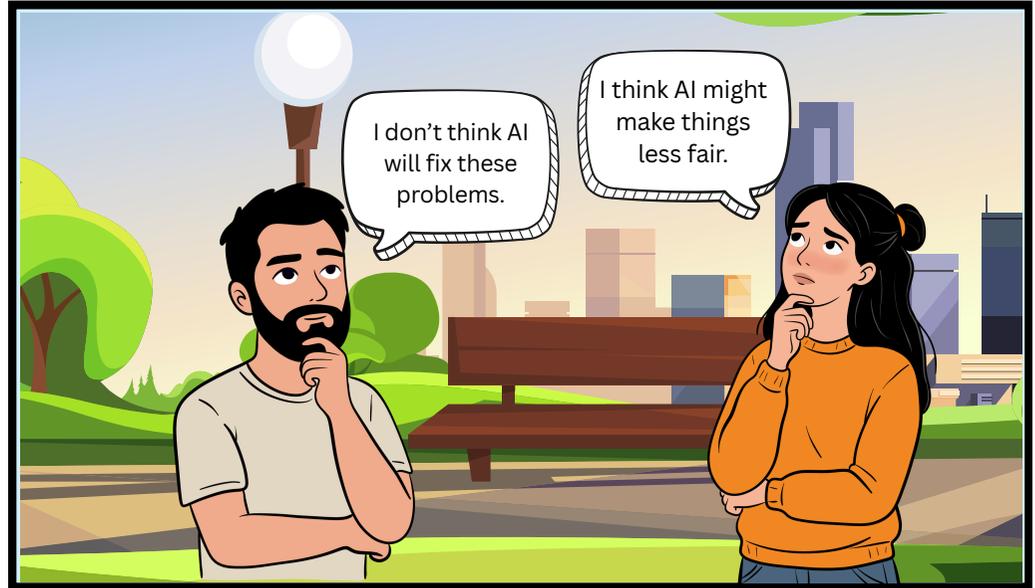


People said that the world is sometimes unfair and unequal.



I don't think AI will fix these problems.

I think AI might make things less fair.

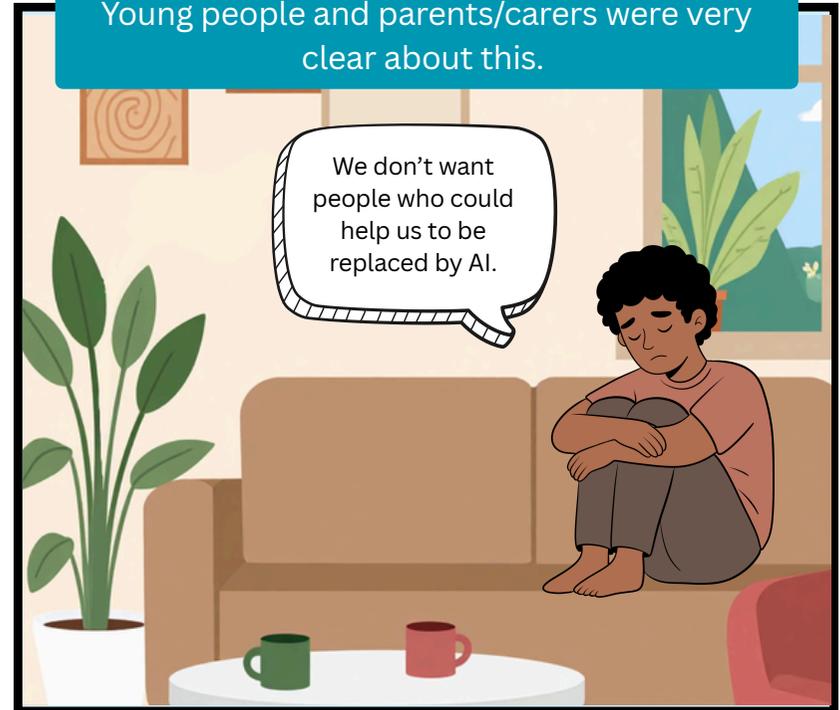


When children and families need help, having a person to talk to is very important.

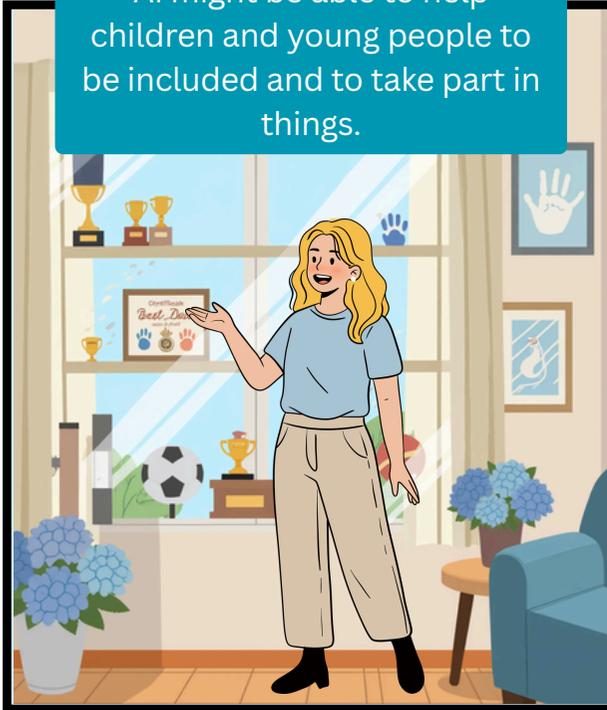


Young people and parents/carers were very clear about this.

We don't want people who could help us to be replaced by AI.



AI might be able to help children and young people to be included and to take part in things.



It can be scary for young people to share their views in hearings.



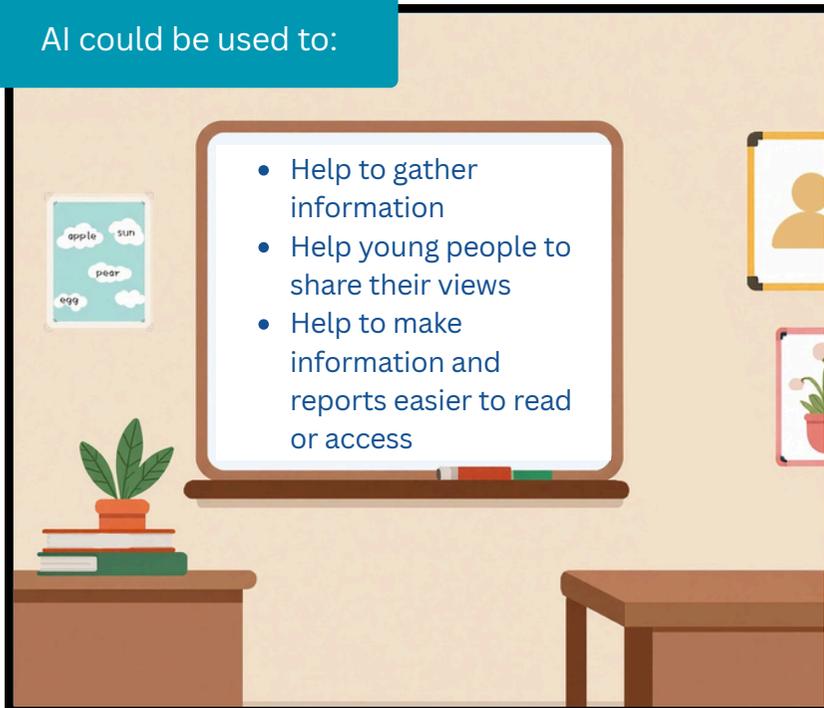
Everyone said the Children's Hearings System could be better at helping children and young people take part.



People didn't always agree with each other about whether and how AI should be used for this.

AI could be used to:

- Help to gather information
- Help young people to share their views
- Help to make information and reports easier to read or access



But these things could be done by a human.

People said it was important to make sure humans were involved in these things to make sure people were treated as individuals, and had their needs met.



People were worried that AI could make children and young people unsafe by:

- exposing them to online abuse or harmful images or videos
- creating fake photos or videos from their online images
- leading to 'real life' abuse

People were also concerned about impacts on children's learning.

Children and young people did not see AI as helpful for supporting real learning.

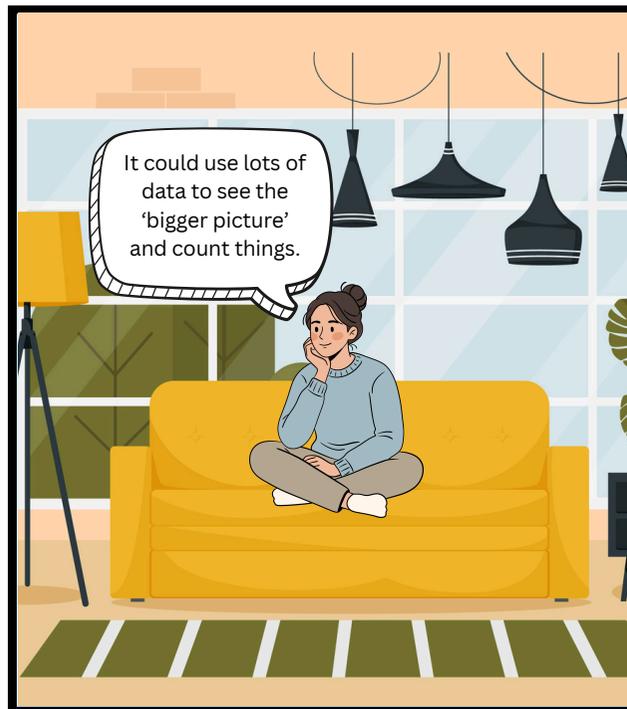
AI should put children's best interests first.

Any AI in the Children's Hearings System should make things better for children and young people.

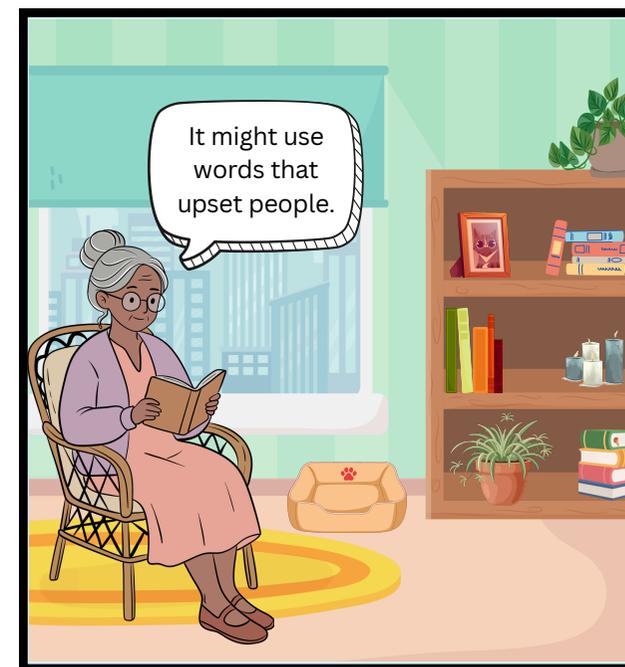
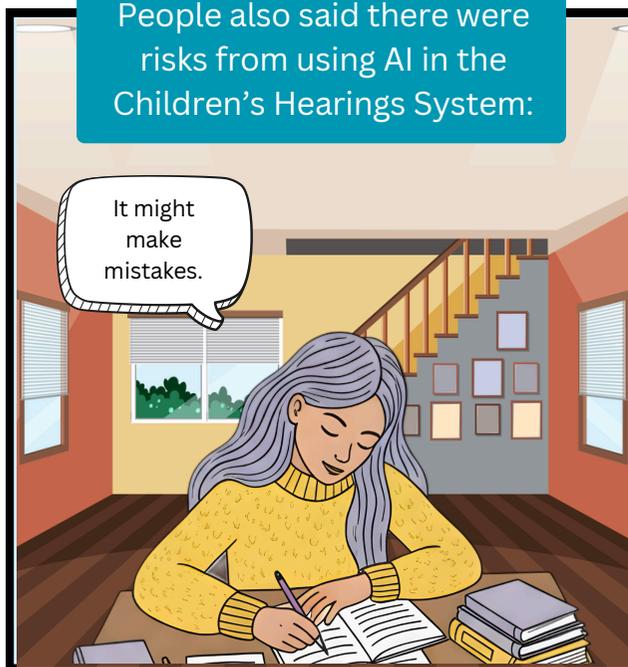
It should not just be about saving money.

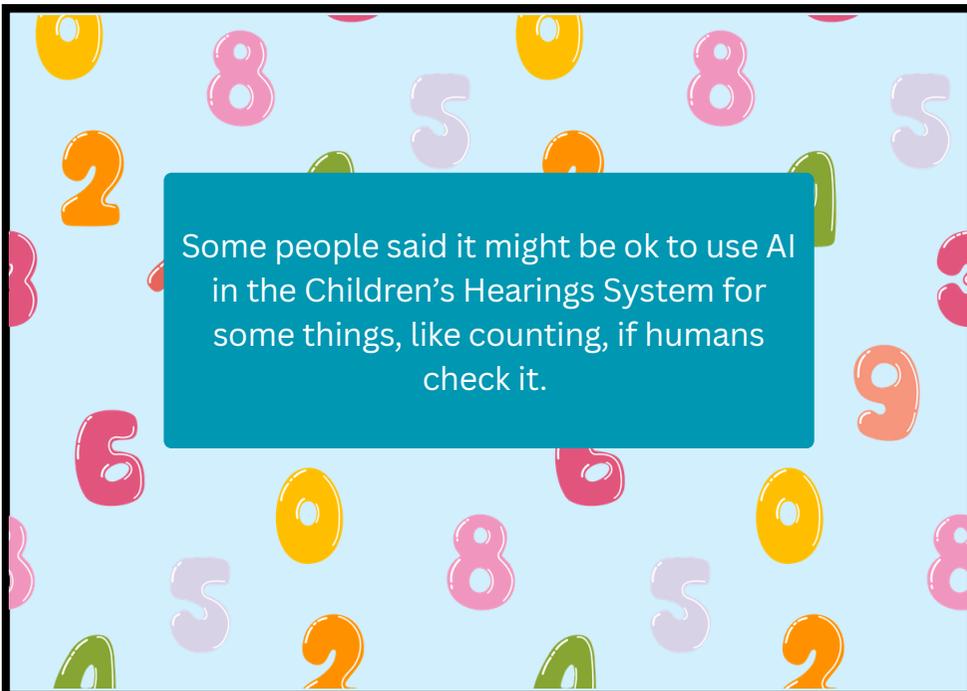
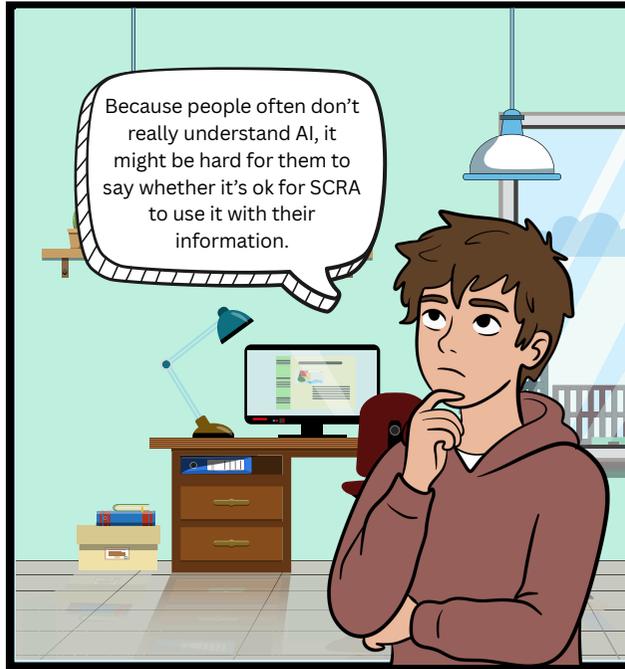
There are good and bad sides to any uses of AI

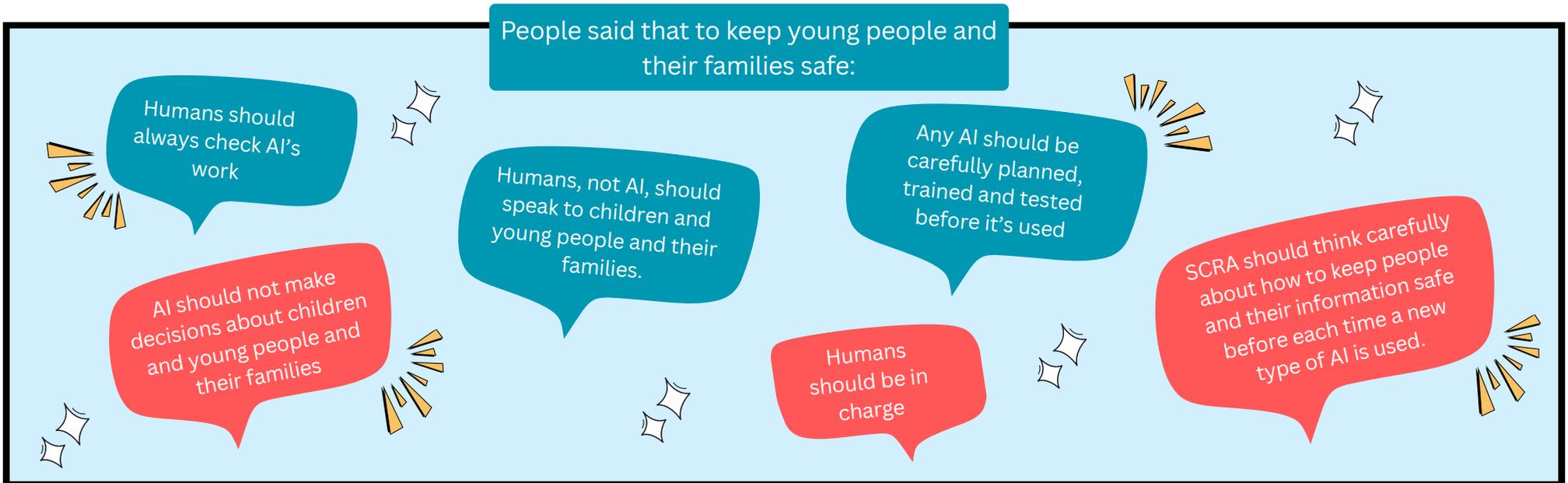
Good things about using AI in the Children's Hearings System could be:



People also said there were risks from using AI in the Children's Hearings System:







The findings of this research project agree with other research on AI. People are concerned about:

How AI could change human relationships

Online safety

How big companies would use AI

What might happen if AI makes decisions

Keeping people's information safe and private

Possible impacts on the jobs and the environment

Whether AI could make the world less fair and equal

AI making mistakes or being misleading.

In the Children's Hearings System, we need to be even more careful about these issues.

This is because the children, young people and families who come to us are already having a hard time.

Based on the findings of our research, we think that any AI used in the Children's Hearings System:

Should not make decisions.

Should not be used to try to fix bigger problems that need something else to fix them.

Should not be used to replace human contact.

Should only be used where it's needed.

If AI is used to help with some things like counting or some types of paperwork, then:

SCRA should think first carefully about the good and bad things that could happen.

People's data must be kept private.

SCRA should work with people who will be using the AI to check it works properly.

It should be clear to everyone how and why AI will be used and managed.

SCRA should keep checking that AI is working ok and following these rules.

This should happen for every type of AI that is used.

Want to know more?

You can find the full report on our website [www.scra.gov.uk/research](http://www.scra.gov.uk/research)

Thanks for reading our research.

