A co-regulatory approach to stay safe online: reporting inappropriate content with the MediaKids mobile app

# Details

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## Topics

## Sample

First, researchers collected data on attitudes towards digital media content from an initial student survey (aged 9-17 years old) from three High Schools in the Barcelona area: Institut Jaume Balmes (279 students), Escola Ramon Fuster (235 students), and Institut Damià Campeny (426 students). Six focus groups (ten students each, two per centre).
In a second step, and stemming from the results of the survey and the focus groups, three training sessions were held at the three centres (approximately 45 minutes each).
The educational sessions were organised in conjunction with the European Observatory on Children’s TV. Relying on participatory observation, the research team used multimedia tools to estimulate the discussion of a video-tour of the MediaKids prototype app to collect feedback from minors about its aim and functionalities.

## Implications For Policy Makers About

Creating a safe environment for children online

## Implications For Stakeholders About

* Researchers
* Industry
* Other

## Other Stakeholder Implication

Family and Children welfares, Public and private digital literacy initiatives

# Abstract

The convergence of mobile technologies, media, and the Internet is transforming the way that
digital content is produced, distributed, and consumed, especially among children and young
adults. In Europe as in many other areas, minors are exposed to an ever-growing amount of
digital content on mobile phones, tablets, or computer screens. Increasing exposure at an early
age brings both new opportunities and risks. This paper reviews the current discussion about
strategies that deal with inappropriate, harmful, and illegal content online and proposes a
particular co-regulatory, technology-driven approach based on the active involvement of
children, their families, and the educational system. The MediaKids project aims to test this coregulatory approach by developing a mobile application—the MediaKids app—within the
broader context of an educational programme to raise awareness about online safety. The
project seeks to involve children and young adults in defining the notion of “harmful content”
and, ultimately, in the elaboration of the policies for the emergent digital public space.

# Outcome

This paper reviews the current discussion about strategies that deal with inappropriate, harmful, and illegal content online and proposes a particular co-regulatory, technology-driven approach based on the active involvement of children, their families, and the educational system.
The ethnographic approach provided an insight into the many strategies used by children and teenagers to browse the web, upload pictures, connect to their friends, and do their own queries. In this particular context, “harm" is pragmatically perceived in relation to the construction of their digital identity, and mainly through the layout of mobile devices. Researchers found that children seemed to be more concerned with privacy and intimacy than with potential harm, because they established a personal and self-reflexive relationship within the digital ecosystem they build up through the web. Therefore, they praised both to be connected and to be let alone at the same time
The ultimate goal of the research was to produce a set of audiovisual materials that help to understand how risk situations are perceived and to identify the mechanisms that minors apply in conflictive situations as they deal with potentially harmful or illegal content..