Children’s ICT use and its impact on family life (DigiGen - working paper series No. 1)

# Details

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Children’s ICT use and its impact on family life

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Vienna

## Topics

* Social mediation
* Internet usage, practices and engagement
* Literacy and skills
* Content-related issues
* Risks and harms
* Access, inequalities and vulnerabilities

## Sample

Literature review with a view to Children’s ICT use and its impact on family life.

## Implications For Parents About

## Implications For Educators About

Digital citizenship

## Implications For Policy Makers About

* High-quality content online for children and young people
* Stepping up awareness and empowerment
* Creating a safe environment for children online

## Implications For Stakeholders About

# Abstract

The deliverable gives an overview on the literature on ICT use in the family.
"Although digital technologies are an integral part of all areas of life, children and young people use ICT (Information and Communication Technology) most frequently at home. The omnipresence of digital technologies affects the social interactions in their homes and thus influences the family dynamics. Therefore, this working paper reviews the existing literature on the effect of new technologies on family life from the perspective of the individual family members, but also looks at families as a whole. This review shows that the use of digital devices is becoming increasingly privatized and mobile. Still, families enjoy the joint use of digital technologies by actively engaging in ICT activities together or by appreciating the passive co-presence of other family members during their digital experiences. Individual ICT activities are a primary source for entertainment and a way to relax but are also a root cause of family conflicts. Unlike solitary ICT use, joint digital family activities can create a strong sense of ‘we-ness’ among family members which promotes family cohesion. As a result, digital technologies are part of the daily act of reproducing family and can thus be understood as a central element of the concept of ‘doing family’. The existing evidence suggests that the ways families engage with digital technologies are complex, and so are their consequences. On the one hand, ICT offers unique opportunities for families and their diverse individual members. Digital technologies support the reproduction of family (doing family), assist the creation and maintenance of new and existing relationships, help children in the development of their identity and skills. On the other hand, children – and also adults – face online risks and challenges, for example if they are exposed to harmful content or if their privacy is abused. Adequate parental mediation and essential digital competencies can help to mitigate the adverse effects of children’s and young people’s online activities. Hence, whether the overall impact on family life is positive or negative highly depends on the combination of digital behaviors families implement in their daily lives. In addition to families, the society – including its multiple institutions – is also essential to promote digital competencies and strengthen the resilience of children and young people." (Lorenz/Kapella, 2020, 1)

# Outcome

"The existing evidence suggests that the ways families engage with digital technologies are complex, and so are their consequences. On the one hand, ICT offers unique opportunities for families and their diverse individual members. Digital technologies support the reproduction of family (doing family), assist the creation and maintenance of new and existing relationships, help children in the development of their identity and skills. On the other hand, children – and also adults – face online risks and challenges, for example if they are exposed to harmful content or if their privacy is abused. Adequate parental mediation and essential digital competencies can help to mitigate the adverse effects of children’s and young people’s online activities. Hence, whether the overall impact on family life is positive or negative highly depends on the combination of digital behaviors families implement in their daily lives. In addition to families, the society – including its multiple institutions – is also essential to promote digital competencies and strengthen the resilience of children and young people." (Lorenz/Kapella, 2020, 1)