Net Children Go Mobile: Rapport België

Engl. transl.: Net Children Go Mobile: Report Belgium

# Details

## Year

2014

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## Language

Dutch

## Start Page

## End Page

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## Type

Report and working paper

## Publisher

Educatt

## Topics

* Social mediation
* Risks and harms
* Online safety and policy regulation

## Sample

511 children ebtween 9 and 16 years old, 236 from the Dutch-speaking part of Belgium and 275 from the French-speaking part

## Implications For Parents About

Parenting guidance / support

# Abstract

# Outcome

"Digital media, and especially smartphones become an integral part of the media-environment in which children grow up. Parents and the home context play a central role in making their children resilient. Yet, the very 'personal' characteristics of these mobile devices challenges parental control and guidance. It is more than ever crucial for parents to communicate about safe internet use. Mobile devices offer more diverse possibilities for children to develop a diverse pattern of online activities. The data supports the hypothesis that children that are more active online, discover more these possibilities and develop more digital skills. This is the case for children that are using smartphones more often. Yet, this also increases their exposure to risks.
Risks don't necessarily lead to harm. Children who are less online might get less in touch with the risks but are also not resilient to negative experiences. Nevertheless because of the 'stranger danger' discourse, there is still concern since children don't perceive meeting new people online as a risk. But in practice, it are rather friends-of-friends than it is grooming. It remains important that children are aware of this phenomenon without taking it out of proportion. Active guidance and open communication about making via-via contacts is equally as important than prevention.
Cyberbullying on the other hand, is the risk with potential the strongest impact of harm. Not many children experience it, but when they do it is a very negative experience. Young people should know where to go when they are a victim of this. Confidential counselors are key players to offer children the strategies to contain the bullying.
Parents often take an active role in guiding the child which is perceived as positive by their children. Especially when they feel that their parents are interested and have knowledge of their digital world and activities. In cases where adolescents prefer to dissociate from their parents, other familiemembers or friends play the role of trustee. The latter can have both a positive and negative role since they decide the online values and norms within the peer group." (Sofie et al., 2014, pp. 71-72, translated by Joanna Beeckmans)