Click-guides and panic buttons: Designed possibilities for youth agency and user empowerment in online youth counselling services

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## Sample

Data from a larger project within two different settings investigating the development of online youth counselling services in Sweden. The two settings are the national website UMO.se and an e-service design project for one municipality in Sweden. In both contexts, online youth counselling service refers to a youth clinic practice that is set up online to provide support and help for young people aged 12 to 25. In addition, data from focus group meetings with young potential users discussing design features of an online youth counselling service.

## Implications For Stakeholders About

Healthcare

# Abstract

This study examines how possibilities for agency are designed into online youth counselling services, as well as how such possibilities are addressed by young prospective users during the design of the services. The data are drawn both from the design of a national website for youth clinics in Sweden and from a design project developing e-services for local youth clinics in a Swedish municipality. The agency of young users is here treated as a key concern for understanding how user empowerment is accomplished through the design of websites and e-services. Using combined research materials (i.e. two websites and focus group meetings), this study demonstrates how design features may both facilitate and restrict young people’s involvement and control over sensitive and private issues. In addition, we demonstrate how the designed possibilities for empowerment may allow young users to critically approach and effectively use such services.

# Outcome

"[P]rivacy and trust are central aspects of user empowerment in online youth counselling systems where young users are offered the possibility to define their own problems, actions and strategies. In addition, power relations related to the information-seeking process and the personal space became central for how young users access and navigate information in the e-services at hand." (Authors, 274)