Wahrnehmung, Bewertung und Bewältigung belastender Online-Erfahrungen von Jugendlichen. Eine qualitative Studie im Rahmen des Projekts "SIKID - Sicherheit für Kinder in der digitalen Welt"

Engl. transl.: Perception, evaluation and coping with stressful online experiences of adolescents. A qualitative study within the project "SIKID - Safety for Children in the Digital World".

# Keywords

* contact risks
* coping
* support
* risk and harm
* cyberbullying
* cybergrooming
* cyberharassment
* hate speech

# Details

## DOI

https://doi.org/10.21241/ssoar.86633

## Issued

2023

## Language

German

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## Type

Report and working paper

## Topics

* Risks and harms
* Online safety and policy regulation
* Internet usage, practices and engagement

## Sample

16 young people (7 female, 9 male) aged twelve 12 to 17

## Implications For Parents About

Parenting guidance / support

## Implications For Policy Makers About

Creating a safe environment for children online

# Abstract

# Outcome

- Young people engage in various public spheres such as semi-public messenger chats with classmates, multiplayer games and social media platforms with online friends, strangers or bots.
- Experiences of interaction risks, including nasty and hurtful behaviour, such as cyberbullying, sexual harassment or cybergrooming, vary in frequency, situational appraisal, stress intensity and emotional involvement.
- Based on the participants' responses, we identified incident-, communicator-, person-, perception- and context-related factors influencing the individual (stress) experience.
- In response to stressful online experiences, children and young people employ various coping strategies. Some use strategies targeting the stressor (e.g., blocking, passive avoidance strategies or confrontation), while others try to ignore it. The interviews also revealed cognitive and emotional regulation strategies (e.g., devaluing the stressor, distracting oneself, or focusing on something positive).
- Coping strategies are used in different combinations and at different times during a stressful encounter, depending on the characteristics of the situation and stress intensity. Some strategies, such as deleting unwanted messages/images or the whole chat history, can sometimes be counterproductive as they prevent further (police) investigation.
- In terms of social support and help services, there seems to be a 'cascade of support'. This means that when individual coping efforts fail, adolescents first tend to seek help from people they know, such as parents and friends. Only when these are not perceived as an appropriate source of support or cannot help do young people consider turning to more distant actors and groups (e.g., counsellors or psychologists) for support.
- Young people expressed different needs for support services. While some prioritise instrumental and informational support (e.g., solving the problem together or getting advice and further information), others primarily seek emotional support.
- According to the young people interviewed, the most critical aspects of adequate support are unprejudiced listening, confidentiality, and reassurance that their concerns and needs are taken seriously.
- Young people often appear unaware of their rights in the digital space and how to assert them (e.g., when to involve the police).
-These findings provide invaluable insights into how young people try to manage diverse and sometimes stressful online experiences and when they need support. From a media education perspective, approaches that raise young people's awareness of their rights in the digital space, increase their awareness of injustices and strengthen their assertiveness are needed, particularly for issues such as sexual harassment and digital civil courage.