Mediation of young children’s digital technology use: The parents’ perspective

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## Topics

* Social mediation
* Risks and harms
* Internet usage, practices and engagement

## Sample

The parents of children aged 7–8 and their siblings (N=10 families) in the Czech Republic.
Research was part of a research project called “Young Children (0-8) and Digital Technology” carried out by the Joint Research Centre, Institute for the Protection and Security of the Citizen The present research is based on a more detailed re-analysis of the data collected in the Czech Republic only.

## Implications For Parents About

* Parental practices / parental mediation
* Parental digital literacy
* Other

## Other Parent Implication

To give education concerning digital skills to both parents and children together.

## Implications For Stakeholders About

Researchers

# Abstract

The present-day reality that young children use digital media has forced parents to balance the risks and opportunities of the content that their children may encounter online. Current studies have mostly been quantitative. They have mainly focused on children aged 9 and older, and have addressed the types of mediation that parents use. However, they have not considered their relation to specific risks and opportunities. In the present study, we have sought to address this discrepancy and to understand the mediation strategies that parents use to shape the online experiences of their children. We focused on the factors that play a role in these mediations of specific risks and opportunities. In-depth semi-structured interviews with the parents of children aged 7–8 and their siblings in the Czech Republic (N=10 families) were conducted in 2014. A thematic analysis identified three main themes: (1) Mediation strategies of technology usage in relation to the mediation of online opportunities and online risks; (2) Time and place management of mediation strategies; and (3) The child as a co-creator of mediation strategies. Our results indicated that parental mediation is a dynamic process that is co-constructed by the parents and children according to context.

# Outcome

"A thematic analysis identified three main themes: (1) Mediation strategies of technology usage in relation to the mediation of online opportunities and online risks; (2) Time and place management of mediation strategies; and (3) The child as a co-creator of mediation strategies. Results indicated that parental mediation is a dynamic process that is coconstructed by the parents and children according to context." (Smahelova et al., 2017, Abstract)
"Results suggest that parents use various kinds of mediation strategies, such as co-use, active mediation, supervision, parent as role model, restrictive mediation, and trial and error." ( Smahelova et al., 2017, Mediation Strategies of Technology Usage, para. 1)
"The mediation of technology opportunities was mostly connected to “content opportunities” where parents let children learn new things and let them improve their digital skills." (Smahelova et al., 2017, Mediation Strategies of Technology Usage, para. 2) "Parental mediation strategies emerge over and over again according to time, place, and the parents’ and children’s characteristics and behavior. Parental mediation "is more a process of the interactions between children and parents that co-constructs the mediation strategies of the parents." (Smahelova et al., 2017, Child as a Co-Creator of Mediation Strategies)