Mediation practices of parents and older siblings in guiding toddler's touchscreen technology use: an ethnographic case study

# Details

## Year

2016

## Issued

2016

## Language

English

## Volume

7

## Issue

2

## Start Page

## End Page

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## Type

Journal article

## Journal

Media Education - Studi, ricerche e buone pratiche

## Topics

## Sample

This ethnographic case study was carried out from September 2015 to May 2016, during which time the touchscreen technology use and parental and older sibling mediation practices of two girls (21 and 54 months old) were explored. The data gathered consists of field notes and videos recorded with a smartphone and semi-structured interviews with parents and a 4-year-old child.

## Implications For Parents About

Parental practices / parental mediation

## Implications For Stakeholders About

Researchers

# Abstract

The aim of this ethnographic case study was twofold. Firstly, we aimed to find out which mediation strategies parents used to regulate the touchscreen technology use of their toddlers and how these strategies were embedded in the family’s everyday life. Secondly, we aimed to study older siblings’ influence and the mediation practices of toddlers’ touchscreen use. This ethnographic case study was carried out from September 2015 to May 2016, during which time the touchscreen technology use and parental and older sibling mediation practices of two girls (21 and 54 months old) were explored. The data gathered consists of field notes and videos recorded with a smartphone and semi-structured interviews with parents and a 4-year-old child. Our results indicate that the parental mediation strategies were in accordance with their positive or negative expectations of media effects on children. As the mother was more concerned about excessive internet use and improper online content, she was mainly engaged in restrictive mediation; in contrast, the father was more relaxed, believed in the educational role of touchscreen technologies and was thus more likely to engage in active mediation. The older sibling influenced the younger one’s practices both in terms of the content used and the times of use, but also served as a role model, a playmate, gatekeeper, consoler, trustee and "window" when mediating her younger sister’s touchscreen use.

# Outcome

"Ethnographic case study results revealed that toddlers communicate and interact through both living (parents and siblings) and nonliving elements, e.g. touchscreen devices." (Nevski Siibak, 2016, p. 334). "Parents use different parental mediation strategies and combine these strategies to fulfill their roles as mediators of young children’s touchscreen use." (Nevski Siibak, 2016, p. 334). "In addition to the parents, the older sister played a huge role in mediating the younger one’s touchscreen use." (Nevski Siibak, 2016, p. 334).