Jugendmedienschutzindex: Der Umgang mit onlinebezogenen Risiken – Ergebnisse der Befragung von Heranwachsenden und Eltern

Engl. transl.: Youth Media Protection Index: Dealing with online-related risks – results of the survey of adolescents and parents

# Keywords

* Youth media protection
* online risks
* media usage
* children
* parents

# Details

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Report and working paper

## Topics

* Online safety and policy regulation
* Risks and harms
* Literacy and skills

## Sample

"A total of 805 adolescents and their parents were interviewed between mid-February and mid-April 2017." (cf. Brüggen et al. 2017, 8)

"The parents surveyed are between 28 and 67 years old and on average around 42 years old. More than two thirds (71%) are female. Forty-seven per cent report a secondary school leaving certificate as their highest educational qualification, 19 per cent have a high school leaving certificate, 18 per cent have a lower secondary school leaving certificate, and 14 per cent have completed a course of study. Most parents (76%) say they are responsible for raising their child together with their partner who lives in the same household." (cf. Brüggen et al. 2017, 14)

"The children and adolescents are almost evenly distributed across the targeted age groups of 9 to 16 years. While 16-year-olds are slightly underrepresented (n = 95; 12%), 13-year-olds are slightly overrepresented (n = 108; 13%). Half of the children and adolescents surveyed are male and half are female. Most (62%) live with siblings in the household. Almost all of them (about 99%) are currently attending school, and about 1% are already in vocational training." (cf. Brüggen et al. 2017, 14)

[translated by the coder]

## Implications For Educators About

Digital citizenship

## Implications For Policy Makers About

Stepping up awareness and empowerment

# Abstract

"The present study represents the first part of the "Youth Media Protection Index" initiated and published by the Freiwillige Selbstkontrolle Multimedia e.V. (FSM). The focus of this part is on those affected or "end users" of youth media protection: parents and adolescents. The "Youth Media Protection Index" indicates how the protection of adolescents from negative online experiences is anchored in the concerns, attitudes, knowledge and actions of parents, educational specialists and teachers as well as adolescents. On this basis, the strengths and weaknesses of the current media policy regulations for the protection of young people from harmful media as well as the available media pedagogical support offer become apparent, from which starting points for their further development arise.

The empirical basis of the study is a nationally representative survey of adolescents between the ages of 9 and 16 who use the internet and one parent each who is responsible for online education or is most familiar with the child's online use. GfK Media Communication Research GmbH Co. KG was commissioned. A total of 805 adolescents and their parents were interviewed between mid-February and mid-April 2017." (cf. Brüggen et al. 2017, 8)

[translated by the coder]

# Outcome

"It is obvious that the online use of children and adolescents is a cause for concern and that there is reason to think about protection options: About three-quarters of the parents mention at least one cause for concern in response to whether they are worried about their child's online use. Among the adolescents, it is slightly less, but with almost sixty per cent, the majority can name concrete concerns. While both adolescents and their parents are less concerned about contact with disturbing or frightening content as they get older, risks related to interaction with other adolescents (e.g. bullying) become increasingly important. Overall, the focus of the spectrum of concerns is shifting away from the risks covered by traditional youth media protection." (cf. Brüggen et al. 2017, 8)

"Protection of minors from harmful media is widely accepted, even if it restricts online use: 90 per cent of parents and as many as 72 per cent of adolescents agree with the statement that the protection of children and adolescents is more important than easy access to all online offers. About concrete protection options, parents show ambivalences that point to the need for media education: On the one hand, age labels are widely accepted; on the other hand, the majority of those surveyed assume that they encourage younger people to use the services intended for older people. Parents are aware of their role within youth media protection. At the same time, they believe that authorities, media providers as well as schools and politics should also bear responsibility. Furthermore, most parents assign responsibility to the adolescents for their own protection – the older the children, the more." (cf. Brüggen et al. 2017, 8-9)

"Knowledge about established aspects of youth media protection such as age levels, age labels and advertising regulations is available to a majority of parents. Many parents have adequate ideas, concerning the basic functioning of youth protection programmes. On the other hand, there are gaps in the institutional aspects of the system for the protection of minors from harmful media and very concrete aspects of the application. From the point of view of both parents and adolescents, young people aged 13 and over outperform their parents in terms of their online skills, which poses particular challenges for the role of parents in youth media protection. About coping with online risks, parents rate their own abilities higher than those of their children; only in the case of 15/16 year-olds do they have the same confidence in their children." (cf. Brüggen et al. 2017, 9)

"If adolescents are confronted with problematic online offers or need support in case of stressful experiences, only about one-third of the parents know about corresponding contact points. Only very few have made use of them so far. Children and adolescents would primarily turn to parents, friends and teachers if they had problems; they, too, are hardly aware of official complaints offices or professional counselling." (cf. Brüggen et al. 2017, 9)

" Parents mainly rely on content- and time-related rules, the observance of age ratings and talking about online use for protection-related media education. The age of the children is a decisive factor for the extent and the choice of parental measures: Parents of the two younger age groups are particularly active." (cf. Brüggen et al. 2017, 9)

"The protection of children and young people from harmful media should be understood as a continuous process of social negotiation in which all the actors concerned should be involved - at least, that is, state agencies, media providers, educational and training institutions, parents, children and young people themselves as well as their peers. In this sense, this study provides information about the perspective of parents and adolescents.
Youth media protection cannot only consist of protecting adolescents from possible negative experiences in online communication. It should also be a goal to enable them to deal with online media in a conscious and socially responsible way that does justice to their interests and to support them in avoiding or coping with risks.
n view of the findings identified here that parents' attitudes to youth media protection vary greatly and that children's online communication thus takes place under very different conditions, media education initiatives and programmes should increasingly take these differences into account.
 The prominent role assigned to parents in the implementation of the protection of children and young people from possible online risks can be undermined by ignorance, lack of knowledge, misunderstandings, excessive demands as well as convictions that run counter to the idea of protection. However, these problem situations can also only be defused with measures tailored to specific target groups, such as education about parental obligations, awareness campaigns to reduce knowledge gaps, clarifications regarding the effectiveness as well as the limits of certain protection instruments, assistance in using these instruments in everyday life, and parent-specific offers for guidance in training or adapting their own media education concepts.
Overall, the results of the survey point to the importance of a systematic and recurring inventory of concerns, expectations and knowledge of parents and adolescents in youth media protection." (cf. Brüggen et al. 2017, 10)

[translated by the coder]