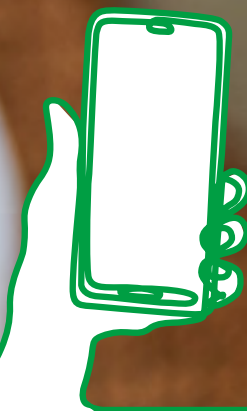# GUIDE FOR FAMILIES
ENDING

ICT & Early School Leaving. Developing a New Methodology to Empower Children in Digital WellbeIng and Critical ThiNkinG

ENDING
PROJECT

www.endingproject.eu

Guide For Families. ENDING.

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INTRODUCTION

Early school dropout is a serious problem that both families and the education system in general have been facing for years in the different countries of the European Union. Among the factors that currently have the greatest impact on school dropout are those related to the misuse of new technologies and the risks associated with exposure to the digital environment, to which children and adolescents are subject from an early age.

The mission of the ENDING project is to develop an innovative methodology based on the active participation of young people, which allows them to identify, understand and overcome the challenges that new technologies represent for their personal and academic development. Tackling school dropout and developing skills for the use of digital resources with knowledge and critical thinking is fundamental for the future of our teenagers, and this is the framework of action in which the ENDING project is inscribed.

School dropout is associated with a wide range of factors, including low academic performance, increasingly linked to the abusive use of the Internet and the problems arising therefrom, which affect the family and school environment and compromise the development of children and young people. This Guide for Families presents some tools to address fundamental issues for the construction of a digital citizenship, always

from the perspective of promoting children's rights, with a special emphasis on critical thinking and media and digital literacy, fundamental for the autonomous and conscious development of children.

This Guide for Families was produced as an intellectual result of the project, based on the multidisciplinary experience of the five entities participating in the ENDING project.

The ENDING consortium

Five leading institutions in Europe have joined forces to develop this project that proposes an innovative and multidisciplinary approach to the factors that, from the field of new technologies, influence school dropout.

MAPFRE Foundation

With more than 45 years of experience, it is recognized as a benchmark global foundation for our commitment to the well-being of people and social progress. Its mission, as a non-profit institution created by MAPFRE, is to contribute to improving people's quality of life and the progress of society through multinational programs and activities.

MAPFRE promotes the comprehensive education of people, especially children and young people who belong to disadvantaged communities, with the aim of achieving a better society. To do this, it works in collaboration with local organizations on projects to support nutrition, health, education and access to the labor market.

In the field of Health Promotion, MAPFRE works to improve people's health and their quality of life through the prevention of non-communicable diseases related to lifestyle. It works in collaboration with public administrations, educational institutions and scientific societies with the aim of promoting healthy lifestyles. It reaches out to

people of all ages through educational programs in schools, initiatives to promote health in the workplace, and activities for families.

Spanish National Police

The Spanish National Police Force (Policía Nacional – PN) find their origins in 1824. Since them, it has been growing up to become in 1986 as the updated and specialized police force that it is in the present day. Currently, it is almost 70.000 police officers with competence in all the Spanish territory.

Within the Headquarters of Public Security and Safety of the Spanish National Police be found the Community Policing Central Unit. Its main purpose is to manage relationships between citizens and Police and also promote, monitor and evaluate prevention actions through the coordination of their Community Policing Services distributed throughout the Spanish national territory, except in Catalonia and the Basque Country regions.

Besides this, its other main objective is to promote the implementation of prevention plans for vulnerable groups in society. One of the prevention plans that structure the Community Policing Central Unit is the so-called "Master Plan for Coexistence and Improvement of Safety in Schools and their Environments", in charge of the protection of children and youth through the prevention of any kind of risk that may affect minors, as for example the well known nowadays dangers of the Internet through, among other actions, educational and informative activities.

Stiftung Digitale Chancen

Since its creation in 2002, Stiftung Digitale Chancen has been in charge of researching the social impact of digitization, campaigning for equal internet access for all people and promoting digital literacy.

Its goals are the digital inclusion of all social groups and to counteract the digital divide. Stiftung Digitale Chancen works in cooperation with public, civic and private partners on projects funded by federal and European programs as well as by industry. The foundation works under the patronage of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy and the German Federal Ministry for the Family, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth. Leading German civil society organizations are represented on the advisory board.

Its lines of action focus on:

- **Digital society:** Digitization is shaping our daily lives in many aspects and has a huge impact on social processes. This evolution must be investigated, modeled and contextualized.
- **Digital inclusion:** lack of access and knowledge for competent use of digital resources can cause or increase social disparity. The foundation enables and promotes the digital inclusion of all people.
- **Digital competence:** a vital prerequisite for digital inclusion is digital competence. Training should be delivered in a targeted group-oriented manner through innovative formats.

Centre for Intercultural Studies (CEI), ISCAP, Polytechnic of Porto

The Polytechnic of Porto is the largest and one of the most dynamic polytechnic schools in Portugal, integrating eight schools spread out over three campuses, where thousands of people study, research, teach, and innovate daily. The Polytechnic of Porto's mission is to qualify socially responsible citizens, that use their knowledge to improve society, contributing for the development of a better world. Social responsibility is undertaken for the benefit of the community and the society, within an international framework of reference and excellence.

The Center for Intercultural Studies (CEI) is located at the Porto Accounting and Business School (ISCAP) of the Polytechnic of Porto. ISCAP

has a long experience in innovation in learning, creativity and e-learning, constantly improving teaching methods through the use of technology.

CEI develops applied and fundamental research, cooperating with other national and international institutions in scientific, technical and cultural projects. The designation and the goals of this Center encompass the entire interdisciplinary field generated by their research, exchange opportunities, scientific events and editorial projects, developed over the years within the main research lines of CEI: intercultural theories and practices, intercultural communication, and intercultural business.

The team of CEI is composed of more than 50 researchers and lecturers from ISCAP-P.Porto and institutions, both from Portugal and abroad, and is supported by a recognized advisory board. CEI hosts and supervises master classes, conferences, seminars, postgraduate courses, and master's programs, with the help of a specialized library and several open access databases. CEI has taken part in countless international conferences, publications, networks, and financed research projects, and published nearly two dozen books with worldwide distribution, in the broad field of intercultural studies.

PantallasAmigas

PantallasAmigas (PA) arose from the opportunities that ICTs offer minors and the need for them to grow up in an integral, safe and healthy way. The motto of PantallasAmigas stands "For a safe and healthy use of communication technologies and responsible digital citizenship", which means that it is an initiative that works for the promotion, participation and protection of children and teenagers on the Internet and other online technologies since 2004. The creation of educational resources and awareness, dissemination and research work are its main activities, with special emphasis on the issues of cyberbullying, grooming, sexting, digital violence against women, critical thinking and privacy. Among its signs of identity, the strategic use of educational communication, the development of skills, the promotion of universal values and the application of innovative methods stand out.

ENDING

PantallasAmigas works daily in educational centers, in direct contact with students and the educational community, promoting different aspects related to digital well-being and digital media literacy among children and teenagers. He has addressed numerous programs related to the use and overuse of mobile phones, video games and other connected devices, as well as the development of critical thinking skills. In addition, it develops Cybermanagers, a permanent program based on peer learning and service-learning strategies with a focus on promoting coexistence, citizenship and digital health. The Cybermanagers program is a pioneering methodology that the AP launched for the first time in January 2010, which combines two widely tested methodologies - the solidarity learning service and peer training - and places adolescents at the center of the intervention.

1. COMPARATIVE LEGISLATIVE ANALYSIS

Spanish National Police

In view of the European and national framework in which the ENDING project takes place, it considers it useful to include at the beginning of this guide for families a brief comparative analysis of the legislation on the minimum age for the use of the Internet by minors in Germany, Spain and Portugal.

Germany

In Germany, as in Spain, the minimum age of criminal liability is 14 years, according to Section 19 of the German Penal Code (Strafgesetzbuch, vom 15. May 1871).

According to Sections 1 and 3 of the Child Protection Act, if a minor who has reached the age of 14 but has not yet reached the age of 18 commits a criminal offence, the following rule applies, provided that the minor has attained a degree of moral and intellectual maturity sufficient to enable him to understand the illegality of the act and behave according to that understanding. A number of measures can be imposed on responsible minors, such as: training courses, community service, avoiding contact with certain people

or places, and even confinement in a closed centre for a maximum of ten years.[1]

Finally, in the event that a minor under the age of 14 commits a criminal offence that minor will not be subject to any criminal liability.

Spain

According to Article 19 of the Spanish Penal Code (Organic Law 10/1995 of 23 November 1995), "minors under 18 years of age shall not be criminally liable under this code. When a minor of this age commits a criminal act, he may be liable in accordance with the provisions of the law governing the criminal liability of the minor." In accordance with Article 1.1 of Organic Law 5/2000 of January 12, which regulates the criminal liability of minors: "This law applies to liability persons over 14 years and under 18 years of age for the practice of acts classified as crimes or misdemeanors in the Criminal Code or in special criminal laws".[2]

Consequently, the minimum age of criminal liability is 14 years. If a person over the age of 14 and under 18 commits a criminal offence, he/she shall be held accountable in accordance with the provisions of the above mentioned criminal law, which contains a number of measures to be imposed depending on the seriousness of the offence committed (from Community service to prison in a closed regime for a maximum of eight years).

If the offender is less than 14 years old, the provisions of the rules on the protection of minors provided for in the Civil Code (Art. 3 of Organic Law

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1   German juvenile criminal law also applies to the so-called "Heranwachsende" (Young adults), defined people that, at the time of the crime, have reached the age of 18 but not yet 21 years, in accordance with section 1 of the Protection Youth ("Jugendgerichtsgesetz Vom 11. Dezember 1974").
2   According to Article 69 of the Spanish Penal Code: "If a person over the age of 18 and under the age of 21 commits a infringement provisions of the law governing the criminal liability of minors may be applied in cases and with the requirements set out therein." Notwithstanding the foregoing, the initial regime provided for this age group in Organic Law 5/2000 is no longer applicable, since it was abolished by Organic Law 8/2006.

5/2000 of January 12, which regulates the criminal liability of minors) apply. Children under the age of 14 do not have the necessary maturity to assess and be motivated by criminal rules and to understand their consequences.

Portugal

According to Article 19 of the Penal Code Portuguese (Decree-Law No. 48/95 of March 15): "Minors under 16 years of age are not criminally responsible". Therefore, persons under the age of 16 will not be held accountable under this rule as they are unable to understand the illegality of their actions.

According to Article 1 of the Educational Guardianship Law (Law No. 166/99 of 14 September): "The practice, by a minor aged between 12 and 16 years of age, of an act qualified by law as a crime gives way to the application of educational guardianship measure in accordance with the provisions of this law". Among these tutelary educational measures, we can highlight the implementation of training programs, the treatment of alcohol or substance dependence, or even hospitalization in a center, for a maximum period of three years, in order to internalize the values that allow the person to govern his life in a socially and legally responsible manner, as indicated in Article 17 of the above mentioned Law.

Finally, minors under the age of 12 who commit an offence are considered victims and not perpetrators or offenders.

2. MISUSE OF CONNECTED DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES

PantallasAmigas

2.1. Some criminal behaviour that our children can commit through ICTs

Guiding, supervising and advising our children on how to make safe and effective use of the Internet involves making them responsible for their own actions online. In order to guide their digital practices, we need to be aware of those factors that can lead our children, especially during pre-adolescence and adolescence, to commit online actions outside the limits of the law. Below, there are four factors to take into account in order to guide our children towards responsible online use:

- On many occasions, we can perceive a feeling of impunity on the part of our children when they use the Internet. This mistaken sensation usually derives from ignorance, from not knowing that there is criminal or civil liability, thinking that what they are doing is not a crime, or because they believe that it is more difficult to identify the perpetrators because they are doing it on the Internet.
- It is also common for them to think that everything is allowed online. This thinking may stem from their own exposure to different situations, including illegal contents, that they face on a daily basis.
- Our children may also experience the feeling that it is very difficult to prosecute and identify those who commit crimes online, either for

technical reasons or for reasons of availability and prioritisation of the necessary means.

- On the other hand, we must bear in mind that our children can commit unlawful acts, even involuntarily, due to the ease of immediacy with which these actions can be carried out, simply because they have a device connected to the Internet.

2.1.1. Threats, coercion, insults, defamation

Blackmail, coercion, extortion, threat... are names that refer to different, more or less serious, non-lawful ways of trying to condition people's freedom, including that of our children. The difference between them may be great or subtle, but in any case, they constitute a crime, since they deliberately affect the free exercise of another person's own will. We must convey to our children that the law pursues this criminal conduct, like any other criminal conduct, whether it takes place on or off the Internet.

On the other hand, it is necessary to remind them that the language used on the Internet can be a crime. Insult, which is also considered a form of verbal aggression, and which can take the form of defamation and slander, is a way of affecting the right to honour and to one's own image and, as such, falls outside the scope of the law.

In short, these are actions that our children can easily carry out and which may constitute a crime. We must also bear in mind that this type of behaviour is facilitated and amplified by the characteristics of the Internet itself.

Moreover, if we add to this the possibility of aggravating circumstances, such as when these behaviours take place in public or in written (with publicity), the problem becomes more complex and can affect our children more seriously, both as victims and perpetrators.

Finally, it is advisable to guide children in the safe use of the Internet, showing and explaining this reality to them, but always avoiding advice

that could cause them to feel fear. Being cautious when using the Internet does not mean being afraid to use it, but rather being aware of how we should use it and how misuse by other people can affect us.

2.1.2. Computer damage

Sometimes, for a specific purpose or simply for entertainment, our children, especially teenagers, "hack" websites, extract passwords from user accounts or carry out similar actions by introducing certain malicious software on other people's servers or devices. It is necessary to warn and remind them that these actions may involve, among other things, an offence of computer damage.

On the other hand, we must mention other criminal conduct, such as the crime of discovery and disclosure of secrets, which includes actions such as accessing another person's e-mail or intercepting their communications.

2.1.3. Intellectual property offences

Thanks to the Internet, our children can directly or indirectly access an inexhaustible source of digital goods and services: image banks, books, software, videogames, music, films, etc. It should be made clear to them that everything, absolutely everything, has an intellectual authorship that is usually linked to rights of use and exploitation. Sometimes, whoever owns the authorship and intellectual property allows certain free uses of that good or service under specific conditions. However, if our children decide to use or commercialise a digital good or service without the appropriate authorisation, they could be committing a crime against intellectual property.

2.1.4. Gender-based cyberviolence

It is common that, especially during adolescence, our daughters and sons have partners. We must be especially vigilant about the behaviour and attitudes that they show towards their partners, given that the violence

that an adolescent can exert on his or her partner or ex-partner takes on a new dimension with the Internet.

For example, psychological violence of control can materialise in the form of interference in the communications of the adolescent girl (usually via instant messaging such as WhatsApp or social networks such as Instagram), affecting their nature, privacy, contents or recipients. The following behaviours are the most common when it comes to exercising such violence:

- Firstly, that which requires teenage partners to send or record intimate images *(sexting).*
- Secondly, sextortion, which involves using an intimate image of the adolescent partner as a coercive element to obtain some kind of advantage from them, by threatening to have the image published or shared.
- Finally, digital gender-based violence can take perhaps its cruelest form after the relationship has ended, with the sole purpose of causing harm. This is the non-consensual publication of intimate images, also misleadingly referred to as "revenge porn", because it is neither porn nor it is supposed to have an affront in the origin of revenge; moreover, if these images are forwarded, a crime is being committed.

It is important to talk to both our daughters and sons about cyber-violence within the couple, because when these behaviours are exercised – either by a man towards a woman or by a woman towards a man - they constitute a crime.

S*talking* should also be mentioned, which consists of an action carried out in an insistent and repeated manner, without being legitimately authorised, a series of harassing behaviours, seriously altering the development of the victim's daily life. Among the possible forms of harassment is the following: "establishing or attempting to establish contact with the victim through any means of communication".

2.2. Hate speech

We must bear in mind that hate speech is one of the risks whose incidence among minors has increased most exponentially over the last decade. According to the Council of Europe, the term 'hate speech' shall include all expressions which disseminate, incite, promote or justify racial hatred, sexism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism or other forms of hatred based on intolerance, including intolerance expressed through aggressive nationalism and ethnocentrism, discrimination and hostility towards minorities, migrants and people with a migrant background. This definition includes all forms of expression (texts, but also images or videos) in any medium, including the Internet.

The more frequent and intense access and use of the Internet by our children, through different platforms and simultaneously broadcasting messages, makes it difficult to identify and manage hate speech. However, we must remember that this type of speech is generally banned on most social platforms, although, on the other hand, it is protected to a certain extent by freedom of expression.

We must make it clear to them that using the Internet to generate hate speech is not a desirable use. Hate speech on the Internet is a serious problem because of the speed with which it can amplify and multiply. In many cases, they can be linked to disinformation strategies and campaigns, adding to their reach an innocuous appearance that makes them even more dangerous.

We also need to explain the difference between hate speech and hate crime. The most common hate crimes are criminal offences that severely punish those who publicly encourage, promote or incite, directly or indirectly, hatred, hostility, discrimination or violence against a group, a part of a group or against a specific person, for racist, anti-Semitic or other reasons related to ideology, religion or beliefs, family situation, belonging to an ethnic group, race or nation, national origin, sex, sexual orientation or identity, gender, illness or disability.

2.3. Overexposure

Our children, especially teenagers, are prone to share personal information without questioning the dangers or harm that this may entail. When we question them about their compulsion to share personal information, we find that their response is often that they do it because "they have nothing to hide" or because "they have nothing to lose". We need to make them think about these actions because their privacy is a protective factor and everyone is also a custodian of the personal data of others.

Before explaining to our children the risks involved in these actions, we must know that overexposure, also known as *oversharing*, refers precisely to the attitude of publishing excessive personal information on social networks or the Internet, which leads to an immediate loss of privacy and, consequently, to greater vulnerability. Information, photographs and videos, tags and metadata, such as geolocation, published by our children, not always consciously, become irretrievable. We must also point out that this overexposure has a phenomenal amplifier both in social platforms (eager to have data to share with third parties), and in the people with whom this information is shared or whom it eventually reaches.

It is important to understand some concepts associated with our children's online exposure in order to explain in more detail the possible short- and long-term consequences:

- A digital footprint is the trace we leave behind when we visit the pages we go to or want to go to.
- Digital identity is what we are for other people on the network, or rather, what the network says we are. This identity can be seen in our use and consumption of 2.0 tools and social networks.
- Online reputation refers to the prestige of a person on the Internet. This depends on the information we choose to share and the information they provide, through comments and opinions.

2.4. Inappropriate viral challenges

Our children are increasingly taking part in "challenges". Challenges are not new, they existed before the Internet, but they did not have the degree of popularity or the possibility of global reach that they have now. It is the latter that makes our daughters and sons feel attracted to overcome a challenge, because, in the worst-case scenario, they will always add a few views, followers or "likes".

Broadly speaking, and for obvious reasons, we should try to ensure that our children participate in challenges only in a responsible way and that they always avoid those that can:

- Involve a breach of the law or mandatory rules at the place and time concerned.
- Pose a risk to the physical or psychological integrity of the participants.
- Endanger third parties.
- Result in property damage of any kind.
- Be a nuisance, offence or derision to others.
- Contain an unpredictable effect or lead to an unforeseeable end.
- Involve, without prior and express consent, third parties or violate their privacy.
- Affect the right to honour, privacy and self-image of others, especially if they are minors or have an intellectual or developmental disability.

Taking all these considerations into account, it may be necessary to exclude many of the viral challenges that circulate on social media platforms on a regular basis and in which our children may be involved. We should also remember that the age of our children influences the development of their digital skills as well as their levels of digital competence to deal with certain risks and with the consequences of open publication and dissemination on the Internet.

There are infinite challenges for our children and it is always possible to help them choose one that is stimulating for them and that,

while avoiding the aforementioned characteristics, is also fun and attractive.

2.5. Advice for family action

2.5.1. Action Guide for Families

The misuse of the Internet by our underage children depends on many factors, which are undoubtedly enhanced by the accelerated pace of our society. Likewise, we must bear in mind that our children do not know everything about the Internet and that we are responsible for providing them with a critical education on the use of the Internet, taking into account the following factors:

- Their lack of experience is vital in dealing with certain online situations.
- Inappropriate values.
- An inadequate perception of risk, as they are not aware of the real consequences that certain online actions may have for them and for others.
- Insufficient development, especially at early ages, of some personal skills.
- Lack of digital skills, also related to the child's own age of intellectual and cognitive maturity.

One of the greatest concerns as parents or legal guardians of children is often related to the specific actions that we can take with our children to protect them and help them using the Internet in their best interests. On too many occasions, for different reasons, we believe that we have fewer resources than we actually have to help them. We must always remember that many of the risks our children face online are very similar to those they face offline. Like other problems that have nothing to do with the Internet, there are risk and protective factors both online and offline.

The key for us, as mediators of their online actions, is to focus on what is most important nowadays and what has changed. On the other hand, we have to keep in mind that our children's misuse of the Internet can be conditioned by the medium as well as by other people, and intervening over this fact can always help them.

Below, there are some strategies that can help us to both protect and encourage the positive use of the Internet by our children:

- *Promoting a culture of privacy:* privacy is not only a right, but also a protective factor for our children.
- We must insist on the idea of preserving their privacy, because as someone responsible for their actions, we know that the more others know about them, the more vulnerable they will become online.
- *Boosting cybersecurity:* the pathway that links us to other people is also a gateway for those who wish to do harm.
- It is our responsibility to make sure that our children have a safe connection and use safe devices, so that we can prevent them from risky or harmful situations and misuse.
- *Increasing the perception of interdependence:* becoming aware that the network is just that, a set of interconnected nodes in which all people have links with those to whom they relate and who may affect them.
- Thus, the cybersecurity of the people with whom our children interact and their management of privacy also affects that person, and vice versa. We need to explain to them that this is a collective issue and not an *individual one.*
- *Promoting the feeling of belonging to a community:* the networks, what we make of it, is a question of co-responsibility, of commitment, of digital citizenship.
- We need to educate our children as digital citizens responsible for their own actions, letting them know that their decisions can affect others and not only themselves.
- *Knowledge of legal limits and responsibilities*: knowing the rules of the game helps those who may seek to affect the rights of others to reflect beforehand and helps those who may be suffering from some form of online victimisation to better protect themselves.

- It is our responsibility to help our children deepen their understanding of the legal limits and responsibilities of their actions on the Internet, in order to ensure their digital protection, both as authors and victims of unlawful actions.
- *Development of digital life skills:* our children's lives today are hybrid, they happen on both sides of the screen, and although they are not two isolated life experiences, at the moment they follow rules that are not entirely similar.
- In order to help our children live the digital part of their lives in the best possible way, we need to strengthen in them skills such as empathy (to enable them to better understand people on the other side of the screen), critical thinking (to unmask harmful information, services and people) and emotional management (to face the permanent challenges that assail us in this intense life without disconnection).

2.5.2. Examples of strategies to apply with our children

As mothers, fathers or legal guardians, we must bear in mind that our children can be the cause of a bad online action, as well as the victim. It is advisable to establish an open dialogue with them about the different actions that may involve this type of risk and harm and, above all, it is important to go beyond an instruction or a prohibition so that "it does not happen again".

We must talk about and share digital experiences with our children, always giving them their space as active individuals and protagonists of these activities. We should mediate their online activities in an active exercise of co-responsibility, that is to say, an active exercise of their rights and duties.

Here, we show a practical example of a simple activity that we can do with our children in order to help them use the Internet efficiently, by coping with potential risks or harms and taking advantage of the opportunities.

DEFINING "NETIQUETTE"

This activity consists of guiding our children in the development of their own rules when using social networks. From our side, we must always keep in mind the strategies mentioned in the previous sections of this chapter, in order to guide them towards a safe and effective use of the Internet. One of the most popular activities among children is the use of social networks, and it is precisely here that our children can be most exposed to potential risks (e.g. security, privacy, hate speech, overexposure, gender-based cyber-violence, etc.) or commit actions and display unethical or unlawful behaviour related to those risks.

Before proposing the activity or game, we must take into account both the age and the preferences of our children when using the Internet. Therefore, it will be easier to select a topic (e.g. privacy on social networks) that we consider more crucial, bearing in mind the dangers faced by children - either as a potential victim or as a potential author.

Once we have chosen the activity, we will ask them to write on a piece of paper a ten-item list with the rules they think people of their age should follow on a social network. This will make them think about the risks implicit in the different actions and, above all, will make them aware of and take responsibility for their own actions. When this ten-item list is ready, we go over each section with them, guiding them towards a safe and effective use of social networks. In this game, we will try not to judge the child for their potential lack of knowledge about certain risks. Our role is to engage in an open dialogue with our children based on their digital preferences and help them to cope with the potential risks. We will try to avoid imposing any activity or use restrictions, which could limit the many opportunities that the Internet has to offer.

3. CYBERBULLYING & SECURITY

Spanish National Police

3.1. What is cyberbullying

To define cyberbullying, we first need to know what bullying is. Bullying is understood as repeated and continuous mistreatment or harassment over time by a minor or a group of minors towards another minor, with the purpose of harming him/her in a clearly intentional manner.

It is important to determine that in order to a situation of bullying to occur, and thus differentiate it from a specific conflict between peers, three fundamental characteristics must be met:

1. Intentionality, i.e. a conscious desire to hurt, threaten or frighten.
2. Imbalance of power between the child and the victim, which may be real or a subjective perception of the victim.
3. Repetition of the action in a systematic methodical manner over a prolonged period of time.

From this point, cyberbullying can be defined as bullying that is carried out using Information and Communication Technologies (ICT). It is carried out through networks, such as the telephone network, using terminals such as computers, smartphones, or video game consoles, and also through the services that these ICTs offer to consumers, such as e-mail, social networks, or mobile device applications.

As UNESCO has stated, "ICTs can complement, enrich and transform education". A good example of this was the COVID-19 pandemic, where ICT proved to be an indispensable tool for the continuation of the teaching activity. Nevertheless, ICTs also create a new way of relating to others that is not free of multiple risks, which we must be aware of in order to protect our children.

In addition to the characteristics it shares with bullying, cyberbullying at school has other characteristics of its own that make it even more dangerous. The main difference is that it takes place in a virtual space where there is no direct contact between the parties. It should also be noted:

A) WITH REGARD TO THE AGGRESSOR OR CYBERBULLY

1. Anonymity. The cyberbully can create a false profile from which to harass.
2. The capacity for dissemination and repetition of the action is greater, including the number of victims, as the same message can be sent to different people with just one click.

B) WITH REGARD TO THE VICTIM

The emotional damage suffered by the victim is higher because:

1. The abuse is sustained for a longer period of time. What is published is difficult to control and even if it is erased, there is always the fear that it will reappear.
2. The bullying does not stop when the bully leaves the school. It lasts permanently 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.
3. The audience is much wider and difficult to control. We do not know what impact it has and how far it reaches, going beyond the victim's immediate environment and potentially going viral.

3.2. Identifying the symptoms of cyberbullying

3.2.1. If my son/daughter is the cyberbully

When parents hear for the first time that their son or daughter is bullying another child, their first reaction is usually denial or, if necessary, defence and justification. Often the mistake is to think that they have fewer reasons to be concerned than the victim's parents when their problem is of equal importance.

It is not an easy task for families to come to terms with the fact that their child is bullying someone in his or her environment. If necessary, they have to work with the help of someone else with the aim of modifying the child's behaviour, so that he or she understands that what he or she is doing is not acceptable.

IN GENERAL, THE FOLLOWING BEHAVIOURS CAN BE OBSERVED
IN CYBERBULLYING CHILDREN

- They actively participate in forums and social networks without respecting the rules of netiquette, i.e. in a rough and aggressive manner. This is what is known in the online world as a "hater".
- They are often present in inappropriate content communities, where participants enjoy sharing and commenting on violent material.
- They may have a mobile device of which parents are unaware.
- They are reluctant to have their parents monitor their online activity and when questioned react in an inordinately violent manner.
- They do not accept their parents on their social networks.
- They think that making nasty comments to other Internet users is funny and does no harm to anyone.
- They seek to make comments so that their friends will "like" them, seeking popularity to gain more followers.
- They spend too much time "connected", showing little interest in outdoor activities.
- They stay away from common areas and even hide to go online, for example, while playing online games.

- They often share violent content on their digital platforms and instant messaging groups.
- They like to photograph and videotape most of the activities they do, especially those they find funny.

3.2.2. If my child is a victim

THESE ARE SYMPTOMS OF CYBERBULLYING

- Changes in attitude towards the use of the Internet.
- Stops posting content and comments on the Internet, when previously he/she was very active, or radically changes the mode or subject matter of the material he/she shares.
- Suddenly closes their social media accounts.
- Is reluctant or reacts negatively to the use of Internet-connected devices.
- Is uncomfortable or frightened when receiving notifications on their mobile phone.
- Has stopped playing online games.

3.2.3. Witness

They are also part of cyberbullying and can be the key to ending the problem, as their reactions can influence bullying or, on the contrary, can help to eradicate it.

The cyberbully needs witness when he humiliates his victim. The "likes" and favourable comments on posts where the victim is denigrated are a very high reinforcer for the bullying to continue. The favourable attitude towards cyberbullying and even passivity and inactivity maintain and perpetuate it. Sometimes they behave in this way out of fear of being targeted by the cyberbully or for fear of being accused of snitching. But often it is because they consider it to be none of their business.

On the contrary, and according to numerous research studies, victim support becomes crucial for the cyberbully to stop bullying. However, it must be recognised that intervening by expressing disagreement with

the cyberbully's offensive attitude and supporting the victim requires much more effort and commitment than in the opposite case.

Ultimately, if the cyberbully does not feel supported and is urged to stop his or her behaviour by reporting the bullying from the beginning, in most cases the bullying will stop. This is why it is necessary to work with minors, so that they are aware and sensitised to the harm they can cause in order to put an end to cyberbullying.

TYPES OF WITNESSES

1. The collaborator: expressly supports cyberbullying by making positive comments, uploading images or stickers where he/she laughs or applauds.
2. The reinforcer/encourager: supports cyberbullying in more subtle ways, for example by 'liking' offensive posts.
3. The neutral: does nothing, tolerating the situation.
4. The defender: supports the victim and condemns the cyberbully by expressing their disagreement or reporting the situation to a trusted adult.

In this sense, and in order to improve coexistence among children, it is crucial to encourage children's empathy, which will allow them to identify those situations that may in some way harm a peer, as well as assertiveness, thus allowing them, as witnesses of this harassment, to take part in the resolution of the conflict in one of the following ways:

- Rejecting comments or posts on the Internet that may hurt another person.
- Support the victim of cyberbullying.
- Ask for help from a trusted adult if the situation does not stop.

It should also be conveyed that, in order to support the victim and stop the bullying, an aggressive attitude should never be adopted towards the cyberbully, as this would also make him/her a victim. They should also be aware that confronting the bully is not the best option, among other things as a simple matter of self-protection.

3.3. Conflict situations in cyberbullying

- Threatening, insulting, or verbally attacking a child repeatedly on the Internet, through comments or messages in social network posts or chats.
- Posting any kind of audiovisual content such as photos, videos, memes, stickers of a child on social networks, without his/her consent, with the aim of attacking and humiliating him/her.
- Creating groups on social networks or forums exclusively to badmouth and attack a child.
- Spreading defamatory and false rumours against a child in order to attack him/her and turn everyone against him/her.
- Excluding a classmate from an online school group in order to socially isolate him/her.
- Making recordings of a classmate in which others provoke him/her with some kind of humiliating action, such as removing an item of clothing or causing him/her to fall to the ground, and then publishing it on social networks or online groups for equally humiliating purposes.
- Having third parties make repeated or massive contact with our son or daughter.
- Bullying a colleague by using a hidden or unknown phone number or a dummy username.
- Blocking the victim's social network accounts or changing their passwords so that they cannot use them or so that someone else can use them on their behalf.
- Creating and sending polls through social networking groups in which the aim is to offend another classmate, e.g., who is the ugliest/fatter in the class.
- Registering the victim on websites where votes are taken on intelligence or other characteristics.

Preventive advice (Cyberbullying at school)

- Our son or daughter should remove from their social networks those people who may be harassing them and configure the security and privacy settings correctly.
- Except for their own parents or legal guardians, children should not share their passwords with anyone.
- They should never give out personal information, locations, photos, or other material that could provide stalkers with personal information.
- They should be aware that there is an option to report the publication of content on social networks and in this way inform those responsible for the website that certain rules are being breached by harassers.
- The safest thing to do is not to reply to the harasser and if they do, they should never act like them. To this end, they should be trained in the rules of netiquette and always act in a respectful and polite manner.
- If they are aware that the bullying persists, the child can block the bully and the adult is the one who should consider contacting the school and, if necessary, file the corresponding complaint.

3.4. Other situations of risk for our sons and daughters

3.4.1. Grooming

A set of deception techniques used by an adult to gain the trust of a minor, with the aim of obtaining a sexual benefit from him/her. It is a deception with a sexual purpose, where the groomer's real aim is:

- To obtain intimate material in which the minor appears.
- To get close enough to talk about sex with the child or to have sexual contact with the child.

Grooming can end in a situation of school bullying and cyber-bullying, as the sexual content that the victim has previously shared with the groomer is sometimes spread by the groomer as a form of revenge through a group that includes students from the school or another group to which the groomer belongs.

Within Grooming there are 5 different phases

1. Friendship: the groomer contacts the child and tries to gain his or her trust.
2. Relationship: the child begins to express himself freely about intimate matters, as he considers the groomer his friend. In this phase, some conversations may start to approach sexual topics.
3. Beginning of abuse: the reciprocal sending of increasingly compromising sexual content begins. When the child refuses, the blackmail or extortion phase may begin.
4. Sexual abuse and assault: the grooming is aimed at getting physically close to the child for sexual purposes.
5. Post grooming or dissemination: in addition to the damage caused in the previous phases, this can be increased by the use of the sexual material obtained from the victim.

Preventive advice (Grooming)

- On social networks, our children should never accept the friendship of people they do not know in real life and should be very careful about who they interact with in on-line games.
- They should never share personal information with strangers.
- Inform them to deactivate geolocation coordinates, otherwise they may be able to locate them.
- Always cover the webcam when not in use, even when the device is switched off.
- Be extremely careful with online chats.

- They should not agree to requests where they are compromised, nor should they send material of this nature.
- Teach them to be careful not to save passwords and users names on their devices and thus prevent their details from appearing by default.
- Insist that they never give in to the groomer's blackmail and immediately cease any relationship with the groomer.
- It is very important to keep evidence of the bullying (photos, videos, recordings, screenshots).
- Tell them to immediately block the person who is harassing them and to immediately tell a trusted adult.
- A report should be made, whether or not the bullying has stopped.

3.4.2. Sexting

This consists of sending and receiving material (images, photos, videos) of sexual content made by the sender himself/herself, using a mobile phone or other electronic devices.

This activity entails multiple risks, one of them being that the material may reach the hands of the child's classmates through no fault of their own, which could give rise to a situation of cyber-bullying and possible blackmail. Furthermore, it may constitute a criminal offence when the person who has consensually received such content, forwards it without the consent of the person concerned.

3.4.3. Sextortion

Also known as sexual extortion, it occurs when one or more persons threaten a minor with the distribution of sexual or intimate material if they do not obtain some kind of compensation in return, usually money or favours of a sexual nature.

Preventive advice (Sexting and Sextortion)

- Never take compromising photos or videos. Even if they do not send them, someone could intercept them or the devices where they are stored could be stolen, lost and the material they have stored can be uploaded to social networks by mistake.
- They must take care of their online image and thus their online reputation. They should think before they send it, then they will lose control over that material.
- If you catch your child engaging in such behaviour, try to make them understand the importance of keeping their image safe.
- They should never share compromising images of themselves or others.
- If they receive compromising material from a minor, they should not disseminate it and should delete it immediately. Disseminating images of child pornography is a criminal offence.
- Insist that they report it to a trusted adult (family member, teacher, police, or doctor).

3.4.4. Identity theft

This consists of impersonating another person in order to obtain a benefit or interest, for example to cyberbully a minor. Thus, with the intention of harming them, they impersonate them on social networks and carry out reprehensible conduct in their name.

THIS CAN BE DONE IN TWO WAYS

1. Illegally, accessing that person's digital account.
2. Create a new, fake profile with the identity data of the person I want to impersonate.

Preventive tips (Identity Theft)

- Teach them to create secure and strong passwords (alphanumeric, symbols, lowercase and uppercase).
- They should never share, store, or write down their personal passwords with anyone except their parents.
- They should know how to create a private profile and correctly configure the privacy and security settings of social networks.
- Remind them to keep their devices and applications up to date.
- Advise them about the importance of not being watched while typing on the computer.
- Children should be especially careful not to check the option to save their password and username on their devices to prevent their personal data from appearing by default.
- Get them into the habit of always closing all sessions when they finish using email or social networks.
- Emphasise that they should use a nickname to identify themselves in social networks and online games, avoiding the use of their personal details.
- Insist on the need to install a good anti-virus, anti-malware, and anti-spam software on their electronic devices to protect them.
- If their identity has been impersonated, they should tell a trusted adult, report the incident to the platform concerned and, where appropriate, to the Spanish Data Protection Agency, as well as to the police.

3.4.5. Inappropriate content

This is all material that minors can access and whose content is harmful to them due to the fact that their maturity is not sufficient for them to understand it correctly.

Often children and young people seek this material directly on the Internet on purpose, but many other times they may also be exposed to this material involuntarily and by chance, for example through video games or even through advertising on television or social networks.

Inappropriate content can be of two types:

1. Illegal content: these are not allowed by law, including child pornography and paedophilia, but also advocacy of terrorism, provocation and incitement to commit hate crimes, the manufacture of weapons and explosive devices or drugs.
2. Harmful content: this is permitted by law but is highly detrimental to the normal development of minors. For example, pornography between adults, material depicting violence or promoting eating disorders - Pro-Ana (promoting anorexia) and Pro-Mia (promoting bulimia) pages - or self-harming ideas, or viral videos about activities that are harmful to health.

Preventive advice (inappropriate content)

- Warn them about content that is not appropriate for their age.
- They should download only from authorised official websites, as well as make online purchases from secure websites and never from places with public Wi-Fi.
- Get them used to using the devices in common areas of the home. It will help to maintain control over their online activity.

- Parents should be aware of their children's online activity and share this activity.
- Insist on the indications of video games with regard to the age required for their use and purchase only those assigned to their own age.
- Make use of parental control tools.
- Teach them to properly configure the security and privacy options of devices and browsers, as well as updated antivirus software.

3.5. Guidelines for action that i should pass on to my children

1. Tell: when faced with a problem on the Internet, children should talk, as soon as possible, to a trusted adult (relative, teacher, police, doctor) who can help and protect them.
2. Block: if the child knows who the person or persons who are harassing and bothering them are, they should block them immediately on all digital platforms or devices.
3. Collect: minors should be reminded that in these situations they should save all those elements (photos, videos, screenshots) that can serve as proof of the harassment they are suffering. Therefore, it is important that they do not delete these types of conversations or audiovisual content.
4. Denounce: both on social networks and publicly to the relevant institutions, providing all the evidence that proves the existence of the bullying.

Finally, and depending on the applicable legislation in each country or region, conduct that leads to a situation of cyberbullying may constitute a crime and should therefore be reported to the public bodies responsible for receiving complaints, such as the courts or public prosecutors' offices, as well as law enforcement agencies.

As a model aimed at preventing and dealing with these situations, the Spanish National Police has a Communiting Policing Delegate[3], a police expert who goes to schools and is available to parents and students to carry out his or her functions within the framework of the Master Plan for Coexistence and Improving Safety in Schools and their Environments, among which we can highlight the following:

- To carry out training and informative talks aimed at young people, minors, teachers, parents, paying special attention to the consequences of bullying on those who suffer it, as well as the responsibility of all to report and combat it. The prevention of security risks associated with new technologies and the use of social media, in particular, those related to bullying, sexual harassment, also known as "child grooming", or the dissemination of sexual content via mobile phones, known as "sexting".
- To advise parents whose children are in a situation of vulnerability or conflict within the school environment.
- To raise awareness and guide students on those behaviours that can lead to criminal or violent actions, promoting the values of responsibility, equality, respect, and coexistence.
- To provide tools for the prevention of conflicts and to avoid the risk of becoming victims of certain crimes (sexual abuse or aggression, bullying, access to certain Internet content, etc.).
- To instil the need to communicate or ask for help from parents and teachers with regard to events occurring inside or outside the school when the seriousness of the situation makes it advisable to do so.
- To improve their knowledge and confidence in relation to the functioning of the Security Forces and the public service they provide to the community, as well as the different channels of communication they can have with them.

3   Along the same lines, in Portugal, the Public Security Police ("Polícia de Segurança Pública") within the Safe School programme ("Escola Segura") promotes through its Safe School Programme Teams ("Equipas do Programa Escola Segura") the surveillance of school areas and close contacts with the whole educational community, responding to the various requests addressed to it, and promoting awareness-raising and prevention actions in schools.

4. ABUSE OF ICTs. HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Fundación MAPFRE

Information and communication technologies (ICTs) are all those tools and programmes that process, manage, transmit and share information through technological supports. Although ICTs range from classic examples, such as radio and television, to new technologies centred mainly on the internet and all electronic devices connected to the network, it is the latter that we will refer to as ICTs.

ICTs are part of our lives, facilitating our daily routines and interpersonal relationships. But the fact that children regularly use the internet does not mean that they know how to do so in a safe and responsible way, neither knowing the consequences and risks that can result from harmful use for themselves and others.

It is in fact important to know how to use them properly and the dangers of their misuse for health.

The ENDING project specifically addresses one of the risks associated with the misuse of ICT: early school leaving. In many cases, young people spend the time that they should devote to studying or sleeping, pursuing other leisure activities on the internet. This may lead to decreased academic performance and is a risk factor.

Since the appearance of ICTs, different pathologies have emerged that affect both the physical and mental health of those people who, through

misuse or addiction, spend many hours in front of devices with screens (computers, mobiles, tablets, consoles, etc.). Although the use of ICTs offers numerous benefits, it should not be forgotten that they can be accompanied by health hazards, which families should be aware of so that they can be prevented, especially in adolescents, who are the age group most at risk.

Let's start with those that are most obvious to people who live with adolescents on a day-to-day basis: the physical symptoms.

4.1. Identification of physical symptoms

These are due to the continuous, excessive and uninterrupted use of ICT devices, as well as to the bad habits they generate. Depending on which organ or body system is affected, different problems can be identified:

Ligament problems

- **De Quervain Syndrome:** *Tendinitis and Tenosynovitis:* "player's thumb" caused byrepeated movements of the thumb leading to inflammation and pain in the tendons that attach to it.
- **Digital Flexor Tendinitis:** the finger gets stuck in its flexion movement due to chronic inflammation of the tendons.
- **Lateral epicondylitis** *("tennis elbow"):* painful inflammation of the tendon located at the outer elbow caused by misuse of the mouse by not resting the wrists on the table and keeping the arms away from the body, or by the use of a console and game controllers that simulate sporting movements.
- **Supraspinatus tendonitis:** caused by inflammation of the tendon when it rubs between the head of the humerus and the acromial arch during repeated shoulder elevation movements in situations where there are poor ergonomics.
- **Rotator cuff injuries:** similar to above, but involving the tendons of the supraspinatus, infraspinatus, teres minor and subscapularis rotator muscles of the shoulder.

Recommendations: avoid long sessions without breaks; practice stretching exercises for the muscles and tendons that affect the finger, wrist, elbow and shoulder joints; and use comfortable and ergonomic devices that avoid forcing movements. If an injury is already present, the activity should be stopped and a health professional should be consulted for assessment and treatment (Physiotherapy Guide, 2020).

Musculoskeletal problems

- **Neck pain:** pain in the neck usually caused by forced postures with the use of a posture that brings the neck forward over the shoulders or bending the neck anteriorly to use a mobile phone, tablet or laptop at the level of the legs, etc.

- **Dorsalgias and lumbalgias:** low back pain and neck pain caused by poor postures of sustained flexion without adequate back and lumbar support.

- **Early fingers osteoarthritis:** Finger joints that operate devices can be subjected to hundreds of movements per minute, subjecting the joint to inflammation and early joint wear and tear. One finger that is particularly overloaded is the thumb, where early osteoarthritis of the joint ("BlackBerry thumb") occurs at the base of the thumb.

- **Trauma and accidents:** due to the use of devices, usually mobile phones, while walking in the city or driving vehicles.

Recommendations: avoid awkward postures by adopting proper ergonomics in front of screens; avoid long periods of time without rest; practice stretching and strengthening exercises for the muscles surrounding the spine; do not use mobile phones that distract us from other actions that require our attention such as walking and crossing streets.

Nervous system problems

- **Carpal tunnel syndrome:** consists of an inflammation of the tissues and tendons that cross the wrist through the carpal tunnel. It is common in people who perform fixed manual activities that are repeated over long periods of time with poor wrist posture, e.g. when using a mouse and keyboard with the wrist in extension.
- **Paraesthesia:** described as tingling and numbness of fingers, hands, elbows, arms, thighs, legs and feet due to sustained compression against the edges of knobs, tables, chairs or other objects, or due to sustained and forced flexion of the limbs.
- **Pain, loss of sensation and strength:** occurs when nerve compression is sustained over time and progressively affects the nerve until it is permanently damaged.
- **Phantom vibration syndrome:** this is a sensory disturbance in which the device is felt to vibrate when it is not. It is typically experiency by those who continually use their mobile phone in vibration mode (Tusq *et al.,*2011).
- **Enuresis and encopresis:** urinary and faecal incontinence. This disorder is due to prolonged inhibition of the reflex to urinate or defecate to avoid disconnecting from the video game.

Recommendations: avoid postures where the nerves of the extremities are flexed or compressed; do not prolong the position that begins to cause symptoms; move; massage the area; take rest periods and do not ignore signals from the nervous system that the body emits to satisfy its biological needs.

Visual problems

- **Computer vision syndrome** *(CVS) ("digital eye strain"):* consists of the appearance of visual problems that increase according to the time of exposure to digital screens. Computer vision syndrome presents the symptoms of itching, stinging, a sensation of grit and dryness in the eye accompanied by blurred vision, even double vision, due to fatigue in focusing, photophobia, dizziness, and headache, especially in the orbital or parietal area of the head.
- **Myopia:** myopic children have been found to spend more time using screens and less time outdoors than children without myopia (Álvarez Peregrina *et al.,* 2020).

> **Recommendations:** Given that the main cause is prolonged exposure to the screen, the best way to avoid symptoms is to take breaks to rest your eyes. The *20,20,20,20* exercise consists of taking breaks every 20 minutes when using devices or screens and, for 20 seconds, looking at a distance of more than 20 metres. This will relax the vision and allow the eye to rest before continuing to look at the screen. In addition, a minimum distance of 50 cm from any type of screen is recommended.
>
> Spend less than two hours a day with screen devices and engage in outdoor activities (Hernández Tiscareño, 2020).

Hearing problems

- **Premature deafness:** caused by the use of earphones and headphones that maintain an excessive and constant sound level with frequent peaks of sound intensity. According to the WHO, sound levels exceeding 85 decibels pose a risk of hearing loss if repeated over time or with continuous exposure (Gutiérre Farfán *et al.,* 2018).

- Tinnitus: the experience of ringing, whistling or persistent noises when in a quiet room. One of its causes is exposure to intense and prolonged noise.

> **Recommendations:** use devices at a volume that allows us to hear another person talking to us, and never exceed 70 decibels. As much as possible, avoid headphones and use external speakers (Dios *et al.,* 2013).

Metabolic and cardiac problems

- Obesity: due to two fundamental causes, the lack of physical activity by replacing time spent on sporting activities with sedentary screen-based activities and, secondly, the tendency to eat more, and worse quality food, in front of screens while playing. The food consumed tends to be fast food, industrial, highly processed, high-calorie food, often accompanied by sugary or alcoholic soft drinks (Kenney and Gortmaker, 2017).
- Diabetes: predisposition to diabetes occurs as a result of obesity, lack of physical exercise and high intake of foods with a very high glycaemic index (simple carbohydrates) and beverages with a high sugar content.
- Hypercholesterolaemia: the intake of foods high in cholesterol and saturated fats, ultra-processed foods and lack of physical exercise are the main causes of increased cholesterol in young people.
- High blood pressure: obesity, sedentary lifestyles, excessive salt intake and saturated fats from ultra-processed foods are the cause of increased blood pressure.
- Cardiac arrhythmias: arrhythmias and unconsciousness have been reported in people with susceptible heart disease when playing intense video games (Swift, 2019).

> **Recommendations:** dedicate time to outdoor physical activities; do not eat in front of screens; take breaks; respect meal times; eat healthy foods (for example, a Mediterranean diet); and hydrate with water or non-sweetened beverages.

Vascular problems

- **Cold hand syndrome:** due to compression of the wrist on the edge of a table or other surface.
- **Leg and foot oedema:** this is an increase in the volume of fluid that accumulates in the tissues of the legs and feet, swelling them due to fluid retention.
- **Varicose veins, phlebitis and thrombophlebitis in the legs:** these are different degrees of vein damage caused by sitting for long hours, and repeatedly, without moving in front of screens.

> **Recommendations:** avoid sitting with bent legs; get up from your seat every half hour; walk and do sports activities, limb stretching exercises and massage; keep your legs up and straight while playing.

Sleep disorders

The presence of electronic devices in the bedroom (television, video game consoles), internet use and keeping mobile phones switched on under the pillow and answering messages and calls at all hours, have a negative influence on the quantity quality of sleep and can lead to sleep disorders (insomnia, intermittent sleep and early awakening).

Recommendations: It is necessary to explain to children the need to take electronic devices out of the bedroom as using them just before bedtime makes it difficult to fall asleep.

4.2. Identifying psychological symptoms of ICT misuse (use, abuse and addiction)

Although the uses we make of ICTs are diverse, three broad categories can be established according to the type of relationship that each person establishes with them. This division helps us to differentiate between appropriate and inappropriate use, and their possible negative consequences.

These categories are:

- *Use:* it is one activity among others, so that if it is interrupted it does not cause the person any discomfort, nor does it affect the normal development of his or her life.
- *Abuse:* Abuse or inappropriate use can be understood as when the form of relationship with technologies, whether by amount of time, frequency or type of use, can manifest negative consequences for the user and his or her environment.
- *Addiction:* when this activity is prioritised over others, affecting other areas of the person's life. The fact of not being connected generates a high degree of discomfort.

Internet addictive behaviours are characterised by the appearance of three main symptoms:

- *Tolerance:* the need to increase time spent on technology to have the same effect as when the person first used the internet/ICTs.
- *Withdrawal: an* unpleasant feeling experienced when technology cannot be used. This is why it is used more and more and for longer periods of time.

- *Dependence:* when the person needs to progressively increase the time of use and also feels bad if he/she is unable to do so.

In developed societies, new technologies are widely available, but only a small number of people are addicted to them (around 3-6 %). Some factors may influence this type of person:

1. Psychological factors

- *Personality variables:* impulsivity, seeking strong emotions and transgression of rules, low self-esteem, intolerance to unpleasant stimuli, inadequate coping style, excessive shyness, rejection of body image.
- *Emotional vulnerability:* dysphoric mood (anxiety or depression), affective deficits, weak family cohesion, poor social relationships, personal dissatisfaction with life.
- *Previous psychiatric problems:* depression, ADHD, social phobia, social hostility looking for a way out of their discomfort.

2. Family factors

- *Highly rigid and authoritarian family environments:* these often foster dependent, irresponsible or rebellious children.
- *Highly permissive or unstructured family environments with inconsistencies:* these often encourage egocentric, capricious and impulsive children.

3. Social factors

- *Social isolation:* they use ICTs as a mean of communication.
- *Relationships with people who abuse new technologies:* out of a desire to belong to the group, they copy their actions.

The misuse of ICTs can: cause changes in behaviour, mood and relationship with the outside world, especially if it becomes an addiction; cause aggressiveness, social and family isolation; decrease academic or work performance; postpone necessary biological activities; encourage criminal

or antisocial behaviour; lead to pathological gambling or substance abuse; and produce misinformation, manipulation, harassment or loss of privacy (Buiza, 2018).

In short, internet dependency should be suspected when:

- There is overuse associated with a loss of control and the person experiences withdrawal symptoms when they are unable to connect, as with other chemical addictions.
- Withdrawal symptoms (profound emotional distress, anxiety, irritability, psychomotor restlessness and dysphoric mood) appear in the face of the impossibility of accessing the network.
- Tolerance is established (a growing need to increase internet connection time in order to feel well).
- There are negative repercussions on daily life (isolation, poor academic or work performance, lack of interest in other subjects and active leisure) (Echeburúa, 2012).

4.2.1. Conflict situations

DEVICE DEPENDENCY

- **Nomophobia**

This consists of an irrational fear, uneasiness, anxiety and great discomfort that a person feels because they do not have their mobile phone, either because they have left it at home, the battery has run out, they do not have mobile network coverage, the credit has run out, the phone has been stolen, they have lost it or it has simply broken down.

Another characteristic symptom is the inability to switch off the mobile phone even in places where its use is prohibited. The mobile phone must be kept close at all times and in all circumstances, even while sleeping, which causes numerous cases of insomnia as they continue to receive messages and the need to see and reply to them, interrupting the natural sleep cycle.

Nomophobia is related to FOMO (Fear of Missing Out) or fear of being disconnected, losing messages or contact with social networks.

It is advisable to reinforce the healthy habit of switching off the mobile phone for several hours a day, especially at night, as well as having a specific plan to avoid interruptions in other life activities (work, meetings, cinema, theatre...) (Nomophobia, 2018).

- **Mobile addiction**

    Designated in multiple ways (such as "crackBerry"), it is impossible to continue any task if a warning pops up, resulting in an urgent need to view its contents, or the need to continually check the email account, among other applications.

DEPENDENCE ON SOCIAL NETWORKS

With social networking through the internet, young people can participate in experiences with other people they don't even know, but who are part of the virtual community. They are interested in their photos, preferences, beliefs and shared experiences. Social networks are also a barrier-free introduction that can be used to share goods, services, comments and knowledge with others and, above all, to convey emotions, experiences and likes and dislikes. Social networks are also emotional networks.

Many adolescents are at risk of network addiction, even dependence, because in some way they show a greater concern to be permanently active and feel the need not to miss anything that happens in the virtual

communities to which they belong. Their mood can be modified depending on the number of "likes" they get and the comments they receive on their profile posts, which leads, in many cases, to dangerous overexposure.

CYBER-ADDICTION AS A PATHOLOGY

- **Video Game Disorder**

Nowadays, video games are integrated as another leisure activity for young people and, as such, they entertain and amuse them in their free time, often involving families in this leisure activity. Moreover, many of them contribute to developing collaborative and social skills, teaching cultural content, stimulating creativity and transmitting values (desire to excel, respect for the team, tolerance, sportsmanship, solidarity, etc.).

When our children start playing video games, it is usually an activity that is carried out at home and within the space that the family dedicates to free time. Therefore, as parents, it is important to think that video games can coexist with other family games and become a shared family activity and thus, not just a personal or individual activity for our children.

In the same way that we are used to seeing age ratings on films or TV series, video games also indicate a recommended age level. The *Pan European Game Information (PEGI)* is the European age rating system that advises about the recommended user age for a video game in terms of protection of minors, without considering the level of difficulty or the skills required to play. Based on eight rating descriptors (violence, foul language, fear, drugs, sex, discrimination, gambling and online play with others), one of five age categories is assigned: PEGI 3, 7, 12, 16 and 18.

The problem arises when this activity goes from being a hobby and a leisure activity to becoming the centre of the young person's life and turns into an addiction, often leading to isolation from the family.

Some of the most prominent symptoms to look out for if they appear are:

- Constant preoccupation with playing at all times and places for long periods of time and increasing the amount of time spent playing.
- The social isolation of the person, who becomes irritable, worsening communication with others.
- Lies to family and friends about time played.
- When prevented from playing, emotional and affective consequences such as depression, aggression, anxiety and phobias emerge.
- Severe sleep disorders that affect future development.
- Change in eating habits and predilection for fast food or eating in their room while playing.
- Poor posture, muscle pain and physical injuries especially in the back and hands.
- Limited enthusiasm for other hobbies or interests.
- The addict changes his schedule so that he can play and postpones homework or chores for later.
- Their school performance drops considerably.
- He tries to justify himself by saying that his friends do it too, or that they need him to play.

ONLINE BETTING

Sports betting and gambling (via games like poker, roulette, etc) are becoming increasingly accessible through mobile and computer applications and can be accessed 24 hours a day with low stakes that lead teenagers and young people to believe that the risk is minimal.

The immediacy, ease of access, anonymity and intimate environment provided by ICTs make the online universe the perfect space for developing addictive behaviours, including gambling disorder.

Gambling addiction or gambling disorder is a disease or disorder recognised by the WHO, in which "persistent and recurrent problem gambling" behaviour appears, causing clinically significant impairment or distress. This disorder can occur with any type of gambling (slot machines, bingo, roulette, poker, sports betting, lotteries, etc.).

Online gambling is highly addictive for a variety of reasons:

- Seemingly easy wins.
- Ease of practice: everyone can play, no special skills are needed.
- They guarantee anonymity.
- No restrictions. You can play at any time and from any device with an internet connection.
- Minimum amounts. You can start betting with as little as one euro.

To prevent this, it is advisable for families not to give their children too much money and to teach them the importance of money. Children should be taught the value of effort and work and take responsibility for their own and the family's expenses. Parents should inform adolescents that, as minors, they cannot gamble. It is not legal, and they would be committing a crime. It is also important to inform them of the risks of gambling, which go beyond gambling disorder, such as: nervousness, anxiety, irritability, insomnia, poor diet, increased spending, indebtedness, use of lies, worsening of family relationships, theft at home, problems with school performance or absenteeism, or distancing themselves from friends who refuse to gamble, among others.

Likewise, these risks are also obvious signs of gambling in minors, so it is important to monitor it in the family environment and, if it is detected, to seek professional advice. Finally, and most importantly, parents should be role models for their children by maintaining appropriate behaviour in relation to gambling.

4.2.2. Recommendations for healthy use of ICTs among Families

One of the best ways to prevent and protect against risks is information. People who are aware of the risks that their behaviour may entail tend to act more cautiously. It is essential for families to be aware of the tools that their children use in order to be able to guide them.

Preventing addictive problems requires the efforts of parents and educators to empower adolescents with certain personal and family resources (Labrador et al., 2015).

PERSONAL RESOURCES

- *Fostering self-esteem:* this helps to regulate behaviour and self-control, improving the person's emotional balance.
- *Improving social relations and communication:* this makes it difficult to create an imaginary virtual world as opposed to the real one.
- *Increasing problem-solving skills:* fostering the development of critical thinking that enables us to make appropriate decisions.
- *Improving emotional control:* to achieve adequate strategies for coping with stress so as to avoid unnecessary suffering that leads to undesirable behaviours.
- *Adequate occupation of leisure time:* providing ICT-free leisure time options that satisfy the need for new and varied sensations to combat boredom.

FAMILY RESOURCES

- *Limit the time children spend with ICTs*: establish places, times and moments to use them.
- *Do not allow ICTs to be a barrier between adults and children.* Try to be as up to date as possible with the tools they use.
- *The use of ICTs should be subject to rules of use that are as consensual as possible.* It is a good idea to put them in writing. The use of ICTs should be supervised. Depending on the age and maturity of the children, this supervision will be more or less intense. We recommend

that supervision should be fully face-to-face at least until the age of 14, which is the minimum age for having social networks. Subsequently, the child should gradually be granted autonomy, or supervised autonomy.

- *Prevent them from using the computer, mobile phone, tablet or video games as a way of filling the time.* Help them to plan their free time and encourage offline activities.
- *Avoid isolating children in their rooms:* It is important for children to use ICTs in a common area of the home. Especially in the late afternoon. It is necessary to remove devices to avoid their use during sleeping hours.
- *Ensure that they have fulfilled their responsibilities before carrying out activities involving ICT.*
- *Use ICTs together.* Surf with them and play their favourite games from time to time. This will facilitate and improve communication in the family environment.
- *Explain to children the risks of contacting strangers*. Comparisons with real life can be very useful, making them aware of the risks they are exposed to online and offline.
- *Set an example*. Adults are an example for children, but in many cases we ourselves are the ones who overuse ICTs, so that children observe us and can develop excessive ICT use by imitation.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND GUIDELINES

Within families, it is easier to detect abusive and/or inappropriate use of ICTs among children at home than at school, as in most cases the problem occurs outside school. It is important that families can help and advise their children on how to organise their free time, establishing clear rules and limits so that they use ICTs appropriately. And, if a problem is detected, facilitate the possibility of seeing a specialist.

The psychologist Dr. Kimberly Young, in several of her articles and books such as "Innovations in Clinical Practice: A Source book" (1999), states that the main objective should be to break the child's habits of connection. In order to implement this new routine, she proposes:

- *Break their habits when they use the internet.* For example, if they go online as soon as they get home from school, it is recommended that they have a snack first. It is about learning to postpone and adapt to a new schedule.
- *External switches*. Use things you have to do or places to go as signals to switch off (use clocks or alarms).
- *Abstinence from a particular application*. The application that is causing the most problems for the adolescent (e.g., certain chat rooms, online games, etc.) should be stopped.
- *Goal setting.* To avoid relapse, a realistic timetable can be drawn up to allow the adolescent to manage his time and have a better sense of control.
- *Use reminder cards*. Ask him/her to make a list of the top 5 problems caused by internet addiction and another with the main benefits of not being online or abstaining from an application.
- *Educate in the use of the internet as a source of information and training, and not only as a tool for leisure.*
- *Develop a personal inventory.* You should write down the things you have stopped doing as a result of internet abuse and classify them as: "very important", "important", "not very important" and examine them.
- *Be informed about prevention tools and resources*. For example, use parental control software, content filters and others to limit connection time and access to harmful content.
- *Join a support group*. Working with others who are experiencing similar situations can be a great help.
- *Talk about the internet with adolescents.* Compare and contrast the advantages and disadvantages of its use, without making negative assessments of teenagers' use of the Internet. It is important provide positive reinforcement whenever they ask for help with any problem they have related to the internet.
- *To understand excessive use of the internet as a way of reacting to psychological discomfort.* To address the reasons why they spend their leisure and relationship time on the internet. Maintain an attitude of active listening to their isolation.
- *Family therapy.* It is important to check whether the family relationship has also deteriorated. In this way, the family as a whole is educated, reducing the feeling of guilt of the adolescent for his or her behaviour,

promoting the analysis of the problems from the source and encouraging collaboration.

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5. DISINFORMATION AND CRITICAL THINKING

PantallasAmigas

5.1. Differences between disinformation and misinformation

One of the many opportunities that the Internet offers our children is the access to information. They receive and share large volumes of information online on a daily basis making use of different channels such as websites, social networks, email, forums, etc. As their age increases, children develop a greater interest in consulting, seeking advice, and exploring different topics, and the use they make of information becomes more intense and diverse. In parallel, their need to communicate and share ideas or opinions with their peers or other people also increases with age.

Online information is presented in different formats: texts, photographs, videos, etc. and can be very useful to help them with their homework, looking for queries about their hobbies or interests, sharing opinions with friends, family, and other people, searching for health issues, check the news, etc. On the other hand, not all the information they access, create or share is truthful; on too many occasions, it is false and there may even be an intention to manipulate it in order to cause discomfort or harm to the recipients. For this reason, it is important that, from an early age, we help them to develop resilience strategies based on a critical attitude towards the information that circulates on the Internet. As a

family, we must share digital experiences with our children, talk, advice, and communicate with them about the benefits and risks (or harm) that certain information may entail.

How to explain the types of misinformation to our children

First of all, it is advisable to take into account rigorous evidence that allows us to distinguish the different concepts of misinformation that exist today, in order to be able to pass on to our children advice and guidance based on reality.

In 2017, the Council of Europe report 'Information Disorder: Toward an Interdisciplinary framework for research and policymaking' defines and differentiates between two concepts related to misinformation:

- *Misinformation* is false information that has not been created with the intention of causing harm.
- *Disinformation* is false information that has been deliberately created to cause harm in a person, a social group, an organisation or a country.

UNESCO uses the concept of *disinformation* to refer to deliberate, often planned and coordinated attempts to confuse or manipulate people by delivering them dishonest information. It is considered particularly dangerous because it is often organised, uses the necessary resources and applies advanced techniques and technologies to increase its effectiveness and reach.

We must make it clear to our children that on certain occasions, they may come across information that has a certain basis in reality, but which is intended to cause harm to a person, an organisation or a group. In other words, on the Internet, we can find *malicious use of information*.

The following examples can help to explain in a simple way to our children the main characteristics of misinformation, so that they can adopt

a critical thinking posture that will help them to develop resilience tools and cope autonomously with this potential risk:

- *Disinformation* is often planned, orchestrated, and given the means to achieve its harmful purpose.
- In the case of *misinformation*, in addition to having no harmful intention, those who disseminate it are generally unaware that it is misinformation.
- The *malicious use of information* is characterised by its unethical use.

On the other hand, as we know, the concept of *fake news* is familiar to many children. However, we must warn them that, apart from news, we can also find other types of false information on the Internet.

How to help our children identify misinformation or dishonest information

There are many resources and strategies that can hide a particular form of *misinformation*. Below are some examples that can help us to identify false information.

- Satire and parody.
- Headlines designed as *clickbait headlines*.
- Misleading use of subtitles, visual resources or statistics.
- Genuine content that is shared out of context.
- Impostor's authorship content (eg. when the name of a journalist or the logo of a media company is used without any relation to them).
- Manipulated and designed content.

5.2. Risks and consequences of misinformation

The ease with which content is produced and the speed at which it is replicated and viralised in a digital, global, frenetic and interconnected society has provoked the so-called *information disorders* (disinformation and misinformation), which are a subject of concern due to the severe consequences they can trigger. These consequences can have adverse

effects, especially among those children who lack the critical digital skills to differentiate between truthful and false information.

It is the responsibility of the family (mothers, fathers, legal guardians, or other adults responsible for the child) to educate our children as responsible digital citizens. We must guide their digital experiences towards active and autonomous participation online, always using truthful information and showing a critical and combative attitude towards the spread of misinformation.

How our children can be affected by a lack of critical skills to identify misinformation

On a more personal level, our children can be affected by exposure to misinformation in the following ways:

- Waste of time and increased distraction without any benefit for them.
- Manipulation of opinions, and consequently lack of freedom or correctness when acting or giving opinions (lack of critical positioning when they face information).
- Non-voluntary participation in disinformation dissemination chains.
- Even legal issues, arising from participation in the dissemination of disinformation that may have had a negative impact on third parties.

5.3. Media and information literacy: What is it and why is it essential for our children?

Media and information literacy (MIL) is defined as a process of building knowledge and competencies (skills and attitudes) that empowers individuals to understand the functions of the media and other information providers, to critically evaluate media content, and to make informed decisions as users and producers of information and knowledge.

Families must try to empower our children through MIL as this is one of the most important prerequisites for them to have equal access to information and knowledge.

ENDING

As those primarily responsible for the effective and safe use of the Internet for the benefit of our children's overall (digital) wellbeing, we must bear in mind that education based on critical digital thinking and skills must start at an early age. Fostering critical thinking will enable them to be autonomous, free and digitally competent users.

It is advisable to discuss and share with our children the benefits of the Internet as a source of information for many areas of their daily lives (source of knowledge, communication with peers and family, entertainment, homework, employability, news, etc.). This education about the benefits of the Internet must always be accompanied by clear guidelines about the potential risks (or harm) of misinformation and misinformation to which they may be exposed.

5.4. Critical thinking as a basis for digitally guiding our children

Critical thinking is one of the life skills defined by the WHO in 1993 as 'those skills necessary for appropriate and positive behaviour that enable us to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life'.

Undoubtedly, the fact that our daughters and sons can face the risk of misinformation and overcome it without suffering any harm has to do with their ability, but above all with their attitude towards false or fake information. Above all, we must teach them to doubt by observing the content they receive, generate and disseminate online.

Here are five practical actions to enhance their critical thinking:

1. Understand the information they receive in order to clarify its meaning. On many occasions, we can perceive that our children's conversations may be based on false information they have received via WhatsApp or another social network or digital channel. In these cases, it is advisable to ask them to show us the original source from which they have obtained this information to help them critically interpret the false information contained in the message.

2. Validation of the credibility of the information in terms of our prior knowledge, its origin, coherence and intentionality. An excellent opportunity to guide our children in this activity is to help them search for information on different websites for specific school activities. In this way, we can show them how to validate information on the same topic - which may include false information - that we find on different websites.

3. Questioning data and information and cross-checking with alternative sources. This action is recommended to be carried out together with the validation action.

4. Self-evaluation through a review of one's own mental process by analysing the information and questioning, confirming or going over this reasoning and the final results obtained.

5. To make sure that our children have understood the process of critical interpretation of information, it is advisable to guide them in this evaluation process, once the previous steps have been carried out, by repeating clearly and concisely all the steps taken to detect false information.

Critical thinking does not depend only on the intellectual capacity of our children (in terms of what is measurable by IQ tests), but is influenced by other cognitive abilities not measured by intelligence tests and by certain personality traits.

Encouraging intellectual humility in our children is vital, as getting them to think critically implies that they will doubt other people, but above all themselves. Thinking critically is an attitude through which the child begins by assuming that he or she does not know.

Encouraging the development of critical thinking in our children stimulates their capacity for high-level reasoning, which, according to studies and research, provides advantages in other facets of life:

- It encourages better decisions.
- It reduces the frequency of negative events.
- It improves academic performance.
- It increases efficiency in occupations requiring analytical skills.

5.5. How our children's biases and emotions influence the identification of misinformation

It is important for families to bear in mind that the risk of misinformation has a lot to do with the reactions of people who are exposed to it through screens. These reactions can be affected by biases, which are like shortcuts that each brain has developed to simplify problems and make decisions easier. This can have an unintended effect and become an obstacle for our children to identify misinformation.

Some examples of biases to avoid useful for the promotion of critical thinking in our children

- *Confirmation bias* leads to overvaluing information that fits with one's own beliefs (values, ideologies, prejudices) or, failing that, with

prevailing beliefs, and to unconsciously disregarding information that does not coincide or is contrary.

The *familiarity* bias or *counterproductive effect* implies that the greater the frequency with which we are exposed to a certain piece of information, regardless of its veracity, the more likely it is to be considered true.

- This bias can particularly affect our pre-teen and teenage children, who are exposed to and share different types of viral messages on a daily basis.

- The *social interaction validation* bias leads a person to do what others do, thus reinforcing something as primal as the feeling of belonging to the group.

  A child's search for identity is mainly based on a feeling of belonging to the group, especially in pre-adolescence and adolescence. It is, therefore, especially important that we guide our children towards critical thinking related to the veracity of information at this age.

- The *visual superiority* effect is due to the fact that the brain processes an image up to 60,000 times faster than text. Content accompanied by images is consumed and shared much more than content without images.

  We must bear in mind that our children receive and share a large number of videos and memes on a daily basis. The existence of this bias may imply an exchange of false or erroneous information.

Emotions do not help to combat misinformation either because our thinking, and especially that of our children, is not only rational but also emotional. When information provokes a certain emotion in us, it is possible that this emotion conditions the analysis of the information and then leads to a rational justification of what has been concluded.

There are emotions that are particularly difficult to manage, especially for adolescents, producing, for example, reactions of anger, compassion, curiosity, fear and urgency. Disinformation appeals to these emotions because the emotional component of the thought encourages sharing it.

5.6. Strategies to cope with misinformation

In order to educate our children in a responsible, critical and active way in the face of misinformation, there are several lines of intervention to be encouraged by the family.

1. Pause and make them consider the option of not sharing

The child should be urged to realise that sharing without checking (or cross-checking) is not a gesture of generosity, but is in fact, unsupportive. If their response is that they "don't have time", the only responsible alternative is simply to suggest that they cannot share the information.

We can summarise four reasons to urge to not to share without verifying:

- Compulsive or urgent sharing of information is more likely to be untrue. If it is considered very important to disseminate it, it is also important to take the time to verify it.
- Disinformation can cause discomfort or harm to others (including your friends or family). By contributing to its dissemination, you also take responsibility for its harmful effects.
- Participating, expressing opinions, defending ideas, trying to help others are citizens' rights and obligations, which are incumbent on our children. However, disseminating unverified information is reckless and unethical.
- Finally, they should be reminded that, regardless of their age, if the information has been disseminated and is subsequently found to be false, means should be put in place to disprove it, taking the time to try to compensate for the erroneous action.

2. Awareness of effects and personal responsibility

- We must help our children to visualise and find out the negative consequences of disinformation and to take responsibility for them in

order to avoid their participation - consciously or not - in the chains of disinformation.

- All too often, the focus is on identifying and combating hoaxes and misinformation by enabling the skills to do so at an early age. However, it is just as important, if not the most important, to put the emphasis on motivating, raising awareness, and giving reasons to our children so that they can assume a critical and responsible attitude. It is not enough to know how to do it; it is necessary to want to do and to have sufficient motivation.

3. Stimulate critical thinking in our children in a broad sense

- In addition to developing the ability to analyse and evaluate information, deduction, and conclusion, it is important to propose activities, adapted to their age that help them to question themselves and their own approaches. In this way, they will learn to limit the hasty and vehement dissemination of their opinions or value judgments.

4. Knowing the influence of biases and emotions

- We have to try to get to know our children better, to know what biases they have and how these may influence their evaluation of certain information and what emotions they feel about it.
- For example, our children's *confirmation bias* is combated by questioning to a greater extent the information that most closely matches what they think because, despite being endowed with intelligence, people have a predisposition not to change their minds.

5. Identify the strategies and motivations for misinformation that can affect our children

- Knowing the nature and characteristics of risks is always an advantage in knowing how to confront and overcome them. For example, it is positive to know that misinformation exploits our children's biases and emotions, and we could make more progress by trying to identify how it does so.

- It is also useful to know the motivations that can lead to disinformation which can affect them. Sometimes it is pure fun, created as a challenge or to generate a certain amount of chaos, for simple entertainment. At other times, most of the time, it is for economic or ideological purposes.

6. Know and use tools for cross-checking information

It is necessary to bear in mind that for the validation of a given piece of information there are always supporting evidence (including textual information, in image, audio, or video format) that we must teach them how to verify it. This task must be supported by one or more of these skills:

- Efficient search for information on the different web platforms or social networks they access.
- Access to reliable and relevant sources of information.
- Knowledge and use of applications and services for quick verification of images and videos.
- Careful observation of information, including the use of logic and deduction.

We must bear in mind that the age of our children can be a determining factor when using strategies for identifying and overcoming disinformation (critical thinking). For example, while at younger ages they can be shown simple examples of disinformation, adolescents can be told that there are organisations dedicated to identifying disinformation and that it is possible to access their information systems (databases or websites) to check whether something has already been identified as a hoax.

7. Useful and practical resources

It is essential to remember that we are not alone when we try to educate, guide and advise our children about the risks related to misinformation and misinformation. Below, we show entities and organizations where professionals work every day to combat the risk of misinformation.

Maldita.es /Spanish

https://maldita.es/

Maldita.es is a non-profit media whose purpose is to provide citizens with "tools to avoid being cheated". Maldita Hemeroteca, Maldito Bulo, Maldita Ciencia and Maldito Dato focus on the control of disinformation and public discourse through fact-checking techniques and data journalism.

Newtral

https://www.newtral.es/

Newtral is a media startup founded in January 2018 by journalist Ana Pastor. The three business areas in which they work are: the production of programs (for television and platforms), new narratives in social networks, innovation in journalism through fact-checking (data verification) and a line of research based on Artificial Intelligence protocols.

In Portugal, there are currently three major fact-checkers: Fact Check, which is a section of the digital newspaper Observador, launched in 2015; Polígrafo, launched in 2018, which is the first digital newspaper dedicated exclusively to fact-checking; and Prova dos Factos, a digital section of the Público newspaper, launched in 2016. The Observer Fact Check and the Polígrafo are part of the International Fact Checking Network (IFCN). The Observer partners with Facebook to verify information shared on the social network.

Polígrafo

https://poligrafo.sapo.pt/

Observador Fact Check

https://observador.pt/seccao/observador/fact-check/

Prova dos Factos

https://www.publico.pt/prova-dos-factos

These mechanisms have pages on social media, which are worth following assiduously, as a way to stay alert or be notified about the wrong information that circulates on the web.

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6. UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

Sitftung Digitale Chancen

Why do children need special rights?

For centuries, children were the property of their parents without any rights. Decisions about education, profession or even relationships were made by parents and caregivers. It was not until the 20th century that a paradigm shift occurred. Pioneers like Janusz Korczak, a pediatrician from Poland and Eglantyne Jebb, founder of the initiative "Save the Children" tirelessly drew attention to respect the personality of the child. At the request of Poland, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) was adopted in New York in 1989 and ratified by every member of the United Nations, except for the USA.

Children need special rights because they belong to the vulnerable part of our society for several reasons:

- They are often not perceived as having their own rights.
- Children normally have only few opportunities to assert their rights.
- Child poverty, child labor, abuse of children are several examples of disregarding children's wellbeing and rights.

Therefore, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child became very important. But to be honest, there are still children in the world for whom too little care is taken to protect them, to encourage them, and to involve them in all things that are of concern to them.

The following sections are intended to strengthen the understanding of children's rights and to support families in entering into dialogue with their children.

About UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child is part of the legally binding international instruments for the guarantee and the protection of Human Rights. According to the UN Convention a child means any person under the age of 18 years. The UN Convention contains recommendations for governments, to enable children's well-being and protect them from injustice and exploitation. How this is implemented in detail is left to the individual states. Article 42 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child says: "States Parties undertake to make the principles and provisions of the Convention widely known, by appropriate and active means, to adults and children alike." (https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/crc.aspx)

Structure of the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child is an agreement under international law. All treated things are laid down in individual paragraphs, the so-called articles. The whole document is divided into several parts. After the preamble, there are three parts:

– Part I contains articles concerning all living conditions of children
– Parts II and III contain the regulations for the monitoring of children's rights by a UN committee as well as the formalities for the signing and entry into force of the Convention.

The rights of children were written down in 41 articles. Further 14 articles describe statutory provisions for the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

ENDING

The individual rights in the UN Convention can be summarized in three groups: *Rights to Protection*, *Rights to Provision* and *Rights to Participation*.

- *Rights to Protection:* These articles issue the special needs for protection of children. That means the protection of children from physical and mental violence, abuse, neglect, economic exploitation and drugs. Furthermore the States undertake to provide special protection for children at war, e.g. from kidnapping and child trafficking.
- *Articles:* 19-22, 30, 32-38
- *Rights to Provision:* These rights include the rights to health care, education and adequate living conditions, and the right of a personal identity and a nationality.
- *Articles***:** 23-29, 7, 8
- *Rights to Participation:* These rights include, for example, the right to freedom of expression and hearing of the child's opinion, the right to free access to information and media. The Convention even goes one step further: children have a right to get information that is appropriate for them. The right of the child to leisure time and participation in cultural and artistic events and activities also belongs to that group of rights.
- *Articles:* 12-17, 31

When children's rights were written and ratified in 1989, it was not yet possible to foresee the development of society. The conquest of digital space as part of our daily lives, with all its opportunities and risks, was therefore not yet addressed. It is undisputed that digital development has a strong influence on the way how children grow up. The digital move in our society offers opportunities for learning, playing, health, communication and participation, but risks to children's safety, privacy, mental health and well-being are also emerging. (Livingston et al (2018), page 5) So there is no doubt about the necessity of protecting children in the digital world and raising awareness among families, adults, social institution, governments and economies for Rights of the Child in the digital world as well. It is a mission for us all to guarantee both those rights and a safe space for growing up, but this mission is even more special for relatives of children and their caregivers.

On March 2nd, 2021 the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child adopted the General comment No. 25 (2021). This text is about children's rights in the digital world.

The following section gives an overview about children´s rights in the digital world and some recommendations about how to implement them in a family environment. The project ENDING will contribute of to fulfill the mission of the General Comment N°25, to generate opportunities for parents and caregivers to gain digital literacy, to learn how technology can support the rights of children, to gain awareness of signs alerting that a child is victim of online harm and to respond appropriately. The sections about the General Comment are reinforced by statements of children. In total 709 children, aged 9-22, were asked for their statements which were collected by the 5Rights Foundation in 70 countries to get insights about how the digital environment affects their life.

Children´s Rights in the digital world

"The rights of every child must be respected, protected and fulfilled in the digital environment" (General Comment No. 25, Article I.4)

1. Non-discrimination

Technical applications can be discriminating in that way that automated processes like filtering, suggesting or decision-making are biased, based on former things done on the internet. Every move in the digital world generates small digital units called 'cookies' which are saved by providers of websites and online services. On this basis is created a digital profile of you or your child that evolves on the internet. This affects the contents that will be shown to you and made available for you. To a certain extent the issue of discrimination goes along with the access to the digital world, through the property of an own digital device or the access to places where children can use a computer or mobile.

The UN Convention states a non-discriminating access to information and digital developments for children.

WHAT CHILDREN SAY

The collection of children´s voices along the General Comment N°25 states, that most children have their first moment of access to the internet via a mobile or smartphone." (Our Rights in the Digital World, p. 17). But this goes along with barriers:

- Kenya, boy, 13: "If I ask my mum to buy me a phone, she always tells me that I am too young to use a phone." (Our Rights in the Digital World, p. 18).
- Malaysia, girl, 13: "I am sincerely hoping that the signals in rural areas can be strengthened and the financial problems will be overcome." (Our Rights in the Digital World, p. 22).
- Ethiopia, boy, 18: "A language barrier prevents us from better using internet service for self-expression." (Our Rights in the Digital World, p. 33).

Tips for family environment

- Talk to your children and decide together when it is the right time to get access to the internet and according to which agreements.
- Use privacy settings while surfing on the internet. These settings prevent information of movements in digital space and the creation of profiles of you or your children.
- Clean regularly your internet browser: delete temporary files, browsing history and cookies.
- If you download some apps on your mobile device, check the app permissions beforehand and switch off all permissions which are not necessary for using the app.

2. Right to life, survival and development

Children should be protected from threats to their right to life, survival and development. Some digital phenomena are creating a potential risk for children. Challenges in social networks, like bursting a washing machine pod in

your mouth or doing different tasks and the last one is to kill yourself (so called 'blue whale challenge'), communities which glorify or trivialize eating disorders, and so on.

Next to the states and providers of digital service parents are responsible for taking care of their children and enabling them to grow up. Because of that the General Comment on the UN Convention recommends that "Training and advice on the appropriate use of digital devices should be given to parents, caregivers, educators, and other relevant actors [...]" (General Comment No.25, C.15).

WHAT CHILDREN SAY

Children are aware of suspicious phenomenon on the internet and they are in sorrow about it.

- Chile, gender and age unknown: "[I worry about] the 'Blue Whale'...I used to have a schoolmate who...started communicating with a person that told her to hurt herself and this person threatened her." (Our Rights in the Digital World, p. 68).
- Philippines, gender and age unknown: "Social media can be used to bully other people and sometimes its causes...suicidal thoughts [and] depression, [which] deprives the rights of the child. (Our Rights in the Digital World, p. 65).

Tips for family environment

- Be interested in what your child is doing on the internet. Let your child show you which webpages he/she likes, which games he/she plays.
- Be honest if you don't agree on contents your child likes or uses.
- Don´t be reproachful if your child comes with a problem or a situation in the digital world which makes him/her feel guilty.
- Look for appropriate digital content for your child.
- You can find more information about how to face online harassment and cyberbullying in Module 3.

3. Respect for the views of the child

Digital development creates the opportunity for children to raise their voice and share their opinions. But that only works if questions of access are answered. This means that the processes of participation have to take into account the lack of technique and skills of children.

WHAT CHILDREN SAY

Children have a clear vision of the digital world they want to live in. "They want a more private, protective and transparent digital world: one that is age-appropriate and enabling of their interests, relationships and opportunities." (Our Rights in the Digital World, p. 106) Furthermore they want to be heard and involved in decisions affecting their life.

- Nepal, boy, 14: "Governments should include children in decision making about their digital media use, by creating groups of children and taking suggestions from children. Government should inform children before banning any digital media. Government should not make decisions without informing children in digital media." (Our Rights in the Digital World, p. 107).

Tips for family environment

- Empower your children in raising their voice. When children experience at an early age that their ideas and views are taken seriously, this has a positive effect on their experience of self-efficacy. Respecting the views of your children does not mean always agreeing with them or implementing all ideas, but at least listening and taking them seriously.
- Start listening.
- Discuss different views.
- Be patient.
- Don´t be afraid of generating rules. Do it together in family environment.

Aiming to respect the views of children, find your way to protect your children and let them make their own experiences. An important base is trusting each other and try to understand each other. Therefore it´s a good way to talk to you children, to share your sorrows but also to understand their feelings. Talk to other parents, share your experiences and get ideas how other families handle that issue.

4. Evolving capacities

Depending on their age and stage of development, children need measures to use digital applications safely and with low risk. Thus, everyone is called upon to develop and keep ready protective measures that are appropriate to the developmental stage and age of the child.

WHAT CHILDREN SAY

Children state that digital development is important in their life. They use it to inform themselves, to express their opinion, to find other children which share the same ideas and so on. They want their parents to accept that they use the digital achievements, but they want to be protected. In that sense children count on parents and family members to guide them in the digital world and to lower online threats. Along to that, they agree with rules implemented by their parents to protect them.

- Croatia, boy, 12: "I am not allowed to use my cell phone at night, and no more than 2 hours a day." (Our Rights in the Digital World, p. 81).
- Canada, girl, 11: "Our parents have the right to tell you that you can't put any personal info online." (Our Rights in the Digital World, p. 82).
- Croatia, boy, 11: "Five years ago I was rarely allowed to use technology, and I always had to ask my parents' permission. Now, my parents don't restrict my use of technology." (Our Rights in the Digital World, p. 82).

Tips for family environment

The state parties are forced to support parents and caregivers in getting digital competencies and guaranteeing a healthy grow up with digital media. There are different european and national initiatives which support families, parents, and caregivers in the fulfillment of that mission.

- "PEGI provides age classifications for video games in 38 European countries. The age rating confirms that the game is appropriate for players of certain age. PEGI considers the age suitability of a game, not the level of difficulty." - https://pegi.info/
- Tips for good digital health. - https://www.familiaysalud.es/sites/default/files/2018-05-28_definitivo_aep.pdf
- Campaign for the prevention of gambling addiction. - https://www.ordenacionjuego.es/sites/ordenacionjuego.es/files/noticias/triptico_policia_v2_ok.pdf
- "Ciberexpert@ program" - http://www.ciberexperto.org/
- Material on creating protective environments for children and preventing sexual abuse - https://www.unicef.es/educa/blog/entornos-protectores-infancia
- Campaign for the prevention of risky viral challenges. - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ppzgv_uaJ2w
- Ministry of Social Rights and Agenda 2030. - https://www.mdsocialesa2030.gob.es/
- Internet Segura for Kids - https://www.is4k.es/
- MAPFRE Fundantion - https://www.fundacionmapfre.org/educacion-divulgacion/salud-bienestar/actividades-educativas/controlatic/
- INCIBE Emprende is the cybersecurity entrepreneurship program for companies and start-ups that encompasses the processes of ideation, incubation and acceleration. - https://www.incibe.es/
- Pantallas amigas - https://www.pantallasamigas.net/
- Campaign about sexual abuse and grooming: https://www.a21.org/content/spain/gr4yow0

5. Access to information and freedom of expression

"The digital environment provides a unique opportunity for children to realize the right to access to information." (General Comment N°25, VI. A.50). But the internet was not developed for children. So there is a high need for child-sensitive and age-appropriate information in child-friendly language. The state parties are asked to ensure qualified, diverse information for children and their access to them. Next to access of information, children have the right to freedom of expression, which means the freedom to express their ideas, opinions, and views. Furthermore, children are reporting that digital places have the advantage of giving them the possibility to meet their peers which share the same interests. So, it is a good opportunity for children to gather with other young people and to support each other.

WHAT CHILDREN SAY

Children enjoy the possibility of getting easy and fast information through the internet, but there are some restrictions regarding to issues of access mentioned above in point 1. Another concern is the phenomenon of misinformation which children are aware and afraid of. However they do not have the skills to identify them. In this case they ask for support from adults.

- Brazil, girl, 13: "Access to information has become easier because, where before you had to buy a newspaper or wait for it to air on television, now all you have to do is look up what you want to know on the internet." (Our Rights in the Digital World, p. 24).
- Romania, girl, 16: "Adults (institutions, companies, the parents and the teachers etc) should teach children to make the difference between fake news and true news. (Our Rights in the Digital World, p. 27).

Beyond accessing information, children like the possibility to express themselves in safe, digital spaces. They feel somehow braver online than offline. In this case the role of parents may be seen in very different ways.

- Norway, girl, 16: "My parents show commitment to my online self-expression and think it's cool that youths are engaged." (Our Rights in the Digital World, p. 32).
- Lebanon, girl, 17: "They don't support my freedom of expression because they are afraid of harm." (Our Rights in the Digital World, p. 32).

Tips for family environment

There are already programs and initiatives which support a child-friendly access to information, e.g. news on television for children, webpages and search engines especially designed for children. During the last years the phenomenon of Fake News and Misinformation has got more prominent. There are several supporting materials to teach you and your children how to identify fake news and misinformation.

- https://www.getbadnews.com It´s a free-to-play online browser game. Players take the perspective of a fake news tycoon. The game is a serious game to improve improving digital skills.
- Polígrafo: https://poligrafo.sapo.pt/
- Observador Fact Check (Portuguese website): https://observador.pt/seccao/observador/fact-check/
- Prova dos Factos (Portuguese website): https://www.publico.pt/prova-dos-factos
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- Maldita.es. - Periodismo para que no te la cuelen https://maldita.es/
- Youtube Kids es. - https://www.youtubekids.com/?hl=es
- Observatorio de la Infancia - https://observatoriodelainfancia.vpsocial.gob.es/infanciaEspana/home.htm
- Pantallas Amigas - https://www.pantallasamigas.net/

6. Right to privacy

The digital world collects a lot of data from persons. From that collection may arise threats for people, especially for children. Furthermore, the

own activities on the internet causes risks as well. Especially the handling of private pictures or the provision of personal data during a registration process causes big issues of privacy. Since children cannot judge the consequences of the decision concerning pictures and private information they can share on the internet, it is the parents' duty to make the right decision for the sake of their children's well-being and safety.

WHAT CHILDREN SAY

Children state the right of privacy as one of the most important ones. They are aware about digital profiles generated by providers and the commercial intentions behind.

- New Zealand, boy, 16: "The digital age has opened [up] many new sources where people's privacy can be invaded...so there's a very strong need for this right." (Our Rights in the Digital World, p. 41).
- United Kingdom, girl, 15: "I want to know more on what specific companies are using my data; I want to know how much money companies are making off my data; I want to know and access what data of mine is stored." (Our Rights in the Digital World, p. 46).
- Norway, girl, 14: "Even though there aren't that many that will abuse your pictures, there will always be some that will. Always be critical about what you share." (Our Rights in the Digital World, p. 49).

Tips for family environment

- Do some research in your family environment: What do you have to consider when using images on the internet? Talk to the members of your family about your findings and maybe make an agreement about how to handle private pictures on the internet.
- Accompany your children for registration process. Go together through the information which are needed for registration. Do not simply decide if the children understand the issue. Talk about necessary information and optional ones and share your thoughts and sorrows about publishing private information. Don't claim to understand or be able to explain everything. It´s a very complex issue.

7. Violence against children

While spending time on the internet, children are exposed to different threats, e.g. hate speech, cyberbullying, sexual abuse, content not suitable for them. "Crises, such as pandemics, may lead to an increased risk of harm online, given that children spend more time on virtual platforms in those circumstances." (General Comment No25, VII.80) Meanwhile, the internet offers support for children and young people who are exposed to violence and are looking for help "[...] by providing a platform for sharing important information, discussing issues of violence, and connecting people to support services." (Our Rights in the Digital World, p. 62)

WHAT CHILDREN SAY

The children are aware of possible threats they may face on the internet and they have a clear demand of being protected from that. The most concerns of the children are: "[...] encountering age-inappropriate, violent and/or sexually explicit content online [...] cyberbullying [...] discrimination and online harassment [...] sexting [...] sexual exploitation [...] kidnapping, murder and other extreme risks of harm." (Our Rights in the Digital World, p. 64-67).

- Philippines, boy, age unknown: "Technology [can be] used for doing any kind of violence, especially to children. It is important that children are protected from... violence because they are very vulnerable to...risk using technologies." (Our Rights in the Digital World, p. 63).
- Pakistan, gender and age unknown: "Parents and teachers should try to understand the problems of their children and students and they should not [overemphasize] the problems. Adults should help [children] and not dismiss them." Our Rights in the Digital World, p. 70).

Tips for family environment

- Try to be a person of trust for your children, the one who listens to their worries and needs without prejudice and try to find a solution together.
- Empower your children for being tough enough to understand and say: "No"
- If you register some worrying changes in behavior of your child, try to ask what`s going on. If you feel insecure or suspect sexual abuse, contact your national help hotline: [https://fapmi.es/, https://www.policia.es/_es/tupolicia_conocenos_estructura_dao_cgseguridadciudadana_ucparticipacionciudadana.php#, https://www.anar.org/].

8. Children with disabilities

"The digital environment opens new avenues for children with disabilities to engage in social relationships with their peers, access information and participate in public decision-making processes." (General Comment No25, IX. 89). Disabilities in that context means different types of physical, intellectual, psychosocial, auditory, and visual ones which all represent barriers in the digital environment. Children with disabilities are highly affected by cyber threats. For them, it is often difficult to take advantage of the opportunities offered by digital technologies, likewise, they also need special support to cope adequately with the risks they might encounter while using them. Meanwhile the development of assistive technologies grows and finds its ways in commercially available digital devices, e.g. the possibility to raise up letters, to change contrast, read aloud function, and so on.

WHAT CHILDREN SAY

Children prompted digital service providers to offer easier access to the digital services, e.g. easy translation opportunities or more easy use of digital tools.

- Portugal, boy with hearing impairment, 13: "Criolo is never on the internet… With Portuguese sign language it is the same thing. There is even less Portuguese sign language on the internet." (Our Rights in the Digital World, page 20).

Tips for family environment

- Check the settings of your mobile, pc or tablet according to issue of accessibility.
- Support your children in using the technology self-responsibly.
- Try to find webpages or social media profiles of people with disabilities to make them more visible for your children. This helps in experiencing a feeling of belonging.

9. Health & welfare

Every child has the right to grow up healthy. The internet offers a lot of opportunities to have access to information about health, well-being, puberty and sexuality. Regarding those topics there is only a small step for children to get information which are not adequate for them. For example information which they do not understand, misinformation like glorification of eating disorders and so on. On the other site with the usage of digital media new issues of health occurs, like risk of addiction, incorrect posture, visual difficulties.

WHAT CHILDREN SAY

Children see on one side the advantages of the internet to get more information or advice to questions of health and personal development, especially for topics which are "[…] uncomfortable discussing with parents and other significant adults." (Our Rights in the Digital World, page 85). On the other side they are aware of problems which go along with using digital technology.

- Indonesia, girl, age unknown: "I learned how to clean up my body after menstruation, based on my religion." (Our Rights in the Digital World, page 85).
- Brazil, boy, 13: "Spending too much time on the phone...can impact your eyesight and give you headaches, and also...your neck or back can hurt." (Our Rights in the Digital World, page 90).
- United Kingdom, girl, 17: "You can develop unrealistic expectations from [seeing] photographs [that have] a negative impact on [your] mental health and body image." (Our Rights in the Digital World, page 92).

Tips for family environment

- Don't be reproachful if you notice your child seeks help and information online. Empower your children to ask for help and offer yourself as a trustful dialog partner.
- Be a role model for your children. If you use your mobile or watch TV during family lunch, your children will act the same way.
- Try to promote a healthy lifestyle.
- You can discuss a family agreement about media time and time free of media
- You can find more tips in Module 1 of that Guideline concerning "Health and Wellbeing"

10. Education, leisure and cultural activities

The digital environment promotes children's right to culture, leisure and play, which is essential for their well-being and development. Children experiencing pleasure, interest and relaxation through engaging with a wide range of digital products and services of their choice. Through digital development children are able to enjoy literature, museums or concerts which they wouldn´t be able to experience offline. This can empower their creativity and productivity.

WHAT CHILDREN SAY

- Philippines, gender and age unknown: "I am playful online. I spend 1-2 hours playing Mobile Legend. It makes me happy and I forget my problems temporarily." (Our Rights in the Digital World, page 39).
- South Korea, girl, 12: "[I like it] when artists upload their art videos on YouTube. Someone who likes art can get help through tutorials." (Our Rights in the Digital World, page 39).
- Ghana, girl, 17: "Digital play is actually positive because it prevents boredom… The internet makes children happy by making funny videos." (Our Rights in the Digital World, page 39).

Tips for family environment

- Be open for digital activities of education, leisure and culture.
- Enjoy such activities together with your children, e.g. a short movie about a family trip at the weekend as a memory or a digital paper chase.
- Empower you children to experiment and do not claim it should be perfect.
- Try to get the perspective: time in the digital world is learning time as well. But not itself and only with a healthy range of activities. It´s important to talk about the experiences your children made and it´s important to have a healthy balance between online experiences and offline experiences.

Summary

Children's rights are human rights adapted to the life situation of children and young people. The text above aimed to turn parents or other caregivers aware that children are as important as themselves. The most important learning about respecting the Rights of the Child is that you have to take it seriously. Parents and caregivers usually make decisions on their own, including those that affect the right of the child to

participate. On the other hand there are situations when parents and caregivers have to decide without children's opinion, especially if children are not able to assess the consequences. Participating children means to reflect daily routines. It can be uncomfortable at times, as children's feedback must be endured and addressed. But in the end, it is worthwhile to see the world from the children's perspective, as this helps to widen the adults' view of the need for children's rights.

The digital development is a really challenging situation for families. On the one hand it can bring families together and create new opportunities for how to spend family time but on the other hand it causes tension for daily togetherness and faces parents and their children with new situations for which they have no strategies, yet. What they most lack are digital competences. Teaching them and empowering parents and their children is not only a task for families. National governments also have a responsibility to provide education, awareness and support services. What you can do as families is to establish a dialogue, share your experiences, your sorrows and opinion. Be open minded for added values of digital technologies and be aware of potential risks that could occur.

Summarizing the essential from the mentioned above, there are three strategies to guarantee children's rights:

1. Protecting children with appropriate regulations and guidelines
2. Empowering children to make the right decisions about their needs
3. Practicing participation with children to turn them responsible citizens.

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