



SAILing Safe – Collaborative Strategies for School Leaders, Teachers and Parents for Mitigating Oline Risks

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Annotation. As a result of recent school closures, nearly all school children had used digital technology, e.g. for learning, for keeping contact with their friends, for playing and other free time activities. This has also resulted in lasting changes also as per the wish of children, parents, and teachers. The SAILS consortium has produced evidence-based resources for school leaders, teaching professionals and parents with a unique risk mitigation approach, rooted in child rights legislation and research. This paper explains the approach and its consequences for education and introduces the research-base for it. It also describes inspiring practices in the field. The article does not only contain evidence in the field of pedagogy, psychology, and similar disciplines, but also offers a related legal research base – a rare occurrence in the education research field. The work done is explaining and pursuing a risk mitigation instead of the more wide-spread risk prevention one, primarily based on General Comment No. 25 (March 2021) to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child that emphasises the importance of balancing ALL rights, gives parents a key role related to evolving capacities of the child.

Keywords: *risk mitigation, child rights, digitalisation, legislation, parents, teachers, school leaders.*

Introduction – Mitigating risk online

As a result of recent school closures, nearly all school children had used digital technology, e.g. for learning, for keeping contact with their friends, for playing and other free time activities. School as a social learning place and meeting friends cannot and must not be replaced by digital technology, but one of the outcomes of the closure periods is that there are lasting changes that need to be considered and tackled strategically.

School closures in 2020–2022 also highlighted how necessary it is for schools and families to work together, parents and teachers often learning to navigate digital realities together. While experiences made more teachers and parents appreciate the potential and benefits of using digital technologies for learning, there are several areas in which both groups need support and in which teachers often need to negotiate with parents and families. Overconfidence is just as problematic as overprotective approaches, and this resource is aiming at addressing both. Research conducted since March 2020 by Parents International (Salamon, 2020) clearly shows that parents wish digital technology to become an integral part of schooling and education in a broader sense, and many teachers support this not wishing to return to old practices, but there is also a demand for finding a healthy balance between online and offline activities, finding the role of digital technology in traditional educational activities, negotiating passive and active screen time, and understanding and observing privacy and data protection.

In many countries, there have already been digital technologies in use for home-schooling communication, for supporting learning, for playing and for building social networks. In the first years of using them, both school professionals and parents were so-called digital immigrants, people who lived most of their life without these tools (Kelly, 2021). This meant that both groups were undergoing a learning process, unfortunately most often not together. However, digital natives, children who were already born into the digital age are becoming parents nowadays. With an ageing teacher force that is the reality of Europe, it is time for teachers and parents to collaborate in this field, the digital natives supporting the learning of teachers and school leaders. However, research by Parents International, shows that there is a need for cataloguing the various ways digital technology is present in the lives of children, families and home-school relations in order to have a conscious approach to dealing with them. The SAILS consortium – consisting of two main stakeholder representative organisations at European level and national partners from Greece and Spain – has decided to implement a risk mitigation approach to online safety. First, it is necessary to explain what is meant by this and why it is important. On the one hand it is a major child rights issue, on the other hand they will meet risk and harm, but if you have a risk prevention approach in place you may not know about it. Parents as the main guardians of their children's rights need to consider this as part of their parental duties, and schools as accountable education institutions also need to have arrangements in place. Let's start with the child rights challenge. There is no question about a certain hierarchy of child rights: we need to do everything we can to prevent any risk to life. Still, accidents and incidents happen, and children – sadly – die. However, you teach children certain skills, for example to prevent them from being hit by a car and allow them to leave the house every day. The media is full of stories about children being harmed, mostly mentally by online activities. The answer for many is to prevent children from going online (in their presence) or using certain online tools, such as social media. The risk

mitigation approach clearly says that it is not the right way of handling risks. Similarly, to navigating the roads, we need to teach our children how to recognise and deal with online risk and harm – and thus starting to provide for another basic right, the right to education. We also need to ensure a family and school environment where children feel safe to seek adult (primarily parental) advice if they feel uncomfortable, sad or at risk – thus providing for the basic right to be brought up in a loving and caring environment. Schools often limit digital access or attempt to do so to avoid any incidents happening during school hours, however, this approach is no more than turning a blind eye to the inevitable online interaction between students (and possibly school staff). Research (Day, 2021) has confirmed that for the children of today online and offline presence means a continuum, not two separate fields of life. Online tools, and especially social media provide the platform for getting together, for organising social life, for expressing views and debating them, for widening their horizon and learning about the world around them. Therefore, child rights organisations have highlighted the importance of online access – thus providing for a few basic child rights, such as the right to the freedom of speech, the right to peaceful assembly, and again the right to education. When legislation, family, or school attempts to prevent access, they violate all these rights while their actions are not justifiable by the prevention from harm as a proportionate element. It is important to mention that adult access to mailboxes, social media handles and other personal online spaces as well as most so-called parental control tools are also violating the basic right to privacy. The basic principle of child rights is that it is closely linked to the evolving capacities of the child. The last 20–30 years has been a period when children in Europe – largely as a result of American influence – have been considered less and less capable of exercising their rights. Let's go back to the road crossing example. At the end of the 19th century, cars had been considered so dangerous that in cities the driver was obliged to hire a runner to run in front of the car with a flag indicating danger (and by that also to drive ridiculously slowly). Cars have become much faster and much more numerous, and still people have decided not to lock their children in the house but to teach them how to cross the road safely. First you cross together, holding hands and being a role model for your child. Then you ask the child to tell you when you can cross the street after they look around or check the traffic lights. And at the age of 6 or 7 (yes, that is the right age, not later, children are capable), you let them go on their own knowing that you have taught them all. Similarly, the first online experiences should be joint ones and important adults (both parents and teachers) need to be role models for their children. At the same time, it is important to create an environment and practices that enables the child to share anything, even being naughty, cheeky or outright bad, without having to be afraid of punishment. Free discussions around the table at dinner has proven to be the best. Teachers should encourage this open communication and promote it to parents. That way, parents will know if something bad is happening to them online or

offline and build trust rather than violate their rights. Most people are afraid of their children or students being bullied online, but they don't consider two things. Online bullying is (nearly) always an extension of offline bullying behaviour, and often a sign of the bully being bullied. And sadly, we also need to understand that child-to-child bullying is not the most prevalent. Children are most often bullied by teachers and trusted adults from the family and the circle of friends are the second in line (Gusfre et al., 2022). Another major concern is about pornographic content, but that has been on the table for decades, probably centuries. Children always found ways to access such content, without adult presence, if forbidden. A third area of concern is being exposed to violence. In this field research is not conclusive, but the balance is dipped towards research results (Drummond, 2020) showing that violent content is rarely a trigger for violent behaviour. At the same time, violent games often play the role of a punch bag.

Recent research on children in the digital world

In the few months preceding the compilation of this resource, several research papers were published that clearly verify the risk mitigation approach implemented in SAILS. They underline that the only way to learn sailing safely online is to do it, and the more children use digital tools and social media the more confident and resilient they become. It is also clear that while regular users know when and from whom to ask for help, the adults around them, especially teachers, are not always prepared for the job.

Probably the most important such paper is by Sonia Livingstone, one of the most vocal advocates of a balanced approach to digital practices and of ensuring all child rights, not only the right to protection, and her colleagues. It is a systemic evidence review that is aiming at making the link between young people's well-being related to content or occurrences that are uncomfortable or bad, and their resilience and media literacy. The percentage of young people reporting that their well-being level is lowered due to such encounters is declining, and there seems to be a very strong link between their resilience to such events and well-being. However, you can only build resilience by having to cope with difficult situations and by increasing media literacy levels. Thus, it seems to be clear that given the right support by their family, friends, and adults in their circle of trust, young people benefit from being exposed to risk and uncomfortable situations in the long run. The task we are trying to help parents and professional educators solve is to be able to offer the right support, to increase resilience in a complex way, and to support their media literacy.

Another research authored by Kathy Hirsch-Pasek, and her colleagues highlights the importance of targeting parents as a main recipient group in SAILS. Their research was focusing on younger children, their digital practices (especially watching videos) and the impact of parents discussing it with them on their other skills and competences.

Their findings strongly underline again the importance of parental curiosity about children's digital activities and the importance of discussions.

Research conducted by Ofcom in the UK shows that most children under 13 are already registered on at least one social media platform. One-third of parents of children aged 5 to 7 said their child had a profile, which rose to 60% among children aged 8 to 11. There is no data directly from children, so the percentages are likely to be higher, especially for the 8 to 13 age group. This is a reality we need to deal with, and it means that even the parents and teachers of younger children must have the right competences to guide children while allowing them to experiment. Amy Orben and her colleagues have analysed the impact of social media use on life satisfaction and have found that there is a major difference between boys and girls of different ages. High levels of social media use accounted for lower life satisfaction for girls aged 11–13 and boys aged 14–15. A recent publication by Lie Detectors, a Belgian journalism NGO finds a clear mismatch between the social media use of children and young people, and the adults close to them. This is an important finding highlighting that indirect tools are important in education for living in the digital age as the educator may live in a different digital reality from the digital reality of the learner – regardless of who is educating whom. This paper also highlights another element in our approach: that children are often more skilled than adults. The findings show that children are far more capable of identifying falsified pictures than adults.

The UNICEF Report the State of the World's Children 2021 shows that by being online and active on social media regularly, children become more confident and subsequently feel much safer online. It is a reassuring finding that many children know how to seek support if something feels uncomfortable online. The percentage grows with the regularity of logging in. 74% of first-time users already know how to ask for help from family, other adults, or friends. Occasional social media use increases this to 86%, while in the case of regular users 93% feel confident asking for help. However, a high percentage of children felt that school was not responsive to their online learning challenges at all.

Legislative review

This effort was aiming at summarising the international legislation around a safe digital childhood and the national implementation of these regulations as well as other national legislative and quasi-legislative elements.

SAILS consortium partners had explored country-specific inspiring practices and – not surprisingly – have only found very few. Thus, the authors have included less specific inspiration, primarily from industry, the Council of Europe and the Dig-iLitEY COST Action that are aiming at parents in all project countries. The legislative mapping exercise had found that a safe and healthy digital childhood is provided for

in international legislation while some national legislative regulations may be over-restrictive both violating the rights of children and parents.

International legislative framework

As with all human rights, children's rights are subject to an internal hierarchy. The protection of life, similarly to general human rights law, overrides all other rights. It appears, however, that national and regional regulators consider themselves to possess absolute freedom over ranking, and assigning importance to, children's rights in digital environments. A purely risk-prevention focused approach loses sight of the importance of balancing, and indeed respecting, children's rights. A risk-mitigation approach can achieve a balance between competing children's rights while also minimizing risk that children face in digital environments. Below, a survey of European and international rules concerning children's rights on the internet is presented.

EUROPEAN UNION

General Data Protection Regulation ("GDPR")

The GDPR, adopted in 2016, is an instrument directly applicable and binding in each Member State of the European Union ("EU"). Most relevant for present purposes is Article 8, titled Conditions applicable to child's consent in relation to information society services. The Article, in essence, fixes the default age of consent in online environments at 16, although granting the leeway to Member States to reduce this to as low as 13. As such, Member States of the EU are forbidden from introducing a lower age of consent. This rule effectively removes the ability of parents to decide on the maturity of their own children and the possibility for children to exercise their rights such as free expression. The Regulation further posits that simplistic, child-friendly language should be used in any communication aimed at children in data processing contexts (Article 12 and Recital 58). All national supervisory authorities must also pay special attention to online activities aimed at children (Article 57). It is considered that children merit such extended protection due to their lack of understanding of the ramifications of sharing one's personal data (Recital 38). This blanket ban on under-16 use of certain sites (as many sites cannot be used without data processing), is an extreme form of risk-prevention. It assumes that children are not competent to make their own decisions and must be protected from all risk even at the expense of several rights that they are theoretically entitled to. No discussion of potential harmful effects on other rights are apparent, nor does it appear that the EU legislator was cognizant of the need to respect and protect children's rights. In the name of risk-prevention, rights to free speech and association, among others, have been effectively discarded.

INTERNATIONAL LAW AND POLICY

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (“UNCRC”)

The UNCRC is the most important and the single broadest international legal instrument concerning children’s rights. As such, it also has major relevance for the digital context. In no order of importance, the following rights are, or should be, most impactful in the online environment:

- The right to free expression (Article 13).
- The right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion (Article 14).
- The right to freedom of association and peaceful assembly (Article 15).
- The right to privacy (Article 16).
- The right to access to information (Article 17).
- The right to education (Article 28).
- The right to leisure, play, and culture (Article 31).
- The right to protection from economic, sexual, and other types of exploitation (Articles 32, 34, and 36, respectively).

GENERAL COMMENT ON THE UNCRC

In 2021, the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child adopted a General Comment concerning children’s rights in digital environments. The Committee devised four principles through which the implementation and balancing of children’s rights should be achieved at national level.

Firstly, States must guarantee non-discrimination. Children should have equal and effective access to digital environments. Hateful communication or unfair treatment using technology is also considered discriminatory treatment.

Secondly, the best interests of the child should inform national efforts concerning digital technologies. The regulation, design, use and management of such technologies should have as a principal consideration the best interest of the child. States should consult child right organizations. Importantly, it is highlighted that all children’s rights should be given due weight, thus including the right to seek, receive and impart information, not only that to be protected from harm.

Thirdly, States should protect children from risks to their life and development. Such threats encompass a wide range of activities, such as violent content and gambling.

Fourthly, States should ensure that children may voice their views through digital technologies and that these views be respected. In regulating in this area, States should pay due attention to the concerns and opinions of children.

The General Comment highlights the need for specialised policies and rules at the national level which address children’s rights in the digital environment. As is clear from the summary above, the Committee considers it (rightly) critical that States

recognize the relevance of all children's rights in the digital world. Comprehensive and broad risk-prevention approaches are strikingly contrary to this required respect for rights such as that to access information and voice one's opinion. If, in the name of risk-prevention, a parent or authority may prevent a child from using digital platforms, this is tantamount to a frontal assault on these rights for no discernible reason. As explained by the Committee, proportional protection, non-discriminatory treatment, and the best interests of the child should inform decision-making surrounding children's presence online.

The internet can be an unparalleled tool in fulfilling children's rights. Through the web, the rights of free expression, freedom of thought, freedom of association, access to information, freedom of leisure, play, and culture, and the right to education can also be promoted in a manner not possible in the offline world. Through public fora, children may voice their views in forms, and to audiences, which they would not be able to offline. Through digital education, the diversity and quality of materials used in teaching, as well as that of methods of teaching, can be greatly enhanced. Games provide new forms of play as well as playful learning, while often also allowing novel ways of association with peers and accessing information.

Other rights may, contrarily, be threatened in digital environments. Particularly the right to privacy and protection from exploitation must be borne in mind. However, the main takeaway should not be that these rights must be protected at the expense of all others listed before. The risks thereto should be mitigated to the greatest extent possible, guaranteeing the respect for all other rights unless impossible in the circumstances. No right other than that to life and survival may trump others without careful balancing and, if possible, case-by-case assessment.

UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN'S FUND ("UNICEF") DISCUSSION PAPER

Recent research by the United Nations Children's Fund ("UNICEF") suggests the adoption of principles like those proposed by the UNCRC Committee in the context of age assurance tools. These are:

Proportionate and transparent usage: age assurance tools, which are in effect an obstacle to free access, should only be used if necessary and proportionate, and should be employed in a manner transparent to affected children.

Access and inclusion: the exercise of children's rights in the online sphere should not be inhibited unless there is a risk based on evidence. Outright prohibition of access should not be employed if any less intrusive measure is available. All the foregoing must apply in an inclusive, non-discriminatory manner.

Governance: age-gating (that is, making access conditional on being of a given age) must be justified by evidence of potential harm and reasoning concerning the chosen

age ranges. Internationally, more consistency is necessary in the regulatory framework to protect and fulfil children's rights.

What is perhaps even more pronounced when considering this research than the General Comment is the untenability of comprehensive prohibitive measures in the name of risk-prevention. Child rights, simply put, do not allow for blanket measures. This should come as no surprise: general human rights are subject to identical balancing efforts. It is high time that States recognize that child rights are human rights and deserve the same dedicated and careful balancing that "adult rights" receive. Proportionate, transparent, accessible, and inclusive regulation and policy should be devised in areas surrounding children's online presence. Blanket age restrictions, for example, on using social media in any form whatsoever is clearly not such a balanced measure. Risk-mitigation, not risk-prevention, should prevail in decision-making to respect and uphold children's rights.

National legislative framework: Hungary

Age of consent for information society services (GDPR, Art. 8)

Hungary made the decision to increase the age of consent for children for online contexts significantly above the minimum threshold prescribed by the GDPR. While the Regulation foresees that Member States may introduce an age of consent as low as 13, Hungary implemented the Regulation nationally by not providing the age of consent. As such, the country introduced the default rule of 16 years of age contained in the GDPR. Protection of children online and the rights of the parent: law and policy. No specific law has been introduced in Hungary concerning child protection online, nor concerning parental rights and duties in the aforesaid context. The laws in effect are based on the UNCRC. In 2014 the National Media and Info communications Authority ("Nemzeti Média- és Hírközlési Hatóság" (NMHH)) formed an initiative dubbed Internet Roundtable on Child Protection ("Gyermekvédelmi Kerekasztal"). The role of this advisory board to the NMHH is to promote and support the protection of children on the internet, assisting the president of the NMHH. While it does not have the power to adopt legally binding instruments, it focuses on the production of recommendations and research promoting safe and child-friendly internet use best practices, focusing on filtering software and digital literacy of both parents and children. Additionally, concerned parties may contact the board if they consider a content provider to lack in its child protection efforts. For instance, if a video-sharing service provides unconstrained access to violent content for minors, this may be reported to the board who may then examine it.

The board consists of an array of experts, including educators, internet providers' association representatives, and child safety professionals. Internet market professionals and child protection experts may together recommend members for eight of the twenty-one seats on the board to the chairperson.

The Hungarian online child protection efforts are influenced by the outcome of a national consultation held in 2015, the results of which showed that most respondents want no threats towards children to be posed by the internet. As a result, the government initiated the Digital Welfare Programme (“Digitális Jólét Program”). Relevant for present purposes is a subcomponent of the Programme, namely the Digital Child Protection Strategy of Hungary (“Magyarország Digitális Gyermekvédelmi Stratégiája”). The Strategy emphatically refers to protecting children from all threat, and preventing risks that may exist online. Additionally, it aims to also equip children, parents and educators with the knowledge and skills necessary for value-creating and culture-fostering internet use. Three main pillars are taken as the basis of addressing child protection online. Firstly, raising awareness and providing knowledge of media realities. Secondly, protection and security through tools such as filtering software and content limitation. Thirdly, sanctions against threatening content through data collection and activity monitoring concerning threats to children online.

Overall, in Hungary, several separate policies, actors, and rules govern child protection online. Large portions of child protection efforts remain at the level of non-binding policies or advice. Several education and awareness raising centres are also established in Hungary, aimed at promoting digital media literacy as well as conscious and safe media use.

- Put the child’s interest first in digital design.
- Involve children in the design process.
- Limit the processing of personal data related to children.
- Ensure transparency in a manner understandable to children.
- Conduct impact assessments concerning the privacy of the child.
- Introduce child-friendly privacy design (i.e., generally recommending opt-in approaches).
- Avoid profiling children based on the data provided and their actions online.
- Avoid economic exploitation of children.
- Avoid design that can be harmful to children.
- Develop industry guidelines focused on child protection.

National legislative framework: The Netherlands

Age of consent for information society services (GDPR, Art. 8)

The Netherlands made the decision to increase the age of consent for children for online contexts significantly above the minimum threshold prescribed by the GDPR. While the Regulation foresees that Member States may introduce an age of consent as low as 13, the Netherlands implemented the Regulation nationally by not providing the age of consent. As such, the country introduced the default rule of 16 years of age contained in the GDPR.

Protection of children online and the rights of the parent: law and policy

No specific law has been introduced in the Netherlands concerning child protection online, nor concerning parental rights and duties in the aforesaid context. The laws in effect are based on the UNCRC. There is, however, an authoritative Code for Children's Rights developed by Leiden University and endorsed by the Dutch Consumers and Markets Authority. As a result, the Code is likely to have effect in the market, even in absence of legal codification. Its main focus is, among other digital products, on apps and games, recognizing the growing importance of these products to the everyday life of children.

The Code is based on a set of ten principles intended to guarantee the protection and fundamental rights of children online. The principles, aimed at developers and designers of digital products and based on the UNCRC and the GDPR, are the following:

The Netherlands has also revised its Youth Act which deals primarily with services for children and families, from preventive to specialised care. Such services are now decentralized, mainly falling into the responsibility of municipalities.

Several separate policies and actors partake in online child protection efforts. The Dutch Safer Internet Centre exists to promote safer and better internet use of children. They include youth in their policymaking through the Youth Panel ("Digiraad"). They also provide a hotline and a helpline to assist in safer internet efforts. Its central element is its Awareness Centre, responsible for national coordination between ministries, NGOs, and private partners (such as ISPs).

The Netherlands has also seen several good practice initiatives aimed at helping parents, children, and educators. For instance, the Safe Internet website (veilinginternetten.nl) provides resources and advice concerning safe internet use, funded jointly by the government and private actors, relying on the expertise of the national cybersecurity agency.

National legislative framework: Spain

Age of consent for information society services (GDPR, Art. 8)

Spain made the decision to lower the age of consent for children for online contexts below the default threshold prescribed by the GDPR. While the Regulation foresees that Member States may introduce an age of consent as low as 13, Spain implemented the Regulation nationally by setting the age of consent at 14. Spain introduced a new child protection law in 2021. After receiving approval from the Lower House, it was confirmed by the Senate. Among others, it reinforces the right to be heard and allows the government to create courts specialized in violence against children. Parental rights and duties are defined in this law. It is focused on protecting children from any kind of violence (physical, mental, moral, and psychological) in whatever manner it may occur (thus both online and offline). Spain also specifically defines the duties of minors, such as the duty to avoid bullying. In the context of internet safety, the latter duty is of critical importance, as cyberbullying presents a significant threat to children on the internet.

The laws in effect are based on the UNCRC

Schools are allowed to introduce digital learning if the school board so approves. It is completely at the school board's discretion whether they involve stakeholders (teachers, teacher representatives, students, parents, and non-teaching staff) in decision-making concerning digital education. While in terms of curricula teachers have little autonomy, they possess significant leeway in choosing the method of education. Teachers' attitudes towards technology in education is mostly positive. The greater access to diverse sources is conceived as particularly beneficial. It is widely recognized that technology is a tool, thus its ultimate benefit or harm depends on conscious efforts to maximize beneficial uses and minimize undesirable applications thereof. The wide availability of sources of dubious reliability is considered a point of concern among teachers in Spain.

National legislative framework: Greece

Age of consent for information society services (GDPR, Art. 8)

Greece made the decision to lower the age of consent for children for online contexts below the default threshold prescribed by the GDPR. While the Regulation foresees that Member States may introduce an age of consent as low as 13, Greece implemented the Regulation nationally by setting the age of consent at 15.

Protection of children online and the rights of the parent: law and policy

No specific law has been introduced in Greece concerning child protection online, nor concerning parental rights and duties in the aforesaid context. The interest of the child as a concept is not defined in any binding instrument. The laws in effect are based on the UNCRC. Parental responsibility, generally, is defined by the Civil Code and encompasses care, protection, and education. These concepts, in turn, may be applied to digital contexts. The parent (or guardian) must promote the moral and material interests of the child. The former, relevantly to the present discussion, includes psychological and mental health, as well as the protection of fundamental rights, all of which are highly relevant in online environments. Interestingly, despite the relatively high age of consent in digital environments, the Greek legal system applies a flexible approach to evaluating the child's maturity in legal proceedings. It is recognized that each child and thus each case is different, and high levels of flexibility consequently apply when assessing the maturity of the child. Such flexibility is clearly absent from the approach taken towards online presence for minors.

Several separate policies and actors partake in online child protection efforts, for instance, the Greek School Network of public school in the country and abroad Safe access of students to the Internet and their protection against inappropriate content are their fundamental principles. Since 1999, it operates a content control service on the internet applying a secure content policy, in line with international practices and legal requirements, but without parental engagement and with no visible activity supporting parents. Overall, while some good practice-based efforts exist, there are fewer initiatives compared to other countries.

Select Inspiring Practices

Helping parents keep their children safe online (by <https://www.internetmatters.org/>)

The initiative aims to assist parents in keeping their children safe when navigating the online world. By providing advice, checklists, and toolkits, it aims to raise parents' awareness of issues potentially impacting their children such as inappropriate content and fake news. While it is commendable to raise awareness of risks, the initiative appears to promote a risk-prevention approach through, for instance, setting up parental control on all devices and generally restricting access. It provides guides on restricting access to sites and / or functions on computers, phones, gaming consoles, social media, and so forth. On a positive note, it also recommends that parents discuss internet safety and conscious web use with their children. This is a laudable aspect of the initiative as it gives children, at least to some extent, a say in their own online presence. Thus, this risk-mitigation focused aspect compensates somewhat for the strict risk-prevention and non-child-right-cognizant restriction recommendations of the initiative.

Positive Online Content Campaign (<https://www.positiveonlinecontentforkids.eu/campaign>)

The initiative aims to improve parents' digital literacy which in turn should enable them to act as role models to their children concerning online activities. Additionally, it promotes raising awareness and disseminating knowledge about what positive and negative characteristics of online products to look out for. By promoting the making of informed choices and the characterization of parents as role models, the initiative appears to fit well with risk-mitigation approaches. For example, instead of banning children from downloading apps, it wishes to teach parents how to recognize and discuss potentially harmful ones.

Internet Segura for Kids (<http://www.infocop.es/pdf/guia.pdf>)

The Spanish Internet Safety Centre aims to raise the awareness of parents and children alike concerning the safe and responsible use of the internet and digital technologies in general. It offers a helpline for stakeholders in doubt, which should further the ability of parents and children to make wise choices when navigating the online world. By recognizing that both parents and children are equal stakeholders in safe internet use and by promoting awareness and training instead of prohibitions and restricting access, the initiative appears cognizant of children's right and in line with a risk-mitigation approach to online threats.

Apple Families (<https://www.apple.com/families/>)

Apple's family features aim to enable parents to be aware of what children are doing online. It allows parents to decide on the manner and amount of device and / or app usage. It generally focuses more on limiting and consciously monitoring online activity than pre-emptively banning access. Through time limits and specific app restrictions,

it provides a more tailor-made form of regulating online presence for children than blanket prohibitions on, for example, using the App Store. While a positive approach in that it is more focused on mitigating risks than preventing them, it can easily move astray and incentivize inclined parents to unduly monitor and restrict their children's online activities. However, this is a fine line to tread, and the initiative is commendable for its focus on case-by-case limiting instead of blanket banning.

#SeizeTheControls (<https://www.seizethecontrols.eu/>)

The initiative recognizes the popularity, potential and positive characteristics of video gaming. It aims to help parents in understanding video games, choosing age-appropriate games for their children, and setting up limits as to when and how long children can play. By promoting that parent, for example, familiarise themselves with in-game reporting tools and by promoting parent-child discussion surrounding video games, it fosters two-sided, honest discussion and subsequent conscious online play.

Instead of discouraging parents from allowing their children to play, the initiative hopes to enable parents to recognize the positive impact games can have while mitigating potential risks, such as non-age-appropriate games (for example, highly violent and obscene shooter games for preteens). To this end, it relies on and explains the Pan-European Game Information classification ("PEGI", <https://pegi.info/>). The classification allows conscious decision-making when buying and playing games. Sufficiently aware of the contents, parents and children can make informed choices together whether this game is appropriate.

Smart Parenting in the Digital Age (<https://library.parenthelp.eu/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/DigilitEY-Smart-parenting.pdf>)

This guide intends to assist parents in raising children in a digital world. It emphasizes making decisions about boundaries as a team, together with children, while simultaneously building trust. This latter aspect is important as the guide recognizes that total monitoring and constant supervision are not feasible. The guide also promotes leading by example and helping children find games and tools suitable for their age and maturity. The guide emphasizes that children's consent should be discussed with them from an early age and, whenever possible, they should be allowed to have a say when their consent online is requested. Similarly, helping children understand what not to share online is promoted as a tool for raising risk-conscious children. Overall, the guide promotes a healthy risk-mitigation approach through discussion and joint decision-making. It opposes blanket prohibitions and making decisions for children. As such, it is a step in the right direction – away from risk-prevention and towards risk-mitigation in online environments.

UNICEF: Digital Age Assurance Tools and Children's Rights Online across the Globe

Relevantly for present purposes, the discussion paper includes alternatives to age-gating tools. It promotes the use of parental content control on home Wi-Fi networks

to prevent children from assessing inappropriate content. Importantly, however, it emphasizes that this tool is only suitable for young children, as older children's rights to access information may be impeded by such measures. It also uniquely recognizes that children are often more tech-savvy than their parents and such measures are thus also likely to give only a false sense of successful risk-prevention to parents. Similar control measures are available on gaming consoles and are similarly encouraged only for specific situations and very young children.

The 4Cs: Classifying Online Risk to Children (S. Livingstone, M. Stoilova)

The authors develop a four-way classification of online risks: the 4Cs. As stated in the report, the classification assists in recognizing that risks to children online can arise when a child.

- “engages with and/or is exposed to potentially harmful CONTENT.
- experiences and/or is targeted by potentially harmful CONTACT.
- witnesses, participates in and/or is a victim of potentially harmful CONDUCT.
- or is party to and/or exploited by a potentially harmful CONTRACT.”

Through the 4Cs classification system, the report hopes to, inter alia, enable parents to be conscious of what type of risks to look out for and what can be done to tackle them, should they arise.

Mediawijsheid (<https://www.mediawijsheid.nl/ouders/>)

The organization collects and disseminates sources and tools for parents to be digitally literate, active partners in their child's development. Emphasizing educating and conversing with children, sources are collected which may be helpful in mitigating or preventing risks through a variety of manners, such as smart media use. Inevitably, as a collection of sources, it contains risk-prevention approaches alongside risk-mitigation ones. However, it is a helpful, accessible, and clear resource for parents wishing to be more digitally literate and better understand their children's digital world.

Veilig op internet: hoe bescherm je je kind online? (<https://www.oudersvannu.nl/kind/praktisch/veilig-internetten/>)

The website provides tips over children's internet use to parents. Through discussing online risks and dangers, it highlights what parents should pay attention to. It suggests the use of parental controls, although only as a secondary measure after talking to one's child. This is commendable as it promotes dialogue and joint decision-making. It recommends making online activities a daily topic, discussing the positive aspects thereof while not losing sight of potential risks. The advice of discussing internet use with children fits well with a risk-mitigation approach that recognizes children as competent actors in decisions concerning their online presence.

Conclusions

Children's use of digital and online tools is a reality that will remain, and they – as the whole population – are likely to use these tools more and more. Responsible and child rights aware adult behaviour is to support them in enjoying the opportunities the digital world offers in a way that provides for both basic safety and the exercising all relevant child rights from the right to the right education to freedom of expression and the right to information. Education – not only formal, but also non-formal and informal, including the most impacting education, that provided by parents – need to support children in this. Activities and support tools need to be evidence-based in terms of not only pedagogy, psychology, technology, but also legislative. While there are inspiring practices and initiatives, there is still a lot to do to provide for this in a way that is fully in line with the promise countries made when ratifying the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

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Saugus „buriavimas“ – bendradarbiavimo strategijos, skirtos mokyklų vadovams, mokytojams ir tėvams, siekiant sumažinti riziką internete

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Santrauka

Dėl per pandemiją uždarytų mokyklų beveik visi mokiniai mokymuisi, bendravimui su draugais, žaidimams ir kitai laisvalaikio veiklai dar intensyviau pradėjo naudoti skaitmenines technologijas. Tai lėmė ilgalaikius pokyčius, taip pat vaikų, tėvų ir mokytojų persiorientavimą į kitokią veiklą. SAILS konsorciumas parengė išteklius mokyklų vadovams, mokymo specialistams ir tėvams, taikydamas unikalų rizikos mažinimo metodą, pagrįstą vaiko teisių įstatymais ir tyrimais. Šiame straipsnyje pristatomas šis metodas ir jo padariniai švietimui bei pristatomas atliktas tyrimas. Taip pat aprašoma įkvepianti praktika šioje srityje. Straipsnyje pateikiami ne tik pedagogikos, psichologijos ir panašių disciplinų įrodymai, bet ir susijusi teisinių tyrimų bazė – retas reiškinys švietimo tyrimų srityje. Atliktas darbas paaiškina ir siekia rizikos mažinimo, o ne labiau paplitusio rizikos prevencijos, visų pirma, remiantis Bendruoju komentaru Nr. 25 (2021 m. kovo mėn.) su JT Vaiko teisių konvencija, kuri pabrėžia VISŲ teisių pusiausvyros svarbą, suteikia tėvams pagrindinį vaidmenį, susijusį su besivystančiais vaiko gebėjimais.

Esminiai žodžiai: *rizikos mažinimas, vaiko teisės, skaitmenizacija, teisės aktai, tėvai, mokytojai, mokyklų vadovai.*

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