

The Internet became the core of social life with social media. We trust in the positive energy and influence of social work to guide children and young people at risk safely through the challenges and support them to benefit from the great advantages of social media.



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Nobody's Children Foundation  
Poland



RIAP Association  
Lithuania



Fundación Esplai  
Spain



Narodni centrum bezpecnejsiho internetu  
Czech Republic

## news in the field

### WEEK WITHOUT BULLYING - Lithuania

Youth 3.0: Smartphone and Internet include children's everyday life

EU Kids Online seeks to enhance knowledge of European children's use, risk and safety online

## editorial

Dear Readers,  
on April 8th 2014 about one hundred international stakeholders from the area of children and youths work have attended the project's final conference in Berlin to discuss how the influence of social work can be used to ensure the online safety of children and youths at risk. During the event, the findings of the project were presented and discussed with the high-ranking members of the **international Advisory Board of SocialWeb - SocialWork**. In the afternoon, the interactive working format of the *Appreciative Inquiry Approach* offered all participants the opportunity to get directly into contact with each other and exchange experiences and opinions beyond national and professional borders. Enjoy reading our report on the **Future Summit SocialWeb - SocialWork**.

The presentation of the project's findings on the final conference gave an insight into the evaluation activities of the project: the quantitative survey waves and the accompanying qualitative focus group interviews with trainees and managerial staff of social work institutions. The project's evaluation activities focus on the short-term and long-term effects the training and the online-learning units have on the daily working routines of the target group and will draw conclusions about the transferability and scalability of the project's training approach to other groups of professionals and in other European countries.

With regard to the final project phase and beyond, the project's evaluation results will be prepared for further dissemination to the interested public, aiming at a broader implementation of the project's training approach in other European countries. We are looking forward to announce soon the availability of the final findings of the project evaluation as well as the material and online units developed during the training campaign in six European languages on the **project website**.

Yours  
Carolin Bretl,  
project manager

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## report

### Future Summit *SocialWeb - SocialWork*

**Professionals discussed the influence of social work on the online safety of children and youths at the final conference of the European project *SocialWeb - SocialWork* in Berlin**

About one hundred international stakeholders from the area of children and youth work have attended the final conference of the European project *SocialWeb - SocialWork* on April 8th 2014 in Berlin. The project consortium - partner organisations from Czech Republic, Germany, Lithuania, Poland and Spain - presented the project's findings and discussed the results with the high-ranking members of the international Advisory Board of *SocialWeb - SocialWork*: John Carr (UK), Dr. Renata Geležiniene (Lithuania Republic Special pedagogue association, Lithuania), Loreta Krizinauskiene (Association LIA / Langas I ateiti, Lithuania), Andreas Link (jugendschutz.net, Germany) and Tink Palmer (The Marie Collins Foundation, UK). In the afternoon, all participants had the opportunity to exchange experiences and ideas in the framework of a future summit on the impact of social work on the online safety of children and youths.



What kind of influence does the internet have on the identity building and personality development of young people nowadays? Digital media are an essential part in youths' daily life, as data reveals. In 2013, the average number of Internet users in Europe was 77% of the population aged 16 to 74 years, the age group of 16 to 24-year-olds is with 96% almost entirely online (Eurostat 2013). And especially for the 9 - to 16-year-old children and adolescents, for example, the EU Kids Online survey found that "Internet use is fully integrated into the daily lives of the children," because 93% of this age group are at least once a week online and 60% every or almost every day (Livingstone/Haddon et al. 2011, 5).

Unfortunately, vulnerable children and youths e.g. minors belonging to high-risk groups such as socially disadvantaged families are literally falling through the net. Research like the EU Kids Online Studies show the need to consider this target group and their specific needs when measures for child and youth protection in the media are developed (Livingstone/Haddon et al., 2011).

This is where the EU project *SocialWeb - SocialWork* steps in: socially and educationally disadvantaged children and youths are less likely to get guidance in their family or through their school education, if they go to school at all. To reach them, new areas of work with children have come into focus. And, as proven by the evaluation results of the project, social youth work can contribute to the Internet safety of these young people.

The final conference of *SocialWeb - SocialWork* invited professionals working with children and youths and other interested parties to discuss on the basis of the project's findings how the influence of social work can be used to ensure the safety of children and youths at risk on the Internet.

Introductory, the project coordinator Stiftung Digitale Chancen explained the unique project concept consisting of two equal pillars: the provision of a training campaign for professionals working with children and youths at risk on online safety and in parallel the evaluation of the training effects on their work. The subsequent presentation of the project's findings was nourished by the expertise of the project's Advisory Board members. After a two year phase of piloting and evaluating, the results show that the approach to train professionals working with children and youths in media literacy and online safety is successful. The training participants in the five European partner countries deepened their knowledge of media usage behaviour and understanding of the online fascination of their young clientele and developed it further. Their awareness for risks which children and youths are exposed to on the internet has clearly been increased through the training campaign. Six months after the training the awareness of the professionals working with children and youths was heightened by around 20% for all mentioned online risks. Plus they are taken into confidence by their young clientele when the need is felt to discuss online problems. "Talking to each other and listen what children and youths have to say - that is what is important," says Gerhard Seiler, managing director of Stiftung Digitale Chancen, project coordinator of *SocialWeb - SocialWork*.

The interactive working session in the afternoon designed according to the *Appreciative Inquiry Approach* allowed all participants to get directly into contact with each other and exchange experiences and opinions beyond national and professional borders. Basing on the fact that the Internet is **the** platform where identity building and personality development of young people takes place and that social work has a positive influence to guide children and youths at risk safely through this process, this approach encourages positive thinking and focuses on identifying what is working well, analysing why it is working well and then discussing how to achieve more of it. In four working phases - appreciating the best of what is, envisioning what might be, engaging in dialogue about what should be and innovating what will be - the conference participants took a look into the future and tried to identify the existing strengths, potentials and the positive aspects of social work on that issue.

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## report



The presentation of the group work highlighted the significance of the African saying "It takes a whole village to raise a child" and its transferability on the subject of the conference. "Nowadays, it must be a global village that takes part in a child's education," concluded Jutta Croll, moderator and board member of the Stiftung Digitale Chancen. "We need companies to already consider safety for children and youths while developing their internet services, as well as the support of the government for setting a frame." "Parents and other guardians need support for media education within the family, while social youth workers are especially needed when the safety of children and youths at risk is concerned", adds Virginia Pareja from the Spanish partner organisation Fundación Esplai.

The report on the final findings of the project evaluation as well as the material and online learning units developed during the training campaign in six European languages will be available from summer 2014 on.

[Please take a look at our conference programme](#)

## events in the field

**Reacting on cyberbullying - the witness role**

16.05.14, Warsaw

**The Mobile Phone and its User: who is smarter?**

20.05.14, Prague 1

**15th German Child and Youth Welfare Day (DJHT)**

03.06.14 - 05.06.14

**At-Large Summit II (ATLAS II)**

21.06.14 - 26.06.14

**8th International Conference "Keeping Children and Young People Safe Online"**

25.09.14 - 26.09.14, Warsaw

**FOSI Annual Conference - Redefining Online Safety**

12.11.14 - 13.11.14, Washington, DC

## research in the field

### EU Kids Online: Preventive measures - how youngsters avoid online risks

by *Sofie Vandorinck, Leen d'Haenens & David Smahel*

To protect children from online risks, it is important to recognise that children's perceptions of online problematic situations may greatly differ from those of adults. What adults perceive as problematic does not necessarily result in a negative or harmful experience for children.

This report shows that children's perceptions of online risks strongly depend on their awareness of how online activities may turn into problematic or harmful situations. Also important is their knowledge of effective preventive measures, since it appears that when children feel capable of dealing with a risk they are less fearful or worried by it. Children expressed a range of concerns about online problems that sometime bother or upset them. The salient risks in children's eyes are online bullying and harassment, unwelcome contact from strangers, misuse of personal information, issues related to sexual content or communication, and commercial content. Looking at the media platforms where these incidents occur, about half of unpleasant online experiences happen on social networking sites such as Facebook. While children acknowledge the potential risks of social networking sites, they do not necessarily do something to avoid the risk. However, when they do feel capable of dealing with the risk, they are less fearful or worried about it.

These new findings result from the qualitative analysis of 57 focus groups and 113 personal interviews with children aged 9 to 16. In total, 349 children from nine different European countries (Belgium, Czech Republic, Greece, Italy, Malta, Portugal, Romania, Spain, and UK) were invited to explain what they perceive as problematic or harmful online, and what they do to prevent harm from occurring.

The full report can be found here: [Preventive measures: how youngsters avoid online risks](#)

## contact information

Please contact us via phone or email. We are looking forward to your comments and questions.

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