

Youth Protection Roundtable



youth protection roundtable newsletter nr. 1

may 2007



news from the field

31.05.07 UK: One child in five has met up with a chatroom stranger

30.05.07 Germany: Court supports Landeszentrale für Medien und Kommunikation with posing photos

16.05.07 Web safety warning for children

16.05.07 Dangerous Websites

16.05.07 More Trust in content – The potential of co- and self-regulation in digital media

YPRT editorial

Dear Readers,

hereby we are sending you the first issue of the new youth protection newsletter. This quarterly newsletter reports about the current situation of youth protection in Europe and sheds light on the work of the Youth Protection Roundtable, a project funded in the framework of the Safer Internet Programme of the European Commission. Within the 24 months to come the member organisations from all over Europe (see logos on the left side) will cooperate at the Roundtable. While many fruitful and distinct ideas are sure to blossom at the Youth Protection Roundtable, one overarching goal will be to develop a common strategy embedded in the cultural situation to prevent children and youth from encountering unwanted and harmful content while using the Internet.

The **Mission** of the Youth Protection Roundtable is to establish an intercommunicable socio-technical approach to youth protection. Users – responsible adults in the case of minors – should be empowered to make their own decisions on how to deal with harmful and unwanted content on the Internet.

We would love to keep you informed on our ongoing work.

Yours

Katharina Kunze, project manager



The Members of the Youth Protection Roundtable at the 1st Meeting in Leipzig, May, 09 2007

YPRT report

Youth online: What about Safety and Security in the Virtual World

Nowadays various areas of life are shifting from the real to the virtual world and more and more people are likely to use the Internet as a tool for gathering knowledge and information as well as for entertainment. But many of them are afraid of encountering unwanted and harmful content instead of useful information while being online. Therefore users of all age groups should be addressed by any measure to prevent unwanted and harmful content and become able to decide on their own which content they want to access. Particularly children at home under the responsibility of their parents and in schools or social institutions like youth clubs under the responsibility of teachers and pedagogues should be provided with rich content on the one hand and be prevented from encountering harmful content on the other hand. A climate of confidence is needed to ensure that parents and other adults responsible for the education and welfare of children succeed in the process of enabling youth for a safe and secure use of the Internet.

Filter technologies seem to be an adequate means to provide for a safe use of the Internet. There are filter technologies available that allow the full blocking of any content that might be harmful – especially to children and youth.

On the other hand, in many cases the same filter technologies prevent access to wanted and useful content, that is, they overblock in a way that is not intended. Children's welfare specialists therefore claim media literacy as a more adequate means for youth protection. A combination of effective technology-enhanced strategies on the one hand and education-based strategies on the other hand seems to lead to a more safeguarded Internet environment. To develop the ideal product-neutral mix there is a need for communication and collaboration between technical specialists and children's welfare experts. For this reason the Youth Protection Roundtable was established by Stiftung Digitale Chancen on behalf of the European Commission in the framework of the Safer Internet Programme.

On May 09, 2007 the 1st Meeting of the Youth Protection Roundtable – YPRT – has taken place in Leipzig, Germany. This formation meeting of the new European project was organised parallel to the EU Media Experts' Conference 'More trust in content – The potential of co- and self-regulation in digital media' in Leipzig from 9 to 11 May 2007.

The purpose of the formation meeting was to measure and describe the landscape of youth protection. Therefore the co-ordinator has conducted an international survey to identify the different viewpoints of technical experts and children's welfare specialists in European countries.

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Out of the experts' answers to the questionnaire it became clear, that dangers and risks from the real-life – like abuse, violence and so on, are evident in the virtual world as well. The European experts emphasized the responsibility of parents and media pedagogues to take care for children and youth online. When asked about protecting minors against inappropriate sexual content or violence on the Internet control by parents and teaching of media literacy were stated most frequently.

The questionnaire and further information on the Youth Protection Roundtable are available at www.yprt.eu. The survey is open until the end of June 2007, the results will be published online. During the next 24 months the roundtable's members from various European countries will broaden their view for upcoming threats and will develop a common approach of countermeasures as well. Our goal for the Youth Protection Roundtable is to encourage a collaborative and cross-sector dialogue considering the various cultural backgrounds of European countries to enable youth – and responsible adults in the case of minors – for a safe and secure use of the Internet. The quarterly issues of this electronic newsletter will provide you with information on the on-going work at the roundtable.

research in the field

Children help moms with online shopping

The results from a US study of children between the ages of 8-14 years old show that children are helping their parents with a diversity of online chores, including shopping, income tax return online and vacation planning. The 'Surfin' on Mom's Turf' survey, conducted by Stars for Kidz, found that tech-savvy youngsters are helping their moms with various online tasks and some have even completed financial transactions. Almost half of the 6,000 US children surveyed, said their parents are 'clueless' online and 29 percent said, their moms needed help due to lack of time. Regarding the results of the survey, there is a need to reconsider, to whom address media literacy efforts. The debate of youth protection on the Internet is getting a different perception. Who is protecting whom from harmful content, inadequate contacts and financial/privacy fraud?

Social networking services: joys and drawbacks

The Mannerheim League for Child Welfare (MLL) carried out a wide-ranging inquiry of adolescents' experiences of Internet's photo galleries. Data was collected in the spring of 2006 in three photo galleries: IRC-Galleria, Kuvake.net and ii2.org. All together, 11 300 adolescents aged 12–17-years answered the questionnaire within a couple of days. Two thirds of the respondents were girls, and this also represents the sex distribution of the photo gallery users.

ETSI to develop more safeguards for young child users

In a move to provide better safeguards for young children who use mobile phone and Internet services, ETSI has started a new consultation with industry and child agencies. The aim is to produce a set of European guidelines for service providers, whose products and services are being used by young children, some as young as 4 or 5 years of age. ETSI will publish the new guidelines in 2008.

events in the field

13.06.07 Family Online Safety Institute Mexican Roundtable

Mexico City

14.06.07 Violence in the Media

Gesellschaftshaus der BASF Ludwigshafen, Germany

20.06.07 - 21.06.07 Safer Internet Forum 2007

Jean Monnet Building, Rue Alcide de Gasperi, Luxembourg

21.06.07 Grey areas on the Internet

Telekomhaus Stuttgart, Germany

21.06.07 - 22.06.07 Intercultural competence in social youth work and education

KVJS-Bildungszentrum Schloss Flehingen, Germany

contact information

Stiftung Digitale Chancen

Fasanenstraße 3

10623 Berlin

Tel.: 030-437277-30; -40/Fax: 030-437277 39

E-Mail: kunze@ypert.eu