

Youth Protection Roundtable



youth protection roundtable newsletter nr. 5

may 2008



news from the field

30.05.08 Regulation authority states concerns regarding mobile Internet privacy

28.05.08 BBC research declares web worlds as 'useful' for children

21.05.08 USA: Supreme Court confirms act against the distribution of child pornography

13.05.08 ISFE's 3rd Annual Conference 'Virtual Worlds Meet Real World'

23.04.08 European Commission wants to limit sales of violent video games

YPRT editorial

Dear Readers,

a huge step towards the achievement of the aims of the Youth Protection Roundtable has been made. From May 14-16, the members of the YPRT convened at the Stempferhof near Nuremberg to welcome 20 young people and their tutors from 7 European countries. The so called Young Roundtable was established to discuss with the YPRT what young people expect from the Internet of the future and what could be done to make them feel safe online.

Along the lines of **Have fun and feel safe!** the group worked on risks which young people are exposed to and on appropriate measures to protect them from harm.

Another type of safety training was provided to the Roundtable when, secured with harnesses and snap hooks, the young and the adult experts had a nice time exploring the climbing garden in Pottenstein. We invite you to join the Young Roundtable by viewing the pictures and listening to the podcasts and would like to kindly invite you to give us your comments - at www.yprt.eu

Please note the news, events and reports about research in the field on the next pages.

Yours

Katharina Kunze
Katharina Kunze, project manager



YPRT report

Young Roundtable on Internet Safety

Young people are not only the most active users of the Internet, since Web 2.0 they are also the most productive ones. Therefore it seems quite natural to involve young people in the debate about safety issues and in the development of solutions to combat risks and harms.

At the 3rd meeting of the Youth Protection Roundtable the so-called Young Roundtable was established to give the young Internet generation a voice in the discussion and to engage them permanently in the work of the YPRT. The members of the Young Roundtable have been working beforehand on Internet safety since they are the national winners of the Safer Internet Day competition 'Life online is what YOU make of IT'.

They know how to benefit from the Internet but they also have experienced the risks of the media. During the workshops of the Young Roundtable they were given the chance to express their future visions of the use of the Internet in a safe environment. It struck the adult experts at the YPRT how well thought their ideas were on the one hand but also how radical on the other. The young people strongly expressed their wish to be protected from unwanted and harmful content. To achieve this, they recommended a system where content they do not feel comfortable with - be it commercial or user generated content - can be reported and if possible removed immediately.

For advice how to behave online and how to deal with bad behaviour of others they rely more on their peers than on adults.

To the young people's opinion neither their parents nor their teachers are sufficiently acquainted with the virtual world their children are living in. Concurrently adults and youths at the Roundtable stated huge differences between European countries regarding the incorporation of teaching digital literacy in the regular schools' curricula and also huge differences in the ability of teachers to fulfill this task. Training for digital literacy for teachers as well as for parents and for their children was therefore given high priority on the agenda by all participants of the Roundtable.

The following first conclusions can be drawn from the involvement of the Young Roundtable into the work of the YPRT: Young people do not in general have a different view on the risks and threats that might occur when using the Internet, but they might set slightly different priorities, for example as regards violence or pornography. Regarding the instruments and measures to ensure safety they are not completely aware of all tools that already exist, for example hotlines to report unwanted and harmful content. In addition to the development of new measures it therefore seems to be useful to intensify awareness raising for all groups of users.

The recommendations from the Young Roundtable are well in line with the objective of the YPRT to develop a mix of technical tools and pedagogical measures as an appropriate strategy. To the YPRT members the involvement of the young people has recalled the huge potential and benefits the Internet provides for them. Eventually it should be seen as the right of the youth to explore the boundaries of this wealth but nevertheless it is the task of the adults to provide for a framework of safety measures and an atmosphere of confidence and trust.

research in the field

Eurobarometer Poll: Online privacy a concern for EU citizens

Most citizens of the European Union believe that data transmission over the Internet is not sufficiently secure. They are increasingly using technology to protect their privacy online, a new poll of the EC reveals. The trend signifies a challenge to the current business practices of IT companies which rely on private data to offer their services.

Behind the Screen: The hidden life of youth online

Many young people are effectively being "raised online" spending in excess of 20 hours a week using sites such as Bebo, Myspace, Facebook and YouTube, according to new research published by the Institute for Public Policy Research (ippr). This is over three times higher than previous official estimates.

Ofcom Research: Social Networking

Ofcom has been observing the rapid growth of social networking over the last two to three years. The survey reveals that children swarm to social networking sites. This shows the entry of social networking into mainstream culture and its integration into the daily lives of especially young people. Furthermore there has been substantial media coverage of the growth of social networking, its potential positive outcomes and concerns about the way that some people are using it. The research focused on the social and communications aspects of social networking sites.

Writing, Technology and Teens

The Pew Internet & American Life Project released a new study. It revealed that children and young people write a lot, but they do not think of their emails, instant and text messages as writing. This disconnection matters because young people believe good writing is an essential skill for success and that more writing instruction at school would help them.

events in the field

12.06.08 Beyond Byron - Towards a New Culture of Responsibility

Oxford e-Research Centre, 7 Keble Road, Oxford, OX1 3QG, UK

18.06.08 Child Protection in the Digital Environment

Central London, UK

27.06.08 Child poverty and media

Freiwillige Selbstkontrolle Fernsehen e.V.
Hallesches Ufer 74-76
10963 Berlin

02.07.08 - 03.07.08 Specialist Course in understanding child sex offenders

Europol, The Hague

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