



Safer Internet Programme
<http://ec.europa.eu/saferinternet>

Safer Internet Forum
Promoting Online Safety in schools
21-23 October 2009

Minutes

Teacher's Panel report

Youth Panel on Online Safety

Safer Internet Forum 22 and 23 October 2009

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Overview

The Safer Internet Forum was held on 22 and 23 October 2009 with separate youth panels and teachers' panels taking place the previous day. The youth panel brought together two young people from 26 European countries and the teachers' panel was attended by one teacher from 27 European countries, representing both primary and secondary schools and a range of different subject areas. Nearly three hundred participants attended the main Forum from across Europe and beyond. Participants came from a range of different sectors, including education, health, child welfare, NGOs, government, academia and industry, as well as from national youth panels organised in most cases by the national Safer Internet Centres.

The theme of this year's Forum was Promoting Online Safety in Schools, this having been identified as a key area for action in the European Commission's Public Consultation on Children and Online Technologies in 2007.¹ The Forum was designed to be as interactive and participative as possible, not only through the two panels for young people and teachers, but also through the structure of the main sessions: each session was introduced by a panel of stakeholders from different sectors, including members from the youth and teachers' panels, with the presentations then commented on by other participants and then the opportunity for contributions from the floor. This fostered wide ranging discussion and offered all delegates the opportunity to express their view and contribute to the debate.

The Forum approached the theme of Promoting Online Safety in Schools from the children's perspective, the teachers' perspective, and a collaborative perspective between pupils, parents and

¹ http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/activities/sip/policy/consultations/onlinetech_child/index_en.htm

teachers. National and international examples of good practice and resources were presented. The key topics considered by the Forum as well as an outline of the main challenges and conclusions can be seen from the attached agenda and minutes.

Outcomes

1. Online/Internet safety is on the curriculum in many countries, but not consistently implemented

The Eurydice survey presented in the Forum showed that Internet safety as a specific subject is included in the curriculum within 16 European Union Member States, all of which include it at secondary level and 11 of which also include it in primary schools. However, the discussions in the Forum showed that the implementation can be inconsistent and often dependent on individual teachers. Within those countries where online safety is not formally on the curriculum it should not be assumed that the topic is not addressed at all within school. It may be incorporated within other subject areas or included informally in other classes. It is important not to wait to address the challenges until the subject is formally on the school curriculum before addressing the topic, since this can be a lengthy process which is far outstripped by the speed of technological development.

2. Schools are best placed for teaching children about online safety

Schools are best placed for reaching the majority of children, regardless of income or background, as well as other key recipients of Internet safety messages, such as teachers and (indirectly) parents. They are also the context within which most young people develop a network of relationships which can be extended into or reflected in the online space. Young people themselves have expressed the view that they should be taught about safe and responsible use of the Internet at school and there is also considerable public opinion across Europe that the education sector will perform this function.

3. Education on online safety should start as early as possible and as a horizontal issue

Pupils should begin learning about online safety from a young age, preferably as soon as they begin using computers and certainly from the age of 6, by which time children are generally in full-time education. The topic should be included throughout a pupil's school career, taking into account physiological limitations on what children and young people can comprehend at different ages.

It should not just be the role of ICT specialists to teach online safety, nor should the topic be confined to ICT or computer science classes, although these subject areas are important, particularly in order to address more technical issues such as computer security and viruses. Since pupils are increasingly using computers and the Internet across the curriculum, it is appropriate also to embed lessons about safe and responsible use into all relevant subject areas. The topic should include a range of issues, such as appropriate online behaviour, personal safety, privacy, cyber-bullying, commercial issues and evaluating the veracity and quality of information. Pupils should also be taught about positive and creative uses of the Internet, ie opportunities as well as risks.

4. Adequate teacher teaching and development of innovative and peer-to-peer teaching methods should be sought

This 'horizontal' approach to including online safety in a range of subjects has implications for teaching staff. There is a role for all teachers in delivering the subject and all teachers therefore need to receive training about how children and young people use the Internet and the opportunities and risks which this may create, although it is not necessary for all teachers to become technically expert. Other education professionals within the school community, including management and school boards, should also be given a basic understanding of online safety. Many teachers feel under-confident in addressing a topic about which their pupils may seem to have more knowledge

and understanding.

The use of peer education to harness and make use of this knowledge can be very powerful and well received by children and young children. Much of the teacher training which is currently available, particularly within continuous professional development, is optional, and it is important to find incentives to encourage teachers to participate. Teachers can also benefit from twinning and mentoring programmes. External experts can also play an important role in delivering online safety lessons to pupils and thereby also raising the awareness of teachers about the topic.

5. Teachers need validated resources in terms of material and teaching methods

Schools also need validated resources – there is already a very broad range of materials available from a variety of sources such as industry and the Safer Internet Centres, and validation would help teachers to select appropriate resources for their pupils. The most effective approaches are those which encourage children and young people to engage with the topic in an interactive way, creating content of their own, for example writing blogs, designing materials and making videos.

Humour is an effective tool at all ages, while teenagers express a preference for material which has the ‘shock factor’. It is important that teaching about safe and responsible use focuses on consequences rather than simply consisting of a series of rules – young people often know the rules already but may not understand why it is important to follow them.

6. Blocking of services in school creates a gap between actual use and what is taught

Currently most schools ban or block access to user-generated content such as social networking sites, as well as the use of mobile phones. Since these are the applications and platforms which children and young people are most commonly using at home – and therefore the ones on which arguably they may be most at risk – schools should consider allowing access within the classroom context in order to address the issues which may arise.

7. Evaluation of online safety education is needed

There is currently a lack of consistent evaluation of how well online safety is being taught. It is important to consider the effectiveness of lessons and materials not only in the short term, ie do pupils learn something during the actual classroom session, but also in the medium to long term is there evidence that children and young people are adapting their behaviour patterns as a result of what they have learned. It is crucial to develop both qualitative and quantitative evaluation methods in order to measure not only how many children have been reached with online safety education but also whether this is making a positive difference to their online activity and experience.

Minutes of the Safer Internet Forum 2009

1. Introduction

Horst Forster, Director Digital Content and Cognitive Systems Directorate of the Information Society and Media DG at the European Commission, welcomed delegates to the Safer Internet Forum and introduced the theme of Promoting Online Safety in Schools. He highlighted the degree of public, particularly parental, expectation that schools would play a significant role in educating children about how to use the Internet in a safe and responsible way.

2. Setting the scene

Ruth Harris, the independent expert working for the European Commission in the preparation of the Forum, gave an overview of her role and the primary and secondary research which had preceded the event itself. She also introduced the key questions to be answered in respect of promoting online safety, namely:

1. Why should online safety be considered in schools?
2. What should the topic include?
3. When should children start learning about online safety?
4. Where, ie in which subject areas, should online safety be included?
5. Who should be responsible for teaching online safety in schools?
6. How should online safety be taught ie what pedagogical approaches, resources etc should be used?
7. How well is online safety being taught?

This last point was highlighted as being of particular concern, since there is very little evaluation of awareness campaigns in general, and what evaluation there is tends to be quantitative rather than qualitative.

3. Eurydice report

Stanislav Ranguelov from the **Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA)**² presented the results of a Eurydice exploratory study into the extent to which online safety is included in school curricula across Europe. He presented data illustrating the different educational systems across Europe, for example in terms of the number of years (and age range) of compulsory education and the ratio of pupils to teachers, variations in the way children are taught to read. The trend towards increasing autonomy of schools and individual teachers was also noted.

Current status

The recent study had revealed that online safety is specifically included on the curriculum in 16 countries, all of which include it at secondary level and 11 of which also include it in primary schools. In most countries online safety is taught within a variety of different subjects including ICT. Responsibility is shared between ICT teachers and other subject specialists or class tutors. In most countries there is some kind of public/private partnership involved in delivering online safety education within schools, with a high degree of cooperation with Safer Internet Centres funded by the European Commission. The report from the survey was to be updated after the Forum.

² <http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/index.html>

4. EU Kids Online research

Sonia Livingstone, co-ordinator of the **EU Kids Online**³ research network, presented the findings of the collation of over 400 pieces of research about the use of the Internet by children and young people. The opportunities and risks are classified under the following three headings:

- Content – child as recipient
- Contact – child as participant
- Conduct – child as actor

Key trends

The review of available research reveals several key trends, namely rapid Internet adoption, particularly across Southern and Eastern Europe; ever younger children going online, and the increasingly 'private' nature of young people's Internet use. It was also noted that youth often do have an experimental, risk-taking approach to the Internet. In general parental use is catching up with children's use – however, there are still countries where young people's access outstrips that of the preceding generation. Professor Livingstone suggested that teaching online safety as part of a broader media literacy agenda may empower children to make more constructive and contextualised judgements about online content.

Challenges

It is interesting to note that increasing access, use, skills and opportunities also increases risk. Although schools are best placed to reach most children, particularly those who are disadvantaged, provision is inconsistent. There is a lack of training for teachers and other education professionals and often no access to applications such as social networking which children are using most frequently at home. There is little or no robust evaluation of the effectiveness of awareness campaigns and this should be addressed.

5. Online safety in school: the children's perspective

- **do you want to talk about online safety in school**
- **what would you like to talk about**
- **who should talk about it**
- **what setting would you prefer**

Panel and presentations

The panel for the first part of this session consisted of four members of the youth panel along with representatives from the **Ministry of Education in Niedersachsen, Germany**, the **CEAPA-FAPA parents' association in Spain** and the **EU Kids Online** project. Presentations were made by the **Safer Internet Centre in Lithuania**, giving an overview of their work with pupils, parents and teachers, and the **Dubestemmer (You decide)**⁴ **campaign in Norway**, which uses content created by high school pupils to produce short, humorous and in some cases shocking films to provoke discussion on privacy issues within the classroom.

The second part of the session included panellists from the **youth panel** and from the **Heimili og skoli parents' association in Iceland**, as well as presenters from the **Safer Internet Centre in**

³ <http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/EUKidsOnline/>

⁴ <http://www.dubestemmer.no/en/>

Finland (including a youth panel member), and from **Orange Spain**. The presentation from Finland explained the Mannerheim League Peer Support System which is already being used in around 90% of Finnish schools using peer mentors and adult instructors to combat bullying. The Spanish presentation highlighted the role that companies can play through their corporate social responsibility departments – Orange employees are trained by the Spanish Safer Internet Centre to deliver online safety sessions in schools.

Sources of information

During the discussion the youth panel representatives stressed the fact that there are certain subjects which they do not want to discuss at school – sex, for example – and so approaches to online safety education should respect this. They would rather get information about such sensitive or potentially embarrassing topics from the Internet. The general feeling among the young people was that their teachers and parents do not know as much as they do about the Internet and how it works, and therefore they are most keen to learn from other young people through peer education and mentoring schemes. However, it was also noted that although they may have a high level of knowledge, they do still want and need adult support and guidance.

Subject areas

The view of most of the youth panel representatives was that it is good to embed ICT and online safety education in all subjects rather than treating it separately – in the same way as the alphabet is taught and used for all subjects, the same approach should be taken to online and digital literacy. There is a problem with the fact that the applications and devices which children use most at home are not available in school, eg social networking sites and mobile phones. These should be incorporated into lessons about online safety.

Concerns

The issues which are of most concern to young people are privacy and cyber-bullying. Some young people requested more guidance on how to actually use the computer, while other areas of concern included viruses and commercial issues such as spending money online, signing up for things on the Internet, companies selling children's personal details. Generally the youth panel representatives felt that they knew the issues around meeting strangers, the risk from paedophiles etc, although sometimes it is not clear why they should follow these rules. Resources which illustrate consequences are very useful for helping to guide them in these areas.

Resources

Young people also want to be involved in the design and creation of materials and resources for awareness-raising around safe and responsible use of online technologies. There is a preference among teenagers for resources and campaigns which are humorous and slightly shocking, such as the Dubestemmer examples shown during the presentation.

6. Teachers, parents and pupils working as a team

- **what possibilities and risks should be discussed at school?**
- **different information for different age groups**
- **common engagement of teachers, parents and pupils**

Panel and presentations

The first part of this session included contributions from representatives of the **teachers' and youth panels, EU Kids Online, Riga Teacher Training and Educational Management Academy** and the **Safer Internet Centres in Latvia and Italy**. A presentation from **EAST (Italy)** gave an overview of the different factors influencing young people's use of new media (emotional and

relational, cognitive and value/civic-based) and emphasised the importance of adopting an emotionally-focused approach to the issue. EAST also presented their teachers' manual, 'Education and New Media', which includes teaching resources and lesson plans.

For the second part of the session the panel was made up of representatives from the **teachers' and youth panels**, the **US ConnectSafely**⁵ organisation, **ASPE (parents' association) in Greece** and **COFACE (Confederation of Family Organizations in the EU)**.⁶ The session included presentations from the **Dutch Cyberouters** organisation and **BECTA**, the educational technology agency in the UK. The Cyberouters⁷ are a group of parent mentors who work with schools to reach out with online safety information to other parents. They receive regular training and have access to virtual and physical helpdesks. BECTA⁸ presented their holistic approach to working with schools using the PIES model (Policies and practices, Infrastructure and technology, Education and training, Standards and inspection) and their self-evaluation framework for schools. The BECTA approach is underpinned by the principle of 'protect in school, educate for out of school'. In their view, online safety should be seen as a child protection issue rather than a technical one and should be seen a part of wider safeguarding strategy.

Positive aspects

During the discussion it was felt that it was important to focus on the positive opportunities offered by the Internet rather than just highlighting the negative aspects and possible risks. Consideration of safe and responsible online behaviour should therefore also include how the Internet can enhance education and communication.

Age specific approaches

It is important to use the right approach for different age groups, with cartoons being particularly popular with younger children. By 11 years old all children should have been taught all the main messages about privacy, passwords and identity. In Latvia an Internet safety test has been developed for all children in 6th grade – this will serve both as a survey of what children know and a guide to what needs to be improved.

Engaging with parents

There was discussion of the needs of parents, many of whom feel at a disadvantage – as do many teachers – when it comes to understanding and guiding the Internet use of their children. Some participants felt that there is a role to be played by schools in reaching parents whilst others were of the opinion that schools already have enough demands placed upon them and should not be expected to educate teachers as well. A number of initiatives work with parents, pupils and teachers with the same or related material – here the challenge is to encourage parents to participate. It was suggested that online safety could be included as a theme in other activities or events, for example meetings for the parents of new pupils, in order to encourage attendance. Initiatives such as the Cyberouters scheme can be instrumental in disseminating online safety information to a greater number of parents and through them to the wider community. Generally the youth panellists expressed a wish to be able to communicate more openly with their parents about the issues which arise through their online activity.

⁵ <http://www.connectsafely.org/>

⁶ <http://www.coface-eu.org/>

⁷ <http://www.cyberouters.nl/>

⁸ <http://schools.becta.org.uk/>

7. Teachers' perspective

- **how to empower and build confidence of teachers when using online technologies and when teaching about online safety in the school environment**
- **do you feel confident to talk about online safety in school**
- **what are the main concerns when talking about online safety aspects**
- **what material do teachers need in order to teach (easily) about online safety at school**
- **public-private partnership**

Panel and presentations

In the first part of this session four members of the **teachers' panel** were joined by representatives from the **University of Palermo** and the **Austrian Ministry of Education**, both of whom also gave presentations, and the **Danish Safer Internet Centre**. The University of Palermo presentation highlighted the difference between home and school use of the Internet by children and young people and stressed the importance of considering online safety within the broader context of media literacy. The role of school in developing critical and creative skills is crucial, for example through the use of blogs by both teachers and pupils. The potential for technology to create digital divides was also noted. The presentation from Austria gave an overview of the e-Learning school system and noted the importance of providing face-to-face and online training for teachers while also engaging actively with students and parents, for example through the use of social networking sites.

The panel for the second part of the session included four members of the **teachers' panel** and a representative from the **Belgian Safer Internet Centre**. Presentations were made by the other three panellists from the **Polish awareness centre**, **TeachToday**⁹ and **Deutsche Telekom**. The presentation by the Polish Safer Internet Centre focussed on the need for blended learning ie a combination of traditional teaching methods and computer-based learning. Examples of resources for different age groups were presented, using cartoon-type characters for younger children and videos of young people discussing online issues for the older age group. The presentation also outlined the Polish system of providing certificates for teachers and pupils using the awareness centre resources. An overview was given of the TeachToday initiative which is run by the Internet and mobile industries in partnership with European Schoolnet, the education sector and other local stakeholders. TeachToday provides information and teaching resources for teachers and headteachers in order to help them ensure that they themselves use the Internet safely and responsibly as well as empowering them to guide and support pupils in their care. A local example of TeachToday was illustrated by Deutsche Telekom, highlighting the key areas of privacy and security, communication and responsibility, games and child safety, and potentials and risks.

Skills gap

In general teachers feel that there is a gap between the skills and knowledge which they have and that demonstrated by their pupils. Even amongst younger teachers who may be more adept with the technology there is sometimes a naivety as to how their own use of the Internet, in particular social networking sites, can jeopardised their privacy or even their careers. It is important to build the confidence of teachers in their own 'life literacy' and professional skills. As long as teachers are able to gain some basic understanding of the Internet and how children and young people use it, they do not need to become technically expert in order to help guide their pupils to use online technologies in a safe and responsible way. However, this does require a significant shift in the mindset of teachers, who are used to knowing more than their pupils about the subjects they teach. They need to be willing to learn from the skills and expertise their students already possess and to learn new

⁹ <http://www.teachtoday.eu/>

things together with their class – this is a horizontal method of teaching rather than the traditional vertical approach.

Training and guidance for teachers

Teacher training therefore needs to be didactic rather than technical, and continuous professional development should include new educational teaching methods as well as new technologies. In many schools the teaching of online safety depends heavily on the interest and knowledge of individual teachers – it is important to ensure that this is shared with colleagues so that the knowledge doesn't leave if the individual teacher does. Teachers need clear guidance for their own use of the Internet and for its use in the classroom. Resources need to be accessible, mapped to curriculum aims and goals, and easy to use. Partnerships with organisations such as the Safer Internet Centres are welcome and help to train the teachers at the same time as teaching the pupils.

8. The right ingredients

- **national examples**
- **international examples**

Panel and presentations

For the national section of this session presentations were made by **Ministry of Education** representatives from **France, Romania and Luxembourg** with comment by representatives of the **Slovenian awareness centre**, the **Hector's World** initiative in New Zealand and the **teachers' panel moderator**.

National examples

The French B2i initiative was presented – this is a broad ICT course which includes aspects of security, safety and responsible online behaviour within the citizenship module. All school leavers have to complete the B2i in order to achieve their school-leaving certificate. It is incorporated across the curriculum in a range of different subjects. The C2i is available for teachers and has been compulsory since 2007 for new entrants to the profession.

The Romanian presentation outlined the national situation regarding children's access to and use of the Internet and stressed the importance of the partnership approach which had been facilitated through integration with the EU. A range of awareness-raising activities has been undertaken by the Ministry in partnership various organisations including Save the Children, Microsoft and the police. The representative from Luxembourg outlined the history of the Luxembourg Sicher im Netz campaign which has worked with children from 8 years old to raise awareness of computer security and online safety issues. The University of Luxembourg is undertaking a scientific analysis of the activities on the basis of questionnaires completed by participants.

International examples

The international section included presentations from **Hector's World in New Zealand**¹⁰ and the **CyberSAFE project in Malaysia** with comment by representatives of the **teachers' panel**, the **Luxembourg Ministry of Education** and **INSAFE**. Hector's World is a partnership initiative with the Ministry of Education and the police. It is aimed at children aged 2 to 9 years, this age range having being reduced as research has revealed as younger children have begun using the Internet, in some cases from the age of two or three. The focus is on digital citizenship rather than specifically Internet safety. NetSafe has designed a useful grid indicating what children are doing and can be expected to know at different ages, and the fact that very young children are unable to identify risk

¹⁰ <http://www.hectorsworld.com/island/index.html>

because of their brain development was highlighted in this context. The key to the success of Hector's World is the creation of characters with whom young children can identify, in the same way as they do with Disney characters.

Particularly striking in the Malaysian example is the far higher penetration of mobile phones than of fixed Internet, and the importance of tackling the issues which that creates. The Malaysian CyberSAFE initiative aims to reach three target groups, ie parents, pupils and teachers, and provides a wide range of different resources, such as train the trainer sessions, games, videos and road shows, in order to raise awareness about safe and responsible use. The project is training pupil ambassadors to act as peer educators and mentors, and a Licence2 Surf is being planned – this is an online e-learning course with optional assessment.

9. Summing up teachers' and pupils' needs and concerns

The concerns of teachers, parents and pupils were identified as follows:

Teachers

- the importance of fostering confidence in teachers' professional skills and life literacy
- the need for training, both during initial preparation for the profession and through continuous professional development
- time to assimilate new skills and areas of knowledge
- space in the curriculum to include online safety issues
- support from school management
- appropriate and reliable infrastructure and applications, including the supervised use of social networking sites and mobile phones where relevant
- materials, tools and resources for preparing and delivering lessons
- guidance about classroom use and their own use
- access to expert support
- access to information about new technologies and likely trends in how young people will use them
- opportunities for knowledge and problem sharing with their colleagues
- robust evaluation and assessment of online safety materials and lessons

Parents

- the need to foster parents' confidence in their own parenting skills and life literacy
- willingness to learn together with their children
- opportunities to share knowledge and problems
- the importance of avoiding knee-jerk and panic reactions
- access to support and guidance

Children and young people

- the need to start talking about online safety as soon as children first use computers
- the importance of involving young people in the identification of issues, and design and delivery of online safety education
- covering a range of issues such as privacy, passwords etc, rather than just focusing on cyberbullying and paedophiles
- interactive materials and approaches
- the effective use of humour and the 'shock factor'
- peer education and mentoring supported by broad guidance from parents and teachers
- need to know how to use the technology correctly

- understanding the consequences of their own use
- knowledge about how and where to report illegal or harmful content or conduct
- better communication with teachers and parents

10. Teaching pupils

- **what do pupils need to learn**
- **when to introduce online safety in schools**

Panel and presentations

The panel for this session included representatives from the **National Association of Youth for Social and Mental Health in Sweden**, **EU Kids Online**, the **University of Athens** and the **Safer Internet Centre in Cyprus**. The session included a presentation from the **Portuguese Ministry of Education**, which gave an overview of ICT infrastructure within Portugal, including the government scheme to provide subsidised laptops and broadband connections for pupils and teachers in order to overcome digital divide issues and ensure that ICT is integrated into education as consistently as possible. Digital content and training are also provided by the Ministry and online safety is included in the curriculum at various stages within different subjects, such as ICT and citizenship.

Health issues

The discussion mirrored much of what was said in the session on the children's perspective, again highlighting the fact that online safety should be included in lessons from as early a stage as possible since children are adopting the Internet at an increasingly young age. There was some discussion around the question of whether or not it is harmful for young children to use computers – research from the American Academy of Paediatrics suggests that children under 2 years should not be exposed to the screen at all, and children between 2 and 4 years should only use the computer for a maximum of between one and two hours a day. The panel stressed the importance of recognising the limitations of children in terms of brain development – since the brain develops until the age of about 24 years, children should not be treated as small adults.

Vulnerable and hard-to-reach children

There was some discussion of the needs of vulnerable children, for example those who do not attend school regularly, and it was noted that the provision of equipment alone is not sufficient in itself, but should include some training (perhaps in the form of pre-loaded content) on how to use the computer in a safe and responsible way. One youth delegate suggested that specialist centres should be set up within the community so that young people who do not attend school are able to access information and support.

Focus on personal safety

One panellist noted the importance of maintaining the focus on specific physical threats to children's personal safety whilst also considering a breadth of themes and issues, both positive and negative. A non-judgemental approach is essential in order to avoid young people being reluctant to report problems in case they are punished. A delegate from Brazil highlighted the issue of rights of children and young people online, which can best be addressed within the context of cyber-citizenship.

11. Training teachers

- **basic understanding of new media for teachers**
- **the right use of technologies**

Panel and presentations

For this session the panel consisted of a representative and the moderator from the **teachers' panel**, the **Charles University in Prague**, the **Ministry of Education in Austria** and the **Swedish Film Pedagogical Institute**. A presentation was given by a representative of the Ministry of Education in Austria who are also partners in the national awareness centre.

Whole-school training

The paradigm shift in the role of teachers was highlighted, which in turn means that all teachers from the kindergarten up to secondary school need to receive training, along with other school professionals such as governors and managers, since head teachers and other managers can be a bottleneck in the process of developing online safety programmes throughout schools. A wide range of topics was identified as being important, including legal aspects of Internet use. Social networking sites such as Ning can be useful environments where teachers can learn by doing. Motivated pupils are the best incentive for teachers, and older teachers (50+) should be encouraged to feel confident in their broad professional experience rather than intimidated by the technology. With their years of experience they are well equipped to find creative ways of teaching the themes and topics included in online safety. The content, text and media are the important elements, not the technology.

Teachers' use of Internet

Teachers should be careful not to overstep boundaries when using the Internet, particularly social networking sites, for example by posting compromising photos of themselves online where pupils can find them or by inappropriately 'friending' pupils on social networking sites. This should be included in teacher training on basic understanding of new media for all teachers.

12. Summarizing the Safer Internet Forum 2009

Time being short, Ruth Harris summarized the outcomes of the Forum very briefly, using the key questions which had been posed at the outset (see **Conclusions** below). She thanked the European Commission for raising this important topic and also thanked the delegates for their participation and contributions.

Conclusions

1. Why should online safety be considered in schools?

Schools are best placed to reach the majority of children and therefore should play an important role in protecting them at school and educating them for their online use and activity beyond the school gates. There is considerable public expectation that schools will perform this function, as evidenced by a range of surveys across Europe during recent years.

2. What should the topic include?

The topic should include a broad range of topics. While it is important not to lose the focus on actual threats to children's personal safety, other topics are also essential, such as privacy, security, commercial issues. Pupils should also be taught about positive and creative uses of the Internet rather than just focusing on the negative.

3. When should children start learning about online safety?

Children should start learning about online safety as soon as they start using computers, which research shows is as young as 2 or 3 in some countries. The topic should be included throughout a pupil's school career, taking into account physiological limitations on what children and young people can comprehend at different ages.

4. Where, ie in which subject areas, should online safety be included?

Online safety should be included throughout the curriculum rather than being isolated within ICT or computer science, although these subject areas are important, particularly for addressing the more technical issues of computer security, viruses etc. The literacy, behavioural and risk aspects of online safety can be incorporated in a broad range of different disciplines.

5. Who should be responsible for teaching online safety in schools?

If online safety is to be taught across the curriculum there is a role for all teachers in teaching the topic. All teachers should therefore be trained to have a basic understanding of how the Internet works and how children and young people are using it, although it is important to stress that not all teachers need to be technical experts. Peer education is a very powerful and effective approach to teaching online safety, and external experts such as Safer Internet Centres also have an important contribution to make.

6. How should online safety be taught ie what pedagogical approaches, resources etc should be used?

A range of online and offline resources is available for teaching online safety. Teachers need to have guidance as to what resources are best for their particular context and age group, and some kind of labelling or validation would be extremely useful to assist them in making these choices. For older children it is important to teach children about consequences rather than simply giving them rules, whereas younger children are not yet capable of abstract thinking about the future and therefore need to have more concrete learning points through a medium with which they will identify. Humour is an effective tool at all stages while for teenagers an element of 'shock factor' can be a useful factor.

7. How well is online safety being taught?

There is a lack of robust evaluation of how well online safety is being taught in schools, and indeed through broader awareness campaigns. Further work is needed to develop robust qualitative and quantitative evaluation methods in order to ensure that approaches to online safety education are effective in the short, medium and longer term.

13. Identifying main challenges

- Inclusion of the topic of online safety in the school curriculum is inconsistent across Europe and can be dependent on individual teachers. Even in those countries where it is formally on the curriculum, it should not be assumed that all pupils are being taught about issues related on online safety, while conversely it is not the case that this topic is not being addressed at all in Member States where it is not officially part of the school curriculum.
- Curriculum development can be a very slow process which is rapidly outstripped by the pace of technological change. To delay the inclusion of online safety education until such time as it is formally on the curriculum would disadvantage many pupils and possibly put them at risk.

- The availability of training for teachers on online safety is inconsistent both within initial teacher training programmes and continuous professional development, and courses tend to be voluntary rather than compulsory, relying on the interest and motivation of individual teachers.
- Currently filtering and/or banning preclude the use within school of certain applications and platforms such as social networking sites and mobile phones. Given that these are the technologies which young people are using most frequently outside school, this creates a gap between school and home use which may prevent pupils from receiving appropriate guidance.
- There is very little evaluation of online safety education, and what does exist tends to be quantitative. There is a lack of qualitative analysis of the effectiveness of awareness raising activities in the short, medium and longer term, particularly with regard to whether or not they have brought about attitudinal and behavioural change.
- The proposed embedding of online safety across the curriculum highlights a gap in both competence and confidence between many teachers and their pupils in respect of ICT in general and the Internet in particular.
- Even teachers who are familiar with computers and the Internet may not be aware of the legal and ethical issues associated with their own use of online technologies such as social networks and mobile phones. There is a lack of guidance in this area.
- Teachers are already under considerable time pressure to meet all the demands placed upon them, and the training and preparation required to incorporate the topic of online safety for all ages across the curriculum would be an additional burden.
- A wide range of online and offline resources are available across Europe to support and enhance online safety education. Without official validation it can be very difficult for teachers to know how to select quality and age-appropriate materials.
- Young people generally feel that they already know the issues and the rules around online predators and stranger danger. However, they do not necessarily understand why they should follow the rules, ie there can be a lack of comprehension of the consequences of failing to do so.
- It is important that parents are also made aware of online safety issues and the need to support their children in using the technology in a safe and responsible way. However, schools are already expected to fulfil a range of different roles and the requirement to convey online safety messages to parents as well as to pupils may be excessive.
- Children who are hard-to-reach, disadvantaged or vulnerable in various ways may be unable to benefit fully from online safety education delivered within the mainstream curriculum.

Ruth Harris, 13th November 2009



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
Information Society and Media Directorate-General
Digital Content and Cognitive Systems
eContent and Safer Internet

European Teachers' Panel on Promoting Online Safety in Schools

21 October 2009 Luxembourg – Euroforum

REPORT



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I. Introduction

27 teachers from across the EU, selected through the INSAFE network, met in Luxembourg on 21st October 2009 as a group to discuss promoting online safety in schools. Representatives of this group presented the findings of the Teachers' Panel at the Safer Internet Forum on 22nd-23rd October 2009.

It was noted at the outset that this was essentially a group of experts, people who had a real interest in online safety and many of whom have been delivering these messages effectively to children and young people for some time now.

However, the group were able to speak for their colleagues from school and all had a good perspective on the state of online safety provision across their respective countries.

The panel had an initial plenary session and all participants were invited to comment on their vision for teaching internet safety in schools.

The group was brilliantly moderated by Karl Hopwood and Barbara Buchegger.

The teachers gave very positive feedback on the overall meeting and on its moderation.

Already during the plenary session it became clear very quickly just how important the subject of promoting Online Safety in schools was to the group and also some of the frustrations surrounding the delivery of this to children and young people.

The full agenda of the meeting is available in Annex I.



Plenary session of
Teachers' Panel

II. Summary of main common areas of discussion

Following the plenary session, teachers were split into 2 parallel groups covering primary aged children (up until the age of 12) and secondary aged children. Both groups addressed similar issues.

The following bullets provide a summary of the main areas of discussion in the two groups and these are expanded below.

What possibilities and risks should be discussed at school?

- The consequences of children's actions – how this can impact on their future.
- Privacy issues when using social networks
- Cyberbullying
- Grooming
- Media literacy
 - How to research on the Internet
 - How to become able to judge content from the Internet (distinguish commercials from other sites)
- How to integrate games in learning – make school more interesting (serious gaming)
- Downloading and copyright issues
- Mobile phones and particularly financial problems
- Maintain a balance of positive and negative – children and young people need to know some of the risks, but not be overwhelmed and given negative messages.
- Sexting – this was a common concern, even amongst the primary colleagues, but it was noted that often the terminology that is used can be unhelpful as although it means something to adults, it means little or nothing to children and young people.

What types of information is needed at different ages?

- Children need to start receiving online safety education as soon as they start to use a computer or other technology. There were some who felt that this didn't need to happen too early, but the main consensus was that awareness raising needed to start as soon as the technology was a part of their lives, when the child is 6 years old.
- Is restricting the Internet for older students at school sensible, since pupils have unrestricted access to Internet on their mobile phones and at home. It is better to empower them to help themselves.

How to empower and build confidence of teachers when using online technologies and teaching online safety in the school environment

- Teachers need to overcome their fear of the technology – they feel that because the children have more technical skills, they, the teacher are ill-equipped to offer support and guidance.

- Teachers have to be able to use ICT in classroom activities (ICT as a normal tool), being confident with using ICT)
- Teachers have a role to play as they bring a wide experience, life skills and an understanding of what is and is not appropriate.
- Ensure that online safety is a whole school issue and not left to one or two people.
- Make it clear that there is no need to panic – none of the behaviours or risks are new – the internet is merely a tool providing easier access to some of the inappropriate content or activity.
- Empower teachers so that they can keep themselves safe when they are online. They need to set a good example.
- Let pupils teach their teachers and let them learn from each other.

What material do teachers need to *easily* teach online safety in schools?

- Materials need to link the real world and the online world.
- Ready useable material
- Creativecommons material that can be exchanged



Example of material for schools produced by awareness centres

What are children and young people actually doing when they are online?

As digital natives, children and young people make full use of the internet and what it can offer. They are engaging in a range of different activities, some legal, some not. Teachers felt that it was important to understand (or at least be aware of) what they are doing in order to be able to best support them.

- MSN, Chat, Instant Messenger, Skype
- Research, help with schoolwork and assignments
- Downloading music, video
- Uploading content
- Playing games
- Accessing inappropriate content
- Using social spaces

Common engagement of teachers, parents and pupils – teamwork

- It is essential that everyone who works with children and young people are involved in this.
- Where does the role of the school and the teacher start and stop?

The group agreed on the importance of the role of teachers in promoting online safety, however teachers should not replace the parental role.

- How to reach parents?
 - Involve their children in order to teach them
 - Integrate it in interesting and creative events
 - Newsletters and online material

Concern was expressed from the panel about parents and more importantly the engagement of schools with parents around this issue. Many schools had attempted to deliver awareness raising sessions with parents, but with very limited success, a common concern was that the small number of parents usually attending these sessions are not the “hard to reach” group. Children of the hard to reach parents are more likely (as far as teachers are concerned) to be vulnerable and at risk of some of the online dangers and so it is very challenging to know how best to reach this group. One member of the panel suggested using existing parents evenings to talk about online safety issues while parents are already in school. There was some discussion around whether it was the role of the school to deliver some of these messages to parents, but most felt that ultimately it was, despite the fact that some of their colleagues would be likely to disagree.

Mobile devices

A growing concern for schools, the question was asked, do they represent problems or possibilities? Many children and young people talk about needing to “power down” when they attend school as the technology is not allowed. In some cases this may be justified, schools have had instances of children taking photos or videos of lessons, of children being reprimanded and more of a concern, children being photographed while changing or showering. However it was acknowledged that in schools where there was a clear policy about online conduct, there should be fewer problems of this nature – children need to be aware that there are consequences for their actions when they are online in the same way that there are consequences in the “real world”.

Filtering

In 2/3 of schools across the EU, the internet is filtered and restricted. Yet most young people do not have similar restrictions at home and on their mobile devices. Teachers reported that this can cause difficulties in schools, particularly in relation to working together with pupils to address some of the issues of social networking profiles and how to protect online privacy. If children are to be empowered to use the technology safely, then restriction is not the most effective way. However it was also noted that if no filtering was present at school many teachers would be less confident in using online technologies in the classroom.

Use of new media in classrooms

Unfortunately the panel felt that new media was not being used as effectively as it could be in classrooms. Some schools have spent huge amounts of money in order to equip their teachers and classrooms with the latest technologies; however these are not always employed in the most meaningful ways and teachers need training in order to be able to make best use of them.

New media should also be used in order to deliver online safety messages, videos, podcasts as well as leaflets and newsletters were all cited as useful methods of raising awareness, particularly with parents and the wider community.

Peer to peer teaching and learning

This was seen as a very effective method of delivery for online safety messages by many members of the panel. Children and young people can often have a high reputation with their peers which puts them in a powerful position as regards online safety.

Children and young people can help here – parents and teachers often feel technically inadequate, but children and young people lack the life skills and the knowledge and understanding of the world. Essentially, both groups need each other and the panel was keen to point out the benefits of using pupils to teach staff about some of the technical aspects. Using pupils to inform parents was also considered a useful method and this was likely to make parents curious.

III. Specific outcomes from the two working groups

The Primary school teachers group discussed as well to what extent Online Safety is included in the curriculum and it is currently being taught at school.



The Primary school teachers' group

Please note that the information presented in the table below is merely based on the experience and perception of one teacher per country and does not represent any official information on the country situation.

Country	Is online safety taught	Is it statutory	How is it taught?
Bulgaria	No, very patchy and no incentives to teach online safety.	No	2 lessons per year in the 5 th grade.
Cyprus	No and there are no incentives to teach it. However, teachers do try to deliver it as they think it is important.	No	All schools have filtered access, this is often seen as the solution. Some teachers work with pupils to develop rules for internet use. Catchphrases are used ¹
Denmark	Some teachers provide time for this as there is lots of media coverage.	Using the internet is part of the 2009 curriculum. But internet safety is not.	Lots of good resources including film from the media council. Peer to peer is encouraged as this is very effective.
Finland	Yes, in some schools, but this very much depends upon the individual teachers.	There was mention in the 2005 curriculum of media literacy. This does not cover today's social media.	
Greece	Patchy coverage.	No	Some teachers are involved in other EU projects and try to deliver online safety as part of them. NB. Every child gets a free wireless notebook when they are 13
Hungary	Very patchy and down to the individual teacher or school	It is mentioned, but there is no guidance about what to actually do.	Resources are scarce.

¹ Read, think, click; type, check, click; close and discuss....

Ireland	Patchy coverage in about 50% of schools	Not statutory, but mentioned in the PSHE curriculum	NCTE have 10 and 20 hour CPD courses., they also provide seminars for parents.
Luxembourg	Yes, in some parts of the country – mainly between the ages of 9 and 12.	No	Experts visit the schools and deliver a session. (2x9 mins) mainly in the north of the country.
Netherlands	If teachers want to teach it then they can.	No	Lots of materials are available – schools can ask the police to come into school as the experts and there is no charge for this
Romania	No, but Microsoft, Insafe and Save the Children all deliver voluntary sessions	No	Main problem is the adult mentality, people need to be more open-minded. There aren't enough resources.
Slovenia	Yes, taught in lots of schools and awareness is being raised.	No	Lectures are given to children, teachers and parents. Materials are sent to schools and there are plans to make online safety part of the curriculum.

The Secondary School teachers group formulated the following "wishing list":



The Secondary school teachers' group

What do we need from school administration?

- Guidelines: what to do with them and when (content and age)
- Make teachers aware, that they have to teach it!
- Make clear, who is responsible that is really taught.
- Support for teachers who are willing to try something new
- Involve parents

What do we need from government?

- Make clear that Online Safety has to be taught in school
- Invest not only in hardware, but also in didactical support (how to use technology in classroom)
- Laws and regulation, how social networks should work (guidelines for industry)

What do we need from NGO?

- EU wide exchange of material (we don't want to invent the wheel again)
- A think tank that is researching new trends and transfer that to educational system
- Train the Trainer offers

What do we need from Industry?

- Social responsibility concerning data usage in social networks
- Moderation in social networks
- Try to enhance media literacy, so everybody is able to understand ToS

IV. Main conclusions

There is a common consensus from the teacher panel around all of the issues discussed. It was felt that the most effective way of delivering online safety messages in a way that would make a difference to children and young people was by embedding the messages within the existing curriculum, although it was acknowledged that there would be occasions when certain aspects did need to be specifically taught – (for example passwords).

There was some concern expressed about the difficulties in assessing online safety messages for the impact they have.

One example provided came from Denmark where the teacher had asked the children (primary) to prepare some videos that she could showcase at a conference. The children made their videos but then, following discussions decided that none of them could be shown – some contained references to the children's names, some showed too much information about where they lived etc. the fact that the children decided that they shouldn't be shown, was a good demonstration of how effective the online safety messages had been. It was generally acknowledged that although schools are usually able to identify the impact that particular teaching or intervention has had on pupils, this has not been the case with regards to online safety.

Online safety is like any other subject that needs to be addressed within schools – the following need to be considered: knowledge, skills, values and attitudes.

Knowledge will encompass some of the more technical aspects of how things actually work and this area may need some understanding of specific technologies, an ideal role for children and young people to play.

Skills will include some specifics such as how to create strong passwords and how to ensure that your accounts are private – these are crucial and teachers will need some support to address these as they will change and differ for different technologies and applications.

Values are part of citizenship and encompass behaviours and understanding of what is right and wrong in the real world. Education about values needs to be an ongoing process.

Attitudes need to reflect the understanding that children and young people have about the internet. They need to have a positive attitude whilst recognising that there are risks. Their knowledge and values will contribute to this positive attitude towards online technologies.

Last but not least the whole panel agreed on the fact that helping children and young people to stay safe online needs to be a team effort, everyone must be involved, parents, teachers, young people, the wider community.

Annex I: Agenda of the meeting

9:15-9:30	Registration and welcome
9:30-09:45	Introduction to teacher's panel Outline of the day, overview of agenda
Online safety in Schools: setting the scene – plenary session	
09:45-10:30	Personal introduction of each participant and overview of issues, concerns, needs (based on the feedback received from the member of the teachers' panel beforehand)
10:30-10:45	Coffee break
The teachers' experiences and concerns discussion in two groups (Primary-Secondary teachers)	
10:45-11:30	What are the children and young people who you work with doing online? What sort of risks are they facing? This will provide a good opportunity for teachers to share local concerns with colleagues and form a picture of some of the issues we face on an EU scale, what are the similarities and differences we need to consider
11:30-13:00	How are online safety issues addressed in your school? Is online safety in the curriculum? If yes, how is it implemented? Are you teaching online safety on a voluntary basis? Are there incentives for teaching online safety? How should online safety issues be addressed in school? Who should take the responsibility for doing this? In what subjects? From what age should the work start?
13:00-14:00	Lunch

Teachers needs discussion in two groups (Primary-Secondary teachers)	
14:00 – 15:00	<p>What material do you use for teaching Online safety?</p> <p>How effective are the materials we have to work with?</p> <p>Each teacher should bring examples of their teaching material in order to have an exchange of views on the existing material</p>
15:00– 15:45	<p>How confident are you and your colleagues to deal with the issues surrounding Online safety?</p> <p>What needs to be done to build confidence? What are your needs?</p> <p>What kind of organizations are best placed/have a responsibility in meeting your needs? (School administration, Govmt, industry, NGO...)</p>
15:45- 16:00	Coffee break
16:00- 16:30	<p>Engagement with parents</p> <p>How have you and your colleagues addressed this complex issue? Which methods have been effective? How do we reach the hard to reach parents?</p>
Summary of the discussion in plenary session	
16:30- 17:20	<p><u>Summary of parallel sessions</u></p> <p>What are the common issues?</p> <p>What are the main concerns, the greatest challenges?</p> <p>Where can we work together?</p> <p>What are our next steps?</p>
17:20- 17:30	<p>Certificates' ceremony</p>

European Youth Panel on Online Safety Safer Internet Forum 2009

21st October 2009 Luxembourg

REPORT



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I. Introduction

Listening to young people's experiences has become more important for the Safer Internet Programme during the last years – this gives important input on awareness-raising strategies, tools and materials as well as first-hand knowledge about how they use online technologies and their conception of risks and how to deal with them.

National youth panels exist in 26 European countries, as part of the awareness raising mandate of the Safer Internet Centres. The aim of these national panels is to ensure that young people's voices are heard and that their ideas and perspectives are taken into consideration when new awareness activities are being planned and policies made. By proactively consulting the key target group the activities funded under the Safer Internet Programme can better meet the challenges of promoting safer and responsible use of online technologies and create policies and awareness messages that adequately meet their needs.

A European youth panel on online safety was arranged on Safer Internet Day 2008, with 27 young people (aged 12-19) from nine countries. One of the main conclusions was that the young people wanted to learn more about online safety in schools.¹

On the occasion of the Safer Internet Forum 2009 in Luxembourg, the first pan-European Youth Panel on online safety was organised by INSAFE on 21 October. This was the first time that a panel has been organised with such wide geographical coverage (26 European Countries) under the Safer Internet Programme.

This initiative has been made possible through the support of the Safer Internet Programme (Information Society and Media directorate of the European Commission) and three organisations from the private sector: Liberty Global, Microsoft and Vivendi.

2. Organisation of the Youth Panel

The event gathered 52 young people, aged 14 to 17, chosen by the national awareness centres and coming from 26 member countries (Portugal was the only country not represented). The aim of the meeting was to discuss issues related to the youngster's use of online technologies and to investigate whether and how they would like to learn about online safety in schools. Four professional moderators in child participation have been selected to facilitate the discussions around online safety education in schools.

The young people were given also an important role in the debates of the Safer Internet Forum that took place on 22nd and 23rd October 2009 with the theme 'Promoting Online Safety in Schools'.

In order to 'break the ice' among the young people, an entertaining *ice-breaking* event took place on 20 October 2009 at the Rockhal, the biggest music complex in Luxembourg. This was an occasion for the young panellists to get to know each other and transcend language barriers through a culture that most young Europeans share – music!

On 21 October the meeting was opened by a video message of Viviane Reding, EU Commissioner for Information Society and Media: "The Pan-European Youth Panel has my full support. This is a very valuable initiative which allows European youngsters to voice their own opinions, concerns and suggestions about the impact of the new technologies on their everyday lives. I would like to congratulate INSAFE for organising this event, and thank the sponsors for giving it their backing. It is a good example of public-private partnership" said Mrs Reding.

1 http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/activities/sip/docs/summary.pdf

Then the youngsters were divided into four groups guided by the following moderators: Ellen Ferguson, Steffi Rack, Ella Craciun and Remco Pjipers. The themes discussed included protection of personal data, subjects that should be taught about online safety, people who should perform this task (parents, teachers, siblings or peers), age in which children should start getting information about this issue and best ways to teach them according to different age groups. Consequently, the participants came up with several ideas on how to teach children about online safety, ranging from periodic classes to exchange experiences to specific curricula suggestions.

The conclusions are outlined clearly in each of the Moderators' assessments of the meeting presented in the annexes.

3. Main Conclusions

"We're talking about children who are born in two dimensions. The way parents teach them how to cross the street, that's how small kids should be taught to handle the streets of the internet."

Although each moderator coordinated the discussions in a different way, all of them respected guidelines on child participation², and the general principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

There are some important cross-cutting conclusions that can be drawn from the sessions. First, education on online safety came through as a crucial way of empowering children to benefit from the advantages of internet and minimize the risks. In truth, the youngsters had important debates on, among other subjects, which age children should start learning about online safety, curricula that should be taught and who should teach them:

- Most of the young people had not had education in online safety in schools;
- Education on online safety is the best way to empower children on how to benefit from the advantages of the internet and minimize its risks;
- It is important to start online safety education at an early stage, for instance 5 years old, learning first with their parents and later with teachers;
- Online safety qualities should be embedded by the age of 11 (e.g. privacy);
- Children are gradually having access to technology at a younger and younger age;
- Peer education and peer support can be effective tools for information and protection;
- Pupils should be asked to train teachers about young people's use of online technologies;
- The groups also outlined possible curricula that could be implemented in the schools at different ages;
- Making films and material in class can be a good tool to learn about online safety, and older children can make material for use by younger children and also teach younger children about online safety;
- The young people saw Internet as a positive tool for positive experiences;
- Privacy is an important topic for the young people;
- "Shocking" or thought- and discussion-provoking films and material is the most effective awareness-raising tool for the older children (like themselves).

² Practice Standards in Child Participation, Save the Children

4. Annexes

4.1. Report from Youth Panel Group 1

Moderator: Ella Craciun (Save the Children Romania)

What are the online risks and possibilities that should be discussed in school?
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The discussion began with the theme of protection of personal information, concerning the way young people deal with the huge amount of personal information shared online, especially through social networks.

In groups of three, the youngsters debated on a couple of photos relating to the subject and shared their personal experience on e-bullying and personal integrity issues.

They concluded that one of the main causes of personal information abuse is that youngsters don't know what privacy settings are and how important they are. They do not know the risks they are dealing with when uploading pictures/personal info on-line.

Also, teachers don't know what online safety is. Children and youngsters feel detached from their teachers. Consequently, in case of abuse, they find it very difficult to share their concerns with them. In this context, the participants came up with the idea of having young people to teach teachers about online use, giving them knowledge about how they deal with this virtual world in which they spend a lot of time.

One of the youngsters underlined that the internet is a second dimension of real life - online, one can face the same risks and opportunities as in real life. They then considered it crucial that parents and teachers begin Internet Education as early as possible, at the same time as they begin to teach their children to be careful when they go out on the street or to unknown places. They highlighted the idea that children have to be given the power to decide, and not to be restrained in any way by parents and teachers, meaning that empowering children through a very good and healthy online safety education is the answer for a consequent better use of the internet.

Youngsters also found it extremely important that teachers know the experiences of the teenagers, and get in touch with the new technology. Moreover, they thought of some organized chats where young people, previously trained, should try to support others who have had bad experiences online, and to promote positive aspects of internet usage.

As the discussion turned more and more into the educational issue, they highlighted the importance of initiating education on online issues at an early age, such as 5 years old, first by parents, and then by teachers. As for Internet Safety Lessons at school, they suggested that the older teenagers (over approximately 13) should be taught on this issue and should work on creating online safety materials for the younger ones (from 5 to 13), like cartoons, books and magazines with, for instance, tips about the risks and opportunities children can encounter online. In this way, older teenagers will also get to learn more by actually promoting them to the younger generation.

Another suggestion was to have periodic "exchanging experience" classes, in which pupils should get in touch with other pupils from other schools and talk about their personal experience. These meetings would create a sense of reality about risks and opportunities on the web suggested by people their age who have experienced it. Also, they think this is one

of the best ways of including teachers into the 'Getting to Know their Students' idea, so that they actually get in touch with the real problems as well as the possibilities that youngsters encounter on-line.

Moreover, youngsters consider these factors to be very important in influencing children to adopt a better and safer use of the internet - socializing, having access to a great source of information, developing social and language skills, creativity, increasing their participation in different projects/contents and having a global value, a great way of connecting worldwide.

Specifically concerning the risks, bullying was mentioned first, and all that comes along with it: stalking, harassing, grooming, meeting strangers, privacy abuse, pornographic and harmful sexual content.

Talking about the Online Safety Classes in School, they came up with a curriculum suggestion.

First age group: from 5 to 7 years

- ✓ children should learn basic information about the internet and what technology means;
- ✓ on how to protect their personal data;
- ✓ and on how to properly use the internet for their age, through for instance educational games online, special programs made by the older students to work on in class;

Second age group: from 8 to 10 years

- ✓ children this age should know more things about privacy, since this is the age when they tend to share everything online;
- ✓ learn together with the teacher how to use chat rooms properly;
- ✓ three youngsters in this group came up with the idea of creating a character called Mr. Blinkie. Mr. Blinkie should be a desktop character, similar to the paper clip of Microsoft Word, and he should guide children on every site they are on, giving them advice regarding online safety and tips on how to better use the internet. Mr Blinkie should be able to answer all their questions about possibilities of the Internet, such as guidelines on where to find the information they need. Mr Blinkie can also be the character from the cartoons and materials for children, and he can also come in schools from time to time and talk face to face to children in order to teach them that sometimes socializing is better in real life, where we can better express ourselves. Mr Blinkie is thought to be a great educational tool for mainly the first three age groups.



Third age group: from 11 to 13 years

- ✓ Children should discover social networks together, sharing experiences and learning from each other. This is also thought to be a great way for the 'Getting to Know your Student' issue;
- ✓ Students should have special Chatting Role classes. That means they should have plays on teenagers chatting, one of them bullying the other, and then exchange places so that the bully kid becomes the one being bullied. After this, they will discuss about how they felt in this exercise. Teachers would be leading the exercise.
- ✓ Watching videos together about online safety, and also other videos (educational ones, on certain themes)
- ✓ Having famous people involved in classes, to come and talk to them especially about privacy protection (teenagers look upon famous people as being role models so their opinion would count very much)

Fourth age group: from 14 to 16 years

- ✓ Again, use Facebook together, Youtube, and other popular sites for teenagers
- ✓ create materials for the younger students: cartoons, books, magazines with e-safety tips
- ✓ Exchange experiences classes with students from different schools, so that they could talk about their own experience on-line



4.2. Report from Youth Panel group 2

Moderator: Ellen Ferguson (Children International, United Kingdom)

To start off, each member of the group was asked to create their “technology timeline”. Afterwards, the participants were invited to look at the moderator’s own technology timeline where they could see that the first piece of technology she came across was a children’s tape cassette machine. The group was surprised that the moderator’s first contact with the internet was at 17 whereas their first experience with the internet was at a much younger age. The purpose of this event was to identify a common theme in terms of access to technology and the ages at which important online safety messages have to/could/should be shared.

There were no real differences in terms of the technology that children were able to access, even though there were some differences in terms of the ages at which children were able to access the internet.

The most common latest piece of technology was an iPod and again the older members were surprised to see that their younger counterparts had access to these devices at a much younger age than themselves. Thus the theme of younger and younger children accessing the internet was well established and the group used this premise to begin discussing the appropriate ages to start talking about internet safety and which subject should be tackled at which age and who – parents/teachers/the young people themselves should take charge of these subjects.

Having analysed the different timelines this was used as evidence to support a basic curriculum of subjects that should be taught at the different stages of child development. There were several overarching themes, one of which was personal information. The group felt that this was an important topic and one that should be revisited time after time. Generally the group felt that online safety qualities should be embedded by the age of 11.

When were you first told about internet safety?

Outside of their involvement with INSAFE there didn’t seem to be a theme or pattern in terms of how and when parents and teachers were approaching the subject matter. Despite the lack of adult provision older siblings and friends did play a strong role in getting internet safety messages across to the group. The group was also more likely to discuss their online experiences with siblings and peers and therefore more likely to listen to their advice.

Case study Norway:

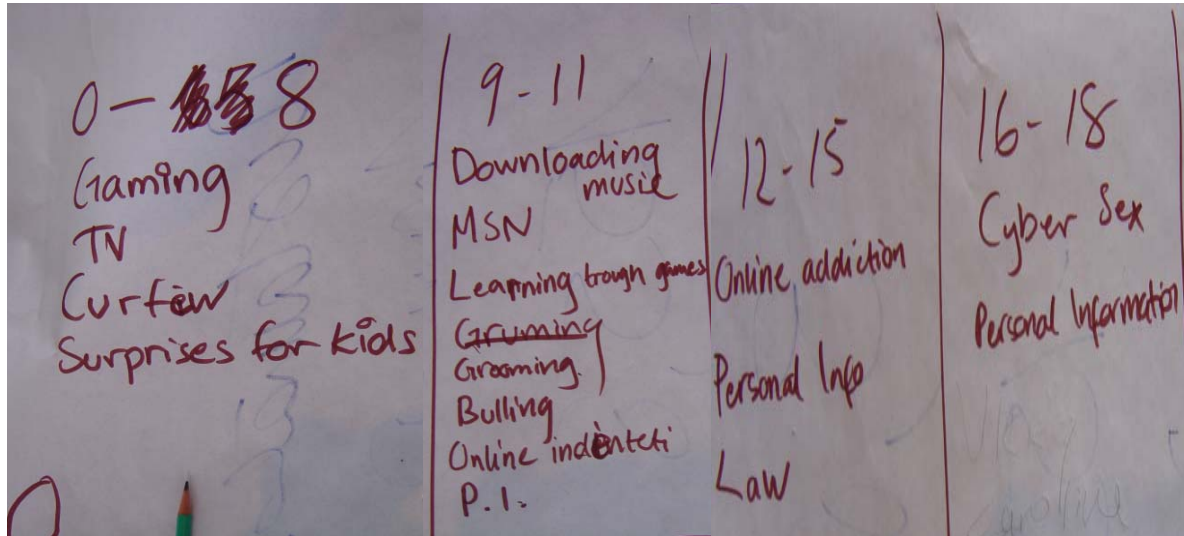
One of the experiences provided by the youngsters in the Youth Panel was that of the Norwegian representative. Access to the internet was provided when she was **six**. According to her own description, both of her parents were “gadget geeks” who always had the latest technology. Her first internet safety messages were received from her parents and this was subsequently supported by the teachers in her school.

In truth, the youngster admitted that she easily empathised with teachers who were unable to grasp *a.* use of interactive technologies *b.* the safety messages that should be shared with students.

She also mentioned that an event was held in her school where the pupils were invited to “teach” the teachers how to use the internet and some of the popular services young people use. The participant highlighted this as a very useful way of teaching useful messages to both teach and student.

Creating suitable resources

Having gone through the “brainstorming” process, the group was then asked to choose one of the developmental stages and to come up with some ideas for resources:



First age group: 0-8

- ✓ Fun Infomercials with songs with a message - this is an early age to teach and therefore children learn through fun.
- ✓ The main messages should be that there are risks combined with the usage of the internet and you need to be safe. At this age, the group would like to see that the strongest message is the opportunities offered by the internet and not the risks.

Second age group: 9-11

- ✓ Promote a film that is not too childish or too adult e.g. the Simpsons. Clear explanations and examples would be given so that children can understand the consequences of their actions. However the group also wanted prevention to be part of the education programme. The important messages would need to be that they should take care about what they are doing online – do not add strangers on MSN.
- ✓ There was an emphasis on learning through playing games – not violent games but funny games that will help them to learn about the internet. Games and movies were the favoured route for education.

Third age group: 16-18

- ✓ At this stage it is important to educate teenagers about the dangers of webcams. They would take a realistic approach to the subject matter and film was their preferred medium. There is also a need to have stronger tactics for this age range.
- ✓ They came up with a storyline whereby a couple produces a sexual film and then the boy sends it to his friends making a proud mockery out of it. The film would have the title “we were only webcams”. The group preferred teachers to handle this subject matter as parents would be too embarrassing.

Conclusion: Who would you prefer to talk to you about internet safety?

The group spent some time discussing the preferred adult to discuss internet safety messages. There was a difference for the stages of child development. However, overall the group felt that they wanted to learn from teachers and feel comfort from parents.

Overall conclusion of Youth Panel members: Future of youth panels

This group also discussed wishes for future youth panels:

- For the youth panels to continue and for there to be exchanges between the youth delegates in different countries so good practice can be shared
- For everyone to feel safe online
- For the internet to be used in a good way for learning



4.3. Report from Youth Panel group 3

Moderator: Stefanie Rack (Landeszentrale für Medien und Kommunikation, klicksafe.de, Germany)

At the beginning the participants questioned each other about duration, frequency of their internet usage and the quality of their social contacts. A short discussion showed that there were no big differences between nationalities concerning the amount of time they spent using the internet (1-3 hours a day). But between the sexes, a difference can be mentioned concerning the average time of daily internet use: The boys (Sweden: 6 hours, Greece: 7 hours) spend much more time online than the girls. Some play online games, some just spend their time doing several other things.

There is one main difference in social network use, especially concerning the number of friends: In some eastern European countries' social networks, as in Romania, nearly everybody in the networks is linked as "friends" with almost everybody else. The Romanian representative stated that no one she knew of had less than 400 friends. Whereas the other European representatives in the group told me that a number of about 150 friends was for them a usual amount. When asked how many of these "friends" they would call a real good friend, two attendants grinned and said "less than 5, no, less than 3". The others nodded.

Therefore, it seems they were all capable of thinking critically about the real meaning of social network contacts.

Media education in school: State of affairs in their home-countries

The youngsters explained that media topics probably play no mentionable role, and surely not an important part, in their countries, in their schools or in any case. In class, they use computers for research only; some are taught how to use word processing programs.

Work on their own curriculum

After having set an aim for the next working phase – to create their own ideas of how to implement media and internet topics in education in an appealing way to young people – the participants collected topics that they thought should be discussed in school, including good and bad aspects of internet and media use. Participants should think not only of themselves and their own interests and online experiences (good and bad), but also about what a younger child, a sibling for example, could encounter on the internet.

The following topics were collected:

- ✓ What happens to my data?
- ✓ Online addiction (gaming)
- ✓ Online porn addiction (The girl from Iceland said that it could be a problem to spend too much time on online porn portals because the feeling for real emotions could get lost and youngsters could be influenced by false role models)
- ✓ Cyber mobbing
- ✓ Bad content (harassment, paedophiles)
- ✓ To get more technical knowledge (filtering, understand what phishing is, how spam works, and how to intervene)
- ✓ To use the internet in a more productive way (knowing how to create your own homepage, how to "merchandise" yourself online in an effective way)

After discussing some examples, three main competences were identified that could be taught while dealing with the mentioned topics in class.

1. Competence to use the media in different ways:

- ✓ Productive and active production of Web 2.0 content; how to use web 2.0 for self expression;
- ✓ How to read blogs profitably;
- ✓ How to write adequate comments (a “web2.0 school of literacy”)
- ✓ Reflective competence in dealing with information; critical assessment of sources;
- ✓ Understanding how internet and how some websites, as for instance online shops; work; understanding online trade and business in general.
- ✓ Technical:
 - How does filtering work;
 - How does SPAM work;
 - What is phishing;
 - Programming and so on

2. Online self- competence /Self Management

- ✓ To know and to think about Data Protection,
- ✓ How to represent one’s self on SNS, with what intention;
- ✓ Also online- addiction and what to do in the case of addiction (including online porn addiction)

3. Social/ethical Competence online

- ✓ Such as chat behaviour;
- ✓ Cyber mobbing ..., how to help others,
- ✓ What to do when you find bad content, where to report

The participants then separated into three groups of interest, each one working on one of the three competences, answering questions such as: “HOW?”, “WHO?”, “WHO ELSE and HOW?”. It was now the participants’ task to develop their own curricula, working on “HOW” (methods and surroundings).-the competence they were focusing on could be taught by concentrating on a special topic (as for instance on how social behavior could be trained in class by discussing the topic of Cyber-mobbing) -; “WHO” (teacher, exterior, peer) should teach it, and “WHO ELSE” should be informed about it (parents, siblings).

The groups focused on their chosen competences and the allocated topics. Each group fully worked out one topic (cyber-mobbing, gaming addiction and technical knowledge). Different countries mean different ways of learning and teaching methods; some of the participants were taught in strictly pupil centred classes (Norway, Iceland), others were mainly used to ex-cathedra teaching with the teacher as main actor (Luxemburg, Italy).

Conclusions

The participants worked meticulously on their topic and the moderator considered that it would do each country good to involve their pupils in the process of planning the lessons. In Germany there is a curriculum that is fixed in form and content to two-thirds. There’s one third left that the school can fill with a focus. Therein lies the possibility to ask the pupils for participation and advice, for instance because they are probably more in touch with the recent internet topics that young people are concerned with than the adults with educational

background and pedagogic view who are usually setting up the curricula. But only few schools in Germany do that.

The **online/gaming addiction group** thought about making pupils create a **film** in class that could be used for self-reflection and also for parental education. Roberto from Sweden had the funny idea to have two different sets of subtitles in this film, one with a special address to the “elder generation” (-> “Who else and how”). Creating a film in class would also teach pupils to act in a productive way, demonstrating that the competences are often enmeshed with each other. Spots are in the teenagers’ opinion a good and funny method to get young people to talk about things they are concerned with.

The **technical skills group** thought about inviting a technician, who could explain how different technical things work. Even more, they would have liked to go on an excursion to a firm that works in the filtering sector or to visit a bank where someone could explain to them some security arrangements such as protect yourself from phishing, for example. Most of all they wanted to be taught by different instructors, not only by their teachers. The best teachers, according to them, would be university students who are concerned with the topics and not much older than themselves. None of them thought that one of their teachers would be able to teach this subject in an interesting way.

Most of the youngsters see the internet as a completely good and safe place even if they seemed to be very self reflective of their own use. This enthusiastic attitude is positive, but it is necessary to emphasize problematic aspects as well. We should keep on reinforcing their awareness in an amusing and ironic way, as for instance through spots for youngsters and through young and unconventional student-teachers.



4.4. Report from Youth Panel Group 4

Moderator: Remco Pijpers (MijnKindOnline, The Netherlands)

Firstly, the participants saw a video of the 12-year old Dutch girl called Bo who was threatened by two so-called friends into take her top of in front of the webcam, or else they would beat her up. She gave in, hoping it would all go away automatically. But when three weeks later everyone in the village had seen the images and at school peers were harassing her, she asked a school psychologist for help. The psychologist accompanied Bo to her parents.

The story stirred the discussion in the group. Two boys stated it was her fault. She shouldn't have stripped. After it happened she should have called the police. She almost asked for it. That reaction made the girls respond emotionally.

Why stay silent?

The group was asked why this girl waited so long to tell her story. These were the answers:

- ✓ "You feel embarrassed, guilty in a way."
- ✓ "You don't want to disappoint your parents. "
- ✓ "Reason is disordered."
- ✓ "Will I be punished?"
- ✓ "Talking about it makes it more 'real'."

The group then discussed possible ways to help victims. They regard it as a very important issue: not only should we try to avoid problems online and stay safe, but there should be more help for all the boys and girls who faced serious problems but decided to remain silent about it.

What can be done to help those teenagers who stay silent after having a bad experience with Internet?

Their answers were:

- ✓ Talk to a 'green' teacher or pupil(s) at your school.
- ✓ Red button in toolbar on every messenger service to report anonymous: not perfect, but ok.
- ✓ Paying a little for a safety filter on the net
- ✓ Chat room with trained people to give concrete information: youth helps youth: teach teenagers to help their own friends!
- ✓ Campaigns to inform youngsters, parents, teachers about the online websites where you can ask for help. Helplines are not known.
- ✓ Mobile help line, just for internet subjects; free; anonymous.
- ✓ Publication of realistic solutions and guidelines on an obvious site.

They underlined the need for training, online or at school.

Which are the most important internet safety topics for youngsters and what is the best way to talk about them?



The group, divided in pairs, was then given the assignment of making internet safety commercials on a storyboard.

- ✓ For primary education:
 - A storyline using the character of Sponge Bob. Its goal is to make children/pupils change their profile into a private one.

- ✓ For secondary education:
 - Comics about a day in a girl's life with pictures that stress the constant presence of an unknown face, in order to convey the message "don't help them see you better". It focuses on privacy.
 - A conversation between two friends (Tom and Ann) about a possible date with someone they met online. In truth, Tom is teaching Ann a lesson - under a false name he invites her for a date. But he isn't there. He phones her afterwards to explain the risk she took.
 - Drawing of a boy and a computer with the slogan "Not all information on the net is ok; there's a lot of rubbish too".
 - A story about three kids and their mother. In the end, the mother gets as addicted to the computer as her children. The slogan would be 'Don't let this happen!'
 - A story about a girl using the computer; in the computer, one censored photograph (naked with black banners over it). The photograph spreads all over the web, on mobile phones and even at a bus stop. The slogan would be "Don't make an idiot of yourself: don't give people an eyeful on line"
 - A story about a girl using the computer, checking e-mail and twitter. The teacher comes in and stands behind her. The slogan would be: "Are adults allowed? Privacy is your right! - Privacy is something to explore!"

Conclusions

Privacy is an important issue for the teenagers of this group. They want an online space of their own but also in real life they want their privacy borders respected. At the same time they want to be protected. Their concern about 'little children', younger than they are, show that they understand parental concern.

The school is a good place to talk about internet safety. The teenagers from this group think there should be **real life stories** and 'shocking material' to warn them of what might happen. 'Shocking' seems to mean that the story should be in their face, very clear-focussed.

Safer Internet in the curriculum of primary and secondary school

The youngsters stated:

- ✓ Nowadays there are ICT lessons in secondary education. But not every section has ICT lessons. It seems that the higher the level, the less ICT lessons are taught. Most of the time, ICT lessons are voluntary or in extra time.
- ✓ "All teachers in every subject should take care of safe internet use", the group stated.
- ✓ One participant asked if ICT lessons can be compulsory and integrated in classes about social subjects, for instance.
- ✓ It should definitely become one of the end goals of compulsory education. Perhaps there could be a computer driving licence concerning this matter.
- ✓ Lessons about internet should start at the age of six, at primary school and the main subject should be never put cell phone number or home address anywhere on the web.

Main subjects approached

- ✓ As in real life, children should know that they must never talk to strangers online and never add them in personal lists
- ✓ Only use or create private profiles
- ✓ They should be taught merely the possibilities of the internet:., appropriate websites to visit, how to search online, how to upload information, and so on.
- ✓ Also on how to make a web site
- ✓ How to use social networks
- ✓ What to put and not to put in profiles
- ✓ How to use your mobile in a correct and responsible way
- ✓ Using and sharing pictures on the net
- ✓ How to deal with websites, specially those containing sexual content
- ✓ Appropriate sites to visit
- ✓ How to deal with addiction, cyber bullying, cyber porno websites
- ✓ Where to get help when you are in trouble on or from the net
- ✓ Caring about privacy on the internet - privacy is a right and therefore schools shouldn't observe pupils when visiting websites, reading or e-mailing;