



Net Children Go Mobile

Giovanna Mascheroni & Andrea Cuman

Net Children Go Mobile

The foreign research *Net Children Go Mobile* deals with the use of mobile devices by children and parental mediation to serve as prevention and protection against the negative impacts of mobile phone usage on children's recipients. The document also includes facts about different countries, their school rules or the opportunities for internet access and so on. The authors have used the methods of interviewing and a questionnaire for the participants of the survey.

Parental mediation

Nowadays, in this time full of modern media technologies, the family sphere as a social space has a significant impact on children's experiences with the Internet, whether using mobile phones, smartphones, tablets, laptops or other technologies. To regulate the time spent with the Internet, parenting mediation is also used to understand the possible risks and pitfalls of the media.

We know several parenting strategies:

1. *Active mediation* of Internet use, when parents can engage in activities such as talking about the Internet content that children encounter.
2. *Active mediation of Internet security* where the parent accesses more securely and monitors more responsibly the use of the Internet.
3. *Restrictive mediation*, which includes the establishment of rules that limit and regulate the time spent online, the place of use, online activities.
4. *Technological definitions* that have the ability to monitor the online activities of children.
5. *Monitoring the recording and control of online activities.*

Parental Active Mediation

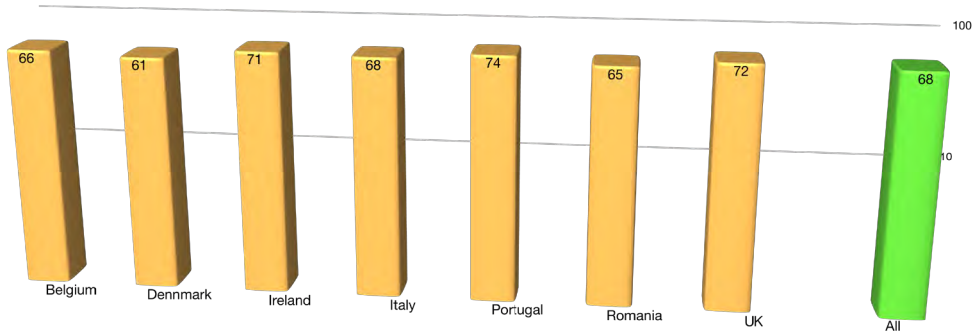


CHART 1:

Parental Active Mediation (%) of Child Internet Use according to Country

Source: : MASHERONI, G. - CUMAN, A.: *Net Children Go Mobile: Final Report*. Milano : Educate, 2014, p. 39.

The most commonly used parental strategies are: talking to children about what they do on the Internet, stay with them and watch what they do when they are online, explain why some websites are appropriate and some inappropriate, suggest safe use of the Internet. In addition, parents also encounter younger children with insufficient digital experience often needing guidelines on the use of technologies or devices. Regarding older children and teenagers, parents say that they do not want to set strict rules or even do not consider it necessary.

Up to 65% of parents acquire two or more forms of restrictive mediation

In this case, we are talking about the introduction of different rules related to the use of technology by children. These can be rules regarding the time and place of using the Internet, “allowed” apps or content (violence in games, inappropriate vocabulary, etc.). Some parents set a limit on screen devices for their children, by which they limit the time spent on the Internet, or they prohibit media use during dinner, at night, when there is nice weather, during schooling etc. Such rules mostly follow on from the effort of parents to teach children responsibility and to fulfill their own responsibilities. However, during interviews with parents, they are also often unaware of parental control options.

Using the Internet or mobile devices by students

Very often, students are breaking the rules during a lesson - they use mobile phones, send messages, play video games or spend time on social networks. Sometimes, however, they are doing something more innovative: for example, in Romania and Germany, some students mentioned that they used their personal device to create an open WIFI for all classmates. It has also been found that in several countries students are breaking the rules because they disrespect their teachers.

Using the Internet or mobile device by students

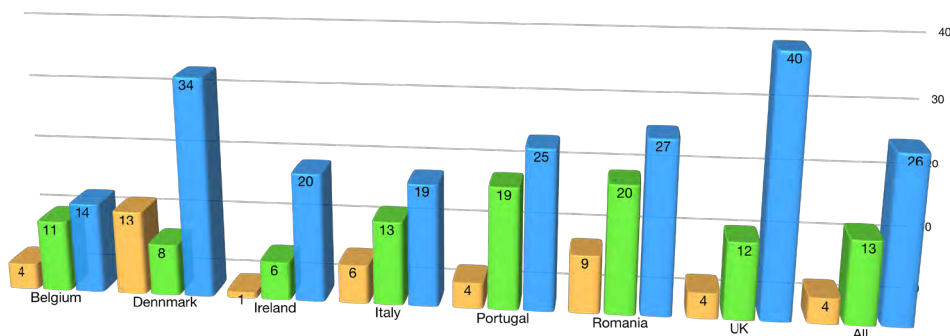


CHART 2:

Students using the Internet or smartphones at school daily - according to country

Source: MASHERONI, G. - CUMAN, A.: *Net Children Go Mobile: Final Report*. Milano : Educate, 2014, p. 48.

Children, teachers and parents support the chance to use mobile technologies at schools and argue for the use of these modern devices in classrooms by making them more attractive and beneficial to health (compared to daily heavy book carrying, etc.). Having digital interactive learning aids can also be helpful for children with cognitive disabilities.

Current European and national programs help teachers work with digital technologies and use them in teaching. In Belgium, the initiatives and services focus, for example, on the safe use of the Internet. In addition, in Belgium there is the inclusion of information and communication technologies into school curriculums established by law. Similarly, also in Denmark, which aims to increase the implementation of information and communication technologies into activities at all levels of education. In Germany, compulsory qualifying education of teachers is required as well as technological equipment provision by schools. Since 2007, Portugal has witnessed a rapid expansion of Internet access among children and young people. This expansion was supported by a national policy that tried to present technology as a dimension of modernity and development. The country continually tries to provide equipment and Internet access at schools. Romania is also striving to promote the necessity of digitalization.

Bibliography and sources:

MASCHERONI, G., CUMAN, A.: *Net Children Go Mobile: Final Report*. Milano : Educatt, 2014, 70 p.

**Timea Fornálová
Daniela Lagíňová**