

RESEARCH ON BEST PRACTICES

MAD for Europe

KA2 SMART. Nº Project

GENERAL SITUATION ON YOUNG PEOPLE AND SOCIAL NETWORKS

Almost a million Spanish teenagers are at risk of Internet addiction, with big medical problems. Young people spend more than 3 hours a day on the Internet.

The data transferred by the President of the Internet Users Association in Spain is are worrying: "33% of pediatric consultations have to do with cybernetic issues, with the use of the Internet or mobile phones, 50% of children under 10 already have a smartphone and, with 14 years, this percentage rises up to 90 %. "40% of children between 10 and 12 years old access to explicit sexual nature content and more than 30% share images of others without being aware of the risk that entails. Our minors have in their hands a tool very powerful and dangerous".

As it was referred before, 32% of young people spend more than 3 hours a day online. Almost 50,000 adolescents already suffer from Internet addiction and one million are at risk of suffering from it, according to *Kelisto* Comparator Data. According to a research from the European Union, these are some indicative data to determine if a person is hooked to the Internet: spend more than 18 hours a week with the computer connected to the network, 14 hours on social networks or have more than 500 friends virtual.

Contact through the network

It is one of the most disturbing data. More than 60% of adolescents have been connected through the Internet with someone they do not know and 45% have come face to face with that person. Although, the majority of adolescents are in social networks and we must remember that legally in Spain it is necessary to have 14 years old to be able to open a profile in a social network.

RELATIONSHIP WITH SOCIOECONOMICAL ISSUES

The process of socialization is extremely important in the social development of children and adolescents, through this process "they learn behaviors, skills, motivations, values and beliefs, which correspond to the cultural context in which they develop". Today, the media is one of the most important socialization agents. Adolescents of our society grow up in a completely digitalized context unknown a few decades ago. These are part of what is called the "netgeneration" and have a wide range of means to communicate. This increases their social field, because they can surf the Internet with complete freedom and, if they wish, they can be connected by mobile phone at all times, participating in conversations with people from any part of the world, belonging to virtual communities and thousands of people.

Possibilities that ICT and Internet offer today

Regarding the socio-economic aspect, we see that adolescents with less education and who live in more depressed areas have less access to social networks, but at the same time they are more likely to get hooked. Nowadays, the digitalization in Spain reaches all strata social, so the generation called NI-NI (Not studying and not working) is usually addicted to the network. Social relationships have changed and there is a good chance of talking (chatting) with stranger, maintaining cyber-relationship relationships. They also lose listening capacity, diminishing social skills.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

Raising awareness of parents (first) and educational centers, so that they know the problem fully. Is vital because parents, relatives or teachers are the most direct way to adolescents to make them see the danger of social networks, so we propose basic measures that the adolescent can realize to solve this problem and thereby reduce the serious damage that can cause them in their personal development.

Some recommendations to avoid the abuse of the Internet:

- 1- Supervise and talk with teenagers about what they do and find on the Internet.
- 2- Never provide personal family information, such as age, address, phone numbers, images or videos, work site, etc.



3-Avoid making "virtual" friendships or online, especially in chat rooms, instant messaging (such as Messenger), or social networks (Twitter, Facebook). Many people that meet online, lie about their identity and / or profession in order to deceive and attract more people to their profile.

4-Encourage adolescents and minors to inform about everything that makes them feel uncomfortable, dislike or offend, or what they have knowledge about the risks that the Internet has.

5-Take into account that certain actions that are "normal" may have their risks, such as uploading your own photos or videos to public places, since by its speed of dissemination and by the number of people who will see it, it may be similar to Place your photo in all places of the city or spread your video on all advertising screens.

6-Avoid pages with harmful or false content. Do not create everything you find, see or read on the Internet, because the network circulates a lot of opinion and less true knowledge, so you run the risk of misinforming more than inform yourself.

7-Keep in touch with the Educational Center your teenagers attend and inform yourself about what they learn or handle on the Internet.

8-Agree a "generous" time for your children to use the Internet, but set a time limit for use. In addition, it is advisable not to lock themselves in a room to surf the Internet, but this is done in a place in the home visible to everyone.

The most direct way to avoid the misuses of the Internet is prevention

GOVERNMENT POLICIES ON ISSUES

The fight against the pathological use of new technologies has become one of the main challenges of the Ministry of Health in the field of addictions. The data on the consumption of social networks and other new tools are alarming, especially among adolescents: 18% of young people between 14 and 18 years of age use Internet compulsively, according to the Ministry of Health. The new National Addiction Strategy, which the Council of Ministers has approved this year, provides for the first time measures to address this problem.

Francisco de Asís Babín, delegate of the National Plan on Drugs, explained that they're not addicted, but the surveys where young people has participated shows aspects like that they cannot stay for a long time without connecting to Internet or social networks and that generates anxiety or discomfort.



The idea of the new strategy, which will be held for eight years, is to have a database of initiatives that work so that each community does not have to start from scratch. For example, Babín has said that it has been seen that parent guides have very useful parts, but that it is more practical for them to raise their concerns and the solutions that come to mind.

A part of the problem in the use of networks is in the online games. The Government is studying the regulation of minors' access to Internet betting advertising. According to the data presented by Babín yesterday, 9.8% of those under 18 admit that they have bet on the Internet. "That does not mean they are gambling," he has qualified. Among adults addicted to gambling (0.9% of the population), 44.8% have ever bet before reaching the age of majority, according to data from the Ministry of Health.

OPINION OF YOUNG PEOPLE ON SOCIAL MEDIA

For this activity, three young students from Spain have been interviewed. They talk their experience with social networks and what they think about it, its benefits and also the disadvantages.

James, from Barcelona, explains that it's very useful because you can search whatever you want and inform you about everything. The danger thing is that, especially in schools, the bullying that comes from it.

Celia, talks about the rapid accessibility of social networks to be in touch with your loved ones even if you are far away. The negative part is that there's not privacy.

Marta, explains the facility of having a "video call" and being able to see easily with just one call to your friends. The downside is that it can take away a lot of time, especially when you are studying or doing important things.

Link here → <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SmGlbkj3tms>

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